



Napier Repertory Players

announce

AUDITIONS AUDITIONS AUDITIONS AUDITIONS

for

JOHN LOGAN'S



Peter & Alice

***'Of course, that's how it begins:
a harmless fairy tale to pass the hours.'***

When Alice Liddell Hargreaves met Peter Llewelyn Davies at the opening of a Lewis Carroll exhibition in 1932, the original Alice in Wonderland came face to face with the original Peter Pan. In John Logan's remarkable new play, enchantment and reality collide as this brief encounter lays bare the lives of these two extraordinary characters.

John Logan's extraordinary script was written for England's National Theatre and was produced in 2013 with Dame Judi Dench as Alice Liddell Hargreaves and Ben Whishaw as Peter Llewelyn Davies.



The work explores the exploitation of the characters' childhood selves by their respective authors, and the agony and the ecstasy of inherited fame.

In a note in his script, Logan writes:

Many years ago I came across the following in *The Real Alice*, Anne Clark's biography of Alice Liddell Hargreaves, the model for Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland.

"One June 26 1932 Alice opened the Lewis Carroll exhibition at Bumpus, the London bookshop. Beside her was Peter Davies, the original Peter Pan."

I wondered what they said to each to other.

Auditions: Saturday 17th April, 1.00pm

This will be a group audition because, well, frankly – I prefer group auditions. They're much more fun than boring old one-on-one auditions and it's much easier for me (M'l'directeur) to bounce people off one another and reduce them to tears when they don't deliver what I want.... Seriously, I'm not that bad!!

The individual script pieces for each role are attached to this document and I'll give everyone time to go over them before you present them to the group. I don't expect you to memorise the lines but please be very familiar with them.

I'm hoping the whole audition won't take more than a couple of hours but if we get hundreds of people turning up it might take a few minutes longer.

Auditions will take place at

THE LITTLE THEATRE

76 MCGRATH STREET, NAPIER

Rehearsals

We'll have an initial read-through and get-together some time (by mutual agreement) in April but rehearsals will not properly begin until Sun 2 May.

M'l'directeur is rehearsing and performing in 'Equus' (a minor play being produced by some upstart company) throughout April but he trusts that you'll be reading and re-reading the script of 'Peter and Alice' throughout that time with ultimate aim of actually learning some lines...

We expect to rehearse Tues/Thu evenings and Sun afternoons but this is negotiable. M'l'directeur is very flexible.

All rehearsals will take place at

THE LITTLE THEATRE



76 MCGRATH STREET, NAPIER

Performances: 30th June to 10th July 2021

All performances will take place at

THE LITTLE THEATRE

76 MCGRATH STREET, NAPIER

The Roles:

Peter Llewelyn Davies – Male, 30s. Was, as a boy, the inspiration for the character of Peter Pan.
Polite, quiet, reserved. Upper middle class

Alice Liddell Hargreaves - Female, 80s. Was, as a girl, the inspiration for the character of Alice (as in 'Alice in Wonderland'). Elegant, somewhat severe. Upper class but financially strained.

Lewis Carroll/Rev. Charles Dodgson - Male, 30s. The author of 'Alice in Wonderland'. Intelligent but shy and awkward with a stutter.

James Barrie - Male, 40s. The author of 'Peter Pan'. A brusque, brisk Scotsman. Strangely endearing.

Peter Pan – Male 14 - 20s to play younger. Inquisitive, bright, light and quick.

Alice in Wonderland – Female 14 - 20s to play younger. Intelligent, curious, well-mannered but not one to suffer fools.

Arthur Davies/Reginald Hargreaves/Michael Davies – Male - late 20s -30s. To play the father and brother of Peter, and the husband of Alice – all vastly different characters!



Audition Scripts

Peter Llewelyn Davies / Alice Liddell-Hargreaves:

ALICE: May I ask you a personal question?

PETER: You seem incapable of asking anything but.

ALICE: Were you interfered with?

PETER: Molested you mean? By Barrie? No, nothing like that... Not physically anyway.

This strikes a chord with her.

PETER: To be asked to reckon with things beyond your years? Is that to be molested?... To be fixated upon. To be kept too close.

ALICE: To be forced into feelings you don't understand. To be spoken to about emotions too strong for youth, too deep for childhood.

PETER: To always disappoint because you don't love back enough.

ALICE: To be the dream child in a dream you couldn't possibly comprehend. Being made to grow up too soon.

PETER: Yes. That's it. We've arrived.

ALICE: Where?

PETER: At our story... At Peter and Alice.

ALICE: The love story?

PETER: Partly... And partly that other book. The endlessly painful one with no happy ending.

ALICE: Honestly! I gather it's fashionable among you people to be dreadfully grim and depressive, you wear it as a badge of pride, but it's rather a bore. Now I've had my share of difficulties, but I've always carried on with some hope.

PETER: "Difficulties" you call it? That's a comfortable euphemism, like finding another word for cancer.

ALICE: Loss? Death? Is that what you want to hear?

PETER: That's what it is.

ALICE: I'm not afraid of those words, but I don't luxuriate in them.

PETER: Is that what I do?

ALICE: I think so.



PETER: That's just who I am.

ALICE: It's indulgent.

PETER: Sorry... All right then, let me ask you: these feelings of loss, do you remember the very first time you felt them? ... And were you the same person after?

ALICE: How can I remember something like that? It's too vague.

PETER: Tell me.

ALICE: No.

PETER: Tell me a story, Wendy.

ALICE looks at him. So be it.

ALICE: My sisters and I had gone Reverend Dodgson's studio to be photographed. This was not uncommon; we'd done it many times... I smell the chemicals still... Bromide and chloride dissolved to make the solution for the negative... Then like magic out comes the polished glass plate, which had to be perfectly clean, I've never seen anything cleaner, no dust, no imperfections. Like the skin of a baby, fresh like youth, I don't know like what, like innocence!

PETER: *(Laughs)* Oh God!



Peter Llewelyn Davies / Alice Liddell-Hargreaves:

ALICE: In a hundred years no one will ever remember Alice Liddell. And no one will ever forget Alice in Wonderland... Now you tell me who's more real.

PETER: Mrs. Hargreaves... We can't live in a fantasy. Reality may be hard, but it's all we have. Maybe there was a time but... The war ditched me really, and then Michael's death. The nightmares are pretty unspeakable. You see, when I close my eyes I see them, my family... and I feel... I feel they are waiting for me. As if I would be betraying them if I didn't join them: for we are a family defined by our sadness... To this day I'm frightened to close my eyes, because when I do see them, that line of corpses, lunging for me in the dark... my father, gaping in that monstrous leather jaw... My mother, falling in the parlour, hand outstretched... My brother George, bloody hands gripping the barbed wire tight... My brother Michael, eye staring up, sinking down, reaching for me... I see them... Even now... even now...

He closes his eyes.

Keeps them closed.

PETER: Do you see them?

This harrowing for him.

PETER: I want to hear the mermaids singing to the moon... I want to be young, with my brothers... I want to be sane again and whole... I want... I want... to jump on the wind's back and away we go...

He opens his eyes.

PETER: But here we are. Awake again. Into the truth.

ALICE: I can't afford your truth. I need mine.

PETER: Even if it's not real?

A beat as she gazes at him.

She finally stands.

It's a little difficult getting up. She feels her age.

She looks at him dead on.

ALICE: Shall I tell you about reality, young man? ... When my son Alan was killed in the war, and my son Rex was killed in the war, I thought I could not know more suffering. My husband did not recover from the shock, honestly. He got very old and I with him. He died six years ago, my gallant Mr. Hargreaves. After 46 years of marriage.



Beat.

ALICE: It was then I learned the estate was in less than ideal shape. He had not overseen our finances with the acumen I had expected. That fell to me. I found I could no longer afford to keep the staff intact; those seven pretty maids are no more, Mr. Davies. Cuffnells is a large house and expensive to maintain, so I've closed most of the rooms and spend my days in the library, at the top of the house, where there's little heat and it's very draughty... As I told you, I sold Mr. Dodgson's manuscript for the money. Because I had to... But what will I sell next year?

Beat.

ALICE: My son Caryl and his wife look in on me every now and then, but I bore them so they find excuses to come less and less. My father and mother are long since dead, so too my sisters, so too my friends. No one comes to visit me. I see no one. I am alone... Do you know what it is to be 80 years old and sick and alone? Do you know that truth, Mr Davies?

Beat.

ALICE: And if I sit there in that room at the top of the house and I think about my life and if I shut my eyes from time to time and imagine being warm in the summer and I hear the bees buzzing and for a moment I truly am Alice in Wonderland, do you have the heart to tell me I'm not?

She advances on him:

ALICE: I can be the lonely old woman in the draughty room or I can be Alice in Wonderland... I choose Alice.

Beat.

ALICE: So, now the choice is yours.

PETER: I don't know what you mean.

ALICE: It's your life. Not Mr. Barrie's. Not your brother's. Yours... So choose.

PETER: What would you have me do?

ALICE: I would have you live.

PETER: Believe in fairies?

ALICE: Why not?

PETER: Dance to the pipes in the deep, dark woods?

ALICE: Take my hand. We'll go together.

She holds out her hand.



He looks at her.

At her outstretched hand.

ALICE: I'm a dying old lady, not much loved by anyone... But I know the way to Wonderland.

He longs to.

More than anything.

But he can't.

His heart breaks.

PETER: I have grown up.



Lewis Carroll:

CARROLL: We shall have whatever you like.

ALICE: Please then, Reverend Dodgson, a story.

CARROLL: Well, first things first: if we're to have a story then we must have a p-p-p-

The word doesn't come. His mouth gapes horribly.

This is his stammer.

He starts to panic.

CARROLL: P-p-p-p...

ALICE: Pirate? Poetess?

CARROLL: P-p-protagonist. Who shall be our heroine? Shall it be one of your sisters? Shall it be Lorina? Or should it be Edith?

ALICE: Me!

CARROLL: Why you then, Alice?

ALICE: Because I am your dream child. Because they're awfully silly and I'm not. We understand each other, Mr. Dodgson.

CARROLL: Like two cryptographers, unlocking the same secret.

ALICE: I don't know that word.

CARROLL: That's a word you learn when you're eleven, along with crepuscular and cantilevered... So if we can't be cryptographers, perhaps we'd best be polar explorers, roped together lest a crevasse or snow-blindness make us lose our way.

ALICE: I don't see how one can become blind in snow. I could see losing your way in a cave, or at the bottom of the sea.

CARROLL: I wonder if you'll lose your way someday, Alice?

ALICE: I would think that depends on where we're going in the first place.

CARROLL: It's a simple thing to get lost, you know. You glance around and suddenly everything's changed. Nothing's like it was, even you in the looking glass. Who you thought you were, you're not... And you don't need to be exploring another c-c-c-continent either. You can lose your way right here in Oxford if you're not careful. Right over that hedge.

ALICE: Or down that rabbit hole.



CARROLL tells a story. He's enchanting.

The buzzing of the insects becomes intoxicating music.

CARROLL: So imagine a day like this and a girl like you and a sister like Lorina and you find yourself on a riverbank, and there's a rabbit hole nearby, and perhaps you had one too many jam tarts this morning, so you're ever so soporific, which is a twelve-year-old word in truth, so on this particular, peculiar day you fall asleep...



James Barrie:

BARRIE: No, Peter, you're wrong... There no love in it! No romance, I promise you that...

JAMES BARRIE enters briskly and goes towards PETER. He's a stunted, sad, inspiring Scotsman.

BARRIE: There's not a jot of love or moonlight to be had, except for that moon which can be glimpsed at dead midnight over the Tyburn gallows after those bloodthirsty brigands have met their way and sway from the gibbet. Gather 'round, lads... Here at Black Lake Cottage there's a lake which – you will not be surprised to learn – is black. But do you know why it's black? Not the murky water, though tolerably murky it is. Not the depth of it where no light can pass, though deep it is. It's black because the souls of all the dead men trapped at the bottom, it's been blackened by wickedness, by them that walked the plank, that felt the touch o' the cat, that had their throats slit by that fearsome captain afore his breakfast. What's his name again?

PETER: I can't remember...

BARRIE: What's his name again, Peter?

PETER: Really, I don't -

BARRIE: Come on now! ... Feel the spray of the ocean, like you used to when you were a boy; when you wanted to sail the seas on a triple-master, like every boy does, to see the world, to have adventures, to fly and fight and fly again. What's his name, that piratical gentleman who had us quaking under the covers at night?!

PETER: Hook!

BARRIE: Yes, Hook! Now you're with me! You're on the deck of the mighty galleon as it rolls and pitches, and we're lashed to the wheel together, lad, through the cataracts!

PETER: 'Round the Horn!

BARRIE: Until the maelstrom passes!



Barrie/Arthur:

BARRIE: Don't speak, Arthur. Let me tell you about the boys. George wrote to me from Eton that he wants to come home for the weekend, but I wonder if –

ARTHUR: Jim.

BARRIE: Are you sure you should?

ARTHUR holds up a hand, he must try to speak.

This is agony:

ARTHUR: There is no money... There is my wife... There are five boys.

It is too hard to continue.

BARRIE: Shall I try to find the words for you?

ARTHUR nods.

BARRIE: You're thinking about them now, about the future. You wonder once you've gone what'll become of them.

ARTHUR nods.

BARRIE: You look at me and you feel apprehension.

ARTHUR nods.

BARRIE: For you don't think I'm a good man. For you think I'm closed and cold. For you think my sentimental attachment to your boys is unnatural in ways you can't fathom, and maybe you could if you were a more learned fellow. But in your heart you feel it's not right.

ARTHUR nods

BARRIE: Still you hope that your boys are strong enough to stand on their own two feet and be the fine young men they are going to be, no matter what I do.

ARTHUR nods.

BARRIE: But now you're up against it and we can't do things by halves. This room will be closed and shuttered soon, and no one will come in... And what becomes of the boys? Who's to pay for school? Who's to keep up the house and staff?... Who's to be their father now?

ARTHUR nods.

BARRIE: Are you giving them me, Arthur?

Beat.

ARTHUR nods.



BARRIE: Free and clear?

ARTHUR nods.

BARRIE: Would you say it?

ARTHUR: Yes.

BARRIE: Yes, what, Arthur? I need you to say it. I'm so sorry. I must hear it.

ARTHUR: My boys... my boys... my boys... are yours.

Beat.

BARRIE: Peter, take your father out. Mark him now. That's a good man there. You'll rarely see his like, and never his better.

PETER PAN leads ARTHUR away.



Peter Pan/Alice in Wonderland:

PETER PAN: I'll never understand grown ups!

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: Nor I. They have perfectly good breast of guinea hen in front of them, they only want mutton.

PETER PAN: Any time they're happy, they can't wait to be sad.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: Never here and now, always there and later.

PETER PAN: Always looking at the clock.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: Looking over their shoulder.

PETER PAN: Then back at the clock.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: Time for this, time for that, never time for "Well, here we are, isn't it glorious?"

PETER PAN: Go to a party, look at the cake, long for the cake, reach for the cake –

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: Don't eat the cake.

PETER PAN: I love cake.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: I love pie.

PETER PAN: He loves gin.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: And have you noticed – they're always waiting for it to rain?

PETER PAN: They carry umbrellas on the sunniest days – which is dangerous because if you're attacked you need one hand for your cutlass and the other for your pistol.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: Everyone knows that!

PETER PAN: What do they do when the Indians attack?!

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: They're always forgetting.

PETER PAN: When they're not always remembering.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: So there's never time for tarts.

PETER PAN: Or cutlasses or kites.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: Or croquet!

PETER PAN: Or dancing to the pipes in the deep, dark woods.



ALICE IN WONDERLAND: Like they used to.

PETER PAN: I hear the pipes all the time!

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: She wasn't always like this, mind, like she is now. She was wicked in her day.

PETER PAN: The old lady? Not likely!

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: That darling little sable brush? Pinched it.

PETER PAN: Good for her!

PETER: You didn't!

ALICE: Still have it!

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: And she knew men. Grown up gentlemen I mean, in her day, a lot of them.

ALICE: (*Unpleasantly shocked.*) Oh.

PETER PAN: He carries a flask and drinks all the time.

PETER: (*Quickly to ALICE.*) I told you that.

PETER PAN and ALICE IN WONDERLAND grow increasingly revelatory, but are entirely without rancour:

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: She took lovers and then grew bored.

PETER PAN: His children are embarrassed by his drinking.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: She doesn't love all her sons the same.

ALICE: That's not true!

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: 'Tis.

PETER PAN: He's a great big liar too. Betrays his wife regularly, pretends she doesn't know.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: Does she know?

PETER PAN: Of course she does! He doesn't care.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: She despises tradesmen and blackies and chinkies and pretty much anyone who's not her.

PETER PAN: He still lives on Barrie's money.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: And she still bites into her pillow and cries every night.

PETER PAN: Barrie paid for the publishing house.



ALICE IN WONDERLAND: But thinks other people crying is weakness.

PETER PAN: Hates him, but takes the money.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: She thinks about killing herself.

PETER PAN: He's hit his children.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: She looks at the bottle of laudanum and wonders.

PETER PAN: He fears going mad.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND: She's forgotten how to play croquet.

PETER PAN: He's forgotten how to fly.



Peter and Alice

The Audition Form

Please fill in all areas as fully as possible, print it out and bring it with you to your audition.

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Role(s) Auditioning for:

Do you like pīwakawaka?*

*This might be a trick question. Be very, very, careful.



For further information please contact either

Rob Hickey (Director) – rbhickey@xtra.co.nz

or Sandra Angove (Production Manager) - sandraangove@hotmail.co.nz