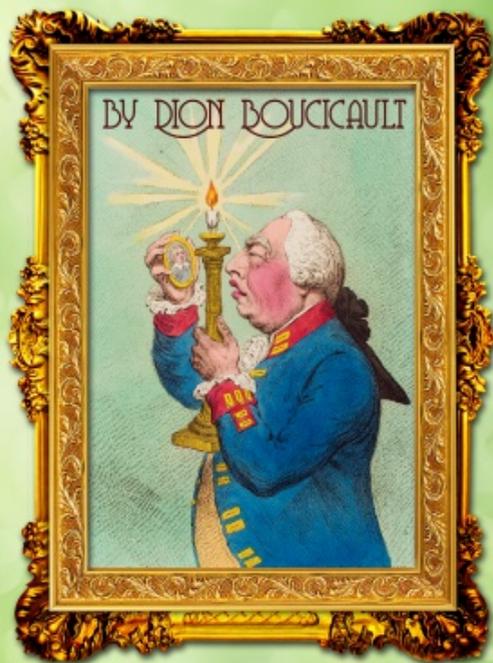


SPRING GROVE FRINGE - 2023

# LONDON ASSURANCE



Friday 24th November at 8.00pm  
Saturday 25th November at 7.30pm

Reg. Charity No. 1150982

# LONDON ASSURANCE

## BY DION BOUCICAULT

### CAST

Cool, valet to Charles Courtly	Laurie South
Martha, housekeeper at the Courtlys' house	Amanda Shaw
Charles Courtly, son of Sir Harcourt	Adrian Treloar
Richard Dazzle, young gentleman of unknown provenance	Matt Sexton
Sir Harcourt Courtly, elderly Belgrave Square resident	David Hamilton
Squire Max Harkaway, of Oak Hall, in Gloucestershire	Scott Milligan
Solomon Isaacs, a money lender	Keith Glenny
Pert, maid to Grace Harkaway	Lynn Charlton
Grace Harkaway, Max's niece	Karina Ramnarain
Meddle, local lawyer in Siddingham, Gloucestershire	Chris Brooks
Lady Gay Spanker, flamboyant Siddingham horse rider	Sandie Glenny
Adolphous Spanker, Gay's husband	Tony Tresigne
Squire Fallow, a visitor at Oak Hall	Jonathan Rollason
Molly, a maid at Oak Hall	Julia Becker
Newspaper seller	Daniel Sexton

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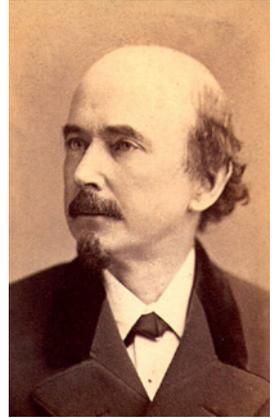
The scenes are set in the Belgrave Square house of Sir Harcourt Courtly, and Oak Hall, the residence of Squire Max Harkaway in Siddingham, Gloucestershire. The year is 1841.

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Director	Nigel Duffin
Prompt	Jo Need
Stage Team	Alison & Héctor King
Costumes	Jenny Robson, Sandy Gavshon
Makeup	Emma & Suzanne Nail
Lighting & Sound	Mark Springthorpe
Catering	Amanda Shaw
Bar	Jayne Britten

# DION BOUCICAULT

Dion (Dionysius) Boucicault was a prolific playwright, actor and theatre manager in the Victorian period, successful on both sides of the Atlantic, and with a scandal-filled life to match. His second marriage was to the young actress Agnes Robertson, a juvenile lead, with whom he eloped to New York. They both became popular on the American stage and they had six children. His third marriage, again to a young actress, was bigamous and he sold the rights to many of his plays to finance alimony payments to Agnes.



Dion's mother Anne was from an influential Anglo-Irish family related to the Guinnesses. When Dion was born, in Dublin in 1820, she was separated from her husband (of the Huguenot surname). Dion's father was Dionysius Lardner, who was lodging with Anne and became professor of natural philosophy and astronomy at University College, London, and famous for his books popularising science. Anne followed him to London with her children. At school in Brentford, Dion wrote his first play at 17.



The young Dion was given a job in a Dublin brewery by Arthur Lee Guinness, had an affair with him, which was of concern to the Guinness family, may have blackmailed him, and anyway returned to London in 1840 flush with cash. Dion's writing and acting career took off.

London Assurance, first performed at Covent Garden in 1841 with a stellar cast, was a big success and has frequently been revived. It had been co-written with John Brougham, who originated the role of Dazzle, but their relationship soured and, in settlement of a lawsuit between them, Brougham relinquished his authorship rights. Many of Dion's subsequent plays ran with great success on the London stage and in America.

In America, Dion leased theatres, including on Broadway, and produced and acted in plays in several cities, before falling out with his business manager and partner over money. In London, he made and lost a fortune producing plays and in the management of theatres. He became an American citizen in 1873 and continued acting and producing in London and New York, where he died in 1890.



## SHELTER

This Christmas morning over 131,000 children will wake up without a place to call home. The highest number on record. It doesn't have to be this way.

Following this production, we will be making a donation to *Shelter*, a charity which exists to defend the right to a safe home. Because home is everything.

Locally, *Shelter* offers one-to-one, personalised help with housing issues and homelessness.

Online, information can be found about everything from reclaiming a deposit to applying as homeless. Advisers are available over webchat.

There is a free emergency helpline, open 365 days a year, for anyone struggling with a housing issue or homelessness.

*Shelter's* solicitors provide free legal advice and attend court to help people who've lost their homes or are facing eviction.



## PANTO TIME - 9TH & 10TH FEBRUARY 2024



Next year's Spring Grove Fringe pantomime will be Dick Whittington. Parts are open to everyone, including those who are interested in finding out about the group, either acting on stage or helping backstage.

There will be an initial read-through on Wednesday, 6th December at 8:00 pm, here in the Parish Hall. It would be great to see you all there, so if you would like to take part in any way, please come along.