



An evening of swing style songs depicting the seasons!

A journey through the year in music!

COLCHESTER OPERATIC SOCIETY PRESENT

 seasons with  
**SWING**

Wednesday 7th,  
Thursday 8th,  
Friday 9th,  
Sunday 11th  
June 2017  
7.30pm

Welcome to our 2017 summer concert "Seasons with swing".

This year's theme came about when I combined ideas with fellow COS executive committee member Diane Emberton. I envisioned a concert based on the seasons of the year and she envisioned a swing concert. We blended the two ideas together to make an even better concert! Unfortunately Diane was unable to co-direct with me, so I enlisted the help of Amanda Powell as my assistant, who has been an invaluable support and has injected some great choreography into some of the numbers.

Not every song is in a swing style which is why we opted for "with swing" in the title, so as not to imply the whole programme was swing-based music. This concert provides a variety of songs for your entertainment, carefully put together to take you on a journey through the year. Starting with autumn and winter in the first half and spring and summer in the second half, we have endeavoured to capture the essence of each season through our arrangements of songs.

It has been a pleasure directing this lovely, talented group of people. We have worked them hard but we've had fun along the way, which I hope will emanate through to you as an audience.

This concert would not have been possible without the help and support from the COS executive & CO2 committees, our publicity team, our cast & crew, our chaperones, the theatre staff, our musical director Geoff and his musicians and my assistant Amanda. A big thanks to all of them and to anyone else involved that I may not have mentioned!

Katie Cutmore  
Director



# Credits

Director—Katie Cutmore

Assistant Director—Amanda Powell

Choreography—Amanda Powell & Katie Cutmore

Lighting design & operation - Charlotte Butcher

Sound/Projection operator— Grant Borroff

Backstage Crew - Clive Roebuck/Christopher Hunt

Chaperone - Trevor Walton

Front of house - Maggie Walton

Concert artwork -Marc Williams

Programme - Katie Cutmore

Concert publicity— Gabby Fusi, Sarah White & cast

MD—Geoff Osborne

Musicians:

Piano - Geoff Osborne

Drums - Archie Drummond

Additional musicians for

Mercury Performance:

Bass - James Stirling

Keyboard - Phil Toms

CO2 MD - Bev Firth



Cast/Chorus:

ChiChi Armstrong, Fiona Bocking, Maeve Borges, Graham Bowden, Louise Cassidy, Viv Cassidy, Valentine Cavanagh-White, Ryan Cope, Nathan Crame, Debbie Drew, Stephen Drew, Toni Ellis, Joe Fusi, Celia Greaves, Shannon Hannah, Claire Jones, Peter Jones, Lisa Latin, Sally Leung, Helen McCraw, Shauna Murray, Natasha Palmer, Lisa Pordham, Bethan Powell, Amanda Powell, Barbara Ryan, Chloe Rutter, Barbara Scully, Steve Woodward, Sarah Young, Michael Cutmore (Friday performance).



## Director –Katie Cutmore

Katie has been singing from the age of five, plays the piano and guitar and writes her own songs, which she has performed solo and in bands locally. She has also performed locally with Platform Musicals, COS and Encore Company Singers. She has been a member of COS for over 13 years and served on the executive committee for the last three years, but this is her directing debut.

Katie says: "I have really enjoyed the challenge of directing, which has given me another new perspective into musical productions. Seeing my idea transform into reality through the creative process and the cast's hard work and talent is very rewarding and I hope everyone enjoys the show as much as I have enjoyed creating it. I love autumn as the weather cools down, the trees look stunning as their leaves change colours and it marks the start of many new things as the school year begins in September."

## Assistant Director—Amanda Powell

Amanda has been singing and dancing since the age of four and began performing in professional pantomimes and shows from the age of ten. She went on to study Performing Arts at The Italia Conti Academy of Dance and Theatre Arts in London, where she received various diplomas and qualifications in dance, drama, choreography and singing. Amanda has continued to perform in pantomimes, plays and musical theatre productions throughout the country over the years, enjoying many roles such as Anne in Anne Frank, Geraldine in The Vicar of Dibley, Mother Abbess in The Sound of Music, Nickie in Sweet Charity and Sister Mary Patrick in Sister Act. She has also choreographed many adult and youth pantomimes, plays and musical theatre productions in London & Essex as well as running many youth drama workshops.

Amanda says: "Spring is my favourite season; seeing all the blossom on the trees never fails to make me smile!"



## Musical Director—Geoff Osborne

Geoff has been a musical director for local societies for over 20 years, helping produce: *Annie, Carousel, The Wizard of Oz, 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, Guys and Dolls, Crazy for You, Oliver, Oklahoma, Half a Sixpence, Sweet Charity, Anything Goes, Thoroughly Modern Millie, South Pacific, Little Shop of Horrors, The Addams Family, Fame, Singing in the Rain, Spamalot* and many others. In January Geoff conducted a much acclaimed production of *Jekyll & Hyde*, with Colchester Operatic Society at the Mercury Theatre. In addition to all this he runs a weekly community choir in Brightlingsea, and teaches privately. Before he retired from full-time teaching in 2011, Geoff had dedicated his life to music education. He taught in local schools for 35 years; worked with Essex County Council in schools and colleges across the county; and for a time was the teacher-in-charge at the Colchester Area Music School.



Working with COS for this concert has been a delight. Geoff says: "Spring is definitely my favourite time of year. I enjoy watching the world wake up after a drab and cold winter. I hope you will all enjoy our selection of songs reflecting all the seasons of the year."

## Drummer—Archie Drummond

This is Archie's first show with COS but he's been drumming since the age of four and has performed at local venues such as the Headgate Theatre and Charter Hall. He also records drum tracks for local bands and has appeared on BBC's Look East. His favourite season is winter because it means Guy Fawkes, Christmas and New Year.



# Mercury Gala performance in aid of Mercury Rising - Sunday June 11<sup>th</sup>



CO2 join us at the start of the second half of our Mercury performance for a guest spot, performing a medley of songs from their upcoming production of "Little Shop of Horrors" with musical direction from Bev Firth.

## **CO2 cast of Little Shop of Horrors**

Will Mugford, Emily Lane, Alex Terry, Lewis Tebbitt, Dominic Simpson, Sophie Knights, Jasmine Triadi, Lorna Perrin, Sophie Ramsey, Kassia Wall, Shalom Asemota, Fraser McLauchlan, Lochlan Alcorn-Reilly, Jacob Norton, Tommy Rigg, Jake Daniels, Corey Moore, Josh Tarrier, Sam Johnston, Alfie de Brito, Paul Hodgson, Rob Mercer, Scott Dingwall, Davina Mpofu, Maddy Smith, Holly Lofting, Millie Gould, Millie Watson, Martha Mugford, Megan Patmore, Cerys Wilkin, Sophie Peterson, Tabettha Parrick, Alice Molnar, Ella D'Arcy-Jones, Charlotte Mackellar, Emily Mear, Gabrielle Tyler, Shannon Hannah, Sophie Holland

## **Supporting the Mercury:**

"Colchester Operatic Society started performing at the Mercury Theatre in 1973 and we have happily remained there for our last 50 shows, also introducing our youth arm CO2 to the venue who also perform at the Mercury annually.

As well as our main shows, over the years the Society has also produced a number of spring/summer concerts, and many local charities benefit enormously from these efforts and it was an honour and very fitting that the Mercury asked us to perform in aid of the Mercury Rising initiative. Along with other local groups we have been consulted and updated on the plans and progress of the proposed development by the Theatre Management and they have demonstrated, as always, an unwavering keenness to enhance and facilitate the town's flourishing amateur theatre scene.

On behalf of Colchester Operatic Society I would like to sincerely wish them well with this mammoth undertaking and look forward to the privilege of being able to share in this bright new initiative."

Mark D Fincham  
Chairman & Business Manager  
Colchester Operatic Society



**Mercury Rising** is an exciting project that will modernise and transform Colchester's much-loved theatre, safeguarding its future for the whole community. Their planned improvements include:

- Transforming the foyer so it's a bigger, lighter space which is open all day
- Redeveloping the main auditorium with extra seats
- Making all areas fully accessible for the first time
- Creating a new café where you can work and meet friends
- Building completely new rehearsal and community spaces equipped to support the best new talent
- Revamping and extending their backstage facilities to help make even better theatre

The Mercury have already raised a fantastic £7m thanks to support from The Arts Council England, Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council. But they still have £1.7m left to raise. If you are interested in supporting their campaign go to [www.mercurytheatre.co.uk](http://www.mercurytheatre.co.uk) where there is more information on how you can get involved.

# Running order for first half



Above artwork by Jennifer Lommers

1. Sing, Sing, Sing (*written by Louis Prima, arrangement by Philip Kern*)  
Chorus

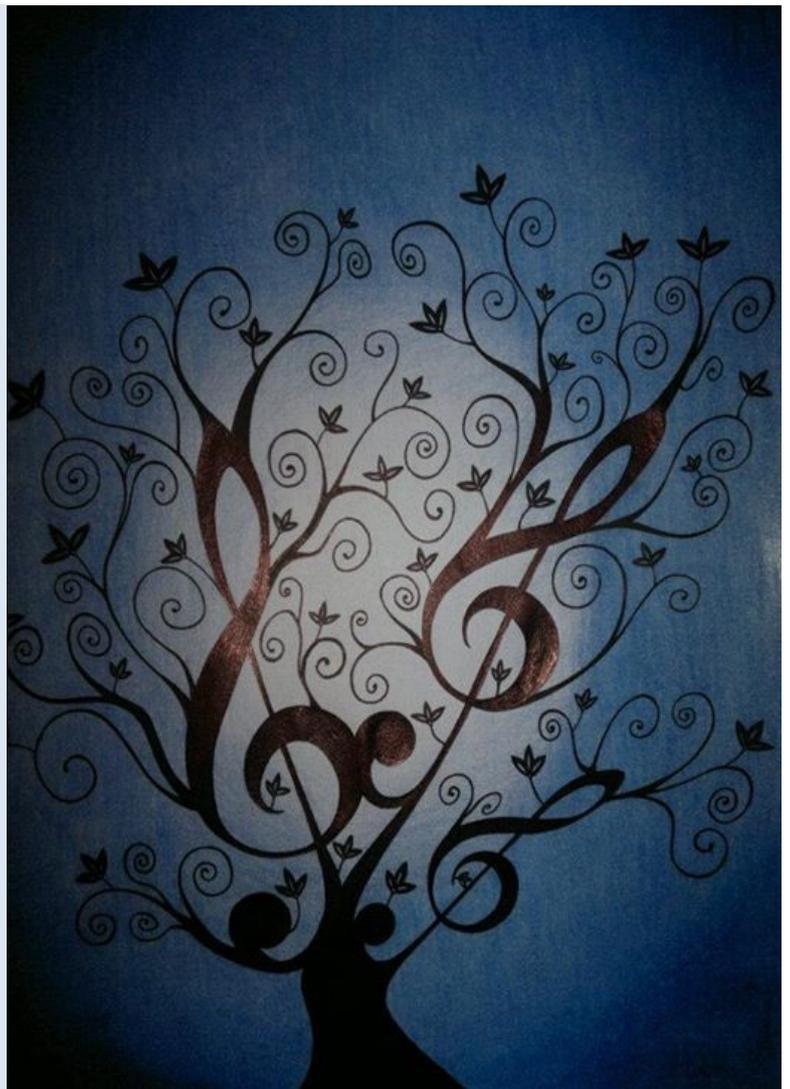
## Autumn section

2. Autumn Leaves (*music by Joseph Kosma, lyrics by Johnny Mercer, arrangement by Ryan O'Connell*)  
Chorus
3. September (*written by Maurice White, Al McKay & Allee Willis, arrangement by Mark Brymer*)  
Chorus with solo lines-Steve & Helen
4. Wake Me Up When September Ends (*written by Billie Joe Armstrong*)  
Ryan & Joe with male chorus
5. Halloween Medley (*arranged by Geoff Osborne*)  
Chorus
6. Four Seasons in One Day (*written by Tim & Neil Finn, arrangement by Darren Ballingall*)  
Chorus with solo by Shannon

## Winter section

7. Stormy Weather (*music by Harold Arlen, Lyrics by Ted Koehler*)  
Performed by Fiona
8. Baby It's Cold Outside (*written by Frank Loesser*)  
Duet by Steve & Shannon
9. Winter Song (*written by Sara Bareilles & Ingrid Michaelson*)  
Duet by Louise & Viv
10. Winter Sleigh Bell Medley (*arranged by Geoff Osborne*)  
Performed by Sally, Shauna, Sarah, Lisa P, Maeve & Toni
11. Let It Snow, Let It Snow (*music by Jule Styne, lyrics by Sammy Cahn, arrangement by Carl Strommen*)  
Chorus
12. Seasons of Love (*written by Jonathan Larson, arrangement by Roger Emerson, from the musical Rent*)  
Chorus

**Interval of 20 minutes**



# Running order for second half

NB: For the Mercury Performance only: Guest spot by CO2 will be performed at the start of the second half

## Spring section

1. Spring, Spring, Spring (*written by Johnny Mercer & Gene de Paul, from the film Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*)  
Chorus
2. Poisoning Pigeons in the Park (*written by Tom Lehrer*)  
Performed by Bethan
3. It Might As Well Be Spring (*music by Richard Rogers, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II, from State Fair*)  
Performed by Pete (Katie on Friday night)
4. April Showers (*written by Morley & Churchill, arrangement by Geoff Osborne, from the Disney film Bambi*)  
Chorus
5. Blue Skies (*written by Irving Berlin, arrangement by Steve Zegree*) Chorus
6. Time of the Season (*written by Rob Argent of The Zombies, arrangement by the Harmonistas*)  
Performed by Sarah, Natasha, Shannon, Louise, Ryan, Joe, Steve & Pete (Mike on Friday night)

## Summer section

7. In Summer (*written by Kristen Anderson-Lopez & Robert Lopez, from the Disney film Frozen*) Performed by Graham
8. Too Darn Hot (*written by Cole Porter*) Performed by Amanda with dancers: Fiona, Val, Natasha, Bethan, Sarah, Louise, Maeve, Helen, Lisa P & Shannon
9. Summertime (*written by George & Ira Gershwin and Dubose & Dorothy Heyward, arrangement by Mark Hayes*) Performed by Barbara Ryan
10. Heatwave (*written by Edward Holland, Lamont Dozier & Brian Holland, arrangement by Mark Brymer*) Performed by Chi-Chi, Natasha & Helen
11. Sunny Afternoon (*written by Ray Davies of The Kinks, arrangement by Katie Cutmore & Geoff Osborne*)  
Chorus
12. Summer Wind (*music by Henry Mayer & lyrics by Johnny Mercer*) Performed by Nathan
13. That's Life (*written by Dean Kay & Kelly Gordon*)  
Performed by Steve, Ryan, Joe, Nathan, Graham & Pete (Mike on Friday night)
14. It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing (*music by Duke Ellington, lyrics by Irving Mills*)  
Chorus



Live narration by Ryan Cope with voice over links by Michael Cutmore. Our introduction was an adaption of the poem "Home, my little children, here are songs for you" by Robert Louis Stevenson.

# Cast spotlights



## Chichi Armstrong (Alto)

Chichi has a wealth of experience as a singer travelling around the world with the London Community Gospel Choir and the infamous 'Boney M'. She enjoys singing and intends to be with the society for many more years to come! Chichi says: "My favourite season is summer. I was born in summer and I love the sun!"

## Fiona Bocking (Soprano)

Fiona has been singing with bands around the country since she was 16 and she ran a band with her husband for 15 years. She joined COS about 12 years ago mainly to be in the concerts but has also enjoyed taking part in many shows. Fiona says: "My favourite season has to be spring. The temperature getting warmer, the days getting longer and the beautiful spring flowers starting to bloom, everything is fresh and new."



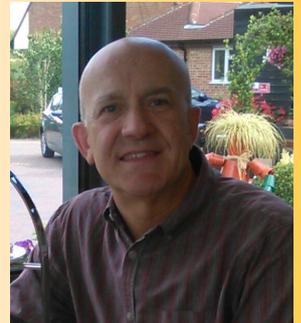
## Maeve Borges (Alto)

This is Maeve's fourth year in Colchester Operatic Society, although she did have a short break of about 36 years between the King and I in 1979 and Sister Act in 2015! Maeve says: "It was the best decision that I ever made to come back, I've made so many friends and shared so many laughs! Despite the picture, my favourite season is definitely summer, with barbecues, relaxing and lots of 'bubbles' in the sun."



## Graham Bowden (Tenor)

Graham has been involved in productions for at least 33 years on and off, including 16 years with Colchester Operatic Society playing a host of leading and supporting roles. Graham is also a regular performer with Platform Musicals who perform at the Headgate Theatre. Spring is his favourite season because life is emerging from the winter and there is the hope and expectation of things to come.



## Louise Cassidy (Alto)

After a long break away from COS, Louise is really excited to be back on stage with her friends. The long and sunny days make summer Louise's favourite season!



## Viv Cassidy (Alto)

Viv has been a member of COS for quite a few years now and has performed in various concerts. She is making a return after a break for several years. Her favourite season is, without a doubt, summer as she loves the long days and warm weather.



## Valentine Cavanagh-White (Soprano)

Valentine has appeared in every single musical with COS since 2001! Her younger self toured the world as a dancer and she now has a long established dance school in Colchester. Val says: "I think spring is my favourite season, with the promise of summer to come."



## Ryan Cope (Bass)

Ryan joined COS to do this concert and we hope he stays for many more shows to come. He is currently studying Musical Theatre at Colchester Institute.



## Nathan Crame (Baritone)

By day: mild mannered primary school teacher but by night: amateur musical theatre addict! Nathan has been a member of COS since moving to Colchester in 2003. He has played various principal roles in many COS shows as well as being involved with the executive committee and organising several concerts with the society. Most recently he appeared as Benny with OD production's Rent at the Headgate Theatre. He feels very privileged to be part of a thriving amateur theatrical scene in our region that is providing so many opportunities for many different people. Nathan loves all the seasons, taking joy out of everything they have to offer.





Debbie Drew (Alto)

Debbie joined COS last year and Jekyll & Hyde was her first show with them. Before that she played the Fairy godmother in Cinderella in a parent panto for her daughter's theatre group. Debbie says: "I loved every minute of panto. I just love performing. My favourite season is spring because it's not too cold and it's not too hot, it's just right. Maybe I should be Goldilocks next?!"

Stephen Drew (Alto)

This is Stephen's COS debut. At only 16 he has balanced rehearsals with GCSE revision and exams.

Joe Fusi (Bass)

Joe has been a member of COS for just over a year now, starting as the only guy in last year's Dolls & Guys concert, and carrying on with Jekyll & Hyde in January. Both shows have been wonderful experiences and he hopes to do many more. Joe says: "Summer is probably my favourite season because of the holidays (although you can't go wrong with a bit of skiing in winter!)"

Toni Ellis (Alto)

Toni is new to COS, joining us for this concert to sing alongside her daughter Natasha and sister-in-law Claire.



Celia Greaves (Soprano)

Celia joined COS when she returned to Colchester after many years away and has been involved in six productions. Celia says: "All the different shows and concerts I've been part of have had great music and fantastic production values but the best bit has been getting to know all the other COS members." Celia's favourite season is spring, with all its new beginnings and the transition into summer.

Shannon Hannah (Alto)

As an active member of both CO2 and COS, this is her 12th show with the society. Having graduated with a BA Honours Musical Theatre Degree in 2016 she is very excited to be working with such a fantastic company full of friends and wonderful talent. Shannon loves spring because "you don't need to wear a coat and you get to see all the new colours of new flowers and if you're lucky it doesn't always rain!"



Claire Jones (Alto)

Claire has been involved in COS for nearly 20 years and has taken part in most shows. She has also thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the concerts. Her favourite season is spring when everything is coming to life after the long winter.

Peter Jones (Bass)

Peter has been involved in concerts over a number of years, as he loves to sing at every opportunity! His favourite season is winter, particularly a bright, crisp morning.

Lisa Latin (Soprano)

This is Lisa's first concert with COS and she has loved every minute of it. Lisa says: "My favourite season is winter as I love skiing and the mountains."

Sally Leung (Soprano)

Sally joined COS in 1994 and has only missed one show since! Sally is also the musical director for the Colchester Military Wives Choir and runs a children's choir. Sally is really looking forward to singing with her COS friends again in Seasons with swing. Sally's favourite season is spring. Sally says: "I love it when the trees are in bud and the spring flowers add colour to the dark earth and summer is on the way."

Helen McCraw (Alto)

Helen has performed locally since the age of three. She dances endlessly, sings loudly and loves to act. When not performing in musicals and choirs, Helen can be found teaching, travelling, running, cycling, reading or chatting. This is her fourth COS show after her parents encouraged her back on stage. Helen says: "I can't pick a favourite season because I enjoy them all!"



Shauna Murray (Alto)

Shauna has been with COS for a few years now, taking part in last year's concert and Jekyll & Hyde in January this year at the Mercury Theatre. She currently studies Musical Theatre at Colchester Institute and also co-owns a business being a Disney princess for children's parties.



Natasha Palmer (Soprano)

After six years away Natasha is thrilled to be back performing with COS. During her time away she has performed with Southampton Operatic Society but can't wait to get back on stage in her home town. Natasha found it tricky to decide on a favourite season as she loves the snowy mountains in the winter but can't wait to head to the beach come summer time!



Lisa Pordham (Alto)

Lisa has been with COS for over 10 years and loves being part of a great society that's truly talented and welcoming. Lisa enjoys being part of a concert, which takes a team effort. Lisa says: "Seasons with swing has been an absolute blast and I truly encourage anybody thinking about joining COS to do it! For me every season has a meaning but summer is my favourite with the warm evenings, watching the sun go down and of course the obligatory glass of wine to finish it off perfectly!"



Bethan Powell (Soprano)

Bethan is 15 and has just joined COS. She has appeared in various amateur and professional pantos through the years, has danced at Disneyland Paris and the O2 in London. Recently she got the chance to perform Legally Blonde in Germany! Her favourite season is summer as she can enjoy fun at her nearby beach with all her friends.



Barbara Ryan (Soprano)

Barbara has been a member of COS since 1974. She enjoys all aspects of the society and is delighted to be a part of this concert. Barbara says: "Summer is her favourite season. I love the warmth of the sun!"



Chloe Rutter (Alto)

Although Chloe has done three shows with Colchester Operatic, this is her first concert and she is really looking forward to performing with a smaller ensemble. Chloe says: "My favourite season is summer because of the longer days and sunshine!"



Barbara Scully (Soprano)

Barbara joined COS in 1984 and has been lucky to have had some lead roles in many of our main shows. She has also performed in many of our concerts. Spring is her favourite season as it's not too hot and she enjoys seeing the beautiful flowers come alive.



Steve Woodward (Tenor)

This is Steve's second production with COS having performed in January's Jekyll & Hyde. He loves to sing and has had a keen interest in Musical Theatre most of his life. Steve says: "My favourite season is, without doubt, summer! I love to spend time outside so it needs to be nice and warm. I get depressed when it's grey and gloomy, so approach me with caution come winter!"



Sarah Young (Soprano)

Sarah has always been involved in local theatre and been with COS since she moved to Colchester in 2010. Her highlights so far are playing the part of Erma in the musical "Anything Goes" in 2008 with BSMTTC at the Playhouse in Harlow and more recently being awarded the NETG adjudicators award in 2016 for her part in the play "A Matter of Life and Death", which was performed here at the Headgate Theatre. Her favourite "Time of the Season" is Halloween and she never misses the opportunity to dress up for the occasion.



Colchester Operatic Society present...

# hairspray

• THE BROADWAY MUSICAL •

At the Mercury Theatre, Wed 24th January -  
Saturday 3rd February 2018.

Directed by David Rutter with musical direction by Geoff Osborne and choreography by Debbie Marks.

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with JOSEF WEINBERGER LIMITED on behalf of MUSIC THEATRE INTERNATIONAL of New York

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Book by  
Mark O'Donnell  
Thomas Meehan

Music by  
Marc Shaiman

Lyrics by  
Scott Wittman  
Marc Shaiman

Based on the New Line Cinema film written and directed by JOHN WATERS

The story is set in Baltimore, 1962, and focuses on Tracy Turnblad, a big girl with big hair and an even bigger heart, who is on a mission to follow her dreams and dance her way onto national TV.

Tracy's audition makes her a local star and soon she is using her new-found fame to fight for equality and integration, bagging local heartthrob Link Larkin along the way.

## Want to get involved?

We are looking for a cast of up to 45 people, aged 16 years and over, and auditions are open to new, old and returning members of COS and CO2 (over 16yrs). The cast for this show needs to be a mixture of white & black ethnicity in order to depict the black segregation that was part of life in the early 60's in America, an issue addressed in the story of this musical. Our society membership at present is mostly members of white ethnicity and therefore we are particularly looking for new members of black ethnicity to be a part of this production.

If you are interested, Auditions will only be held on Sunday September 3rd 2017 at Prettygate Junior school at 10am. There is no alternative audition date.

Pre-audition rehearsals will be Mon 21st, Thurs 24th, Mon 28th and Thurs 31st August 7.30-10pm (venue on Mondays is the Officers Club and Thursdays at Prettygate Junior school). You will need to attend these rehearsals to learn the pieces for audition, which will include a dance routine for the chorus.

For further information please contact us via our website [www.colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk](http://www.colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk) or contact our membership secretary by email at [colint139@btinternet.com](mailto:colint139@btinternet.com) or by phone (01206) 262664.

THE MERCURY THEATRE  
COLCHESTER

OCTOBER  
4<sup>TH</sup> – 14<sup>TH</sup>

WWW.MERCURYTHEATRE.CO.UK  
01206 573 948

**COLCHESTER OPERATIC SOCIETY SECOND EDITION (CO2)**

# LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

**BOOK AND LYRICS BY  
HOWARD ASHMAN**

**MUSIC BY  
ALAN MENKEN**

**BASED ON THE FILM BY ROGER GORMAN,  
SCREENPLAY BY CHARLES GRIFFITH  
ORIGINALLY PRODUCED BY THE WPA THEATRE  
(KYLE RENICK, PRODUCTION DIRECTOR)  
ORIGINALLY PRODUCED AT THE ORPHEUM THEATRE,  
NEW YORK CITY BY THE WPA THEATRE, DAVID GEFFEN,  
CAMERON MACKINTOSH AND THE SHUBERT ORGANIZATION**

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International (Europe)

All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI Europe

[www.mtishows.co.uk](http://www.mtishows.co.uk)