



WHITEFIELD CREATIVE ARTS



Issue 5 February 14<sup>th</sup> 2024

# WHITEFIELD CREATIVE ARTS

## Welcome to the Fifth issue of Whitefield Creative Arts

The intention of this magazine is to promote, publicise and connect creative people who have a link with Whitefield.

This includes anyone who was born and raised in the town, works here, lives here, belongs to and engages with creative organisations within Whitefield, those who perform here... it's a very broad and inclusive grouping.

The term 'creative' covers the visual arts, performing arts, music in its many forms, creative writing, poetry, venues, design, dance, fashion and textiles, exhibitions, mixed and multi-media, the list goes on.

The magazine will be published digitally every six weeks, and available for download on Facebook:

Whitefield Creative Arts

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Cover:  
Detail of painting by  
Ranjana Rani

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**Blues Rock Jam Session Review**

# JANUARY



**T**he start of January saw the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual January Blues Rock Jam session at the Eagle and Child, Higher Lane, Whitefield.

This hugely successful and really well supported event saw Blues Rock musicians from the North West come together to jam and create a great evening.

Above right, the evening was hosted by the ever popular and highly talented 'Rocking Horse', regular performers at the Eagle and Child Blues Rock Wednesday evening sessions.

**EAGLE+CHILD**



**BLUES+ROCK**

THE EAGLE AND CHILD,  
HIGHER LANE, WHITEFIELD,  
M45 7EY

Photos: Steff Walters



## Blues Rock Jam Session Review



Performers at the January session included Nick Bold (centre right) and John Casey (top right). Coverup (below centre), whose rehearsal sessions have been covered in this magazine, used the Jam Session for their first public performance. Below, Chris Tickell led the dancing while a welcome member of the audience was Paul Burgess, drummer with 10cc since 1973.





# A DRAMA and a CRISIS



*The curtain rises.*

Two characters sit in a room. On the other side of the room is a telephone.

*SF/X: A phone rings.*

The First Character walks across the room and picks up the receiver.

First Character: Yes? Yes it is...  
You don't say...  
You don't say...  
You don't say...

The First Character puts down the receiver, pausing thoughtfully.

Second Character: Who was that?

First Character: She didn't say.

*SF/X: Three dramatic chords*

It's an old joke, but it's not funny when you are the Director of a play due to open that evening... and the call is to let you know a major actor in the cast has contracted laryngitis and won't be able to perform.

The Director was Alfred Howard and the play was The Whitefield Garrick's January production of 'Be My Baby'. The cast and crew had been working hard for weeks, rehearsing and refining their production for their opening night on 13th January 2024 when, on Thursday, Catherine Cropper told Alfred Howard she had a



Above:  
Alfred Howard, Director of  
Be My Baby at the  
Whitefield Garrick



Above Right:  
Catherine Cropper as  
'Queenie' during a rehearsal

Photos: Steff Walters

scratchy throat but otherwise felt fine. By Friday, Catherine was finding it difficult to talk. Two other cast members, Rachel Slater and Janet Leather, were also feeling unwell and Alfred Howard took the decision to cancel the dress rehearsal to allow everyone to rest before opening night.

On Saturday morning, Alfred received a text message from Catherine, she had completely lost her voice. Alfred responded to Catherine's message saying, "Thanks for letting me know. Leave it with me."

Following this were a number of frantic phone calls.



Right:  
Mindie Leonard-Lockett,  
with Matt Shreader in a  
performance of 'After the  
Dance' at Whitefield  
Garrick Theatre  
January 2023

Photo: Steff Walters

Far Right:  
Chelsea Nelson

Photo: Daisy Leather

Alfred knew another theatre group, The Marco Players, were due to perform 'Be My Baby' in February. He'd discussed the production with Mindie Leonard-Lockett, a regular actor at the Whitefield Garrick, who was playing Mary in the Marco Player's production. Indeed, Mindi had attended a number of the Garrick rehearsals, reading in for an actor who was unable to join the cast in the first week of rehearsal due to being in another production. Mindi had already mentioned that Chelsea Nelson would be playing Queenie in the Marco Players production, the same part Catherine Cropper had been expecting to play at the Whitefield Garrick, and that Chelsea was a good choice for the part. Alfred knew Chelsea; they had performed together in the Bolton Little Theatre's production of 'Hobson's Choice' in 2022 where Alfred had taken the part of the much put upon Willie Mossop, a particular favourite of his.



Alfred phoned Chelsea... no answer. He then tried her fiancé's number in an attempt to reach her... again, no answer. The play was due to open at 7.30pm and it was now 11.00am. Still, Alfred says, he was determined he wasn't going to cancel the performance. He then texted Chelsea, who he'd only seen a couple of times since Hobson's Choice. "Hey, it's Alfie. Please can you give me a call? ASAP."

Alfred Howard spread his net wider. He texted Kimberley Riley-Shipperbottom, who Alfred had performed with at Bolton Little Theatre in a production of Measure for Measure. "Hey Kim," he asked, "when you did Be My Baby, who played Queenie?" She couldn't remember. He considered calling other people at the Bolton Little Theatre to see if anyone knew who had played the part and how to contact them. He also was at the same time trying to find contacts at Rossendale Players. They had performed Be My Baby in 2021 and Alfred wanted to know who could put him in touch with their Queenie.

Alfred's phone rang... it was Chelsea!

"Hi Chelsea, thanks for calling me back." He said. "Am I right that you're playing Queenie in the Marco production?"

"Yes"

"How would you feel about performing tonight at Whitefield Garrick, it's absolutely fine if you need to use the script..."

There was a long silence. Then Alfred heard Chelsea's fiancé, Joel Cheetham, in the background "Do it! A Whitefield Garrick debut!"

There was another pause, and then Chelsea replied,

"Err, okay... yes... I know the lines, but I don't know the songs yet, and we've not even looked at the dancing"

"Is there any way you would be available to rehearse this afternoon?" Alfred asked. "All afternoon? Please?" She agreed and Alfred said he'd pick her up and drive her to the theatre. He then phoned each of the other cast members, informing them of the situation and asked if they could give their afternoon for an emergency rehearsal.

As Alfred drove Chelsea from her home to the Whitefield Garrick she read through the detailed notes Catherine Cropper had made on her cues and moves. Daisy Leather from the cast also shared a video of one of the dances that Alfred didn't even know existed and which Chelsea watched carefully. Meanwhile Alfred briefed Chelsea on multiple aspects of the Whitefield Garrick's particular production.

By 1.30pm, all of the cast were assembled at the theatre. As the cast rehearsed all of Queenie's dances, songs and interactions, Jane Murphy, a long term member and actor at the Garrick, worked on Chelsea's costume, Chelsea being quite a bit taller than Catherine. Peter Hill and Phil Cohen had heard of the emergency afternoon rehearsal and arrived to run the lighting and sound.

"Chelsea was amazing," said Alfred, "she absorbed everything in record time."

The cast worked through until 4.30pm when Alfred Howard told the cast and crew to get something to eat before returning before 5.30pm





when they ran through almost the whole play without a break. When they finally finished, minutes before 7.00pm, audience members were already gathering in the theatre’s main foyer.

The first night, always fraught, was a complete success. Alfred Howard had announced at the start of the production’s first evening of a cast change at short notice. The audience, guessing at the difficulties that had been overcome, gave a standing ovation at the end of the play. Director Alfred Howard, recognised it wasn’t just Chelsea the applause was for. “It was for the whole cast who have put together a remarkable piece of theatre,” he said, “and one that I’m very proud to have been my directorial debut at the Garrick.”

The whole run was a success. Each night that Chelsea performed, Alfred Howard, as Director, made an announcement to inform the

audience of the substitution, as the programs were already printed with Catherine's name. Apart from that, there were no major changes. “I knew that Chelsea still had about four weeks of rehearsal left at the Marco Players,” said Alfred, “and I’m aware at that stage, even when actors know

their lines they still need the occasional prompt or might go a little astray on the lines. With this in mind, I instructed the cast to be on their toes, to cover for Chelsea when necessary and be creative.” Alfred continued, “I instructed the prompts not to interrupt in the performance unless it was absolutely necessary, and clear that the actors couldn’t recover any errors themselves.”

“Chelsea, was almost perfect,” Alfred reflected, “much better than 99% of actors would be with four weeks rehearsal left. There were a couple of occasions during the very first performance where other cast members helped keep the play moving in the right direction but there were no prompts necessary during the entire run.”

Catherine Cropper was eager to return to the role of Queenie and contacted Alfred Howard. “She would have been able to return on the Thursday,” said Alfred, “but still wasn’t 100% well. Given that Chelsea was doing such a good job, we decided that Catherine should recover fully before performing.” Catherine returned on Friday 19th January. Taking part in that evening’s production and the Saturday matinee and evening shows, she portrayed Queenie, the play’s mouthy, sarcastic and deeply vulnerable character that she had spent weeks developing and refining in rehearsal.

The whole cast and crew of the Whitefield Garrick’s Be My Baby production, working together, had successfully turned a crisis into a drama.



Above:  
Backstage at the Whitefield Garrick during the run of Be My Baby

Photo: Alfred Howard

Right:  
The whole cast of Be My Baby  
Left to Right,  
Jane Embury, Chelsea Nelson,  
Catherine Cropper, Gemma Walker,  
Daisy Leather, Janet Leather,  
Rachel Slater

Photo: Alfred Howard



PH

Chelsea Nelson will be performing as Queenie in the Marco Players production of Be My Baby from Tuesday 7 February to Saturday 10 February 2024 at Stepping Stones, Chorley Old Road, Bolton, BL1 6AH Box Office: 01204 294401

The Whitefield Garrick’s next production will be ‘The Hound of the Baskervilles’ (spoof), Directed by Andrew Close and running from 9th - 16th March 2026.



Left:  
Amanda Whittington, playwright of ‘Be My Baby’ sent her congratulations to the cast and crew at the Whitefield Garrick for the ‘fabulous production’ of her play.





## NORTHERN EXPOSURES

Contemporary Street Photography in the North West  
Photographs by the Streetsnappers Collective North West

# OPEN EVENING

Photos: Steff Walters

**F**riday January 5th 2024 saw the successful first exhibition of Streetsnappers Collective North West at the Garrick Theatre, Whitefield. Streetsnappers North West are a new photographic group specialising in street photography. Fourteen members each submitted two photographs for exhibition, producing a wide variety of styles and approaches to street photography.

The evening was very well supported and was recognised as being of high quality and well presented. Rob Mandell of the group gave a welcome to the exhibition, described the intention of the group and explained how the group intended this to be a travelling exhibition which will appear at venues, first in Liverpool and Blackpool, and then hopefully at other spaces.





## STREETSNAPPERS EXHIBITION OPEN EVENING



Feedback from audiences of the Whitefield Garrick Theatre production, 'Be My Baby' who saw the exhibition during the play's run was highly complimentary of the work and the display in general. Whitefield Garrick Theatre are planning a new exhibition for the theatre foyer showing work by Steff Walters.

PH





**R**anjana Rani is an artist who lives in Preswich and is a member of the Whitefield Life Drawing Group. She recently submitted her painting, 'Ganga Mata Nano Nano: Ganga Puja' to the prestigious biennial exhibition held at the HOME Gallery in Manchester City Centre. She was successful in both having the painting accepted and in selling it.

"The title of my artwork, 'Ganga Mata Nano Nano: Ganga Puja', means we bow and salute you, Mother Goddess, the River Ganges. 'Ganga Puja' means worship of the River Ganges and is painted in oil on canvas. I have tried to capture the scene of devotees traditionally dressed in bright orange and yellow coloured sarees (women) and dhotis (men) worshipping the holy river Ganga (The River Ganges) by chanting Mantra and floating lit lamps and flowers down the river. Ganga Puja is an integral part of Hindu cultural festivals and ceremonies.



Above:  
Detail from 'Ganga Mata  
Nano Nano: Ganga Puja'  
by Ranjana Rani  
Photo: Helen Mandel

"I grew up in Patna, which is a place by River Ganga. I have been inspired by people's faith and devotion to this river which is considered the most sacred Hindu tradition. Hindus believe that bathing in or offering worship to this river can purify the soul and absolve sins which ultimately helps the liberation of the soul (Moksha). The River Ganga is affectionally also referred to as 'Ma' or 'Mata', the Mother Goddess.

The River Ganga has inspired many philosophers, artists and writers, including the poet T.S. Eliot, who referred to it in his famous poem, 'The Waste Land'.

"My painting of Ganga Puja is my homage to the mighty river. I have also created other artworks in my effort to capture and depict how this river impacts different aspects of people's lives."

Ranjana Rani

Ranjana Rani has pursued her interest in art since retiring from medical practice about 5 years ago. She is self taught and finds inspiration in nature and life around her.

Right:  
Ranjana Rani with her  
painting at the  
Manchester Open  
Exhibition 2024  
Photo: Helen Mandel

Below Right:  
Ranjana, centre, with  
Helen Mandel, left,  
and Janis, right,  
outside the exhibition  
at the HOME Gallery,  
Manchester

Ranjana experiments with different styles and media, including oils, acrylic, digital and ceramics. To develop her own style further she takes inspiration from the techniques of other artists and is particularly interested in abstraction and impressionism. Ranjana feels her own passion for bold and vibrant colours comes from her birthplace in India where she grew up.



Ranjana is a member of Whitefield Life Drawing art group which organises 2 sessions each week. This is a vibrant group of about 30 local artists and enthusiasts who Ranjana feels have inspired her and helped her to improve her skills.





In Search of...

# ANDREW CLOSE

Whitefield Garrick are presenting "The Hound of the Baskervilles - the spoof", March 9-16 2024. Director Andrew Close reflects on his journey to his latest project.

**T**he play is a spoof with a cast of three, playing all the parts. It has a similar premise to the production of '39 Steps' which we staged at the Garrick a few years ago. That had a cast of four, so this time they will have to work even harder. Fortunately we have returning John O'Connell, so he is well aware of what is required. Our other cast members, Guy Samuels and Stephen Davies are in for a shock!

I joined Whitefield Garrick in the late 1970's and have directed 22 plays there, and acted in a further 35.

When I joined, the whole place was tiny. A small auditorium and just one back room which served as dressing room, props, kitchen etc. but it had such charm.

PHOTOS: STEFF WALTERS



## ANDREW CLOSE: Director and Actor

Over the years, thanks to tireless work by Garrick members, the place has grown into the state-of-the-art building members now enjoy. It is now total luxury with central heating, bar, lounge, props cellar and costume store. Today's actors don't know they are born!



My amdram activities have not just been with Whitefield Garrick. I have been a member of Bolton Little Theatre for over 60 years, and was Artistic Director for 25 years. This entailed programming a selection of nine plays each season, and directing and acting in many of them. Highlights were directing 'Chicago' the musical with several Garrick members including Pat Hill, Mark Leigh, Caroline Weekes and Matthew James, and a tour of USA acting in 'The Corn is Green'.

I also venture over to Farnworth Little Theatre and Altrincham Garrick to act and direct.

Altrincham Garrick seats 500, so it's a contrast to Whitefield's 90. Shows directed at Altrincham include the musical 'La Cage aux Folles' and 'Goodnight, Mister Tom'.

Paul Kerryson was Artistic Director at Altrincham and I directed 'The Ladykillers' as part of his inaugural season. Paul has been Artistic Director at Manchester Library Theatre, Oldham Coliseum and Leicester Curve, so that was being mentored at a high level.

However, back to Sherlock Holmes. The play is dependent on timing, invention and tight playing. As such, I intend to have a longer rehearsal period than normal.

It is a process of 'layering'. Set the basics, then fill out with business, characterisation and timing.

The set is almost another character in the play. Bespoke pieces need creating and are integral to the action.

Luckily, Whitefield Garrick has set-design/construction team extraordinaire in Martin and Christine

Ashton. Anything is possible for them. The sets they produced for my recent production of P.G.Wodehouse's 'A Damsel in Distress' were magic, and award-nominated.

This production of 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' is my 433rd project, either acting or directing. I'm lucky to have been given so many opportunities.

Which do I prefer? A mixtre of both, I suppose. Directing means no lines to learn, but you are responsible for everything. Acting means a memory job, but you are only responsible for yourself. Someone else does the worrying.

I think it is good for a director to also be an actor. He can appreciate how frightening it is for an actor to "get out there and do it."

Favourite production? It's always the one I'm currently working on.

*Andrew Close*







*Left: Andrew Close and the cast of The Hound of the Baskervilles discuss scene and character development in early rehearsals.*

*Below: Cast and Director observing John O'Connell's deft handling of the bubble making machine during January rehearsals.*



*Below Left to Right: Andrew Close works carefully with Stephen Davies in early rehearsals for the dramatic introduction of the character 'Cecile'*

*Right: The mysterious yet alluring Cecile. Stephen Davies in early February rehearsals.*



**W**hen Andrew Close pitched the spoof play, 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' at the Directors' Evening in February 2023, he made it clear that any actor wishing to be chosen had to be ready for intense rehearsals over a long period.

Rehearsals for 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' started in late January 2024,

immediately after the set for the previous play, 'Be My Baby' was struck. Rarely seen without pads and pens, Andrew Close had already made intense scene by scene notes and would continue to add to and adjust them throughout the rehearsal period. He works closely with the small cast, giving a clear direction of his vision for the production while welcoming creative contributions from the cast.





## ANDREW CLOSE: Director and Actor



*The Yokels*  
Left and Below: Guy Samuels and John O'Connell in rehearsal for their 'Yokel Scene'. Note, Guy's real beard has been seamlessly replaced by an artificial one.



The production has a cast of three actors; John O'Connell, Guy Samuels and Stephen Davies. Between them, however, they play all of the characters including World Famous Detective Sherlock Holmes, the faithful Dr Watson, Sir Henry Baskerville, Sir Charles Baskerville (briefly), a cabbie, two country yokels, the mysterious yet alluring Cecile, Stapleton, a hermit, the Barrymores, and many, many more... including themselves.



*The Bed Scene*  
Left and Above: Guy Samuels and John O'Connell as Sir Henry Baskerville and Dr Watson rehearse their terror on hearing a mournful baying of the Hound.

## Rehearsals: Hound of the Baskervilles

*A London Steamroom*  
Right: John O'Connell, Guy Samuels and Stephen Davies in an early rehearsal for the Steamroom Scene and below in (or in Guy's case out of) costume at a later rehearsal.



Rehearsal for a play like the spoof 'Hound of the Baskervilles' requires meticulous practice and refinement of lines, interaction, movement and quick-change of costume and props. Scenes like the Tango, expressing the burgeoning love between Sir Henry and Cecile, can take many experiments and explorations before achieving its final form.



*The Tango*  
Above: Guy Samuels and Stephen Davies in early rehearsal for the Tango Scene. Note the Scripts and pencils for note making both actors are carrying at this early stage of their exploration.



Above Right and Right: Guy Samuels as Sir Henry Baskerville and Stephen Davis as Cecile explore the potential of that most passionate of dances, The Tango.





# BAHNHOF BERLIN

**An Exhibition of Photos  
by Steff Walters at the  
Whitefield Garrick  
Theatre Foyer**



**W**hen Steff Walters first stepped of the train at S-Bahnhof Friedrichstraße in 2008 she felt she'd come home. Perhaps it was her partial German-Jewish heritage, but exploring Berlin that Summer confirmed to her that here was a sense of belonging and familiarity.

This exhibition at the Whitefield Garrick Theatre foyer is the result of a number of visits to Berlin since first arriving at Friedrichstraße Station. Steff Walters has taken hundreds of photos across the city, but for this exhibition she has chosen to present a series of images around the theme of Berlin stations. Some are the of major S-Bahns, some of U-Bahns but all evoke a city both re-inventing itself while resonating with the echos of it's past.

The exhibition, Bahnhof Berlin, will be open to those attending performances of 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' at Whitefield Garrick Theatre from 9<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

**Left: Bahnhof Alexanderplatz**





**Above: U-Bahnhof Zoologischer Garten  
Top Right: S-Bahnhof Potsdamer Platz  
Centre Right: U-Bahnhof Stadtmitte  
Bottom Right: U-Bahnhof Alexanderplatz**





Right:  
Lemonade at the  
Welcome Inn

Photos: Steff Walters



Right:  
Anita Lee on Bass,  
Chiz (Chris Bentley) on  
vocals and Lead Guitar

# Welcome Back!

**W**hen James Main took over the Welcome Inn on Bury Old Road a short while ago he knew there had once been live Rock Blues bands playing regularly there. He wanted to restore these sessions to the Welcome Inn, so who better to ask advice from than Sue and Michelle, the landladies of The Eagle and Child, home to the highly successful Wednesday Evening Rock Blues Sessions.

Sue and Michelle thought it was a great idea. They'd long known James Main and thought live music would be a great way to bring the crowds back to the Welcome. They pointed James in the direction of Mike Wright, the man who had brought the Wednesday Night sessions to the Eagle and Child and drove its popular success.





Left:  
Gary from  
'Rocking Horse'

Right  
Sue and Michelle,  
landladies of the  
Eagle and Child

Below:  
Nick Bold of 'Nick Bold  
and the Raging Sea'  
(left) with Mike Wright

Centre Right:  
Iain Veitch of 'The  
Torpedoes' and Anita  
Lee of 'Lemonade'

Below Right:  
Chris Tickell  
with locals



Above:  
James Main, Landlord of  
the Welcome Inn (left) and  
Mike Wright

Mike immediately saw James Main's offer as a solution to a problem he was having with his band list. The Eagle and Child's Wednesday Night Sessions were so successful, with more and more bands wanting to play there, the time between a band playing at the Eagle and Child and being able to play there again was getting longer and longer, up to seven or eight months. Starting a second Rock Blues venue at the Welcome Inn was a solution to Mike Wright's problem.

Thursday 1st February 2024 saw the first of the Welcome Inn Rock Blues sessions and it was an immediate success. Lemonade was a great choice to open the sessions, a rocking 4-piece band playing covers with skill, personality and high energy.

Ironically, the Welcome Inn had been the original venue for Rock Blues evenings some years ago but the then landlord wasn't supportive so Mike Wright had approached Sue and Michelle asking if they'd be interested in hosting the evenings at the Eagle and Child. They had immediately agreed and the Wednesday sessions have gone from strength to strength.

There was a great appreciative crowd at the Welcome Inn for the Rock Blues session that included Gary from 'Rocking Horse', Nick Bold from 'Nick Bold and the Raging Sea', Iain Veitch from 'The Torpedoes' as well as Sue and Michelle from the Eagle and Child, all there to wish James Main success in the Thursday Evening Rock Blues sessions. Chris Tickell was in attendance too, seeing if he could get the dancing started as he does each Wednesday at the Eagle and Child.

For a good, fun Rock and Blues night, join Rocking Horse at the Welcome Inn on 15th Feb 2024 which, with the Eagle and Child, is making Whitefield one of the best Rock Blues towns in North Manchester.





# the three o'clock fox

The three o'clock fox  
First out of the blocks  
But stealthy are her movements  
There's no kidding her  
She knows what's what  
This lady's an 'A star' student

The three o'clock fox  
Mocks her prey  
The big grey box  
Also known as the dustbin  
The ultimate urbanite  
Takes sweet delight  
In what is cast away

It makes her day  
When there's a chicken carcass  
Lurking in the darkness  
She's having that for tea  
Thinking 'what a great deal  
A gourmet meal!  
Always tastes better when it's free

The three o'clock fox  
Safely transports the food  
Back to her brood  
And watches the cubs play  
They rumble and tumble  
And ask for apple crumble  
For supper  
In their own special way

The three o'clock fox  
Puts her babes to bed  
Tucks them in under the chin  
And although the sun's just come up  
Her night-time is about to begin

The three o'clock fox  
Gets to work on the dirty socks  
Well -  
Whatever her equivalent may be  
When the uniforms are done  
It's time for a little fun  
And a glass of wine on the settee

The three o'clock fox  
Lays down  
And dreams she's at a soiree  
A lone mother  
Hunter  
Protector  
Mentor  
Prays she gets to her party one day



Poem by **YOKO**

Illustration by Pete Haigh



# Whitefield Garrick Directors' Evening

**W**hitefield Garrick revealed the programme for it's 80th Season on Sunday 4th February with its Annual Directors' Evening. The evening allows five Directors to announce publicly the plays that will be produced in the upcoming season by the Garrick that will run from September 2024 to May 2025. The theatre was filled with actors who listened to the pitches by the Directors and put their names forward indicating their interest for being cast in various roles. It was an evening of fun, excitement and not a little nervousness. There is always competition for the best roles and Directors will consider carefully their casting choices.

*Right: Janet Leather opened the Directors' Evening on the stage of the Whitefield Garrick Theatre, introducing each Director for the upcoming 80<sup>th</sup> Season*

Photos: Steff Walters



**Dear Lupin**  
by Roger Mortimer and  
Charlie Mortimer,  
adapted by Michael Simkins.  
Director: Jon Walker  
21st - 28th September 2024.

Based on a collection of witty and touching letters from a father trying to keep his wayward son on the straight and narrow over 25 years, *Dear Lupin* is filled with crisp anecdotes and sharp observations. Charlie, the son, narrates his life while Roger, his father, plays the parts of many of the characters Charlie meets in his increasingly chaotic life.

Their relationship, expressed through the letters, though at times strained, remains warm and affectionate.

*Right: Jon Walker, pitching *Dear Lupin* to the assembled actors*



**Juno and the Paycock**  
by Sean O'Casey  
Director: John Cunningham  
16th - 23rd November 2024

*Juno and the Paycock* revolves around the misfortunes of the dysfunctional Boyle family. A change in fortunes for the family seems about to happen when they are due to come into an inheritance, but a mistake in the drafting of the will leads the family into even deeper struggles. Meanwhile, brutal IRA troops haunt the shadows, threatening violence and revenge.

The second of Sean O'Casey's 'Dublin Trilogy', *Juno and the Paycock* takes place in the tenements of Dublin in 1922, just after the outbreak of the Irish Civil War.

*Left: John Cunningham was sadly unavailable on Sunday evening but Sam Taylor more than successfully made the pitch for 'Juno and the Paycock'.*







**It's a Wonderful Life**  
adapted by Mary Elliott Nelson  
Director: Andrew Close  
18th - 25th January 2025

George Bentley, an everyman figure in the small midwest town of Bedford Falls, dreams of escape and adventure. Forced through circumstances into a life of small-town obligation and civic duty, an accidental loss of money risks the bank he has given up so much for. On Christmas Eve, in despair, George wishes he'd never been born. Clarence, George's Guardian Angel, comes to earth to show him what things would have been like for family, friends and the town as a whole if George had never been born.

*Left: Andrew Close pitched the much loved 'It's a Wonderful Life'. While the film version is familiar to many and there have been musical and 'radio' adaptations, a stage production of the drama is less well-known.*



*Above: Geoffrey Shindler, Chairman of the Whitefield Garrick Society, overseeing the occasion from the back row of the theatre*

**The Thrill of Love**  
by Amanda Whittington  
Director: Peter Schofield  
15th - 22nd March 2025

When Ruth Ellis shot her lover, David Blakely on 10th April 1955, it took the jury only 20 minutes to find her guilty. Ruth Ellis became the last woman in England to be executed. The Thrill of Love follows the events leading up to the murder exploring Ruth Ellis' life and motives to try and understand why she shot her lover.

*Right: Peter Schofield made a passionate pitch for 'The Thrill of Love' exploring how and why Ruth Ellis came to be the last woman hanged in Britain.*



**Pygmalion**  
by George Bernard Shaw  
Director: Natalie Crompton  
10th - 17th May 2024

Updated to the late 1940s, Pygmalion follows the consequences of a bet between Professor of Phonetics, Henry Higgins and his friend, Colonel Pickering. Higgins says he can turn a common flower girl, Eliza Doolittle, and pass her off as a lady in London society by the use of elocution lessons.

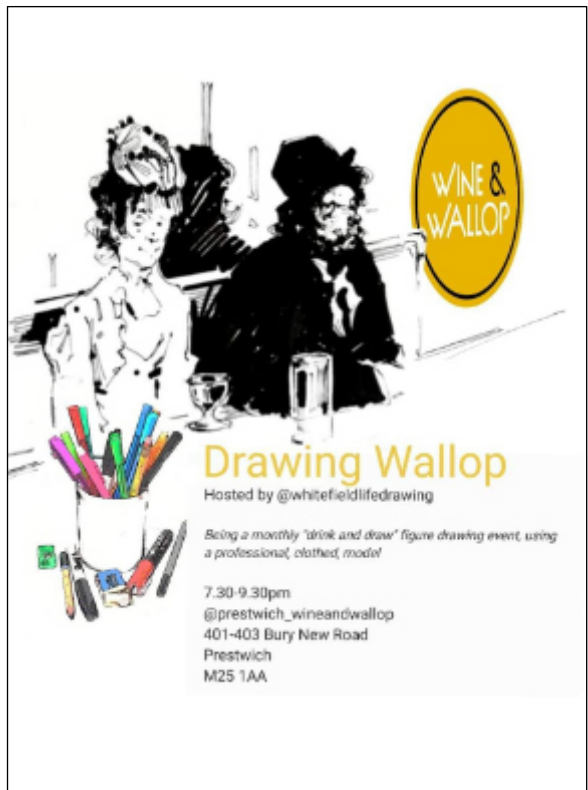
*Left: Natalie Crompton pitching George Bernard Shaw's 'Pygmalion'. While audiences may be more familiar with the musical version, 'My Fair Lady,' this production is Shaw's original conception of the story. Set here in the late 1940s rather than Edwardian England, think less Cecil Beaton, more Dior 'New Look'.*





*Above: After the pitches by the Directors, actors put their names on the play lists, indicating which characters they would like to be considered for. Actors also take the opportunity to meet and talk with Directors, particularly important if they hadn't worked together previously.*

*Right: Members of the Whitefield Garrick Society after the Directors' pitches. Left to right, Phil Cohen, sound technician; Sam Taylor, actor; Martin Ashton, set design and construction; Geoffrey Shindler, Chairman of the Whitefield Garrick Society and Director.*



# Drawing Wallop

An Evening of Figure Drawing, hosted by the Whitefield Life Drawing Group at the Wine and Wallop, Preswich

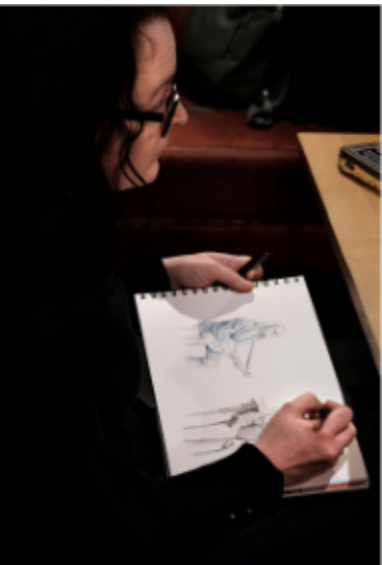
Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 saw a welcome return of Whitefield Life Drawing's monthly 'Drink and Draw' event at the Wine and Wallop, Prestwich.

This session's model was Sean Fitton, a regular model at the Whitefield Life Drawing's Monday classes on Church Lane, Whitefield. Also a poet, Sean performs his work at the monthly Crooked Man Spoken Word event in Preswich.

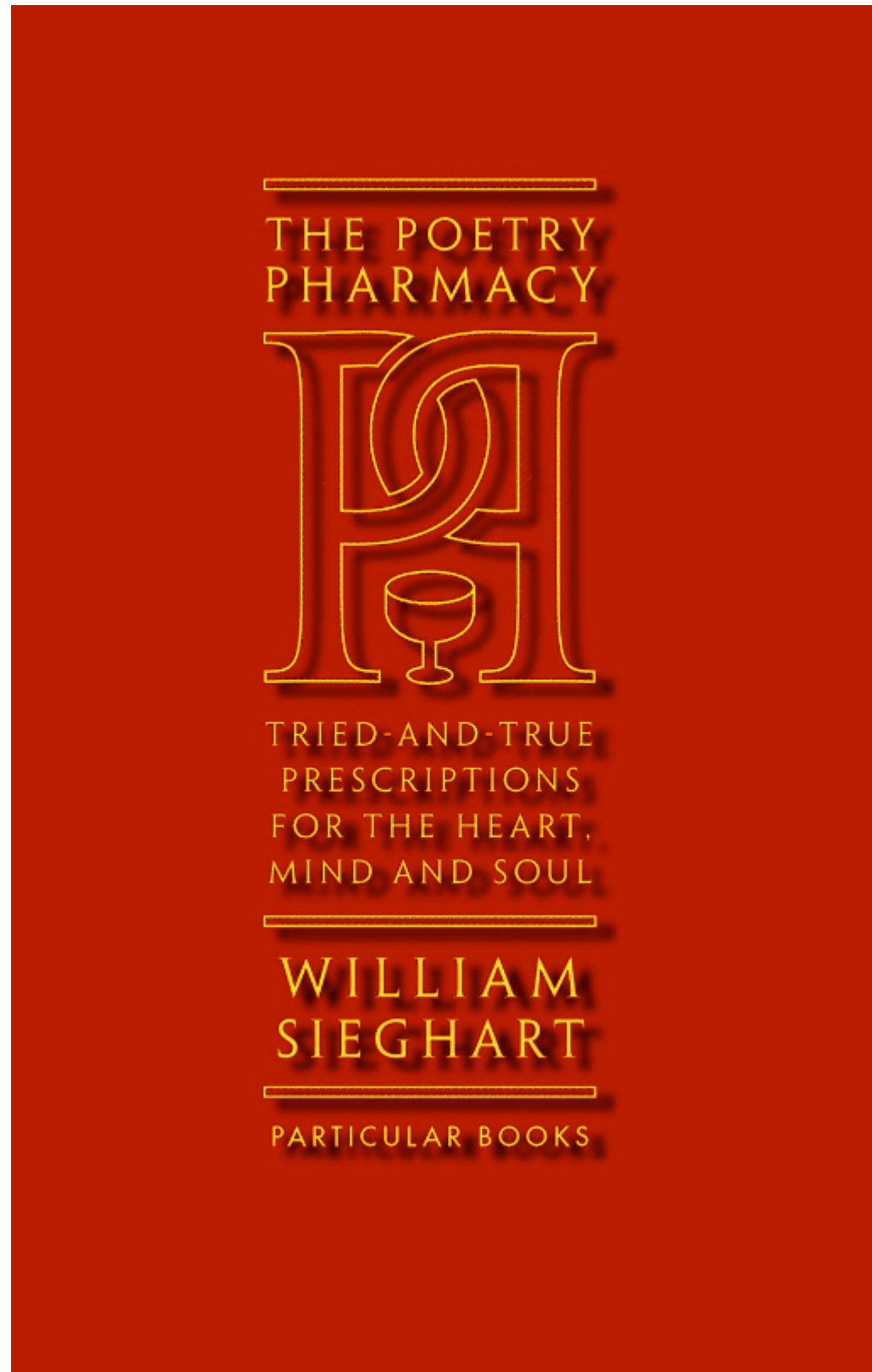
A range of skillful and varied drawings resulted from this well attended event, and a good and enjoyable time, as always, was had by all!

The next Wine and Wallop 'Drawing Wallop' event will be on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

Photos: Robert Mandel







# THE POETRY PHARMACY:

Tried and True Prescriptions for the Heart, Mind and Soul.

Ed. William Sieghart

Penguin 151pp £12.99, Kindle Edition £5.99

As World Poetry Day (25th March) approaches it's an ideal time to consider your stance towards poetry. There's often an underlying assumption that poetry is for 'other people' . You might be an avid reader of biographies, novels or travel books, yet when it comes to poetry some of us often withdraw - it makes us uncomfortable, it can seem too studious or perhaps frustratingly opaque.

**Genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood**

T. S. Eliot

But a poem is not a puzzle to be solved, rather, just as any work of art (music, photography, painting, architecture...), it is there for us to appreciate and engage with on our own terms. We can bring our own reactions and interpretations to the poem to see what thoughts and feelings it generates.

**Words are, of course, the most powerful drug used by mankind**

Rudyard Kipling

A rewarding way to explore the diversity of poetic talent is to treat yourself to the poetry anthology: The Poetry Pharmacy. Edited by William Sieghart, who displays his in-depth knowledge lightly, the book presents a concise, commanding collection of poems which offer wisdom and consolation for those life-changing events we all experience, for when we feel overwhelmed by circumstances. There's great comfort to be had in knowing we're not alone, and when you come across a poem which speaks to you personally, as Sieghart himself says, the perfect poem for the that particular moment might be just the tonic the doctor ordered!

**When you write poetry you are always addressing the world somehow**

John Cooper Clarke

Sieghart, a publisher and philanthropist, has dedicated his career to supporting the arts and literature. It's well worth watching his short Tedx Talk on YouTube (June 2020) , The Healing Power of Literature, to gain a comprehensive overview of Sieghart's philosophy and of his inspiration for creating these 'literary prescriptions'. As Carol Ann Duffy asserts, You can find poetry in your everyday life, in your memory, in what people say on the bus, in the news, or just what's in your heart.

So, when we struggle to make sense of the world, be mindful of the fact that Sieghart's done us a good deed. By offering us wise words and a collection of poetry that may indeed resonate with 'what's in your heart', he's encouraging us to engage with the universal nature of the human condition.

GC

*Gill Campion is a former Lecturer in English Literature who lives in Whitefield.*



Here are a couple of poems from the anthology for you to peruse at leisure. Sieghart precedes each poem with a few short paragraphs which contextualise his reasons for selecting this particular poem for this specific ailment. GC

It happens all the time in heaven  
by Hafez

translated by Daniel Ladinsky

It happens all the time in heaven  
And some day

It will begin to happen  
Again on earth -  
That men and women who are married  
And men and men who are  
Lovers,

And women and women  
Who give each other  
Light  
Often will get down on their knees

And while so tenderly  
Holding their lover's hand,  
  
With tears in their eyes,  
Will sincerely speak, saying,

My dear,  
How can I be more loving to you;

How can I be more  
Kind?

Hafiz 1325–1390 was a Persian lyric poet whose collected works are regarded as one of the peaks of Persian literature. His works are often found in the homes of Persian speakers who learn his poems by heart and use them as everyday proverbs and sayings. Hafez is best known for his Divān, a collection of his surviving poems probably compiled after his death. Hafez primarily wrote in the literary genre of lyric poetry or ghazals, expressing the ecstasy of divine inspiration in the mystical form of love poems.

This poem first was written by Hafez, approximately 700 years ago.

Sieghart categories it under the heading:

The World and Other People, Condition: *Unkindness* (cruelty, intolerance, self-obsession, bickering in relationships).



Divan of Hafez, Persian miniature, 1585.

The second poem selected can be found under the heading:

Motivation, Condition: *Lack of Courage* (fear, lack of conviction, lack of confidence, paralysis of the soul).



Christopher Logue, CBE 1926 – 2011 was an English poet associated with the British Poetry Revival of the late 1960s.

Logue was a playwright and screenwriter as well as a film actor. He was a contributor to *Private Eye* magazine between 1962 and 1993, and won the 2005 Whitbread Poetry Award for *Cold Calls*.

His last major work was an long-term project to render Homer's *Iliad* into a modernist idiom. This work is published in a number of small books, usually equating to two or three books of the original text. The volume, *Homer: War Music*, was shortlisted for the 2002 International Griffin Poetry Prize.

Come to the Edge  
By Christopher Logue

Come to the edge.  
We might fall.  
Come to the edge.  
It's too high!  
COME TO THE EDGE!  
And they came,  
And he pushed,  
And they flew.

Just a sample of the gems that await you - and a perfect gift for yourself or a loved one.

Why not let us know which poem is your own particular favourite, and if you wish, briefly explain the reasons for your choice. The contact email address is given on the final page of the magazine.

GC



**EAGLE+CHILD**



**BLUES+ROCK**

THE EAGLE AND CHILD,  
HIGHER LANE, WHITEFIELD.  
M45 7EY

- |             |                             |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 21 February | <b>The Dirty Truth</b>      |
| 28 February | <b>Ginpit</b>               |
| 6 March     | <b>The Rocking Train</b>    |
| 13 March    | <b>Between the Vines</b>    |
| 20 March    | <b>Kingbird</b>             |
| 27 March    | <b>Blues With A Feeling</b> |

Bands supplied by Mike Wright  
Contact: 07958 474635



*The*  
**Hound**  
*of the*  
**Baskervilles** (Spoof)

**Director: Andrew Close**  
*9th - 16th March 2024*

**Whitefield Garrick Theatre,**  
**Bank Street, Whitefield. M45 7JF**  
E-mail: [whitefieldgarrickmail@gmail.com](mailto:whitefieldgarrickmail@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.whitefieldgarrick.org](http://www.whitefieldgarrick.org)  
[Ticketsource.co.uk/whitefieldgarrick](http://Ticketsource.co.uk/whitefieldgarrick)  
Ticketsource Box Office 0333 666 3366

**ALL  
SAINTS  
STAND**

**CHURCH LANE, WHITEFIELD**

**Bury Choral**  
**Brahms Requiem**  
Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March  
7.30pm

**Augmented Choir**  
**Stainer's Crucifixion**  
Sunday March 17<sup>th</sup>  
6pm



**BAHNHOF  
BERLIN**

**An Exhibition of Photos by Steff Walters**  
**at the Whitefield Garrick Theatre Foyer**

**The exhibition, Bahnhof Berlin, will be open to those attending performances of 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' at Whitefield Garrick Theatre from 9<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> March 2024.**





The Welcome Inn  
61 Bury Old Road,  
Whitefield  
M45 6TA

15 February **Rocking Horse**  
29 February **The Cheating Hearts**

March Events **tbc**

Bands supplied by Mike Wright  
Contact: 07958 474635

## whitefieldlifedrawing



The group meets twice a week, Mondays and Fridays, from 10.00am -12.30pm in the All Saint's Stand Church Hall on Church Lane in Whitefield.

Information about the club, the dates of sessions, times, costs and examples of work produced by members can be seen on the website:  
<https://whitefield.co.uk>

If you have further questions you can e-mail:  
[whitefieldpaintinggroup@gmail.com](mailto:whitefieldpaintinggroup@gmail.com).

There is also a Facebook page at:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/212189623164093/>

## Further..a Whitefield



### **PADOS YOUTH GROUP**

is excited to be returning to The Met, where they will be performing the school edition of

### **Les Misérables.**

Wed 20 Mar 7:30 PM  
Thu 21 Mar 7:30 PM  
Fri 22 Mar 7:30 PM  
Sat 23 Mar 2:30 PM, 7:30 PM

**Derby Hall @ The Met**  
£18 (inc fees)

*Duration approx. 2 hours 30 mins (inc interval).*



### **Word Central**

An Open Mic and Spoken Word event  
At Manchester Central Library  
St Peter's Square

Hosted by **Tony Curry**  
5<sup>th</sup> March 6.00-7.45pm



### **Come and join us CIRCLE DANCING.**

Gentle, fun exercise to many different styles of music.  
No need for a partner.  
Each dance is taught.  
All sessions start at 2pm.  
Upcoming dates: Thursday 22nd February, Thursday 21st March.  
Where: New Jerusalem Church, Charles St, Kearsley BL4 9DD (opposite Kearsley West Primary School)  
£3 per session, including light refreshments.

**ALL WELCOME**





Thank you for reading this fifth issue of Whitefield Creative Arts.  
If there is anyone who you feel may be interested in reading this  
magazine, please let them know they can download it from

**Facebook: Whitefield Creative Arts**

or alternatively

**e-mail: [whitefieldcreativearts@hotmail.com](mailto:whitefieldcreativearts@hotmail.com)**

Comments and contributions for the magazine to the same  
e-mail address.

The sixth issue of Whitefield Creative Arts will be available on  
1st April 2024

Pete Haigh: Contributing Editor/Designer

