



ECCO: January 2015



In this edition:

Aladdin

Audition: FEATS 2015

Committee & ECC News

Feats 2016

Future Productions

Lighting Workshop

Play Readings

Tom & Viv

If you have any contributions to ECCO, please send them to Janet at ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com

The next ECCO will come out in March 2015

Deadline: 15 February

Welcome – From your ECCO Editor

Normally ECCO would be coming out in early January, but with the Christmas festivities heating up and my family coming home, I felt it was better to get the January issue out early as I think I'm going to be distracted from now on!

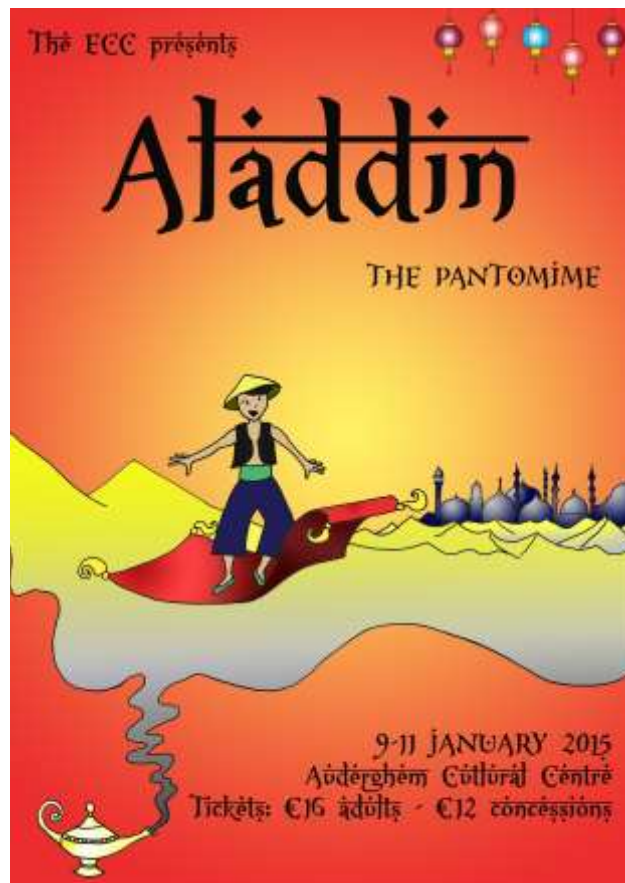
2015 will be getting off to an excellent start for three very good reasons. One reason is our 2015 Panto: Aladdin. As I type, the cast and crew are putting together a wonderful and very funny production which will entertain the entire family. It was just a tiny bit surreal to walk into the Warehouse the other day and find a most beautiful rickshaw sitting sedately outside the rehearsal rooms! What a find!

The second reason why 2015 is starting well is because, subject to her official election by the committee at their next meeting, Lyn Wainwright has agreed to be the next Chair of the ECC. This is a real coup for us, and we are delighted that Lyn, with her wealth of knowledge of the workings of Am Dram in Brussels and her many talents, has allowed herself to be put forward.

Finally, on 6 February our preparations for FEATS 2016 will get under way, with the official Launch Party (which we had to postpone because it would have coincided with the strike this month).

So once again I wish you all the very best for the festive season and a happy 2015.

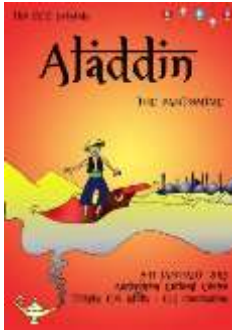
Janet Middleton ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com



TICKETS
SELLING
FAST!

**Click
Poster**

to go
directly to
the Box
Office &
ensure you
don't miss
out!



Auderghem Cultural Centre
Blvd du Souverain 183, 1160 Brussels
9 January (8pm), 10 January (1.30pm & 5pm),
11 January, (1.30pm & 5pm)
Tickets are €16 for adults and €12 for children
<http://ecc.theatreinbrussels.com>

Director Henri Colens writes: This year's show builds on the success of last year's *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and we're having great fun preparing *Aladdin* for you. We even took a few pictures during the last rehearsal to give you a taste of what's to come. In the picture you can see Wishee Washee (Cath Howdle), Widow Twankey (Chris Jones) and Aladdin (Izzy Poston), but the panto has a lot more characters than that!



As always, it's Goodies versus Baddies! The Goodies include The Genie of the Lamp (Andy Blumenthal - who's been just magical in rehearsals so far - Ed). The Baddies are led by the dastardly Abanazar (Conrad Toft). He will be ably assisted (or should that be hampered?) by his quick-witted Genie of the Ring (Lara Gill) and his sunlight-deprived tech sidekick Neil (Andreas Weisinger). The comedy duo, PC Jan and PC Jean (Tim van Rie and Olly Kaye) will have you in stitches as they hilariously (and accurately) impersonate two Belgian gendarmes, in China. The whole thing is set in and around the Imperial Palace, in which The Emperor (Hugo de Chassiron) contemplates how to marry off his daughter, the beautiful Princess (Alyssa Frayling). Although she's a bit of dreamer, Princess Jasmine has her feet kept on the ground by her ditsy handmaidens (Rachel Heijkoop, Kristina Kardum, Annette Aragones and Imani Carty).

But that's not all! You'll love our children's chorus: Chiara, Giulia, Anna, Hannah, Roisin, Alice, Caoimhe, Mia, Toby and Jasper, who have all been method acting to try to get into character as the street urchins of Old Peking. We are also lucky to have two acrobats called Sparky and Bob, who also have real names. We have an adult chorus struggling to keep up with them: Leanne Darnborough, Katarina Jovovic, Andreea Martinovici, Valeria Valone and Grainne Crowley. And, last but not least, no pantomime would be complete without the odd animal. This year's is very odd. Watch out for the whirlwind that is Camilla the Camel (Benjamin Owen)! People have told me not to work with children or animals - I obviously haven't listened!



It'll be big and bold, and we've even got a dragon, a rickshaw and a cave filled with tons of treasure, some of which might, or might not, be edible. If that wasn't enough, our Stage Manager Glenn managed to take "Break a leg!" literally and went and broke his ankle. We love a challenge... but I'm sure it'll all be worth it. **See you after Christmas!**

You can also find Aladdin on Facebook:



Running Time:

2 and a half hours with 20 minute interval



Tom & Viv

24-28 March 2015

The Warehouse Studio Theatre, 8pm

Tickets now available:

<https://thelittleboxoffice.com/ecc>

Director Janet Middleton writes: With so many other productions competing for cast and crew at the start of 2015, I consider myself very fortunate in having found an immensely talented and friendly group of people to be working with. We have already begun our rehearsals, although we shall all be glad when we can have our Tom with us on a permanent basis (the much-in-demand Gareth Lewis whose (understandable) first priority until now has been his role in the ITG's *Dolly West's Kitchen*). Viv will be played by Sophie Thompson; her father by Martin Webber (a newcomer to the ECC stage); her mother by Sandra Lizioli (a far more serious role than Sandra's last with us, which was as Olive Harriet Smythe in *Move Over Mrs. Markham*); and her brother, Maurice, will be played by Craig Simpson. Louise, the pharmacist and friend of Viv, is played by Orla Colclough, and Chris Wehbe, Jeremy Zeegers and Katherine Cox take on other roles.

Tom and Viv is a dark yet startlingly funny play about T. S. Eliot's marriage to his first wife Vivienne Haigh-Wood. Vivienne suffered a hormonal imbalance which today would almost certainly be treatable to the extent that she would be able to live a 'normal' life. However, at the time the medications she was prescribed had a devastating effect on her mental and physical health, and impacted on the lives of those around her. There is little room for doubt in the play that Viv was a great influence on Eliot's work, in particular *The Waste Land*, but it also strongly suggests that some of it was in fact penned by Viv.

In trying to write this article for ECCO I find myself in a quandary as not only are there so many aspects of *Tom and Viv*, the people as well as the play, which one could explore, but also the problematic issue of writing a play based on real people. In his introduction Michael Hastings writes: "In the theatre all biography is fiction and some fiction is autobiography". This simply needs 'Discuss' to become an excellent English Literature examination question! Hastings has taken real or imagined situations and used them to give the audience a perspective of the past: a past which is shrouded in secrecy because access to Eliot's estate, an estate which includes the literary works of Vivienne, is closely guarded by Eliot's executor and widow, his second wife, Valerie.

Valerie Eliot rarely gives interviews, but in 1994, following the release of the film of *Tom & Viv*, she spoke to The Independent at length about how she felt her husband had been portrayed unfairly; that his part in placing Vivienne in a place of safety had been twisted and used against him; that Maurice was no dunce; and that Vivienne was not as great an influence as history believes. One can of course understand her taking issue with the play, his great love for Viv and the idea that she influenced his work until 1953. However, Valerie argues her case using correspondence that she will not publish and with the energy of a woman who fell fanatically in love with her husband through his poetry when she was 14 (it has been rumoured that she swore then that she would one day marry him), and then deliberately sought employment with Faber and Faber in order to have access to Eliot. In our production we will be presenting Hastings' work as the truth and hope that it will encourage our audience to want to learn more about Eliot, his work and the "social tragedy" (Hastings again) which was his marriage to Vivienne.

Audition Notice

FEATS 2015: WAR BRIDES

ECC Brussels will be presenting *War Brides* by Marion Craig Wentworth at FEATS 2015 in Hamburg (22-25 May 2015). The show will also be performed earlier in May in Brussels.

There are seven characters (four women, three men) in the show:

- **Hedwig (Joan):** *"tall, well built, and carries herself proudly. Strong, intelligent features, but pale"*
- **Amelia (Amy):** *"a slight, flaxen-haired girl of nineteen"*
- **Mother:** *"sturdy and stoical"*
- **Minna:** *"young, pretty"*

- **Hoffman (Joseph Kerman):** *"familiar, inclined to stoutness, but good-looking"*
- **Arno:** *"in his early twenties, and looks even younger than he really is"*
- **Hertz (Captain Bragg):** *"well along in years, rheumatic, but tremendously self-important"*

The script (copyright-free) is available from <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/14602>. If you are interested in auditioning, please contact the director, [Conrad Toft \(conradtoft@gmail.com\)](mailto:conradtoft@gmail.com), to arrange an audition time. Auditions will take place on 13 & 15 January 2015 at 20:00 and 18 January 2015 at 11:00 at Avenue Goerges Henri 154, Woluwe-Saint-Lambert. If you are unable to make those audition times, we may be able to find alternatives.

A Warehouse Lighting & Sound Workshop will be held early in 2015

A lighting/sound workshop - focussing principally on the new Studio layout - will be held early next year. Our thanks to Barbara and Jim who are organising this for all the groups.

The workshop could be split so that those only keen to run lights (not hang lanterns) do not need to stay for the more in-depth instruction that would be required.

- The workshop will be held over a weekend.
- Interested persons would need to understand the commitment involved, including staying more than 3 months in Brussels
- Workshop will be conducted in English
- Aimed at assisting the amateur English-speaking theatre groups in Brussels
- There will be a fee

If you are interested, please email ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com and you will be contacted.

ECC NEWS

Committee

Until the next meeting of the committee, the committee is composed as follows:

Committee	Role	Contact us at:
Vacant	Chair	chair@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com
Janet Middleton	Secretary & Ecco	ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com
Martin Blackwell	Treasurer	treasurer@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com
Andy Ing	FEATS	feats@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com
Chris Jones		chris@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com
Joanna Patrick	Webmaster	web-admin@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com
Lyn Wainwright	CAST	lyn@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com
Sara Hammerton		sara@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com

FEATS 2016

**We're very excited about hosting FEATS in 2016
and hope you will be too!**

Come Along to our Launch Party on 6 February!

**8pm, Rue des Atrebatas 27, 1040 Brussels
RSVP: ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com**

Hosting FEATS is a huge event for the club, and whilst as one of the FEATS founders we are regular hosts, each time is a unique experience involving very many people with all sorts of different talents to offer. We need help with administering the event, help with welcoming the participating groups, help with feeding and watering the performers and audiences and help with running the event at the theatre.

We are delighted that Eileen Sutton has agreed to Chair the FEATS 2016 Committee, bringing with her to the ECC her huge experience of FEATS and of theatre in Brussels.

FEATS 2016 will run 6-9 May 2016

If you cannot join us at the party, please email Janet at the above address to register your interest in being involved.

MONTHLY PLAY READINGS

Future Dates:

Wednesday 14 January
(delayed to avoid clashing with *Aladdin*)

Wednesday 4 February

IMPORTANT

Although Mary and Barbara are still very much our guiding lights, Mary is no longer going to ring around to remind people about the meetings, and so you will now only hear about them by reading Ecco, Ecco Flash or via Facebook. However, in addition, every month Janet will be emailing a reminder to people who have attended in the past and who want to be on the Play Reading email list. **If you would like to be added to the ECC Play Reading List, please email her at ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com.**

We are now asking people to register as coming along via a Doodle link: all you will have to do is click on the link, add your name to the list under 'Table View', click in the box and then 'Save' your entry. If you have any problem with this, please do not hesitate to contact Janet - or simply to ring Mary on **02 345 8583** as usual! She has a message service if she's not there.

Doodle Link for January Play Reading:
<http://doodle.com/qzhcnr5k2mp676f4>

**Details about the next Play Reading
will be circulated in early January**

We meet at 7.45 for an 8pm start
Contributions of interval drinks or nibbles always welcome!

FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS

ECC

Aladdin
9-11 January 2015

American Theatre Company

44 Plays for 44 Presidents by Andy Bayiates, Sean Benjamin, Geneva Gallo-Bayiates, Chloé Johnston and Karen Weinberg
20-31 January 2015

Brussels Shakespeare Society

Henry VI & Richard III
1-8 March 2015

Irish Theatre Group

Quietly by Owen McCafferty
10-14 March 2014

ECC

Tom & Viv by Michael Hastings
24-28 March 2015

American Theatre Company

Café Theatre
21-24 April 2015

BLOC

The Pajama Game
4-7 June 2015

**Click on the name of the theatre group above to go directly to their website.
For more information and auditions see also www.theatreinbrussels.com**

YOU MIGHT ALSO BE INTERESTED IN:

NT Live now screening at Utopolis, Mechelen. [Click here for further details](#)

22 January Treasure Island

KVS has regular productions subtitled in English. Visit their website to find out more: <http://www.kvs.be/en>

Fun, Food & Acting: Once a month a unique presentation at Theatre de la Toison D'Or in association with Brusselslife: <http://www.ffact.be/#>