

SKIPTON PLAYERS PRESENT
THE NORTHERN PREMIERE OF

OSCAR WILDE'S

Lord Arthur Savile's Crime

ADAPTED BY TREVOR BAXTER DIRECTED BY CHRIS BIRCH



Skipton
Little Theatre

From the Chairman

Hello and welcome

Good evening everyone and welcome to our production of 'Lord Arthur Savile's Crime' by the great Oscar Wilde.

This adaptation by Trevor Baxter has only recently been released for the amateur stage having had a very successful tour around the country in 2010 with Lee Mead in the title role and starring among others, Kate O'Mara as Lady Windermere and Gary Wilmot as Podgers – and we are privileged to be the first amateur company in the north to stage this version!

Last year at this time the February play rehearsals were hampered by bad weather such as we experienced before Christmas. As I write this we are enjoying a relatively mild spell with some lovely sunshine and no snow on the horizon! Let's hope this continues for the next three weeks to enable rehearsals to go without a hitch and we can look forward to the first green shoots of spring.

On a more serious note we are finding it increasingly more difficult to fill the House Manager rota. We are required by law to have an inside and an outside house manager for fire and safety reasons. It seems easy enough to get people to do the inside duty – after all you get to watch the play – but it is more difficult to find someone to do the outside duty. Perhaps it is because the outside person also happens to make the coffee. It would be easy to say 'Let's do away with the coffee', but we would still need someone to be outside during the performance.

If you feel you could help us in this way (it would only be a matter of one night during the run), we would be very grateful and so would all your fellow playgoers who enjoy their interval coffee. Many thanks.

Now forget all about recessions and cutbacks, sit back and allow your heart to be warmed and your ribs to be tickled on a dark February night by 'Lord Arthur Savile's Crime'.

Beryl Binns
Chairman

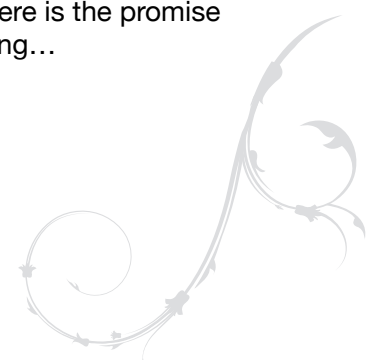
Melodrama revisited

This production of Lord Arthur Savile's Crime continues melodrama's tradition of looking to a literary source. Written in 1887, the story shares with Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) and Wilde's own *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) a fascination with the double or double life, a theme to which Wilde frequently returns. One of the most celebrated melodramas of all, *The Bells* (1871) which made Henry Irving's reputation, deals precisely with this idea of an alternative personality discovered through the process of mesmerism.

When the word melodrama was first used, it described a play with music or a dumb show with musical accompaniment, and a specially composed score plays an integral part in this new stage version of Lord Arthur Savile's Crime.


The production celebrates those elements of melodrama that are contained in the story and which have been disregarded or dismissed in our more cynical age. It tells of remarkable events bound together in a suspenseful plot; it features both light and low comedy and takes audiences both into the glamour of high society and the squalor of the East End. Painted backcloths are employed to whisk the production through a succession of locations and the action is punctuated by a series of tableaux – a perennial feature of melodrama.

And audiences need not be concerned – as in all the best melodramas, there is the promise of a happy ending...



OSCAR WILDE'S

Lord Arthur Savile's Crime



performed in a new and original version by
Mr Trevor Baxter
and Directed by
Mr Christopher Birch

The following Metropolitan ARTISTES have DEFINITELY PROMISED to APPEAR
(vehicular transportation and better-paid engagements permitting)

Lord Arthur Savile.....	Mr Tom Lodge
The Dean of Chichester.....	Mr Alan Parkinson
Miss Sybil Merton.....	Miss Alex Blackie
Lady Windermere.....	Miss Helen Parkinson
Mr Septimus Podgers.....	Mr Philip Smith
Lady Clementina.....	Miss Shirley Rowlands
Herr Winkelkopf.....	Mr Martin Cole
Policeman.....	Mr Andrew Walker

Bridesmaids, Peasantry, Hussars, Wrestlers, Bargemen, Costermongers,
Stevedores, Pall-Bearers, Morris Dancers, Pedlars, Navvies, Gypsies, Fairies
and ALL OTHER CHARACTERS performed by the Full Strength of the Company.

The ACTION of the play takes place in LADY WINDERMERE'S HOUSE in
GROSVENOR SQUARE, Mr PODGER'S lodgings in MOON STREET,
LADY CLEMENTINA'S PRIVATE DRAWING ROOM,
THE DEAN OF CHICHESTER'S STUDY,
and the THAMES EMBANKMENT

The PLAY is set in ANNO 1900 and is Performed in TWO ACTS

!!! VIVAT REGINA !!!

GOOD FIRES are constantly kept lighted so that the
WHOLE THEATRE is thoroughly warm

Gentlemen are particularly requested NOT TO SPIT ON THE FLOOR
but to use the SPITTOON

No persons will be admitted into the boxes without SHOES or STOCKINGS

THE CREW

Stage Manager.....Miss Jacqui Whitely
Prompt.....Miss Angela Freeman

Assisted by Mr Christopher Rose, Mr David Whitely, Mr George Votsikas,
Miss Louise Radice and sundry Members of the Company to create the Various
Sounds, Music, Lime-Lights, Smells, Costumes, Sets and Stage Properties.

The Company would like to THANK the FRIENDS and MEMBERS of the Company
for providing the FRONT-OF-HOUSE service.

VARIOUS REFRESHMENTS will be SERVED at a modest COST
in the INTERVAL between ACT 1 and ACT 2



The Wilde Life



1854 Born Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde on 16th October in Dublin, the younger son of an eminent eye surgeon and a moderately successful Irish writer.

1871-4 Reads Classics at Trinity College, Dublin.

1874-8 Wins a scholarship to read Classics at Magdalen Collge, Oxford, where, under the tutelage of Walter Pater, he becomes a prominent advocate of the aesthetic (or the art-for-art's-sake) movement.

1881
Poems published.

1882 Tours the USA, lecturing on aestheticism, under the management of Richard D'Oyly Carte. Completes his first two plays – *Vera* and *The Duchess Of Padua* – both remain unperformed for many years.

1884 Marries Constance Mary Lloyd, the daughter of an Irish barrister, on 29th May.

1885 Son Cyril born in June.

1886 Second son Vyvyan born in November.

1888 *The Happy Prince And Other Tales* published.

1890 Wilde's only novel, *The Picture Of Dorian Gray* published.

1891 *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime And Other Stories, Intentions and A House Of Pomegranates* published. Begins work on *Salome* in Paris. Meets Lord Arthur Douglas, an Oxford undergraduate, who is 16 years younger than him.

1892 George Alexander produces *Lady Windermere's Fan* in London. Begins work on *A Woman Of No Importance* for Herbert Beerholm Tree.

1893 *Salome* published in France. *A Woman Of No Importance* opens in London.

1894 *Salome* produced in Paris by Sarah Bernhardt. Due to the Lord Chamberlain's restrictions on the representation of biblical characters on the stage, the play is refused a licence in England. English translation of *Salome* by Lord Alfred Douglas and *The Sphinx* is published.

1895 London production of *An Ideal Husband* opens in January. George Alexander produces *The Importance Of Being Earnest* in London, and the two plays run concurrently. Against the advice of his friends, Wilde decides to proceed with a libel action against the Marquess of Queensberry (Lord Alfred's father). He loses the case and is arrested; he is eventually found guilty of "gross indecency" and sentenced to gaol for two years. Also declared bankrupt.

1897 Writes a long letter to Lord Arthur from Reading Gaol, which is posthumously published as *De Profundis*. Following his release in May he is shunned by many of his former friends and eventually settles in France under the alias of Sebastian Melmoth. Begins work on *The Ballad Of Reading Gaol*.

1898 *The Ballad Of Reading Gaol* published under Wilde's convict number C33.

1900 November: Oscar Wilde dies of meningitis in Paris.

1905 *De Profundis* published by his long-time friend and literary executor Robert Ross. Ross later pays off Wilde's debts and recovers the literary rights on behalf of Wilde's two children.

Wild about Wilde?

TRY OUR QUIZ AND SEE HOW MUCH YOU KNOW!

1. What was Oscar Wilde's full name?
2. Wilde married Constance May Lloyd in 1884 and had two children – what were their names?
3. Wilde wrote a number of stories for children. Which famous story is about a taller than average person who tries to keep children out of his garden?
4. Which legendary composer and lyricist team made fun of Wilde the Aesthete in the operetta *Patience*?
5. In 1892, which of Wilde's plays was banned from public performance by the Lord Chamberpot, because it introduced biblical characters whose appearance on stage was at that time forbidden?
6. What was the nickname of Lord Arthur Douglas?
7. What was the name of the long poem Wilde wrote while he was in prison?
8. Fill in the blanks in these famous quotations from Wilde's works:
 - a) One should always have something to read in the train (*The Importance Of Being Earnest*).
 - b) I can resist everything, except (*Lady Windermere's Fan*)
 - c) One would have to have a heart of stone to read the death of Little Nell without (*From a lecture on Charles Dickens*).
 - d) There is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is being talked about (*The Picture Of Dorian Gray*).
 - e) To love is the beginning of a lifelong romance. (*An Ideal Husband*).
9. Where did Wilde die in 1900?
10. What were his last words?
11. Which actor played Oscar Wilde in the 1997 film *Wilde*?
12. In 1995, one hundred years after the famous trials, a windowpane dedicated to Oscar Wilde was unveiled in the traditional resting place of famous literary figures – where?



Skipton Players 2011 Productions

April 12th – 16th

Intimate Exchanges

by Alan Ayckbourn
Directed by Ann Busfield

June 21st – 25th

On Approval

by Frederick Lonsdale
Directed by Richard Wilkinson

All productions start at 7.30pm. Doors open at 7.00pm.
To book seats either go to www.skiptonlittletheatre.org.uk
or phone 01756 791552, during the week before the play.