



ECCO: January 2017



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of Date**

RIP – Carolyn Cusak

***The Government
Inspector*** – A view
from the audience

**If you have any
contributions for ECCO,
please send them to
Janet at**

ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com

The next Ecco will come
out March 2017

Deadline: 15 February

Message from the Chair

Our last ECCO saw us preparing for our November production *The Government Inspector*. In the event it was a huge success and Anna Holmen and her team are to be congratulated on keeping up the energy for a two week run and sending home lots of happy people.

Now just when you might think that the ECC would be taking a rest we find that Christmas will be here very soon. The relatively mild weather and sunshine make it difficult to get down to serious preparations but since no Festive Season is complete without the fun of a Panto, don't forget to book your tickets for *Cinderella* which will be our next production between the 13th and the 15th January 2017. Preparations will be frantic between now and then.

Wishing you all the very best for the NewYear, and we look forward to entertaining you in 2017.

Lyn Wainwright
ECC Chair

chair@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com



**Click on
the image
left to go
directly to
the box
office.**

Auderghem Cultural Centre
Friday, 13 January 2017 (20:00)
Saturday, 14 January 2017 (13:30 & 17:00)
Sunday, 15 January 2017 (13:30 & 17:00)
Tickets: Adults - €16 Children - €12
<http://ecc.theatreinbrussels.com/cinderella>

Cinderella

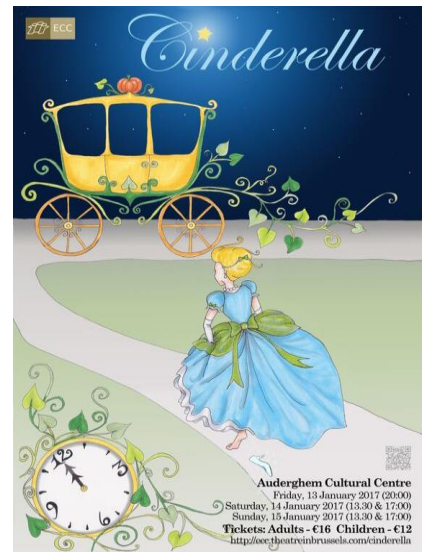
Friday 13 January 2017 - 20:00

**Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 January 2017
13:30 & 17:00**

Tickets €16 / €12

**Auderghem Cultural Centre
Bvd du Souverain 183, 1160 Brussels**

Click on the poster to go directly to the Box Office!



Countdown to the Royal Ball: time to join us at the Palace!

With only a few days left before the palace doors open on the royal ball, the ECC panto gang are putting the final touches to the show!



After several months of rehearsal, our cast is bouncing with excitement at the chance to share the awesome songs, delightful story and terrible puns with the wider world.

Our principals are now starting to dress up for rehearsals (which for the Uglies has led to some truly mind-boggling outfits). Our comic characters are coming up with extra jokes to throw into the mix, and our romantic

characters have mostly stopped giggling every time they are instructed to look dreamily into each other's eyes. As director, this is the most fun part of the rehearsal process - time to relax, let go, and enjoy seeing your cast really shine.

Our chorus are also shining: lines and songs have been learned and are now being polished up. We've also been running rehearsals for all cast members ... and the nice thing about panto is that when the kids' chorus are not actively rehearsing, they watch and provide all the cheers and boos that a real audience would provide ... oh and they also benefit from the "practice runs" for the sweet-throwing scenes!



We've become a real team over the last few months, with everyone bringing their talents to the table. Alongside our brilliant costume, props, set and sound teams, cast and parents alike have stepped up as choreographers, set-builders and publicity/social media coordinators. And as the show draws closer, we'll be joined by our excellent stage crew and lighting squad.

So, in summary - after months of hard work, we're nearly there!

If you'd like to come and see *Cinderella*, the box office is open and tickets are selling very fast indeed!



The Government Inspector: A View

Sara Hammerton writes:

In 1984 Sweden won the Eurovision song contest for the second time, with a catchy little ditty called "Diggiloo Diggiley". Unlike Abba, the Herreys were not propelled to international fame. Instead their song has become infamous as one of the WORST Eurovision winners ever. But that's because it wasn't performed by Gail Rego and the cast of *The Government Inspector*.



Director Anna Holmen used the song to close the first act of the ECC's performance of Nikolai Gogol's 1836 satire on ingrained corruption in 19th century Russia, to great effect. Obviously the original version didn't actually include Swedish pop songs, but this was a modern day script, written by none other than the ECC's very own Tim Myers.

The key themes of "officials", "administration", "power play" and "corruption" are still relevant today, and Anna decided that the play could easily be set in modern day Europe. It worked, with no small thanks to Tim who virtually rewrote the entire script, while remaining faithful to the original story line.

The play begins with the Mayor of a small town informing local dignitaries that he has been tipped off that an inspector is due to visit – incognito. Terrified that their little "peccadilloes" might be uncovered, the Mayor calls on each of them to clean up their act. A cast of colourful characters is introduced in the process, each more stupid and corrupt than the last.

The characters' original Russian names described their particular faults, and unlike previous versions, Tim chose to change them to English, which makes a lot of sense. So in the ECC version we have a Mayor called Bagloot, a chief physician called Boneyard, a judge called Rushcase and a total waste of space of a person, the visitor, called Wästrell.

The casting was excellent. Tim was very much at ease in his role as the corrupt and dictatorial mayor with a surface polish that quickly wears off. Hugh Dow gave a hilarious cameo performance as the drunken incoherent Dr. Boneyard, playing him as a grumpy old Scot. Can't think where that idea came from. Hannah Grainger Clemson gave a very convincing performance as the Mayor's vain, social climber of a wife, and it was good to see Robynn Colwell in a role she could really get her teeth into as the rather nasty – and corrupt – hospital director Olga Chisel.

The two main clowns of the piece are Bobbit and Dobbit, who jump to the conclusion that the visitor to the town must be the inspector, thereby triggering the whole comedy of errors. Sandra Lizoli and Jonathon Goldsmith were well-matched in this Tweedledum and Tweedledee comedy duo, and clearly enjoyed being stupid. Another very funny character was the shamelessly noseey postmistress, Niamh Flannery, played with hilarious naivety by Orla Colclough. Svea Brain Jangen tackled the role of spoilt stropky teenager Mary, Anthony Bagloot's daughter, with aplomb, in her battles with the strong spirited servant Dotty, confidently played by Sophie Riederer. Oliver Brain brought great physicality to his role as the dumb, timid, schoolboy-like School Inspector, Luke Lamb, while Johan Enegren came across as an equally clueless judge. As one audience member remarked, there were no weak actors. Janet Middleton showed versatility as flashy greedy merchant one minute, and a smart, no-nonsense official (looking very sleek in a grey suit) shortly afterwards, while singing star Gail Rego was both a young servant and an old widow.

Which brings me to the central character Ivan Wästrell and his trusty but cynical servant Benny. Chris Simpson was very impressive in his assured performance as Benny, that reminded me of a smarter version of Baldrick in *Blackadder*. And of course, Yorgos Filippakis came up trumps as always, portraying Wästrell as lazy, useless chancer, grabbing every

opportunity thrown at him with undisguised greed, never thinking of the consequences. A scene that really sticks in my memory is the party scene, where Yorgos absolutely revelled in the part of the drunken Ivan dancing away in his white jeans, open-necked black shirt, medallion, and the all-important golden shoes (referred to in the song, and worn by the original singers).

On the subject of costumes, much thought was clearly given by Fiona McGinnis, Elisabeth Munklinde and team to dressing each actor to portray their character, notably the slightly over-the-top mother-of-the-bride outfit worn by the Mayor's wife, and the drab geography teacher look complete with too-short trousers sported by the school's inspector, as well as Robynn Colwell's razor-sharp black and white outfit.

The set helped too – by being very simple. Essentially it was a set of mismatched chairs, rearranged to suit each scene, with a few extra items such as table when necessary. It worked extremely well, and at no point did you feel the cast of 18 was too much for the space available at the Warehouse studio.

I had the good fortune to go on the last night when we were treated to a full-cast performance of "Diggiloo Diggiley" at the end. It was an absolutely joyous performance (choreographed by Hannah Grainger Clemson – well done) and demonstrated what a happy, cohesive cast they were. That sense of joy spread to the audience, ending the evening on a very cheerful note.

Try it yourself - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZMV6qCkRnU>

Come on, altogether now, Diggiloo... diggiley...

Next Social Event



FURTHER DETAILS TO FOLLOW!

Friday 27th January
8pm

The Bar Room
The Warehouse, Rue Waelhem 69a, 1030 Brussels

Committee

Lyn Wainwright
Kerry Lydon
Fiona McGinnis
Sara Hammerton
Anna Holmén
Andy Ing
Janet Middleton
Boff Muir
Steve O'Byrne
Bryony Ulyyett

Role

Chair
Secretary & CAST Chair
Treasurer & Costumes
ACTS & Publicity
CAST Rep.
FEATS
Ecco
Webmaster
Workshops

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CAROLYN CUSAK, RIP

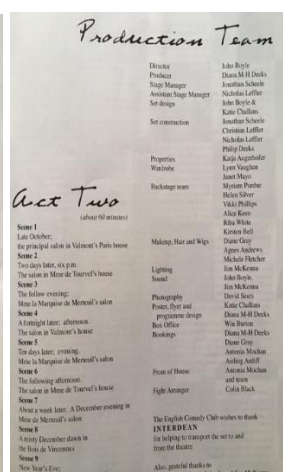
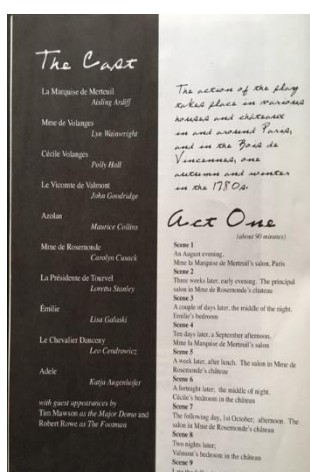
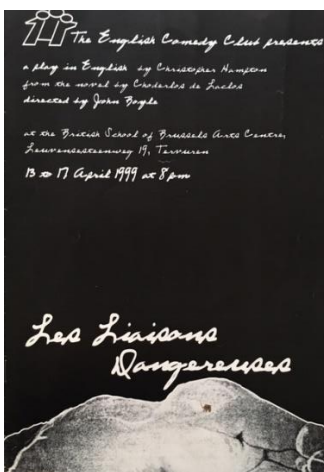
Lyn Wainwright remembers a good friend:

Carolyn passed away in Dublin early in November 2016 after a long struggle with Multiple Sclerosis. She was a good friend both to me and to the ECC during the many years that she lived in Brussels. I saw her a few months ago in Dublin and she was as brave and as spirited as ever.

The photograph shows her as she was in 1999 performing the role of Mme de Rosemonde in the ECC production of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* directed by John Boyle and performed at the British School, as many of our productions were in those days.

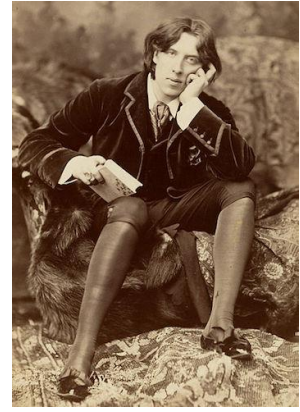
I was also in the cast and even then I remember that she needed a helping hand to be able to take her bow at the end of the play, so we walked down together. It was just the beginning of a long and painful journey and, although it is sad that she is no longer with us, it is a blessing that her suffering is over.

Our thoughts are with her daughter Alex and the rest of her family.



Auditions

A Wilde Evening 23-27 May 2016



A Woman of No Importance - Directed by Conrad Toft

The ECC will be staging an abridged version of Oscar Wilde's satire *A Woman of No Importance* in Brussels from 23-27 May and at FEATS Frankfurt for one performance between 2 and 5 June. With his usual wit, Wilde takes us on an epic romp of Victorian high society exposing scandals and delivering his fine repartee at every opportunity.

Characters (not all may appear in the abridged version):

Lord Illingworth (Successful politician and dandy, 40s)
Mrs. Arbuthnot (Widow, 35-45)
Gerald Arbuthnot (Her son, 20s)
Mrs. Allonby (A female dandy, 35-45)
Miss Hester Worsley (American Puritan, 20s)
Jane, Lady Hunstanton (Victorian aristocrat)
Lady Caroline Pontefract (Victorian aristocrat, bully)
The Ven. Archdeacon Daubeny (Priest)
Lady Stutfield (Victorian aristocrat)
Mr. Kelvil, M.P. (Politician)
Lord Alfred Rufford (Aristocrat)
Sir John Pontefract (Victorian aristocrat)

The Impotence of Being Frank - Directed by Adam Brown

The Impotence of Being Frank is a short farce intended as a tribute to Oscar Wilde and Joe Orton, in which a tenacious detective manically - and ultimately successfully - tracks down the perpetrator of a crime that wasn't committed. It is the first play by a highly renowned Brussels based biographer and academic, writing under the pseudonym of Joe Wilde. The play, originally written for the radio has never been performed before so a certain amount of workshopping and imagination will be required by the actors.

The characters:

Detective Inspector Hyde:	A fearless and tenacious pursuer of facts
PC Beasley:	His loyal assistant
Mrs Mulligatawney:	A matronly sort
Mr Frederick Grass:	Ex-military, by the sound of things
Mrs Mary Grass:	His wife, a flower arranger
Ernest Potage:	Rich, famous, etc etc

Auditions will be held at The Warehouse, Rue Waelhem 69, 1030 Brussels

30th Jan and 2nd Feb:	19.00 <i>The Impotence of Being Frank</i> 20.30 <i>A Woman of no Importance</i>
5th Feb:	14.00 <i>The Impotence of Being Frank</i> 15.30 <i>A Woman of no Importance</i>

For any further details, please contact the producer, Kerry at Kerry.lydon@gmail.com

Monthly Play Readings

THIS MONTH ONLY WE'LL MEET ON 2ND WEDS: 11 JANUARY

Arms & The Man

By George Bernard Shaw

Join us chez Mary Pritchard, 32 ave. Bel Air, 1180 Brussels

The opening words of this 1894 play, are *Arma virumque cano* (Of arms and the man I sing), and, dealing with the subjects of the futility of war and the hypocrisies of human nature, it was one of Shaw's first commercial successes. Shaw was called onto stage after the curtain, where he received enthusiastic applause. Amidst the cheers, one audience member booed. Shaw replied, in characteristic fashion, "My dear fellow, I quite agree with you, but what are we two against so many?"

The Plot

It is helpful to know that the play takes place during the 1885 Serbo-Bulgarian War.

Characters:

Raina Petkoff: Heroine. Young Bulgarian woman engaged to Sergius Saranoff.

Sergius Saranoff: Bulgarian war hero

Captain Bluntschli: Swiss mercenary in the Serbian army

Catherine Petkoff: Raina's mother

Major Petkoff: Raina's father

Louka: Petkoff servant girl, engaged to Nicola

Nicola: Petkoff man servant

If you intend to join us please register via Doodle by clicking [Here](#)

Or ring Mary on 02 345 8583.

For those of you who are new to the play reading group, we meet at 7.45pm aiming to start reading at 8. We have drinks and nibbles, and a small contribution in the form of a bottle or something to eat is always welcome!

Although Mary and Barbara are still very much our guiding lights, Mary is no longer ringing around to remind people. However, every month Janet emails a reminder to people who have attended in the past and wish to be on the mailing list for these reminders. If you would like to be added to the ECC Play Reading Email List, please email Janet at ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com

How to Doodle: All you have to do is click on the link above, add your name to the list under 'Table View', click in the box to show you are coming (or do nothing if you're not!) and then 'Save' your entry. If you have any problem with this, please do not hesitate to contact Janet - or simply ring Mary.

FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS/EVENTS

ECC	<i>Cinderella</i> 13-15 January
BSS	<i>The Winter's Tale</i> 23-28 January
ITG	<i>The Cripple of Inishmaan</i> by Martin McDonagh 7-11 February
ATC	<i>The Crucible</i> by Arthur Miller March
ECC	<i>A Wilde Evening</i> 23-27 May
BLOC	<i>HMS Pinafore</i> by Gilbert & Sullivan 1-4 June
ATC	Cafe Theatre 13-17 June

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:

KVS has regular productions surtitled 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: <http://www.ffact.be/#>

LIVE THEATRE FROM LONDON (or repeats!)

Kinepolis, Brussels: Click here for further details

Utopolis, Mechelen: Click here for further details

16 February Utopolis	<i>St. Joan</i> NTLive
9 March Utopolis	<i>Hedda Gabler</i> NTLive