

MAY 2023 newsletter

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sewellbarn
THEATRE

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- Our next production: ***A Midsummer Night's Dream***
- Our previous production: ***Di and Viv and Rose***
- Coming Soon: ***The Welkin***
- Our **2023/24 season**: full details
- Audition: **1984** (the first show in our 2023/24 season)

Our next production: ***A Midsummer Night's Dream***

by William Shakespeare | directed by Clare Williamson

1-3 & 7-10 June at 7:30; matinee on 10 June at 2:30



Photography: Sean Owen of Reflective Arts

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* we see what happens when reality and magic collide on midsummer night when, traditionally, the natural order of the world is allowed to turn upside down before it is righted again in the morning. The *Dream* is Shakespeare's most performed play for good reason – it is hilariously funny, it can be enjoyed by all ages, and many quotations of its well-known characters are deeply embedded in the English language.

The *Dream* is also open to interpretation on many levels. Fundamentally, it is rather weird: "A bunch of insane fairies attempt to solve the romantic problems of some mortals lost in a wood" (John Haynes/Time Out). Yet the play can also be considered as a prototype of feminism, the first dramatic example of young women rebelling against patriarchal authority.

The director of this production, Clare Williamson, has embraced the *Dream's* multi-layered challenges of theatrical delusions and illusions: "Not only is this a joyous play for an audience to watch, it's also a wonderful play to direct. That is because it is so open to possibilities, with so many opportunities for the team of wardrobe, set design, lighting and sound to create our own version of this magical world. And what fun it is for the actors, with such a rich cast of characters to get their teeth into!"

The 21 speaking roles are played by 13 actors, with a highly-talented combination of Barn regulars and newcomers. As was the case in Shakespeare's original troupe of players, several double-up between 'foolish mortals' and denizens of the fantasy world. Sean Bennett and Netta Jones play the leaders of

both realms, Theseus and Hippolyta as well as Oberon and Titania; Robin Croft plays Philostrate and Puck; Barney Matley plays Egeus and Quince; whilst Alexandra Evans, Melanie Peter, Megan Saunders and Lewis Garvey are both the other 'rude mechanicals' and fairies. In single roles, Rob Tiffen plays Bottom, with Naomi Cunningham, Eva Wright, Zach Burbridge and Jose Tarouca as the young lovers, Hermia, Helena, Demetrius and Lysander. There are also special guest appearances by Olivia and Lyra Matley.

Follow Puck 'over hill and over dale' between Thursday 1 June and Saturday 10 June 2023. Tickets available online at £11 and £12 from TicketSource at www.ticketsource.co.uk/sewellbarn, also by phone via 0333 6663366. Booking fees are included in the ticket prices.

Our previous production: *Di and Viv and Rose*

by Amelia Bullmore | directed by Emma Kirkham

13-15 & 19-22 April

Three very different young women find themselves drawn together in the 1980s sharing a university flat, and their lives, with each other. Over the following thirty years we follow their funny, moving and sometimes unexpected journey through life and friendship as both evolve over the passage of time.



Photography: Sean Owen of Reflective Arts

"Sewell Barn Theatre are an enthusiast company that put a great deal of effort into giving us high production values and **you would need a heart of stone not to engage with the three lively characters** who fill this atmospheric theatre with this show. **Another winner from Sewell Barn** greatly enjoyed by tonight's audience." *Julian Swainson - Norwich Eye* [[click here for full review](#)]

[Click here for more reviews of this and previous shows.](#)



Coming soon: *The Welkin*

by Lucy Kirkwood

3-5 and 7-8 July (please note: NO performance on Thursday 6 July)

We are thrilled to have the opportunity to restage this show, after the devastating cancellation due to an outbreak of COVID among several members of the cast last autumn. Sadly the original director, Jez Pike, is unavailable to recreate the show, but cast member (and joint artistic director in waiting!),

Sabrina Poole, will take up the reins with support from long-standing Barn member and Trustee John Holden, and the reforming of the whole of the original cast. This powerful production was [much praised in its original incarnation](#), and we know that many of our audience were disappointed to have missed the two performances that took place – so do book your tickets soon.

Our 2023/24 Season: full details

We were delighted to welcome many of our friends and members to the barn on Sunday 21 May to find out the details of our new season. **Sabrina Poole** takes over as joint Artistic Director from Clare Williamson with effect from the end of the present season, and with **Cassie Tillet** presented the eight directors who will be assembling a wide variety of quality entertainment for you in the coming year.

Full audition details will be available on the website very soon, but meantime, here is a brief summary of the shows, directors and dates.



1984

George Orwell / Robert Icke & Duncan Macmillan

Dir: Ginny Porteous

12-14, 18-21 October

IMMACULATE

Oliver Lansley

Dir: Sabrina Poole

23-25 November, 29 November-2 December

COMIC POTENTIAL

Alan Ayckbourn

Dir: Joe Flatt

18-20, 24-27 January

THE CLEARING

Helen Edmundson

Dir: Chris Bealey

29 February-2 March & 6-9 March

BARBED WIRE & TEDDY BEARS

Karen Forbes

Dir: Robert Little

14-16 March

BETTE and JOAN

Anton Burge

Dir: Steven Scase

18-20, 24-27 April

AS YOU LIKE IT

William Shakespeare

Dir: Carole Lovett

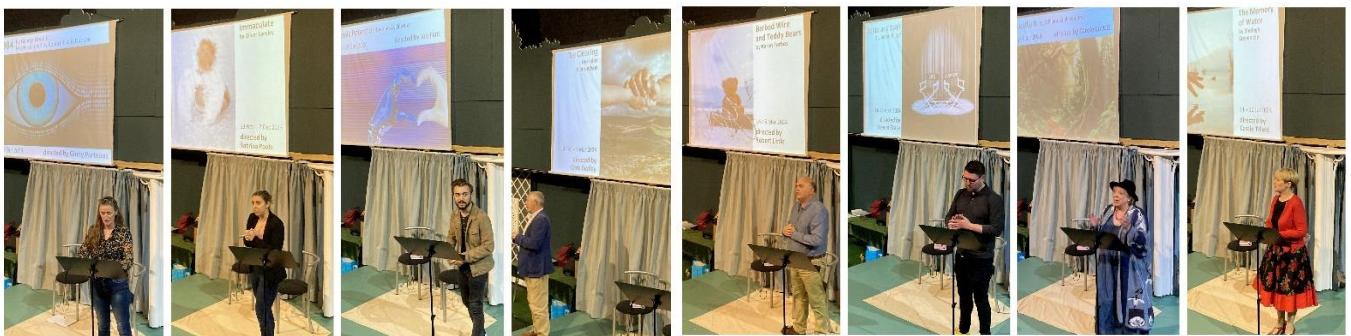
30 May-1 June & 5-8 June

THE MEMORY OF WATER

Shelagh Stephenson

Dir: Cassie Tillet

11-13, 17-20 July



The eight 2023-24 directors as they made their presentations

Our grateful thanks to Phil Williamson for his help and support with the design of the new brochure, our presentation slide show, and proof-reading skills; and to Hollinger Print (www.hollinger.co.uk) for their patient and creative design work.

Additionally, we would like to thank everyone - onstage, backstage, audiences, committee and all volunteers – who continue to support our work and help us create consistently high-quality entertainment. Finally, as her last season draws to a close, a personal thank you to Clare from Cassie, for being such a wonderful collaborator, co-director and friend.

Important note: the first auditions of the new season – for Ginny Porteous' production of **1984** – will be held very soon; details below...

Auditions: **1984**

by George Orwell, newly adapted by Robert Icke and Duncan Macmillan
directed by Ginny Porteous

Contact: ginny.sb1984@gmail.com

Performance dates: 12-14, 18-21 October

Auditions: **Friday 2nd June** (with possible recalls as required)

Please note: auditions will take place at the Maddermarket Theatre

War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength.

A dark cautionary tale published in 1949 about the dangers of totalitarianism, government surveillance, and censorship. Most of the world is at war. Great Britain is part of Oceania, controlled by Big Brother. Nothing is your own, not even your thoughts... $2+2=5$, fact!

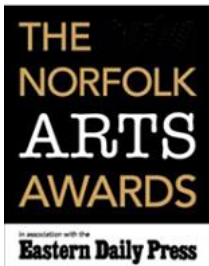
Winston Smith and his colleagues work at the Ministry of Truth, rewriting history to fit Party doctrine. But Winston rebels, he illegally begins a diary and more importantly falls in love.

A stunning, chilling rollercoaster of a journey. Do not expect an easy ride!!

This is an ensemble piece and many of the characters slip in and out of other personas and will be involved in the final sequence and scene changes.

For full audition information and details of characters, please visit www.sewellbarn.org/1984casting.html; to express your interest and to book an audition slot, please contact director Ginny Porteous as shown.

Norfolk Arts Awards nomination



We are absolutely delighted to know that **Michelle Hutchings'** acclaimed production of 'Queers' - her directorial debut, at the Barn earlier this year - has been nominated for the **Dick Condon Theatre Award** in The Norfolk Arts Awards for 2023. In addition, you'll find one of our previous Artistic Directors, the talented **Michelle Montague**, is nominated for the **Diversity Award**. Do please vote for them, and for any other categories you wish, on the link below - and huge congratulations to all involved!

You can help us by visiting this link and voting in the above categories (and any others you'd like to support). Voting closes on **Wednesday 31 May**. Thank you!

Membership: subscription rates

After keeping the membership subscription at the current rate for many years, it was decided at the AGM that an increase is due. From July, when the year starts, the new rates will be: £15 individual membership, at £25 for a couple living at the same address and £75 for life membership.

Don't forget if you buy a ticket for the first night of any production, and bring your membership card, you can claim a free drink at the bar.

Jill Fuller – Membership Secretary

