



ALBERT

BY RICHARD HARRIS
DIRECTED BY SHEILA MCKENZIE



BETWEEN MOUTHFULS
BY ALAN AYCKBOURN
DIRECTED BY ANGELA ROBINSON



JOINING THE CLUB
BY DAVID TRISTRAM
DIRECTED BY DIANA ZUGER

OUR SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Maria Schoch Thomann, of "La cave du soleil" for generously donating the wines uncorked for *Between Mouthfuls*: "La cave du soleil", Sulzerstrasse 9, 4054 Basel, Tel. 061 302 28 33.

Wines from our sponsor will be on sale at the bar during the intermission.

Tanner, The English Book Shop, for kindly handling ticket sales: Streitgasse 5, 4051 Basel, Tel. 272 45 47.

YOU, The Audience, for your support! *If this is your first time at a Semi-Circle production, and you would like to receive advance notice about future productions, or if you would like to learn more about club membership, please contact our Secretary:*

Ann Maerki, Weiherweg 84, 4054 Basel, Tel. 301 60 86.

Looking ahead:

**On 20, 21, 22, and 23 October 1998,
The Semi-Circle will be presenting an
Evening of Entertainment with
William Shakespeare**

Welcome to The Semi-Circle's 1998 Workshop Production

The Semi-Circle is Basel's English-language amateur theatre group. We like to put the emphasis on the first three words, not the fourth. But, of course, we *are* all amateurs, working hard to get better at an enormously satisfying activity—and to offer our audiences good entertainment in the process.

To our surprise, the word "Workshop" has sometimes discombobulated those contemplating buying a ticket. People are uneasy about what will be expected of them. "Will I have to *do* anything?"

The answer is blissfully simple: All you have to do is sit back and have fun. *We* are the ones (gladly) doing the work—and there is always plenty of that to go around for any drama lover keen about producing live theatre. Our workshop productions are a time for learning, shifting focus, exploring new ground. Novice actors are given the opportunity to appear on stage for the first time; veteran actors can test themselves by climbing into new roles. Fledgling directors are encouraged to realise their ideas on stage and any member wanting to better understand, or even manage independently, the mysterious machinations of a specific area of production work—lights, publicity, front of house or whatever—is given the chance to do so.

The sketches we have selected for tonight's performance are loosely connected by two common themes— (1) love and marriage (both the firey and faded kinds), and (2) communication, upon which of course the success of "(1)" depends. Our sets are simple. The interior of the human heart is complicated enough. And, as we hope you will discover once again this evening, often wryly amusing.

Joining the Club by David Tristram

Directed by Diana Zuger



Jenny
Tom

Rebecca Scriven
Peter Williams

Prompter

Joy Scherer

The scene:

Jenny and Tom's home,
one evening after work

Jenny and Tom are a modern couple seemingly unencumbered by old-fashioned notions of division of labour. She is the main bread-winner—and a lucky thing, too, because Tom, frustrated about having been passed over for an important promotion, has just quit his job. He plans to tell her tonight. On the very night that Jenny has some very special tidings for him as well. .

For some of you the name David Tristram may ring a happy bell. He is the author of the popular "Little Grimley" plays recently staged by the Semi-Circle; they reenact the tribulations and triumphs of an endearingly dysfunctional, small-town theatrical society.

Albert by Richard Harris
Directed by Sheila McKenzie

Karin Rust
Nico Bellini
Albert Burroughs

Prompter

The scene:



Katie Coop
Tony O'Sullivan
Eric Collino

Chris Comerici

A private home, where
Karin is working as an
au pair

If you find you are having trouble catching the drift of things here, you are in good company. Karin, Nico and Albert aren't faring much better. This is a weirdly funny play. A play with no dialogue. Talking yes, dialogue no. The players, a Finn, an Italian and an Englishman, share no common language, and therefore can establish no meaningful "give-and-take" in conversation. Words are batted back and forth without triggering any real comprehension. The characters resort to hilarious gesticulations, and so great is their desire to communicate, they delude themselves into thinking they are doing just that—a misconception with mortal consequences.

We wish to extend our special thanks to Miss Caitlin Williams, for allowing Rory, the Teddy Bear, his first taste of stage success.



Between Mouthfuls by Alan Ayckbourn
Directed by Angela Robinson



The Waiter
Donald Pearce
Mrs. Pearce
Martin
Polly

Dennis Dell
Andrew Thompson
Margaret Dürrenberger-Osborne
Jan Haecky
Kathleen Michaels

The scene:

A hotel dining room

This play is taken from a set of five interlinked one-act plays by Alan Ayckbourn, entitled *Confusions*. The collection deals "... riotously, but with sharply pointed undertones, with human eccentricities and the human dilemma of loneliness". In *Between Mouthfuls*, we find two pairs of diners in a restaurant at separate tables. We catch smatterings of their separate conversations as talk fades in and out of hearing range. In the process, it becomes clear to the audience that these four diners form not two but three couples. The play is not an easy one to perform. Timing is the key.

*This evening's production is by arrangement with
Samuel French, Ltd.*

The Cast and Directors

Eric COLLINO made his first stage appearance ("in fear and trepidation") for the Semi-Circle six years ago. He brilliantly succeeded in remembering most of his lines most of the time. Building on this triumph he has been willingly coerced into a gamut of challenging roles ever since. Katie COOP arrived in Basel one and a half years ago, making her way here via Germany, Japan and Belgium. Once upon a time she was an *au pair*... and look what's happening to her now. Dennis DELL is a chemist for Roche, a lepidopterist for himself and an all-round man for the Semi-Circle (and his wife). He has been production manager, programme editor, spotlight operator—and very frequently in the spotlight himself, looking fetching in things like toga cut-offs. Margaret DUERRENBARGER-OSBORNE is our Swiss-Scot who, in her words is "trying her hand at English and putting her foot in it, having left home in 1959 when her English was still speakable." Jan HAECKY is a hybrid Swiss great Dane, no, great Swiss Dane, but escaped to become an elephant trainer in Madagascar (where Barbra Streisand was born). He speaks several languages fluently. Two of the above statements are true. Kathleen MICHAELS was left in the lurch by *Phantom of the Opera* and so she has joined another good thing—the Semi-Circle, which is guaranteeing a 7-night run. Sheila MCKENZIE has acted, crewed and done committee work for the Semi-Circle for many years. Lately, she has been turning into a Panto Person for the English Speaking Club, helping with script writing, stage management and assisting the director. Tonight she bites off a bigger chunk—solo directing. Tony O'SULLIVAN is a chemist living in Basel. This is his first time acting (sensibly, on a stage). Angela ROBINSON jams, juggles and jogs—among a dozen or so other things—when she is not writing or directing plays (she has four pantomimes to her credit). The Semi-Circle flew her in especially from Kenya for her debut with us. (Well, not really... but we did scoop her

up soon after she got off the plane.) Rebecca SCRIVEN—out of the garbage can (echoes of Beckett here) and into the club! After two and a half years as a member of the Semi-Circle this is Rebecca's third production for the group. It is purely coincidental that she seems to end up playing hysterical women. . . .

Andrew THOMPSON is an old ham never properly cured. He joined the Semi-Circle (this is his second play for us) after an absence of 40 years from the amateur stage. He is still hoping to be spotted. Peter WILLIAMS came to Basel four and a half years ago, making his Semi-Circle debut last year as the Executioner in *The Actor's Nightmare* on the strength of previous acting experience as a clever rat and a stupid vet. He refined his cutting technique with surgical tests in *Doctor in the House* last autumn. Diana ZUGER made her directing debut with the one-act play *A Cut in the Rates* two years ago and thought she'd have another go. It makes a change from poisoning nice old men as she did in her last role in *Arsenic and Old Lace*.

The Production Team

Production Manager	Ann MAERKI
Stage Manager	Barbara HUMMEL
Bar	Michael WILKINSON and friends
Box Office	Suzan WILSON and friends
Lights and Sound	Roger KLEIBER and Alex WILSON
Make-up	Sonia DELL, Helen BALDOMERO, Ray KLEIBER
Programme	Cynthia BAER
Programme Cover	Flavio DeROSA
Scene Changes	Matthew BRECKENRIDGE, Louisa BRECKENRIDGE

And numerous helpers, not mentioned by name, who have contributed much of their time to make this production possible.