

Director's Notes

How is it possible that in nearly 50 years of theatre-going, reading and film watching I have never come across Billy Liar? When I got the call asking me to direct the play at the Lyceum I hesitated not knowing anything about the script except that it was a northern drama about a young man who lives in a fantasy world.

In 1956 Look Back in Anger exploded onto the theatre scene and overnight changed what was represented on stage. Gritty realism was in, replacing drawing room comedies and the lives of nice, middle-class people. Billy Liar is set in Bradford but could be any northern town and its appeal for me was that I immediately recognised this was my world – the way people speak to each other and the house Billy lives in – all familiar from my childhood in Oldham. Billy is a romantic in a workaday world, dreaming of getting out – and which of us has not done that at some point in our lives? Billy Liar is as relevant today as when it was written. Just think of all the talentless hopefuls who turn up for auditions on X Factor and Britain's Got Talent all eager to fulfill their fantasies of fame and fortune just as Billy does. I hope you enjoy our production and that it awakens some fond memories of life in the 1960s.

Paul Gledhill

Our next production: The Odd Couple

Neil Simon's famous update of his contemporary classic, The Odd Couple, starts with a group of women friends playing their regular game of Trivial Pursuit. This week the friends are meeting at the apartment of Olive Madison, a divorcee who freely admits to being a slob: "I leave a mess when I read a book." Late to arrive is Florence Unger, a stickler for detail who would try the patience of a saint and who has, unfortunately, just become separated from her husband. As life would have it, the slob and the fussy decide to live together - with hilarious results!

Within days Florence's obsessive habits start to take their toll on Olive and their friends. The only remedy Olive can think of (a pair of brothers from Barcelona) disastrously backfires and the two women are forced to agree on one thing – even the best of friends sometimes make the worst of roommates.

Warning: be prepared to laugh a lot. This play is seriously funny!

John Rhodes, director



Billy Liar

by Keith Waterhouse and Willis Hall

8 – 16 April 2016
7.30pm

Cast:

Florence Boothroyd	Joan Duffin
Alice Fisher	Maggie Blaszcok
Geoffrey Fisher	Ean Burgon
Billy Fisher	Nathan Simpson
Arthur Crabtree	Sam Edwards
Barbara	Mary Platts
Rita	Suzanne Clayton
Liz	Alison Knowles

The play is set in an industrial town in the north of England in 1960.

Act I	Saturday morning
Act II	Afternoon of the same day
Act III	Later the same evening

There will be a twenty minute interval between Acts I and II.

Director	Paul Gledhill
Stage Manager	Steven Nathaniel
Lighting	Bob Critchley
Sound	Steven Nathaniel
Props	Jon and Debbie Comyn-Platt
Props Source	Pat Lowe
Wardrobe	Terri Parker and The Company
Producer	Joan Duffin

Set Construction: Roger Stretton, Neville Cavill, David Chadwick, Jim Travis, Jack Hirst, Phil McCarthy, Sue Wharfe, Walt Blaszcok, John Moss, Chris Chester, Ian Orry and Rob Hodgetts

With Thanks to
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