



ECCO

SEPTEMBER 2009

English Comedy Club, Brussels

Dear all,

Welcome to another season at the English Comedy Club! We'll be kicking off our line-up of exciting plays later in the month with *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* – see the calendar round-up below for details of other great Brussels plays coming up over the next few months. And don't miss our AGM on 19 October, where you can vote in our new Committee and voice any comments you may have. On a sadder note, we're sorry to bid farewell to Anne Fox, who died in August – Paquita Horan has written an obituary below.

Finally, after over a year bringing ECCO to you, I will be heading back to the UK at the end of September – thank you for all your news over the last year and best of luck with everything. I'm sure I shall be back at some point to clog up the space in the Warehouse bar very soon. Rest assured that ECCO will still be going strong – watch this space.

All the best,
Harriet Mancey-Barratt, ECCO Editor

CALENDAR ROUND-UP (see below for full details):

22-26 September 2009 – **Someone Who'll Watch Over Me** (dir. Conrad Toft, for the ECC)
The Warehouse, rue Waelhem 69a, Schaerbeek (bookings at ecc.theatreinbrussels.com – see below for more details)

29 September to 3 October 2009 – **ETCetera** (various directors), The Warehouse, rue Waelhem 69a, Schaerbeek

20-24 October 2009 – **The Yellow Wallpaper** (adapted and dir. Caraigh McGregor, for the ATC), The Warehouse, rue Waelhem 69a, Schaerbeek (bookings at atc.theatreinbrussels.com)

30-31 October 2009 - **My Mother Said I Never Should** (ECC & Bedford Swan Theatre Company), The Warehouse, rue Waelhem 69a, Schaerbeek (bookings at ecc.theatreinbrussels.com)

9-14 November 2009 – **Julius Caesar** (dir. Hugh Dow, for the BSS), The Warehouse, rue Waelhem 69a, Schaerbeek

8-12 December 2009 – **The Cherry Orchard** (dir. Malinda Coleman, for the ECC), Theatre Mercelis, rue Mercelis 13, Ixelles

19-30 January 2010 – **Oscar & the Pink Lady** (dir. Malinda Coleman, for the ATC), The Warehouse, rue Waelhem 69a, Schaerbeek

9-13 February 2010 – **A Chaste Maid in Cheapside** by Thomas Middleton (dir. Jonathan Sawdon for the BSS), Scarabeus Theatre, rue Creuse 19, Schaerbeek



AGM AND NOMINATION FORMS

English Comedy Club Annual General Meeting
Monday 19 October 2009, 8pm
Warehouse Bar Room

It is hard to believe that a year has flown by already, but it is almost October, and the time of our AGM is approaching. The announcement is below, and a nomination form is included. If you have a burning desire to say something to – or join! – the Committee, please join us at the AGM. Nominations should be made in advance of the AGM please, and remember that only paid-up members of the Club are entitled to vote (which is also a polite way of saying that it is membership renewal time!) If you have points you want to add to the agenda, please contact Abi Greef on agreef@deloitte.com.

Agenda:

1. Minutes from previous AGM (EGM)
2. Report from Chair
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Report on FEATS 2009
5. Membership
6. Election of Committee members
7. AOB

<i>Nomination form to be returned to The ECC Chair, Abi Greef, on agreef@deloitte.com</i>	
I wish to nominate (please print name in capitals)	The nominee must be a paid-up member of the club whose consent has been given for this nomination.
Chairman Hon. Secretary Hon. Treasurer Committee member	Please tick or circle the position for which the nominee is being put forward
Proposed by (please print name in capitals) membership number	Seconded by (please print name in capitals) membership number
Signature	Signature
ALL NOMINATIONS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED BY Friday 16 October at noon (each candidate should be submitted on a separate form)	

SOMEONE WHO'LL WATCH OVER ME
by **FRANK MCGUINNESS** directed by **CONRAD TOFT**

Three men. One cell. A lifetime.

iii
English Theatre Club

8pm, 22-26 September 2009
The Warehouse Theatre, Brussels

7.30pm, 2-3 October 2009
The Place, Bedford

SOMEONE WHO'LL WATCH OVER ME
by **FRANK MCGUINNESS** directed by **CONRAD TOFT**

There's an Englishman, an Irishman and an American being held hostage in the Lebanon... Not the start of a joke, but the premise behind Frank McGuinness's modern classic.

Colum Hatchell, Patrick Stephenson and Craig Simpson star in this dark, surprisingly funny and thought-provoking play which describes the trials, tribulations and inner strengths of the hostages, exposing their uneasy friendship and petty rivalries, and revealing to us the depths of the human condition.

Brussels tickets: €14 / €12
ecc.theatreinbrussels.com
or +32 (0) 477 408 704

Bedford tickets: £7.50 / £6
www.theplacebedford.org.uk
or +44 (0) 1234 269519

MOAN – MEMBERS OLD AND NEW

Nick Roche is a Brussels lifer coming towards the end of his time as an interpreter in the EU institutions. Over the last 25 years he has been involved in a couple of dozen shows as actor and director with the Irish Theatre Group, the Brussels Shakespeare Society and the English Comedy Club. The onstage roles he has most enjoyed are Christy Mahon in the 1985 production of the *Playboy of the Western World*, Henry IV and the Chorus in the *Henrys* and Norman in the *Dresser*. As a director he particularly cherishes his memories of the ITG's two productions of *Dancing at Lughnasa*, *Measure for Measure* and *Richard III* for the BSS and the centenary production of the full four-act version of the *Importance of Being Earnest* for the ECC. Nick will be appearing in *The Cherry Orchard* this winter – it will be his second experience of acting in Chekov, the first being in Andrew McLroy's production of *The Three Sisters* for the ITG.

CHARITY DONATIONS

The English Comedy Club is planning to donate 500 euros each to two charities (one UK-based, 1 Schaerbeek-based):

1. The Institute of Cancer Research (UK)

Why? Not only did they also celebrate their 100th year in 2009 as we did, but cancer is an illness which we have already seen affect various members of the theatre community in Brussels and within the FEATS community. As it is likely to affect one in three of us personally if not those around us, we believe this is a worthy cause.

2. Harmonisation Sociale à Schaerbeek HSS

Why? This local community organisation goes some way to try to ensure harmony and good relations between all parties of the community within Schaerbeek. As the commune has hosted us for many years, we wanted to give something back to the community. We particularly like the fact that their Mission incorporates intercultural shows/events and that their philosophy of providing services aims to help integrate newcomers to the area from abroad – after all, in many ways we do exactly the same. For more information, please see

http://www.schaerbeek.irisnet.be/site/fr/culture_loisir/5vie_assoc/hss#an_chorgrid or <http://www.hss-asbl.be/schaerbeek/solidarite.php>

NEW – FRIDAY NIGHT PROJECT

The ECC is looking into organising regular club nights (probably a Friday evening per month at the Nekkersdal in Laeken) covering a host of projects to be determined by those who get involved - film making and workshops are a couple of the ideas on the table so far. This is still very much in the formative stage and we will keep people posted as plans gel but if you already want to hear more, contact Steve Challens on stephenchallens@gmail.com.

SWAN THEATRE COMPANY – 30-31 Oct 2009

The ECC is delighted to host Bedford on their fifth visit to Brussels. Swan will be performing *My Mother Said I Never Should*, Charlotte Keatley's critically acclaimed play exploring the lives and relationships of four generations of women – Doris, Margaret, Jackie and Rosie – and how different generations strive to break free from the traditions and culture of their parents.

Tickets: ecc.theatreinbrussels.com or 0477 408 704

CALL FOR DIRECTORS: MARCH 2010 SLOT

We're very sorry to report that we have not been able to get the rights for *Pornography*, which we had planned to produce in March 2010. However, it does mean that we now have a free slot (two weeks in the Studio from March 2nd) for any budding or established members looking to flex their directorial muscles. As auditions would need to start towards the end of October please let Abi Greef (agreef@deloitte.com) know if you are interested by the end of September complete with details of play, producer and stage manager.

FEATS 2010

Following previous calls for directors for the 2010 FEATS slot, we are pleased to announce that we will be submitting *The Masquerade of the Red Death*, directed by Steve Challens. Hoping to see you all in Bad Homburg 2010!

ECC PLAYREADINGS

The next ECC playreading will take place on Wednesday 7 October at 7.45pm at Mary Pritchard's house (32 Avenue Bel Air) – please ring ahead on 02 345 8583 (9-10 am or 8-10 pm) to confirm numbers. The play will be *Private Fears in Public Places* by Alan Ayckbourn.

We're also pleased to present the following playreading dates for your diary: Wednesday 4 November and Wednesday 16 December (which will be the usual mulled wine and mince pie spectacular!).

KAM KLUB ANNUAL CHARITY EVENING

Kam Klub's Got Talent! (plus tombola and prizes!), a talent contest held by De Kam's entertainment club, will be held at De Kam, Beekstraat 172 (on the corner with Overloopstraat), 1970 Wezembeek-Oppem on Saturday 3 October at 20.00. If you would like to take part in this talent contest, please contact Dave Skinner by 12.00 on Tuesday 22 September at david.skinner@ec.europa.eu for full details.

More info can be found on www.kamklub.be. As this is a charity evening the entrance fee will be €10 (which will be reduced to €8 if you are in the queue before 20.00). Everybody is welcome to take part!

THE CHERRY ORCHARD IS UNDERWAY!

Preparations are going strong for December's production of *The Cherry Orchard*. June auditions were well attended, and the strong cast includes Comedy Club old hands Abi Greef and Steve Challens, stalwarts from other groups Jonathan Goldsmith and Nick Roche, and a host of others (including some newcomers to the Comedy Club): Charif Wehbe, Laura Riley, Dominic Robinson, Jennifer Rankin, Bess Brooks, Zena Waters and Saskia Van Nuffelen (from BATS!), Tim Myers, John Doy, John Allen, Priit Ruttas and Simone Ellul.

Rehearsals will begin in earnest mid-September, following several cast and crew meetings during the summer (including screenings of a Russian film, "Burnt by the Sun", for inspiration).

The Cherry Orchard will be performed from 8 – 12 December at the Petit Theatre Mercelis, in Ixelles, a new venue for the Comedy Club. Producer Janet Middleton has been assembling an impressive crew, which includes Teresa Perez-Rocha, Iona Hamilton, Lyn Wainwright, Carrie Counce, Eileen Sutton, Philip Deeks and Zsuzsanna Dakai. Other hands will of course be needed, so if you're interested in helping out (especially with Box Office, Bar or Front of House), do contact Janet (0495 942 991).

Discovering a theatrical "classic" is always both a joy and a challenge. So far, I feel we are well equipped to rise to the occasion. For future bulletins, watch this space!

Malinda Coleman (Director)
September 2009

Thanks!

Barbara Blackwell would like to thank warmly the English Comedy Club for their kind BUTT awards (Audience Award for An Evening with Friends – Three Dotty Aunts, and the Alan Kenway Memorial Perseverance Award).

Obituary: Anne Fox

By Paquita Horan

Anne Fox, whose premature death surprised us all, was a staunch and highly versatile member of every English-speaking theatre group in Brussels. Like many of us, she arrived here in the mid-1970s and, having discharged a set of demanding professional assignments during the day, devoted her leisure hours and unfathomable psychological energies to the thespian world.

Anne was a founder member of the Brussels Shakespeare Society. Together with Catriona White and Ian Flintoff, she played a leading role in "Queens", a set of excerpts from the Bard's historical works. The standard of the performances in the Île Saint Louis, a small venue close to the Grand Place, left nothing to be desired and consequently attracted high rates of attendance night after night.

She was an equally committed member of the English Comedy Club where her creative abilities were put to the test as actress, costume designer and lighting consultant.

Anne's versatility was catapulted into even greater prominence at the time the Irish Theatre Group was formed. She played convincingly in Samuel Beckett's "Come and Go" where she was heard reminiscing on a park bench alongside Catriona White. Here, it could be said that Beckett was to be a prelude to her showcasing her talents as a director. She directed Brian Friel's "Translations" and Bernard Farrell's "I do not like thee, Dr. Fell". Not alone did she direct them but, with the hand of a professional, invited the authors to Brussels to host their opening nights. Her farewell act of generosity as a director was Bernard Shaw's "Arms and the man". It was discerningly cast, judiciously executed and bore all the hallmarks of genuine creative talent.

This thumb-nail sketch would be incomplete without some reference to Anne personally. She was kind, open-minded, sincere and warm-hearted. Strange though it may seem, the concept of "self" was absent. She tended to focus on the concerns of others. Her wit could turn the most miserable of situations into something more palatable. In that sense, we have all lost a shining light.

May we here in Brussels extend our sincerest sympathy to Anne's family and friends.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Yes, it's that time of year again. Summer is over, the leaves are turning, and membership renewals are due. We very much hope that you will wish to continue supporting the ECC, as well as obtaining benefits such as reductions on ticket prices. Membership remains at the rate of €10 per year, and only €5 for students, stagiaires and under-18s, with the membership year running from 1 October to 30 September.

We would be very grateful if all new and continuing members could fill in a copy of the attached membership form, in order to ensure that our contact details remain current. Please be reminded that you will not be eligible to vote at the AGM unless you have renewed your membership, though you will be able to do this at the AGM if you have not been able to do so previously. If you have any queries regarding membership, please do not hesitate to contact our membership secretary, Rachel Cuff, on rachel.cuff@bplaw.com or 0486 102632.

You can pay membership dues by bank transfer to our account: **310-0627727-29**. Don't forget to put your name in the communication. Then please take a moment to **update the form on the next page** and send it by:

- Post, to Rachel Cuff at Rue Lesbroussart 110, 1050 Brussels; or
- Or E-mail to Rachel.cuff@bplaw.com

For the sum of €10 a year (€5 for students, stagiaires and under 18s), you will be entitled to:

- Our regular newsletter, ECCO, with information on forthcoming auditions, shows and other club events
- Reductions on tickets for ECC productions
- Membership of CAST, giving access to the rehearsal rooms and workshop in the Warehouse complex for ECC, ATC and ITG events
- Participation in monthly play readings and other club events.



English Comedy Club, Brussels Membership renewal

I am a new member	I am renewing my membership
Date:	

Name			
Address	(street & no.)		
	(commune)		
mobile phone			
Tel (daytime/office)			Tel (evenings)
e-mail			

I am interested in (PLEASE TICK):

ACTING	DIRECTING	PRODUCING	
RUNNING PLAYREADINGS	RUNNING BOX OFFICE	TAKING BOOKINGS	
ATTENDING PLAYREADINGS	COSTUMES	PROPERTIES	
STAGE MANAGEMENT	SET BUILDING	PAINTING	
LIGHTING	SOUND	PUBLICITY	
MAKEUP	HAIR	FRONT OF HOUSE	
OTHER			