

The Jester

October - November

2016 Issue



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Kelvin's 2017 Season

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The playwright Edward Albee, who died last week, said: "Remember this about democracy. We can have anything we want and at the same time, we always end up with exactly what we deserve."

It has been another interesting, exciting and varied year of proposals for the new Kelvin season, and as usual balancing the different styles and genres whilst considering technical demands, marketing and cast sizes for both genders has proved a difficult balancing act, but the result is a season which offers opportunities to all members of the club on or off stage.

As usual, the APC would like to thank all those directors who proposed a play, and our apologies that we had to let some of you down. As is often the way, there were several plays which the APC enjoyed reading but couldn't fit into a balanced season. With 11 proposals vying for 5 slots some will always be disappointed but again we were all impressed with the ideas and vision of directors in the club, and long may this continue.

The 2017 season has roles for around 25 men (depending on doubling up), 13 women (some excellent large roles here) and anywhere from 4-12 roles of either gender. The roles vary in playing age from 13 years to 79 years. We have directors with a range of experience, from those new to Kelvin to others who are well established in the club. The season includes an 18th century comedy, a classic American text, a crowd pleasing drama, a delicious modern black comedy and one production which is (I believe) a unique first for Kelvin in its 87 year history.

Sadly we were not quite able to match our new ideal season structure which you may have seen in the Jester as we had no submissions for family-friendly plays. However, we have managed to meet all the other criteria, so thanks to directors for taking the structure on board. Due to a lack of a range of suitable play submissions, we are also regrettably not able to programme a "Black Box" production for 2017, although one or two of the productions will have a stripped back visual style similar to the black box.

I would like to offer my thanks to the APC for their hard work reading, circulating and discussing of plays together and with the directors at pitching – especially having to get their heads around a devised piece alongside scripted work. Sam Skelton's 3 year period of service on the APC has now come to a close and I would like to offer my thanks to Sam for her vital contributions over the past three years. I have a waiting list of interested people wanting to join the APC from last year who I will be in touch with, but if anyone would like to add their name to the list to join us in future then please let me know.

I have been in touch with the new Artistic Director of the Tobacco Factory, Mike Twedde, who is keen to come and see one of our productions soon. Because of the closure of the Brewery Theatre and building work to make a new space in the Tobacco Factory itself we have agreed that Kelvin will return to perform in the venue in 2018 rather than next year. The APC are debating the idea of selecting a play in an "APC slot" for directors to pitch for the 2018 season, so keep an eye out in the Jester and Digest for more information on this.

Finally, given that the Devised Play I will direct will have a much longer development and rehearsal period than a usual production – around 6 months including periods of script-writing alongside devising workshops, research and development as well as a traditional month of rehearsals to get it to performance standard I have decided to take a year's sabbatical from the role of Artistic Director to make sure that I can focus on this process and make the production a success.

I have been in discussions with the Committee and the APC about this and with their approval I wish to nominate experienced APC member Fran Lewis as Artistic Director in the interim. I would like to thank Fran for agreeing to take on the role in these circumstances, and I'm sure she will do an excellent job. I would like to conclude by saying that the 2018 Kelvin season is now open for submissions! The deadline for proposals will be **1st May 2017**.

The season as follows:

14-18 February 2017

- *Dinner* by Moira Buffini (dir. Tessa Garrett) – a pitch-black modern comedy set at a dinner party where courses include “Primordial Soup” and “Apocalypse of Lobster”. Described by the Guardian as “Sharply funny” and having a “poisonous stylishness.”

25-29 April 2017

- *The Beaux’ Stratagem* by George Farquhar (dir. Martin Walsh) – A comedy about two gentlemen who have fallen on hard times trying to marry into money in the country. A large scale production with stage combat, dancing and singing.

NB. Martin Walsh is a new director to Kelvin but has been directing plays and musicals since the 1970’s in various contexts. In terms of Kelvin’s eligibility criteria he is doing a backstage role and directing a rehearsed reading this year but given the Black Box Format is primarily for new directors (rather than directors new to Kelvin) the APC and Committee have agreed that Martin could pitch this full production.

11-15 July 2017

- *A Devised Play* (dir. Josh Cooper) – In a first for Kelvin, I will form a company of actors who will devise a play in the rehearsal room from a stimulus over a 6 month period with the help of two Dramaturgs (Craig Malpass as writer and Anna Marshall for design & logistics).

11-14 & 18-21 October 2017

- *A View From The Bridge* By Arthur Miller (dir. Ralf Togneri) – this classic and tragic American drama by the author of *Death of a Salesman* and *All My Sons* explores the tensions of a family affected by illegal immigration.
- **Two week run for this production.**

The Artistic Programming Committee (APC): Anna Barry, Joshua Cooper, Fran Lewis, Mike Luckett, Jacqs Graham, Peter Spence, Sam Skelton.



A Christmas Carol is coming...



Preparing for Christmas

After eighteen months of planning, the clock really is now tick, tick, ticking. With 48 costumes to get ready in time for the festivities, **Chrissy Fryers** is busy producing some very special Christmas outfits. **Bronwen Grover** has come up with a fabulous idea for decorating the set in a truly Christmas fashion, including 22 original etchings for projection. **Neil Bonnett's** lighting design will make sure everything sparkles on the day. **Steve Graham** is ensuring that Christmas Crackers make the right type of bang at the right time. **Anna Marshall** is helping to make our Christmas memories happy ones by working on the 'Spirit of Christmas Past' puppet. **Lizzie Nicholson** is helping make sure everyone is in the right place at the right time, and knows all their Christmas carols. **Catherine Alcock**, as Production Manager, is working hard to ensure everything is wrapped ready for the big day.

The Party invitations

It would have been lovely to have offered everyone who wanted to come to the Christmas party an invitation. Sadly, as is often the case, space is limited. Sincere commiserations to everyone who didn't get an invite, but thank you all for trying. The lucky few who did manage to get a invited are **Steve Dale, Sue Stobbs, Roger Shutt, Rosie Inman, Tim Whitten, Phil Joyner, Martha Graham, and Mandi Bailey-Turner**. They are already working hard on brushing up their party manners so that they know how to behave on the day.

Helping the day(s) go smoothly

There is still a need for more helpers to make sure everything goes smoothly. We need someone to make sure that we have the right sounds, and someone else to make sure the lighting all happens on cue. The party is fancy dress, and some guests have seven or eight costumes to wear, so we need five dressers, both before and during the party, to make sure everyone is wearing the right outfit at the right time. As this is a 'bit of a do' there are bound to be 'gawpers' wanting to watch the festivities, so some extra footman FOH would also be appreciated.

If you would like to be part of the Christmas celebrations please contact Catherine Alcock at catheteria@hotmail.com or 077250337

Robin Turner
Party Planner (aka the Director)



New members!

Martha Graham

Martha joined to audition for 'A Christmas Carol' and has been cast as Actor 7 playing a variety of different characters. She has lots of enthusiasm and can sing. She has been involved in professional shows and ghost tours!

Elly O'Dwyer

Elly joined Kelvin because she loves theatre! At school, she did a Drama GCSE and was involved with a number of productions. She also played a 'Boy Squirrel' in a rival theatre group's production (shock horror!) of 'Wind in the Willows'! She also loves going to the theatre to see a wide range of productions.

All aboard for Brief Encounter!



Just home from an exhausting, but exhilarating Sunday morning rehearsal of Brief Encounter.

We got off to a good start after casting in June and holding our first cast read through at the end of July. Then, however, things ground to a halt as people departed for summer holidays in August and all that was possible were a few duologue rehearsals with available cast.

Plenty of time then for advance preparation and line learning!

Sam Skelton and Peter Spence got to work on the downloaded music score and quickly discovered they had quite a task on their hands.

Instead of a simple tape of well-known Noel Coward songs for the cast to sing along to, they were faced with complicated arrangements and harmonies (many specially written for the show) and they've spent many hours deciphering and adapting these. This hard graft has paid off as these two talented people patiently teach a mixed ability group of singers to harmonise and sing solo. The standard of the singing is, in my opinion, remarkable.

Choreography is being tackled by Lizzie Nicholson who is managing to coax some great and often funny routines from our motley crew! Filming is the other ingredient to throw into the mix. A great time was had at Bitton Railway Station and Avon Valley Adventure and Wildlife Park by our two romantic leads with their filming entourage led by Teri Mohiuddin and Owen Benson. Some memorable footage was the result. And then there is the small matter of the acted scenes set mainly in a railway station tearoom led by yours truly.

Proper rehearsals did not start till the beginning of September giving us a scant six weeks to bring this large multi-faceted production to its climax from 11th to 15th October. The cast is rehearsing four times a week and hopefully all will come together by opening night.

DON'T FORGET WE HAVE INCLUDED A SATURDAY AFTERNOON MATINEE TO MAKE THIS LOVELY SHOW ACCESSIBLE TO ALL.

Those of you who know and love the famous film will not be disappointed as the iconic love story of the star crossed lovers is still the core of the play, but it is encased in a shell of magical music, dance and more than a little of the irresistible Kneehigh Theatre charm.

Come along and see for yourself. I look forward to greeting you all during the week of the run.

Mary McCallum
Director



Studio Report

There's not a lot to report for this edition after a long and restful summer break (well a couple of weeks in August).

Work is now sprinting ahead to create the set for *Brief Encounter* and plans are in place for a stunning design for the set of *A Christmas Carol* designed by Bronwen Grover. We meet on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7:30 to paint and build stuff. If you're interested in joining the fun either come along or give me a call or text 07905 461013.

You may have noticed that the sign boards on the Gloucester Road had disappeared and should by now have re-appeared. If you didn't notice then pay more attention! Please have a look and notice that the boards have been turned to face out rather than face in. It's not a big change but hopefully it may be more visible. Also the Gloucester Road door has been stripped of almost a century of paint and just needs a painstaking detail finish before it's protected again before winter.

I will have mentioned at the AGM about plans for development of the Wesley Road entrance. I'll get something more informative in the next Jester in case you weren't at the AGM (if not, why not).

I've said it before, when you're a very regular user of the building, you tend to accept, or simply not notice the little broken things around the place. It may take a while but if there's anything you've noticed which bugs you, let me know and we'll do what we can to fix it.

More new faces!

Annie Bethell

Annie was previously a member of the Dily's Guite Players in Sheffield where she had a number of roles as an actor, director, stage manager, and wardrobe, front of house and props manager. She also organised a New Writing Festival. She is hugely enthusiastic and sociable and is looking forward to putting her experience to good use.

Jenny Hills

Jenny decided to join Kelvin because of our reputation for producing quality theatre and she lives locally. She loves theatre and is committed and hard working. She studied Drama at University. She was a member of the Trinity Theatre Group in Tunbridge Wells where she played a variety of roles. She then went to live in Australia and New Zealand but now she is back would like to perform again.



Naomi Dunn

Naomi has recently moved to the Bristol Area. She was recommended to join by Horfield Theatre Company and is keen to meet new people and pursue her love of theatre. As well as an actor, she is a dancer and a singer and is also interested in directing.

Jordi Riera

Jordi had a great interest in theatre before going to University and would like to join a company again. His previous experience was with a group that performed mainly Christmas productions. He is very enthusiastic and positive and would like to get involved both on stage and backstage.

And old!

Rachel Fleming, Steve Graham and Alistair Hedderman have all re-joined us after various lengths of time in the wilderness and we would like to welcome them back into the Club! They have all got involved in upcoming productions and Rehearsed Readings.

Jonny Wilkinson
Company Stage Manager

Time for an interview with a member of Kelvin!

Every Edition we want to get to know one of you lovely Kelvinites. Let us know if you would like to volunteer a member or would like to be interviewed yourself.

This Edition we were able to ask Susan how about her time with Kelvin and about her recent lifetime membership award. We hope you enjoy!

Q&A with Susan Howe!

How long have you been a member with Kelvin and what was your reason for joining?

The first show I worked on at Kelvin was "Chorus of Disapproval" in 1989. I was part of a scaffolding team from Bristol Musical Comedy Club who were brought in to put up a gantry at the back of the "Chorus" set at the Redgrave Theatre. I officially joined in the mid 90's I think. I had already been involved with a few other Bristol based, non-professional theatre companies since 1978.

What are your highlights or achievements that make you proud?

Every show there is something on the set I am proud of creating - it's usually the small things, the little touches, the extra details that rarely get noticed. Every show I am proud of my Kelvin friends because they keep pushing the boundaries, pushing themselves and astounding our audiences. There are so many stand out moments, far too many to list. One show I hope I will never forget being a part of is James and The Giant Peach, it was one of the most amazing, innovative, creative teams I have been fortunate enough to have worked with.

Can you name a performance you watched (Kelvin or outside of Kelvin) that has stayed with you? If so, what was it about that performance that affected you?

Warhorse in London. Every single aspect of the show was jaw-dropping. The puppetry was definitely my favourite.

What play should everyone read/watch and why?

Any one of mine! No, seriously we all have such varied tastes, I would not presume to inflict my opinion on anyone about anything I have seen and loved any more than I would like to be pressurised to read/see anything someone else recommends. I have seen (and queued for) hundreds of plays and have been involved in every Kelvin production this century thus far, so picking one would be very difficult.

How do you feel about being awarded a lifetime membership for your contribution to Kelvin?

Truly humbled. I have worked really hard at Kelvin since I first got involved. I love the theatre and I love the friends I have made there. It was really special to have all my efforts recognised and rewarded. Everyone's reactions since have added to this phenomenal event in my life.



For those who did not hear...

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WE'VE **NOM**
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FIRST CORPORATE COUP DE THEATRE AWARD

'Di and Viv and Rose' – Act 1 - Scene 5

AWARD for BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR (Drama)

Ben Crocker as Tom in *'The Secret Rapture'*

AWARD for BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS (Drama)

Fiona McClure as Marion in *'The Secret Rapture'*

JOAN HAWKINS AWARD for BEST SHAKESPEARE PRODUCTION

'Cardenio – Shakespeare's Lost Play'

EILEEN HARTLY HODDER AWARD for BEST ACTRESS (Drama)

Anna Bonnett as Di in *'Di and Viv and Rose'*

Rosie Collins as Rose in *'Di and Viv and Rose'*

Elizabeth Nicholson as Viv in *'Di and Viv and Rose'*

JOHN COE AWARD for BEST DRAMATIC PRODUCTION

'The Secret Rapture'

'Di and Viv and Rose'

Congratulations to all involved, good luck at the awards! We want all of the pictures please 😊

'Dinner'

Audition information!

A play by Moira Buffini

Dir. Tessa Garrett

'Moira Buffini's *'Dinner'* presents a disturbing, dysfunctional and sinisterly funny dinner party' where 'revenge is the main dish on the menu'. 'The audience should feel they are part of the hellish occasion. The intimate surroundings of the Studio are perfect for the dinner party setting.'

To hear the play, come to the read through on **Sunday 13th November**.

Fancy a part? There are two auditions on **Thursday 17th** and **Sunday 20th November**.

Call backs are on **Tuesday 22nd November**.

SOME OTHER LIVE THEATRE IN AND AROUND BRISTOL OVER THE NEXT TWO MONTHS

| Date | Event | Venue | Information |
|---|---|---|--|
| 1 st and 2 nd October | 'The Rivals' | The Bristol Old Vic King Street Bristol BS1 4ED | Sheridan's first (comedy) play transports you back to Bath in 1775 |
| 1 st to 8 th October | 'The Orator' | The Acta Centre Gladstone Street Bristol BS3 3AY | Human thriller about self help and 'online' identity |
| 2 nd October only | 'The Customer Is Always Wrong' | Colston Hall Colston Street Bristol BS1 5AR | Comedienne Jo Cauldfield performs one of her legendary one woman shows |
| 3 rd October and 17 th October and 31 st October | 'Closer Each Day' | The Wardrobe Theatre The Old Market 25 West Street Bristol BS2 0DF | Bristol's live improvised soap opera |
| 4 th to 8 th October | 'Fiddler on the Roof' | Bristol Hippodrome St Augustine's Parade Bristol BS1 4UZ | Timeless political and social comments through the channel of musical theatre |
| 5 th to 22 nd October | Mozart's 'Don Giovanni' | The Tobacco Factory Raleigh Road Southville Bristol BS3 1TF | 'Opera Project' performs one of opera's most memorable creations |
| 5 th October only | Rob Becket's 'Mouth of the South' | Redgrave Theatre Percival Road Clifton Bristol BS8 3LE | Star of 'Live at the Apollo' and many BBC panel shows makes a 4 th visit to Bristol |
| 11 th to 22 nd October | 'Shipped' | Hamilton House Events Space Stokes Croft Bristol BS1 3QY | A new play from a new Bristol University graduate – relations and relationships Nigerian style |
| 11 th to 15 th October | 'Legally Blonde' | Redgrave Theatre Percival Road Clifton Bristol BS8 3LE | Bristol Musical Youth Theatre present the award winning musical based on the film |
| 11 th October only | Nina Conti 'In Your Face' | Colston Hall Colston Street Bristol BS1 5AR | English actress, comedian and ventriloquist with her sidekick puppets |
| 11 th October only | Welsh National Opera's 'The Merchant of Venice' | Bristol Hippodrome St Augustine's Parade Bristol BS1 4UZ | The WNO perform Andre Tchaikowsky's opera in English |

| Date | Event | Venue | Information |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| 12 th October only | Welsh National Opera's 'Macbeth' | Bristol Hippodrome St Augustine's Parade Bristol BS1 4UZ | The WNO perform Verdi's opera sung in Italian with subtitles in English |
| 13 th Oct to 13 th Nov | 'The Grinning Man' | The Bristol Old Vic King Street Bristol BS1 4ED | A musical version of how history <i>may</i> have weirdly unfolded |
| 13 th to 15 th October | Welsh National Opera's 'Kiss Me Kate' | Bristol Hippodrome St Augustine's Parade Bristol BS1 4UZ | The WNO perform the Samuel & Bella Spewack musical with Cole Porter lyrics |
| 18 th to 22 nd October | 'Betty Blue Eyes' | The Redgrave Theatre Percival Road Clifton Bristol BS8 3LE | The wedding of Princess Elizabeth to Philip Mountbatten is backdrop for this musical (based on 'A Private Function') |
| 25 th to 29 th October | 'The Room Upstairs' | The Wardrobe Theatre 25 West Street Old Market Bristol BS2 0DF | A new play from Ben Callon charting the ensuing complications of fertility struggles |
| 25 th October to 26 th November | Billy Elliot – The Musical | Bristol Hippodrome St Augustine's Parade Bristol BS1 4UZ | 10 th Year anniversary tour stops at Bristol |
| 25 th October to 5 th November | 'The Wier' | Tobacco Factory Theatre Raleigh Road Southville Bristol BS3 1TF | New unsettling play by Conor McPherson co-produced with The Sherman Theatre |
| 7 th to 10 th November | 'Coulrophobia' | Tobacco Factory Theatre Raleigh Road Southville Bristol BS3 1TF | 'Slapstick, mime, puppetry and a lot of cardboard' |
| 8 th to 12 th November | 'Are You There?' | Zion Bishopsworth Road Bedminster Down Bristol BS13 7JW | A funny 2 hander that spotlights the schism in British ideas about Christianity |
| 8 th and 9 th November | Professor Brian Cox | Colston Hall Colston Street Bristol BS1 5AR | The acclaimed Professor will take the audience on a dazzling journey through space and time. |
| 11 th November only | Sean Walsh 'One for the Road' | Tobacco Factory Theatre Raleigh Road Southville Bristol BS3 1TF | The English stand-up comedian returns to the stage with a brand new show |

| Date | Event | Venue | Information |
|---|---|---|--|
| 12 th November only | Shappi Khorsandi 'Oh My Country' | Tobacco Factory Theatre Raleigh Road Southville BS3 1TF | Star of many TV comedy shows, Shappi celebrates her 40 years in Britain |
| 15 th to 26 th November | 'Stomping on Shadows' | Hamilton House Stokes Croft Bristol BS1 3QY | A new play from Theatre West – a surreal madcap romp across the globe |
| 15 th to 19 th November | 'Champ' | Wardrobe Theatre 25 West Street Old Market Bristol BS3 1TF | A new piece from 2 young theatre makers from Bristol. Champ asks why so many young men feel they have no purpose |
| 16 th to 20 th November | '946: The Amazing Story Of Adolphus Tips' | The Bristol Old Vic King Street Bristol BS1 4ED | Music, foolishness and puppetry tell this story of war, prejudice and love |
| 17 th to 26 th November | 'Our Country's Good' | The Redgrave Theatre 2 Percival Road Clifton Bristol BS8 3LE | Set in 1778 in Australia prisoners arrive in Botany Bay – what are the effects on the locals. |
| 25 th November only | Comedian - Ross Noble | Coston Hall Colston Street Bristol BS1 5AR | Another chance to take a trip through 'Noble's fertile imaginative landscape' (The Guardian) |
| 28 th November to 3 rd December | 'Million Dollar Quartet' | Bristol Hippodrome St Augustine's Parade Bristol BS1 4UZ | Musical inspired by the meeting of Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis and Jonny Cash |

That's all from us!
Your editors,
Roger and Lucy

