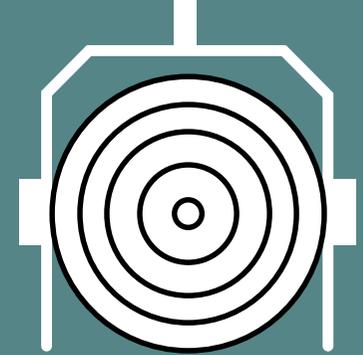


SPOTLIGHT

Newsletter of the Geneva English Drama Society
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(ccp 12-10826-9)
www.geds.ch



IN THIS EDITION

NOVEMBER WORKSHOP

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WANT TO DIRECT A PLAY?

We are now accepting offers to direct for the 2016–17 season. If you've got a vision, we want to hear about it!
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PROOF REVIEW

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Caught in the Net

by Ray Cooney. 17–21 November at the Théâtre de Terre Sainte, Coppet

Catch up with frazzled taxi driver John Smith as he desperately tries to keep his kids – and wives! – from finding out about each other. You may remember everyone's favourite double husband, John Smith, from *Run*

for *Your Wife*, directed for GEDS in 2006 by Richard and Pam Walsh.

Fifteen years have passed and John has managed to keep his two families blissfully unaware of each other. However, his teenage children – one from each wife – have found one another online and are determined to meet in real life! John will stop at nothing to keep them apart as he wades deeper

and deeper into an outrageous mess of his own making.

This classic farce combines subterfuge, doors slamming, crazy tricks, and slapstick rolled out at breakneck speed – if you're not careful you could end up *Caught in the Net!*

Have you seen our London cab promoting *Caught in the Net* out and about? Below is one of our drivers, John Tracey. And it would seem our publicity strategy is working – Ray Cooney shared this photo on his own Facebook page!



Welcome to Spotlight

The season is in full swing and with three upcoming productions, a FEATS entry, new workshops and exciting and original playreading evenings, there's plenty more to look forward to during these long, dark winter months.

In this issue of *Spotlight* you'll find a review of our recent production of *Proof*, details of auditions for our spring production and our FEATS show, an interview with GEDS member, polymath and all-round overachiever Cécile Van de Voorde, plus news and updates from your society!

Left: Charles Slovenski and Barrie Duggan; right: John Tracey, spreading the news by taxi

Help with publicity

After many years zipping around Geneva publicising GEDS shows, our heavenly helper Janet Fremeaux has decided to pass the torch on to another kind soul. The job involves helping to organise mailing parties and delivering boxes of flyers to Geneva-based businesses and organisations. You must have a car and be available to deliver flyers during business hours. Email Chairman of the Publicity Sub-Committee Mark Clayton at mclayton@bluewin.ch for more details.

Auditions announced

Auditions for our spring production of *Rabbit Hole* by David Lindsay-Abaire will take place from 7 pm at the English Church Hall on Monday 7 December.

Rabbit Hole tells the story of Becca and Howie Corbett, who have everything a family could want, until a life-shattering accident turns their world upside down and leaves the couple drifting perilously apart. *Rabbit Hole* charts their bittersweet search for comfort in the darkest of places and for a path that will lead them back into the light of day.

If you are unable to attend the scheduled auditions, please contact director Tim Hancox (thancox@bluewin.ch) to try to arrange an alternative date.

The show will run March 1–5 2016.

GEDS apprenticeships for Rabbit Hole

Would you like to get involved with lighting, set construction, and/or props and costumes for GEDS' 2016 spring production? Our experienced crews are offering you the opportunity to shadow them as they work and be taught all the tricks of the trade. This offer is open to people of all ages and experience levels. For more information, please email director Tim Hancox at thancox@bluewin.ch.

GEDS is going to FEATS!

GEDS has chosen to enter original piece *Working Girl* in the 2016 Festival of European Anglophone Theatre Societies. The festival will take place in Brussels from Thursday 5 May to Sunday 8 May.

The play will also be performed as a spring charity event in Geneva on 29 and 30 April. Auditions will be held from 7 pm on Thursday January 14 at the English Church Hall.

Membership: your last chance to renew...

Membership payments are now more than two months overdue. If you haven't paid by 30 November your life will become very sad as you will no longer hear a word, nary a peep, from GEDS – how will you survive?!

You will also have to pay to attend playreadings. Please pay up asap – if you have any questions, ask Nic Sommer (geds.membership@gmail.com or 022 734 3446).

Payment details here: www.geds.ch/pages/membership.

Many thanks!

Feeling festive

Our final playreading of 2015 will take place on 8 December with a performance of *My Wonderful Day* by Alan Ayckbourn. Mulled wine and seasonal treats will be provided, but we are looking for a few more volunteers to swell the ranks of mince-pie-makers. If you'd like to help, please email Liz Kernen at liz@kernen.net.

GEDS WORKSHOPS

Improvisation for the theatre workshop

*Saturday 28 November
Scouts Genève, 5 rue du
Pré-Jérôme Geneva
10.30 am to 4.30 pm*

As well as being great fun and entertainment in its own right, improvisation can deliver real, practical benefits for stage actors.

Sam Al-Hamdani will introduce you to the building blocks of improvisation, and then to theory and technique around character, narrative, status and stagecraft so that you can quickly build rounded characters on stage, bring natural movement and style to your technique, to know when (and how) to go big with a character and, crucially, to survive that moment when it all goes wrong on stage.

This workshop will be run by Sam Al-Hamdani and is free for GEDS members. The fee for non-members is CHF



25. Refreshments will not be provided so be sure to bring water and snacks with you. (there will be a break for lunch at around midday) Participants should arrive thirty minutes before the start to register.

To reserve a place, please email Workshops Manager Christopher Bailey at christophertomlinbailey@hotmail.com.

Our two first workshops have been very well-attended and well-received. Many of you wrote to us to tell us how much you enjoyed our Building a Character workshop last month, led by Christopher Bailey.

Thank you for coming and for sharing your thoughts with us. The image above is of a

group exercise on creating a physical life and interrelating while moving through space. Often when focusing on the script, beginning actors forget they are physical beings moving through physical space.

The participants learned about exploring character through physicality and activity.

Call for directors for 2016–17

The Committee is looking towards the 2016–17 season and soliciting offers from newcomers and experienced directors alike.

We are open to all offers but experience indicates that the September slot is best suited to a small-cast show (because of the need to rehearse during the summer).

The slots and theatres will most likely be Théâtre de l'Espérance in late September 2016, Théâtre de Terre Sainte (Coppet) in November, and Espérance again in March 2017.

Please send your offers and any questions to Tim Hancox at thancox@bluewin.ch.

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

NOVEMBER 24

Charles Slovenski

The Country House

by Donald Margulies

Inspired by Anton Chekhov's pastoral comedies, and written by Pulitzer Prize winner Donald Margulies (for *Dinner with Friends*, awarded in 2000).

Gathering in their Berkshire home during the Williamstown summer theatre season, a family of actors wrestles with fame, art and, as always, each other. But when the events of the weekend go off-script, secrets are spilled and bonds are broken – threatening an already fragile foundation of a home brimming with old memories, new love and discarded dreams.

Please note that this event is private and for members only.

DECEMBER 8

Beverly Rousset

My Wonderful Day

by Alan Ayckbourn

Winnie Barnstairs is an 11 year-old living in London with her mother Laverne. They have been abandoned by Winnie's father so, although pregnant, Laverne is grateful for her cleaning job at the home of minor television personality, Kevin Tate.

Laverne's French-speaking cousins live in Martinique and she dreams of one day taking her family there to live, so she encourages Winnie to learn French. On the day the play takes place, Winnie's not well enough to go to school and accompanies Laverne to her job. Settling down to her homework, Winnie works on her essay describing a wonderful day.

JANUARY 12

Viki Lazar

Evening of short plays

Find something to suit all tastes at this evening of short pieces. You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll be inspired and entertained. Each piece was chosen and directed by a different director. More than half of the pieces are original works written by GEDS members. Come check out the fledgling careers of the future directors (and writers) of GEDS!

JANUARY 26

Colin Paterson

Fault Lines

by Nicolas Billon

Fault Lines is a trilogy of short plays by Nicolas Billon. Each play – *Greenland, Iceland, and Faroe Islands* – are performed primarily as monologues, as the characters struggle to manage their lives against the backdrop of momentous events that take place in far off countries but have serious consequences at home.

Geological discoveries, a banking crisis, and a traditional whale hunt all shape – and forever change – the life of each character.

Nicolas Billon is represented by the MCR Agency, <http://www.paris-mcr.fr>



A 21st Century Salesman

In celebration of Arthur Miller's 100th birthday last October, GEDS members were treated to an unorthodox rehearsed reading of his seminal work *Death of a Salesman*.

In response to the high proportion of female performers in GEDS and the dearth of roles for women in the play (and indeed in theatre in general), arranger Christopher Bailey decided to give Willy Loman daughters instead of sons, and gender-swapped Loman's neighbour Charlie and his son

Gemma Parkes as Biff and Christopher Bailey as Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman*

Bernard, to great effect.

The reading was performed in the round, making it an intimate and immersive experience for the rather sizeable audience, and the response to this foray into large-scale non-traditional casting was overwhelmingly positive.

Congratulations to all involved, and thank you as ever to our members for your enthusiasm, open-mindedness and constructive feedback!

PROOF REVIEW

by Loulou Stirrup

"As far as the laws of mathematics refer to reality, they are not certain, and as far as they are certain, they do not refer to reality." – Einstein

Mathematics might seem like an unlikely bedfellow for theatre but actually the two have more in common than first appears. Both have an essential musicality, a natural inclination towards harmony and rhythm. Both focus on intimate relationships and patterns, but know that such details are reflective of broader global and sometimes even cosmic truths. In spite of their fierce internal logic, both disciplines know that it is more important to ask questions than to answer them. The recent GEDS production of *Proof* by David Auburn testifies to just how successful the relationship between mathematics and theatre can be when skillfully handled.

We first meet Catherine on the dawning of her 25th birthday. The name and age are significant as traditionally the feast of St Catherine was the day when women who had

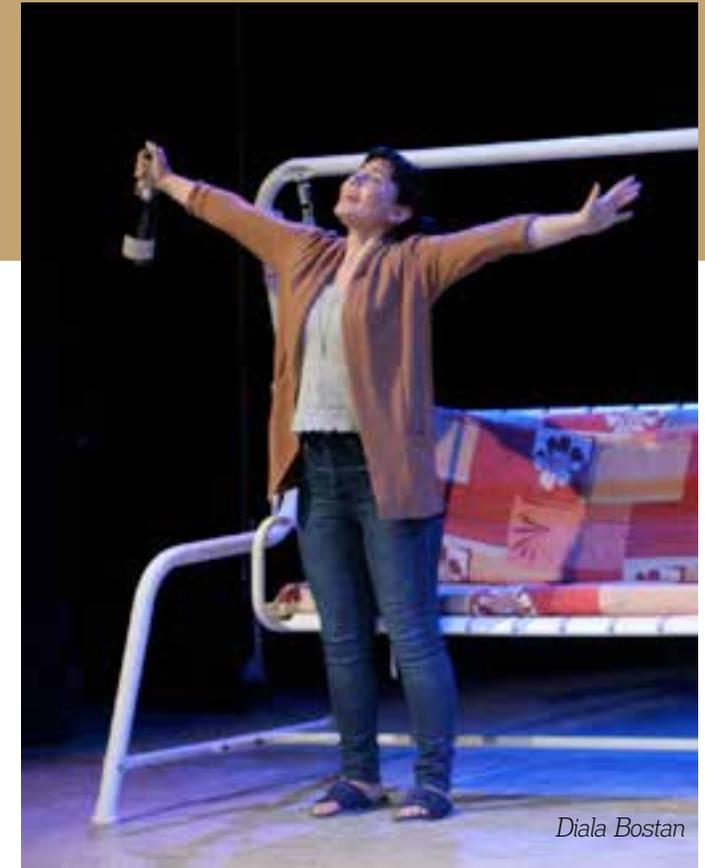
reached the age of 25 without getting married would pray for husbands. The Catherine in *Proof* is not anxious to find a husband and nor is she, by contemporary standards, in any way past it when it comes to her marital or reproductive potential. But there is a sense of potential, particularly her intellectual potential being stymied, or even willingly squandered, as she has chosen to dedicate much of her youth to caring for her father, a celebrated mathematician who has suffered a mental breakdown (gone completely 'bug-house' as he expressed expresses it in a rare, and possibly imagined moment of lucidity). Whether out of love, or deliberate self-sabotage, or simple avoidance of the rather uncomfortable business of trying to make your own life happen, there is, appropriately, the sense that Catherine has martyred herself to her

father's cause and we remain conscious of both the sacrifice and the frustration as we struggle to discern the truth of Catherine's assertions regarding her own work.

Add to this rather complex mix the suggestion that as well as inheriting his intellectual gifts, Catherine has also inherited his capacity for self-delusion and the question mark over Catherine's character looms ever larger. The doubt is established from the outset as the father we encounter in the opening scene is actually a posthumous apparition, either a ghost, should we choose to believe in them, or a figment of Catherine's imagination, or perhaps simply a natural by-product of grief with the death being very recent and the funeral pending (it is to take place later this same day, Catherine's birthday). And so the questions breed, as they are apt to do. Is the

presence of the father at this moment indicative of a genetic psychological fragility? Or simply an illustration of the depth of the relationship between Catherine and her father, Robert? Perhaps our discomfort over the meaning of Robert's presence in this opening scene speaks more forcibly of our unwillingness to acknowledge the effects of bereavement, indeed our fear of death, of the end of potential, than of Catherine's apparent frailties. Is it always true that, as Dryden had it, great wits are sure to madness near allied? Is it fear of this fact, compounded by the evidence of her father's demise, that is causing Catherine to consciously invite the madness in, to effectively become a self-fulfilling prophecy?

Diala Boston, who played Catherine, struck the balance beautifully, counterpointing intelligence and fierce pride



Diala Bostan

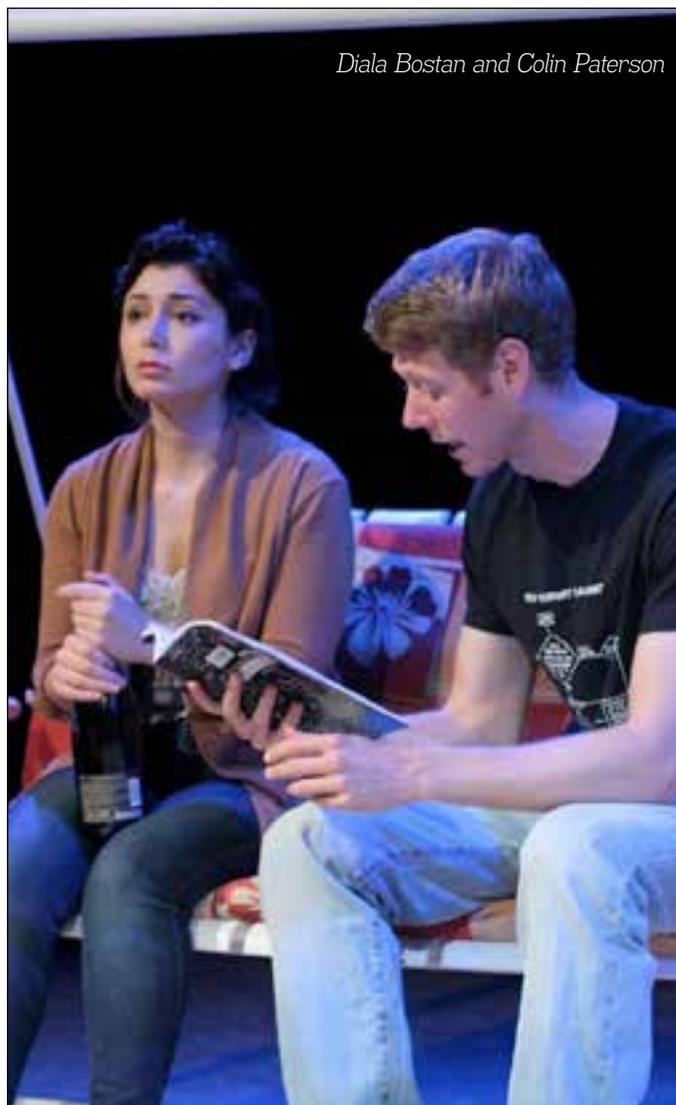
with naivety and emotional vulnerability, keeping the audience perfectly divided between doubt and the desire to believe in her as the author of the proof, knowing even as we question it that we are, albeit unintentionally, in cahoots with the established patriarchy and falling victim to established ideals about what genius should look like.

Robert, played with both gravitas and a tangle of volatility by Gary Bird, is himself emblematic of the

patriarchal system that Catherine rails against. For all his belief and pride (even in this revealing a sense of ownership) in her ability, he still inhibits Catherine by imposing the role of caretaker on her. Indeed when he has a moment of false lucidity he becomes excited by the prospect of how they could organise things so that Catherine can come and help him with his work, again enabling his career more than hers. Catherine quickly realises that Robert is deluded

and that he is not recovering his faculties as he believes, but strives to protect him from this knowledge.

The question of madness is an intriguing one in *Proof*, and invites reflection. From the classic mad professor in Robert to the steadiness of Hal (played with an apposite sense of calm thoughtfulness and unspoken fealty by Colin Paterson) Robert's one-time student who - for all his pragmatism - is devoting hours to trawling through his tutors endless notebooks of nonsensical ramblings with the stubborn conviction that they could yet contain some valuable work. Then there is Catherine who, after years of living in the thick of her father's madness, oscillates between fear for her own mental state and conviction of her genius, offset by the figure of Clare, the older, more worldly sister who, though arguably the most reasonable member of her family, is also the most limited. With the arrival of Clare (played with great vivacity and an almost menacing normality



Diala Bostan and Colin Paterson

by Jaimie Guerra) we see are reminded of the temptation of treating otherness as madness, and the dangers therein. There is some currency to Nathaniel Lee's statement, 'They called me mad, and I called them mad, and damn them, they outvoted me' here. Had there been a second Clare rather than Hal in the picture in the discussion over Catherine's claim to be the author of the proof, things may have unrolled rather differently.

Catherine, whatever her true mental state, is savvy enough to show the proof to the right person, Hal. This is the real consummation of their fledgling relationship, the moment at which they are both most exposed, Catherine in her need for Hal to believe her, Hal in his initial struggle to do so. It also introduces one other essential element of the play, the notion of desire and crucially how desire can affect or even transfigure the results of what we are investigating. In this case it is Hal's literal desire for Catherine that causes him to investigate the proof, that causes him to remain open

to the notion that she may be its author, superseding or perhaps fulfilling his initial desire to prove that something yet survived of his tutor's vast abilities.

Like *Hamlet*, *Proof* begins with the spectre of a departed father and a sense of unfinished business, and raises questions of sanity and judgment, particularly in relation to great intellect. It could be quite a challenge to stage and certainly demands a lot from its actors, something that director Frances Favre was acutely aware of in her casting and in the performances that she drew from the actors. The set provided the perfect backdrop - slightly shambolic mid-western suburbia, which contrasts starkly with the complex machinations of Robert and Catherine's minds, and the equally complex dynamics of family relationships.

The title of this piece turns out to be somewhat ironic, as this is not so much a play about proof as a play about faith. Catherine denigrates Hal for

his lack of faith in her, and even after he has come to believe her she mocks his methods and describes the evidence he proffers in support of her claim as 'just circumstantial.' Even Catherine's process of writing the proof was in itself an act of faith - she talks about joining the dots, with no idea of how to get to the dot, or even if there was a next one. Operating like a beautifully crafted equation, *Proof* is spare, elegant and, for those prepared to look into the potential significance of what is being presented, eloquent and expansive. The final truth of this play is that some things are beyond proof.

IN PROFILE: CECILE VAN DE VOORDE

GEDS member Cécile Van de Voorde gives us her thoughts on playreadings, on Sharon Pollock's Lizzie-Borden-inspired play *Blood Relations*, which Cécile arranged for as a playreading for GEDS in September of this year, and the next playreading she is arranging: *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*

Cécile Van de Voorde has been involved with GEDS for over three years now, as a costume designer (*As You Like It*, 2012), an actress (*God of Carnage*, 2013), and an organiser of or participant in several playreadings. At the end of last season, she brought us Sam Shepard's *Buried Child*, a classic drama that delved into the dark secrets of a highly dysfunctional American Midwestern family. This season, she has arranged a staged reading of Sharon Pollock's award-winning *Blood Relations*, an intense drama about the real-life, unsolved double murder case that made Lizzie Borden a household name in the United States. She is set to stage a reading of *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* in June 2016.

What made you pick *Blood Relations* for the reading?

First of all, I wanted to present a play off the beaten path, by a dramatist hailing from neither the US nor the UK. Sharon Pollock, OC FRSC,



is a respected Canadian playwright, director, and actress. On many levels, Lizzie Borden's story is a gripping but complex one to tackle and I thought Ms. Pollock presented it compellingly and artfully, with a few mistakes but without unnecessary gory details... I do not know how much inspiration she drew from her own experience, but she did try to murder her abusive husband when she was 28 (and already had 5 children with him). She then went back to her father's in New Brunswick, hoping to start over with her family nearby, only to find that her father had remarried and had two children, a new life, and a completely different outlook she could not relate to.

Does your professional background affect the way you select plays or roles?

As a writer and a social documentary photographer, I thrive where I can be creative and either have or foster opportunities to share something significant with others. Theatre makes me

happiest when the audience and I can experience memorable characters and outstanding plays that encourage us to challenge our worldviews or question our own moral compass. That goes for films, too...

As Stella Adler once said, "the theatre is a spiritual and social x-ray of its time". Of course, I have my favourites. There is a social and moral consciousness in plays by Sam Shepard, Arthur Miller or Tennessee Williams, for instance, that makes them timeless classics, but I also enjoy sharing contemporary works or older classics by a wide range of playwrights, as long as they encourage us to think, to ask questions, and even to become more self-aware and, sometimes, perhaps more forgiving.

Theatre has brought me more joy and thrills with powerful dramas than any other kind of plays. Thankfully, I do not need to relate to every plot element or to identify with every single twisted character in order to express and

thoroughly enjoy myself as an actress or director! This being said, you cannot possibly get into my line of work – cultural criminology and international humanitarian and human rights law – without being deeply stirred by what you see and do every day, even on a subconscious level. Anyhow, we all make choices based on personal biases we may not necessarily be aware of. I am not sure my professional experience has a huge impact on my decisions here, although it most likely has a role to play. I was drawn to heavier dramas even before I stepped foot in a law school auditorium, interviewed serial sex killers, earned my PhD studying suicide bombers, or spent years with Tibetan exiles to work on torture and cultural genocide.

Were you familiar with the Lizzie Borden case prior to choosing the play for the reading?

Yes, I was. I used to teach about this case in my criminal profiling seminar some 10

years ago. It was particularly suitable to the analysis of behavioural evidence. I taught my students how to infer offender characteristics based on the brutal way the two victims were killed, and how to use what we know about Lizzie Borden to better understand the behaviours and patterns inherent in this case. There was also a lot to learn from this gruesome case as far as crime scene analysis was concerned, all the more as we have never solved this double-murder mystery. I used it, amongst others, to explain crime reconstruction, the importance of crime scene characteristics, and how to interpret motive. I even had criminalists (forensic science specialists) come into my classroom to explain how science could help us better understand the crime, evaluate and interpret the physical evidence we have available to us, and how to investigate and solve this double murder today.

I have additionally used this case in graduate seminars on crime in the media. This

is when the media circus we are accustomed to today first appeared in the United States. Lizzie Borden's highly publicized 1892 trial polarized the country and marked the beginning of what we call yellow journalism or infotainment today. The public's fascination with this case can be compared to what unfolded during the espionage conspiracy trial of the Rosenbergs in the early 1950s, or with the Menendez brothers, who killed their parents in 1989. Of course, we have to also mention the O.J. Simpson trial following another brutal double murder in 1994 and, more recently, the Amanda Knox and Oscar Pistorius cases. The last three have divided public opinion on the issue of guilt and the often-furiously shortcoming of the criminal justice system, far beyond US borders.

Why was Lizzie Borden acquitted when she seemed obviously guilty?

"Obviously guilty" does not mean much today, and did

not back then either. Having been brilliantly represented by former Governor George Robinson, a highly respected Massachusetts politician who emphasized how ludicrous it was to even think that a woman, especially of that social status, could have committed such a horrible crime, Lizzie Borden was acquitted in 1893. There was essentially no physical or forensic evidence against her. There was no blood on her when the police arrived, the hatchet was found but it was clean and inexplicably missing its handle, Lizzie's dress was never recovered – and her sister Emma later admitted Lizzie had burned the dress she had worn on that fateful August day because it supposedly had paint stains on it.

So, here was a 32-year-old spinster who had been living at home with her rich father, bitter stepmother, and older sister. She had no marketable skills (unless compulsive shoplifting counted as one) and was clearly mentally unstable. She tried to purchase hydrogen



Lizzie Borden

cyanide the day before the murders, supposedly to kill moths that had eaten through a fur coat of hers. The pharmacist refused to sell her the highly poisonous, colourless liquid for fear she was lying to him about its intended use. Interestingly enough, that "detail" was not admitted at trial because the judge deemed it "too far removed in time" to matter! Even her changing alibis did not raise enough red flags to secure a conviction.

Today, thanks to advances in forensic science, and given Lizzie's profile and the information we now have about life in the Borden house

(e.g., the house didn't have running water or electricity given Andrew Borden's miserliness; the wealthy businessman installed locks on all the doors in order to indulge in incestuous relations with both of his daughters), criminologists and criminalists alike believe that she did in fact murder Andrew and Abigail Borden on that hot August day in 1892. Popular culture has perpetuated the notion that she indeed killed her father and stepmother, despite a few glitches in the process. The famous rope-skipping rhyme, for example, mentions forty and forty-one "whacks" given with

an axe, whereas the weapon was a hatchet and the victims received 11 and 18–19 blows, respectively.

What became of Lizzie Borden after her spectacular acquittal?

Well, Lizzie did get her house up on the hill! After the trial, she changed her name to Lizbeth and bought a 14-room Queen Anne Victorian mansion she called Maplecroft. There, she regularly entertained her friends from Boston – mostly actors and artists, at a time when such people were pretty much considered scum by high-class society. She did not

entirely get away with what she did, however, as many people in and beyond Fall River were convinced that she was guilty. She was essentially ostracized by people in the town, an awfully crippling social punishment for someone who had yearned for so long to become part of the "it" crowd. Children were forbidden from approaching her and no one wanted to deal with her in local shops.

In 1905, Lizzie and Emma Borden had a falling out over Lizzie's constant partying and her intimate relationship with Nance O'Neil, a stage and silent film actress who is portrayed in the play without being explicitly named (even though the women actually met in 1904, two years after the 1902 theatrical plot). Emma moved out of the house and barely spoke to Lizzie again after that. Lizzie died of pneumonia on June 1, 1927, at the age of 66. Emma died of nephritis just eight days later. Both women are buried in Fall River, where the Borden house has become a "bed & breakfast museum".



It is worth noting that new information may still come to light, following the 2012 discovery of journal writings belonging to one of Lizzie's defence lawyers, Andrew Jennings.

In the spring, you are staging a reading of *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Can you tell us a little bit about this already?

This is a terrific drama, based on Ken Kesey's 1962 eponymous novel. When people think of it, they usually picture Jack Nicholson's memorable Randle "Mac" McMurphy or Louise

Fletcher's chilling portrayal of Nurse Ratched in Miloš Forman's film adaptation. There is so much more to that story!

Kesey wrote the novel as a biting critique of behaviourism and an indictment of the U.S. mental health system that still rings painfully true today. He worked the graveyard shift at a California psychiatric institution and participated in the CIA's illegal mind-control program in the late 1950s, which greatly influenced the way he wrote his novel. Dale Wasserman adapted it for the stage in 1963 and it premiered on Broadway with Kirk Douglas and Gene Hackman in the lead roles. In

2001, it was back on Broadway with the Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and won the Tony Award for Best Play Revival when Terry Kinney directed and Gary Sinise starred as Mac (not to be confused with his CSI:NY character, of course). I am really looking forward to sharing this gut-wrenching story with our Genevan friends.

As far as staging the reading is concerned, it shall be an interesting challenge! There are many actors involved (17 men and 5 women), which is actually not my biggest concern. The difficulty of this play, for the male actors, is that none of the characters are truly mentally ill. Most have committed themselves to break away from the rest of the world, one has been pretending to be deaf and dumb for twelve years, and the protagonist is faking mental illness to escape a prison sentence for battery and gambling. Hence, the test will be whether people can play someone pretending to be nuts without overdoing the crazy.

I would like to prepare a

few weeks ahead of time and present the play in a very different format from our usual Tuesday night readings. Here, we have an excellent opportunity to put people's skills to good use and organise some kind of intensive training workshop on acting (advanced acting, individual performance and ensemble work, voice expression and projection, body language, movement, physicality, etc.) and even set construction (we will need a rather uncomplicated single set). I hope I can organise something educational, creative, and fun in the weeks leading up to the reading, which will ideally not take place in a basement.

On that note, if you could change one thing about GEDS playreadings, what would it be?

Somehow, I would love for us – arrangers and actors alike – to have a few minutes at the end of a reading in order to discuss certain themes or answer potential questions from the audience. I always receive interesting comments

and pertinent questions via e-mail or at later events. Maybe it is because I organise or take part in readings of thought-provoking plays that engage the public in a deeper way than a light-hearted comedy, although there should be plenty to talk about even then.

Every reading I attended or took part in during my pre-GEDS years was followed by an informal gathering, where people took the time to analyse what they had just seen or heard and to exchange a few thoughts on related topics. Whether the reading had been organised to determine if the play should be produced more "seriously" or not, we always talked about the play and the playwright with audience members... As a former professor, I really love having (and always look for) opportunities to meaningfully exchange with people. Here, it sometimes feels as though we are presenting plays within a vacuum and that can make the evening feel rather incomplete, or like a one-way relationship.

MEANWHILE ELSEWHERE

Also on in and around Geneva

14–15 NOVEMBER (2PM & 6.30PM)

4 DECEMBER (8PM)

5–6 DECEMBER (2PM & 6.30PM)

Rumpelstiltskin

GAOS will be performing *Rumpelstiltskin* at Théâtre de Marens, Nyon. Tickets are CHF 28 available from www.theatreinenglish.ch

Rumpelstiltskin tells the tale of a mysterious man able to spin straw into gold and the fiendish bargain he drives. This production incorporates all the traditional pantomime elements, terrific songs and one bad pun after another to produce what's sure to be a crowd pleaser.

Please note that the show takes place the weekend before and two weeks after GEDS' production of *Caught in the Net*.

19 NOVEMBER (6.30PM – 8.30PM)

Girl Be Heard

Girl Be Heard – A show organised in partnership with

the United States Mission to the United Nations in Geneva as part of the Future She Deserves initiative. will be performed at Auditorium Pictet A, Maison de la paix, Geneva

Renowned theatre company *Girl Be Heard* brings its inspirational show to Geneva for a fast-paced evening of drama and debate. Telling stories through music and theatre, the performance highlights the challenges which teenage girls face, revealing how young women can become brave, socially conscious leaders in their communities. The show will be followed by Q&A with the audience, exploring opportunities to empower women and girls to lead healthy, fulfilling lives, safe from violence. Don't miss it!

The event will be followed by a drinks reception with the performers.

- Introduced by
- Prof. Elisabeth Prügl, Director of the Programme on Gender and Global Change, The Graduate Institute
 - Amb. Pamela Hamamoto,

Permanent Representative to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in Geneva.

UNTIL 20 NOVEMBER

Shake

Shake, directed by Dan Jemmett at Théâtre de Carouge, until 20 November This sumptuous show is a frenetic feel-good take on Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.

Discounted tickets are available to those who take part in the theatre's survey aimed at the international theatre-going community in Geneva. To take part, copy paste this link into your browser:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/13XPORgDFAyOP3FeDC9zFwgg6-dTf3zIuKQApafRocs/viewform?usp=send_form

2–4 DECEMBER (7PM)

Jekyll & Hyde

Jekyll & Hyde: The Musical by the International School of Geneva at La Grande

Bossière Campus, Centre des Arts Auditorium, December 2–4 at 7pm.

Tickets are CHF 20 and can be purchased at the door or booked online at <http://www.centredesarts.ch/>

Based on Robert Louis Stevenson's classic thriller, *Jekyll & Hyde* is the gripping tale of a brilliant mind gone horrifically awry, set to a powerful pop-rock score by Frank Wildhorn with book and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse.

In an attempt to cure his ailing father's mental illness by separating "good" from "evil" in the human personality, talented physician Dr Jekyll inadvertently creates an alternate personality of pure evil, dubbed Mr Hyde, who wreaks murderous havoc on the city of London.

As his fiancée Emma grows increasingly fearful for her betrothed, a prostitute, Lucy, finds herself dangerously involved with both the doctor and his alter ego. Struggling to control Hyde before he takes over for good, Jekyll must race to find a cure for the demon he has created in his own mind.

10 DECEMBER (8PM)

Renegade Saints

What better way to warm your heart this winter than with a generous helping of belly laughs? Your last chance to catch the side-splittingly funny *Renegade Saints* improv this year is at 8 pm on 10 December at Mr Pickwick's Pub on Rue de Lausanne. Tickets cost CHF 10 and include a voucher for one free drink; doors open at 7.30 pm.

ONGOING

Youth theatre

The Village Players in Lausanne have decided to look into the possibility of starting a Youth Theatre for boys and girls from the age of nine up through to the early teens, and had positive feedback on a survey carried out at their stand at the recent Lemans International Fair in Palais de Beaulieu.

The group would like to

know the age and gender of any children that might be interested in becoming involved in a Youth Theatre group, as well as their expectations e.g. whether they are interested in dancing, singing, acting, backstage support, directing, and/or other activities.

The project would be free of charge and aims to promote English-speaking theatre amongst the younger generation in the Lausanne region and to breathe new life into the club.

The initial goal of the project is to prepare a one-act production to be performed at the Village Players' theatre in Lausanne in late spring 2016 for an audience of children, parents and members of the Village Players.

The theatre would be led in Lausanne by members of the Village Players with experience of teaching young people or with broad experience in theatre.

Those interested are invited to email Derek Betson at derekbetson@msn.com

New members

A warm winter welcome to our new members:

Karolina Bozek
Megan Davies
Jan Dijkstra
Sharon Gill
Natalia Juszka
Jo Marceau
Théo Marceau
Maria-Luz Peñacoba
Mike Sell
Sue Sell
Peta Tracey
Ana Veljkovic
Deborah Hill
Tineka Smith

Spring social

Were planning a social gathering for our members this coming spring, and we want to know what you'd like to do. If there's a particular type of activity you'd like to see GEDS organise, or if you would like to organise an event yourself, email your ideas to geds@geds.ch.

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WHAT'S ON ... AUTUMN

| Who | What | When | Where |
|--------------------|--|--------------|---------------------------------|
| GEDS | <i>Caught in the Net</i> – show | Nov 17–21 | Théâtre de Terre-Sainte, Coppet |
| GEDS | <i>The Country House</i> – playreading | 24 Nov | English Church Hall |
| Girl Be Heard | <i>Girl Be Heard</i> – show | 19 Nov | Maison de la paix |
| Théâtre de Carouge | <i>Shake</i> – show | Until 20 Nov | Théâtre de Carouge |
| GEDS | <i>Improv for actors</i> – workshop | 28 Nov | Scouts Hall |
| Ecolint | <i>Jekyll & Hyde</i> – show | 2–4 Dec | Centre des Arts |
| GAOS | <i>Rumpelstiltskin</i> – show | 4–6 Dec | Théâtre de Marens, Nyon |
| GEDS | <i>Rabbit Hole</i> – auditions | 7 Dec | English Church Hall |
| GEDS | <i>My Wonderful Day</i> – playreading | 8 Dec | English Church Hall |
| Renegade Saints | <i>Renegade Saints</i> – show | 10 Dec | Mr Pickwick |
| GEDS | <i>An evening of short plays</i> – playreading | 12 Jan | English Church Hall |
| GEDS | <i>Working Girl</i> – auditions | 14 Jan | English Church Hall |