

# The Oxford Medieval Mystery Plays 2022

## PROGRAMME

12 MIDDAY - 5:30PM  
SATURDAY 23RD OF APRIL 2022  
ST EDMUND HALL  
ADMISSION: FREE



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St Edmund Hall  
*University of Oxford*

#OXFORDMYSTERIES  
@OXMEDSTUDIES



# WELCOME TO THE OXFORD MEDIEVAL MYSTERY PLAYS 2022

We are very pleased and relieved to be able to welcome everybody to the second incarnation of the Oxford Medieval Mystery Cycle at St Edmund Hall. This had originally been planned for April 2020. and until week 8 of Hilary Term we still hoped to be able to pull it off – there were some dramatic moments when “Jesus” was unceremoniously bundled away by his parents during a rehearsal for the French Mary Magdalen play on the day when the first lockdown started; we thus recorded the dress rehearsal with the statue of St Edmund standing (or rather sitting) in for the missing player. The video is fun to watch but it is definitely more fun to be able to take these plays in as they were meant to be enjoyed: perambulatory, morphing the spectators into different crowds witnessing all the events from the Creation to the Resurrection (no Last Judgment this year – we had rather enough of that in real life).

Enjoy the ‘spectaculum’ or rather the ‘spectacula’! We have kept the winning formula from 2019 – a multitude of actors and directors, using the architecture and grounds of the College, having again a dog as sheep (this time it’s the Principal’s!), even if it threatens to steal the show from the human actors, and have added in some extra flourishes. We are particularly proud to expand the linguistic scope further this time, taking in French and Spanish in addition to English, German, and Italian. This might even go further – offers for Latin, Hebrew, Dutch, or Welsh plays are very welcome for next time. Since everything done in Oxford twice constitutes an “Oxford tradition”, we thank you very much for turning up today and helping us to establish this tradition! Medieval plays started as a collective journey of a town or a region - the #OxfordMysteries strive to revive this tradition.

We are very grateful to all everybody who joined the enterprise, acting, directing, filming, singing, advertising, making music, providing props or poetry (a special shout-out to David Maskell who wrote the new prologues!), to Eleanor Baker who administered it all beautifully, to the wonderful Teddy Hall Comms Officer Claire Parffit, and to the Fellows and Principal of St Edmund Hall for being such congenial hosts. *Floreat Aula et Studia Mediaevalia!*

Professor Lesley Smith and Professor Henrike Lähnemann, Co-Directors of the Oxford Medieval Studies Programme

# MASTER OF CEREMONIES AND LINKING-VERSES CREATOR

## DR JIM HARRIS - MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Jim Harris is the Ashmolean Museum's Teaching Curator, and trained as an actor at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art before turning to scholarly pursuits. You may recognise his voice from BBC Radio 2's 'Pause for Thought'!

*"After a 23 year hiatus in my acting career, it's a great pleasure to be making a return in a cycle of plays almost as old as I am."*



## PROFESSOR DAVID MASKELL - LINKING VERSES CREATOR

David Maskell specialises in both the academic and practical aspects of theatre in Classical and Modern Languages. He is an experienced creative writer, and has created all of the verses linking between the plays for the Oxford Medieval Mystery Plays 2022.

*"It has been a joy and privilege to write introductory verses for each play in this year's Medieval Mystery Cycle at St Edmund Hall. Before COVID I'd written several plays in rhyming verse for student productions, which included adaptations of Euripides, The Bacchae; Ovid, Metamorphoses; Ariosto, Orlando Furioso; Voltaire, Mahomet. I was delighted for the chance to rhyme again for the Teddy Hall Mystery Plays!"*

**A SPECIAL THANK YOU, ALSO, TO OUR FILMING TEAM: NATASCHA DOMEISEN, ISABEL REICHENBACH, AND PETRA STANKOVIC!**

# MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

## THE ANONYMOUS MINSTRELS

We are delighted to welcome a group of talented musicians to open our performance! Playing a range of music from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, their playing is sure to get you in the mood for our dramatic offerings!

Aidan Adcock (harp, shawm, vielle, crumhorn, voice)

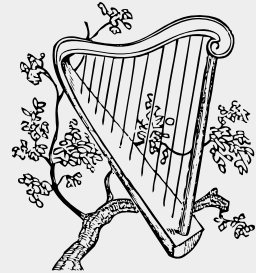
Felicity Cormack (vielle, crumhorn, percussion)

Rhiannon Evans (lute, crumhorn, percussion, voice)

Sue Hipkiss (recorder, bass viol, percussion, voice)

Mark Levy (rebec, percussion)

Noreen Tyson (recorder, percussion)



*"We are pleased to have been invited to contribute to this exciting project, and are looking forward to using our period instruments to share music from the 13th to 16th centuries which would have been known to the authors and audiences of these plays!"*

## MANAGER

### DR ELEANOR BAKER

Eleanor is reprising her role as manager of the Oxford Medieval Mystery Plays.

*"I am, as ever, so impressed with the creativity, commitment, and good humour of everyone involved in the Oxford Medieval Mystery Plays. Thank you to all of you, including our wonderful audience, for being part of one of the most bizarre and brilliant events in Oxford!"*





## 1. CREATION & ADAM AND EVE

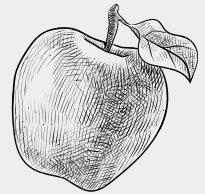
**PLAYGROUP: FACULTY OF ENGLISH**

**LANGUAGE: MIDDLE ENGLISH**

We are performing a pair of two short plays that flow one into another. In these plays, God ('Deus'), supported by his angels, creates the universe, world, the Garden of Eden and Adam and Eve. Then one of the angels, Lucifer, leads some of the others to challenge God's authority; they are banished to become demons. Then Lucifer emerges from banishment disguised as a serpent to lure Adam and Eve into disobeying God as well, by doing the only thing that God had forbidden. God banishes them from the Garden of Eden. The history of the world begins.

Cast:

God / Lord	Clare Mulley
Cherubim / Angelus	Rachel Burns
Lucifer / Satan	Jane Griffiths
Good angel	Tom Revell
First bad angel / demon	Mishtooni Bose
Second bad angel / demon	Harriet Soper
Adam	Jacob Ridley
Eve	Cosima Gillhammer



Crew:

Daniel Wakelin (son et lumière)

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## 2. THE KILLING OF ABEL

**PLAYGROUP: HOLLOWAY MYSTERY PLAYERS**

**LANGUAGE: MIDDLE ENGLISH**

When Cain starts feeling resentful that he has to sacrifice the best part of his wheat to God, his brother Abel tries to convince him that it's not so bad after all. Tempers flare and humanity takes a violent turn in this comedy-drama of sibling rivalry, taxes and murder.

Cast:

Cain - Keira Joyce  
Abel - Ailsa Milligan  
Boy / God - Isabel Smith

Crew:

Director: Isabel Smith  
Co-producers: Isabel Smith, Ailsa Milligan, Keira Joyce  
Costume designer: Isabel Smith  
Prop designer: Ailsa Milligan



### 3.NOAH

#### PLAYGROUP: MEDIEVAL STUDIES STUDENTS

#### LANGUAGE: MIDDLE ENGLISH

Long long ago, in a college garden far, far away, God sent a flood to drown all—all, that is, but one dysfunctional family and their mobile zoo. Will Noah get the ark built on time? Will his wife ever actually get on board? All this and more from the Townley Noah.

#### Cast:

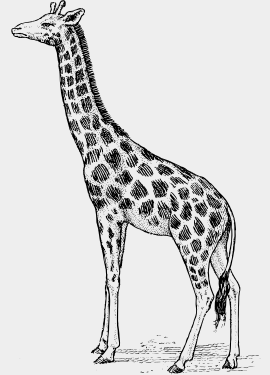
Jonah Skolnik - Noah

Barbara Pinto De Almeida Lima - Noah's Wife

Nia Moseley-Roberts - God

Catriona Dowden - Son 1/Wife 1

Cecily - Son 2/Wife 2



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### 4. THE VISITATION

#### PLAYGROUP: JASMINE AND THE KILNSIANS

#### LANGUAGE: MIDDLE ENGLISH

In this holy moment, the expectant mothers of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ rejoice in the glory of God and the mystery of the Incarnation. This ordinary tea-time conversation between the two cousins and miraculous mothers-to-be, Mary and Elizabeth, both serene in their sanctity, reveals the extraordinary nature of grace. Purity, reverence and gratitude are our main emphases in portraying the Visitation, especially through the perpetual presence of the angels and the sung Magnificat — Mary's prayer of thanksgiving to God — which is still sung in the Church today.

#### Cast:

Jasmine Jones – Mary

Elizabeth Crabtree – Elizabeth

Cynthia Liu & Rebecca Short – Angels

#### Crew:

Jasmine Jones & Elizabeth Crabtree – Directors & Producers



## 5. THE SHEPHERDS' PLAY

### PLAYGROUP: THE PASTORAL PLAYERS

### LANGUAGE: MODERN ENGLISH (WITH A NORTHERN TWIST!)

The Second Shepherds' Play is a comedic nativity play featuring very grumpy shepherds, medieval social commentary, and some mayhem involving a mix-up with a sheep. Liam's witty translation into contemporary northern English modernises the play in such a way as to bring out the humour for a 21st century audience while staying true to the spirit of the original.

#### Cast:

Leah Aspden – Coll

Scott Watson – Gib

Sabrina Coghlan-Jasiewicz – Daw

Mia Hollingsworth-Smith – Mack

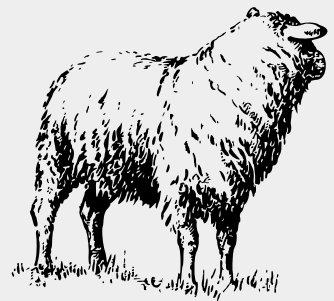
Isobel Lewis – Gill

#### Crew:

Aili Channer – Director

Liam Gornall – Writer and Producer

Rachael White and Amy Weihang Deng – Staging Assistants



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## 6. THE WISE MEN

### PLAYGROUP: THE WISE WOMEN

### LANGUAGE: SPANISH

On the first Christmas ever, three wise women journey to Bethlehem to meet and pay homage to baby Jesus. As they cross paths, they share their qualms and plan their way forward, but they were not expecting to encounter an ambitious and ruthless human king, Herod. Watch out for the Roman sovereign's moment of urgent personal crisis as he sees himself dethroned and cast out by a new-born. Who will come to his aid with the knowledge to save his Crown? His experts are none other than female scholars hailing from the faraway land of Oxford!

#### Cast:

Taerim Lee - Shooting Star

Laura Norris – Caspar

Cliona Vaughan-Spruce – Balthasar

Cici Hong – Melchior

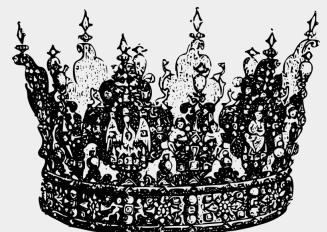
Alfie McIntyre – Herod

Covadonga Martínez Sánchez - Wise Woman 1

Lucy Pick - Wise Woman 2

Chaia McQuail - Wise Woman 3

Loreto Romero - Wise Woman 4



## 7. HEROD THE GREAT

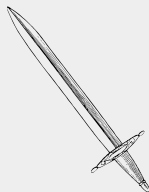
**PLAYGROUP: THE 5TH WEEK BLUES**

**LANGUAGE: MIDDLE ENGLISH**

Herod the Great follows the story of the Massacre of The Innocents in the Biblical cycle. We wanted to combine the seriousness and horror of this event with the inevitable humour that comes from the Middle English play script, whether that's Herod's diva-like attitude, some decidedly clunky lines or bizarre confusions between different non-Christian religions. We hope you are both amused and moved, and above all that you enjoy it!

Cast:

Austin Haynes – Herod  
Pax Butchart – Messenger  
Emma Burberry – Soldier  
Coral Kim – Soldier  
Harriet Carter – Woman



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## 8. JOHN THE BAPTIST

**PLAYGROUP: LES SOEURS DE SAINTE-HILDE (AVEC LA PARTICIPATION DE QUELQUES PAYSANS D'IFFLEÏ)**

**LANGUAGE: FRENCH**

In 2020 we rehearsed 'The Penitence of Mary Magdalene' culled from the same epic passion play of the mid C15th written by Arnoul Gréban, organist at Notre Dame cathedral, and doubtless also choirmaster. This project had to be abandoned because of COVID, but we recorded our work in progress before retreating. Rather than resurrect the piece two years on, we decided to undertake another story from the same cycle, having become excited by the poetry and theatricality of the French language, which only reveals itself through the process of rehearsal. We have all enjoyed the town/gown, youth/age collaboration, and appreciate the initiative, work and faith of Henrike and Lesley in making this event happen.

Cast:

John the Baptist - Laurence Nagy  
Manasses (disciple) - Alice Hawkins  
Sophonias (disciple) - Laura Laube  
Herod - Alex Marshall  
Herodias - Irina Boeru  
Salome - Isabelle Heinemann  
Groignart A (servant) - Kate Bunn  
Groignart B (servant) - Andrew Stilborn  
Amphiarus (noble) - Alice Hawkins  
Radigon (noble) - Laura Laube  
God – Asefay Aberaha



Crew:

Director: David Wiles  
Stage Manager: Sebastian Dows-Miller  
Head Creator: Andrew Stilborn



## 9. LAZARUS

### PLAYGROUP: MEDIEVAL MASTERS

#### LANGUAGE: MIDDLE ENGLISH

Come watch the English MSts knock 'em dead (or alive?!). You might have expected one corpse to rise from the grave, but how about six? Marvel as they live, die, and rise again! Zombies never sounded — or looked — so fifteenth century.

#### Cast:

Joe Weir - Jesus  
Joe Lucas - John  
Corinne Clark - Peter  
Ciara Williams - Mary  
Michael Angerer - Thomas  
Alex Barnes - Martha  
Logan Rivers - Lazarus  
Stepan Mysko von Schultze - Lazarus  
Caleb Prus - Lazarus  
Eve Thomas - Lazarus  
Erin Lueck - Lazarus  
Leah Casey - Lazarus



#### Crew:

Abigail Stevens - Costumes  
James Titterington - Props  
Lucy Turton – Director

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## 10. THE CRUCIFIXION

### PLAYGROUP: THE MANIC MEDIEVALISTS

#### LANGUAGE: MIDDLE ENGLISH

This depiction of the crucifixion, from the 14th-century York Mystery Cycle, is here rendered in Middle English by present-day Oxford students in their second year, mostly studying medieval literature. However, it originally would have been the prerogative of 'pynneres and paynters' (pin-makers and painters). These artisans could showcase their craftsmanship through skilled prop-making, and especially the cross itself. The play has a small cast of just five, four of whom are characterised as ordinary workmen (though described as 'Miles', 'soldiers', in the text), who have just been set the arduous task of crucifying Jesus. In a critically fascinating depiction of what is now termed cognitive dissonance, the workmen navigate between the practicalities of crucifixion and resisting their own moral complicity through a problematic plea of superior orders. Meanwhile, Christ himself speaks little, and when he does much of it is drawn from the gospels (such as his entreaty to 'Forgive them, father'). However, look out for one moment when Christ entreats those walking by in the street to behold his suffering, including the gore of his wounds: a striking moment of typical affective piety brought to open-air theatre.

#### Cast:

Eloise Peniston - Jesus  
Clare-Rose McIntyre - Soldier I  
Charlie Epps - Soldier II  
Kesaia Toganivalu - Soldier III  
Liam Stewart - Soldier IV

#### Crew:

Kesaia Toganivalu - Director and Props Coordinator  
Charlie Epps - Director

## 11. THE RESURRECTION

### PLAYGROUP: THE MERCANTILE MINSTRELS

#### LANGUAGE: MEDIEVAL GERMAN (SPOKEN); LATIN (SUNG); ENGLISH (NARRATION)

A mix of crude comedy and reverent Resurrection, this adaptation of the Innsbruck Easter play includes everything from angelic song to jokes about donkey farts. Interspersed English narration should guide you through the spoken Middle High German and sung Latin; the plot can be roughly summarised as such: sinful and mischievous merchants sell three mourning Marys a balm for the (apparently) dead Jesus' wounds; upon reaching the sepulchre with the acquired balm, the mourning Marys encounter three chorally talented angels, who (spoiler alert!) announce the miracle of Jesus' Resurrection. Watch out for the on-stage brawl and marital scandal - but make sure to silently appreciate the final scene of religious devotion. Enjoy!

#### Cast:

Reinier van Straten - Master of Ceremonies

Nicholas Champness - Mercator / Merchant

Adam McMeekin - Rubin

Kate Osment - Merchant's wife

Luise Morawetz - Merchant's maid

Haley Flower - Narrator

Courtney McNeil - Mary 1

Lucy Ford - Mary 2

Anna Wilmore - Mary 3

Henrike Lähnemann, Andrew Dunning, Nathan Cornish, Zachary Guiliano – Angels

#### Crew:

Haley Flower - Director

Anna Wilmore - Stage Director

Luise Morawetz - Costume Director

Ellie Knock - Costume and Prop Coordinator

Henrike Lähnemann and Andrew Dunning - Choral Directors



## LOOKING FOR MORE EASTER INTRIGUE?

The new St Edmund Hall Old Library exhibition revisits the Easter story and showcases beautiful imagery of the Crucifixion and Resurrection. From Vice-Principal H.P. Liddon's (1829-1890) personal ephemera for private worship, to 'Popish' engravings which helped sentence Archbishop William Laud (1573-1645) to death. The exhibition explores the tensions between different religious approaches to commemoration, as well as fun scientific interrogation into the physical cause of Jesus' death. Revisit this tale through the possessions of some of Teddy Hall's notable clergymen.



# PLAY PERFORMANCE TIMINGS

11:45-12:00 MIDDAY

MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT

12:00-12:05

INTRODUCTION

12:10-12:40

1. CREATION AND THE FALL OF ADAM (FACULTY OF ENGLISH)

12:45- 12:55

2. THE KILLING OF ABEL (HOLLOWAY MYSTERY PLAYERS)

1:00 – 1:25

3. NOAH (MIEVEAL STUDIES STUDENTS)

1:30 – 1:50

4. THE VISITATION (JASMINE AND THE KILNSIANS)

1:55- 2:20

5. THE SHEPHERDS' PLAY (THE PASTORAL PLAYERS)

2:25- 2:40

6. THE WISE MEN (THE WISE WOMEN)

2:45 – 2:55

7. HEROD THE GREAT (THE 5TH WEEK BLUES)

3:10 – 3:30

8. JOHN THE BAPTIST (LES SOEURS DE SAINTE-HILDE (AVEC LA PARTICIPATION DE QUELQUES PAYSANS D'IFFLEÏ))

3:35 – 3:55

9. LAZARUS (MIEVEAL MASTERS)

4:00 – 4:15

10. THE CRUCIFIXION (THE MANIC MIEVEALISTS)

4:20-5:00

11. THE RESURRECTION (THE MERCANTILE MINSTRELS)

