



ECCO: March 2017



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

ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com

The next Ecco will come out in May 2017

Deadline: 15 April

Message from the Chair

Exceptionally this month I have plenty of time on my hands. As some of you may know I broke my leg at the beginning of January and have since been marooned in the UK which makes writing for ECCO a strangely detached activity. Fortunately, it turns out that the ECC is made of stronger stuff and is managing very well without me. I missed *Cinderella* completely but I did receive many glowing reports so well done to Cath and her teams for maintaining the very high standard that we have now come to expect.

Auditions have already taken place for our 'Wilde' evening due to be performed in May, and this will include our entry for Feats which this year will be held in Frankfurt. Unfortunately, Adam Brown has unexpectedly had to hand over his role as Director of one of the two pieces to be performed, and we are very grateful to Hugh Dow for stepping in. I hope to be back with you all long before then.

Lyn Wainwright
ECC Chair

chair@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com



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

A Wilde Night

The Warehouse Studio Theatre

Rue Waelhem 69a

1030 Brussels

16-20 May at 8pm



Producer Kerry Lydon writes:

From 16-20 May, the ECC will be staging ***A Wilde Night Out***, comprising of two plays, one by Oscar Wilde and one written in the style of Oscar Wilde.

First up is an abridged version of Oscar Wilde's satire ***A Woman of No Importance***, which is also the ECC's entry for FEATS 2017 in Frankfurt. Director Conrad Toft has assembled a committed team of backstage crew and a fine cast to represent the group in Germany. In this play, 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.

The second play of the evening is ***The Impotence of Being Frank***: 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 vastly experienced director Hugh Dow is looking forward to putting his own stamp on the show with his highly talented cast.

Tickets are €15 and are available from <http://thelittleboxoffice.com/ecc>

Cinderella: A View

Janet Middleton writes:

Many congratulations to Director Cath Howdle and her *Cinderella* cast and crew for treating us to another fun-filled panto. It was clear that the writing team had a ball with the script, but while their words were being enjoyed by the audience it was evident that a lot of work was going on behind the scenes – and had been going on for some time.

With so many actors, actresses and delightful mice to get into the right place at the right time, Producer Boff Muir, Stage Manager Glenn Vaughan and ASM Richard Hampton (how did he manage to be King and ASM?) must have been kept on their toes, and I know that they were extremely grateful for the team of parent helpers who greatly contributed to the smooth-running of each performance. And then there was the whole 'getting them dressed and made-up'! Many congratulations to Fiona McGinnis and Bryony Ulyett on producing some truly fabulous costumes, and special mention must be made of Sheila Hewitt's incredible transforming dress for Cinders, all this backed up by a fabulous team of talented make-up and hair artists to add the finishing touches to the whole ensemble.

In fact, Richard Hampton seems to have been everywhere on this production, as he also played a major role in the construction of the set, while Cath's friend, Cat Harris, paid a flying visit to construct the incredible pumpkin carriage. Louise Thomson must have had to keep a very careful eye on where all the props were with so many people milling around backstage.

And we must not forget that while everyone was focussing on what was happening on the stage, Barbara Daw, Ant McCarthy, Steve O'Byrne and Andy Fisk were quietly getting on with sound and lighting effects which play such an important part in the presentation of a show – and which a lot of people only notice when things go wrong!

So what was going on on the stage?

Well, lovely but put-upon Cinders, Jen Cleal, beautifully sang and danced her way from family servant to princess with the help of lovelorn Buttons, Stephen Challens (who had us all wishing we didn't know that he wouldn't get the girl in the end), Fairy G (aka Neasa Conroy) and her apprentices played by Michelle Paneli and Rosie Balina. Poor (literally) Baron Hardup (David Monckton) had a difficult life with his murderous Baroness, who was played by 'I only get out of bed for a fabulous costume' Sara Hammerton. Like all parents, King Richard Hampton and Queen Hannah Riley were keen that their son should find a suitable wife. And so, thank goodness that Prince Charming, Andy Fisk, was not distracted by the fine-legged and fine-voiced Dandini, Josephine Draycott, nor by the village's, nay, the town's, nay, the county's most beautiful sisters Myopia and Dystopia Hardup (Conrad Toft and Andy Blumenthal) and found his true love Cinders! Although how the Prince could not fall for the charms of the hip-swinging, couture-dressed Hardup beauties is beyond me.

Add into the mix a ghost (Ben Owen), a gorilla and a very fine chorus (far too many to mention) of all ages, and it was a production that was full of life. Many congratulations to all the cast who revealed their fantastic singing and dancing abilities, and to Choreographer Josephine Draycott who got everyone dancing as a team.

It really was a fun production, with a lot of very funny set-pieces and a great deal of talent both on and off the stage. The live singing made a real difference to the quality of the production, and it was wonderful to see so many young and new people involved. Congratulations all!



Cinderella: Some Production Photos



January's Games Night

Sara Hammerton writes (and maybe fantasises):

I could hear the excited chatter of the people waiting to take part in the ECC Games Night as I walked up the rue Waelhem to the Warehouse. In truth, this was partly because someone who shall remain nameless had forgotten the key (*who could have done something so stupid? Ed*), so everyone had to wait in the courtyard until it arrived. However they cheerfully braved the winter cold and used the time to organise themselves into teams.

At first I thought I had made a mistake and stumbled on a dress rehearsal for an Agatha Christie play. Then I realised that some of our resourceful and enthusiastic participants had entered into the spirit of the evening by dressing up as Cluedo characters. That is what happens when you plan a games night for thespians. They even had an alarming array of murder weapons – fortunately all harmless props, not deadly implements. (Well, almost all...)



Inside the bar was quickly set up, complete with snacks, while the games were laid out. A few snags were quickly ironed out. Twister on the hard Bar Room floor is pretty unforgiving. However two helpful chaps were dispatched to the props room and came back with a couple of rugs to put under the plastic game sheet. Problem solved.

Once Twister got going, it was a source of great hilarity, and as much a spectator sport as a participatory event. Sparing her blushes, I would like to suggest however that the (apparently double jointed!) young lady who stayed the course with such skill might want to rethink what she wears next time. Short skirts are not ideal. Not that I can talk. Tight skinny jeans are far from a sensible choice. In fact the circulation in my left leg has still not returned. Some fared worse. I hope the person who put their hip out will recover soon. They were given the details of a good physio-therapist. Laughter is the best therapy they say, though, and there was plenty of that.

Meanwhile, if Donald Trump is looking for a new Security Advisor, he could do a lot worse than some of the players in our Games Night session of Risk. The thought that went into some of those tactics was deeply impressive. And I'm pretty sure the knowledge of geo-politics displayed would put Trump and his team to shame. Just sayin'. A teeny bit of aggression was witnessed at one point, but fortunately a refugee from the Twister mat intervened as soon as they realised that two of the players were about to take things outside.

High finance was at stake in the backroom, where some people had chosen to play the Ultimate Banking version of Monopoly. Things did get a little heated towards the end, until the organisers stepped in to ensure that the game's results would not be converted into real money. Someone was on the verge of having to remortgage their property. Next time we will stick to the M&Ms version.

Last but not least, several fast and furious games of Snakes and Ladders were played in quick succession. Someone had managed to adapt the rules to turn it into a drinking game. Bar takings shot up as a result. I couldn't explain the rules to you because by the time I spoke to the instigator, his speech was far too slurred. Full marks for inventiveness though.

And there you have it, a fun-packed games night. The above account may or may not be true, but the point is that when a bunch of imaginative, fun-loving theatre folk get together with a few board games and a well-stocked bar, pretty much anything could happen. Next time, come along and find out.

ECC Christmas Party

Huge Thanks to Conrad & Michelle for so generously opening up their home for the ECC Christmas Party!



ECC NEWS

Committee

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

Role

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Secretary & CAST Chair
Treasurer & Costumes
ACTS & Publicity
CAST Rep.
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Webmaster
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very best wishes to Lyn

We wish you a very
speedy recovery and
return to Brussels!



My leg is broken!

Don't worry, i got duct tape

The ECC misses
you!

Monthly Play Readings

1 March

Accidental Death of an Anarchist

By Dario Fo

Join us chez Janet & Tim - Rue des Atrebatas 27, 1040 Brussels – 7.45pm

The play is a farce based on the real-life events surrounding Italian railwayman and anarchist Giuseppe Pinelli, who fell – or was thrown – to his death from the fourth floor window of a Milan police station in 1969. Pinelli was accused of bombing a bank but was cleared of the charge. The events of the play, however, are fiction.

I will leave the play to unfold ... but there is an interesting, rather grim, factoid: An actor Mark Blanco, who was cast in the lead role at a London fringe theatre, died in unexplained circumstances himself in December 2006 shortly before the production was about to open. Blanco fell to the ground from a balcony in Whitechapel, East London. His family said: "We absolutely do not believe that Mark committed suicide, or that his death was a simple accident." They continue to press for information on Blanco's last hours at the party from those who were present, including former Libertines singer Pete Doherty.

I chose this play when the death of Fo, aged 90, was announced last October, and I thought we would all enjoy reading one by this Italian author who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1997.

Conrad directed a very funny production of the play some years ago, and I hope we will be able to recapture the humour!

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

ATC	<i>The Crucible</i> by Arthur Miller 7-11 March
ECC	<i>A Wilde Evening</i> 16-20 May
BLOC	<i>HMS Pinafore</i> by Gilbert & Sullivan 1-4 June
ATC	Cafe Theatre 13-17 June
BSS	<i>Henry IV</i> 19-24 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 subtitled in English. Visit their website to find out more: <http://www.kvs.be/en>

LIVE THEATRE FROM LONDON (or repeats!)

Kinepolis, Brussels: Click here for further details

Utopolis, Mechelen: Click here for further details

9 March Utopolis	<i>Hedda Gabler</i> NTLive
23 March Kinepolis	<i>A View from the Bridge</i> NT Live
27 April Kinepolis	<i>No Man's Land</i> NT Live
18 May Kinepolis	<i>Amadeus</i> NT Live
22 June Kinepolis	<i>St. Joan</i> NT Live