



## Cecil Hepworth Playhouse

29<sup>th</sup> April 2026 -2<sup>nd</sup> May 2026

Director Karen Broadbent

Musical Director Catherine Nicholson

### Little Women

U.S. National Tour Version (2006)

Produced nationally and internationally, *Little Women* has been praised by critics for its ambition in adapting such a well-known story for the stage. This timeless captivating story is brought to life in this glorious musical filled with personal discovery, heartache, hope, and everlasting love. The original production starred the unparalleled Sutton Foster, who received Tony, Outer Critics Circle, and Drama Desk nominations for her performance.

Based on Louisa May Alcott's life, *Little Women*, follows the adventures of sisters Jo, Meg, Beth and Amy March. Jo is trying to sell her stories for publication, but the publishers are not interested - her friend Professor Bhaer tells her that she has to do better and write more from herself. Begrudgingly taking this advice, Jo weaves the story of herself and her sisters and their experience growing up in Civil War America.

*Little Women* embodies the complete theatrical experience, guaranteeing a night filled with laughter, tears, and a lifting of the spirit. The powerful score soars with the sounds of personal discovery, heartache and hope -- the sounds of a young America finding its voice.

## Full Synopsis

### Act One

1865, New York City.

Josephine (Jo) March is living in Mrs. Kirk's boarding house, while trying to sell her stories to publications. Professor Bhaer, another tenant in the boarding house, informs Jo that a letter arrived for her. Jo reads it and finds herself disappointed. It is another rejection from a publisher. Jo asks Professor Bhaer if she can read him one of her stories, for his opinion. He agrees and she begins.

("An Operatic Tragedy") The story begins with a thunderstorm and the story's heroine, Clarissa, is running across the coastal heath, trying to escape the clutches of the evil Braxton Prendergast. Just when it seems

Clarissa cannot escape Braxton's clutches, the handsome and bold Rodrigo appears. He comes to kill to Rodrigo and...

...suddenly Professor Bhaer interrupts Jo and wonders what it is she is writing. "Blood and guts stuff," she replies. Professor Bhaer tells her that she is a unique woman--vivacious and outspoken--but her stories seem to conform to what she thinks the public wants to hear. He says she can do better and walks away. Jo can't comprehend this, saying that her stories were a great success back home in Concord, Massachusetts ("Better").

We are then back at the March household, two years earlier. We meet Jo's sisters Meg, Beth, and Amy. Jo tells them she has written a piece to perform for Christmas and tries to convince them of its impending success. The sisters are won over and they begin to rehearse ("Our Finest Dreams"). Jo exclaims she is bursting with energy and asks for tasks to do. Beth asks for their father to be home from the war, Meg wants to be invited to the Valentine's Day ball, and Amy wants a Christmas tree. Jo obliges and runs out the door to chop one down across the street at Mr. Laurence's house.

As Jo leaves, Marmee enters. Marmee, the March girls' mother and pillar of the family, wants to know everything that the girls did that day. The girls begin to tell her about the play Jo has written, but before they can get far enough, Jo walks in with a fir tree. She announces that she has cut it down from Mr. Laurence's estate, but Marmee demands that it be taken back. Beth suggests that they could at least give the tree to the Hummel family, since they are so poor.

As Marmee agrees to this action, Mr. Laurence walks in demanding Jo repay him. When Jo agrees, Mr. Laurence walks out leaving his grandson, Laurie. Laurie awkwardly introduces himself to Jo and confides that he thought what she did was brave. Jo asks Laurie to give the fir tree to the Hummel family. Laurie happily agrees.

Following the introduction, a letter arrives from Mr. March. The girls all gather around Marmee as she reads the letter aloud. Mr. March says that the war continues but assures that he is well and that he sends his love to the girls. The girls, relieved, disperse to their rooms, leaving Marmee alone. Marmee sings to her absent husband about the difficulties of raising their daughters by herself ("Here Alone").

A few days later, Jo goes to her Aunt March's house. Aunt March wishes to have Jo take her place in society, much to Jo's disdain. Aunt March then tempts Jo with the offer of going to Europe with her, but only if she promises to change her ways and become more like a proper lady ("Could You").

A month later, Jo and Meg are preparing to go to the Valentine's Day Ball. Jo feels uncomfortable in her dress, but Meg is absolutely terrified of going to her first ball. Marmee calms her down and takes her through all of the steps of being at a ball ("Delighted").

Amy walks in, wearing a gown that is too big on her, ready to go to the ball. Marmee tells Amy she wasn't invited and so she can't go to the ball. Amy asks to take Jo's invitation, since she cares about society and Jo doesn't. Jo and Amy then get into a fight, with Amy mocking Jo's stories and Jo stealing Amy's fan to bring with her to the ball. At that moment, Jo and Meg leave and say good night. Amy, bitter and angry, takes Jo's portfolio of stories and throws it into the fire.

At the ball, Jo accidentally spills punch on another guest and decides to step out for a moment with Meg, whereupon they meet Laurie again, who has been sleeping on a chaise. Mr. Brooke, Laurie's tutor, comes in telling Laurie that his grandfather wants him to meet more important people. Before he can take Laurie away, though, Mr. Brooke meets Meg and is smitten. He asks her to dance, and they walk away, leaving Jo and Laurie alone.

Laurie is absolutely smitten with Jo. Wanting to be around her more often, he offers his companionship ("Take a Chance on Me"). Jo finds Laurie's enthusiasm entertaining and decides to accept him as her new friend, challenging him to a race across the pond the next day. Laurie accepts and they, along with Meg and Mr. Brooke, go back to the March house.

To Marmee's surprise, Meg comes with a sprained ankle in the arms of Mr. Brooke. After he and Laurie leave, Meg, transfixed, announces that she went to the ball a girl, but came home a woman. As she goes off to bed,

Amy and Jo make up and Jo goes off to finish one of her manuscripts, only to discover that it's gone. She runs after Amy, who proudly announces that she burnt the story. Marmee scolds Amy that she did an intolerable thing, and demands that Jo and Amy live together with respect. Amy runs off as Jo sits on the stairs, dejected ("Better - Reprise"). Just then, Jo is struck by another idea for a story.

A few days later, Laurie convinces Jo to come skate with him, declaring that he will win one of their races before the winter is over. Jo accepts and races Laurie out the door. Beth, at the piano, convinces Amy to go to the pond and skate with Laurie and Jo as a treaty with Jo, giving Amy her ice skates.

Just then, Mr. Laurence comes in. Laurie told him Beth wants to play his wife's piano, which he had locked up after she passed away. Nonetheless, Beth amuses him and they play a ditty on her piano ("Off to Massachusetts"). Mr. Laurence tells Beth if she comes to his house tomorrow, he will unlock the piano and she can play it before exiting.

Jo and Laurie come bursting through the door. Amy fell through the ice while trying to skate with Jo and Laurie. Amy and Jo finally forgive each other and Laurie, who saved Amy from the ice, is made an honorary March brother ("Five Forever").

That spring, Marmee heads off to Washington to take care of Mr. March, who has fallen ill with pneumonia. Amy is being sent to Aunt March's house while Marmee is gone, and Jo has been asked to go to Aunt March's to ask for money so that Marmee can get to Washington. Jo returns with the money, but not from Aunt March. She says that she could not and so, reveals that she sold her hair to get the money. Marmee takes the money and heads for the train station. Aunt March comes to pick up Amy, furious that Jo has cut and sold her hair. Claiming that Jo has not lived up to her end of the bargain, Aunt March cancels Europe for Jo. Furious, Jo runs upstairs and Amy collects the rest of her things.

Mr. Brooke arrives for Meg, telling her that he has enlisted in the army. He asks Meg when he returns from the war, if she'll marry him. Meg happily accepts ("More Than I Am"). Jo returns, but is upset with Meg's engagement, stating that Meg has turned her back on their agreement to never leave each other. Upset, she flees to the attic where Laurie meets her.

Laurie tells Jo that his grandfather is making him go to college next year, since the war is over. Jo finds the news to be wonderful, but Laurie is unhappy. He doesn't want to go because he will miss her too much. Laurie kisses Jo and asks her to marry him. Jo (confused by the sudden change in their friendship) rejects Laurie's proposal, saying she will never marry. She asks Laurie to leave, which he does. Upset that everything is changing in her life, Jo decides that she can no longer stay in Concord and must fulfil her dream to be a great writer ("Astonishing").

## **Act Two**

We are now back to where we began, in Mrs. Kirk's boarding house in New York City. Mrs. Kirk asks Professor Bhaer where Jo is--she has received a telegram from home. Jo appears and announces ecstatically that she has just sold a story to the Weekly Volcano Press! It is the same operatic tragedy of Clarissa she had written before, but this time to greater effect she has focused on the story and characters ("The Weekly Volcano Press").

Once Jo has recounted how she sold her story, Mrs. Kirk gives Jo the telegram. Jo reads that Beth has become very ill. Devastated, she insists on going to her.

Back in Concord, Mr. Laurence and Mr. Brooke (who is now married to Meg) decide to surprise Beth by giving her Mr. Laurence's piano. Beth is delighted and plays with Mr. Laurence once more ("Off to Massachusetts - Reprise"). Mr. Brooke announces that he received a letter from Laurie when he was in New York. Jo, who has returned from New York just a few days earlier, is surprised that Laurie was in New York and did not contact her. The mention of the letter, however, only makes Jo miss New York, rather than Laurie.

Jo writes Professor Bhaer an update on her family--such as Meg's pregnancy. She ends her letter asking how he is. Subsequently, Professor Bhaer confesses that his life has gone on as usual, but it has been quiet since she has left ("How I Am").

That September, Jo and Marmee take Beth to the beach. Jo brings along a kite for her and Beth to fly. Marmee leaves the two alone and Beth asks Jo to entertain her with more descriptions about New York. As the mood becomes more sombre, Jo confesses that Beth is her special someone in the world. Beth tells Jo that she knows she will die and is not afraid. She is only afraid of leaving her sisters behind. She tells Jo to let her go and die peacefully ("Some Things Are Meant to Be").

The following winter, Beth passes. Amy returns from Europe with Aunt March as a full-grown woman. Everyone is excited to see Amy and surprised find that Laurie is with her. Amy explains that they unexpectedly saw each other Europe and surprisingly fell in love and are now engaged ("The Most Amazing Thing"). Jo is surprised, but very happy and supportive of the two, officially welcoming Laurie into the family.

Jo then goes up to the attic, where Marmee follows her. Jo confesses that she cannot write anymore since Beth died. Jo now regrets going to New York and not being there for the family and asks Marmee how she can be strong and wise like her. Marmee tells Jo that she has to believe there is a reason for hope ("Days of Plenty"). Alone in the attic, Jo wonders how she can move on, until she is inspired by Beth's memory to write a story about their family ("The Fire Within Me").

That spring, on the day of Amy and Laurie's wedding, Jo runs into Aunt March. Aunt March tells Jo she does not think she made a mistake, as Laurie and Amy are a perfect match. However, Aunt March has gone over her will. In times like these, Jo needs something to fall back on. Aunt March informs Jo she will receive her house, suggesting she turn it into a library or a school. Jo respectfully accepts Aunt March's offer.

Following the acceptance, Professor Bhaer arrives. He tells Jo that he came to visit her, since he missed her back in New York. They both admit that they have been thinking of each other in a fond way. They agree that they are nothing alike but are willing to accept that in order to be with each other ("Small Umbrella in the Rain"). Professor Bhaer then confesses that he gave his copy of Jo's novel to a publisher--who wants to publish it!

Jo introduces Professor Bhaer to Marmee, who brings Professor Bhaer in to meet the family. Jo, alone, embraces the fact that her dreams came true ("Volcano - Reprise"). Professor Bhaer then comes out to tell Jo that they are waiting for her inside. Jo smiles and takes his hand as they head inside with the family.

## Character Breakdown

### Jo March

Our story's protagonist. Passionate, adventurous, and brave. She has the idea of writing Little Women and eventually becomes engaged to Professor Bhaer.

Gender: female

Age: 18 to 23

Vocal range top: A5

Vocal range bottom: E3

### Professor Bhaer

German Professor who exemplifies proper manners. He is a boarder in Mrs. Kirk's boarding house and eventually falls in love with Jo.

Gender: male

Age: 35 to 45

Vocal range top: F#4

Vocal range bottom: G2

### **Amy March**

The youngest, most energetic sister with a rather pompous air about her. She later marries Laurie. Can double as Troll.

Gender: female

Age: 14 to 18

Vocal range top: Gb5

Vocal range bottom: -1

### **Meg March**

The world-weary, yet hopeful, oldest sister who yearns for a great life. She marries John and has twins with him. Can double as Clarissa.

Gender: female

Age: 21 to 25

Vocal range top: Gb5

Vocal range bottom: A#3

### **Beth March**

The second youngest sister who tragically dies of Scarlet Fever. Peacemaker, lover, and an optimist who is always encouraging her sisters to dream. Can double as Rodrigo II.

Gender: female

Age: 17 to 21

Vocal range top: G5

Vocal range bottom: A3

### **Marmee March**

The girls' mother. She is the strong backbone of the family, who is courageous in spite of the difficult odds she faces. Can double as Hag.

Gender: female

Age: 45 to 55

Vocal range top: Eb5

Vocal range bottom: Eb3

### **Mr. Laurence**

Laurie's grandfather. A stiff and stern elderly man who eventually shows his softer side and gives Beth the beloved piano that belonged to his dead daughter.

Age: 50-80

Vocal range: D3-E4

Baritone

### **Laurie Laurence**

The bright-eyed boy-next-door with considerable charm. He loves Jo but later falls in love with Amy.

Gender: male

Age: 18 to 23

Vocal range top: Bb4

Vocal range bottom: Bb2

### **Aunt March**

A formidable, over-bearing matron and great-aunt to the March sisters. The wealthy socialite in town. Can double as Mrs. Kirk.

Gender: female

Age: 45 to 60

Vocal range top: F5

Vocal range bottom: E3

### **Mr. John Brooke**

Laurie's tutor and a rather stiff man; shows very little emotion. He later marries Meg and changes.

Gender: male

Age: 30 to 40

Vocal range top: F#4

Vocal range bottom: C#3

### **Smaller parts**

Mrs Kirk

Clarissa

Braxton

Rodrigo

Knight

Hag

Troll

Rodrigo 2

**ENSEMBLE** - hags, troll, monk, beachcombers, ice skaters/dancers, dancers at the ball.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Membership: £35.00 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2025 – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2026**

**Show fee: £90.00**

#### **Audition days**

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2026, 12pm, Ensemble and Principle Dialogue only**

**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026 7.45, start at 8pm, Principle Singing**

**To be held at the Guide Hall, Cheam**

**Audition pieces and audition forms will be available via the website or contact  
[Secretary@lyricplayers.org](mailto:Secretary@lyricplayers.org) if you have any questions**

### **How to Audition & Join the Lyric Players**

**Principal Auditions** - All principal auditions with The Lyric Players are open and you do not have to be a member of the company to audition. Auditions are open and will be watched by others auditioning and members of the society. The audition panel will be made up of the Director, Musical Director, member of the committee and 2 independent persons who can be a member of the society or someone connected to the company.

**Dance Auditions** – If you complete the dance audition and are successful in getting into the dancing then this will be taken as a company audition if you are not currently a member of the company.

**Company Auditions** – If you would like to join the ensemble and are not currently or have ever previously been a member of The Lyric Players then company auditions involve singing a short piece of music of your choice in front of a quorum of the committee.

### **Rehearsal halls**

Rehearsals will be on Tuesday and Thursday evening 8pm-10pm, with 4 Sundays.

<b>TUESDAYS &amp; SUNDAYS</b>		<b>THURSDAYS</b>
Starting 27 <sup>th</sup> January		Starting 22 <sup>nd</sup> January
Guide Hall Mickleham Gardens Cheam SM3 8QJ		Christchurch with St Philip Ruskin Drive Worcester Park KT4 8LG

Band call Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April

Tech Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April

Dress Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April

**Contact:** [Secretary@lyricplayers.org](mailto:Secretary@lyricplayers.org)