

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS DIRECTORS VIEW

Many musicals are more at home within the traditional theatre environment of Stalls, Dress Circle, Upper Circle, and then there are those that are planned for the smaller venue – for instance, Off-Broadway in New York. These tend to be more the cult musical type, For example; Rent, The Rocky Horror Show and of course, Little Shop of Horrors.

Tonight, here at the Criterion – a delightfully intimate theatre perfectly suited to the Off-Broadway style show - we are proud to bring you Little Shop, one of the greatest ever science-fiction-spoof-musicals written. It originally opened Off-Broadway at the Orpheum Theatre on July 27, 1982, and when it closed on November 1, 1987, after 2,209 performances, it was the third-longest running musical and the highest-grossing production in Off-Broadway history! A Broadway transfer had long been proposed for the production, but it was felt the show belonged where it was, although it is now performed all over the world.

For those who don't know what to expect, Little Shop is a rock musical based on the low-budget 1960 black comedy film The Little Shop of Horrors, directed by Roger Corman, and starring the young Jack Nicholson. The show was created by composer Alan Menken and writer Howard Ashman, and tells the tale of a hapless florist shop worker who raises a plant that feeds on human blood. The musical style is that of early 1960s rock and roll, doo-wop and early Motown, and includes several well-known tunes, including the title song, "Skid Row (Downtown)", "Somewhere That's Green", "Suppertime" and "Suddenly, Seymour". The show itself satirises many things: science fiction, 'B' movies, musical comedy itself, and even the Faust legend.

For me, Little Shop is a perfect way to end my first full year here at the Criterion. It also marks my debut in the first of what I hope will be many times in the Director's chair. As a director, I relish challenges which continue to stretch the skills and imagination. This has previously included a musical with a dancing mouse, recreating a much-loved TV series or cult movie, as well as taking on classic plays and other cult musicals – but never before a singing plant!

Please sit back and enjoy the show!

Tim Willis

www.criteriontheatre.co.uk

Criterion Theatre

Our next production:

ABSURD
PERSON
SINGULAR

by Alan Ayckbourn
February 5th – 12th 2011

We visit three couples in their three kitchens on the Christmas Eves of three successive years: the lower-class Hopcrofts; their bank manager and his wife and their architect neighbour with a suicidal wife. Running like a darker thread through the wild comedy of behind-the-scenes disasters at Christmas parties is the story of the advance of the Hopcrofts and the declines of the others. The play is one of Ayckbourn's most successful comedies and has been almost continuously performed since it was written in 1971. It had a highly successful West End revival at the Garrick in 2007 and was first performed by the Criterion in 1977 with a cast that included this production's director Wendy Anderson.



BOX OFFICE (Direct)

024 7667 5175

This is a notice to members

Criterion Lottery Fund and Draw

Funds for the theatre are raised through our Lottery Fund. Please consider buying a number (or or more than one) for the small sum of £5 per number per month. Please contact **Mike Tooley** on **024 7667 3789** or mike_tooley@hotmail.com for details.

Remember... you've got to be in it to win it!



Production photography by
Richard Johnson
079 0450 6280

The Criterion is a non-smoking theatre

COMEDY, LOVE, MAYHEM,
MUSIC, MURDER...
AND A SINGING PLANT.

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

BOOK AND LYRICS BY
HOWARD ASHMAN

MUSIC BY ALAN MENKEN

Programme

Produced by arrangement with Josef Weinberger Ltd



ANNE-MARIE GREENE

Performances include Darling Buds of May, Return to the Forbidden Planet, Daisy Pulls it Off, The Memory of Water, A Chorus of Disapproval, Pleasure and Repentance and most recently The Browning Version and Still Life double bill.



CHRISTOPHER SMITH

Theatre credits: Mark Cohen in Rent, Billy Crocker in Anything Goes, Jesus in Jesus Christ Superstar Garry Lejeune in Noises Off, Richard Loeb in Never the Sinner and Clifford Anderson in Deathtrap.



CRAIG SHELTON

Craig is very excited to be performing his first role at The Criterion. Favourite roles include Alex in A Clockwork Orange and Benny in Rent.



DAVID BENCH

This will be David's first production with the Criterion. He is currently receiving expert tutelage at City College Coventry on the Higher National Diploma acting course.



DOUG GILBEY

Doug is excited to be making his debut at the Criterion. Recent roles include Angel in Rent at the Talisman, Jack in Disco Inferno, Solihull.



EMILY TUFF

This is Emily's first appearance with the Criterion. Previous credits include Liz Morden - Our Country's Good & Beatrice - Much Ado About Nothing for the Talisman, Kenilworth.



JAN NIGHTINGALE

Jan last performed at the Criterion in Gaslight. Having had a baby in April, she is glad to be performing an easier role!



JOHN FENNER

John has previously appeared as Roberto Miranda in Death and the Maiden and Andrew Crocker-Harris in The Browning Version. In between, he played Captain Peacock in the Talisman's production of Are You Being Served? Next up will be George Aaronow in Glengarry Glen Ross at the Loft.



CAST

Ronette	Jan Nightingale
Chiffon	Anne-Marie Greene
Crystal	Nicole Firth
Mushnik	John Fenner
Seymour	Chris Smith
Audrey	Rebecca Fenlon
Orin	Jon Elves
Audrey 2 (Voice and Manipulation)	Craig Shelton, Sam Harris, Emily Tuff
All other roles taken by:	David Bench, Julie-Ann Dean, Douglas Gilbey, Mark Randall, Sam Smith, Matt Sweatman

With John Ruscoe as A Voice not unlike God's

Keyboards	Richard Hastie, Owen Dutton
Electric Guitar	Steve Withers
Bass Guitar	Roger Key
Drums	Robin Payne
Rehearsal Pianists	Richard Hastie, Roger Haygreen

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director	Tim Willis
Musical Director	Bill Bosworth
Choreographer	Robin Stokoe
Lighting Design	Ian Knight
Sound Design	Dave Cornish
Sound Operators	Sara Beamish, Andy Stamper
Wardrobe	Maureen Liggins, Pam Coleman, Gennie Holmes, Olivia Holmes, Anne Houston, Marie Wells, Nancy Sylvester
Props	Les Rahilly, Erica Young, Bill Young, Eleanor Lake, Alexandra Darwood, Jonathan Rees
Set Concept	Tim Willis
Set Build	Dave Holmes, Doug Griffiths, John Griffiths, Simon Sharpe, Dave Crisp, Kevin Woods, Joe Sharpe
Set Painting	Judy Talbot, Sue Hadlum, Emma Withers, Viv Woods
Publicity	Led by Deb Relton-Elves
Assistant Stage Manager	Dave Crisp
Stage Manager	John Bagley

Plant is hired from Really Youthful Theatre Company

Thanks to Loft Theatre, Leamington for loan of props and furniture



JON ELVES

Jon's most recent roles have included Dr Alec Harvey/ Frank Hunter in Still Life and The Browning Version double bill, Ben Hecht in Moonlight and Magnolias and Daffyd ap Llewellyn in A Chorus of Disapproval



JULIE ANNE DEAN

Credits include Rent, Disco Inferno & Caucasian Chalk Circle. Next up is the role of Sheila in The Criterion's A Day in the Death of Joe Egg. By day, Julie-Ann is a professional voice-over artist.



MARK RANDALL

Imposing a limit of 25 words on actors' biographies is an excellent idea. It's green and keeps egos to a minimum. Mark's recently appeared in



MATT SWEATMAN

Matt started with the Criterion many moons ago. Amongst his favourite appearances have been Bill Sykes in Oliver Twist, Eddie Carbone in View From The Bridge, Sgt Toomey in Biloxi Blues and Victor Fleming in Moonlight and Magnolias.



NICOLE FIRTH

5 years and 2 children later, Nicole returns to the Criterion as Crystal in Little Shop of Horrors. Previous credits include Gloria in Return to the Forbidden Planet, Constanza Mozart in Amadeus and Director for Barefoot In The Park.



REBECCA FENLON

Rebecca made her debut at The Criterion in 2007 as Elaine in The Graduate. Other performances include Sex, Drugs & Rick 'N' Noel, Great Expectations and A Chorus of Disapproval. She has most recently appeared in Moonlight and Magnolias as Miss Poppenghul.



SAM HARRIS

This is Sam's first show at the Criterion. Roles to date include Nancy in Oliver, Mrs Farley in Playhouse Creatures, Elaine in The Graduate and Duckling in Our Country's Good all at the Talisman.



SAM SMITH

Sam has spent 5 years working for Pontins as a singer dancer. Local shows include Fame, Footloose, 7 Brides for 7 Brothers and Rent.