



Haunted house is perfect setting for classic chiller!

**Didsbury Arts Festival 2013
Saturday 22 – Sunday 30 June**

A haunting tale set in a haunted house!

There have been several adaptations of the classic ghost story, *The Turn of the Screw*, but none more authentically creepy than the latest offering from local theatre director, Hazel Roy.

The historic Old Parsonage, one of Didsbury's oldest buildings, will provide the setting for a staging of the Henry James chiller in which a governess fights to save her two young charges from the clutches of malevolent spirits.

Performances will take place from Saturday 22 to Friday 28 June, as part of this year's Didsbury Arts Festival. The play's action will take place inside the Parsonage in the red room before opening out into the grounds and gardens of the house. Umbrellas may be advisable!

The former home of Alderman Fletcher Moss has a long tradition of hauntings, making it the perfect location for a tale of ghosts and mystery.

A previous occupant, local minister Rev W J Kidd, hastily left the property in 1860, complaining of 'ghosts and troubles.' Servants refused to sleep on the premises and among the various ghostly sightings has been that of an elderly woman, dressed entirely in black. After years of disuse, the Grade II listed building has finally been brought back to life as a community hub, following its restoration last year.

Said Hazel, who is also an actor and writer: 'On my many pleasant walks over the years in Fletcher Moss Park and the Parsonage Gardens I have always been intrigued by The Parsonage itself and wanted to explore the building.'

'I had heard of its reputation for being haunted and had for some time felt the house and grounds would make the basis for an excellent site-specific production. I had been looking at adaptations of Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* and was inspired to write my own version using the Old Parsonage as the setting of the play.'

Twenty-one year old Alexa Morden from Didsbury, a final year drama student at the Manchester School of Theatre, is to play the central role of the governess. And four Parrs Wood High School pupils will share the roles of Miles and Flora, the hapless children horrifyingly possessed by ghosts. Gracie Ashpole (12), Eloise Hall (11), Tom Hardern (11) and Joel Danziger (12) are all enthusiastic members of the school's drama club.

Rehearsals are now underway, so look out for sightings of actors working in the Parsonage grounds - and maybe the odd ghost or two!

For details and tickets, visit the DAF website at: www.didsburyartsfestival.org

or email: hazelroy46@hotmail.com

Performances begin at 7.30 pm on 22, 27 and 28 June. A matinee performance will take place at 3 pm on Sunday 23 June. Audience numbers are limited so book early to avoid disappointment!

DAF 2013 is sponsored by Aba Quality Monitoring Ltd, Manchester City Council and Siemens.

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Find out more about the work of Hazel Roy at: <http://hazelroy.co.uk/>

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