



William Shakespeare's

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

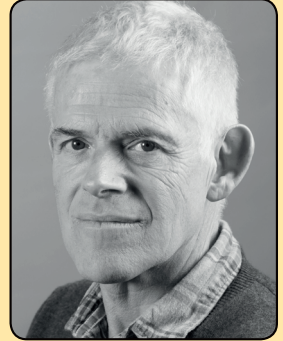
directed by Stephen Thompson

9th - 17th June 2017

£1.50

WELCOME!

Welcome to the Barn Theatre Club and to this performance of *The Taming of the Shrew*. We welcome back Steve Thompson who we last saw as a director of *Howard Katz* in 2008, although we have seen him on stage, slightly more recently, in *Noises Off* in 2010.



This may be your first visit to the Barn. We are an amateur society and rely entirely on our members to make it function. We perform 11 plays on the main stage from September to July (including one production from our Youth Theatre members) and smaller-scale productions in our Studio theatre which gives us the opportunity of staging avant-garde, or very small-scale productions. We also host two drama festivals, the Youth Drama Festival in March and the Welwyn Drama Festival in May. We have around 600 members and are always pleased to see new people join our Club. Our activity does not only involve acting, but also staffing the backstage departments such as costume, sound and lighting, set building and of course front-of-house and back-stage jobs. We also have a vibrant youth element, our Youth Theatre. On the first Sunday of the month Singers at the Barn meet in the Clubroom and entertain with a night's themed music – there's information in the foyer for them. We additionally have to remember that we are the custodians of one of the oldest buildings in Welwyn Garden City (Grade II listed) with parts of the building dating back to 1598 which, needless to say, takes quite a lot of maintenance. There's a lot going on.

Everyone you see on stage or on duty in the foyer or behind the bar does it for the love of the Club. So, why not consider joining us by picking up a brochure in the foyer? You will be made very welcome indeed.

We are nearing the end of our season with the youth production of *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* in July – there are details in this programme. Their production of *Bugsy Malone* last year was a sell-out and I understand that we are in for another treat this year. Next year's season starts in September with the return of the Barn Fringe. So please keep an eye out for our 2017/18 Season Leaflet or join our emailing list from the home page of our website.

In the meanwhile please sit back and enjoy this performance of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

Nigel

Nigel Rive

Chairman, Barn Theatre Club

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The last time I directed Shakespeare for the Barn was 27 years ago – the Scottish play – a cast of over 20 male actors but with only a handful of roles for women (typical Bill.) I recall the auditions at my Mum's house in Moorlands: a long procession of dazzling female actors coming to read and, sadly, I was only able to cast very few of them. I said at the time to the Chair of the Barn's Programme Selection Committee (Sylvia Pepper) what a shame it was that I couldn't do the entire play with women. And that idea has been niggling away at me for almost the past three decades...

Today the theatrical landscape has changed. Gender-blind casting has become an integral part of theatre in this country. Glenda Jackson was a female Lear in London; Maxine Peake played Hamlet in Manchester; Laura Wade's all-male play *Posh* about the young bucks of the Bullingdon Club has recently been played with an entirely female cast at the Pleasance. Closer to home, Siobhán Hill Elam shone as Mark Antony in Jack Wood's *Julius Caesar* at the Barn.

Why is this new theatrical trend catching fire? David Aaronovitch elegantly summed it up in *The Times* last year. He wrote: 'Pedantic casting is obviously a boon for white male actors but it can have a deadening effect on the drama, dropping us into comfort zones. Casting can be used to subvert the clichés of historical drama – making the audience engage with the material in a different way. It is absurd to insist on realistic casting in theatre. This is where we suspend our disbelief. If we're prepared to accept that half a dozen actors banging about with swords can conjure up the Wars of the Roses, then what's so hard about a female Lear?'

I love David's explanation but my answer is different. I think a theatre club exists for its actors as well as its audience. The Barn has a wealth of truly exceptional female actors and they need to be given opportunities in classic plays as well as modern ones.

The play was last performed at the Barn 35 years ago with Lesley Valler as Kate and Keith Thompson (our Production Manager) as Petruchio. It was directed by Mervyn Lloyd – still the finest director with whom I've ever worked (I wasn't in the play when it ran at the Barn because I was in the middle of my O-level exams, but I joined the company as one of Petruchio's servants when it played at Felixstowe Festival). Mervyn's rehearsals were exhilarating – I was a novice at acting Shakespeare and I learned just about everything I know about directing the Bard from watching him. I hope he would approve of what we've done – and I'd like to dedicate the production to his memory.



CAST

In order of appearance

LUCENTIO a gentleman of Pisa Louise Wallace

TRANIO his servantAnneli Page

BAPTISTA MINOLA a rich citizen of PaduaSiobhán Hill Elam

KATHERINE his elder daughter.....Lynsey Wallace

BIANCA his younger daughterGeorge Curry

HORTENSIO suitor to Bianca Rachel Wallace

GREMIO suitor to BiancaJane Pennett

BIONDELLO young servant to Lucentio Andrea Brady

PETRUCHIO a gentleman of VeronaJulia Riley

GRUMIO his servant..... Lorna Thompson

CURTIS Petruchio's stewardHattie Thompson

A TAILOR..... Fran Cullen

A HABERDASHER..... Emily Curry

A PEDANT from MantuaKaren Lee

VINCENTIO father to Lucentio Belinda Gee

A WIDOW Fran Cullen

SERVANTS..... Jenny O'Sullivan

Devi Smart

Other parts played by members of the company

The action takes place at Baptista Minola's restaurant in Padua
and in Petruchio's home in Verona.

Approximate running time: 2 hours 30 minutes

CREATIVE TEAM

Director.....Stephen Thompson
Assistant Director.....Kim Southey
Composer.....George Curry
Lighting Designer.....Trevor Wallace
Lighting Operators.....Ed Read, Clifton Hoyle
Stage Manager.....Trevor Watkins
Assistant Stage Manager.....Michal Parr
Props.....Linda Miles, Kris Moore, Peter Moore
Wardrobe.....Anne Mawer, Sue Owen
Rehearsal Prompter.....Anne Woolmington
Production Manager.....Keith Thompson
Production Photography.....Simon Wallace
Set Design.....Eric Farlie
Set Building Team.....Norman Merry, Eddie Washington
John Sear, Robert Gill, Keith Lambert
Ian Bage, David Fairhurst, Colin Timney



THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

Believed to have been written between 1590 and 1592, this comedy has been adapted on numerous occasions for stage, screen, opera, ballet and musical. Cole Porter's magnificent score for the film *Kiss Me, Kate* and the 1967 film starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton are perhaps the best known.

The issue of gender politics is an important theme. George Bernard Shaw famously called the play 'one vile insult to womanhood and manhood from the first word to the last'. A contemporary critic, Emily Detmer, pointed out that in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, laws curtailing husbands' use of violence in disciplining their wives were becoming more commonplace: 'The same culture that still felt good about dunking scolds, whipping whores and burning witches was becoming increasingly sensitive about husbands beating their wives'.

Petruchio's answer is psychologically to tame Katherine, a method not frowned upon by society. This signalled a shift towards a 'modern' way of managing the subordination of wives, by legitimising domination as long as it's not physical. This would have made the wife-beating reformers proud. The play encourages the audience to accept the method because of the absence of blows and the harmonious outcome.

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FORWARD TO WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS...GET IN TOUCH!

Acting is not the only thing available to our members. The success of our productions is largely due to the enormous amount of work that goes on by the creative teams backstage and our wonderful front of house volunteers. Every show, of course, needs a wealth of talented performers brave enough to play to around 1,000 people over the run of a show – we are delighted if you want to act, but if you are not chosen for a part remember we also need a large, dedicated team of people involved with all manner of other disciplines behind the scenes: from stage management to set building, costumes and props to sound and lighting – sometimes even special effects. There are also the vitally important people involved front of house, selling tickets, serving coffee, stewarding, house managing, working behind the bar, overall club administration – the list really does go on and on...and on!

We'd love you to join us!

SIMON PARR

Membership Director
membership@barntheatre.co.uk

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to our local business supporters.**

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SINGERS — AT THE — BARN DON'T MISS OUT



On the first Sunday of **EVERY** month Singers at the Barn present a wonderful evening of live musical entertainment – from musical theatre and the classics to rock and jazz. Everyone is welcome, the bar is open and you can even get up and sing yourself if you want to. See the Barn's website for more information or call Lesley on:

NEXT DATE: 2nd July & 6th August

01707 872125

singers@barntheatre.co.uk

Our thanks go to

Festival Costumes

*Uniforms, pantomime,
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...fancy dress hire.



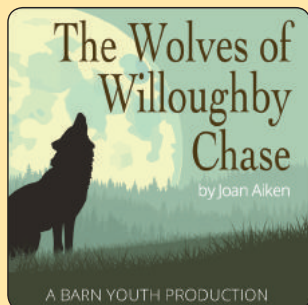
AT THE BARN THEATRE

info@festivalcostumes.co.uk

Opening times

Thursday: 5pm – 7pm Saturday: 10.30am – 1pm

COMING UP NEXT...



Please support the
Barn Youth Theatre ✓
OUR FUTURE – BRITISH THEATRE'S FUTURE

11th – 15th July 2017 at 7.30pm

In an England overrun by wolves, friendship, courage and hope win through

The Wolves of Willoughby Chase tells the story of two cousins, Bonnie and Sylvia, who are determined to defeat the evil schemes of their wicked governess Miss Slighcarp, who has set her sights on the estate of Sir Willoughby and Lady Green, Bonnie's parents. As the children escape her clutches they find adventure and friendship as they make their way to London. Set in an alternative Victorian England in which the country is overrun by wolves, and strangers can be friend or foe, this is a fast-paced, exciting story of cruelty, loyalty, friendship, secret passages, shipwrecks, wolves...and cheese.

JUST SOME OF OUR NEW SEASON...

Barn Fringe 2017

in the Barn Studio

September

A Chorus of Disapproval

by Alan Ayckbourn

29th September – 7th October

Glorious!

by Peter Quilter

27th October – 4th November

Handbagged

by Moira Buffini

17th – 25th November

Narnia the Musical

by C S Lewis

16th – 31st December

84 Charing Cross Road

by Helene Hanff

19th – 27th January 2018

Brontë

by Polly Teale

16th – 24th February 2018

Let the Right One In

by John Lindqvist

23rd – 31st March 2018

...and more besides