

## ALTRINCHAM GARRICK PLAYHOUSE - AUDITION INFORMATION:

A stunning portrayal of the complex bond  
between mother and daughter



# a taste of honey

by Shelagh Delaney

Directed by  
**Carole Carr**



Tuesday 23 –  
Sunday 28  
September 2025

Evenings at 7:30pm



**altrincham  
garrick  
studio**

Box Office: 0161-928 1677  
[www.altrinchamgarrick.co.uk](http://www.altrinchamgarrick.co.uk)

This amateur production of 'A Taste of Honey' is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. [www.concordtheatricals.co.uk](http://www.concordtheatricals.co.uk)

Thank you for expressing your interest in auditioning for “**A TASTE OF HONEY**”. This production will be the first play in our Manchester Season in the Altrincham Garrick Studio at Altrincham Garrick Playhouse.

**The Audition Date** for this production is  
**The Rehearsal Start Date** for this production is  
**The Production Dates** for this production are

**Tuesday 3rd June**  
**Sunday 17th August**  
**Tuesday 23rd -**  
**Sunday 28th September**

### **Rehearsals**

Rehearsals will be every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 7.30pm - 10pm, and every Sunday from 2pm - 5.30pm.

We do ask that all those auditioning are able to make every rehearsal. We do, of course, understand that sometimes you may have other commitments and special occasions during the rehearsal process, and we therefore ask that you inform us of any dates you are not available in advance (at the audition) and we will try and make this work. If you have a date that you're unable to rehearse within ten days of the opening night (23rd September) we may have to ask you to withdraw from the production.

You may not be called to every rehearsal, and the Director will produce a rehearsal schedule as far in advance as possible, but we do still ask that those successful in being cast in the production remain flexible, as rehearsal schedules can often change during the process.

### **A TASTE OF HONEY**

Tuesday 23rd - Sunday 28th September 2025  
(7.30pm each evening including a matinee on Saturday 27th September)  
Altrincham Garrick Studio

Written by Shelagh Delaney  
Directed by Carole Carr

Living in a filthy tenement bedsitter, 17-year-old Jo is deserted by her nagging peroxidised mother, Helen, who is unaware that her daughter is pregnant by a black sailor.

To soothe, clean and cook for Jo is Geoff, an effeminate art student, with whom she makes a temporary home. Bruised by insensitivity and rejection, the boy and girl find a very real comfort in each other.

A stunning portrayal of the complex bond between a mother and daughter, who – despite their sharp bickering – are both holding on for that taste of honey.

This iconic play is a sharply observed portrait of working-class life in Salford in the late 1950s.

Warning: this production contains themes of alcohol abuse, racism, domestic violence, sexual themes, teenage pregnancy, homophobia, sexism, and ableism.

## **Characters**

Please see below some character information provided by the Director:

### **HELEN**

Age in Play: 36 – 44

– Self Absorbed - Neglectful Mother - Unstable Personality

Helen is a selfish, thoughtless woman and mother with her daughter's needs never being taken into consideration. Their constant quarrelling implies that Helen's relationship with Jo is a turbulent one. Helen enjoys drinking whiskey and regularly needs a glass or two of alcohol to sustain her. Although she is extremely selfish in putting her needs first she does show some signs of caring when she offers to send Jo to Art School and also suddenly turning up when Jo is in labour.

Helen thinks nothing of dragging Jo from flat to flat as long as she herself is happy and does not care that this disrupts Jo's schooling or making it difficult for Jo to find friends. Helen does not believe in romantic love and has a very realistic view of marriage and relationships and she prefers to see her relationships as a way of "getting by" in life. This makes her very honest about her selfishness and also practical and down to earth on what to expect in life.

This all reveals that although Helen herself has a very changeable personality and can be very cruel and insensitive but there are also times when she can be quite tender-hearted.

### **JO**

Age in Play: 17

- Insecure – Independent – Needs Love

Jo at 17 has become independent and self-reliant because her Mother has spent time and attention on her male friends leaving Jo alone for long periods. Jo has realised in her life that the only person she can truly rely on is herself and spends her time trying to live in the moment without worrying about the future. Although she has become quite isolated and insecure she is still searching for some sort of love and companionship.

Even when her boyfriend proposes marriage she seems unable to believe that he will return when next on leave in six months' time. The fact that Jo and Helen moved around so much contributed to Jo's lack of friends and this makes her admit to Geof that he is actually the only friend she has.

Jo finds Helen has made plans with boyfriend Peter that do not include her and she is torn between needing Helen's care, love and attention and trying to prove that she is mature but she still feels insecure, annoyed and abandoned that Helen is intent on making a life without her. This makes Jo's feelings complex on her pregnancy – firstly



excited and hopeful and then on realising she will be a single Mother like Helen she develops a mixture of dread, fear and resentment. However, when Helen returns at the start of Jo's labour there is an unspoken bond between daughter and mother.

## **Peter**

Age in Play: 30's

- Homophobic - Enjoys the Company of Women - Aggressive and Angry

Peter is younger than Helen but initially pursues her making it obvious that he finds her sexually attractive. He is something of a rogue and keeps photographs of other women in his wallet. He enjoys spending the money he earns as a Car Salesman but easily becomes aggressive and angry.

His aggressiveness is obvious towards Geof and is rude about him when they first meet. He is openly homophobic with no care about offending Geof and his use of the word "fruitcake" to describe Geof is particularly offensive.

Although at first Peter appears to be a charming man, he does reveal a darker side to his character. In the initial stages of his relationship with Helen he pays her compliments and presents her with flowers. However, he later turns against Helen and has an affair with another woman and is particularly aggressive towards Jo and Geof. Peter calls Helen "woman" instead of calling her by her name which is particularly degrading and he also shows his true nature when he shouts at her that he has "dragged her out of the gutter! "

## **Geof**

Age in Play: 20-22 - Responsible and Caring

Geof is an art student who becomes very good friends with Jo when she is pregnant. He is homosexual and has to suffer emotional torment because of this, particularly at the hands of Peter and Helen. It is hinted that he has been thrown out of his flat because he is homosexual. Geof cares deeply for Jo, even offering to marry her so that he can stay close to her and he does all he can to help prepare Jo for childbirth.

Geof encourages Jo that preparations must be made for the arrival of the baby and he ensures she eats well and helps keep the flat clean. He is extremely responsible and practical in planning ahead listing the equipment Jo will need. Geof displays a very caring attitude towards Jo putting her needs before his own even when she is moody and rude. This shows how much Geof cares for Jo as before he met her Geof's life lacked meaning but since meeting Jo he has found a true friend he can care for and this is something that continues to give him endless satisfaction.

The friendship between Jo and Geof is very real and heart-warming.

## **Jimmie**

Age in Play: 20+

- Light-hearted and Tender

Jimmie - Jo's boyfriend, is a black sailor from Cardiff who originally trained as a Nurse. He appears to care for Jo and is tender and caring when she has a cold. However he makes it clear that he enjoys a good time with his friends and that the engagement ring he gives Jo means that he expects them to enjoy a certain amount of sexual intimacy.

Jo is attracted to Jimmie because he can make her laugh and they often tease each other in a light hearted and tender way. (This is not a feature of Jo's relationship with Helen). Jimmie abandons Jo promising falsely to return in six months' time when his next leave is due.

## **What to Prepare**

Audition pieces will be available on the Audition Evening from 6.30pm in the Theatre Bar. However, we have listed the audition pieces and page numbers below, should you wish to prepare ahead of the evening. There will be time for you to read and prepare before you come in to see the panel.

### **PETER:**

Page 18-19 - From "*This the old...can't renege on the old firm*" - Up to "*You know what I like.*"

Page 30-31 - From - "*I find the whole thing most agreeable*" - Up to "*I don't give a damn what you tell your Mother*"

Page 64-66 - From "*What the hell's going on!*" - Up to "*And she went off the deep end.*"

### **JIMMIE:**

Page 22-24 - From "*Were you surprised to see me... -* " - Up to "*My next leave....six months.*"

Page 37-39 - From "*Don't whine I'm not spending.....*". - Up to "*Why not?*"

### **GEOF:**

Page 48-51 - From "*Don't be daft!*" - Up to "*Yes! Have you got some?*"

Page 58-59 - From "*Do you still think he may come back?*" - Up to "*There's no need.....we needn't split up need we Jo?*"

Page 83-84 - From "*Yes but Jo likes it.*" - Up to "*Goodbye Jo and good luck.*"

## **HELEN:**

Page 10-12 - From *"It hurts when I swallow ... of course there is!"* - Up to *"I used to bring the house down with this one."*

Page 33-35 - From *"Jo! Where's my hat?"* - Up to *"I told you you'd upset him"*

Page 62-64 - From *"I'll give you....good hiding in a minute...."* - Up to *"Why didn't you tell me"*

Page 84 – 86 - From *"Its all right love I'm here...."* - Up to *"Shall I go and make a cup of tea..."*

## **JO:**

Page 14-16 - From *"What's what?"* - Up to *"You get your own coffee....do anything for me"*

Page 54 – 57 - From *"God it's hot!"* - Up to *"think there's going to be a storm.....on the croft."*

Page 79 – 81 - From *"Now that you've been rude to my friend"* - Up to *"Do you wonder!"*

## **The Audition Day**

Auditionees will need to sign in and complete a contact sheet in the Theatre Bar at Altrincham Garrick Playhouse from 6.30pm on Tuesday 3rd June. We will then see each auditionee in the Annexe in front of the audition panel from about 7pm.

Please note, we are also auditioning for another production, **VOICES OF MANCHESTER**, on the same evening.

There will be Garrick personnel to show you around and help you through the process. Please be aware that these audition evenings often include quite a bit of waiting around and can be long, but although we are auditioning for two productions, we expect we can keep things moving as quickly as possible.

The audition panel will consist of the Director and members of the Altrincham Garrick's Artistic and Casting Team (ACT).

We are a diverse theatre and we welcome auditionees of all ages (above the age of 18) and all genders, ethnicities, sexualities, disabilities and races, to enrich the work of the production.

## **What Next?**

If you've read all the information in this pack, and wish to audition, then please email [casting@altrinchamgarrick.co.uk](mailto:casting@altrinchamgarrick.co.uk) stating **"A TASTE OF HONEY"** in the subject heading and detailing your name and contact number. By emailing, you will have registered for an audition on Tuesday 3rd June.

We'd like to wish you the very best of luck, and we look forward to welcoming you, or seeing you again! Thank you for taking the time and interest to prepare for this audition and Break-A-Leg!

Best wishes,

**Joseph Meighan** (Artistic Director/ Artistic and Casting Team)

**Carole Carr** (Artistic and Casting Team)

**Mike Shaw** (Artistic and Casting Team)

**Fiona Primrose** (Artistic and Casting Team)

**Gemma Sales** (Artistic and Casting Team)