Welcome to The Ladykillers at Lyric Theatre. Tonight’s performance will be Audio Described by Florence Stewart in Act 1 and Amy Stewart in Act 2 for Sightlines NI.

Act 1 is an hour and Act 2 is 50 minutes. There is a 20 minute interval.

This adaptation of the classic Ealing Comedy is written by renowned comedy writer Graham Linehan (who wrote Father Ted, The IT Crowd and Black Books) and directed by Lyric Executive Producer Jimmy Fay.

CHARACTER and COSTUME

Mrs Wilberforce played by Stella McCusker: Mrs Wilberforce is an elderly lady, in her 70’s or 80’s. Small in stature and with a thin, slight frame she is upright and well dressed. Her grey hair is neatly dressed in a wavy chignon. She wears simple, wire framed glasses. When we first meet her she is wearing a prim, green, ankle length day dress with a white panel down the front and a neat white collar. She wears sensible shoes with a low heel. When she goes out of the house Mrs Wilberforce wears a long green coat with a neat little hat. Later, for the concert, she wears a pale pink lace dress with a cerise pink satin tie at the waist.

Professor Marcus played by Abagail McGibbon: Professor Marcus is middle aged and of medium build, with blonde hair slicked back and worn loose over his collar. He wears a knee length grey jacket with big checks and matching checked trousers. He has a white shirt with a broad blue neck tie and a grey trilby hat. His shoes are cream leather with brown toes. Most notable about his outfit is his purple and cream striped scarf with cream tassles– it is really long, looped around his neck and still trailing on the ground everywhere he walks.

Major Courtney played by Jo Donnelly: The Major is a short, older military man. He has thick, dark hair worn neatly off his face. When he first comes in he is wearing a brown suede coat with a big fur collar. He wears a heavy grey tweed jacket, buttoned down the front and belted at the waist and a white shirt with a cravat. His trousers are of heavy grey wool. When disguised as an insurance broker for the heist he wears a bowler hat.

Harry Robinson played by Julie Maxwell: Harry is the youngest of the gang at about 20 or 25 years old. He is a teddy boy with a large dark quiff and a cigarette tucked behind his ear. He wears a long camel coloured pea coat and his suit has checked trousers that only go to his ankles, matching checked waistcoat, white shirt and shiny brown shoes. His disguise for the heist is a station porters uniform of dark trousers and jacket with shiny buttons down the front and a cap with a badge on it. Later, he wears a naval type outfit of a white aran style jumper with short trousers held up by braces and long white socks with a peaked cap.

One Round played by Cheryl Fergison (Heather Trott in Eastenders): One Round is short and seriously overweight. He wears a pair of blue denim dungarees over a checked workshirt and heavy brown work boots. On his head he wears a brown cap with the peak off to one side.

Louis Harvey played by Maria Connolly: Louis is a Romanian gangster, tall and thin with collar length black hair. He wears a sharp, dark coloured pin stripe suit with a white shirt and super shiny black shoes. He wear a black trilby hat and has a cross on a chain round his neck.

Constable Macdonald played by Nuala McKeever: Constable Macdonald is an archtypical English bobby of the period. He is tall and a bit stout with big mutton chop style sideburns. His uniform is navy blue serge with a belted jacket that has 5 shiny silver buttons and a silver badge on his breast pocket. On his head is a classic blue policeman’s helmet, tall, reinforced and shaped like half an egg, with a silver rose top at the apex and a shiny silver star badge on the front.

Amy Jolly (Nuala McKeever) / Mrs Tromleyton (Christina Nelson) / Elspeth Dudgeon (Louise Bryans): These three ladies are Mrs Wilberforce’s society friends. When we meet them they are wearing bright, floral tea dresses in pinks and purples, with lots of petticoats and matching hats with flowers and feathers.

SCENERY

The action throughout the play takes place in an old house beside a railway embankment, set in an industrial landscape with brooding skies. The noise of passing trains can be heard at times.

The stage is divided into two storeys, consisting of the hall, living room and small scullery, with a stairway leading to the upper section with a bathroom and bedroom.

The bathroom, which has a sash window overlooking the yard is an annex of the house which juts out. The outside wall has peeling plaster, exposing the brick work. Rising behind the bedroom and bathroom is a tiled roof, slanting due to subsidence with two tall brick, potted chimney stacks at either end. Behind the bathroom is the skeletal remains of a rusting gas storage unit, while to the right of the bedroom is a railway gantry with two red train signals.

On the ground floor at the right of the stage is a white wooden door with a square glass panel in the top, and on each side two narrow panels also with glass in the upper part. A glass section extends over the door with the number 13 appearing as a mirror image. When the door is open we can see a brick wall with a poster of a man and a bird that says “My goodness my Guinness”.

The hallway has black and white tiles and a square foot mat. To the right of the door is a tall wooden plant table with a potted plant. On the left is a wooden Victorian stand with a mirror and some hooks for hats. Beside it is a hall chair with a cushioned seat.

The same floral wallpaper decorates the hall and living room. There are three pictures hanging on the wall to the left of the hall stand, the first of a landscape, the middle one of a man in seafaring garb, below which is a double doored cupboard with a mantle with silver candlesticks on each end and a large urn in the centre. The cupboard is recessed into the wall. The third picture of the Titanic hangs crookedly due to subsidence. A staircase to the left of the picture leads to the upper rooms.

A circular mat sits on a polished wooden floor at the end of the tiled hallway. The living room area contains a straight backed wooden chair, with a brown leather seat without armrests for visitors. Beside this is a small squared topped table with a wooden tray for tea, and a comfortable armchair with a floral print cushioned seat and armrests. A colourful crocheted blanket over the chair back is used by Mrs Wilberforce as a shawl at times. At the foot of the chair is a square mat.

 To the left of the armchair is another small square table with a dainty light and a telephone. To the left and slightly behind the armchair is a white wrought iron table on which stands a bird cage completely covered with a fringed pink cloth from which bird chirpings and words are emitted, though the occupant is never revealed.

Behind the birdcage is a tiny scullery with small window above a Belfast sink with a draining board and pleated curtains around its base. The water pipes feeding the taps are frequently air locked. To the right of the sink is a back door with a glass pane in the upper section. On the other side of the door is a dresser painted pink with the two upper shelves displaying plates, and a cupboard underneath.

A staircase with white struts leads from the living room to the upper rooms. At the top of the stairs is a small landing with a white door into the bathroom, and a narrow passage to the guest bedroom which is directly above the living room.

The bedroom is entered via a white door with a square panel above and two longer narrow panels beneath. To the right of the door is a curtained sash window overlooking the railway track. Beneath the window is a single bed with a wooden slatted base and headboard, and a blue cover to match the curtains. On the left of the bed is a fireplace with a vase of flowers in the grate and two wall lights above it. There is a clothes stand, and a black board on a swivel base covered by a white

drape, a small stool and a chair.

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Other props include a large trunk with metal clasps, a porter’s trolley, a large case which converts into an old fashioned gramophone with a large brass horn, guitar, cello, and violin cases. There is a china tea service with a cake stand and a metal kettle.