

The Semi-Circle Workshop presents
three *outrageously funny*
one-act plays at the
Keller Theater
Schönes Haus
Nadelberg
Basel

March 25-27th
Evenings at 8pm

March 28th
3pm Matinée

Andrew Davis'

Thermal Underwear

directed by Joan Kuster
and Diana Zuger

Don Morris'

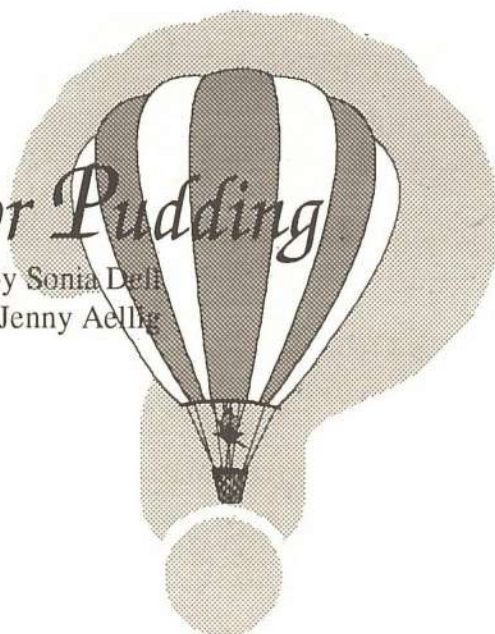
Bar Stools

directed by Joy Scherer

David Tristram's

What's for Pudding

directed by Sonia Deli
and Jenny Aellig

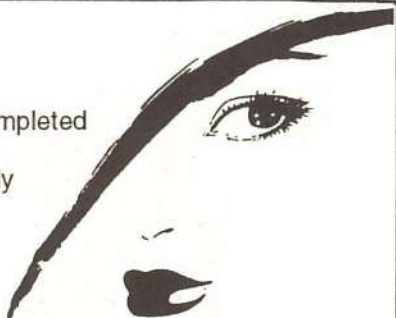


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116 Seiten. 17 x 17 cm.
Ca. sFr. 22.-. Gebunden.
ISBN 3-7643-2708-1
Ab Mai 1992 in allen
Buchhandlungen erhältlich.

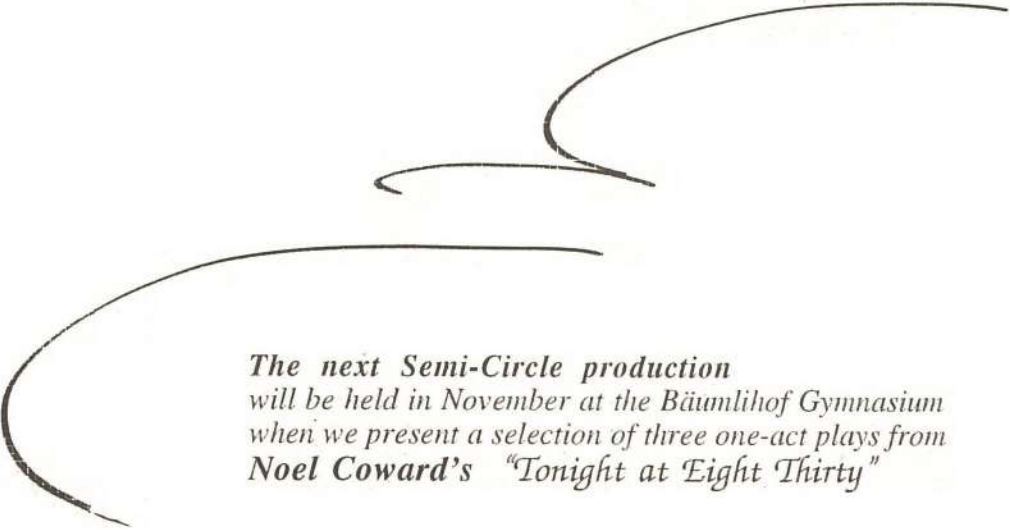
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The Schönes Haus

The formidable two-storey cellar in which you are seated belongs to what was the first stone, and in its day, grandest patrician house in all of Basel. As early as 1294 it was officially referred to as "Das Schöne Haus"; Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini knew and admired it in the 14th century, and throughout its long history it was the home of Basel's most illustrious citizens, Bürgermeister Johann Rudolf Wettstein included. Generations of residents valued the house for its exclusive location on the Nadelberg, its tracery windows and rich interior decoration (regarded by art historians today as the finest of its type in the country)... but, also, undoubtedly for the fact that it was the first (and for more than a century, *only*) private home to possess its own bath! The present squeaky-clean resident, The University of Basel's Department of English Studies, has kindly granted the Semi-Circle use of the Keller Theater for this year's Workshop production.



*The next Semi-Circle production
will be held in November at the Bäumlihof Gymnasium
when we present a selection of three one-act plays from
Noel Coward's "Tonight at Eight Thirty"*

Welcome to another Semi-Circle Workshop!

Since the Semi-Circle's first public performance in 1975, with the reading of Oscar Wilde's "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime", nearly forty productions (readings, musical revues, full-scale plays and workshops) have been added to its credit. Reason enough to argue that the Semi-Circle has by now come full circle. But what is in a name? In our case, a lot. For one, it recalls our fledgling years when we were not yet a fully independent society, and instead sponsored by the British Circle. It is also a sentimental reminder of the days when chairs were arranged semi-circular fashion for our first play readings. In the meantime, we have got our actors on their feet and the audience properly seated... most often at the Bäumlhof Gymnasium in Riehen for our large annual productions and at the Schönes Haus for many of our workshops. Our first workshop play was Noel Coward's "Fumed Oak", presented in 1986. The idea was to give untried talent a greater opportunity to perform on stage, and to give courageous members the chance to test new waters by trying their hand at directing or learning new jobs behind the scenes. The "Semi-Circle Repertory Experimental Workshop" was born... and quickly shaved down to "Workshop". A handier title with no problematic acronyms.

While you will encounter many familiar faces in the casts tonight, we are pleased to say that there are many new players as well, and several of our members are making their directing debuts. Our plays are funny, provocative, and go to the quick. In one way or another they all are about the confounding art of communicating... trying to say what one means, trying to understand what is meant rather than what is said, and coping when one makes a bungle of it all!

Listen well. Not only do we want you to enjoy the production, we also hope you'll take home with you the vague suspicion that *we* have had as much fun as you. Perhaps next time you'll be ready to shift camps... forego your seat and join us on- and backstage. New members, regardless of experience, are always welcome. If you would like to take part in productions, or if you would simply like to be informed of our events regularly by post, please contact our Club Secretary: Joan Kuster, Mattweg 100, 4144 Arlesheim, Tel. 061- 701 62 73.

WHO'S WHO IN THE CASTS

Kevin Ashbridge makes his debut with the Semi-Circle in *Thermal Underwear*. He arrived in Basel in June 1991 directly from his New Zealand home. This will not be his first time on a Swiss stage, however, as he has played the roles of 'The Tree Singer' and Joseph in the two Christmas plays produced by the Orfeo Theater just before Christmas. He has been acting for about three years with his local theater societies and has enjoyed every minute of it. **Edward Atkinson** has lived in Basel for two years, and this is his first appearance in a Semi-Circle production. His stage life began as a Sunbeam a few years ago. This unqualified success led to playing *people*, having speaking parts, and the revelation that stage appearances mean severe stage fright and violent hiccupping at curtain time. **Helen Baldomero** is a research technician in the Department of Haematology at the Kantonsspital. Living in Basel since 1982, she joined the Semi-Circle six years ago, and appeared on stage soon afterwards as Clara Eynsford-Hill in *Pygmalion*. She has taken part in a number of productions both on stage and behind the scenes. **Eric Collino**: English. Believes that an Italian grandfather gives him the right to claim he has a "Quartier Latin". Engineer, London University. No longer young but can't grow up. Italianate father enjoyed amateur dramatics. Son played minor role (a quarter of a century ago) in firm's pantomime. Recovered enough now to try again. Mustn't rush things... **Dennis Dell** made his acting debut as a nasty little lawyer in *Love for Love*. Since then he has been production manager, programme producer, scenery helper and spotlight operator ... a veritable Jack-of-all-trades! **Rupert Dell** started his career in the Basel Theater as a dancer and actor, and now seems to be specialising in eccentric parts with the Semi-Circle ... sick youth in *I Remember Mama*, mentally retarded youth in *Nightmare* and now a naive husband and a German. But who said he was normal anyway! And yes, he is related to Jack. **Jacintha Horowitz** has been with the Semi-Circle, mostly behind the scenes, since 1988. She made her stage debut in *Knightsbridge* in 1989. This is her second on-stage appearance. **Barbara Hummel** makes her first appearance on stage with the Semi-Circle after watching and guiding along two productions from behind the scenes. Despite her Swiss background, she has long had a "faible" for the English language. **Roger Kleiber**, an ächti Basler, is a printer (not chemist!) by day and by night he has done everything for the Semi-Circle from hanging up coats to commandeering the lights. This is his first appearance front of curtain. **Emil Roth** was born a Basler Libra 26 years ago and since then has been balancing his time with judo, serious dance-floor rock and roll, travel, cooking, eating (of course) and now, acting. This is his first Semi-Circle appearance. **Jacky Sayers**, a recent economic refugee from the U.K., made her acting debut as a six-year-old wicked witch. Later parts included a neurotic housewife and a much-acclaimed dung beetle in *The Insect Play*- [N.B. Not a Semi-Circle production. We do not do entomological work.]. A lengthy recuperative period followed before she plunged in with the Semi-Circle. **Sue Stafford**, born in Buckinghamshire, has lived in Switzerland for 23 years and works as a technical translator. She began her Semi-Circle career as a sound effect (a screaming baby) in the workshop production, *Fumed Oak*. Since then, she has played a nurse in *I Remember Mama* and Mrs. Hart in *Queer Street*, in addition to reading in Norman Koeth's production of *A Christmas Carol*. **Sabine Trieloff** was born in Berlin and has been living and working in Basel for almost four years. She has worked with dance theatre groups and performed in Berlin and Basel. This is her first purely acting role on stage. **Caroline Weisskopf** has lived in Basel for 14 years. She joined the Semi-Circle 6 years ago, and has taken part in five productions so far. As life with her four young children is somewhat hectic, she finds that acting helps to soothe her frayed nerves.

Thermal Underwear

by Andrew Davis

Directed by Joan Kuster
and Diana Zuger

Characters

Elaine.....Caroline Weisskopf
Bob.....Kevin Ashbridge
Mum.....Sue Stafford
Dad.....Eric Collino
Shirley.....Sabine Trieloff
Gareth.....Rupert Dell

Prompter.....Marie-Louise Collino

Elaine and husband Bob are hosting a Sunday luncheon in honour of her parents' 40th wedding anniversary. No mean feat for Mum and Dad, holding up the banner of marital bliss for four decades. The prospect of having to do the same fills Bob with trepidation. His wife is having a fling with goodness knows who, his teen-aged daughters are perfect models of self-indulgence and his "Well, yes, quite, here we are then" friends aren't bastions of support either. Plenty there to get under the skin and with the domestic climate as arctic as it is, this man is in need of protection...insulation, like Dad's. Bob begins to eye his father-in-law with growing interest and respect.

Thermal Underwear and *What's for Pudding?* are produced by special arrangement with Samuel French Ltd., London.

There will be a 20 minute interval after *Thermal Underwear*.
Cold refreshments served in the foyer.

Barstools

by Don Morris

Directed by
Joy Scherer

Characters

An American Woman.....Jacintha Horowitz
A German Man..... Rupert Dell
A Frenchwoman.....Barbara Hummel
A Frenchman.....Emil Roth

Prompter.....Muriel Taylor

We are at Charlie's Bar, a clean, well-lighted place somewhere in Germany. One stool per customer, but as soon as the patrons settle in, elbow-to-elbow, a new group dynamic takes over and the bar starts humming like the Tower of Babel. Looking for a friendly nod, the American tosses questions out at the group, like pebbles in a pond. Words and effect are conveyed along in ripples, and we see that getting still waters to gurgle can lead to surprising results.

Barstools is an unpublished play by Don Morris who died of AIDS in 1986. Permission to perform the play has been granted by Pirate Ship Productions, a theatre group based in Zürich with whom Morris was associated. In lieu of royalties, a contribution will be made to the Don Morris Scholarship Fund which supports young people wishing to participate in theatre and workshop productions.

What's for Pudding?

by David Tristram

Directed by
Sonia Dell and Jenny Aellig

Characters

Mary.....Helen Baldomero
Jack.....Dennis Dell
Maureen..... Jacky Sayers
Ted.....Edward Atkinson
Dennis.....Roger Kleiber

Prompter.....Sheila McKenzie

What's gotten into Mary? Dear, TV-dinner-cooking Mary? Weekends for her and fastidious Jack no longer exactly zing with Saturday Night Fever, but tonight the bantering punches are especially fast and low. "Time" is called when there is a sudden knock on the door and friends drop by unexpectedly. The ring widens and a few sociable bottles of Scotch later, everybody starts developing a taste for doing gorilla imitations and letting talk sear closer and closer to truth. And it's a good thing, too, for how else would we find out what's gotten into Mary? And if there will even be any pudding?



Behind the Scenes: *Production Manager* : Barbara Hummel; *Technical Manager*: John Chidlow; *Properties*: Sheila McKenzie & Kevin Hill; *Lights*: Roger Kleiber; *Wardrobe*: Ruth Meier & Rosanna Nicklaus; *Make-up*: Rosanna Nicklaus, Ruth Meier, Lynn Mazzotti & Margaret Hermoso; *Box Office*: Muriel Taylor & Sheila Nixon; *Front-of-House*: John Stafford, Gillian Jespersen & Theo. Bucher; *Programme*: Cynthia Baer & Grayson Richards; *Archival Photographer* :Jonathan Taylor.