



December 2024

We are recruiting for play directors.

We are welcoming expressions of interest for our 2025 season. We welcome both experienced and novice directors, and can offer a mentor, co-direction and lots of other options if you would like to learn the skills required to develop a great show.

If you are interested in a production, we would welcome a brief creative vision, alongside your expression of interest. Please send it to [casting@halifaxplayhouse.org.uk](mailto:casting@halifaxplayhouse.org.uk)

This is our 2025 season:

### **22-26 April Bar Studio**

Maggie May, Frances Poet. 2020

*'They say we're like swans. Ruddy beautiful graceful things on the surface of a lake but underneath we're paddling like mad.'*

Maggie and Gordon first met in 1971 and have been dancing to the sounds of Cliff Richard, Chairmen of the Board, and Jackson 5 ever since. Now in their sixties, and still very much in love, they've been finishing each other's songs all their marriage. But now Maggie is feeling foggy and some days the songs are all she can remember. Her son and new girlfriend are coming to dinner and her best friend is asking questions.

An extraordinary play about an ordinary Leeds family, balancing the challenges of daily life whilst living with dementia. A heartfelt story of hope by award winning playwright **Frances Poet**, **Maggie May** is an inspiring new play with love, laughter and music.

*Maggie May* was created in collaboration with many people living with different types of dementia and their ideas have been crucial in making this play. This included influencing the story, technical design elements, colour choices in the set and costumes, sound and music, and captioned reminders to guide people from scene to scene. All performances of *Maggie May* at Leeds Playhouse were [Dementia Friendly](#).

There was a comfortable space for reflection outside the auditorium – The Picture Booth – for anyone who needed it, designed by Leeds Playhouse Resident Designer **Warda Abbasi**, to amplify the experiences of people living with dementia and their relationship to music.

*Maggie May* contains a naturalistic portrayal of adapting to life with dementia in the first year after diagnosis.

### **13-17 May, Main Stage**

#### **The Ghost Train** by Arnold Ridley (Revised)

Arnold Ridley's classic comedy-thriller, *The Ghost Train*, was first produced in 1925 and has been a firm favourite with professional and non-professional theatre companies ever since. Six passengers find themselves stranded late at night in the waiting-room of an isolated Cornish railway station. Ignoring the ghostly tales and dire warnings of the stationmaster, they decide to stay where they are until morning - with terrifying consequences.

### **10-14 June, Main Stage**

#### **Duke In The Cupboard** by Susan Wear (True story, recent film)

The story of the Duke in the Cupboard is both quirky and true: the theft, in 1961, of Goya's portrait of the Duke of Wellington from the National Gallery, not by a gang of art thieves out to make a fortune for themselves but by an ordinary (but in some ways extraordinary) man of principle from Benwell in Newcastle.

His motivation? Disgust that the government would pay £140,000 to prevent a painting from being taken abroad but pensioners had to pay the full £4 TV licence fee.

### **26-30 August Main Stage.**

#### **Bleak Expectations** by Mark Evans.

Hilarious send up of Dickens' shows. (Radio 4 comedy). The story Charles Dickens might have written after drinking too much gin...

Follow half-orphan Pip's extraordinary exploits with sisters Pippa and Poppy and best friend Harry Biscuit, as they attempt to escape the calculating clutches of the dastardly Mr Gently Benevolent, defeat the hideous Hardthraasher siblings, and deflect disaster at every turn! Will evil be vanquished by virtue? Can love triumph over hate?

Mark Evans' stage play *Bleak Expectations* is a hilarious, chaotic caper, featuring dastardly villains, preposterous names, pulse-quickenning romances, heart-rending death scenes, and definitely, probably, hopefully a happy ending.

### **23-27 September, Main Stage**

#### **Mirror Crack'd** by Agatha Christie adapted by Rachel Wagstaff

In 1960s England, a wind of change is blowing through the land. It has even reached the sleepy village of St Mary Mead. There's a new housing estate to make the villagers curious and fearful, and now the village has been thrown into a frenzy by the news that a glamorous American film star has bought the Manor House. Miss Jane Marple, confined to a chair after an accident, is wondering if life has passed her by. Then there is a vicious murder, and Miss Marple must unravel a web of lies, tragedy and danger. This adaptation of Agatha Christie's famous novel brings real emotional depth and psychological insight to a thrilling story of revenge and dark secrets.

### **21-25 October, Studio Bar**

#### **Breaking The Code** by Hugh Whitmore

A gripping drama based on the life of Alan Turing, a British mathematician and codebreaker who played a key role in cracking the German Enigma code during World War II. Breaking the Code explores Turing's personal life and his struggle to come to terms with his homosexuality in a society that was deeply intolerant of it. The play depicts Turing's difficulties with his sexuality, his pioneering work in computer science, and his eventual tragic death.

As Turing's achievements are celebrated, his personal life is scrutinized by the authorities, and he is eventually prosecuted for homosexuality. The play examines the devastating consequences of this injustice on Turing's life and career, and on the world of science and technology as a whole. Breaking the Code is a moving and thought-provoking tribute to a man who changed the course of history but paid a heavy price for being true to himself.

### **10-14 December, Main Stage (SATURDAY AND SUNDAY MATINEE)**

#### **A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story** by Charles Dickens adapted by Mark Gatiss

It's a cold Christmas Eve and mean-spirited miser Ebenezer Scrooge has an unexpected visit from the spirit of his former business partner Jacob Marley. Bound in chains as punishment for a lifetime of greed, the unearthly figure explains it isn't too late for Scrooge to change his miserly ways in order to escape the same fate, but first he'll have to face three more eerie encounters...

Filled with Dickensian, spine-tingling special effects, prepare to be frightened and delighted in equal measure as you enter the supernatural Victorian world of A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story

### **TBC March 2026**

#### **Crown Matrimonial** by Royce Ryton

The fascinating story of Edward VIII's abdication. Set in Marlborough House between 1936 and 1945, this powerful play focuses on the private family drama of Edward VIII and the Royal Family leading up to the abdication. An engrossing and moving study of both a major constitutional crisis and an overwhelming issue of private and public conflict.

“A gripping and often moving insight into comparatively recent history.” [The Stage]