**Little Women Programme notes.**

Welcome to the Lyric Theatre’s production of Louisa May Alcott's LITTLE WOMEN adapted by Anne-Marie Casey.

Step into the world of sisterhood. Under the skilful direction of Emily Foran, experience the enduring journey of the March sisters - Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy - as they navigate the challenges of the Civil War era, forging unbreakable bonds of love and family. Join us for this heart-warming and captivating rendition of *Little Women* that breathes new life into a cherished classic.

The Sets

Before the play and during intermission, the stage has a large black curtain with the title ‘Little Women’ projected onto it. To the right of the text there’s a quill that ink trails off from the letter E of little.

**The Marsh House**

The Marsh house is a two level structure with a pitched roof - the house has been dissected and is open from the side to the audience.

There is a living room on the ground floor and the second floor room is under the pitch, connected to the ground floor by a staircase on the left hand side.

There is a broad wooden ground floor which extends past the top floor outwards towards the audience. It is all raised about half a foot off the stage.

Off stage to the left of the house is the kitchen and the rest of the house and to the right of the living room there is an ‘imagined’ front door. The windows on the back wall of the living room look out to the front door area which is to the right of the ground floor.

The ground floor living room features a large dining table on the left with 5 chairs around the back of it. The table and chairs are in front of the staircase. At the bottom of the staircase there are coats, bonnets and hats hanging - there is also some storage under the stairs and below the stair bannister some coat hooks. Next to the storage space, on the wall there are another two hooks for hanging up outerwear.

In the middle of the living room floor there is a plush pink wooden framed armchair with wooden legs and a high back facing towards the audience. At the back of the room behind the big armchair there is a red brick fireplace with a wooden surround and mantle. There is a picture hanging above the fireplace of a landscape and on either side of the painting there are two small oil lamps attached to the wall.

To the left of the fireplace there is a small christmas tree of about 5ft tall standing in a half barrel – the tree is decorated with some simple ornaments.

At Christmas time the top of the mantle is decorated with a garland of fir and pine cones **​​​​**arranged horizontally. There are fireplace tools, including a poker and toasting fork to the left and some logs stacked about a foot high to the right of the fireplace.

On the back right wall there is a little triptic of countryside scenes arranged vertically.

At the very back of the room there are two tall windows flanking the fireplace. They are Georgian in style with each window dissected into smaller frames.

The walls are painted with a light blue colour and there is white floral wallpaper above the dado rail which is about 4 feet from the floor.

Outside the Marsh house there is one tree on each side. The trees are mostly in shadow and they are both just taller than the March house. When night falls, outside the Marsh house there is a projection of a full moon above the left hand side of the house.

On the right of the living room there's a piano with it's back against the right hand wall and it has a four legged leather topped piano stool in front of it.

Next to the piano there's a paper basket that holds music manuscripts.

On top of the piano rests Meg's sewing box, a wooden box no bigger than a shoebox.

At the side of the piano there is a wooden chair with a red velvet seat on it and underneath this chair is Amy's drawing box where she keeps her drawing implements.

On the top floor of the Marsh house there is an attic room.

There is a long Georgian window in the back centre of the room. Next to the top of the stairs on the left hand side there's a chair that has some dolls on it and there are some children's toys gathered here along with a sewing machine in a box.

To the left of the window, at the top of the stairs sitting on the floor there is a large wooden trunk, above the trunk there are three of Amy's drawings hung across the wall with a piece of string. Next to Amy's drawings there's a hook with Jo's scribbling clothes hanging on it.

In front of the window there is a writing desk sitting at a right angle with a four legged stool positioned at it. On the writing desk there is an oil lamp and the desk itself has a slanted top that can be opened up - Jo stores some of her writing implements in here.

On the right side of the room there's a chaise long which is used as a bed, it has a red cover and some pillows and blankets. There's a three tier wooden bookcase against the wall just behind the bed, on its top there are some small ornaments and the shelves are partly filled with books.

**The hallway outside the Gardiner’s ballroom**

The corridor in the Gardiner’s house is depicted by a large wooden frame that is lowered down from the ceiling and occupies the right hand side of the stage. The frame is approximately 15ft wide and 10ft tall. There are curtains hanging from inside the frame, they are split in the middle and the right curtain is pulled back slightly with a decorative rope with a tassel. The curtains are satiny brown with a pale brown floral pattern.

In front of the curtain there is a long yellow button back sofa with a dark wooden scroll carved frame and short broad legs underneath.

**The lake - ice skating**

The floor all around the outside of the house is black with with white marbling which represents the ice covered lake when Jo, Laurie and Amy go ice skating. The lake is at the very front of the stage in front of the house and the characters slide their feet across the floor as though they are skating. The house is in darkness with the front of the stage lit with blue light suggesting that it is cold.

**Mrs Kirke’s boarding house in New York**

The boarding house is depicted by a single room - the parlour. The frame is lowered in on top of the same platform that the March house resides on.

In the parlour on the far left there is a bookcase with six shelves and every shelf has books on it. To the right of the shelves there is a writing desk and along the back wall in the centre there is a small button backed cream floral sofa. On the right hand side of the room there is a doorway that has a rich velvet red curtain with yellow fringe hanging from it. In front of the doorway and slightly to the right there is a small wooden stool that has a little shelf underneath it and there is a little wooden box sitting on the shelf.

The house has a pale blue wall inside and a picture rail running horizontally a quarter of the way up the wall. Above the rail the wall is covered with floral wallpaper and there are five paintings hanging from it.

From left to right, the 1st painting has a brown frame and is a still life of some food, the 2nd, 3rd, 4th

and 5th depict various countryside scenes. The 5th painting is on the other side of the doorway and is the smallest painting. Similar to the Marsh House, the remainder of the boarding house is assumed off stage to the left and through the red curtain and the front door is assumed to be at the front right of the space.

When Amy has written to Jo from Paris, she appears outside the boarding house and moves around the stage with each new letter. Jo and Bhaer are still present in the parlour.

**The hallway outside a ballroom in Paris**

Is denoted by a large partial frame on the left hand side. The frame is a right angle of 15ft by 15ft approximately and as with the last frame it is lowered in from the ceiling. There is one white curtain hanging from the frame and it is tied back to the left by a white rope with a large tassel. In front of the curtain there is a white chaise longue. On the right hand side of the stage there is a white crystal chandelier hanging.

**Cast**

**Beth - Maura Bird**

**Brooke - Shaun Blaney**

**Jo - Marty Breen**

**Meg - Ruby Campbell**

**Amy - Tara Cush**

**Marmee - Jo Donnelly**

**Aunt March - Allison Harding**

**Laurie - Cillian Lenaghan**

**Bhaer - Ash Rizi**

**Character Costumes**

All the characters wear clothing that's appropriate to the time of 1860-1870 Massachusetts period dress. As the girls get older their clothing changes to be more appropriate to suit their age, this is especially in the case of Amy.

**JO MARCH,** wears a brown pinafore dress with buttons starting below the bust all the way down to the ankle. Beneath the pinafore she wears an ankle length dusky red floral dress with buttons from the neck to the waist, long sleeves, a soft pleated skirt pinched in by a thick brown belt that has a brass buckle. She wears black tights and black ankle length boots. Jo has very long dark brown hair which she wears pulled back in a long plait.

Jo wears a short brown waistcoat over the top of her red dress. When she returns from the town one afternoon she is wearing a brown beret. Jo has to pull up her tights often and on the back of her red dress there’s a very large black stain.

When Jo leaves the house she wears a long brown cape like coat with a hood on it and also a mustard coloured soft hood like bonnet that ties under the chin.

In the first sequence Jo wears a top hat and a dinner jacket with tails as her play fighting garb. When she is writing she wears a long black sleeveless cloak and a black bonnet called her ‘scribbling suit’ that her sister Beth has put a bright red bow onto the side of.

Later Jo wears a bright red wrap shawl around her shoulders on top of her red dress.

At Christmas Jo wears a long simple khaki green dress that has a red bow at the collar, it is tied in the back and has long sleeves. At the bottom of the dress there is a gathered hem which then drapes to ankle length and she wears her black boots with it. On top of the dress when she goes outdoors she wears a long sleeved dark green bolero jacket that has a flower broach on her right lapel.

When Jo goes to New York she wears a black baker boy style cap, dark grey overcoat and she wears a light brown leather cross body satchel and carries a brown leather suitcase. Under her overcoat she is wearing a tailored black tailcoat over a long sleeved white blouse with a soft round collar that she wears a black neck tie around. Under this ensemble she sometimes wears a short grey waistcoat and always with a long mid-calf length grey skirt with a 2 inch wide satin grey ribbon around the bottom with a pale grey petticoat underneath. Jo later wears a black waistcoat with the same ensemble. When Jo returns home from New York she stays in the same outfit but wears a green short jacket over the top of her white shirt and grey skirt.

**MEG MARCH** dresses in a very pale floor length blue dress with an intricate floral and a white petticoat underneath it. Her dress is very long and has a white ribbon around the bottom of it. The dress has a white lace ribbon collar and the sleeves are long, flaring out at the ends and the top section has three lace embellishments horizontally across the bust. The dress buttons down visibly from the neck to the waist and she occasionally wears a long white pinny with a single middle pocket on the front.

Meg has blonde, just longer than shoulder length wavy hair which she wears down with some of the front pulled round and pinned at the back.

In the opening sequence she wears a top hat and a brown short sleeved cloak with her dress tucked up into her white bloomers.

When Jo and Meg go to the dance at the Gardiner’s She wears the same dress but puts a royal blue ribbon in her hair. She wears a baby blue shawl and a blue bonnet tied with a ribbon around her chin.

At Christmas when she receives some fabric for, Meg makes a Bright blue silk gown, the dress has a fitted bodice, sleeves that fan out at the ends and a bow in the front at the waist. The dress has a white collar and the skirt is wide with a white petticoat underneath.

**BETH MARCH** wears a yellow dress with a fitted bodice at the top and brown shoes throughout. Her dress has a white petticoat underneath and an orange bow at the neck, it has long sleeves and the skirt is draped in pleats. Beth has shoulder length auburn hair that is mostly tied back but some of it hangs at either side of her face. When the girls leave the house, Beth wears a brown knitted wrap-around shawl and a long red cloak. When Beth goes to visit the poor woman’s house she is wearing her yellow dress with a white bonnet and a short white and tan knitted cape. Beth wears a crocheted red and yellow shawl over a white nightgown in her final scene.

**AMY MARCH** wears a pink dress that has no bodice and long sleeves, it has buttons down to the waist on the front and a simple white collar. Amy has mousy brown hair that comes to just past her shoulder and she wears a simple white hair band. She wears white shoes throughout. Amy later wears a pink skirt with a white long sleeved shirt top covered with a green painting pinafore that has a long skirt front.

When Amy goes to Paris she begins to wear an older style of dress with a bodice top and hoop skirt. When Amy is travelling she is wearing a pink bonnet and a large dark pink overcoat and her dress underneath is not apparent. When she is at the ball in Paris she wears a broad skirted pale pink dress with a broad ruffled top. The top is embellished with a dark pink ribbon and white lace. Her hair is tied back and she has dangling sparkling earrings. She also wears long white gloves. When Amy is home from Paris she wears a pale pink bodice dress and jacket with a modern hat embellished with a white feather. The dress has some dark pink accents at the sleeves and underskirt.

**ABIGAIL ‘MARMEE’ MARCH** wears a long blue chequered skirt with a long sleeved dark blue top that has a white collar, generally she has a long apron tied around her waist, the apron is usually white or grey. She wears her dark brown hair tied back in a tidy bun throughout. When Marmee goes out she wears a dark blue cloak with a dark green knitted shawl.

**AUNT MARCH** wears an elegant and somewhat exuberant crinoline dress with a large hooped skirt. The dress is dark purple with green lace trim embellishments around the bust and horizontally half way down the skirt, it is high necked and is ruched from the bust down. The dress has a matching cape top that is tied at the neck with a lime green bow. The cape top comes down as far as her elbows. The fabric is shiny and she wears a matching bonnet that has pink and green flowers on it. Aunt March’s hair is short, grey and curly and she wears her bonnet near the back of her head. Aunt March has a black walking cane.

**THEODORE ‘LAURIE’ LAURENCE,** wears a brown tailcoat jacket with tan trousers and brown leather shoes. He wears a white shirt with a red cravat. He has a yellow waistcoat under his jacket and a red handkerchief poking out of his top pocket. Laurie is tall and has short brown hair. Laurie also wears a white long sleeved shirt with an open necked collar and a black waistcoat when he is being more casual. When Laurie is in Paris he wears a black bow tie with a yellow and brown waistcoat and black trousers and black shoes. When Laurie returns home he is wearing a broad pale brown carrick coat with a dark brown collar and a dark brown suit jacket with black trousers.

**PROFESSOR FRIEDRICH BHAER 30s** wears a Long green velvet jacket over his grey suit, the suit comprises of a white shirt, a red tie and a grey waistcoat with grey trousers and black shoes. Bhaer has short dark wavy hair and facial hair. When Bhaer comes to visit Jo, he is wearing a long black woollen coat, black leather gloves and a scarf over his grey suit.

**JOHN BROOKE,** wears a dark brown long coat over a brown suit with a satiny brown waistcoat. He has a white shirt and a small black short tie. Brooke is tall and has wavy short brown hair. Brooke wears a brown derby hat with a short brown jacket over his suit when he goes for a walk. When Brooke has enlisted in the army he wears a long dark blue single breasted woollen dress coat over grey trousers. The coat has a thick brown leather belt and he wears a black forage cap.

**Production team**

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### Emily Foran

**Director**

### Tracey Lindsay

**Set Designer**

### Stuart Robinson

**Sound Designer**

### Sarah Jane Shiels

**Lighting Designer**

### Gillian Lennox

**Costumer Designer**

### Paula O'Reilly

**Choreographer**

### Debra Hill

**Assistant to the Director**