

# Merlin

## and the Cave of Dreams

by Charles Way

Opportunity for  
young people:  
to work with a  
professional director  
in a magical mystical  
play

To be performed at  
the Savoy Theatre  
during the February  
half term 2010

Interested? Contact:

Stephanie Harris

(01600) 713036

07711055753

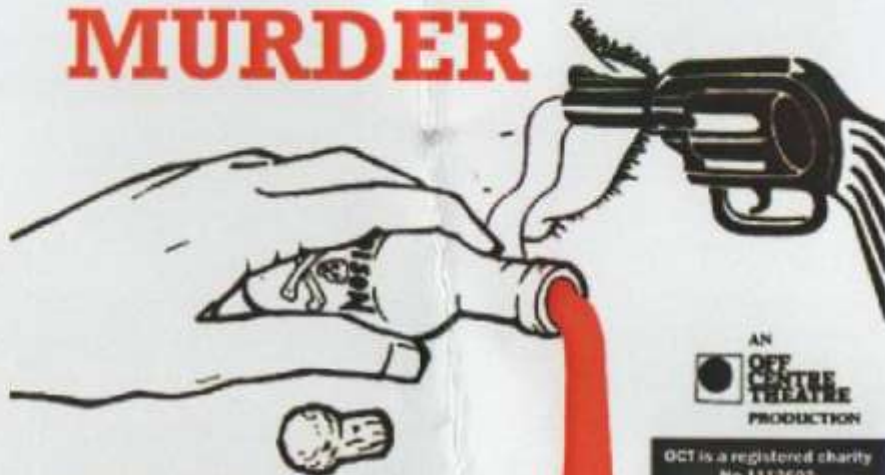
info@atcfloorsanddoors.co.uk



**Off Centre  
Theatre**

Charity no. 1112602

# IT MUST HAVE BEEN MURDER



AN  
OFF  
CENTRE  
THEATRE  
PRODUCTION

OCT is a registered charity  
No 1112602

by Don Woods

7.30 pm  
Thursday, Friday  
and Saturday

12th, 13th & 14th  
November 2009

at The Savoy Theatre,  
Church Street, Monmouth

All of the proceeds from this  
production are being donated  
to the Savoy Theatre



**MONMOUTH MUSIC THEATRE**  
Presents



# THE CARMEN CHALLENGE

AT MONMOUTH LEISURE CENTRE

**On Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

Monmouth Music Theatre has taken on the challenge to rehearse and perform a shortened, semi-staged version of Carmen in one day in aid of DELTA (Deaf Education Through Listening & Talking)

COME AND SING WITH US IN THE CHORUS - NO AUDITION NEEDED  
OR COME ALONG AND WATCH THE PERFORMANCE IN THE EVENING.

For more details visit [www.carmenchallenge.com](http://www.carmenchallenge.com) or Tel. 01600 716220

**NOTE FOR 2010 - MY FAIR LADY**

14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> April

[www.monmouthmt.co.uk](http://www.monmouthmt.co.uk)

Another date for your diaries:

## Showcase Spectacular 10

**Thursday February 25th 2010  
at H.M.S.G.**

In aid of The chosen Charities of the Mayor of  
Monmouth, Councillor Ann Were

Transition Monmouth

First Wyesham Scouts

Hebron Hall Garden Project

### A message from Brian Pearce - OCT's Chairman

It is my pleasure to once again welcome you to another Off Centre Theatre (OCT) production here at the Savoy Theatre. Tonight's murder mystery play by Don Woods, *It Must Have Been Murder* is directed and produced by our own Stuart MacFarlane.



Over the years Stuart has been well used to directing plays of intrigue and murder mystery having put on *House Guest* and *Suddenly at Home*, both by Francis Burbridge, *A Murder is Announced*, by Agatha Christie and *The House on the Cliff* by George Batson. Perhaps he is not as well known to some of you as the writers above (Francis Durbridge known perhaps from his Radio series 'Paul Temple') but Don Woods has produced a play of equal suspense, intrigue and murder with twists and turns in the plot leading to a neat ending for the would be murderers, Louise and Guy Porter.

This production by OCT is part of the efforts to help raise funds for the Savoy Theatre. One of the oldest working theatres in Wales the Savoy is now under new management but is in desperate need of funds to keep it open. The proceeds from this production are all being donated by OCT to the Savoy. It is obviously our hope that Savoy will receive the support it deserves for the films and other productions it offers - so please keep coming and get everyone you know to do the same. Please show your support by coming to see *Gulliver* by the Hijinx Theatre Company this coming Monday 16 November at 7.30pm in this theatre.

If you are interested in joining OCT we always welcome new members of all ages. If you want to offer your experience, have an interest in performing, want to be involved in any way with a production or simply want to support Off Centre as a member please contact our membership secretary, Cedric Gibbons on 01600 716162, email: [cedric\\_gibbons@lineone.net](mailto:cedric_gibbons@lineone.net)

OCT's next production *Merlin and the Cave of Dreams* is to be performed during the Feb half term in 2010. We are still looking for young people for this production - see the advert on the back cover of this programme.

Now just relax and enjoy!

*Brian Pearce*



OCT is a registered charity no 1112602

# PartyAnimal

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We have provided the opening scene 1920's gangster costume

For this Off Centre Theatre Production of

**'It Must Have Been Murder'**



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\*\*\*\*\*  
★ **Wishing OCT best** ★  
★ **wishes for another** ★  
★ **successful** ★  
★ **production** ★  
\*\*\*\*\*



## A new era at the Savoy Theatre and you can be part of it.....

A new era has begun at the Savoy Theatre following the retirement of Vic Bignell and his wife Renee who have been active with the Savoy for many years.

The new Trustees headed by Terry Ashton and Rhianon Thomas face a challenging future. Although a registered charity the Savoy must operate on a commercial basis and like many businesses in the town the Savoy has felt the chill of the recession. We are now seeking new ways to increase revenue and provide a broader artistic experience to the people of Monmouth. The proceeds from tonight's play *It Must Have Been Murder* are being generously donated to boost Savoy's funds by Off Centre Theatre - a big thank you to them.

We are planning to have more live theatre in addition to continuing to bring the latest films to Monmouth. Only last week we were privileged to have a film premiere when the hilarious comedy *A Bit of Tam Jones* received its first screening in front of a packed audience. Both the director Peter Watkins-Hughes and one of the stars, Margaret John (from Gavin and Stacey and Little Britain) spoke about the film and also gave their support to the Savoy and requested that everyone in the area do the same. If you missed this premiere please keep your eyes open as there are more exciting happenings to come. The next production is this coming Monday 16 November when Hijinx Theatre will perform *Gulliver* at 7.30pm.

On a day to day basis the theatre is now being run by a new two-man operations team - Mike Harrold and Sean Purcell. Mike has broad experience in the cinema industry and Sean is a long term resident of Monmouth new to the cinema field but enthusiastic about the job and the theatre itself. They have proved to be a vital asset to the running of the Savoy providing a friendly and welcoming 'face' to our patrons.

From this new beginning running this theatre will require a real team effort. A new management committee has recently been formed and new trustees have come forward to work together to make the Savoy a real success. However more help is needed and if you are interested in joining the team and helping the Savoy please contact Terry Ashton 01600 711552

### Friends of the Savoy

Perhaps you would like to get involved by becoming a "Friend of the Savoy"? This newly formed group will be primarily responsible for fundraising. A committee has been selected chaired by Richard Bond and the search is now on for members. Richard said: *If anyone really wishes to do something to contribute to this beautiful theatre, please get in touch by emailing: [savoyfriends@btinternet.com](mailto:savoyfriends@btinternet.com).*

## It Must Have Been Murder by Don Woods

This ingenious thriller will keep you wondering who will succeed and how.

The plot is based around a married couple, Louise and Guy who have come to hate each other. Louise is unwell and I is convinced that guy is trying to poison her. She has also become aware that she is being stalked but by who?

Louise confides in her best friend Gabby revealing she is convinced she is being slowly poisoned. The plot thickens when Leo, an ex-lover of Louise arrives and gives her advice on just how to kill her husband and get away with it.

But as usual it's not that simple with twists and turns to keep you all in suspense. Of course it wouldn't be complete without a bit of blackmail....

**What will the outcome be?**

**Can you figure it out????**

The action takes place in an English country house.

### ACT ONE

Scene 1 Saturday evening

### ACT TWO

Scene 1 One week later

Scene 2 The following Friday

There will be an interval of approximately  
15 minutes between the two acts

## Cast

Guy Porter	Graham Bryant
Louise Porter	Paula Brady
Emma	Jane Scott
Gabby	Therese Casemore
Leo	Jim Newcomb

## Directors



### Stuart MacFarlane - Director

Born in Chichester, Stuart has lived in Monmouth since 1976 and is one of the founder members of Off Centre Theatre. Formerly in the police he runs a business supplying cycle accessories to many high street stores and mail order companies. He has appeared in many OCT productions from straight plays to variety shows and pantomimes he was last seen on stage in *The Wizard of Oz* as the Guardian of the Emerald City. He is returning to directing after a lay-off of several years and is making his come back in his favourite genre - the murder mystery. In the past he has directed several thrillers by Francis Durbridge and Agatha Christie so he's getting back into knock with this play by Don Woods.

### Geoffrey Manning - Co-director

Originally from Ilford, Geoffrey came to Monmouth in 1982. He became a member of OCT in 1989 and was chairman from 1996-99. He has appeared in many OCT productions from Alan Ayckbourn's *How the Other Half Loves* to Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* and has also appeared in many pantomimes—always playing the fool. Geoffrey has directed a number of plays for OCT including Priestley's *When We Are Married* and Pinter's *The Lovers*. He is very versatile having directed *Annie Get Your Gun* for Monmouth Music Theatre in 2007. After treading the boards for over 40 years he recalls how at 17 he contacted the great Joan Littlewood at Stratford East for guidance on how to become an actor. "Go out and do it anywhere" was her advice. He has lived up to this maxim ever since, having done everything out there anywhere - occasionally this has included acting. When not on stage he runs his own business - *Safety First UK* - providing occupational health and safety consultancy and training.





Come and see this production  
all the proceeds will go  
towards helping rescue the  
Savoy

This coming  
Monday  
16 November  
at 7.30pm

A story of adventure  
great and small, and  
of the writer who  
imagined them all

# Gulliver

PG

Written by Kit Lambert  
Directed by Louise Osborn  
Music by James Williams

In a unique and delightful style, Hijinx brings to life the weird and wonderful world of Gulliver's Travels, with its tiny Lilliputians, giants and even talking horses! Inspired by Jonathan Swift's fantastical satire, this new play explores the relationship between the mysterious Dr Gulliver and his tormented creator Swift, as they travel through the writer's imagination and try not to lose their way.

Capturing the humour and darkness of a man struggling to survive in an absurd world, this classic story is as fresh as ever!

**Savoy Theatre, Monmouth**

Box Office: 01600 772467  
Book online for £1 reduction  
[www.monmouthsavoy.co.uk](http://www.monmouthsavoy.co.uk)  
Tickets £8 (£6 Concessions)

Night Nolson  
Out Allan



## Who is playing who?



**Graham Bryant - Guy Porter** This is my first play with Off Centre but I hope there will be many more to come. My previous acting experience has been with two societies in Cardiff and then with Newport Playgoers at the Dolman Theatre where my roles included Rene in 'Who 'Alo', and leading roles in 'Proof and Plaza Suite'. I have also directed a number of plays there, including 'The Magician's Nephew and Glass Menagerie'. I have also directed and performed in a number of musicals, including 'My Fair Lady and Oliver'. Oh, and somehow I find time to be a Maths teacher!



**Paula Brady - Louise Porter**. Born and bred in Dublin, she came to Wales in April 2006 and loves it. She joined OCT in 2006 with little experience in amateur dramatics, previous roles as a child included, Dorothy in 'The Wizard of Oz' and later she was of the ugly sisters in Cinderella! She played her first adult part as Gwendolyn in 'The Odd Couple' with OCT and in June this year was Ida Sandcastles. Her background is in education and she has established 'Bristol Business College' delivering professional evening diploma courses and management training workshop. Her hobbies include walking her favourite Westie and Springer Spaniel, horse riding and golfing!



**Jane Scott - Emma** This is my first play with Off Centre, but not my first role as a maid/servant! So far, I have performed that role in three productions - 'My Fair Lady', 'Oliver' and 'An Inspector Calls'. Maybe one day, I'll get promotion... I have performed in and directed a variety of shows - musicals, serious plays, children's productions and 'Agatha Christie's', and enjoyed every single one. I look forward to doing much more with Off Centre Theatre.



**Therese Casemore - Gabby** Therese was born in Lymington in the New Forest and trained as a librarian. She has always been interested in amateur dramatics having appeared on stage as a teenager. She gave it up when she married, had children and travelled—although she was a fully paid up member of the Bermuda Music and Drama Society for a while. She came to live in the Wye Valley in 1989 and joined OCT about 8 years ago to help with costumes and got hooked again. She has appeared on stage in a number of productions for OCT and says she has enjoyed every one of them! You may remember her as a drunken rabbit in 'Wind in the Willows'.



**Jim Newcomb - Leo** He is well know to the people of Monmouth having played the dame in thirteen OCT pantomimes up to 2005. He hung up his tights and bras for three years until he was lured back to play Dame Deirdre in the OCT / Stennett Company production of 'Babes in the Wood' in 2008. Jim is very versatile and has appeared in countless productions for OCT he also directs plays for the society. Most recently co-directing (with Geoffrey Manning) 'Men of the World' in which he also appeared. When not performing or directing Jim is a senior lecturer in education at the University of Wales.

## Behind the Scenes

<b>Director</b>	Stuart MacFarlane
<b>Co-director</b>	Geoffrey Manning
<b>Stage Manager</b>	Tony Wells
<b>Sound &amp; Lighting</b>	David Wells & Rachel Stevens
<b>Set Design</b>	Stuart MacFarlane & Andrew Lightly
<b>Construction</b>	Andrew Lightly & Terry Cane
<b>Prompt</b>	Anne MacFarlane
<b>Props</b>	Elaine & Dave Andrews & Tom Rigby
<b>Publicity &amp; Advertising</b>	Anne Macfarlane
<b>Front of House</b>	Jenny Weston & team
<b>Box Office</b>	The Nelson Museum, Brian Williams & the Savoy Theatre
<b>Printing</b>	Pastorprint
<b>Poster Design</b>	David Evans
<b>Programme</b>	Barbara Spence

Thank you from  
**OFF CENTRE THEATRE**



Thank you to the following, for their support and help with this production

ATC Floors and Doors, Monmouth	Monmouthshire Beacon,
Chillipepper Signs	Monmouth Library
Beaver Framing	Party Animal Fancy Dress
Cedric Gibbons	The Savoy Theatre
D & D Installations, Monmouth	St Mary's Church, Monmouth
Nick Frost	Brian Williams, St Mary Street
Steph Harris	Charles Wintour
Ken Hudson	
Nelson Museum, Monmouth	<b>and anyone else who has made</b>
M.B.M. Holdings	<b>this production a success</b>

2010 **Off Centre Theatre** Present


# The ROLLS REVUE

**Tues June 1st**  
to  
**Sat June 5th**  
**7.30pm**  
**at H.M.S.G.**  
Tickets £5 from  
The Nelson Museum, Priory St.

**Mon:** 11am to 1pm &  
to  
**Sat:** 2pm to 5pm

**Sun:** 2pm to 5pm  
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For Information see Local Press and visit the  
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