

DIRECTORS NOTE

COPPERFIELD

We have great pleasure in presenting this rehearsed reading of the new adaptation of David Copperfield. We hope that it will give our audience a flavour of the musical, with score by Tobias Kunzell, which we will be presenting as soon as current restrictions on live theatre are eased.

David Copperfield was Charles Dickens's favourite (fictional) child and the closest he came to writing an autobiography. It is no coincidence that David Copperfield's initials are Charles Dickens in reverse. Our adaptation is taken from the new musical "Copperfield!" which we hope will have its world premiere next year at Upstairs at the Gatehouse. My biggest regret in adapting Dickens's great novel is the necessity of cutting some of the wonderful characters and their scenes.

CHARLES DICKENS

Born in Portsmouth, Dickens left school to work in a 'blacking' factory when his father was incarcerated in a debtors' prison. Despite his lack of formal education, he edited a weekly journal for 20 years, wrote 15 novels, five novellas, hundreds of short stories and non-fiction articles, lectured and performed readings extensively, was an indefatigable letter writer, and campaigned vigorously for children's rights, education, and other social reforms. When he died in 1870 he was probably one of the most well-known and influential writers in the world, a position he retains to this



Handplay Productions and Peter Walton
in association with
Lauderdale House

Present

Copperfield!

Adapted by Harry Meacher
Based on the Novel

by

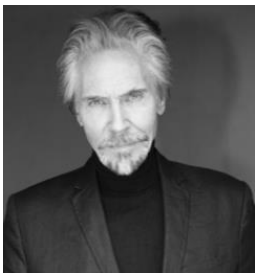
Charles Dickens



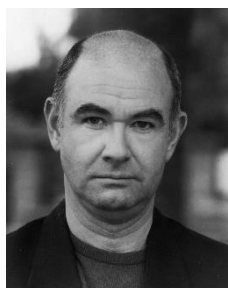
Sunday 20th September 2020 at 7.30 pm

**Lauderdale House, Waterlow Park, Highgate Hill,
London N6 5HG**

Lauderdale House complies fully with all Covid 19 regulations



HARRY MEACHER Won a major award to R.A.D.A. and has worked as an actor, director, and writer. He has travelled extensively, and directed Shakespeare, Ibsen, Chekhov, Strindberg, Shaw, Wilde, and many new pieces of writing. Since 2006 Harry has directed his own play *Through Casa Guidi Windows*, an intimate portrait of the Brownings, playing opposite his wife Judi Bowker and touring South America. He directed and adapted Ibsen's *Ghosts*, *Hedda Gabler*, *The Master Builder* and Strindberg's *The Dance of Death*. For Traffic of the Stage he directed John Cooper's *Education of a Lap Dancer*, *21st Century Faust* and many of his classical adaptations including Jane Austen's *Emma*. In 2009 he directed and played in *The Tempest*, *Twelfth Night*, Chekhov's *Ivanov*, with Judi Bowker as Anna, *A Midsummers Night Dream* and his own adaptation of *Wind In The Willows*. In 2010 he wrote, directed and acted in his new play *Mist After Dracula*, for Handplay Productions, in Kessel Castle in Holland. In the last two years he has played Macbeth and Benedict in *Much Ado About Nothing* on a UK tour. He has recently been seen at Upstairs at the Gatehouse in *Hay Fever*, directed by Bryan Hands, Chekhov's *The Bear* and his own play *The Ghosts*. In Germany where he directed a musical, *Comeback Karl Marx!!* Last year he played the title role in *John Gabriel Borkman* at Upstairs at the Gatehouse.



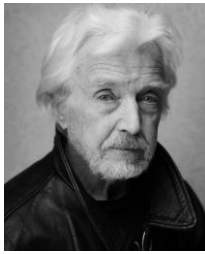
ANDREW McROBB For 15 years, Andrew was resident costume designer for Playfare Productions He has designed costumes for Traffic of the Stage, – 'Much Ado About Nothing' – 'Macbeth' – 'Romeo and Juliet' and 'Hay Fever', he has also designed – 'Candida' – 'Nude with Violin' amongst others. In 2018, he designed the costumes for the successful 'John Gabriel Borkman' at Upstairs at the Gatehouse for Handplay Productions. When his design work permits, Andrew returns to his first love, acting, most recently playing Cornelius Gurlitt, the lead, in American playwright F. Lynne Bachleva's 'Stolen' for PMJ Productions



RACHAEL LOUISE MILLER Trained at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts (Dame Judi Dench Scholarship). Credits include Narrator in *Joseph & the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* (National Tour); Ensemble/covered & played Eponine in *Les Misérables* (Queen's Theatre, West End); Sister Mister in *The Cradle Will Rock* (Arcola Theatre); Ensemble/ cover Dorothy *The Wizard of Oz* (Royal Festival Hall); Blue Fairy in *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (Greenwich Theatre); Amy March in *Little Women* (National Tour); *Les Misérables 25th Anniversary Concert* (the O2); Patty in *Grease* (West End International); Lady Larken in *Once Upon A Mattress* (Upstairs at the Gatehouse); Dorcas in Howard Goodall's *A Winter's Tale* (Landor Theatre).



JUDI BOWKER Achieved early stardom in the BBC TV series *The Adventures of Black Beauty* and has since worked extensively in film, TV and on stage. Films include Franco Zeffirelli's *Brother Sun, Sister Moon*, *Clash of the Titans* (with Lawrence Oliver and Maggie Smith) and *The Shooting Party* (With James Mason). In theatre she has played leading roles for The National Theatre, major reps, UK tours and abroad. Roles include Hedda Gabler, Titania in *A Midsummers Night Dream*, Anna in Chekhov's *Ivanov*, Nina, in *The Seagull*, Masha in *Three Sisters* and Mrs Lyons in Harry Meacher's adaption of *Sherlock Holmes*. In 2013/14 Judi played Lady Macbeth and Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing* for Traffic of the Stage Touring. She was recently seen at Upstairs at the Gatehouse in *Hay Fever*, directed by Bryan Hands and Traffic of the Stage's production of Chekhov's *The Bear* and a new play *Ghosts*. Last year she played Ella Rentheim in Ibsen's *John Gabriel Borkman* also at The Gatehouse.



BRYAN HANDS Made an early start in the business on radio for BBC 'Children's Hour'. He trained at RADA and has worked as an actor, producer, director and writer ever since. He has worked in rep, in the West End and toured in this country and abroad. Favourite roles include Doc in *Small Craft Warnings* by Tennessee Williams, Frank in *Educating Rita*, Dad in *Greek* by Steven Berkoff, and Doctor Rance in *What the Butler Saw* by Joe Orton. He has played Hamm in *Endgame* by Samuel Beckett, Alonso in *The Tempest*, Peter Quince in *A Midsummer Nights Dream*, Ratty in *The Wind in The Willows*, Count Shabelsky in *Ivanov*, Captain Shotover in *Heartbreak House* and Antonio in *Twelfth Night*. He played Dr. Seward in *Mist After Dracula* at Rosslyn Chapel and Kasteel de Keeverberg in The Netherlands and Sir Hugo Malinger in *Daniel Deronda* at the Gatehouse Theatre. He formed 'Handplay Productions' with Harry Meacher and Judi Bowker and directed Ranjit Bolt's translation of *Tartuffe* for the company. a production of *Hay Fever* by Noel Coward and Coward's *Nude with Violin* at the Gatehouse. Most recently he appeared as Foldall in *John Gabriel Borkman* at Upstairs at the Gatehouse. He was in a 'Combat Stress' ad on TV and was the 'royal photographer' in series 3 of *The Crown* on Netflix.



JOHN HASLER is an actor and voice-over artist, who is best known as T-shirt in the children's television series T-Bag from 1985–92. He was the only character to remain with the show for its entire television run, starting as a young boy and leaving as a teenager, he's also known for voicing Thomas the Tank Engine in the UK dub of the children's television. John has been a member of the cast of both the touring and the west end productions of Disney's *The Lion King* in the role of Timon! He spent two years with the tour from the original cast and then was in the role at the Lyceum Theatre in London where he got to perform at the 15th anniversary gala performance

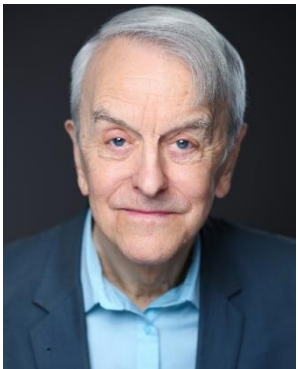
CAST

Harry Meacher	Dickens/ David
Verity Stansall	Davy/Rosa
Bryan Hands	Mr Peggotty/Mr Dick
Judi Bowker	Clara/Dora
Rachael Miller	Em'ly/Agnes
Kathryn Worth	Mrs Micawber/Peggotty/Mrs Heep
Andrew McRobb	Mr Creakle/MrMicawber/Mr Wickfield
John Hasler	Doctor/ Ham
Joan Walker	Betsy Trottwood/Mrs Steerforth
Dudley Rogers	Murdstone/Uriah Heep
Nigel Pilkington	Steerforth/ Mr Spenlow/Woodenleg
Director	Harry Meacher
Producer	Peter Walton
Designer	Andrew McRobb
	Technician



NIGEL PILKINGTON Musical theatre credits include: Shakespeare in *The Frogs*; Beadle Bamford in *Sweeney Todd*; Candide in Bernstein's *Candide*; Seymour in *Little Shop of Horrors*; Balladeer/Lee Harvey Oswald in *Assassins*; David in *Company*; Lombardi in Sondheim's *Passion*; and as an improviser with *The Showstoppers!*. Theatre credits include: *Arsenic & Old Lace*; *One For The Pot*; *Table Manners*; *Design For Living*; *A Toe In The Water*. He has toured German theatres in the

title role of a French-speaking production of *Le Petit Prince* and is a regular acting and directing volunteer for children's charity *Scene & Heard*. On the voiceover circuit, Nigel voices Percy in *Thomas and Friends*; Squirrel Nutkin in *Peter Rabbit*; Clark in *Chico Bon Bon*; and various characters in *Wissper*. He's also the continuity announcer for children's TV channel *Boomerang*. Nigel's podcast comedy "Dying Breeds", a mockumentary about clinging onto the old ways, was released in summer 2020



DUDLEY ROGERS trained at the Guildhall School where he won the Characterisation Prize, and in the fifty years since, has had a varied and happy career in all branches of showbusiness. He's appeared in four West End musicals, *Fiddler On The Roof*, *Joseph's Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*, *Dean and Irma La Douce*. Other musicals include *Blood Brothers*, *Oliver (Fagin)*, *Godspell*, *Remains of the Day* and *1888*, based on the murders of Jack the Ripper, both at the Union Theatre, *Kander and Ebbs Curtains* at the Landor,

Parade, and the award winning *Titanic* the musical at the Southwark Playhouse and later the Charing Cross Theatre, and the 2018 National Tour. His repertory work includes seasons at Chester, Colchester, Crewe and Milford Haven. He is no stranger to panto either, and has played Dame many times. He's also sailed round the world three times as a member of the Stadium Theatre Company on board S.S. Canberra, and has many T.V. and film appearances to his credit Last Christmas he was Geppetto in *Pinocchio*



VERITY STANSALL trained at East 15 Acting School. She was recently nominated for 'Best Actress in a Comedy' for her role as Carla in the southwest premiere of *Alive and Well in Arizona, USA*. Previous roles include Alice in *Closer*, the au pair in *The Blue Room* and Dunyasha in *The Cherry Orchard*. Verity toured as a puppeteer in *The Elves And The Shoemaker (Stringalongapuppet)* As an actor musician, Verity has collaborated on *Fosterling*, *Eurydice*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *The Beggar's Opera*.



KATHRYN WORTH Recent theatre includes *Maurice* (Above the Stag Theatre); *Game Over* (UK Tour); *The Listening Room* (Old Red Lion); *Love on the Dole* (Changing Face Collective); *Archimedes Principle* (Park Theatre); *Old Times* (Stantonbury Theatre). Kathryn starred opposite Tom Hiddleston in Joanna Hogg's award-winning 2008 feature *Unrelated* - winner: Best Actress, Silk Road Film Festival. Other features include *Waking David*, *The Gates of Vanity*,

Always in the Present, *Through the Lens*, *The Fighter's Ballad*, *Bigga Than Ben* and *Mrs Palfrey at the Claremont*. Kathryn trained at RADA.



JOAN WALKER Joan trained at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and started her theatre career immediately at the Dukes Playhouse, Lancaster. She has huge stage, musical, TV and film experience plus a wealth of radio plays and readings for BBC radio. Favourite roles include Tanya in *Mamma Mia* (World tour); Lady Fancifull (Greenwich theatre); the Queen in *The King's Speech* (BBC R4); Madame Beck in *Villette* (R4). She has narrated countless audiobooks and is the

proud winner of Audiophile's Earphones Award and the Library Journal's Best audiobook of 2016 both for *Britt-Marie Was Here*; and in 2017 for *Here in Berlin*. www.joanwalker.co.uk