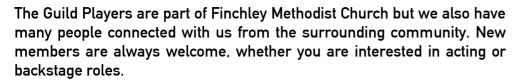
The Guild Players

Part of Finchley Methodist Church

www.quildplayers.org.uk



If you would like further details, or would like to join, please contact our membership secretary Betty Robertson on 020 xxxx xxxx

For more information about us, including photos of past productions visit our extensive website at www.guildplayers.org.uk

To receive details of forthcoming productions, join our mailing list, either via our website, or by sending a text message starting 'GUILD LIST' followed by your name and address to xxxxx

Our next production...

PYGMALION BY BERNARD SHAW

Thursday 21st April at 7.45 pm Friday 22nd April at 7.45 pm Saturday 23rd April at 7.45 pm

Finchley Methodist Church Hall Ballards Lane, London N3

Tickets £7
Box Office 020 xxxx xxxx

"You squashed cabbage leaf... you incarnate insult to the English language: I could pass you off as the Queen of Sheba!"

Professor Henry Higgins takes a bet offered by a fellow linguist, Colonel Pickering, to pass off Eliza Doolittle as a Duchess within six months.

There's just a small problem - Eliza is a common Covent Garden flower seller who can barely string a coherent sentence together. Teaching Eliza to speak properly is one thing, teaching her how to be a lady is quite another.

Better known through its adaptation as the musical 'My Fair Lady', this classic play is a comedy of manners, written by an Irishman who was obsessed with perfecting the usage and pronunciation of the English language.



present



A short modern mystery play for Holy Week by Mike Sparks

Wednesday 23rd March 2005 at 8 pm Brookside Methodist Church, Cat Hill, East Barnet

Maundy Thursday 24th March 2005 at 8 pm Camden Road Baptist Church, Hilldrop Road, Holloway

Good Friday 25th March 2005 at 8 pm Finchley Methodist Church, Ballards Lane, Finchley

An Inn Keeper's Tale

Setting

'The Shepherd and the Crook', a small inn, Jerusalem

Cast

Inn Keeper Mike Sparks

Woman Mary-Ann Ochota

Man in Crowd Neil Grace

Mary Salome Mary-Ann Ochota Mary Magdalene Catherine Walker

Man 1 Stephen Sewell
Man 2 Paul Sparks

Production Team

Author Mike Sparks

Director Laurie Heatherington

Stage Manager David Constable

Mystery plays date back to medieval times, when groups of local people would perform sets of popular religious plays, telling key bible stories from creation, Jesus' life and death, to the last judgement.

From about the eleventh century, plays on biblical subjects were acted out in church by the clergy. These plays became very popular, and eventually moved out of the church into streets and marketplaces, to be performed in English, by lay people, on religious holidays.

The performers who took over from the clergymen were mostly members of craftsmens' guilds which were commonly known as 'mysteries', from the Latin 'mysterium', meaning 'handicraft' or 'office'. Thus, the plays they performed came to be known as 'mystery plays'.

The plays evolved to include topical social themes and comic scenes and jokes, with wildly extravagant costumes and special effects, although the emphasis remained on the message of God's relationship with man and on the promise of salvation through Christ.

The mystery plays would often be performed around the feast of Corpus Christi, which normally falls in mid-June, in an atmosphere of great festivity. The guilds performed on decorated carts called 'pageants', with each play being performed by a particular guild, on a separate cart. On the day of the festival the pageants travelled in procession through the town. Each pageant stopped at each street to perform its play, and then moved on, to be replaced by the next pageant, performing the next episode in the sacred drama. Although each play was fairly short, the complete cycle of plays took a very long time, sometimes more than three days!

A separate subgroup of plays telling the Easter Passion stories developed, and were often performed in Holy Week.

Alongside mystery plays there is a tradition of country drama 'mummers' plays. These folk dramas also involve travelling bands of local performers, and the stories, although at first glance appearing to be more secular, share the themes of resurrection and the triumph of good over evil with the passion and mystery plays.

Mike Sparks' modern piece draws on the traditions of both — a folk drama of the Easter story, acted by local people, travelling to different venues, and combining performance, celebration and worship.