



## ECCO: July 2017



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

[ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com](mailto:ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com)

The next Ecco will come out in September 2017

### Message from the Chair

As the ECC theatre season draws to a close we can be proud of our achievements. We are currently bathing in our success at FEATS 2017 where the ECC entry, *A Woman of No Importance*, won the Stage Management Award. Conrad and his team are to be congratulated on representing the ECC so well and everyone agrees that it was both an enjoyable and a productive weekend.

Auditions are already under way for next season when we will offer you an 'evening of poetry', 'a pantomime' and a full-blown production of *Amadeus*: something for everyone we hope.

Not content with this degree of forward planning we are now turning our attention to what will follow from September 2018. We need ideas, so now is your chance to step forward and reveal your talent.

Maybe you have been hiding your acting or directing skills under a bushel in which case now could be your moment.

Maybe you are a secret writer of plays. If so we would love to hear from you. Our most recent production of an original script *The Impotence of Being Frank* by Martin Westlake attracted a largely new and vibrant cast who contributed greatly to its success: something that we would like to repeat.

**Lyn Wainwrigh, ECC Chair**

[chair@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com](mailto:chair@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com)



**Our November production will be an evening of poetry**

**LIFE REFLECTED**

**Details to follow soon**

# Auditions: Snow White

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**Our next Panto will be:**

## **Snow White 16-21 January 2018 Centre Culturel, Auderghem**

**Auditions are Coming – 25 June & 2 July!**

The Warehouse Studio Theatre  
Rue Waelhem 69a, 1030 Brussels

If you would like to audition for a speaking part, please make sure you turn up on time!

There is more singing in this year's panto. For those roles that require a good singing voice, the audition piece is included together with a YouTube clip so that you can practise before you come along. We will provide song sheets with the adapted words.

Roles include:

- Snow White (f) – Let it Go: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifCAfAzOBJM>
- Muddles (m/f) – Snow White's friend / comic role – 500  
Miles: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPgG\\_1JxuYw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPgG_1JxuYw)
- Cookie (m) – dame – also a singing role, but we really "**don't**" want to hear it!
- Evil Queen (f) – Let it Go: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifCAfAzOBJM>
- Magic Mirror (m/f) – the good magical influence on proceedings
- Prince Leonidas (f) – Snow White's love interest – 500  
Miles: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPgG\\_1JxuYw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPgG_1JxuYw)
- King Philbert (m) – Evil Queen's reluctant love interest
- Godiva and Speculoos (m/f) – two Belgian courtiers
- Seven dwarves (tweens/teens) - Wanabe:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIg9M8tjIQc>

Audition script, which includes just enough of the script for you to get into character without giving the whole game away.

For chorus-only parts, including children who would like to sing and dance, auditions will take place in September. Members of previous panto choruses should get in contact with us at [conradtoft@gmail.com](mailto:conradtoft@gmail.com).

Hope to see lots of you at the auditions!

If you are unable to attend the auditions, but would like to be considered for a role, please contact us at [conradtoft@gmail.com](mailto:conradtoft@gmail.com).

# A Woman of No Importance: Congratulations!

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## Many congratulations to Conrad Toft and Andy Ing's team for their Stage Management Award at FEATS 2017

Not forgetting the nomination for **Best Stage Presentation**, and **Caraigh McGregor** and **Rachel Cuff**'s Best Actor and Best Actress nominations.



### CREW

Conrad Toft: Director & Backstage  
Andy Ing: Stage Manager  
Kerry Lydon: Producer & Backstage  
Steve O'Byrne: Sound  
Anthony McCarthy: Lighting  
Fiona McGinnis: Costumes  
Jen Cleal: Hair and Make-up and Backstage  
Richard Hampton: Set Design and Construction  
Michelle Van der Straaten: Backstage

Thanks to Meg for her help in Brussels

### CAST

Richard Hampton: Sir John Pontefract  
Abigail Greef: Lady Caroline Pontefract  
Orla Colclough: Hester Worsley  
Hannah Riley: Lady Jane Hunstanton  
Joanna Britton: Mrs Allonby  
Sara Hammerton: Lady Stutfield  
Caraigh McGregor: Gerald Arbuthnot  
Mark Prescott: Lord Illingworth  
Chris Simpson: Mr Kelvil MP  
Rachel Cuff: Mrs Arbuthnot  
Hayk Zayimtsyan: Ven Archdeacon Daubeny

## Some of the Crew (is Michelle behind the camera? Where's Jen?)



## FEATS weekend – an inside view

### Sara Hammerton writes:

It's the beginning of June, and the 18 members of the ECC FEATS Team are making their way to Germany. Mark in his car full of singing women, Richard and co. in the van with his amazing set, some of us taking the easy route, by train, arriving at different times, heading to different hotels, but all with the same purpose.

The ECC was one of the 12 participating groups in this year's Festival of Anglophone Theatrical Societies (FEATS), hosted in Frankfurt from 2-5 June by Frankfurt English Speaking Theatre, FEST. Our competition piece was an abridged version of Oscar Wilde's *A Woman of No Importance*, following a very successful Brussels run.

The set-up, essentially, is this: Three different groups perform each night, for between 20 and 50 minutes each, four nights in a row, Friday to Monday, and the adjudicator gives their comments on all three shows at the end of every night. There are also Fringe events, mostly performances, every afternoon. At the end of the four nights prizes are awarded for best production, best actor and actress etc.

The ECC were due to perform on Sunday, the third day. The day started bright and early for the ECC, arriving at the theatre at 7.45 am for our theatre tour, safety briefing, and the "get in" of set, props and costumes. We had a strictly regulated two hour slot to practice placing and striking the set, work out our costume changes (full Victorian costumes, wings visible from the audience...), and the essential lighting and sound checks and cues. Plus a bit of rehearsal. There are firm rules, times when actors can and can't be on stage, shoes you can and can't wear during get-in (no flip flops – not safe).

During the time us actors were not allowed on stage (!!!!), Abi Greef gave us a voice workshop to make sure we could all be clearly heard from all parts of the theatre. Anyone who has heard Abi on stage will understand why she was chosen for this. It definitely paid off.

It all went reasonably smoothly, thanks to stage manager Andy Ing and director Conrad Toft who are well versed in all things FEATS and take it calmly in their stride, together with their fantastic crew. Plus discipline. Such is the dedication of your ECC FEATS 2017 team, folks, that **we didn't go to the FEATS party**. Nope. (*From previous experience, that might not be a bad thing at all. Ed*) It was on Saturday night, beginning at midnight, and we had that early start ahead. So for us it was back to the hotel. Please admire. (And credit to Caraigh McGregor whose idea it was).

We had a team lunch arranged by Miss Organisation herself, Kerry Lydon, followed by a short break –



for most of us. Back to business at 4.00 pm for the women, with our hair and make-up assembly line. Jen Cleal worked her magic, giving us women authentic Victorian hairstyles and light stage make up, ably assisted by Hannah Riley/Lady Hunstanton – when she wasn't eating chocolate... All this was in a hotel room, as dressing rooms at the English Theatre Frankfurt were in short supply. It made it more relaxed and we had great fun.

Back to the theatre for 6 pm to get into costume, for the men to do their make-up, and the stage crew to get the set ready. Then at 7.30 it was show time. Suddenly we're on. And 50 minutes later – it seemed like five – it's all over. There was a great reaction from the audience – happily. There are no curtain calls at FEATS. Instead we had just FIVE minutes to strike the set, get changed, and clear the dressing room. No problem, with Andy and Conrad in charge, ably assisted by Kerry, Michelle and Jen.

In fact, it wasn't completely over. We still had the adjudicator's comments on the evening's three performances to the whole audience, plus our private session with her the following morning. Again, the timetable was strict. At the theatre by 8.45 am for a 9 am start. Twenty minutes exactly and no more. And then on the last night, Monday, we had the results of the adjudication. More about that later.

While not performing, we did get the chance to see the other shows. I cannot comment on Friday night as I wasn't there, but I saw everything from Saturday onward, and felt the standard was pretty high. Lots of the plays featured women, and relationships, but they were all quite different. One of those was ***Bombshells*** by InPlayers, Amsterdam, about three women on the verge of breakdown, including a brilliant performance by Meryl Davenport as a stressed out mum of three, which won her the best actress accolade. My favourite story line, which was not about women, was ***Numbers***, performed by Entity from Munich, about the diplomatic quarrels over how to deal with 51 migrants left stranded on a shrimp trawler off the coast of Malta. Another excellent play was ***A Slight Accident*** performed with perfect comic timing by the Hamburg Players, earning Jason Couch the best actor gong. And there was a very funny original piece by our BATS friends from Antwerp on marital strife called ***My Bitter Half***. The wackiest performance by far however was an adaptation of Shakespeare's ***The Tempest*** by Theater de WAANzin from Gent, which you either loved or hated. Lots of rude language, as the judge noted, but she loved it and it won the best production award, as well as best stage presentation for its set that looked like a fairground hall of mirrors. One interesting highlight was the love scene, with energetic physical action, including tongues, from Miranda and Ferdinand – while standing on opposite sides of the stage.

A brief word on the adjudication. There is only one adjudicator for FEATS, in this case the very experienced Jeannie Russell from the Guild of Drama Adjudicators. Their judgement is bound to be subjective to a point, as is our view of that, but it is always useful and interesting. Our voice work clearly paid off, as Jeannie Russell praised the fact that she could hear us well. She doesn't like black/brown outs during short plays, even for set changes (we had them) and she does like rugs (we didn't have one). Some of our performances were warmly praised, notably Rachel Cuff who was nominated for Best Actress as the deeply wronged Mrs. Arbuthnot and Caraigh McGregor who was nominated as Best Actor for his role as Rachel's son Gerald. (This was Caraigh's fifth Best Actor nomination at FEATS, and he won the previous four). Jeannie also liked our hairdos and the set, and she said that until de WAANzin came on the scene on the last night, she had the ECC down for best stage presentation; although we felt she missed some of the finer – or even more obvious – points.

FEATS is not all about the prizes by any means, but it was particularly gratifying to win the Best Stage Management prize, chosen by our friendly and dedicated hosts, FEST, who by running the festival saw exactly what was going on. It was very much a case of team work of course, but every team needs a leader, or leaders, so stand up and take a bow Conrad Toft, Andy Ing and Kerry Lydon. A special mention too to Meg Chang, who was not at FEATS but led the way as our Stage Manager in Brussels.

Above all FEATS is about theatre, and celebrating theatre. Everyone there was at FEATS because they love theatre, and it showed. A lot of time and effort had gone into the shows, and the fringe. There was much discussion at the FEATS Forum (chaired by our very own Andy Ing) about how to learn from each other's experience, how to make FEATS even better. Similar discussions took place in the bar, where there was a very friendly, cooperative atmosphere between all those taking part.

Finally, a word to our fantastic ECC FEATS team. Everyone got on so well together, worked so well together, it was a very cohesive team. I had a brilliant and very memorable time. I think we all did.

## FEATS 2017 Prize Winners

**First place (Founders' Trophy):** Theater de WAANzin, Gent. *The Tempest*, William Shakespeare

**Second place (ECC Centennial Cup):** Hamburg Players, Hamburg. *A Slight Accident*, James Saunders

**Third place (BATS Trophy):** Entity Theatre, Munich. *Numbers*, Mar Gómez Glez

**Best Stage Management (Marcel Huhn / Bruno Boeye Memorial Award):** ECC, Brussels. *A Woman of No Importance*, Oscar Wilde

**Best Original Script (DAW-Verulam Award):** *Men Are Beasts* by Bruno Sousa. ESOC Theatre Group, Darmstadt

**Best Stage Presentation (Grand Duchy Trophy):** Theater de WAANzin, Gent. *The Tempest*, William Shakespeare

**Best Actor (Blackie Award):** Jason Couch, Hamburg Players. *A Slight Accident*, James Saunders

**Best Actress (Blackie Award):** Amy Dobbert, InPlayers International, Amsterdam. *Bombshells*, Joanna Murray-Smith

**Discretionary Award (Don Lunscombe):** "The caffeine moment" in *Bombshells*

**AND - LOOKING AHEAD – Make a note in your diary now!**



# ECC NEWS

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## Committee

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

## Role

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

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## WAREHOUSE CLEANING WEEKEND!

**26 & 27 August 2017**

**We are fortunate in having amazing theatre and rehearsal facilities – so can you spare some time to help us have a rather belated 'Spring Clean' and clear out?**

**If you can help, please contact Anna: [anna@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com](mailto:anna@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com)**

## Farewell Gareth, We'll Miss You!



We are very sorry to say 'Goodbye' to Gareth Lewis who has appeared in many ECC productions during his time in Brussels. We wish Gareth and Sarah all the very best with their new careers back in the UK.

## Summer Theatre Course in Brussels!

The Cours Florent in Brussels will organise for the first time a theatre training course in English this summer (12 to 18 July:



Click on the image to go to the site.

## Can You Help our Play Reading Group?

Mary and Barbara have gamely hosted us for many, many, years – but now it really is time for them to be given some time off! **Many thanks to Malinda** for offering to host from time to time ... is there anyone else who would be willing to let us invade their sitting room from time to time?

It would also be great to hear from anyone willing to lead a play reading – with or without a play in mind! We have a list of plays you can choose from! Just contact [ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com](mailto:ecco@ecc.theatreinbrussels.com). Many thanks. Janet

## **Wanted: Butties Manager**

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After having been one of the team that had the original idea for the Butties, and then having run the Butties with great enthusiasm and dedication ever since, Conrad has decided that it is time to hand over the reins to someone else.

Therefore, if you would be interested in taking over as the Butt Manager/Co-ordinator, now would be a very good time to speak up. Conrad would be delighted to hear from you and have you work alongside him as he prepares for the 2016-17 awards.

Please contact Conrad at: [conradtoft@gmail.com](mailto:conradtoft@gmail.com) to learn more about this fun and fulfilling role!

## **THE 2016-17 BUTT AWARDS WILL BE HELD IN SEPTEMBER**

We will let you know the date as soon as we can! It will also be announced on [www.theatreinbrussels.com](http://www.theatreinbrussels.com)

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## **A New ECC Adventure: Recording!**

### **Bryony Ulyett writes:**

After having such a great time performing **The Impotence of being Frank** by Joe Wilde during the ECC's a Wilde night out in May, the cast decided it would be fun to record it for posterity as a radio play - which is how the play was originally written. With the author on board, all we need to do is get it done!

The challenges of recording for radio are really exciting, as we all learn new skills and discover a new way of acting (how do you deal with sound effects? Do we need a special studio? What about voice projection? Will it change the energy of the play?). If all goes well, the sky's the limit, and we hope this will lead to more audio adventures in future.

The ECC will provide a link to download and/or stream the play after the summer.



# Monthly Play Readings

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**Wednesday 5 July – 7.45pm**

Graham Andrews will lead us in reading

## ***Doctors of Philosophy***

**By Muriel Spark**

**We will meet Chez Malinda & Robert Coleman**

**46 Boulevard A. Reyers, 1030 Brussels**

**The only play by famed Scottish author Muriel Spark takes on the dilemmas of two intellectually ambitious women in 1960s England**

In a home overlooking London's Regent's Canal in the 1960s, two scholars debate the choices they have made with their lives. Catherine Delfont was one of the most promising minds of her generation, but after earning her PhD she gave up her research to marry a well-regarded economist and raise a family. Her cousin Leonora stayed in academia and became a successful classicist, able to observe both the breadth of history and the lives of others with brilliant, cool detachment. Together, they face the sacrifices they have made as women and intellectuals. First performed in London in 1962 and later in Scandinavia, where it was produced by Ingmar Bergman, *Doctors of Philosophy* is a fascinating artifact of early second-wave feminism.

**To find Malinda & Robert:** They are on the RTBF side of the boulevard and just opposite a little square called Place des Carabiniers. Nearest public transport: trams 7 and 25; and bus 63; they all have stops named Meiser. Parking is not necessarily easy. The best bet is on the boulevard itself; theoretically, paid parking until 9 p.m., but the parking doesn't seem to be checked very often, especially not at night...

**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 aim 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! 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](mailto: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.

**Next Playreading: 2 August**

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# FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS/EVENTS

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<b>BSS</b>	<b><i>Troilus &amp; Cressida</i></b> <b>21-30 September</b>
<b>ITG</b>	<b><i>Waiting for Godot</i></b> by Samuel Beckett 6, 7, 10-14 October
<b>ETC</b>	<b>Grim Tales</b> <b>24-29 October</b>
<b>BLOC</b>	<b><i>Crazy for You</i></b> by Gershwin <b>23-16 November</b>
<b>ATC</b>	<b>TBC: See their website for further information</b>
<b>ECC</b>	<b><i>'Life Reflected': An Evening of Poetry</i></b> <b>9-11 and 16-18 November</b>

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](http://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>