

***‘Murder in the Cathedral’ performed in 2004
in Holy Apostles Church, Charlton Kings***

*Charlton Kings Community Players
present...*



‘ MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL’

By T. S. Eliot

**27th -30th October 2004
in Holy Apostles Church
Charlton Kings**

Programme

NOTES ON THE MUSIC

The music has been composed and arranged specially for this production by Malcolm Dunbar, Peter Meason and Keith Mead.

The main source has been Church Music from the Middle Ages. For the processions, we use part of the *Te Deum* - "We Praise Thee O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord" and a Christmas Anthem *Hodie Christus natus est* - "Today Christ is born, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace: Alleluia."

Music from the Mass and Requiem Mass mark special moments in the drama. These are: -

Kyrie Eleison - "Lord have mercy upon us, Christ have mercy upon us"

Sanctus - "Holy, holy, holy Lord God of power and might."

Dies Irae - "Day of wrath; that day, it will dissolve the world into ashes." (From a poem about the Day of Judgement)

In the sequence of time after Christmas, we have used the Coventry Carol - *Lullay, Lullay, Thou little tiny Child* - from later in the Middle Ages. It is taken from part of the Coventry Mystery Play - the Pageant of the Shearman and Tailors - and is the lament of the Mothers of Bethlehem for the murder of their children ('The Holy Innocents') by order of King Herod (Matthew 2 v 16-18).

Tony Jeans

AND FINALLY...

We are greatly indebted to the Reverend Rod Paterson and the Congregation of Holy Apostles for the use of the Church and especially to Len Bill for his assistance in the details of our operations.

We also thank all the other friends of the Players who have contributed in any way to this production, publicity and selling tickets.

We would like to thank the Langston Horse Restaurant for the use of their car park and Kraft Foods for printing the programme.

This programme is kindly sponsored by

BODYSENSE
FEEL THE BENEFIT

Cheltenham Park Hotel, Cirencester Road, Charlton Kings

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SYNOPSIS OF PLAY

The play opens with the Chorus (The Women of Canterbury) representing all sections of the underclass setting the scene; we learn that Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury has been absent for seven years in France. Their action is "to wait and witness".

A Messenger brings news that Thomas has returned. The three priests ask the messenger whether the rift has been healed between Thomas and the King.

Thomas enters and greets his people and the priests and tells them all to "watch". Tempters come to lure him on to different paths. When he has met them all he feels his "way is clear and the meaning plain."

After the interval, Thomas preaches his sermon - Christmas Morning, 1170. In this he asks the people to remember the martyrs of the past. The Chorus pick up on his mood which is lightened somewhat by the priests and the singing of 'The Coventry Carol'.

The Priests have a brief discussion about what is likely to happen. They are interrupted by the Four Knights who berate and mock Thomas accusing him of all manner of misdeeds. They depart leaving the threat hanging in the air that they will return "for the King's justice and with swords."

The Chorus are in a fine state by now and beseech Thomas to pray for them. He replies that he is "not in danger: only near to death." This causes even more distress.

After Thomas is murdered the knights come forward to explain their actions - whilst most of the play is written in verse, these knights speak as 'Plain English Men' in prose.

In the final chorus, the people and the priests join to give thanks to God for the blessing of Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury. He has achieved his martyrdom. The play finishes with

"Blessed Thomas pray for us."

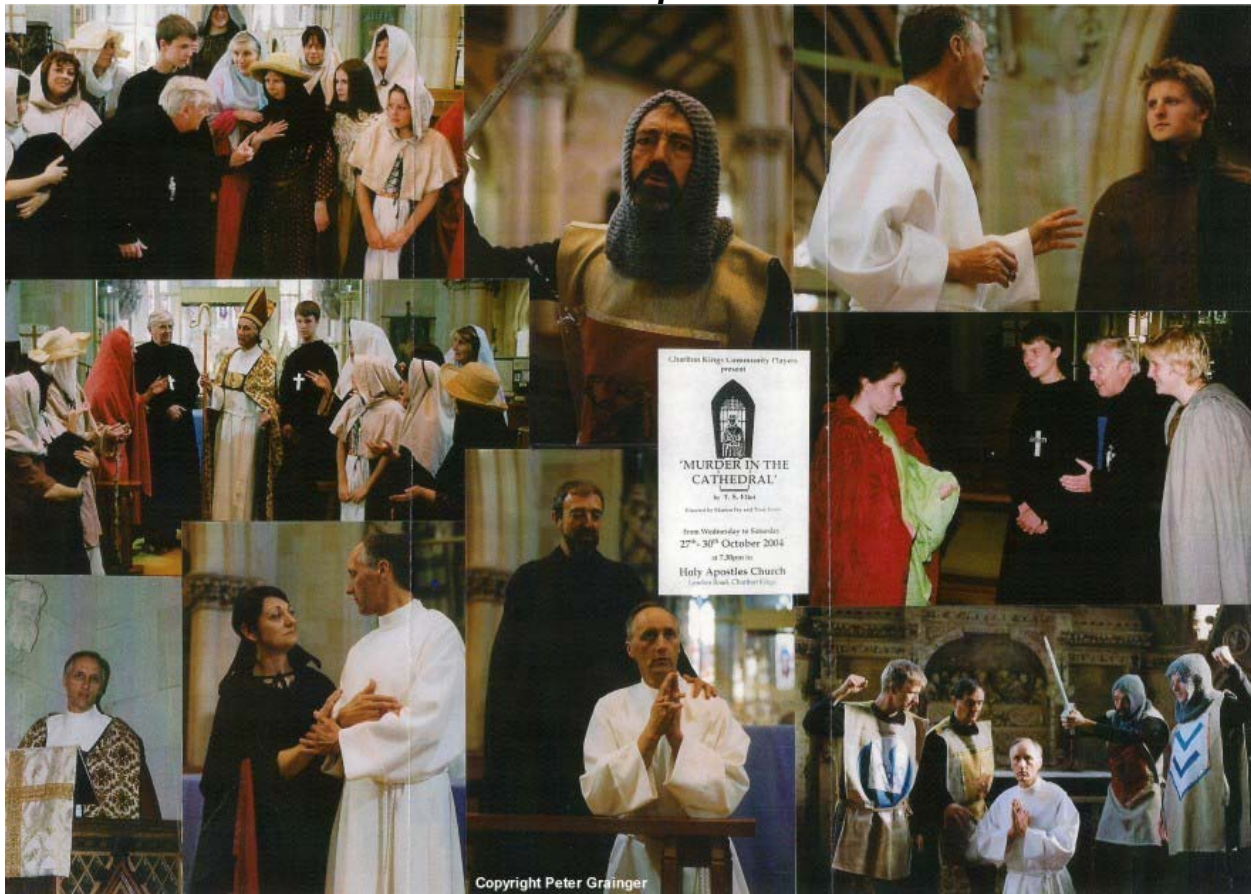
CAST

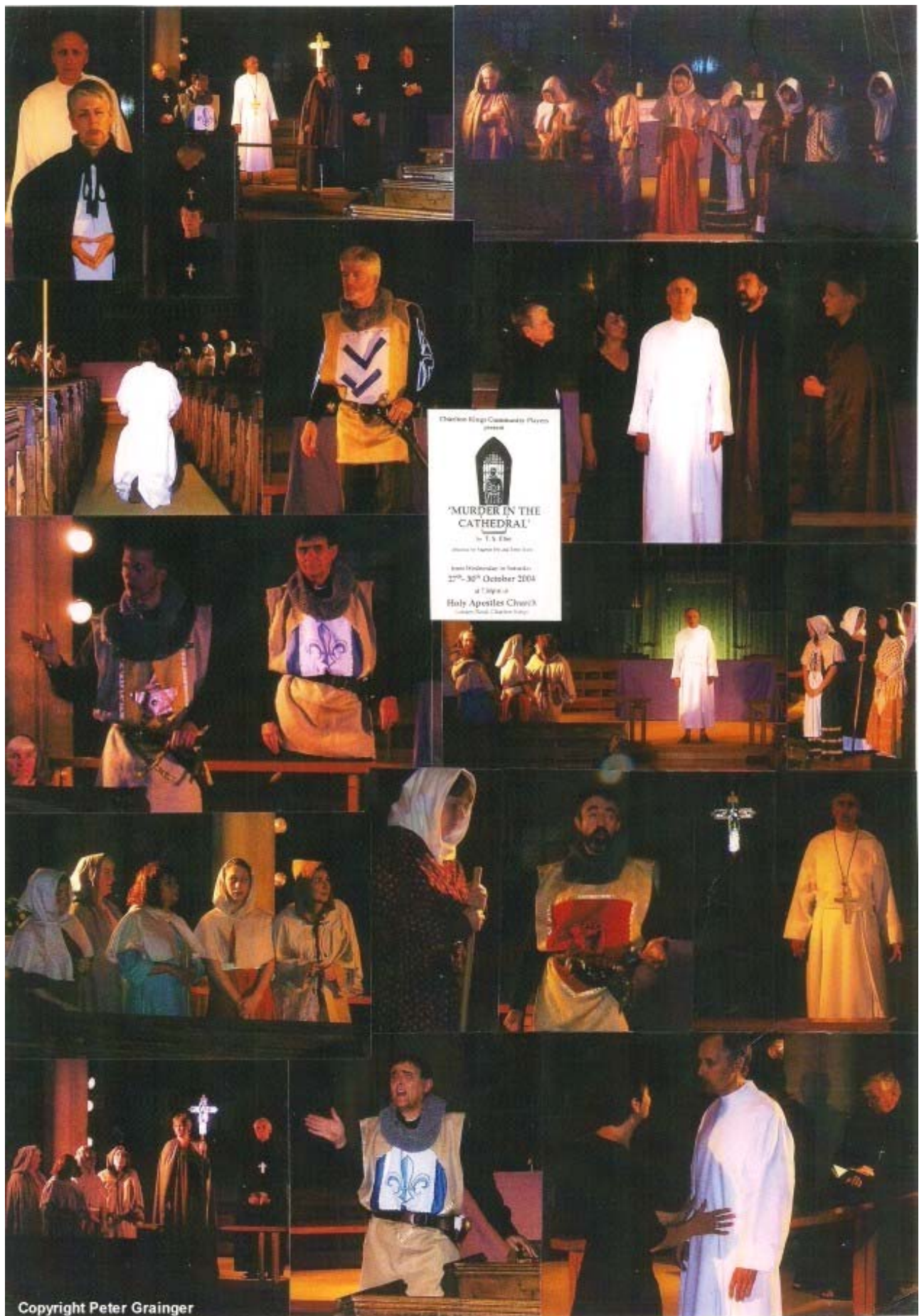
THOMAS BECKET	John Palmer	
1 st PRIEST	James Purveur	
2 nd PRIEST	Peter Grainger	
3 rd PRIEST	Derek Palmer	
1 st TEMPTER	Lynne Glover	✓
2 nd TEMPTER	Sam Jordan	✓
3 rd TEMPTER	Geoff Ramshaw	
4 th TEMPTER	Gill Garrett	✓
1 st KNIGHT	Geoff Ramshaw	✓
2 nd KNIGHT	Brian Deacon	✓
3 rd KNIGHT	Jo Kinane	✓
4 th KNIGHT	Martyn Fry	✓
MESSENGER	Elizabeth Kane	
ATTENDANT	Jack Mabbett	
CHORUS	Clare Cipriani	Veronica Jordan
	Anne Cross	Jane Kane
	Sylvia Fry	Sara Kinane
	Liz Jenkinson	Sophie Kinane
	Helen Jones	Margaret Walker
	Jane Jones	
SINGERS	Yvonne Brawn	David Brawn
	Ann Clark	George Cross
	Carol Davies	Gwilym Davies
	Melanie Fletcher	Michael Garland
	Alison Talbot	Jeremy Worth
	Pam Worth	
MUSICIANS	Flute	Brenda Johnston
	Cello	Melanie Sadie
	Keyboard	Keith Mead
DIRECTORS	Martyn Fry & Tony Jeans	
MUSICAL DIRECTOR	Keith Mead	
PRODUCTION SECRETARY	Val Fippance	
PROMPT	June Pearce	
COSTUMES	Tricia Ratcliffe, Val Fippance, Sylvia Fry & June Pearce	
LIGHTING	Greg White, James Holland, Peter Grainger, Megan Reid & Richard Major	
FRONT OF HOUSE	Ray Talbot & Team	
PUBLICITY PHOTOS	Barry Curi	

Planning in the church



Rehearsals and performance







The women of Canterbury remonstrate with Thomas



‘Murder in the Cathedral’

Planning the production

This is a wonderfully dramatic and powerful play about the murder of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury at Christmas Time 1170. Those famous words of Henry “*will no one rid me of this turbulent priest*” underlie the whole of the play though Henry himself never appears. All the action takes place between 2nd December and 29th December 1170.

Our intention is to produce this play, probably in Holy Apostles Church, in the late autumn of 2004 (not at half-term).

The play is written largely in dramatic poetry form though Thomas’ sermon in the Cathedral on Christmas Day and the four knights (the murderers) speeches, in mitigation of their act, to the audience after they have murdered Thomas are in prose. The latter makes stark contrast to what has gone before. There are some wonderful speaking parts; all of whom have a good number of lines to learn.

- Chorus of Canterbury Women (4-6) who commentate and act as narrators on the events as they unfurl;
- Three Priests of the Cathedral
- A Messenger
- Archbishop Thomas Becket
- Four Tempters (men and women)

In addition there is an opportunity for a number of non-speaking parts such as crowds, attendants etc.

We are hoping to have some music especially composed for this and there could well be opportunities for some choral singing to add atmosphere and enhance the dramatic nature of the play.

Some workshops will be arranged to help you to get to know the play but in the meantime if anyone would like to read the Play I have a number of scripts for people to borrow.

This is a very exciting and thought provoking project and I’m really looking forward to producing it. Do come and join us.

Martyn Fry
September 2003 Charlton Kings Community Players newsletter

‘Murder in the Cathedral’

Reflections

Now that Christmas and the New Year are over it is time to reflect on the ‘passing’ of ‘Murder in the Cathedral’. It is a play that I have wanted to do for a number of years now; ever since I saw it as ‘The Swan’ in Stratford. I have to say I think our production was superior.

The cast, musicians and singers, the backstage team, the production team and the wonderfully atmospheric setting in Holy Apostles all contrived to produce an excellent show. I have nothing but admiration for all the cast who learnt their lines superbly and spoke with such feeling and understanding; the ending was particularly spine-tingling.

The production team led by Peter, Tony and Val came up with the goods as far as set, lighting, costume, props and the organisation of all the rehearsal space. Thank you too, to Keith Mead and his musicians and singers whose quality of sound enhanced the whole production. We mustn’t forget also Malcolm Dunbar and Peter Meason who wrote and provided much of the wonderful music for them to perform.

June Pearce, Tricia Ratcliffe, Sylvia Fry, Rich Major, Greg White, Megan Reid and James Holland also gave unstintingly of their time in making this a very worthwhile production. Jane Kane, Sara Kinane and Peter Grainger did a magnificent job on the publicity front and great thanks to Lynne Glover whose phone was red hot with people wanting to buy tickets.

I would like to add my particular thanks to Tony Jeans, whose help, advice and boundless enthusiasm enabled me to concentrate on directing. He did all those nitty-gritty things that the director so often has to do but doesn’t really have time to do. Thank you, Tony, it was a pleasure working with you.

As Director I feel enormously proud to have associated with such an excellent all round team, thank you all very much. I think the following words written by Enid Phipps, Church Warden at Holy Apostles are a fitting ending to this report:

“Is there no end to the communal genius of the Charlton Kings Community Players.... You have yet again exceeded your already towering standards of professionalism in all areas of production.”

Martyn Fry
February 2005 Charlton Kings Community Players newsletter

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