



Incorporating Millgate Arts Centre Bulletin

Volume 16 Issue May 2018



Special points of interest:

- Season 18/19 Preview invitation
- Review of April in Paris
- Spotlight on our next production We Are Three Sisters

Inside this issue:

- April in Paris Review **2**
- From the Website **2**
- Stagey bits with Keith Begley **2**
- We Are Three Sisters **3**
- Thanks to the bar staff **3**

- Editor's note **3**



Invitation to 2018/19 Season Preview and

Premiere of Sisters, Sisters

SATURDAY 16TH JUNE



Millgate Arts Centre would be nothing without our Friends, Subscribers & active members.

We'd like to say thank you, preview our exciting new 2018/19 Season and, for a dubious treat, perform the world premiere of "Sisters, Sisters" a ridiculous comedy loosely based on "We are Three Sisters", and brought to you by the cast & crew of the Farndale Murder Mystery, who couldn't pass up an opportunity to bring am-drams into disrepute.

The Bar will be open throughout and we'll have tea, coffee and nibbles before the presentations and show and a buffet afterwards.

Timings

6pm-7.30pm.

You are welcome to come and look around the set and backstage

7.30pm- 8.30pm

Season Previews

- Saddleworth Players
- Saddleworth Live
- Saddleworth Film Society
- Saddleworth Concert Society
- **Sisters, Sisters** . A short comedy

8.30pm-10pm

Open Bar and Buffet

TICKETS FOR THE SHOW ARE FREE BUT LIMITED TO THE THEATRE CAPACITY. BOOK YOUR PLACE AT www.ticketsource.co.uk/event/FFIELE OR VIA DELPH LIBRARY OR BOX OFFICE

Sisters,Sisters

A One Act Special play inspired by all things wuthering.

For this world premiere, the cast and crew of The Farndale Murder Mystery (the ones who are still, loosely, on speaking terms) have banded together to form

The Saddleworth Ladies & Uppermill Theatre Society (S.L.U.T.S.).



In a gloomy parsonage where it always seems to be tea time, the Brontë sisters sit and write and are endlessly interrupted by callers.

Cast and Crew

Emily	Lorraine Reynolds
Lydia	Verity Mann
Mrs Reece	Alayne Whitworth
Charlotte	June Holmes
Anne	Kate Jackson
Patrick	John Tanner
Tabby	Siobhan Ebdon

Director	Who needs one?
Prod Assistant	Ditto
Stage Manager	The bossiest one
Props	Cast
Gin mistress	Eileen Southard
Technical	David Plowright
Set Design	Keith Begley
Set Building	Keith's army
Audience	157 max—book now!

REVIEW OF APRIL IN PARIS BY Jane Tonge and Colin Green



Photos courtesy of
Stuart Coleman



"The more we see, the more we don't know" – Al

John Godber's two-hander April in Paris ran from the 7th-14th April 2018

Al (Paul Dawson) and Bet (Liz Travis) are a couple whose relationship is marked by boredom, bickering and a lack of joint interests. Unemployed Al's passion for painting in his shed irritates his long-suffering wife, Bet, and similarly Bet's penchant for entering magazine quiz competitions frustrates Al. We quickly discover that neither Al nor Bet listen to each other and have their own priorities.

An unexpected quiz success sees a thrilled Bet win a 'Romantic Night in Paris' travelling on North Sea Ferries and she persuades a reluctant Al to join her for this exotic adventure. The rest of the play follows Al and Bet trying to come to terms with 'la vie Francais', with some references to the French bordering on stereotype.

Although initially bleak due to the constant bickering between Al and Bet the plot becomes increasingly comic as these

naive travellers' struggle with a new culture and feel obliged to be romantic for the weekend.

The initial scenes nicely set up the situation in their relationship and are well played by Dawson and Travis, some arguments seem to arise too suddenly to be realistic rather than develop over time. This is largely due to the sporadic nature of the dialogue and could have benefitted from some awkward silences to highlight the tension and weariness of this couple after 10 years of marriage.

Both Dawson and Travis displayed great comic timing and are confident performers and very watchable throughout this 'tour de force'. The scenes in the North Sea Ferry Disco, French Restaurant and at The Louvre were particularly well played, showing the disparity between the couple and their surroundings. There are innate challenges in trying to create distinct playing areas on a small stage such as this but this was handled well and visual projections helped transport the audience on a whistle-stop tour around Paris.

The whole play was directed with pace and sensitivity by John Matthews who makes his directorial debut at the Millgate Theatre. The play demands careful handling to avoid crude stereotypes and Matthews succeeds in this and delivers a nuanced production.

The Mondrian inspired set is simple yet effective and adds to the claustrophobia in the couple's living room scenes and provides a more expansive feel, suggesting various Parisian locations in Act 2. Generally, the scene changes could have been slicker and music used more creatively throughout the piece to add to the atmosphere.

It is interesting watching this 1990s play through post-Brexit lens as Al and Bet wonder about both their own relationships and the relationship between the UK and the rest of Europe. This is a comic yet thought-provoking evening of theatre which explores Al and Bet's troubled relationship and we are left wondering whether their romantic Parisian adventure will save their marriage.

From The Website: Lighting up Paris by David Plowright

Hi, I'm David Plowright, and I've been delighted to have the fascinating role of designing the lighting, sound and projection for 'April in Paris'. Together with the set designer, we've been creating the visual and auditory surroundings for our actors' voyage of discovery from Yorkshire to Paris and back.

The vision of the original director, Melvyn Bates, who sadly

had to drop out of the production, was to use a small number of images in the background of the scenes in Paris. We already have a projector in the auditorium ceiling, used with a screen for lectures, parties, etc., but its images would shine on the actors and cast shadows on the backdrop. So, back projection was the answer, and hiring the equipment was the obvious but ex-

pensive means. However, after much careful research, Millgate Arts Centre is now the owner of its own large back-projection screen and a second hand projector.

Has the effort been worth it? Come and see for yourself - and while you wait for the curtains to open, listen to a selection of French singers, from Aznavour to Zaz!

Stagey Bits with Keith Begley

In the last issue of S.P.News I made reference to the interesting floor design (a la Mondrian) but didn't mention our latest innovation: the Back Projection Screen! No prizes for guessing that, after its successful introduction for our Production of "April in Paris, Directors are already thinking of how they too can make use of it.

Our next Production is about the Brontë Sisters and though they lived relatively constrained lives in the Parsonage at Haworth their minds were free to roam the wild moors that loomed large in their imaginations. It is quite a challenge to present their small parlour on Stage, with as many as ten characters jostling for space. Putting their lives in context means putting the Moors in there as well! Now that is a challenge, but 'Can Do' technology has enabled us to try. Come and see if we have succeeded.



Keith Begley



In Haworth in the 1840s, in a gloomy parsonage where there are neither curtains nor comforts, Charlotte, Anne and Emily Brontë light up their world with outspoken wit, aspirations, dreams and ideas. And throughout their confined lives intensely lived - they write. Against the backdrop of a dark, remote northern town, these three remarkable young women live their lives brightly.

Sponsored by Friezland Properties 01457 872273

Cast and Crew

Anne Brontë	Esther Weetman	Director	Carol Davies
Charlotte Brontë	Kate Davies	Stage Manager	Peter Dignan
Emily Brontë	Maye Battersby	Assistant Stage Manager	Dominic Friedrich
Patrick Brontë	John Weetman	Props	Sandy Dixie
Branwell Brontë	Samuel Reid	Costumes	Verity Mann
Tabby	Lisa Kay	Set Design	Keith Begley
The Doctor	James McKeane	Set Construction	Keith Begley, Colin Watt
The Curate	Sam Rowlands	Lighting	Mike Clegg, Jan Weiringa
The Teacher	Martin Taylor	Sound	Bob Crichley
Lydia Robinson	Verity Mann		Tim Newbold

A Year at the Bar!

Approaching the end of another season and a chance to take stock of how the bar has gone on with the rota system – and the Saddleworth Live shows. A few pertinent statistics will tell all!

Number of bar nights

Saddleworth Players	35 nights
Saddleworth Live	20
Film Society	11
Concerts society	4
Private Lettings	10
Total	80

Far more than ever before and handled by the bar staffing group. There are 35 names on the list at present and, at the beginning of the season we estimated that, if we got

enough volunteers, we should expect to do about five nights each.

How has it panned out? Not too badly – to end of May:-

Five nights or less	25 people
Six to eight nights	9
More than eight nights	4

It is not surprising that seven of the thirteen 'best attenders' are bar leaders.

At a rough guess we have probably made over £8000 for the Millgate coffers, a very valuable contribution to our continuing success and a sure sign of the bar's popularity.

A huge 'thank you' is extended to all those who have manned the bar during the season and a massive 'thank you' to the small number who have dropped everything to save a last minute panic!

Ken Wright



Notes from the Editor

I can't quite believe that the Season is almost at an end! It's been a busy and a fun one. We've had some box-office breaking audience figures and some great feedback. As well as our own plays and the Film and Concert Societies it has been great to welcome yet more talent to the theatre with the Saddleworth Live Shows. We've been busier than ever before, so I'd like to say, on behalf of everyone at the Millgate Arts Centre, a massive thank you to Ken Wright who is stepping down from his bar rota management in June. We would have had a dry Season without your organisational skills and tenacity, Ken. Cheers to you!

Going forward, don't forget to book your ticket for the 2018/19 Season launch on the 16th June and hear all about what's on offer. I hope to see you there, *Verity*

Contributions to SP News all gratefully received and printed in full, space permitting. Email Verityjmann@gmail.com

Submission date 1st September 2018 Ooo—Summer off for me—Whoop Whoop!