PROSCENIUM



4 - 7 November 2026

For Services Rendered

W. Somerset Maugham

HARROW CHORAL SOCIETY

Christmas Celebration

A Festival of Music for Choir and Audience

Conductor: Joe Tobin

Organ : Paul Ayres

Byron Brass

Harrow School Speech Room

Harrow-on-the-Hill, HA1 3HP

Saturday 12th December 2026

5.30 pm

Tickets available

Free drink and mince pie in the interval

online: www.harrowchoral.org.uk

email: boxoffice@harrowchoral.org.uk

tel: 07794 253463

£26 in advance (£28 at the door)

Under 18s : £2

making music

Registered charity: 262070

EAST LANE THEATRE

Accidental Death of an Anarchist

2nd,3rd,4th & 5th December @ 7.45pm

5th & 6th December @ 3.00pm

www.eastlanetheatre.co.uk

By Dario Fo & Franca Rame.

Adapted by Tom Basden

This amateur production of "Accidental Death of an Anarchist" is presented by arrangement with Nick Hern Books

PROSCENIUM

For Services Rendered

W. Somerset Maugham

Wednesday 4 to Saturday 7 November 2026
Compass Theatre, Ickenham

Cast

Charlotte Ardsley ..... Linda Hampson
Sydney Ardsley ..... Dan Weiss
Ethel Bartlett ..... Eva Peerless
Gwen Cedar ..... Clare Wooster
Lois Ardsley ..... Caroline MacGinnis
Wilfred Cedar ..... Mark Sutherland
Eva Ardsley ..... Tish Carroll
Collie Stratton ..... Simon Glanfield
Leonard Ardsley ..... Richard Kessel
Dr Prentice ..... Andrew Harrowell
Howard Bartlett ..... David Hampton
Gertrude ..... Lynette Alston

Creative Team

Director ..... Crystal Anthony
Stage Manager ..... Lynette Alston
Assistant Stage Managers ..... Hannah Lester
Caroline Bronne-Shanbury
Lighting Design / Lighting & Sound Operation ..... Helene Smith
Properties ..... Shirley Wootten
Set Design and Build ..... Richard Kessel
Costumes ..... Angela Evans, Shirley Wootten
Poster and Programme Design ..... Charles Anthony
Programme Compilation ..... Mark Sutherland

Scene: The Ardsley's house at Ramblestone, a small country town in Kent near the cathedral city of Stanbury, in 1932

Act 1: A terrace at the back of the house
Act 2: The drawing room, two weeks later
Act 3: The drawing room, the following morning

Programme Sources: National Theatre programme 1979,
Chichester Festival Theatre programme 2015

Aftermath

In an agony column published in The Times at the end of 1914, a distraught woman whose fiancé had been killed in the war offered to 'gladly marry' any officer who had been 'totally blinded or otherwise incapacitated' in combat.

It was an audacious appeal. Somerset Maugham's 1932 play, *For Services Rendered*, vividly presents the dire prospects for tens of thousands of young women whose lovers and husbands died between 1914 and 1918. For these women, the thought that they might forever remain unmarried was terrifying....

...*For Services Rendered* highlights another crisis caused by the war: the debt due to men permanently disabled because of military service. Once again, women were required to make a ‘salute of gratitude' to men who had sacrificed health and limbs to safeguard them from the rapacious Hun. 'Nice Girls' Visiting Bands' were established to minister to wounded veterans in hospitals. Like Eva, these 'nice girls' would play chess and read to the men. Another solution was the establishment of a 'League for the Marrying of Broken Heroes', to put disabled veterans directly in touch with unmarried women...

...The war-wounded were even abandoned by the government. The Ministry of Pensions came to see its job as primarily limiting state liabilities. The burden of caring for blind and disabled ex-servicemen who did not have the support of mothers like Charlotte Ardsley in *For Services Rendered*, was shunted off to charities. Throughout the interwar years, ex-servicemen fought this demeaning of their status, but to no avail. ln the words of James Hogge of the Federation of

Discharged and Demobilised Sailors and Soldiers, 'Do we recall public promises made to men who volunteered? No workhouses, no neglect, no unemployment. Instead pensions, training, employment, priority of claim. And now a charitable organisation asked the same public for old boots and old clothes''' Or, as one disabled man put it in the 1920s, 'lt's not charity I want, but what I am entitled to'. Such appeals fell on deaf ears.

Chichester Festival Theatre
For Services Rendered programme note - Joanna Bourke *(2015)*

"It is not enough to win a war,
it is more important to
organise the peace"

Aristotle

W. Somerset Maugham (1874-1965)

1874 Born at the British Embassy in Paris. Orphaned before age 10 and sent to Whitstable, Kent; educated at The King's School, Canterbury.
1890 Spent final two years of education in South of France and Heidelberg, due to tuberculosis.
1892 Enrolled as medical student at St. Thomas' Hospital.
1897 Qualified as a doctor; published debut novel *Liza of Lambeth*.
1903 First full-length play *A Man of Honour* performed by Stage Society.
1907 *Lady Frederick* (written 1903) staged at Royal Court. Within the next year had four plays running simultaneously in London
1913 Met Syrie Wellcome – married in 1916.
1914 Ambulance driver in France. Met Gerald Haxton.
1915 Novel *Of Human Bondage* published. Maugham recruited into military intelligence. Sent to Russia to attempt to stop Bolshevik revolution (1917).
1925 Novel *The Painted Veil* published.
1927 *The Letter* and The *Constant Wife* first performed in London (the latter in New York in 1926). Maugham and Syrie divorced.
1928 *Ashenden* published. Maugham bought final home-the Villa Mauresque on Cap Ferrat, South of France.
1930 Novel *Cakes and Ale* published.
1932 First performance of *For Services Rendered.*
1933 Last play, *Sheppey*, first performed in London.
1938 Autobiographical work, *The Summing Up,* published.
1939 Forced to leave France – spent war in United States.
1954 Awarded Companion of Honour.
1955 Death of Syrie.
1965 Maugham's death.

Maugham on War

"We made two or three journeys to the hospital and then went to the church of the village...Propped up against the central door of the church, by accident apart from the others, lay a man with an ashy face, bearded, thin and haggard; he made no sound or movement, but stared sullenly in front of him as though, realising death was inevitable, he was filled only with anger. He had a horrible wound in the belly, and nothing could be done for him, he waited for death...another sat against the chancel steps smoking a cigarette and coolly watched: his cheeks were rosy. He did not look ill: he smiled gaily as I went up to him. I saw his arm was bandaged and I asked him if the wound was severe. He laughed a little. 'Oh, that's nothing, if I had no more than that! I've got a bullet in my spine, my legs are paralysed.'"

A Writer's Notebook – W. Somerset Maugham
(Doubleday, 1949)

"The wretched Hitler has got his eyes on the whole of Europe and there are rumours of war."

"To hell with Hitler," Gerald [Haxtonl said. "Don't let's worry."

"There mustn't be another," Willie said. "I dare say," Gerald replied. "But what can you do to stop it?" "In my own little way I did try to stop it. Gerald, you typed out *For Services Rendered*. Can you remember the words? I can remember every word," Willie began to quote from his anti-war play: "I know that we were the dupes of incompetent fools who ruled the nations. I know that we were sacrificed to their vanity, their greed and their stupidity. And the worst of it is that as far as I can tell they haven't learnt a thing. They're just as vain, they're just as stupid as they ever were." Willie paused for a moment. I was conscious that as he had been speaking these lines from his play - as on the occasions when he spoke in public - his stammer seemed completely to disappear.

Conversations With Willie - Robin Maugham
(W.H. Allen / Virgin Books, 1978)

Maugham on Theatre

“As the political importance of the aristocracy dwindled the public took less interest in it. Playgoers began to be ready to observe the actions of people of their own class, the well-to-do merchants and professional men...It was still impossible to interest the public in the lower classes. Novels and plays that dealt with them were very generally considered sordid. It will be curious to see if now that these classes have acquired political power the public at large will take the same interest in their lives that for so long it took in the lives of the titled, and for a while in those of the opulent bourgeoisie.”

The Summing Up – W. Somerset Maugham
(Heinemann, 1938)

Maugham on Maugham

“As I've told you before now, money is the sixth sense which enables us to enjoy the other five. For some reason that escapes me, people seem to regret that money costs money.”

“When on New Year's Eve" Willie said, "I hear people singing that song in which they ask themselves the question, 'should old acquaintance be forgot?' I can only tell you that my own answer is in the affirmative.”

“You know, dying is a very dull, dreary affair.” he said. Then he smiled. “And my advice to you is to have nothing whatever to do with it” he concluded.

Conversations With Willie – Robin Maugham
(W.H. Allen / Virgin Books, 1978)

Our Next Production:

The Children

By Lucy Kirkwood

Three retired nuclear scientists reunite after a disaster – confronting guilt, responsibility, and the choice of sacrificing themselves to fix the damage they caused.

This fascinating, engaging play is threaded with flashes of nostalgia and grim humour, exploring a challenging subject that is relevant to us all.

Ticket price includes a programme, available on your way in.

Directed by Linda Hampson
Wednesday 17 to Saturday 20 March 2027 at 7.45 pm
Compass Theatre, Ickenham
Box Office: 01895 250 615

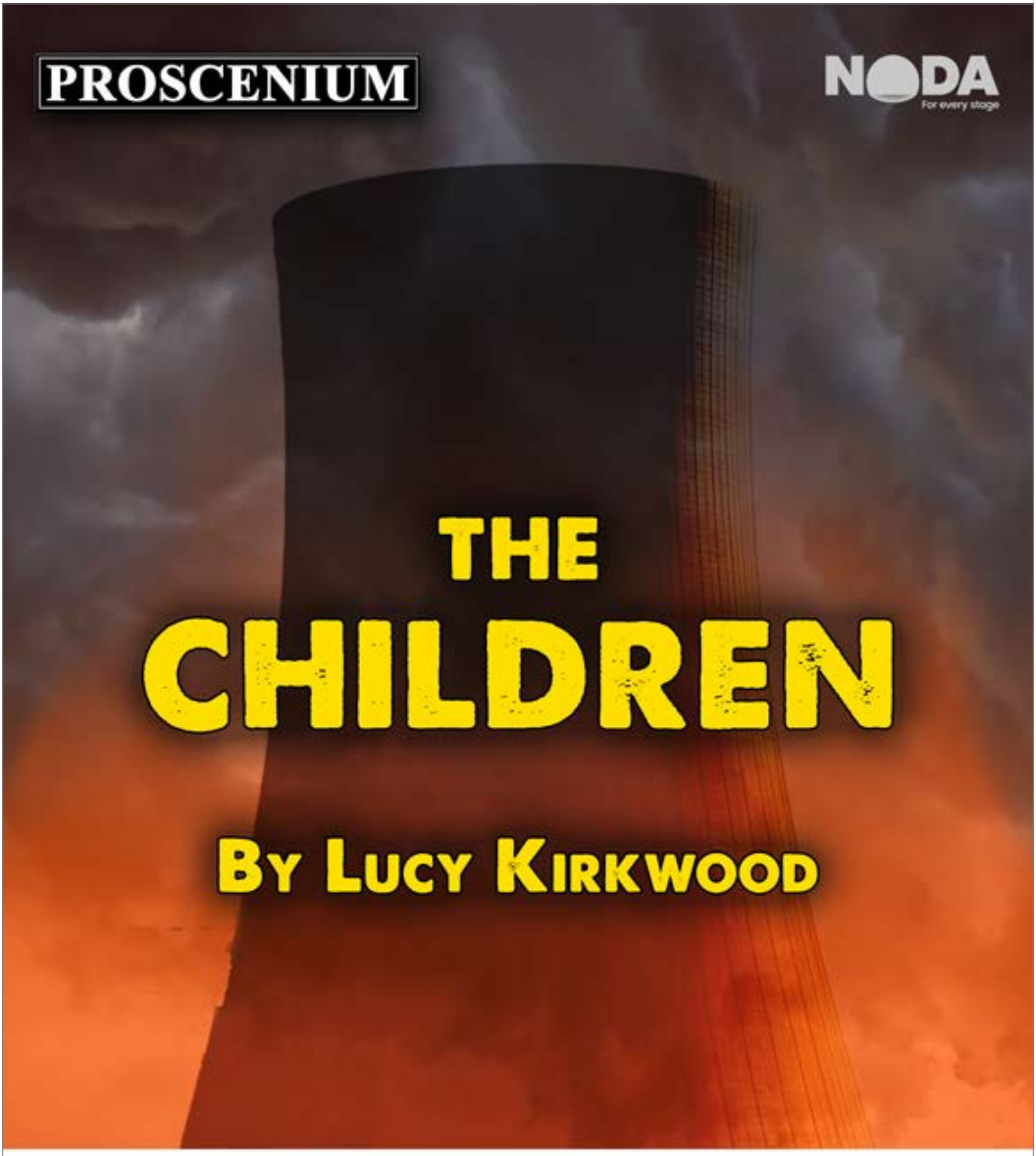
About Proscenium

Proscenium was founded in 1924. Since then, the aim of this experienced group has been to present classic and contemporary plays to as wide an audience as possible. Since 1990, performances have taken place at the Harrow Arts Centre and, more recently, at the Compass Theatre, Ickenham.

The company meets three times a week in Harrow for rehearsals, so that up to four plays are presented in each season. Social, fund-raising activities and play readings take place throughout the year.

Chair : Mike Williams

Contact us at www.proscenium.org.uk



17 - 20 March 2027

7.45pm, Compass Theatre
Ickenham, UB10 8PD
Tickets: £17, Concessions: £16
Groups of 10+: £13

www.proscenium.org.uk
Book tickets: 01895 250615
or discover.hillingdon.gov.uk/theatres
Online transaction fee: £1.50