



# OSPEDALE



In 2019, GOSH Arts commissioned Filament Theatre to create a piece to celebrate the opening of the new Sight and Sound Centre at Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH), supported by Premier Inn.

Drawing from research in the hospital records, with help from the archivist at the Order of St Vincent and St Paul and interviews with the local Italian community and GOSH staff currently working in the specialisms of sight and sound, 'Ospedale' celebrates the past and future of this wonderful building.

'Ospedale' is a promenade performance and will last approximately 40 minutes.

**Composer: Osnat Schmool**

**Director: Sabina Netherclift**

**Musical Director: Freya Wynn-Jones**

**Designer: Emily May Sions**

**The Company:**

**Aminita Francis, Georgia Mann, Kody Mortimer,**

**Christopher Staines, Rebecca Thorn**

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## EPISODES

### **1900: The (Re-) Opening** (the entrance)

The Italian Hospital in London started life as a few rooms in Giovanni Ortelli's house at 41 Queen Square. It opened on New Year's Day 1884, with five wards, which could treat 18 men and 8 women. In 1889, Ortelli donated another house to increase the size of the hospital and just before his death in 1898, he instigated a rebuild of the hospital which led to the building we see today. The Italian Hospital as it was known was formally opened on 14 March 1900 by the Italian Ambassador.

**Ambassador: Aminita Francis**

**Guests: The company**

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### **1915: The War Years** (the waiting room)

When war was announced in 1914, the hospital placed 25 beds for the use of sick and wounded soldiers. In 1915, when Italy joined the war effort, the hospital became a medical centre for the examination of recruits for the Italian front and increased numbers of beds were devoted to the recovery of British and Belgian soldiers.

**Young Italian Recruit: Kody Mortimer**

**Wounded British Soldier: Christopher Staines**

**Nurse: Georgia Mann**

**Visitors: The company**

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### **1926: The Troubled Years** (the courtyard)

In 1919, the last military patients were discharged. The hospital then went through a difficult period financially and organisationally which lasted for a decade. Despite continuing fundraising work, eliciting support from Italian businesses and individuals, and receiving the patronage of the then Prince of Wales the hospital was forced to change its working practices. As the necessity for more beds and new facilities emerged, the hospital ran up debts and periods of closure followed.

### **1942: The War Years** (the eye clinic waiting area)

The bombing of London, the decrease in patient numbers, the threats to the nursing staff from air raids and the acute financial difficulties again saw the hospital closing in 1941. Parts of the building were used by local councils during the war as it became an administrative centre.

### **Committee members/lady visitors/ Office workers: The company**

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### **1950: The Re-opening** (the spiral staircase)

By 1945, the Management Committee were determined to see the hospital renovated, refurbished and reopened as the Italian Hospital once again. The first clinics began to run in 1948, the same year that the NHS was born, but the Italian Hospital stayed independent. The hospital was officially reopened on 19 June 1950, by the Italian Consul General, the chair of the management committee.

### **The Chair of the Management Committee: Christopher Staines**

**Staff: The company**

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### **1972: Angela** (the garden corridor)

In June 1950, the nursing services were provided by the Sisters of Verona, and regular clinics were being held for outpatients, staffed by young doctors recruited from Italy, often recently qualified and wishing to improve their English and young Italian women, such as Angela, a healthcare assistant at the hospital.

**Angela: Georgia Mann**

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### **1973-1989: The League of Friends** (the garden)

The 1950s also saw the inauguration of the League of Friends of the Italian Hospital – an organisation dedicated to raising money to support the hospital's work. Over the next three decades, with Lady Thornycroft at its helm, the League organised balls, tea dances, operatic concerts, Christmas bazaars and film showings. The league contributed over £600,000 to funds in the 10 years before the hospital's closure.

### **Lady Carla Thornycroft: Rebecca Thorn**

**Guests: The company**

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### **2021: Sight and Sound** (the entrance)

The building is now the new Sight and Sound Centre for Great Ormond Street Hospital, which opened officially in June 2021. Another 'first-of-its-kind', the centre features an eye imaging suite, a dispensing optician, state-of-the-art soundproofed booths for hearing tests and other testing facilities and equipment which include some enduring items used in the Italian Hospital's days!

**Staff: The company**

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You can read more about the research that went into this performance by clicking this [link](#) and more about the Sight and Sound Centre by clicking [here](#)

And if you have enjoyed this performance and would like to revisit some of the songs, you can do so by clicking this [link](#)

### **About Filament Theatre**

Filament Theatre is a music theatre company which produces inclusive work combining original vocal music with movement for audiences and participants in London and beyond. The company is led by composer and choir leader, Osnat Schmool and director, Sabina Netherclift.

We combine rich vocal harmonies and a physical approach to performance to create original, dynamic music theatre. We work in partnership with other organisations to bring inclusive performances and participation work to a wide audience, performing in both theatres and non-traditional public spaces.

We work with artists at all stages of their careers and from many different backgrounds. Since our formation in 2009 we have created seven original live performances, six lockdown films and our chorus has recently taken part in several stand-alone events. We have worked on participatory projects in London, Oxfordshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire as well as leading workshops in South West and North East France.

### **About GOSH Arts**

GOSH Arts is the arts programme at Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH). Our live arts programme, art collection and temporary exhibitions inspire creativity, create welcoming environments, and offer meaningful and innovative cultural opportunities for communities both in and around the hospital.

Our work plays an essential role in enhancing the hospital experience. Engaging with visiting artists and having art developed in collaboration with our community integrated into our buildings helps to create less clinical environments, contributes to reducing stress and anxiety and creates space for reflection and exchange.

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