



The Jester

December — January 2020



Tim Firth's The Flint Street Nativity



December 2019

Directed by Sue Stobbs

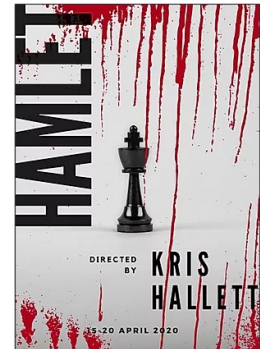
4th—7th & 11th—14th December

The Children by Lucy Kirkwood



Chernobyl - abandoned town

11th - 15th February 2020



15th — 25th April 2020

Our Upcoming Productions

Hi all Kelvin members!

In this issue: the latest on our new Chair's imminent Christmas production of *The Flint St Nativity*, details of our 2020 programme, beginning with Mat Rees directing *The Children*. Don't be shy of getting involved in any or all of our productions, even if you're a new member. Approach a show's director or production manager to get involved, whatever you fancy doing. keep up to date by joining the Facebook members' group, following us on Twitter, or checking out our website: www.kelvinplayers.co.uk

I'd like to start a Letters page in *The Jester*, where people can write about anything to do with theatre in Bristol in general(brief reviews etc for example), and obviously about Kelvin in particular—comments about the club, previous and upcoming shows, and anything really to do with the running of Kelvin, suggestions for improvements etc. I'd envisage it also as a chat forum for Kelvin members, but in letter form. So if you would like to send *The Jester* a letter, please email it to me at jester@kelvin.co.uk Needless to say though, I reserve the right to edit any letters!

The deadline for the next *Jester* will be Monday 27th January 2020 (it'll be in the *Digest* before)

A plea: Can everyone who wants/needs to submit articles to *The Jester* please **please put the deadline for the next *Jester* in your diary!** *The Jester* is Kelvin's bi-monthly newsletter. If you have something of interest to members to submit for inclusion in the next issue of *The Jester*, you can do so at any time by emailing it to me at: jester@kelvinplayers.co.uk Geoff Collard (editor)

MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!



Letter from the Chair.....



This chair is starting to feel a little comfy now and although I am personally feeling a tad exhausted from directing 'Flint Street Nativity', mentoring a couple of new members for the production and settling into this role; I know that in the New Year, committee meetings will become much more familiar for myself.

One thing that has become apparent whilst directing Flint Street is the difficulty the club has to overcome with a two week production. There are so many things to consider, not just ensuring the actors are in place to perform on stage.

For 10 nights we have to ensure the bar is fully staffed, there are first aiders and stewards on duty for each of these nights, there is enough stage crew to manage backstage and up in the box. On top of this we have to ensure the theatre looks clean and respectable for our visitors to the premises.

Next year the club will be doing 5 productions of which 3 of them will be a two week performance. I urge you as a member to think next time you appear on stage that you did not get there without the help and assistance of your fellow member. Make it a New Year resolution to yourself to become a better Kelvin member by 'holding your hand up' a few more times and offering help. We don't always get cast in a role that we have auditioned for So if you are that member that was unlucky to be cast then step up and offer your help to the Director or FOH staff. We cannot keep on trusting that the same people in Kelvin will keep on taking up the 'mantle', it's unfair and not in the 'Kelvin spirit'.

Hopefully you have purchased your ticket for The Flint Street Nativity, if not Why not? This is a cracker of a show and the cast and production team have all been working very hard to bring you this pre-Christmas delight!

So all that remains is for me to take this opportunity of wishing you all a **Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year for 2020**. I hope you all have a restful break enjoying the festivities with your family and friends, and it turns out to be something truly special.

Sue Stobbs

Your New Chair...!



The Flint Street Nativity

by Tim Firth

By the time you read this article our two week run of naughtiness with the kids from The Flint Street Junior School is about to begin. Mizz Horrocks certainly has her work cut out keeping this class under control!

Fortunately my able musical director Nicola Essex along with myself as Director have managed just that and we are really proud of everything that they have achieved. This is not the easiest of plays to put on, particularly mastering the lyrics to well-known Christmas Carols and making them fit to the tunes. I can't thank Nicola enough, she has spent endless time practising her piano skills and helping the cast tirelessly to overcome their nerves and give them confidence to perform their individual songs.

I also want to take this opportunity of mentioning Eszter Vass and George Howard, who both undertook roles that they had never done before. George missed out on getting cast but when I mentioned to him that he might like to have a try at Stage Management he agreed immediately and also came to the construction evenings on a Monday and Wednesday. He told me that he really enjoyed these nights as he was meeting other members of the club and getting to understand how things worked etc. Eszter has been mentored by myself and Anna Bonnett and has learnt quite a bit about being a Production Manager and the relationship built up in working with the Director, running production meetings and generally making sure that things are running smoothly.

I also want to thank those members who offered their help in my time of need to move the small amount of furniture that was required for a very quick scene change. Although they did not have to do very much it was really important they came along to help as the furniture was quite bulky and we did not have enough backstage AS-M's to commit to the full two weeks.

There are so many people who have worked really hard on this production, along with the cast I would mention Mary and Fiona on props, Carol who has made and sourced the costumes, Steve putting our sound tape together and Hester our new young rising star in Kelvin designing her first production for us and coming up with some great ideas. I know there are so many more, the marketing team, the FOH team ...

Thank you so very much!

Sue



Figure 2 Rachel whispering to Mike

stobbsy@blueyonder.co.uk

THE FLINT STREET NATIVITY

4 - 7 & 11 - 14 December 2019

Director: Sue Stobbs

The children of 'Mizz Horrocks' class of 2019 are as follows:

Mary/Debbie Bennett: **Rachel Fleming**

Wise Gold/Dawn: **Lucy Payne**

Angel/Shamima: **Jenny Hills**

Gabriel/Jaye Dackers: **Mayble Pitt**

Shepherd/Zoe: **Emily Butler**

Innkeeper/Christian Jerrums: **Joe Silva**

Star & Ass/Clive Cattle: **Mat Rees**

Narrator/Tim Moyle: **Michael Relph**

Herod & Joseph/Ian Rotherham: **Mike Jessop**

Wise Frankincense/Adrian Atherton: **Dominick Fanning**



There's more to **Flint Street** than at first appears. It is a comedy, but underneath there is a lot of pathos, and it calls for some very subtle acting. The play requires each actor to take two parts — themselves as seven-year-olds performing their school's nativity, then as their parents who have just watched them perform. It focuses on a Mrs Horrock's class of children aged seven and eight, and their involvement in a sole performance of the school nativity play. It follows the youngsters from the pre-performance classroom preparations, through to the final stage performance where calamity and chaos ensue.



**** REHEARSED READINGS ****

Dearest Kelvinians,

As this edition of your beloved Jester goes to press the last 2019 main show, *The Flint St Nativity*, is just about to open - have you got your tickets? Meanwhile the RR season for the year came to an end last weekend, and what a splendiferously lovely season it was too - and now my friends, it is time to look ahead to 2020! Yes indeed, all RR dates for next year are booked in so get those diaries out - and as you read this, I'll be deep into the business of filling these dates with some awesome Kelvin directors. If you'd like to direct a RR in 2020 but haven't heard from me in the last few days, please get in touch - contact details below, or via Facebook.

The most imminent (and as such, important) date is the winter Launch Night on Saturday 1st February - this is when the directors for the first half of 2020 will be coming along to tell us what they'll be presenting, and they'll be looking for actors...which means YOU! Well, it does if you want it to - and hey, why wouldn't you? If you're new to Kelvin and are wondering what I'm on about, this is a perfect way to start getting involved in something low-stakes and low-pressure but high-buzz and high-fun. There is a page on the Kelvin Members website explaining what RRs are, under Members Stuff > Rehearsed Readings - but in all honesty, the best way of finding out about them is to come along on 1st Feb and find out then and there!

Here are those dates then folks, and since it's now December I shall bid you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year - unless of course I see you at *Flint Street Nativity*, where I'll be on 4 of the 8 nights so there's a fifty-fifty chance...assuming you're coming to see it that is, but of course you are aren't you?

All Saturdays... 2020

1st February - winter Launch Night
29th February
28th March
2nd May
30th May

27th June - summer Launch Night
5th September
3rd October
31st October
21st November



Rick Procter-Lane
RR Organiser
07941 878 460
rick.procter@icloud.com

BIG SHINY DIRECTING OPPORTUNITY!

Hey directors! Fancy directing a BIG SHINY SHOW at one of the best theatres in Bristol/the South West/the entire known universe??

I don't mean our own Studio Theatre, though of course you may propose big, shiny plays for that, too, if you wish (more on that later) – no, I'm talking about the **Tobacco Factory Theatres**, one of the premier professional theatrical venues outside of London!

After the huge successes of our previous TFT shows *Tartuffe* and *Anne Boleyn*, they have invited us back to perform in the **May 2021** slot (exact dates tbc) – so, the APC (Artistic Programming Committee) are simply sitting back and awaiting the noble and insightful submissions from our esteemed gang of experienced directors, in order to select the very best to represent our awesome club in this exciting venture.

Please note, we are not suggesting a theme or specific scripts; we are very keen to hear which plays YOU think would suit that venue, and our club.

You will need to bear in mind things like:

- The TFT space – e.g. low ceilings, in the round

- Their programming schedule – what sort of plays do they produce?

- Our club membership – ideally cast size would be 10 plus, with equal m/f split

- Technical aspects – consider carefully what tech requirements you'll need, and whether they are in our capabilities

I would be very happy to discuss any initial ideas you may have, and if you have any questions about the venue itself, please have a chat with the inestimable Ralf Togneri (*Tartuffe*) or the effervescent Jacqs Graham (*Anne Boleyn*), or the magnificent Teri Mohiuddin (who was Production Manager for both), who I'm sure will be able to assuage your concerns.

The closing date for submissions is **1st May 2020**, with shortlisting and pitching a bit earlier than usual as the TFT have print deadlines.

If all this is a bit too shiny and in-yer-face, then never fear, as we are obviously still accepting proposals for the rest of Kelvin's 2021 season, to be held at our very own epic Studio Theatre. There will be some more news on that very soon (ooh... mysterious) but for now, please keep in the back of your minds (not too near the back – maybe more the middle) that the APC are open to submissions and are looking forward to seeing what comes our way.

We are looking for top-quality submissions from visionary directors. Kelvin has a reputation for staging fresh, dynamic and creative theatre and we would like to uphold that reputation!

Please fill in the proposal form as fully as possible, and send it to me along with a copy of the play (preferably online though a hard copy is acceptable). If you have any questions about your eligibility to direct, or about the submissions process, please check out the members' website or get in touch.

Many thanks

Fran Lewis

artisticdirector@kelvinplayers.co.uk

What plays would YOU like to see performed at Kelvin?

The APC are looking to update their Recommended List of plays!

Are we producing the sort of theatre that you like?

Are there any plays that you've seen recently that you think we could do?

What play do you like best in all the world that Kelvin hasn't done yet?

If you have answers to the above questions, then let us know! We want to add some titles to the Recommended List of plays that the APC curates, so that directors in search of inspiration can peruse at their leisure. Plus, we just really like hearing about plays that might tickle our fancies.

Please get in touch by emailing APC member Simon Shorrock on simonshorrock@hotmail.com

Thank you in anticipation of your invaluable input!

Fran Lewis

Artistic Director



Letter from Anne Gilmour at The Little Theatre Guild

Dear Kelvin Players,

Many thanks for the newsy newsletter. Many congratulations for taking on the Chair Sue, I hope you have a most enjoyable time.

And for a future edition, perhaps **a reminder to members of the 2020 LTG National Conference at The Questors Theatre 17 – 19 April.**

All the best for the season.

Best wishes

Anne

Anne Gilmour

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The Children

by Lucy Kirkwood

Tuesday 11th to Saturday 15th February 2020

Directed by Mat Rees

‘Retired people are like nuclear power stations. They like to live by the sea.’

Two retired nuclear scientists, Hazel and Robin, are barely surviving in the small cottage they moved to after their home was flooded. The flood was caused by an environmental disaster. There are blackouts, electricity shortages and they survive on biscuits. Their minimalist existence is shattered when a work colleague from the past, Rose, tracks them down with an offer they struggle to refuse.

The Children was written by **Lucy Kirkwood**, who also wrote *Chimerica*. It is a slow-burning drama that asks tough questions about parenthood and social responsibility. And it offers a vision of the future which we may be responsible for if we don't change the world now.

Many thanks to all those who took the time to audition for *The Children* recently. It was, as ever, a tough decision and I could have cast the play a few times over. But that's the trouble with picking a play with a cast of three.

I'm pleased to announce that the final line-up is:

Rose – Frances Cox

Hazel – Angela Markham

Robin – Ralf Togneri

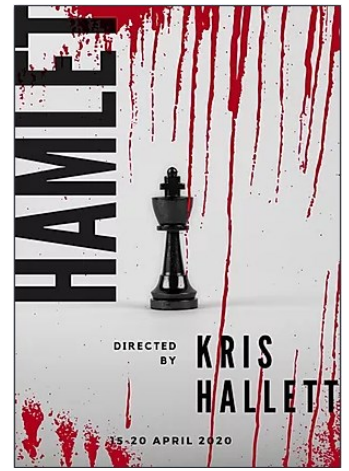


A formidable cast, I'm sure you'll agree. And Angela and Ralf will be resuming the stage marriage they previously initiated under Alex Needham's direction during the play *Natural Causes*.

Rehearsals will start in mid December, although I know the cast have already started learning their lines – thoroughly dedicated as they are (I haven't asked them to, they told me so). Mat and Bronwen have a brilliant vision for the set and we already have construction assistants in place but are looking for a Construction Manager to lead.

We're on the lookout for crew, now, and still have a few roles to fill. Most crucially props and costumes. If you're interested in taking on either of these roles, or would be keen to do anything else, please get in touch with me mat_rees@hotmail.com or Sharon Dudbridge kittymadathome@gmail.com

HAMLET



“The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.”

Hamlet 1.4.1

January is guaranteed to be cold and damp, but why not start your 2020 with an exciting project?

Launch night for *Hamlet* will be on **Sunday 5th January 2020** in the Studio - arrive anytime from 18:30 to start at 19:00 prompt. For those not on a post-New Year diet, cake and biscuits will be provided. The evening will see director Kris Hallett discuss his vision for the piece and answer any questions you may have about the show together with production manager Teri Mohiuddin.

Everyone will have the opportunity to sign up to audition or express interest in a number of technical roles. Auditions and pitches will take place from the 7th January.

Briefs for the characters, the script and audition pieces will be on the members' site in the next couple of weeks. If you have any questions in the meantime, please feel free to email Kris on kristopher.hallett@gmail.com or Teri terimoni@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing lots of you for what will be a challenging but stimulating journey through one of the great texts of Western drama.

Best wishes

Kris Hallett

Email: kristopher.hallett@gmail.com

Twitter: [@krishallett](https://twitter.com/krishallett)

Blog: www.krishallett.wordpress.com

Archive Corner

I noted with interest the 'Calling All Female Members' message in the last edition of *The Jester* and The Digest particularly the 'Exclusive Invitation' aspect of the get-together to discuss encouraging more women to come forward to direct for Kelvin. I fully support this initiative to enhance and strengthen the company's raft of women directors rather regretting that I would be unable to attend to show that support (maybe even having a bit of the promised cake if it was offered!)

As Kelvin Archivist, I wondered what the statistics would show in relation to gender balance if these were extrapolated from the inception of Kelvin in 1929 to the present day including those plays and directors scheduled for 2020.

Having done my research by trawling the archives the figures are as follows:-

Male Directors 145 Female Directors 145

That is quite spooky isn't it? And I can assure everyone that these statistics have not been massaged!

The breakdown is as follows:-

	Male	Female
1929 - 1954	5	19
1955 - 1975	24	29
1976 - 1991	19	25
1992 - 1998.	26	19
1999 - 2007	23	25
2008 - 2015	29	17
2016 - 2020	19	11
	——	——
	145	145



So we can read what we will into these statistics! Certainly since 2008 the balance is a bit skewed so let's see what the future holds?!

Richard Jones.

DIARY DATES

AT-A-GLANCE

December — 2020

DECEMBER

December 4th - 7th & 11th - 14th *Flint St Nativity* (run)

17th Tuesday Shakespeare Workshop with Kris Hallett. 7.30pm (full)

JANUARY 2020

5th Sunday Launch night for *Hamlet*. Studio 18.30 for 19.00 start.

FEBRUARY 2020

1st Saturday: Rehearsed Readings winter launch night. 7pm

Tuesday 11th - Saturday 15th: *The Children* in performance. Studio.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NEWS

SHAKESPEARE WORKSHOP WITH KRIS HALLETT

Tuesday 17th December, 7.30pm

Thanks to everyone who has requested a place on the Shakespearean Dialogue workshop on 17th December - the response has been fantastic and we are up to 24 people now; which is maximum capacity. Sorry to anyone who has missed out. There's a bunch of new courses and activities coming up in the new year that I'll start advertising imminently, so watch this space!

All the best,

Tim Whitten