



The Tinder Box

by Nicholas Stuart Gray

Peter, the soldier	MICHAEL HALL
The Witch	NICK LUCAS
Shemozzle	BETTY SANDERS
Kuffuffe	JOHN FENNER
The White Dog	JOHN HERITAGE
The Black-and-White Dog	PETER PHIPPS
The Black Dog	KATE CHARTERS
A Weird Face	JANE WILKINSON
Kurtz, the innkeeper	GEORGE HOWELL
The Princess Gisella	DIANA TIDBALL
Duke Eldred	DAVID GREAVES
Lord Bartram	JOHN SULLIVAN
Courtesa Helga	MARGARET REES
The King	WILLIAM WILKINSON
The Queen	HELEN ASHBORNE
Voice of the Spinning Wheel	YVONNE SCOTT
A Servant	ROLAND NICHOLS
First Soldier	DONALD WATSON
Second Soldier	ERIC BEARDSMORE
Courtiens, Soldiers	OLWYN AYRES, ELPETH DALES, JAN JONES, JANICE KERANBRUM, CANDACE PIETTE, JANE WILKINSON, NEVILLE FRENCH, BILL NEALAN, GEOFFREY MOUNTFORD, COLIN TALBOT, BRIAN TANDY
Bats	MARY-LOUISE ARMSTRONG, SARAH FINCH, CHRISTOPHER GIBBS, FIONA GIBBS, CAROLINE GOODWIN, LESLEY WILCOX, FRANCIS CHARTERS, SUZANNE COLGAN, DINA MOGRALIA, KAREN SULLIVAN, KATHERINE TODD, RHIANNON WILLIAMS

DIRECTOR: PHYL HARRIS

SETTINGS:

Prologue	Scene 1	The Hollow Tree
ACT 1	Scene 2	The Magic Cavern
	Scene 3	The Hollow Tree
ACT 2	Scene 1	A Garret in the Town of Kastelburg
	Scene 2	The Princess's Room
	Scene 3	Peter's Castle
	Scene 4	The Princess's Room
	Scene 5	Part of a Street in Kastelburg
	Scene 6	Peter's Castle
ACT 3	Scene 1	A Dungeon
	Scene 2	The Princess's Room
	Scene 3	The Edge of a Hill

There will be two intervals of 15 minutes.



Diana Tidball, playing the Princess in Leamington's Loft Theatre production, *Tinder Box*, which opened on Wednesday and runs until January 11.

Tinder Box in need of a spark

THE TINDER BOX—at the Loft Theatre, Leamington, until January 11 (running time: about 2hr. 30min.)

IT MUST have been quite a New Year's Eve party at the Loft Theatre. At least, that's the most likely explanation for their New Year's Day performance.

The actors, who betrayed little else, certainly revealed all the symptoms of post-alcoholic depression as they

By DAVID ISAACS

staggered their mournful way through this unimaginative production at a pace the average gout-ridden tortoise might have bettered.

The show will improve... simply because there is no

THEATRE

alternative. But one must have reservations about whether director Phyl Harris can manage to inject sufficient life, colour and inventiveness to establish it as anything but a failure.

Works harder

I know. It's 1975 and we all ought to try to start the new year by being nice to one another. But I refuse to do the Loft Theatre the disservice of pretending that this is anything but a way-below-par production.

Betty Sanders and John Fenner play a pair of cats with a degree of personality. But elsewhere this is just what the performances lack.

For the most part, people remember their lines— even

if they don't seem to have the remotest knowledge of (or interest in) what they are saying.

Nick Lucas works harder than the rest— not a task that currently over-taxes him—but he lacks the skill to deal with the witch's role to any satisfactory degree.

Very dull

Michael Hall is young and plays a soldier, Diana Tidball is young and plays a princess, Margaret Rees has beautiful red hair and plays a courtesa.

There is a king, a queen, a duke and an earl. There are also three dogs.

The very dull costumes have been supplied by the Royal Shakespeare Company and the show is played for the most part with a uniform lack of lighting which suggests that the Loft haven't been paying their electricity bill.

Philip Prior-Pitt designed the set and I understand the show is already a sell-out.

CATS HAVE A CHAT

FINAL REHEARSALS are under way at the Loft Theatre in Leamington for Nicholas Stuart Gray's popular fairy tale, *The Tinder Box*.

Appearing in the presentation, which is directed by Phyl Harris, are Nick Lucas as the witch, Betty Sanders as Shemozzle (left), and John Fenner as Kuffuffe, the two cats.

The production, which is already a sell-out, starts on January 1 at the theatre in Leamington.

