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PROUDLY PRESENTS

ALADDIN

ADAPTED FROM A PETER DENYER SCRIPT



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OFF CENTRE THEATRE

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Anne MacFarlane, ALCM, LLCM - Director, Musical Director & Chairman of Off Centre Theatre.

Dear Friends,

May I welcome you all to our millennium pantomime and wish you all a very happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year.

I cannot believe that it is the 9th annual pantomime that I have directed and I am quite convinced that the time between shows gets shorter every year. However, here we are again and I must congratulate everyone who has had any involvement in making this production a success. There are in excess of 200 people involved, working on stage, behind the scenes, front of house, constructing props, making costumes etc. etc. - a great team effort. Without those people we would not have a show. May I through this letter thank, sincerely, each and every one of them. Also thank you for your continued support.



So, sit back, relax, and enjoy the show!

Anne MacFarlane

Anne's life has been influenced by music since the age of 3 when, taught by her mother, she started to read music. From the age of 10 she was taught by Professor Robinson in Lancashire, achieving her first letters at the age of 18. She also played the violin in her youth and was appointed leader of the Northern Youth Orchestra when she was 17 years old.

Anne has been an active member of Off Centre since it was formed in 1985. She began directing the annual pantomime in 1992. Prior to that she was musical director for several years. She has trodden the boards in numerous Off Centre productions and has been chairman of the group for the last 2 years.

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Stephanie Harris - Assistant Director

Local business woman Stephanie Harris spends most of her year fitting timber floors throughout the UK. Despite her very busy schedule she is Assistant Director of Off Centre Theatre's pantomime for the third time. Stephanie is originally from Worcester and has been a member of Off Centre since 1993. She has acted with groups in Hockley Heath, Coleford, Goodrich, Ross on Wye and Hereford. Her most recent performances have taken place on 'Murder Mystery' weekends, on one occasion playing a very convincing corpse. She particularly enjoys working behind the scenes although she will be on stage this year as a dragon in which

she will be accompanied by her son David.

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Barbara Spence - Producer

This is Barbara's third year as producer of Off Centre Theatre's pantomime. Originally from Liverpool, Barbara has been a member of Off Centre since 1990. A forester by profession she has been a member of theatrical groups in Liverpool and Ffestiniog in Merioneth before joining Off Centre. She has been seen in many Off Centre productions including the first six of the group's traditional pantomimes which began in 1992. Very happy behind the scenes she was last seen on stage 'extra' in last year's final performance of Sleeping Beauty this year

she will be appearing as the front end of a dragon with her younger son James. Her husband Rob and older son Peter are also in the show. There was no part however for her cat Smudge.

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SYNOPSIS



PROLOGUE

The story begins in the Temple at Thebes where the evil Abanazer learns from the god Ra of a magic lamp in far off China. The Slave of the Ring tells him he will need the help of a boy called Aladdin to retrieve the lamp from the Cave of Jewels. He demands the Slave lead him to Aladdin's home in old Peking....

ACT I

In Peking we meet the dim-witted Wishee Washee and his delightful mother the Widow Twankey proprietress of Suds-R-Us Laundry. Aladdin, Twankey's younger son, arrives and announces the approach of the Emperor and the Princess Lotus Blossom. The arrival of the royal party which includes the Lady in waiting So Shi is heralded by Ping and Pong, members of the local constabulary, with the assistance of the lovely Camilla. As is always the case in stories like this, no one is allowed to gaze on the beautiful princess and as usual there is always one - in this case Aladdin. At first the Emperor wants him executed but Aladdin is reprieved.

The evil Abanazer arrives guided by the Slave of the Ring and makes his way to Widow Twankey's Laundry. Here he makes advances to Widow Twankey to gain her favour. He meets Aladdin and promises to make him the richest man in China by taking him to a secret cave full of gold and jewels. Abanazer and Aladdin agree to meet later and leave Twankey and Wishee to get on with the laundry. - It's always nice to watch other people work.

Aladdin makes his way to the cave, meeting Lotus Blossom on the way and escaping from the palace guards. He meets Abanazer and they soon find the cave entrance. Abanazer instructs Aladdin to enter the cave and find an old lamp for him. Aladdin is keen to find jewels for himself first which infuriates Abanazer who closes the cave entrance leaving our hero trapped. All alone Aladdin needs help to escape - but where will it come from?

Scene 1	Old Peking
Scene 2	Street of the Goldfish
Scene 3	Widow Twankey's Laundry
Scene 4	Outside the Imperial Palace
Scene 5	Outside the Cave of Jewels
Scene 6	Inside the Cave of Jewels

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ACT II

Back in Peking, Widow Twankey and Wishee are thrilled to discover Aladdin is now very wealthy. When asked where it all came from Aladdin produces an old lamp and shows them.

MeanwhileAbanazer returns to Peking disguised as a peddler to retrieve the magic lamp.

Despite the protests of Lotus Blossom and Aladdin's many friends Abanazer manages to get the magic lamp in exchange for a new one. He kidnaps the

Princess and takes her with members of the imperial household to Egypt.

Aladdin and his family are poor again but with the help of the Slave of the Ring he is able to follow the Princess and her captor. Twankey and Wishee Washee are left to make their own way to Egypt. Once there, they meet Aladdin and find themselves in the presence of some one from ancient Egypt. Soon after they take part in Abanazer's evening entertainment. Now all that is left to do is regain the lamp and rescue the Princess.....

Scene 1	Widow Twankey's Laundry
Scene 2	Street of the Goldfish
Scene 3	Aladdin's Palace
Scene 4	Outside the Palace in Egypt
Scene 5	Inside Abanazer's Palace
Scene 6	Back Home in Peking
Scene 7	Finale

CAST

Ra	Derrick Cooling
Abanazar	Gordon Casson
Slave of the Ring	Anne Gibbons-Jones
Wishee Washee	Chris Ryde
Widow Twankey	Jim Newcomb
Aladdin	Marion Hayter
Ping	David Price
Pong	Stuart MacFarlane
Emperor	Cedric Gibbons
Lotus Blossom	Hannah Newcomb
So-Shi	Caroline Pearce
Genie of the Lamp	Iain McIntyre
Camilla the Camel	Lorraine Owens & Tony Brindley
Mummy	Paul Tharia
Woman 1	Marilyn Wright
Woman 2	Carol Brain
Woman 3	Sandra Bargh
Woman 4	Fee De Bruler
Woman 5	Margaret Cooling
Woman 6	Glynis McIntyre
Man 1	Rob Spence
Man 2	Alex Gardner
Man 3	Peter Pearce
Page	Richard Rees Pedlar
Guards	Rob Spence & Alex Gardner
Little Wishee Washee	David Harris

Dance Chorus of Villagers and Egyptians

WHO'S WHO?

GRAND PANTOMIME DRAW

With many thanks to all of the following Local Businesses and Friends for prizes -

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OFF CENTRE THEATRE.

- wish to thank the following for their help and support towards the production of Aladdin and also for help during the year:

Rev James Coutts, Peter Burke Fashions, EIS Insurance Agency, Eurolight Lighting Ltd, Eileen Goodrich, Major Harding-Rolls, Paul Hunt, Chris Jones, Glyn Jones, Monmouth Beacon, Monmouth Cycle Centre, Monmouth Town Council, John Smith, St John Ambulance, Triwall (Europe), Dick Williams Trousers Ltd

OFF CENTRE WINS THE LOTTERY

In March 1999 Off Centre Theatre were successful in gaining an "Arts for All" Lottery grant from the Arts Council of Wales. The group received an award totalling £16,270 For the purchase of equipment to enable Off Centre to raise the standard of productions not only in larger venues in Monmouth, but also in smaller locations out of town. In past years Off Centre have taken shows around the area to various venues including The Narth, Dingestow and Llanellan. These productions were staged to raise funds for local and national causes including Cross Ash School, Monmouth Hospital and The British Heart Foundation. A Touring Millennium Show is being planned for the coming summer.

Some of the benefits from the award are on show at this pantomime. They include the electronic keyboard, sound and lighting equipment which in the past had to be hired. Some of the costumes were made using sewing machines bought with the grant money. These, and other items such as a trailer, will now be available to the benefit of the performers and audiences. It will now be possible to create more professional productions when Off Centre is on tour and at venues with less facilities than here at Haberdashers' Monmouth School for Girls.

Jim Newcomb - Widow Twankey

Jim Newcomb was born in London in 1972! but has aged very, very badly. He has been a member of OCT since its birth. He began to wear women's clothing in the early nineties, moving from simple frocks and the occasional wig to ball gowns, make up and 'special' lingerie, which arrives in plain paper parcels. Members of the audience will not be surprised to find, that his spare time is mostly taken up with aerobics, marathon running, speed cycling and weight-training. As he says himself, 'To be a Dame you have to get yourself in shape, a figure like mine just doesn't happen naturally'.



Gordon Casson - Abanazer

Gordon joined Off Centre 11 years ago, when he came to live at The Narth. He has appeared in and/or helped with many of the productions since then. This, however, is only he second appearance on stage in an Off Centre panto. The last time was as Tiny, the giant dwarf, in Snow White! Abanazer is his favourite pantomime character, as it is the ultimate "baddy role"! He is dying for plenty of booing and hissing, so don't disappoint him!



Chris Ryde - Wishee Washee

Chris holds a degree in drama and has been involved with Youth Theatre based in Cardiff. He is making his first appearance on stage in a speaking role since 1974! He is thrilled to be asked to act again so soon. Some people may remember Chris had a small but distinguished part in *Sleeping Beauty* when he appeared in the 'Full Monty' routine. Monmouth residents can breathe easily as this year he is keeping his clothes on. His daughter Emma is a dancer in the show.





Marion Hayter - Aladdin

Marion has been in two Off Centre annual pantomimes before, but never as a principal. She was outstanding when played the 'Wicked Queen' in OCT's junior production of *Snow White* in 1999. Marion, who is currently taking her GCSEs in Drama and History, has been an avid fan of the stage from an early age. She has been a member of Hereford Operatic Youth Group and is really looking forward to her role of Aladdin, but forgive her if she is the shortest member of the cast!

Hannah Newcomb - Lotus Blossom

Hannah Newcomb is sixteen years old and currently studying for her GCSE's, including Drama, at Haberdashers' Monmouth School for Girls. She has been involved in Monmouth Pantomimes since the age of five, when she first trod the boards in 'The Wizard of Oz'. When she is not trying to stop her father wearing women's clothes, she sings, plays the piano and violin and enjoys outdoor pursuits.



Caroline Pearce - So-Shi

Caroline has lived in Monmouth all her life and has been a member of Off Centre since 1994. As a Councillor on Monmouth Town Council and a member of the Twinning Committee, Caroline is involved in many town activities. She has appeared in many Off Centre productions and is a very important member of the committee being OCT's Wardrobe Mistress. She was memorable as the Queen of Hearts in *Alice in Wonderland* in 1999. Her husband Peter is also appearing in this production.



Anne Gibbons-Jones - Slave of the Ring

A member of Off Centre since 1992, Anne has been in every pantomime since 1993. She has appeared in many OCT productions. Her favourite role was Cruella Eville in *Beauty & the Beast* - "cos I love being nasty". She has been a member of Monmouth Operatic Society since 1989, her beautiful singing voice resulting her gaining a number of principal parts such as Katisha in *The Mikado* - "another old dragon". Anne is Head Teacher at Llandogo School ("but not for much longer!")



Cedric Gibbons - The Emperor

A member of Off Centre since 1990, Cedric has appeared in all annual pantomimes since he joined. He is currently Vice-Chairman of the group having been a Committee member for a number of years. His favourite role for Off Centre was Dr Prentiss in *What the Butler Saw*. He has also been a member of Monmouth Operatic Society since 1989. He is well a known 'Man About Town' being Monmouth's traffic warden. His wife complains 'I can't keep him off the streets'.



David Price - Ping

David was Chairman of the Trojan Players and has been a member of Off Centre since 1990. He has appeared in a number of guises for OCT including a vicar in *Habeas Corpus*, a QC in *Witness for the Prosecution* and an errant husband in *Tons of Money*. He was recently Lionel Frush in the farce *Thark*, for Goodrich Arts Society. This is his third appearance in an OCT panto; progressing from the chorus in *Beauty & the Beast*, via Lord Chamberlain in *Sleeping Beauty* to the role of Ping. He finds acting a relaxation from the demanding balance of farming and family life.



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Stuart MacFarlane - Pong

Stuart has lived in Monmouth since 1976 and is one of the founders of Off Centre. Until 1999 he was a member of the Committee serving as Chairman from 1995-98. Formerly in the police, Stuart runs a business supplying cycle accessories to many High Street stores and mail order companies. He has appeared in many OCT productions and for several years directed 'Murder Mysteries' including *A Murder is Announced* by Agatha Christie. His hobbies are boating, amateur dramatics, Rotary and golf.



Iain McIntyre - Gentle of the Lamp

Since moving to the area from N Devon, Iain has worked as a paper and polythene merchant in Monmouth for 17 years. A founder member of Monmouth Operatic Society in 1988, he has sung several memorable principal roles including John Wellington Wells and The Pirate King in Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. This is Iain's third appearance in an OCT pantomime. He has previously terrified small children as both King Rat in *Dick Whittington* and The Beast in *Beauty and the Beast*. He has appeared in many local shows to raise money for charity, including Bridges, Rotary's Pollo Plus, the British Red Cross and Wyesham Scouts.

Tony Brindley & Lorraine Owens - Camilla

Tony made his acting debut for Off Centre in *Sleeping Beauty* last year. It has always been his ambition to play the rear-end of a camel - something he has yet to achieve! He stated: "I am still at the bottom of a large learning curve". Camilla's other half, Lorraine, also appeared in an Off Centre production for the first time in *Sleeping Beauty*. Having now caught the bug, Lorraine who is a nurse at Monmouth Hospital, has an ambition to sing solo on stage: "I keep up my voice training every day in the car where the acoustics are excellent" she says.



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The Experience of A...

Holly Coates - Choreographer



Holly's dancing career started at the age of 3 and she has trained in dance schools in both the UK and abroad. In that time she has gained experience in shows and cabaret as a semi-professional, and for various charities. She has experience in producing, directing and choreographing her own shows. She joined Off Centre 3 years ago as a dancer in *Beauty and the Beast*. Last year she became involved in the choreography of *Sleeping Beauty* and this year she is principal choreographer. At the tender age of 16 Holly has a wealth of experience behind her and a promising career ahead of her as a professional dancer.



Ian Kyd - Stage Manager



Ian's break came when he was plucked from the front of House team to play a major part (a policeman) in the Company's production of *Gaslight* in 1993. Since then Ian has steadily worked down to become back-stage co-ordinator where hopefully he is neither seen nor heard by the audience. An accountant by profession, and a proud owner of a Sinclair C5, Ian is treasurer of Off Centre Theatre. His hobbies include gardening, golf, gambling, retirement and spending Off Centre's money.

The Pantomime of Aladdin



The story of Aladdin is very old, originally appearing as one of the stories from *The One Thousand and One Nights* (or *The Arabian Nights*). This is a collection of stories held together by the framework story of Sheherazade and the King. This tale tells of a king who vowed revenge on all women after his wife was unfaithful to him. Each day he marries a new wife and has her killed the next morning. Sheherazade marries the King, but has a plan to save her life. On her wedding night she begins telling a story which entrals him. When the sun rises she stops her story but the king is so keen to hear what happens next that he spares her life until the next day. This goes on and on each day as she invents more stories. When at last she finishes after a thousand and one nights the king has fallen in love with her and they live happily ever after.

So if Aladdin comes from the Arabian Nights why is the pantomime you see today set in China? After all the Disney version of Aladdin is set in 'Arabia' as opposed to China. The reason is when it was first performed in Britain in the late 1700s people were fascinated by all things from the Orient. Things like willow-pattern plates and Chinese porcelain were very fashionable so it therefore seemed natural to producers of the day to set it in China. This traditional setting has continued through the years. The most famous of pantomime dames, Widow Twankey first appeared in 1861. The name was probably derived from "twankhay" tea which was shipped to Britain from China at that time. Soon after her first appearance she gained a Chinese laundry shortly followed by another son, Wishee Washee.

Although the pantomime you are seeing today has come a long way from the original story from the *Arabian Nights* it is set in the exotic east and moves from China to Egypt and back again. The plot has everything you would expect of a traditional pantomime with a girl dressed as a boy, who is the son of a man dressed as a woman, winning the other girl (surprisingly dressed as a girl), with the involvement of two people dressed in an animal skin - try explaining that to an American (Mami Erwin excepted)



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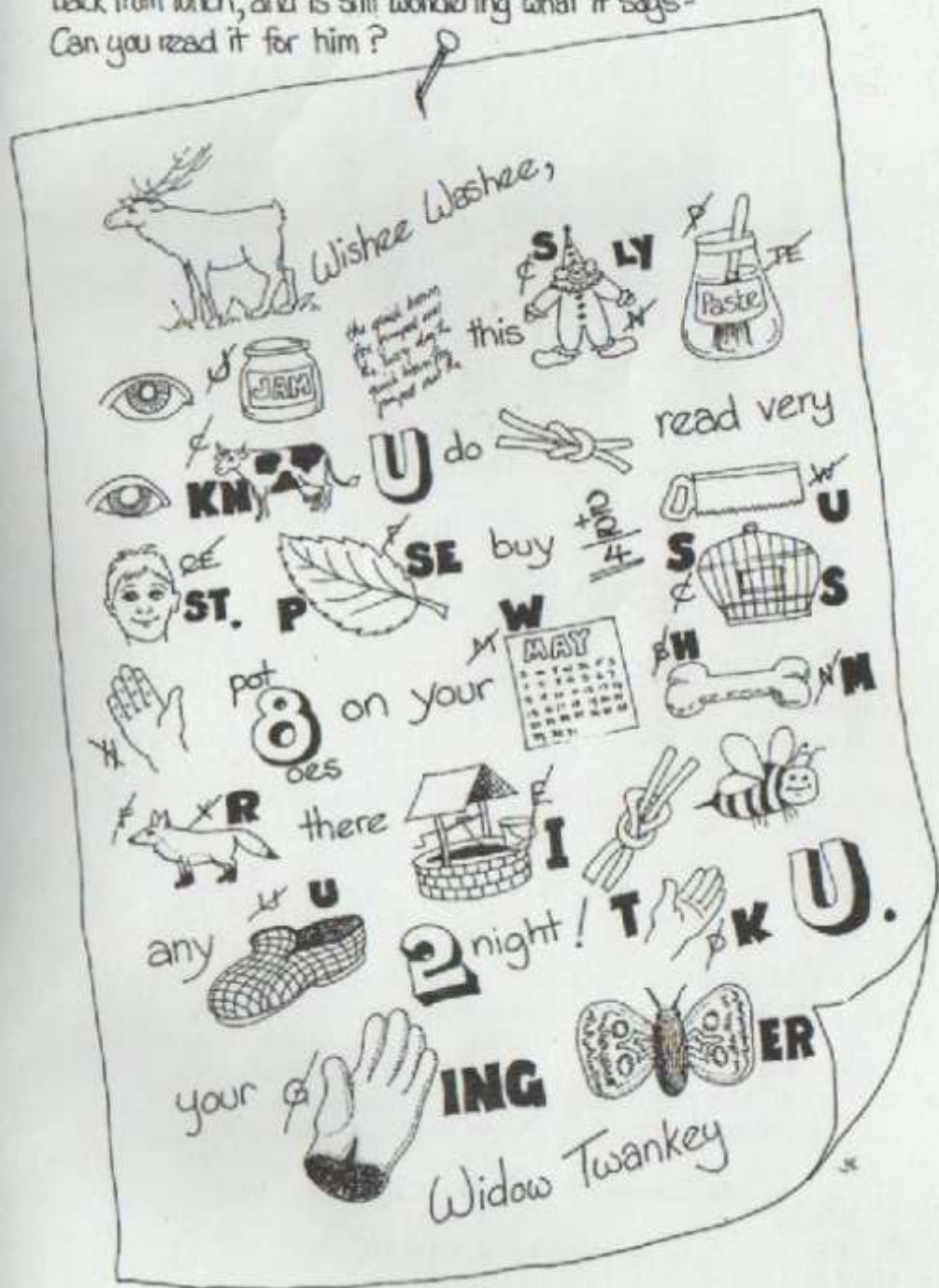
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OFF CENTRE THEATRE ARE ALWAYS NEEDING NEW MEMBERS WHO WANT TO BE INVOLVED IN ANY WAY. IF YOU WANT TO JOIN PLEASE CONTACT OUR MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY, SANDRA BARGH, SPENWOOD, DIXTON ROAD, MONMOUTH, TEL: 01600 772429. ALL AGES ARE WELCOME - NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE NECESSARY.



WHAT'S CHANGED?
 Can you spot the 5 differences between the 2 pictures of the Genie of the Ring?

Wishiee Washee found this note pinned to the Laundry door when he came back from lunch, and is still wondering what it says -
 Can you read it for him?



ALADDIN'S WORDSEARCH

Can you help Aladdin find the following words - look in every direction.

- Abanazer Aladdin
- Camilla China
- Dragon Emerald
- Emperor Flying Carpet
- Genie Gold
- Jewels Lamp
- Laundry Lotus Blossom
- Mummy Ping
- Pong Opal
- Silver
- Slave of the Ring
- Wishiee Washee

E	R	W	T	S	I	L	V	E	R	Y
E	C	A	M	I	L	L	A	I	W	U
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R	Y	B	A	S	N	V	N	B	H	N
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R	R	Z	B	L	A	P	O	L	H	E
O	P	E	L	C	N	L	E	O	E	H
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P	E	A	S	J	G	H	O	J	E	O
M	R	Y	O	U	I	G	P	I	L	E
E	L	A	M	P	A	E	N	W	Q	V
J	H	G	F	R	D	E	S	O	A	A
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