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an evening of short plays

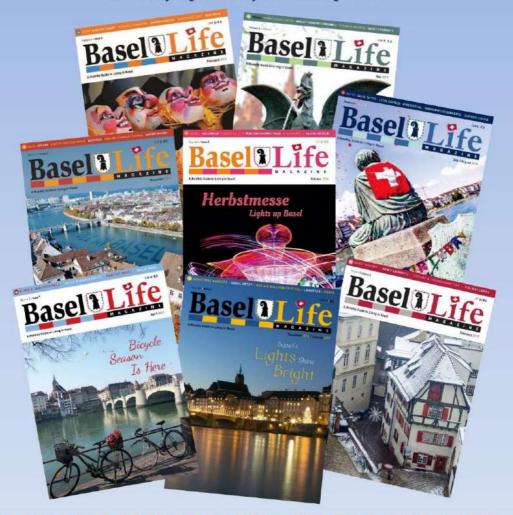
performances 26 October – 4 November 2017 at 19.30 at Theater Arlecchino, Walkeweg 122, 4052 Basel in English

www.semi-circle.ch

tickets CHF 30 (CHF 25 for groups of 10 or more) box office and bar open at 18.45 presales at www.starticket.ch (additional charges apply)



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WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT - Sue Newstead

A very warm welcome to Theater Arlecchino where The Semi-Circle presents SECRETS – an evening of short plays.

In this production we are delighted to provide you with a number of "firsts": the first time that Love Forty has been performed anywhere, ever; the first time that Waiting has been performed in Switzerland; the first time that Woody Allen's Death Knocks has been performed by Semi-Circle; and it is



definitely not the first time that A Respectable Funeral has come to our Semi-Circle stage – but you will find more about that one later in the programme.

Perhaps you are wondering how SECRETS has come together: it has been our custom from time to time to dedicate one of our two productions every year to the new, less-experienced or out-of-practice writers, directors and actors in the Club. After all, Semi-Circle is a Club, and we like to provide opportunities for as many members as possible.

With all of this in mind, the Committee puts out a call for plays and directors – then we sit back, wait, and see what – and who – we get ...

Now, if this all sounds a little bit "hit and miss" to you, that's because it is ... but amazingly this somewhat random recipe has resulted in some outstanding combinations of plays, writers, directors and actors over the years and, more often than not, this seemingly unconnected mix of independent proposals has a common thread running through it!

Take a look at www.semi-circle.ch where you will find colourful information about our past productions – a rich heritage of drama, comedy and classics, since at least 1975. And you will see that SECRETS is no exception ...

.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to:

- The Theater Arlecchino team for all their support
- Ricola for being a generous sponsor and providing us with drops
- Radio X for giving us airtime
- The family and friends of the committee, the directors, the cast and the crew

 without their support and patience this production would not have come
 to the stage.

SECRETS SECRETS SECRETS SECRE



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PRODUCTION MANAGER – Tanja Spichty

After a quieter summer (in terms of theatrical involvement), I am proud to be producing another Semi-Circle autumn show. Welcome to SECRETS.



While you are awaiting the disclosure of Secrets on stage, let me tell you the (mainly off-stage) duties of a producer. According

to Wikipedia: "A theatrical producer is a person who oversees all aspects of mounting a theatre production". Now, what does "all aspects" mean? Within the Semi-Circle it includes liaising with the theatre, communicating with the directors to coordinate their artistic ideas within a certain budget, getting involved in the publicity concept, writing mails, making phone calls, fixing meeting dates and observing deadlines, but mainly getting together a team that shares the same enthusiasm for the theatre. Producing a show is, literally, a teambuilding activity.

In addition to directors and actors, it needs a stage manager and stage hands, a lighting and sound technician, a publicity manager, a photographer and designer, a make-up artist, someone for Front of House, ushers and many more. In other words, it needs YOU! Without the help of numerous volunteers this theatre production couldn't have taken place — and that's no "secret". I would like to thank every one of you for your contribution, no matter whether big or small.

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Does the thought of theatre make your heart beat faster? If you want to add your talent to the mix, then don't keep it a secret – please do get in touch with us.

But before you contact us, may we ask you to switch off your mobile phone as the show is about to start. Enjoy!

PROGRAMME

LOVE FORTY

WAITING

DEATH KNOCKS

Interval - Refreshments at the Bar

A RESPECTABLE FUNERAL

LOVE FORTY by Chloe Hannah

Cast

Annie Lucia Maenz Ferreyros | Rachel Postec

Jamie Luca Manganelli | Barbara Bekalska

Director John Hyland

John was born near London. He is currently job hunting after spending 15 years working for various Swiss banks. His chequered past has seen a finger in every pie: he joined both the police and Royal Navy before graduating from university. Before settling in Basel he had moved 27 times in 20 years. John has been an active member of the Semi-Circle since 1999.





Assistant Director Fabienne Hofmann

Fabienne Hofmann was originally a graphic designer but works mostly as an artist. She paints and crafts fantasy worlds and figures, she blogs about her life and travel stories and she takes acting classes. Her first time on stage was as a teenager when she played Mozart in a small theatre group. This is her first time with the Semi-Circle - she auditioned for a stage role but ended up as assistant director. She feels this suits her better and she is excited that she has been given the opportunity to explore a new world.



Synopsis

Annie engages the help of her new neighbour, Jamie, to look for something that she has mislaid. The quest is made all the more difficult because Annie isn't prepared to tell Jamie exactly what it is that they are looking for...

About the Writer

Chloe Hannah was born in Basel into an Australian-English household. She has a Masters in Musicology (stemming from a teenage obsession with opera) and received her PhD in Motion Graphic Design at Glasgow School of Art; she also lived in Sydney during this period. She is now back in Basel, working as a communications manager. She writes fiction in her free time. Seeing some of her writing come to fruition is a dream come true.



The Cast of LOVE FORTY



Lucía Maenz Ferreyros as Annie

Lucía was born and raised in Ecuador. After graduating high school, Lucía joined a theatre group specializing in improvisation. She then studied in Spain and Germany. During college she was part of the University Theatre Group, performing in several plays, then worked as a producer. Throughout these years she also took specialized acting classes. This year she joined the Semi-Circle; this production will be her debut in an English speaking play.

Rachel Postec as Annie

Rachel was born in Quimper in Brittany, France. She acted for the very first time in 2008, as part of an amateur French production. This novel, yet inspiring experience, motivated her to continue to be involved with stage plays. Since then, Rachel has participated in various amateur plays, playing characters ranging from being a distressed housekeeper to a posh Parisian lady. Having gained more confidence, she decided this year to act in her very first English play.





Barbara Bekalska as Jamie

Barbara grew up in Ireland and has been lured into Switzerland by its snowy peaks. She joined the Semi-Circle in 2016 as a sensual bride of Count Dracula. Since then she has played in *The Vagina Monologues* (2017), and led the make-up team in Semi-Circle's latest production of *Blithe Spirit* (2017). Besides acting she enjoys skiing, kiteboarding, wakeboarding, horse riding, diving, hiking, CrossFit, adventuring and general mischief. And cats – she likes cats.

Luca Manganelli as Jamie

Luca started to act twelve years ago, after a three-year course. He has been a member of the Semi-Circle Committee since 2014, when he was cast in the spring production of *Calendar Girls*. He then directed the short play *My Apology* in November 2015 and was the director of *Dracula* (and Dracula himself) in the June 2016 production. In autumn 2016 he played the role of Jerry in *The Zoo Story*.



WAITING by Lisa Creighton

Cast

Alison Bolton Joy Andv Adrian Chess Billy Gilbert Rachel Paula Cathy Barker Mrs. Baxter Susan Aeschbach

and Jules

Director

Peter Hilton has been in Basel for 25 years now and is still gainfully employed (just) as an English Trainer. He has been on- and off-stage with the Semi-Circle many times you name it, Peter has done it. Whether it be acting, directing, producing, back-stage or front-of-house - he willingly turns his hand and his brain to all things theatrerelated.





Synopsis

Andy is sitting in a café where he has arranged a clandestine meeting with Jules. A conversation he holds with the waitress, loy, starts him wondering whether he might be making a big mistake ...

About the Writer

Lisa Creighton hails from North Wales but has been living in the Isle of Man for almost two decades now. She is fortunate to have many strings to her bow: actress, performance poet, director, producer and writer. As an actress, she has played several famous roles on stage. She has also starred in three short films shot on the island, most recently appearing in Three Mothers in Theatrefest 2017. Before starting a family, Lisa was copywriting as part of her advertising career, but these days she enjoys penning more imaginative pieces, and has been working on plays, children's novels and poetry.



The Cast of WAITING

Alison Bolton as Joy

Arriving in Basel in 2010, Alison grew up in England, Zambia and New Zealand. She recently discovered a long dormant interest in acting and joined the Semi-Circle family as stage manager for Blithe Spirit. She is thrilled to be able to draw on her experiences in the land of the long white cloud in her role as an Antipodean Aphrodite!



Adrian Chess as Andy

Adrian, originally from Wales, has lived in Alsace for four years. He writes and directs plays for Young English Learners in French schools and translates research articles for French universities. Having been a welcoming Front of House guy for Dracula and Blithe Spirit, this is his first acting role with the Semi-Circle.



Billy Gibert as Rachel

Billy has lived in Switzerland for over 30 years. She is relatively new to Semi-Circle and made her acting debut in 2015. Since then she has assisted with sound and/or lighting in the November 2016 and June 2017 productions. Due to her full-time job, she prefers playing a minor role in the exciting thespian atmosphere that is Semi-Circle.



Cathy Barker as Paula

Cathy grew up in north-west England and for the past seven years has lived in Basel, where she works as a teacher and editor. She has acted in several Semi-Circle productions, including as Chris in Calendar Girls, Ethel in Alas, Poor Fred and, most recently, Ruth Condomine in Blithe Spirit. She loves chocolate, cryptic crosswords and singing with the lovely a cappella choir, Basel Chamber Voices.



Susan Aeschbach as Mrs. Baxter

Yorkshire-born Susan, a journalist by trade, but now working in publishing, has lived in Switzerland for most of her adult life. Her involvement in recent Semi-Circle productions has been either front of house or behind the scenes, most notably as assistant director and prompt for Blithe Spirit.





DEATH KNOCKS by Woody Allen

Cast

Nat Ackerman Prateek Natani
Death Gurpreet Singh Gill

Director Georgina Rotter

As well as directing short artsy films and working for small TV stations, Georgina also studied acting at the Santa Monica College in California. She was touched and thrilled when, after relocating to Switzerland, she found The Semi-Circle in Basel. Georgina has both acted and directed with The Semi-Circle, and has always ended up





with a comedy - a wonderful fate. Christopher Durang's *Medea* and *I-900-Desperate* gave her opportunities to wildly unfold her creativity. With Woody Allen's *Death Knocks* she tackles a new style of comedy.

Synopsis

One evening, Nat Ackerman is reading a newspaper in his New York apartment when Death climbs up the drainpipe and breaks in through the window, asking Nat to leave with him. Nat is entirely healthy and believes this must be an error. But Death insists on his duty to take Nat, so Nat concocts ingenious ways to delay his own death...

About the Writer

Woody Allen, born I December 1935, is an American film-maker, writer, actor, comedian and musician whose career spans more than six decades. He has produced over 60 movies, some of his best-known being What's new, Pussycat? (1965), Annie Hall (1977), Everything You always Wanted to Know about Sex (1972), Manhattan (1979), Hannah and her Sisters (1986), Match Point (2005), and Midnight in Paris (2011). Plays for the Theatre include Don't Drink the Water (1966), Play it Again, Sam (1969), God (1975), and Honeymoon Hotels (2011). He has won four Oscars.







The Cast of DEATH KNOCKS



Prateek Natani as Nat Ackerman

Prateek grew up in Jaipur, India, and ever since his school days has been passionate about the stage. His journey started when he was ten years old with *A Christmas Carol*. During college he took up many acting and production roles in drama clubs. He continued to pursue his passion for theatre as a management consultant and was involved in productions in Pune, Delhi and London. He is thrilled to be part of the Semi-Circle group and to be acting again!

Gurpreet Singh as Death

For his debut with the Semi-Circle, Gurpreet plays the character of Death. The role has many shades to it, which makes it so much fun and challenging to play. Gurpreet grew up in India and moved to Basel five years ago. He has been associated with theatre since college, as an actor as well as a writer. Along with everything, he also manages to keep his boss happy in his 9–5 job, by doing hard work and not acting.



This amateur production of DEATH KNOCKS and A RESPECTABLE FUNERAL is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Ltd

Video and/or audio recording of these two plays by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited



A RESPECTABLE FUNERAL by Jimmie Chinn

Cast

Evadne Elizabeth Shaw Joyce Sue Newstead Greta Joy Scherer Charlie Michael Bray

Director Diana Zuger

Diana is a founding member of the Semi-Circle, a loyal member of the club and has been on stage a countless number of times, lately in *Quartet* (2010), as Miss Marple in A Murder is Announced (2013) and, of course, Madame Arcati in Blithe Spirit (2017). As a Semi-Circle director, her productions include A Talk in the Park (2002), Arms and the Man (2004), The Cavern (2008) and Losing it (2013). Down the years, she has also taken on the





responsibilities of Stage Manager and many other backstage roles.

Synopsis

Three middle-aged sisters gather at the house of their deceased mother, following the funeral. Surprisingly, Charlie, their brother, who looked after their mother, has failed to turn up. While the sisters are gossiping, some family secrets are revealed. Mother, it seems, was no saint. And then, suddenly, Charlie arrives...

About the Writer

Jimmie Chinn, 1940–2011, was an English actor and, later in life, a writer. He has given us radio plays like *From Here to the Library* and his television credits include *Emmerdale* and *Coronation Street*. Theatre-goers love him for the fine English humour that he brings to the stage. The Semi-Circle has presented some of his plays: A Respectable Funeral (1987/1988), From Here to the Library (1988), Too Long an Autumn (1989), Interior Designs (1996) and Straight and Narrow (2000).











The Cast of A RESPECTABLE FUNERAL

Elizabeth Shaw as Evadne

Liz has performed in a number of productions since joining the Semi-Circle in 2010: Quartet (2010), Night (2011), A Murder is Announced (2013), The Extraordinary Revelations of Orca the Goldfish (2013) and Syrinx (2015). She was thrilled when the latter was chosen to represent the Club at FEATS in Brussels in 2016. Despite not winning any prizes, it was an amazing experience. She is now rising to the challenge of playing "a northern woman"!



Sue Newstead as loyce

Sue has been on stage since the tender age of six - acting and reciting poetry and prose. Then working life intervened and there was no time for theatre. Retirement has allowed her to return, and she joined the Semi-Circle in 2014 to appear in Calendar Girls and Marigolds. As President and Treasurer of the Club there are so many fascinating things to do and learn; she feels she will soon qualify for the title "lack-of-All-Trades"!

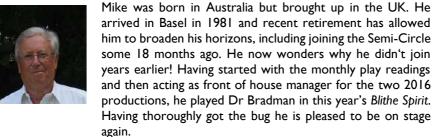


Joy Scherer as Greta

Originally from Leicestershire in the English East Midlands, Joy came to Basel several decades ago and joined The Semi-Circle in the mid-1980s. Since then she has performed many times on-stage, backstage and front-of-house. She appeared most recently in the one-act plays The Dear Departed (2012), The Extraordinary Revelations of Orca the Goldfish (2013) and in the short sketches included in the one-act play production Distraction (2014).



Michael Bray as Charlie







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Stage Manager Chris Jones

Stage Hands Maria Rozmanic, Tatjana Wi

Light & Sound Richard Brown

Props Beatrix Castellote-Iselin

Make-up Helen Baldomero, Barbara Bekalska

Ushers Barbara Bekalska, Lucia Maenz Ferreyros,

Luca Manganelli, Rachel Postec

Box Office Fiona Müller, Jan Hawley, Wendy Monard,

Eva Sternkueker, Valerie Walder

Publicity Sue Newstead, David Laurie

Programme Ralf Pfaff, Cathy Barker

Photography Ralf Pfaff

Artwork Design Lea Windisch





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About A RESPECTABLE FUNERAL – Joy Scherer

One of the Semi-Circle's earliest one-act play productions is being revived this year. A Respectable Funeral by Jimmie Chinn was first performed by the group in January 1987. It was directed by Muriel Taylor, a founder member of the Semi-Circle, who had directed the club's very first one-act play in 1986. For several years our one-act plays were defined as workshops, with the aim of giving less experienced members greater opportunity to perform on stage, or learn new jobs behind the scenes, and from these productions grew our evenings of one-act plays.

Rehearsals for A Respectable Funeral took place at Muriel and Bryan's flat, the venue was the Rekizet (Church Hall) in Ettingen and the invited audience were members of the British Circle. The cast members were Doreen Richter, Joy Scherer, Graham Simons and Diana Zuger. The stage was small, the set was simple but suitably furnished, mainly with items loaned by Muriel, to create the required cluttered living-room effect.



Muriel Taylor

The play was well received and a further performance was held, this time in Muriel and Bryan's living-room which, with ingenuity, they temporarily converted into a small, cosy theatre with space for some 20 spectators. It was a successful venture and in response to popular demand two more performances were held there, again for invited audiences.

Over the next few weeks the cast were invited to perform the play for the *Barfüsserclub*, and then for the International Club. In 1988 they performed at the *Lange Erlen* Park as part of the English-Speaking Club's 25th anniversary celebrations. On all three occasions they had to make do with a very basic set and at Lange Erlen, in the open air and amid a variety of background noises (including goods trains rolling over a nearby bridge), voice projection proved a challenge.

The play was then resurrected in September 1991 when it was chosen as the Semi-Circle's entry at the 3rd Festival of English-Speaking Theatre in Switzerland, held that year in Geneva. So it was time to brush up on the lines once more. For that performance Joan Kuster took over the role of Joyce, previously played by Doreen Richter who sadly passed away earlier in the year. The cast were delighted to be able to perform the play on a "real" stage at last, and received kind words from the adjudicator.

There fell the final curtain on A Respectable Funeral ... or so it was thought. Now, many years later cast and crew hope that you will get as much pleasure from tonight's performance as audiences did 30 years ago. Two of the original cast members are involved in tonight's play. Diana Zuger, who played Evadne, is now directing, and Joy Scherer reprises her role as Greta.

With this play the Semi-Circle wishes to pay tribute to Muriel Taylor and to her outstanding contribution to the club in its early years. Muriel passed away in 2015.



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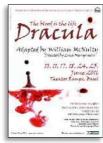
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The Semi-Circle is a non-profit Club with about 100 members of all ages, backgrounds, interests — and if you are interested in us, we are interested in you.











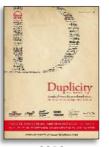






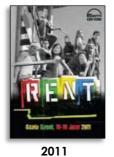




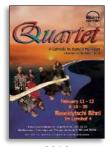












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