

SPOTLIGHT



Newsletter of the Geneva English Drama Society
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www.geds.ch

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Welcome to Spotlight

Happy new year and welcome to the second act of the GEDS season. We might be in the grip of winter but with a *Birthday Party* in the diary, *Good People* to listen to, promises of *Dancing at Lughnasa* and plenty more to look forward

to, there are no excuses for hibernating. Join us for drinks and nibbles at the mailing party, or come and enjoy a free glass of bubbly with the cast, crew and director after the show on the opening night of *Dancing at Lughnasa*, more details below...



We've got mail

The legendary GEDS mailing party will take place on Wednesday 4th February, Collège des Coudriers, as from 18:00. Please drop-by for a sociable drink and nibble to help prepare the publicity mailing for our next production: *Dancing at Lughnasa*.

Many hands make light work, we might not be dancing as we do it, but we'll be having a good time anyway! Stay as long as you wish. We normally finish by 20:00. Avenue de Joli-Mont 15, 1209 Genève. Across the street from Balxert. Easy parking at the school. For more info please see <http://geds.ch/news/MAILINGPARTIES.htm>

Follow us and be a winner!

From February 12th onwards we will be running a competition on the GEDS Twitter page – all

you have to do is follow us! The fiftieth follower will receive free tickets for the Wednesday night showing of *Dancing at Lughnasa*. That's definitely something to crow, I mean tweet, about.

New Members

We'd like to extend a very warm welcome to the latest arrivals in the GEDS camp:

Elizabeth Bourbet
Estelle Gitta
Annie Schmid
Jon Vicary

Message from the Membership Secretary...

Your contact details are important!

Members are asked to inform us of any changes to their contact details (address, phone numbers, emails, and their interests) so that our records can be adjusted

accordingly and be more useful. Please write to the Membership Secretary at geds.membership@gmail.com

If you're not sure what's on your membership form, or if you'd like to fill in a new one, ask Nic Sommer on that same email address.

Save the date

Saturday March 14th !!!

Life is a masquerade, and to celebrate the fact GEDS and GAOS will be joining forces for a marvellous Masked Ball on March 14th – we'll supply the drama, they'll supply the dancing, or perhaps it will be the other way around. It will all take place at the Chateau de Bossey and will include dinner, music and great entertainment of a professional, as well as an amateur nature.

Tickets will be priced at 70CHF, and will be available to buy on a dedicated page on the TIE website www.theatreinenglish.ch/Maskedball from February 14th onwards.



www.geds.ch

DANCING AT LUGHNASA

Directed by Charles Slovenski

Michael, now a young man in 1960, relives the late summer days of 1936, when music on the radio seemed miraculous, the church seemed infallible, and love briefly seemed possible for his unmarried mother and her four sisters. On the west coast of Donegal, the five brave and hardworking

"In the old days, August the First was Lá Lughnasa, the feast day of the pagan god, Lugh."

Mundy sisters welcome home their frail elder brother Jack, who has returned from a life as a missionary in Africa.

The summer is made unforgettable by three arrivals:

Théâtre de l'Espérance •
8 rue de la Chapelle • 1207
Geneva March 3rd–7th, 2015
• Tuesday–Friday 20:00,
Saturday 19:00 Parking
Villereuse and Eaux-Vives
2000 • Tram 12 Terrassière
Tickets: CHF 30 (seats
numbered)

- Book from 12th February on:
www.theatreinenglish.ch
- Choose your own seats, pay

- by credit card or bulletin de versement / e-banking and print your own tickets.
- Book from 12th February at a Swiss post office using a red bulletin de versement payable to: Theatre in English, 1214 Vernier CCP 12-20568-3. In the motif versement box, please write the date, number of tickets required and your daytime phone number or email

- Call us from 16th February weekdays on: 022 575 2582 between 15:00 and 16:00 hours.
- Buy your tickets at the theatre (CASH ONLY) on the night from 60 minutes before the show (check by phone or website if seats are available). Students CHF 20 on presentation of student card. Tickets are not refunded.

Uncle Jack, Michael's prodigal father Gerry, and a wireless radio – the family's one luxury. Unbeknownst to the sisters, tragic and brutal events will make this the last time the family would all be together. They step out into the afternoon September sun to enjoy their tea, unaware that this is the best it ever will be.

Cast: Cathy Boyle, Andrew Brookes, Viki Lazar, Catherine Monagle, Daire O'Doherty, Gemma Parkes, Colin Paterson and Béibhinn Regli.

"... there is no doubting we are in the thrall of as masterly a dramatist as the theatre possesses."

The Times (UK)

"... this play does exactly what theater was born to do, carrying both its characters and audience aloft on those waves of distant music and ecstatic release that, in defiance of all language and logic, lets us dance and dream just before night must fall."

New York Times

Here's another way to get involved ...

We're all getting ready for Dancing at Lughnasa, and are looking for volunteers (5–6 per evening) to help out with some light front-of-house duties. The show will run from Tuesday, March 3rd - Saturday, March 7th, at the Théâtre de l'Espérance, in the Eaux-Vives quarter of Geneva. You can sign up for one night only, or more if you wish, and can easily help out on the night that you have booked to see the show. For those of you who may be first-timers the roles are as follows:

Ticket Tearers (TT) will stand at the doors to the theatre as the audience enters, check

the tickets and direct them towards the right entrance for their seats.

Programme Sellers (PS) will wander through the foyer before the show, carrying a basket of programmes to sell to people while they are waiting for the doors to open, and then stand alongside the ticket tearers to offer a last chance to buy before the show commences.

You only need to be there until just after the curtain goes up (unless you have also booked to see the show that night). Exceptionally, on Tuesday night, we will need one or two volunteers to stay until the

end of the show to help serve champagne. The Front of House Manager, Tamaam Madi-Nassar, will be at the theatre every night one hour before show time. Should you have any questions, she can be reached at +41 79 445 8860 or at tamaam.madi@bluewin.ch

Showtimes and start times:

Tues, March 3rd–Fri, March 6th Show starts at 20:00. PS should be ready to begin at 19:15. TT should be there at 19:30. FOH Manager will be there from 19:00.

Sat, March 7th – Show starts at 19:00. PS should begin at 18:15. TT should be there at

18:30. FOH Manager will be there from 18:00.

If you would like to take part in the fun and help out, just click on the following link to the Doodle schedule. Simply enter your name on the left side of the calendar, and check the box(es) under the night(s) and job(s) you would be willing to do. We need at least 2 TT and 3 PS per evening. The Doodle includes a link to the theatre location. When the schedule is complete, Tamaam will contact the volunteers and send out the finalised schedule:

<https://doodle.com/c5tccs4fqfzpcw>

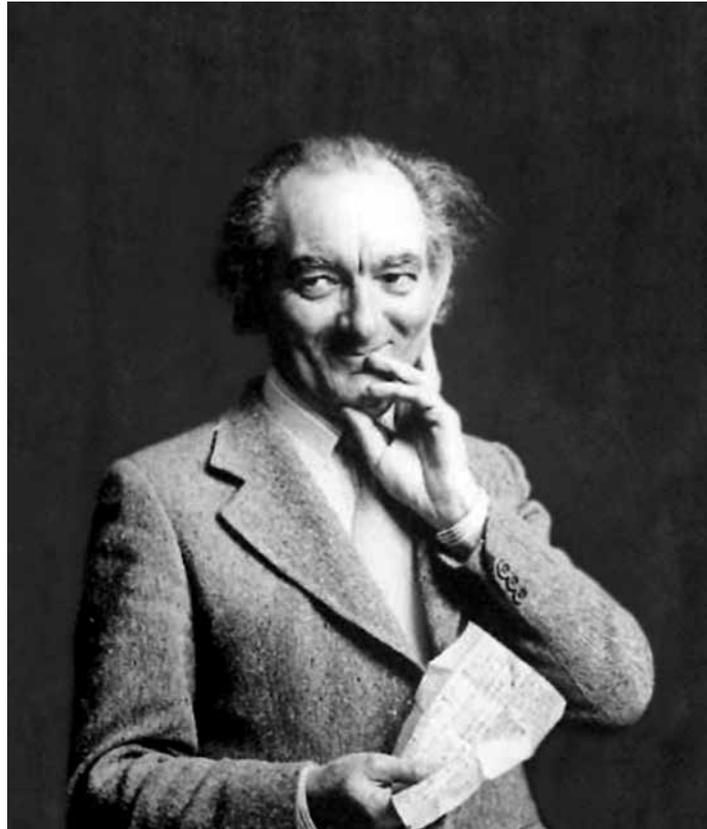
DANCING AT LUGHNASA

Brian Friel Biography

Brian Friel (born 1929, County Tyrone), considered by many to be one of the greatest living playwrights, is often referred to as the Irish Chekhov. Unlike Chekhov who, being unable to support his rather cumbersome extended family as a doctor, turned to writing partly as a way of bolstering his income, Friel began his career as a teacher, only leaving this profession to concentrate full-time on his writing once he had amassed enough savings to enable him to do so.

There is also always an element of experimentation in his work, revealing an interest in Brechtian alienation theories and other aspects of avant-garde theatre

Friel's early work included short stories and polemics, as well as radio and stage plays, but he had to fight to gain recognition as a playwright. It was the success of *Philadelphia, Here I Come!* in 1964 which established his reputation, winning over audiences and critics alike in Dublin, London and New York. This play is regarded as a turning point in



Irish drama and one of the most important plays of the 1960s.

Friel's writing moved through being overtly political in the early 70s, to focusing on the complexities of family dynamics. In his later work the political situation is evident in the tension within the relationships but remains at one remove from the stage – hence the many comparisons with Chekhov. There is also always an element of experimentation in his work, revealing an interest in Brechtian alienation theories and other aspects of avant-garde theatre. An interest in language and the complexities of linguistic exchange also drives his work, *Translations* (first staged in 1980) is one of the most performed and, fittingly,

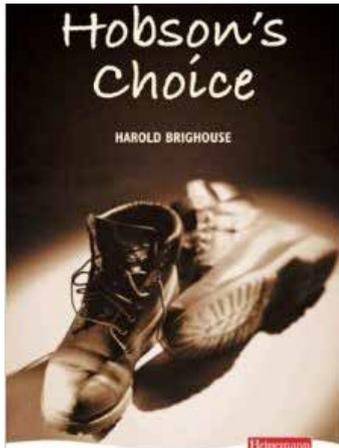
one of the most translated of all post-war plays. *Dancing at Lughnasa*, written in 1990, is perhaps Friel's most successful play, garnering an impressive collection of awards for its author, including an Olivier and a Tony for Best Play. It was also adapted for the screen in 1998, the film version starring Meryl Streep.

With a literary career that has spanned six decades (and counting!) Friel was honoured as a Saoi (lit. a wise one, or master) in 2006 by the Aosdána (an Irish association of Artists). He responded with characteristic irreverence: "I knew that being made a Saoi, really getting this award, is extreme unction; it is a final anointment – Aosdána's last rites."

PLAYREADING CORNER

Doors open 7.00pm: playreadings commence at 7.30pm.

Playreadings take place downstairs at the English Church Hall, Rue de Mont Blanc, Geneva



FEBRUARY 10
ENGLISH CHURCH HALL

Hobson's Choice

by Harold Brighouse

The popular saying, Hobson's Choice means an apparently open choice in which only one option is actually available. The story is set in Salford, Lancashire in 1880, and has been compared to a mélange of the themes of *Cinderella* and *King Lear* – a deceased mother; three daughters, of whom two are pretty and frivolous, while the third is clever and hardworking – and there's even a kind of fairy godmother. Maggie, the spirited daughter of a mercenary shoemaker, manipulates her father into accepting her highly-talented but unassertive would-be husband as his partner and ultimate successor. Meanwhile, her sisters succeed in forcing him to finance their own weddings by means of another ingenious trick.

The play has been adapted successfully for several films, and even a stage musical.

Arranged by David Stieber.



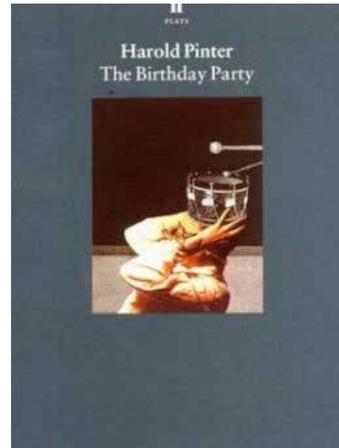
FEBRUARY 24
ENGLISH CHURCH HALL

Good People

by David Lindsay-Abaire

Welcome to Southie, a Boston neighborhood where a night on the town means a few rounds of bingo. . . where this month's paycheck covers last month's bills. . . and where Margie Walsh has just been let go from yet another job. Facing eviction and scrambling to catch a break, Margie thinks an old fling who has made it out of Southie might be her ticket to a fresh new start. But is this apparently self-made man secure enough to face his humble beginnings? Margie is about to risk what little she has left to find out. With his signature humorous glow, David Lindsay-Abaire explores the struggles, shifting loyalties and unshakeable hopes that come with having next to nothing in America.

Arranged by Neil-Jon Morphy.



MARCH 10
ENGLISH CHURCH HALL

The Birthday Party

by Harold Pinter

Goldberg and McCann arrive at a seaside boarding house where Meg and Petey live with their guest Stanley. They inquire about Stanley: we soon find out that McCann and Goldberg have a job to do. Learning it is his birthday they give Stanley a party at which Stanley is verbally bludgeoned into submission. The next day Stanley is removed. It is the collective impact of the dialogue which welds the seemingly inexplicable actions of Goldberg and McCann into a menacing whole.

Arranged by Jack Martin

GEDS writes

We will be hosting another evening of new writing from our members on April 28th, if you are interested in writing something whatever the length or number of characters, please contact Siân before March 7th.

Telephone: +33 450 415 341, email: ackroyd@ilo.org

Forthcoming auditions:

Please pencil in March 25th at 19.00 for the auditions for *Popcorn* by Ben Elton, to be held in the downstairs hall of the English Church of the Holy Trinity, 14 bis, rue du Mont-Blanc. More details will be published later.

Coming up

Watch this space for details of our IMPROV workshop!

Catalyst

The Catalyst Theatre Company in Lausanne is looking for a Stage Manager for their new play, *Blue Butterfly*. The production is funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. The position

would be paid CHF500–1,000 commensurate with commitment and/or experience, and requires presence at rehearsals and performances in Lausanne and Geneva. Some commitment needed between 7th Mar–17th Apr; and more intense presence needed 19th Apr–10th May. Most of the commitment would be evenings and weekends only, so is a possibility for someone with a full-time job.

A collaboration between local scientists (from UNIL, EPFL, and UniGe) and professional theater artists, the piece revolves around different concepts of acceptance in life and in biology. Performances: 29th Apr–2nd May in Geneva (Théâtre Pitoëff) and 8th–10th May in Lausanne (La Grange de Dorigny). Contact Adria Le Boeuf at thecatalyst@thecatalyst.ch

Elsewhere:

The Saints are marching in, and doing plenty of other bizarre things besides ...

Why not check out the next Renegade Saints show and witness some dazzling feats of improvisation: 12th Feb at Mr Pickwick's Pub on Rue de Lausanne, Tickets CHF10 (includes a drink). Doors open at 19:30, show starts at 20:00.

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WHAT'S ON ... IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH 2015

Who	What	When	Where
GEDS	Mailing party	4th Feb.	College des Courdriers
GEDS	<i>Hobson's Choice</i>	10th Feb.	English Church Hall
GEDS	<i>Good People</i>	24 Feb.	English Church Hall
GEDS	<i>Dancing at Lughnasa</i>	3rd–7th Mar.	Théâtre de l'Espérance
GEDS	<i>The Birthday Party</i>	10th Mar.	English Church Hall
GEDS	<i>Popcorn</i> auditions	25th Mar.	English Church Hall