



Audition notice

Bleak Expectations

Wigan Little Theatre is proud to present Bleak Expectations. We would like to invite you to audition for an acting role or contact us if you would like to be part of the production in another area. For a description of each non-acting role, please see the later pages.

Playwright:	Mark Evans
Director:	Lou Steggals
Production Assistant:	Mel Meadows
Audition:	Sunday 12 th April at 2.00 pm in the Bar
Production dates:	Wed 15 th July – Saturday 25 th July

Synopsis of play

Based on the hit Radio 4 show, Bleak Expectations is a fast-paced and hilarious send up of the works of Charles Dickens. We meet the eternally optimistic hero Pip Bin as he battles dastardly villains, improbable coincidences and ridiculous misfortunes in his quest for love, fortune and happiness, helped (and hindered) by his best friend Harry Biscuit, his sisters, and a whole host of Dickensian characters.

Director's Note

This show requires a hugely energetic ensemble, with excellent comic timing, who can take on rapid character changes, tongue-in-cheek story-telling, and physical comedy. We're looking for collaborative and committed performers ready to take on the ridiculous without losing sight of the story.

Rehearsals

Wednesday and Friday evenings, and Sundays (time to be agreed with cast)

Cast List/Characters

Sir Philip Bin (Male, mature) – A legend of the stage (at least in his own head) and the show narrator. A grand Sir Ian McKellen type.

Pip Bin (Male, teens-20s) – our hero of the story. Optimistic and sincere despite everything life throws at him. Able to play the straight man among the chaos

Harry Biscuit/Skinflint Parsinimous (Male/Female, teens-20s) – Pip's sweet but dim childhood best-friend/Gently's business partner.

Pippa Bin – (Female, teens-20s) – Pip's tomboy sister, sensible and stoic

Poppy Bin/Ripely Fecund – (Female, teens-20s) – Pip's youngest sister, typical Dickensian fragility/Pip's later love interest despite hiding her face in a bag for being 'ugly'

Agnes/Flora Dies-Early – (Female, any age) – Pip's mother - a former secretary who loses her marbles following the death of her husband

Gently Benevolent/Trashcan (Male, any age)– the cold, calculating villain of the show, despite the name. Determined to get hold of Pip's inheritance and destroy the Bin family/A business rival of Pip's.

The Hardthrashers (Male, any age) – played by one actor, the Hardthrashers are a comically cruel and selfish family. The actor will play two brothers and one sister.

Thomas/Bakewell (Male, any age) – Pip's father/A Magwitch-type (this actor will also play other small roles throughout the show)

Lucy – (M/F, any age) – a small 'offstage' but vital role, we only ever see Lucy's hand. Will involve a much smaller rehearsal commitment. There will be no audition for this role, please contact the director if interested.

Audition pieces

Sir Phillip: p10-11, p28, p57

Pip: p17-18, p32-35, p84-85 (Pip is in other audition pieces but they will not be part of the primary audition for this character)

Harry/Skinflint: p32-35, p70-71

Pippa: p17-18, p32-35, p85

Poppy/Ripely: p17-18, p63-64, p71

Thomas/Bakewell/ p18-19, p63-64

other roles

Agnes/Flora Dies-Early: p23-25, p77

Gently Benevolent: p23-25, p49-50, p87

Hardthrasher: p29, p49-50, p84-85 (will also read in scenes on p75 and p87 to show other characters)

Director's email address. **lousteggals@sky.com**

Director's telephone number **07963 055967**

Advice can also be sought from any member of the Play Selection and Casting Committee:

Caroline McCann, Cathy Stirrup, Fiona Stewart, Niall Wilkinson, Catherine Finch

THE COMPANY

Actors

WLT aims for a very high standard of production and maximum commitment is required to achieve this. Rehearsals can take place for 8-12 weeks prior to the performance dates, typically 3 or 4 times a week in the evenings or on Sundays. In the event of not being able to attend the audition date, you should contact the director or a member of our Play Selection and Casting Committee (PSCC). Please be aware that only one alternative audition will be held, and times will be limited due to everyone's availability.

Bar

Members of this team should be over the age of 18. They are responsible for working behind the bar, which is open from 7.00 pm until 11.00 pm during each production. Members often do one or two nights during any production.

Box Office

We need friendly and helpful people who have good interpersonal skills both face to face and over the phone. Experience of working with IT would be an advantage but training will be given on the box office computer and administrative systems. Box Office opening hours are 7-9 pm.

Coffee

Coffee is sold during the interval. Most helpers arrive prior to the opening of the show on one or two separate occasions to make and serve the coffee, and once the washing up is done they are free to go!

Front of House

The Front of House (FOH) Team welcome the public to a show, hand them their tickets where appropriate, escort them to their seats if necessary and remain on hand until the end of the show when the FOH representative will wait until the last patron has left before locking the main doors. The usual commitment is for one or two nights during the run of a show from 7-10 pm approximately.

Lighting and sound

The Technical support group is responsible for the design and operation of the lighting and sound for each production. Setting up a new show normally takes place on two or three separate evenings before the Technical Rehearsal, and then two or three members are at the Theatre each night of the production to operate the lighting and sound desks and provide any additional services required by the show. Training will be given, and you won't be left to work alone until you feel completely confident.

Programme Sales

The job is as simple as it sounds! All you need is your smile and the ability to handle cash – then all you have to do is wait for patrons to come to buy a programme! Programme sellers normally arrive at around 6.45 pm and stay on duty until the start of the show at 7.30 pm.

Prompts

Members of the prompt team are never seen - and hopefully never heard – during the run of a production! Prompts work on a rota basis and attend rehearsals for approximately three weeks prior to the opening of a show and for one or two nights during a show, sitting in the wings with a copy of a script, ready to whisper a helpful reminder if required!

Properties

Attention to detail when setting the scene can certainly bring life to a production. This is the aim of the props team. New members are welcome to join us with a view to becoming a props leader. To fulfil this, we are looking for volunteers who are organised, creative and who can deal with situations in a sensible and realistic manner. Commitment to shows and their rehearsal time is necessary. Working together we can create innovative and exciting productions.

Set Building

For this any DIY or trade experience would be useful, but definitely not necessary! A lot of the work involves carrying/moving theatre flats, steps, doors etc. And holding them while they are fixed in place. We have a workshop at the side of the stage with the materials and equipment that we need. There is always someone around, so you won't be asked to do any job or use any tools that you don't feel comfortable with. Generally, we build the sets on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 10 am until 2 pm and Thursday evenings from 7 until 9 pm. All times are approximate and, of course, you can come and go at whatever time suits you within those time periods. So, if you could spare any time at all (even just the odd hour) we would appreciate it.

Set Painting

Set painters bring the set to life with their paintbrushes, whether it's a Victorian Drawing room or a street of terraced houses! You don't have to be Monet – anybody who can use a paintbrush is welcome and the ability to climb a step ladder is also useful. Set painters work during the day, usually the week before a play opens, generally between 10 am and 3 pm. Guidance will be provided along with frequent coffees and a lunch break – and you can stay for as long or as short as you like.

Stage Management

The role of the Stage Manager is to ensure the smooth running of a performance. You will enjoy this role if you are interested in all things theatrical; tactful when dealing with directors, actors and other members of the theatre; able to remain calm under pressure; able to recognise a team; be a good communicator; are mature and sensible in attitude – ideally over 18 years of age.

Sweet Sales

Sweets are sold prior to the start of the show and the interval, along with ice creams, during each performance. Sweet sellers are expected to be on duty from around 6.45 until after the interval, the time for which obviously varies.

Wardrobe

The wardrobe department supplies and constructs suitable costumes for every production. In addition, the department is responsible for cleaning, repairing and maintaining the existing costumes. Some heavy lifting can be required; however, any help is a benefit to support the department. The ability to sew is a bonus.

If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity, please contact secretary@wiganlittletheatre.co.uk

Please note that you will be required to become a member of Wigan Little Theatre to take part in any production, in any capacity.