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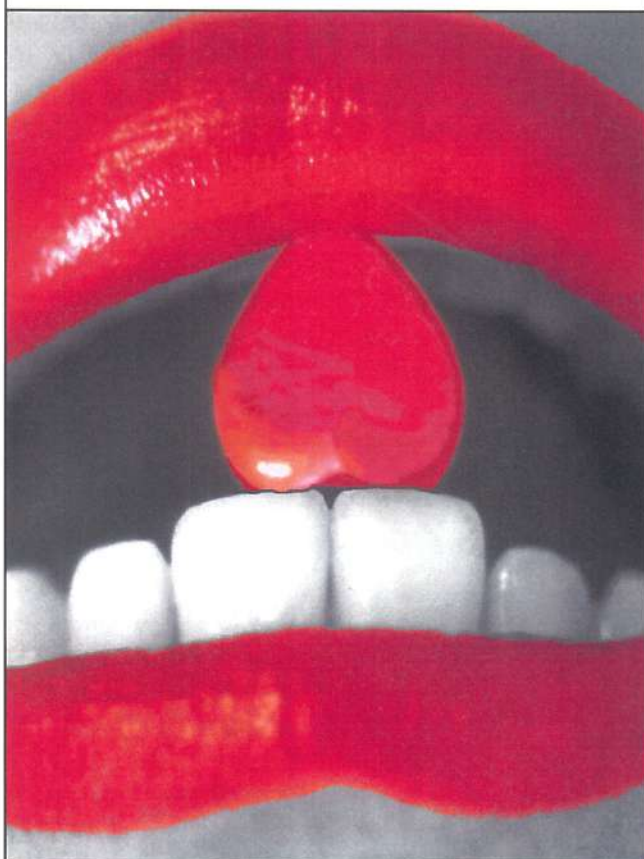
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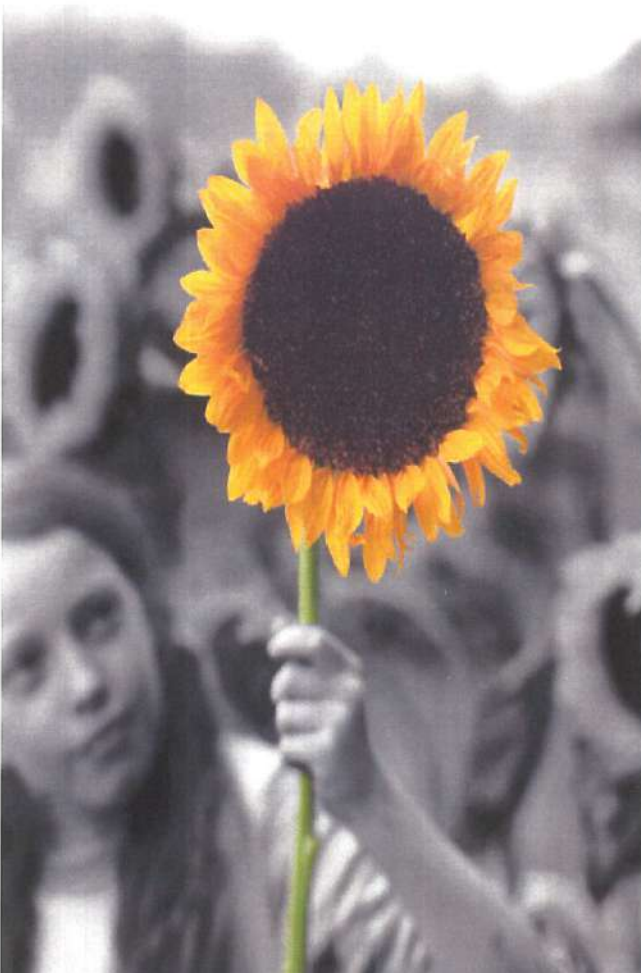
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Theatre in English

LECTURE NOTES

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### The Semi Circle Basel

is honoured and delighted to have the opportunity to return to the Bihni and are very grateful to our kind hosts for helping us with this Production.

### The Baseldytschi Bihni

Our host theatre is the home of "Baseldytschi Bihni". This is an amateur theatre club, which receives no financial aid. It has been in existence since 1892.

Before moving here to the Lohnhof in 1995 it resided at a Keller Theater in Leonardsstrasse. It comprises over 2000 members, 130 of whom actively work together running the theatre, putting on one of their own productions and four guest plays a year, and preparing their club newsletter: "Dr Lälli".

For more information:

[www.baseldytschibihni.ch](http://www.baseldytschibihni.ch)

### Albert R. Gurney

A.R.Gurney is one of America's most prolific and widely produced contemporary playwrights. His many plays include: *Love in Buffalo*, *Tom Sawyer (musicals)*, *The David Show*, *The Open Meeting*, *The Golden Fleece*, *Scenes from American Life*, *Children*, *The Dining Room*, *Richard Cory*, *The Middle Ages*, *The Golden Age*, *What I did Last Summer*, *Sylvia*. He has also written several novels.

Born on November 1, 1930, A.R.Gurney grew up in an American middle-class environment. During the Korean War he served in the US Navy, where he wrote shows to entertain the military personnel. In 1955 he entered the Yale School of Drama and, following graduation, taught English and Latin at a boys' school and later joined the M.I.T. where he remains as a faculty member to this day.

Through a mixture of the commonplace and the bizarre, Gurney looks at the absurdities of American dysfunctional middle-class "WASP" society and while presenting his audiences with uncomfortable questions - he only gives hints at the answers. This is what makes directing and acting in an A.R.Gurney play so challenging and rewarding.

### Coming soon to Basel !

## OLIVER !

The musical based on the novel  
by Charles Dickens  
Script, music and lyrics by Lionel Bart,  
directed by Angela Robinson

Production dates: 28, 29 November  
and 4, 5, 6 December, 2003.

AUDITIONS for adult roles will be held at  
Gemeindehaus Stephanus, Furkastrasse 12,  
Basel.

Tuesday, 10 June at 7 pm.

If you have missed these first auditions and still wish to be considered,  
please contact Angela immediately:

00 33 389 813972 or

[angela.robinson@wanadoo.fr](mailto:angela.robinson@wanadoo.fr)



## Cast and Helpers

### Director: Michael Clarke

Four years ago, Sheila McKenzie and Rebecca Scriven asked me to take the part of "Husband" in A.R. Gurney's one-act play: *The Problem* which they were directing at that time for The Semi-Circle. We soon discovered that the play was all-too-aptly named, as it turned out to be not just a "Problem", but a very tough acting challenge. I was fortunate enough to be acting opposite Susannah Todd who played "Wife" and is now playing "Mona" in *The Guest Lecturer*.

A couple of years later while on a business trip to the United States, I had time to kill and decided to pay a visit to Barnes & Noble, where I happened upon "A.R. Gurney: *The Collected Works: Vol. 1*". After having "devoured" Volume 1, I immediately had to put in my order for Volumes 2, 3 and 4.

I was hooked! I had to see some of these fascinating plays produced on stage – I didn't care if I was to be acting, directing or just a member of the audience – I had to see them!

But once again a "Problem": which of Gurney's rich and extensive works to choose from? With help from the Semi-Circle's newly established "Play Selection Committee", we finally landed on "An Evening of A.R. Gurney One-Act Plays" – an idea was born!

We hope that through our efforts, we shall be able to share with you some of the fun and insight and technical skill of this fascinating playwright.



Michael Clarke has been living in Basel since 1981 and has been a member of The Semi-Circle since 1996.

Promptor: *Eric Collino*

Stage Set: *Baseldytschi Bihni*

Stage Manager: *Mary Sinnott*

Technical Operator: *Baseldytschi Bihni*

Make-up: *Helen Baldamero*

Stage Assistants: *Susan Aeschbach,*

*Sandra Roche,*

*Netsanet Desta*

Director's Assistant: *Eric Collino*

Production Manager: *Mary Sinnott, Yvonne Fenn*

Graphics & Layout: *David Foggetta*

Publicity: *Angela Robinson*

Production Support: *Baseldytschi Bihni, Suzan Wilson, Andrew Thompson, John Stafford, Theo Bucher, Tony O'Sullivan, Andrew Jones, Michael Wilkinson, Martin Spedding*

## The Love Course

### Sally: Leah Mougoyannis



Leah's earliest claim to fame was shooting her first international commercial for SONY in her native Ireland at the tender age of four. She became a dancer with a Dublin Stage School and later attended the Gaiety School of Acting. It was her interest in

working for the aviation industry that led her to her husband Dimitri and ultimately to Switzerland. She was delighted to join the Semi-Circle to rediscover her love of acting and the theatre.

### Mike: Simon Kessler



So, you've made it to this course? I hope you have a good reason, at least... Getting on stage and acting in front of Semi Circle audience is a première for me. I'm more used to exposing myself for presentations, sports or music. But it is just this diversity in life that

has kept me running, excited and motivated to reach new dimensions throughout the last 27 years. So I hope I can contribute to giving you an evening of distraction, fresh entertainment and plenty of smiles! But anyway, what exactly made you attend this class - I do NOT know...

### Prof. Burgess: Peter Hilton



Peter has appeared in two or three productions, recently and most noticeably, as a drunk on a bus. He found this a relatively easy role to fall into after many years of practice on the streets of Europe. Hopefully you will enjoy tonight's performance

and Peter has promised to remain upright for its duration.

### Prof. Carroway: Cynthia Baer



The Semi Circle disclaims any responsibility for this member's aberrant behaviour, with the exception of those occasions when she was an ectoplasmic wife, a cockney maid, a budding 14-year-old authoress, a saucy 90-year-old aunt, a

sassy bag lady of indeterminate age, and a lamentably naïve actress of just the right age in "Talking Heads". She is married to a very patient man.

## The Guest Lecturer

### Pat: Christine Comerici



Christine has been participating in The Semi-Circle productions in a variety of back stage roles, and even once on stage, for a number of years now. Always looking for new adventures, she ran head first into the role of Pat the pianist for this production, and later was stunned, "You mean I actually have to play the piano?"

### Mona: Susannah Todd



Exploring the multifaceted role of Mona has been quite an adventure! *The Guest Lecturer* has awarded me a second opportunity to explore Gurney's work, and as with "The Problem", the playwright entices the characters and audience into a web of intrigue...

### Fred: Tony O'Sullivan



Tony has been acting, scene shifting, directing, scenery painting and so on with the club for the last five years. He likes the company.

### Hartley: Jamie Sievert



This is Jamie's third stint at acting for the Semi-Circle. In the first two (*Rumours* and *The Marriage Proposal*) he had to dress up in a tuxedo. In the *The Guest Lecturer* he gets to dress down -- way down.

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