

If you have any suggestions or comments for ECCO, then please send them to Janet at ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com.

The next ECCO will come out in September 2013

ECCO

July/August 2013



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Dear members,

Rather than yet another picture of me, looking slightly embarrassed, I thought it would be a nice change to have a picture I took on 18th June 2013 of my parents.

Mum and Dad both love theatre, and it was due to my yearly trip to the Christmas Panto that I fell in love with the theatre. And yes, I am rather childishly excited about our forthcoming Pantomime !

Our family trips to The Bristol Old Vic, to see more 'serious' theatre, have enabled me to appreciate plays such as ***Copenhagen***. Working in rehearsals on this production, with three very committed and talented actors, is an absolute pleasure. I am in awe of the way they are learning the dialogue, and under Lyn's caring and attentive eye finding their characters.

After the summer break ***Copenhagen*** will be a must see piece of theatre for all.

Best wishes

Sue Botterell
ECC Chairman

chair@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com



The English Comedy Club

Presents

Copenhagen

By Michael Frayn

8-12 October 2013

Warehouse Studio Theatre
69a rue Waelhem, 1030 Brussels

Booking begins end August

Go to <http://ecc.theatreinbrussels.com/>

See Next Page

COPENHAGEN REHEARSALS

ECCO is privileged to have these exclusive rehearsal photographs and commentary from director Lyn Wainwright

As you can see we are using the latest Danish blocking method and it is going rather well.



It is getting harder to find LEGO without angry faces, but the next scene shows Bohr extending his hand in friendship to Heisenberg even though he looks a bit grumpy about it.

Margrethe is characteristically detached but she has her moments as you will see if you come to a performance of the play in October.

As you can see in the final photograph Margrethe is revealing a bare midriff which she is not at all happy about. Fortunately we have been able to retain the services of an excellent costumier and I think that she is now reassured that the problem will be sorted out before the first night.

Rehearsals are in full swing and we are all working very hard to get the play ready for you.



Rest assured we will be out of the LEGO phase soon!

ECC Makes a Difference

Calendar Girls at the Relay for Life



Calendar Girls and Boys:

Joanna, Boff, Anna, Graham, Deborah, Claire and Roísín, with Janet in the front row flanked by FCC President Pam Showalter, her Vice President Vicky di Vittorio and Kim Gielens (FCC's Regional Coordinator)

Sara Hammerton writes: On Saturday 15 June a group of ***Calendar Girls*** cast members reprised their roles for a short performance at "Relay for Life", the annual 24-hour fund-raising event organised by the Fondation contre le Cancer. They were invited to the event to officially mark the handover of the €7,000 raised for the cancer charity by the ECC's production of the play, which took place in March at the Beaux Arts.

Director Janet Middleton had been determined from the outset to remain true to the spirit of the real-life Calendar Girls, and raise as much money as possible for a good cause. €2 from the price of each ticket was earmarked directly for the FCC, and a bucket collection was held at the beginning and end of each performance. A total of €2,755 was raised this way, an amount then matched by the ECC. Together with the proceeds from the ticket sales that added up to the total of €7,000.

I had the privilege of watching this special performance. I enjoyed the full production at the Beaux Arts, but I found this version particularly powerful. The very nature of the event of course made the story so much more poignant, accentuated by the fact that there was only time for a selection of key moments from the play, giving a concentrated dose of emotion.

The President and vice-President of the FCC came to watch the performance. They thanked Janet for the ECC's donation, assuring her that it made a very real difference. Those thanks should be passed on to our very generous audiences and of course to our sponsors, namely FTI Consulting, FULCRA, Stonemanor and Graham Vincent.

Congratulations to Janet, her cast and crew, for all their hard work and for making it possible for the ECC to support this good cause.

If anyone wishes to make further donations please go to the *Fondation contre le Cancer* website (<http://www.cancer.be/>).

Janet Middleton writes: I thought I had said all I had to say about this play, but I would like to have one final word. I think I speak for those of us who were there on Saturday when I say how humbling it was to perform at this special event. I have not asked the cast to talk openly about their own personal links to this horrible disease, but I believe that we have all met it in one form or another, and we are all glad to have done just a little bit towards fighting this 'shitty, cheating, sly, conniving, silent bloody disease', or helping those who are.





OUR FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS

Jack and the Beanstalk

Auditions for the ECC pantomime will be held at the Warehouse Studio Theatre on Tuesday, 20 August and Thursday, 22 August 2013. The pantomime has many roles available for anyone who would like to get involved in this fun production, which will be performed at the Auderghem Cultural Centre from 5-7 December.

Roles include:

Jack - Principal boy (played by a woman)

Jill - Jack's love interest

Simple Simon - Jack's friend (like Buttons)

Goldilocks - Another friend

Jack's mother - the pantomime dame

Moules & Fritjes - the Baron's incompetent henchmen

The Giant - Either someone over 20m high, or just someone with an impressive voice!

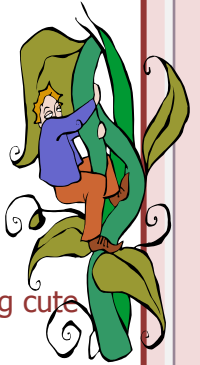
The Harp - Irish (male or female)

Two pantomime cows

Adult chorus - singing and dancing

Child chorus - singing, dancing and looking cute

Baron Hard-up - Boo! hiss!



If you are interested, please get in touch with the director, Conrad Toft, at panto@theatreinbrussels.com. Don't worry if you are not available on the audition dates, an alternative date will be found. We are also looking for crew, so please send us a message if you'd like to join in.

"Even you are not rich enough [...] to buy back your past. No man is."



An Ideal Husband is a comedy by Oscar Wilde which revolves around the blackmail of a popular public official and which is thick with political intrigue. As one of the characters points out: *"sooner or later we have all to pay for what we do."* The play will take place from **18 to 22 March 2014** at the Bozar.

Auditions: Monday, 23 September and Wednesday, 25 September at 20h and on Sunday, 29 September at 16h30 at the Warehouse in the Bar Room.

Rehearsals will start the last week in November, with a break over the Christmas period. I am still looking for a stage manager, crew and costumes person, so let the Director know if you are interested. The play will be set in the early 1950's.

For further details contact the Director at deborahgriffith@mac.com

Deborah would also be delighted to hear from anyone willing to stage manage, do costumes or just generally be a part of the crew.

FEATS 2013

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS!!

Best Production, first place (Founders' Trophy)
American Theatre Company (Brussels), "27 Wagons Full of Cotton"

Best Production, second place (ECC Centennial Cup)
Hamburg Players, "For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls"

Best Production, third place (BATS Trophy)
Stockholm players, "Boy Meets Girl"

Best actor (Blackie Award)
Andrew Carey-Yard (NEAT)

Best actress (Blackie Award)
Amanda Lee (Hamburg Players)

Best stage presentation (Grand Duchy Trophy)
Stockholm Players

Discretionary award (Don Luscombe Discretionary Award)
Gwen Czajkowska (Village Players)

Stage management (Marcel Huhn/Bruno Boeye Memorial Award)
ESOC Theatre Group

Best original script (DAW-Verulam Award)
Bruno Sousa, "Black Horse"

**Extra special congratulations to ATC
who have been invited to attend
the July All Winners Festival
in Teignmouth, Devon:
<http://www.ndfa-bawf-2013.org.uk/>**

FEATS 2014 WILL BE HELD IN LUXEMBOURG



[Click Here to read an article from The Guardian about "Am Dram" which was recently brought to my attention – many of you might enjoy it!](#)

Behind The Scenes – A Campaign!

Two ECC Members are working together to bring National Theatre Live Transmissions back to Brussels

Sandra Lizioli writes: When the National Theatre in London decided to launch its ground breaking project to broadcast some of the best of British theatre live from the London stage to cinemas across the UK and around the world, we were thrilled. When we heard that the Kinopolis Group had decided to stop broadcasting NT Live after last month's performance of *This House* on May 16, we were devastated! Janet Middleton and I are now on a campaign to reverse that decision and bring NT Live back to Belgium. We're looking for your support.

Background: NT Live was launched in June 2009 with a broadcast of the National Theatre's production of *Phèdre* with Helen Mirren. They have since broadcast more than twenty other productions live from the National Theatre, and on occasion other theatres in the UK. Over 1.5 million people in 500 venues around the world, including 250 in the UK have experienced an NT Live broadcast! Here's a reminder of some of them: Danny Boyle's *Frankenstein* with Benedict Cumberbatch and Jonny Lee Miller; *One Man, Two Guvnors* with James Corden ; *The Last of the Haussmans* with Julie Walters, and on 13 June, the one we were all waiting for but was not screened here, *The Audience* with none other than Helen Mirren, a personal favourite of mine.

[Click Here for a clip from *The Audience*, which sadly we didn't get to see here in Brussels](#)



Why has The Kinopolis Group decided to discontinue its partnership with NT Live?

That's the question we've been asking ourselves but, unfortunately, the reason was all too apparent from the empty seats at every performance: low attendance. It begs the question: **Why?** Why has our thriving English-speaking amateur theatre community not welcomed this novel way of accessing English theatre (the best there is) in Belgium? Is it because you weren't aware of it? Given the poor publicity, we're not surprised. Despite numerous attempts to suggest ways of getting the message across to the expatriate community, our ideas were ignored. We did what we could via Facebook and other social media channels, but alas, it was not enough.

We will not be beaten!

Janet and I want to find out why attendance was so low, in the hope that we can drum up support and fill up cinemas, when (we hope) NT Live returns to our screens in the not too distant future. We are in touch with NT Live and UGC, who are already broadcasting 'live' opera and ballet: theatre would be a natural extension for them, and the location is perfect, being in downtown Brussels. If we are to succeed, we must prove that there is a community of Anglophone theatre goers in Brussels who want to see these transmissions from the National Theatre: that's where you come in.

How can you help?

- Complete a short survey. Tell us what you think of NT Live: [CLICK HERE TO GO DIRECTLY TO THE SURVEY](#) Only the first 100 responses will be registered, so if you feel as passionate about this as we do, click now!
- Become a fan of our Go NT Live in Brussels Facebook page: join in the conversation and stay tuned about our progress and upcoming shows: [CLICK HERE TO GO TO THE FB PAGE](#)
- Sign our petition: all those of you who haven't already signed one of our two petitions, please do so now: [CLICK HERE TO SIGN A PETITION](#) Thank you to all our supporters of NT Live who have signed: **We already have over 250 signatures combined!** That's a terrific result! We'd like to get to 500. **With your help we can!**
- Read our blog: read all about the latest updates of our campaign: [CLICK HERE FOR THE BLOG](#)

We hope you will support us in our campaign! Let's together bring NT Live back to Belgium!

OTHER NEWS

RIP Barbara Reckman-Oswald

Barbara Blackwell has asked me to pass on the sad news of the death of her ECC friend Barbara, who died earlier this year. Although she left Brussels in 1990, many of our more long-standing members may well remember Barbara as she was membership secretary for many years and continued to attend FEATS after her return to the UK.

ECC Committee 2012-13

Sue Botterell	Chair
Conrad Toft	Treasurer & ACTS Liaison
Iona Hamilton	Secretary, CAST Liaison & Costumes
Andy Ing	FEATS Liaison
Janet Middleton	ECCO
Laura Smith	Website
Lyn Wainwright	CAST Liaison & Membership
Martin Blackwell	
Sara Hammerton	Publicity

Many Congratulations to Barbara Blackwell on her role in a new play which has been specially written to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of The British & Commonwealth Women's Club. The play was performed in June, and is based on the lives of some of the older members of the club: Barbara was cast as herself!

SAVE THE DATE (1) - 14 JULY 2013

Annual BUTT Awards!

As we reach the end of the season, it's time to celebrate the great theatre shows that we've been to see and been involved in since September. As soon as the last show of the season closes its curtains, you'll have a chance to cast your vote for the annual Buttie awards. Once the votes have been counted, the celebrations will take place at Jim McKenna's place on 14 July. For more details, including voting and booking, go to <http://www.theatreinbrussels.com> from 10pm on 29 June.

Congratulations to Sandra Lizioli who is set to become a Bollywood Star! Look out for her cameo role in Raj Kumar Hirani's film **PK**.



Monthly Play Readings

Wednesday 3 July - Chez Barbara – 7.45 for an 8pm start!

Janet Middleton will lead us in reading

The Audience by Peter Morgan

For those of us unable to get tickets to see *The Audience* in London or transmitted live by the National Theatre (see separate article), here is a chance to at least read the play! Ladies bring your tiara and enjoy being a Queen for a day (well an hour or two!) Gentlemen tell your children "On Wednesday I am going to be the Prime Minister!"

Please ring Mary for further information and to let her know if you are going to come along or email ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com. (If ringing you are most likely to catch Mary between 8-10, am or pm).

Contributions to interval drinks and nibbles always welcome!

We will meet Chez Mary on 7 August ... but please keep an eye out for changes to date or venue that happen from time to time.

Thank You ...

Our thanks on behalf of all ECC members to Roísín, Kevin and all who helped them with the recent clear-out at the Warehouse. It was a lot of hard work, but everyone who uses these premises will benefit from it.

SAVE THE DATE (2) – SUNDAY 15 SEPTEMBER SEASON LAUNCH AT THE WAREHOUSE

To launch the 2013-2014 Season we plan to spruce up the whole Warehouse complex and turn it into a magical theatre land for a day.

There will be performances, presentations, food and drink, information about the new season, and lots of fun. Put it in your diary now; bring friends, family and anyone who enjoys theatre or a good party. More information nearer the time.

Nothing to do with theatre, but if you enjoyed Lyn's article about ***Copenhagen*** rehearsals as much as I did, you might enjoy this too: [Lego Rugby!](#)

NEWS ABOUT OLD OR CURRENT MEMBERS?

If you have some, please send it to Janet at ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com

Please Don't Break a Leg!

Everyone who has been using the Warehouse facilities recently is aware that, unfortunately, the cobbles in the courtyard are coming loose and that there are several patches of uneven or missing cobbles causing a trip hazard.

The ECC is grateful to CAST for its negotiations to get the repairs made, but until these can be accomplished we would ask our members to be aware of the situation and take every care when in the courtyard.

Forthcoming Productions

For more information and auditions see www.theatreinbrussels.com

American Theatre Company

**DOUBLE BILLING OF PRIZE-WINNING
FEATS SHOWS:**

***27 Wagons Full of Cotton* and
*For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls***

30-31 August

English Comedy Club

Copenhagen

By Michael Frayn: 8-12 October

American Theatre Company

12 Angry Men

22-26 October

ETCetera

Buonaparte

5-9 November

Brussels Shakespeare Society

The Way of The World

By William Congreve: 13-16 November

Irish Theatre Group

An Béal Bocht

BLOC

Evita

28 November – 1 December

Click on the name of the theatre group above to go directly to their website

**If you hear of any productions coming up in English in Brussels or Belgium, why not share
with your ECC friends? Send details to Janet for inclusion in the next ECCO:**

ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com