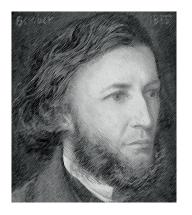


Welcome...



Welcome to the first operetta to be staged at the new address of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in East London, a performance which is also linked to the Jubilee meeting of the World Association of Social Psychiatry and the Rehabilitation Section of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

The philosophy underlying this operetta is not immediately apparent from the title. It is at one level the recapitulation of a well-known event, the romance of two poets,

Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning in 1845, but at another it illustrates the concept of nidotherapy, a collaborative treatment designed not to treat persistent mental illness directly, but to change the environment, in all its forms, to make a better fit between person and setting. Elizabeth Barrett was a recluse with multiple psychopathologies in 1845; she hardly ever left the Barrett household in Wimpole Street and whilst she was a successful poet her personal life was a suffocating combination of over-concern and restrictions imposed by her father. In short, she was miserable and unfulfilled.

But this is not the time to spill the beans about what happens. We will let this unfold shortly. I only want to tell you about our charity, NIDUS-UK, the international charity supporting the promotion of nidotherapy (www.nidotherapy.com). We have training courses in Canada and Sweden and projects in Montenegro and India, that are making the world a better place for a group of people who generally find it an alien place at present. We have also performances of 'Browning' planned for forgotten communities in England, where by involving people (both children and adults) in our performances, we can show nidotherapy in action on the ground. Our next performance is at a mining village, Newstead in Nottinghamshire, in January. We plan for all our performances to be free of charge but are dependent on donations from well-wishers to fund these and hope we can count on your generosity tonight. You will find donation boxes in this theatre and at the exits so we hope you will be unerringly attracted to them during the short interval (sorry we have no refreshments) and when you leave.

Note: NIDUS-UK has donation boxes in the theatre. Cheques can be made payable to NIDUS-UK or electronically to the Cooperative Bank at 089299, account number 65672745

Dramatis Personae

in order of appearance...

Charles Dickens

Our esteemed Narrator

Elizabeth Barrett

Dorothy Wilson – personal maid to Elizabeth Barrett

Joseph Barrett - Edward's son Alfred – another of Edward's sons Septimus – one of Edward's nephews Martha – one of Edward's nieces

Joshua – another of Edward's nephews

Sophie – another of Edward's nieces

Millie Mason - housemaid

Jemima Hardcastle – lady's maid Prunella Blunt – scullery maid Meg Squeers – scullery maid

Edward Moulton Barrett - head of the family

Henrietta Barrett - Edward's daughter

Robert Browning - poet

Lucy Lane – a girl in Westbourne Grove

Amanda Alley – another girl in Westbourne Grove

Harriet Read - Wilson's sister

Mary Manning - rail passenger on Oxford train Beulah Wood – another rail passenger on Oxford train

Porter on Paddington Station Arthur Arbuckle – train guard

Sarah Graham-Clarke – Elizabeth's aunt

Bill Sickle – Sarah's gardener

Reverend Artemis Snodgrass – vicar of Marylebone John Kenyon – socialite and Edward's distant cousin John Tallents Philip Graham

Joanne Davidson

Helen Tyrer

Peter Anthony

Richard Seivewright James Coughlin

Evie Francis
Joshua Walker
Sophia Clarke
Sheena Thompson

Louise Shelley Sarah Carr Nicola Martin Peter Tyrer

Deborah Hart Jonathan Waite Hetty Leach Georgina Webb

Helen Tyrer/Julia Burnside

Maria Clarke Maja Ranger Joe Dickie

David Goldberg Pippa Murdie Adam Hamilton Mike Wilson Kevin Connelly

Music arranged by Colin Dudman

Conductor: Daniel Tomkins

Historical advisor: Bernard Richards

Cast Director: Helen Tyrer

Costumes: Nottingham Community Wardrobe

Other props and costumes from the cast

Music from the Browning Ensemble

Piano: Simon Procter

Scenery supervisor: Delroy Bentt Stage Director: David Britton

Lighting advisor: Neil Bailey

Costume Advisor: Louise Shelley

Film cameraman: Derek Smith



- Music from the Browning Ensemble: Simon Procter (piano), Anna Maratos (cello), Cerrita Smith (flute), Barbara Barrett (violin)
- Act 1. Scene 1. The breakfast room at 50 Wimpole Street, London in October 1845. In which Edward becomes concerned about his daughter, Elizabeth, and her social life
- Act 1. Scene 2. The same room at 50 Wimpole Street later in October, 1845. Edward becomes even more discomfited by his daughter
- Act 1. Scene 3. Outside 50 Wimpole Street, in which an unwelcome visitor, Robert Browning, an itinerant poet, arrives and is refused entry
- Act 1. Scene 4. Drawing room at 50 Wimpole Street, where Edward has an idea to improve Elizabeth's mental health derived from his good friend William Ley
- Act 2. Scene 1. Westbourne Grove, a sorry and neglected street close to Paddington Station, London, where Robert is in some difficulty finding his way
- Act 2. Scene 2. A first class train carriage on the Great Western Railway between London and Oxford, where Elizabeth receives an unexpected visitor and everything gets rather jolly

Interlude of 9 minutes with Charles Dickens

- Act 3. Scene 1. It is now April, 1846, and we are now in the delightful garden of Sarah Graham-Clark's residence in Ledbury, Herefordshire, where Sarah and Elizabeth are having an intimate conversation
- Act 3. Scene 2. The drawing room at 50 Wimpole Street in August 1846. It is late in the evening and most of the family have gone to bed, so Wilson and Elizabeth can speak their minds
- Act 4. Scene 1. On the morning of 12th September, 1846, at Marylebone Parish Church in London, where the Reverend Artemis Snodgrass is a little disturbed by the possibility of conducting an unusual wedding ceremony
- Act 4. Scene 2. The breakfast room at 50 Wimpole Street, later that same morning
- Act 4. Scene 3. Finale. Outside Marylebone Parish Church, where at last everything seems to be going extremely well

Closing music from the Browning Ensemble