



THE MADNESS OF GEORGE III

HIS MAJESTY WAS ALL POWERFUL AND ALL KNOWING.
BUT HE WASN'T QUITE ALL THERE.

By Alan Bennett

TUE 7 MARCH - SAT 11 MARCH 2023

Programme £2



TEDDINGTON
THEATRE CLUB

Teddington Theatre Club

Formed in 1927, Teddington Theatre Club (TTC) is now one of the leading amateur drama groups in south west London, performing in their own custom-built theatre in Hampton Hill. Starting out to stage Shakespeare for schools, it soon developed to stage a wide repertoire of plays for the general public, originally to raise funds for its schools programmes.

TTC's first production, in 1927, was *Scenes from Twelfth Night* followed in 1928 with *The Merchant of Venice* and *Scenes from As You Like It*. Since then, the Club has gone on to put on over 670 productions and counting as it rapidly approaches its hundredth anniversary. Having performed four or five productions a year in hired halls for many years, in 1969 the Club was granted a lease of part of Richmond Council's Hampton Court House and after two years of conversion work finally opened its own theatre in 1971.

As the lease came towards its end, negotiations with Richmond Council secured a site on Hampton Hill High Street for a new theatre and after a concentrated period of fundraising and with a grant from the National Lottery, the well-equipped Hampton Hill Playhouse (now Theatre) was opened in 1998.

TTC present about ten productions a year and welcome new members - from those who wish to be on stage to the technical teams or front of house. All shows at the Theatre are supported by a huge team of volunteers – so thanks to all of those who have supported this show with marketing, front of house, bar, health & safety, box office, finance and more.

There are lots of ways to get involved, so please go to our website to find out more and to keep in touch with what's on at Hampton Hill Theatre, sign up to our monthly show listing at

www.hamptonhilltheatre.org.uk



THE MADNESS OF **GEORGE III**

HIS MAJESTY WAS ALL POWERFUL AND ALL KNOWING.
BUT HE WASN'T QUITE ALL THERE.

Written by Alan Bennett

Directed by Sally Halsey

The events of this play take place in 1788 across
five locations - Windsor, Kew, Westminster,
Carlton House and St. Paul's Cathedral

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with
Concord Theatricals Ltd.

Welcome

Welcome to Hampton Hill Theatre and Teddington Theatre Club's production of Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III*. It's marvellous to see audiences flocking back to enjoy the unique communal experience of live theatre. Legend has it that the movie version of tonight's play was retitled *The Madness of King George*, so American audiences wouldn't think they'd missed the franchise's first two instalments. Whether that's true or not, don't miss the rest of TTC's gloriously varied season! Next week, we present another modern classic: Mike Bartlett's hard-hitting *Bull*. Like *George*, it's both a powerful play and an incisive exploration of power-at-play, but here focused on 21st century office politics.

Then our brace of summer shows ricochet from the ridiculous to the sublime: *The Complete Works of Shakespeare (Abridged)* and Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. We're auditioning for both very soon: 12th and 19th March respectively, so do come along if you'd like to act with us. Likewise, if you're interested in helping backstage or 'front of house', we can provide all the training you need, so just get in touch: artistic@teddingtontheatreclub.org.uk.

Great theatre is the most glorious melding of make-believe and make-real. *The Madness of George III* is testament to that, with Alan Bennett taking considerable liberties with 'the truth'. One has only to search 'George III', 'Fortnum' or the play's hero 'Dr Willis' (J) to realise the sinuous, selective, subjective nature of both Bennett's piece and all fictional interpretation of 'fact'. Three years before, Prunella Scales portrayed Queen Elizabeth II in Bennett's *Single Spies*. Allegedly, when HMQ was later bestowing the CBE on lovely Pru, the former whispered, "I suppose you think you ought to be doing this". It's only alleged, but it smacks of truth. In *The History Boys*, Bennett defines history as "commentary on the incapacities of men. History is women following behind with the bucket". Without acknowledging a universal truth, I do want to offer heartfelt thanks to tonight's director Sally Halsey. And to her consummate cast and creative crew, and our equally invaluable front of house team.

I hope you enjoy your evening & return soon.

Daniel Wain,

(Artistic Director)





Director's Notes

Directing a play for TTC is always an exciting adventure for me and this production has been no exception. A large cast play presents wonderful opportunities to encourage new members into the club, to work with familiar faces I've seen on the TTC stage but not had an opportunity to work with, and to renew old friendships with those who I've been lucky enough to direct or perform with in the past.

The audition process for a play is never easy (either for those auditioning or for those making the casting choices) and, some months ago, I made the decision to make this task even more of a challenge by announcing that casting would not be influenced by an actors gender, race, colour or age, but purely based on their approach to and ability to perform each role. As a result (and also due to the quality of Bennett's wonderful script), we had an amazing turn-out for the auditions and I was able to cast the fantastic group of very talented actors you see today.

From the onset of rehearsals, the whole cast have been hugely involved in making sure we treated this production with the sensitivity it deserves. We wanted to bring out the humour of Alan Bennett's script but we didn't want to do this at the expense of King George himself who has been the butt of far too many cruel jibes over the years and the subject of much misinformed, albeit well intentioned, knowledge concerning the cause of his 'madness'.

In recent years, following the release of various papers and documents from the Royal archives, there has been a new focus of attention on the cause of King George's madness. The previously held notion that he suffered from porphyria has been discounted and scholars are now generally of the opinion that the King was, in fact, bipolar. But even without this knowledge, it seems ludicrous to us now to think that any of the tortuous treatments he was made to endure at the hands of his doctors would ever have been able to cure him.

This play is more than just a simple account of what happened when George III went mad – it is a complex piece that deals with difficulties in royal relationships, political intrigue when party loyalties are tested, and conflict arising from differing opinions in the treatment of mental health. It is fascinating to note how little seems to have changed over the years and how much resonance all of these issues have in our modern world. We witness political infighting and intrigue having a regular impact on the functioning ability of the government and opposition; we observe our royal family experiencing very public difficulties in their relationships; and we talk about mental wellbeing as something that affects us all and which is high on our agenda right now.

We know that there will be very few people in the audience this evening who have not had some experience of mental ill-health – either in relation to themselves or to a friend or family member. But despite this fact, we also know that there have been huge leaps forward in our understanding of mental illness and it is greatly reassuring to know that it no longer carries the stigmas of the past. We have a much better knowledge of the causes and treatments for mental illness and, more importantly, this increased awareness has enabled each of us to have a better understanding of how we can help and support those who suffer.

I hope that all of you will enjoy watching our production this evening – that you will be blown away by the talents of our cast and production team, that you will be entertained by Alan Bennett's wonderful words, and that you will feel thankful that no-one else will, ever again, be subjected to the indignities and tortures that 'Farmer George' had to endure in pursuit of a cure for 'madness'.

Thanks again for coming - ENJOY!

Sally Halvey

(Director)



A Note about the Writer

Many of our audience will already be familiar with the key highlights of Alan Bennett's life, education and career.

Born in 1934 in Leeds, he studied at Exeter College (Oxford) then after a period of National Service, became a lecturer for a short time at Oxford University. To date he has been an actor, director and broadcaster, and written for stage, television, radio and film. Notable successes include the monologues for television *Talking Heads* (1988 and 1998), his 1999 play *The Lady in the Van*, made into a film starring Maggie Smith, *The History Boys* (2004), and more pertinently for us at TTC, *The Madness of George III* (1991) which was made into a film in 1994, and for which he received an Oscar nomination for his screenplay adaptation.

In this biography, I have therefore decided to go further and find the quirkier details to better furnish our audience with the nuances of his life and to get a better sense of Bennett, the man.

For starters, Bennett learned Russian at the Joint Services School for Linguists during his National Service stint before applying for a scholarship at Oxford, whereupon he studied History, a fact he attributes to having informed his writing of *The History Boys*.

Despite his national acclaim, in 1988, Bennett declined the award of Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) and in 1996 declined a knighthood.

In September 2005, Bennett revealed that, in 1997, he had undergone treatment for colorectal cancer, and described the illness as a "bore". His chances of survival were given as being "much less" than 50%. He began *Untold Stories* (published 2005) thinking it would be published posthumously, but his cancer went into remission.



Hugo Glendinning

In these autobiographical sketches which form a large part of the book, Bennett wrote openly for the first time about his bisexuality. Previously, Bennett had referred to questions about his sexuality as like asking a man who has just crawled across the Sahara desert to choose between Perrier or Malvern mineral water.

October 2008, Bennett announced that he was donating his entire archive of working papers, unpublished manuscripts, diaries and books to the Bodleian Library, stating that it was a gesture of thanks to repay a debt he felt he owed to the British welfare state, that had given him educational opportunities which his humble family background would otherwise have never afforded.

In doing this research, I stumbled upon an audio recording of his diaries from 2021, released by London Review of Books. I therefore leave you with some quirky words Alan Bennett attributes to his father and often heard spoken in talking to the family cat!

Jollop = any sort of liquid mess, like blancmange

Tittlemere = I don't know either way

Heloise Plumley

(Director's Assistant)



The Cast

The Royal Household

King George III	Jane Marcus
Queen Charlotte	Enid Gayle
Prince of Wales, George	Lara Parker
Duke of York and Albany, Prince Frederick	September Taliana-Carey
.....	
Lady Elizabeth Pembroke	Cathy Early
Captain Fitzroy	Oliver Tims
Captain Greville	Andy Hewitt
Papandiek.....	Mandy Stenhouse
Braun	Charles Halford
Fortnum	Sian Walters
Thomson.....	Ellie Armstrong



Jane Marcus



Enid Gayle



Lara Parker



September Taliana-Carey



Cathy Early



Oliver Tims



Andy Hewitt



Mandy Stenhouse



Charles Halford



Sian Walters



Ellie Armstrong

The Cast Cont

The Doctors

Dr. Francis Willis..... Daniel Wain
Sir George Baker..... Jeremy Gill
Dr. Richard Warren..... Alan Hooker
Sir Lucas Pepys..... Christopher Burgess

The Politicians

William Pitt, the Prime Minister..... Julian Briscoe
Edward Thurlow, the Lord Chancellor John Mortley
Charles Fox Kevin Sebastian-Pillai
Thomas Dundas Em Westwood
Richard Sheridan..... Dominic Lloyd

The Others

Margaret Nicholson Cathy Early
Sir Boothby Skrymshire..... Charles Halford
Ramsden Sian Walters
Footman to the Prince of Wales Ellie Armstrong
Footman at the Palace of Westminster Ellie Armstrong



Daniel Wain



Jeremy Gill



Alan Hooker



Christopher Burgess



Julian Briscoe



John Mortley



Kevin Sebastian-Pilla



Em Westwood



Dominic Lloyd

From Bethlehem to Bedlam

Note on an extraordinary travel inside mental health treatment in Britain.

We met at the place where children came to claim asylum in Britain in 1938, the Kindertransport statue in Liverpool Street. A few cast members of *The Madness of George III* joined us on this extraordinary walking tour, which I wholeheartedly recommend to any TTC members. Asylum was initially a place of shelter, of treatment, for people with mental illness.

The most famous asylum in Britain was Bethlehem Hospital which became Bedlam. It started as a hospice monastery in 1329, named after the Bishop of Bethlehem. From a place of shelter and refuge it evolved into a money making institution for the Monro family who ran it for profit and not to cure its patients. They opened the hospital to visitors as a human zoo for profits, similar to the colonial human zoos and freak shows of the Victorian era and the complete dehumanisation that went with them.

Queen Charlotte met with Bedlam owners, the Monros, ONCE, and she refused to let her husband King George III anywhere near them. That should tell you all there is to know about Bedlam. Still Bedlam was the only choice some had at the time. At least it was free. At least you did not have to beg at the city gates. At least you had a roof over your head. When Bedlam shut down, there were people who had been chained up there for as long as 12 years.

We have made progress in treating mental illness and talking about it since the Georgian era. The Royal Family has recently been instrumental in opening the debate on the worldwide stage, by embracing the Heads Together mental health campaign. So, we have made some efforts. But in the words of our tour guide, hospitals and mental institutions have also traded chains and strait jackets for medical prescriptions to numb patients just to make them manageable instead of helping them cope with their conditions and rehabilitate them in society.

Back to Bedlam: One man sought to change its reality: William Batty. After a friend was committed to Bedlam and died within a week, he knew it was a call to change things. In his work at St Luke's Hospital, 85% of Batty's patients were released in the community. Those people had a uniform, and were easily identifiable, hence the expressions to be a bit batty. In contrast 85% of patients in Bedlam never returned to their community.

The Quakers, with their belief that God dwells in every man, have long worked to improve the lives of people suffering with mental health issues. In 1796 William Tuke founded The Retreat in York, an institution similar to Francis Willis' own where residents worked, took fresh air and were well treated and in 1813 it was the Quakers who founded the first private mental health hospital in the United States. The Quakers almost single handedly changed our approach to mental health treatment which we still benefit from today.

Back in the 18th and 19th centuries women were more at risk of being unfairly committed in an asylum if they exhibited various physical humours or sickness which were believed to be a sign of mental illness. We have travelled a long way from the belief that women's mental health is different from men's because they were more prone to humours and imbalances. Indeed, until relatively recently it was believed that women's wombs travelled in the body. And when they were exhibiting signs of hysteria or bad humours or feeling unwell, it meant their womb was travelling in their head to seek copulation, hence the imbalance. I kid you not!

In the specific case of George III, our guide was extremely thorough in enlightening us about his treatments. He cast a doubt about the porphyria diagnosis which led to his blue urine. But he highlighted some very interesting facts about Alan Bennett and the genesis of the play in the 90's, which you can only find out if you book the tour with our extraordinary guide, Berwyn. George III still had episodes of his mental illness but he learnt to manage his condition over time, which is what oriental medicine at its golden age of knowledge advocated for. Florence Nightingale wanted Turkish baths installed in London to allow people to cleanse the body and mind instead of purging them with hot cups and leeches and suffering other unsavoury, barbaric treatments.

The King had the means to stay away from Bedlam.
But how many others didn't?

Shana de Carsignac Mongwanga

Tour details: www.discovermedicallondon.com



In Rehearsal



With thanks to:

Huw Morgan Jones & Berwyn Kinsey at Discover Medical London

Catherine McFall & Jennifer Tran at Historic Royal Palaces

Richmond Shakespeare Society

Mr Sally & Mr Lottie for their patience and forbearance

Fiona Auty and Priya Virdee

The wonderful bar and front of house teams at TTC without whom the show literally would not go on



Production Team

Director Sally Halsey

Production Manager Lottie Walker

Stage Manager Harri Osborne

Fight Choreographer..... September Taliana-Carey

Original Design Concept and Scenic Art Junis Olmscheid

Lighting Design & Projections..... John Hart

Lighting Operation Katie Barbarez

Sound..... Jacob Taylor

Wardrobe Lead Lesley Alexander

Wardrobe Maggie Revis, Mags Wrightson

..... Suzanne Strachan, Margaret Boulton

..... Fiona Breaks, Gillian Parsons, Liz Garrigan

Props..... Jacqui Grebot

Stage Crew/ASM Nigel Cole, Zoe Man

..... Karina Vorontsova-Heys

Set Build Team Alan Corbett, Fiona Auty, Libby Duncan

..... Charlie Diprose, Jack Tidball, Priya Virdee

..... Junis Olmscheid, Karina Vorontsova-Heys, Tom Poldre

Wigs & Make-Up..... Junis Olmscheid

Wigs & Make-Up Team..... Juanita Al-Dahhan, Libby Duncan

..... Shana de Carsignac Mongwanga, Louise Ellard-Turnbull

Director's AssistantHéloïse Plumley
Production Assistant..... Shana de Carsignac Mongwanga

Artistic Link..... Nigel Cole
BAT Link Dave Rumens

Programme Design.....Fiona Auty
Photography Steve Sitton
Publicity..... Christine Wayman



Timeline

For a quiet and studious family man King George III lived through his fair share of drama. The following is but a small list of the events that occurred during his lifetime, which was turbulent to say the least.

- 1738 4th June – George William Frederick is born
- 1751 George becomes Prince of Wales
- 1760 George succeeds to the throne
- 1761 King George marries Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz & they are crowned the following day
- 1766 Pitt the Elder becomes Prime minister (for one year only)
- 1772 The Royal Marriages Act
- 1773 The Boston Tea Party
- 1776 America declares independence
- 1780 The Gordon Riots
- 1783 Pitt the Younger becomes Prime Minister & the King first exhibits the signs of mental illness
- 1788 The King has a more serious and distressing bout of illness; he convalesces at Cheltenham
- 1789 The French Revolution
- 1793 France declares war on Great Britain
- 1798 Irish Rebellion
- 1800 The Act of Union passes, coming into force on January 1st 1801
- 1803 The Battle of Trafalgar
- 1807 The Slave Trade Act
- 1810 The King's health seriously declines
- 1811 The King goes into seclusion at Windsor
The Regency Era begins
- 1812 Prime Minister Spencer Perceval is assassinated
- 1814 King George becomes King of Hanover but is unaware
- 1818 Queen Charlotte dies, the King is likely unaware
- 1829 29th January – King George III dies
- 1991 Alan Bennett writes *The Madness of George III*

Did you know

George III was the first king to study science as part of his education, - some of his scientific instruments are in the Science Museum.

During his reign, George III acquired the nickname 'Farmer George', in part due to his agricultural interests and in part as a playful pun

Queen Charlotte could not speak any English when she married George III

George III commissioned the Gold State Coach is an enclosed, eight horse-drawn carriage still used by the British Royal Family today

Fortnum & Mason invented the Scotch Egg

George III bought Buckingham House (now Palace) in 1761 for his wife Queen Charlotte to use as a comfortable family home

The Duke of York, Prince Frederick married Princess Frederica of Prussia
"Fred & Fred"

Thomas Dundas commissioned the world's first steam boat

William Pitt the younger, aged 24, was the youngest ever British Prime Minister

Queen Charlotte was a close friend of Marie Antoinette

A concert programme written in the hand of King George is held in the British Library

Francis Willis also treated Queen Maria I of Portugal; after Willis' retirement his sons treated George III

When George IV succeeded his father he banned his wife, Caroline of Brunswick from his coronation and refused to acknowledge her as Queen

George III owned 65,000 books, later given to the British Museum, as the nucleus of a national library

George III was the longest reigning of Britain's kings



Fancy a VIP tour of **Kew Palace**? If you have the winning programme, your group will be taken on the grand tour of the palace, including the Tudor undercroft (that predates ‘The Dutch House’ itself) and the atmospheric attics – complete with 17th Century witch markings!

Led by an expert guide in full Georgian attire, you will hear stories of Kew Palace in it’s prime, and uncover the people who lived, loved, and lay in state there. Predominantly, George III and Queen Charlotte.

Complete the slip inside this programme and pop it into the Prize Draw box in the foyer to be in with a chance of winning this fabulous prize for you and three friends.

The winner will be contacted by phone or email
on Sunday 12th March

Please be aware that tickets to Royal Botanic Gardens Kew are not included in this prize; if you wish to visit the Gardens after your tour, please book a ticket.

COMING SOON

**Booking at www.thelittleboxoffice.com/teddingtontheatreclub
or phone 020 8410 4546 (5.00pm - 8.00pm Mon - Sat)**

TUE 14 MAR - SAT 18 MAR 2023

BULL

By Mike Bartlett

It's just one of those days, one of those meetings

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Nick Hern Books.

TUE 27 JUN - SAT 1 JUL 2023

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE (ABRIDGED)

By Adam Long, Daniel Singer, Jess Winfield

All the plays in 97 minutes!

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Josef Weinberger Ltd.

TUE 4 JUL - SAT 8 JUL 2023

A DOLL'S HOUSE

By Henrik Ibsen

What is Nora's dark secret?

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd.

TUE 3 OCT - SAT 7 OCT 2023

THEY DON'T PAY! WE WON'T PAY!

By Dario Fo

The poorest of society must choose between food or fuel, two neighbours get into a pickle after a supermarket looting!

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with United Agents LLP

Teddington Theatre Club is affiliated to Arts
Richmond and this production is entered for the
Swan Awards for Drama and Musicals.





TEDDINGTON THEATRE CLUB

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www.teddingtontheatreclub.org.uk

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