

Newsletter

In Players In Players

Summer 2004

In Player agenda:

Saturday 18th September

Opening Season Party

Wednesday 22nd September

Play Reading

Friday, 24th September

"Merry Wives" Workshop

Hello All,

Summer has finally arrived though you wouldn't know it the day I'm writing this - we've got afternoon storms, wind, lightning and even a few hail stones thrown in for good measure! Summer also means a well earned break from theatrical activities after what has been another very busy year, although not for us of course! But never mind! September brings with it a new season and I am happy to announce three great events in one September week - that's right, 3 events in 7 days! Can it be done? You betcha!

First off we've got the opening season party on Saturday, September 18th - so get your glad rags on for that, then on Wednesday 22nd there is the first of our monthly playreadings - so get your reading glasses on for that, and on Friday 24th we've got the first of our new weekly workshops - so get on the phone and book your place **NOW!**

In Players Opening Season Party

The In Players Opening Season Party will take place at Café Carels II, Saenredamstraat 32 in Amsterdam Oud Zuid on Saturday September 18th. This year there will be a special **Pub Quiz** hosted by Mike Williams. As with any quiz there will be a prize for the winning team although we shan't announce what this is until the very last moment! Should be fun! Also, I am currently in the process of arranging a few surprise acts and performances so don't be surprised if your telephone rings! Or you can always call us!

In addition to this I can promise any In Player that I will personally buy them a drink providing they order it *in the altogether!* So come on, show us you're members! One final thing, there will be a small spread laid on by Carel II's marvelous master of ceremonies, Fritz! Everyone is welcome - and feel free to bring one of your partners.

The evening begins at 800pm; the pub quiz at 9pm

Play reading - *My Mother Said I Never Should* by Charlotte Keatley

Charlotte Keatley's first mainstage play, *My Mother Said I Never Should* was premiered in 1987 at The Contact Theatre, Manchester and in 1989 at London's Royal Court. It has been translated into twelve languages and is performed across the world. The play moves back and forth through the lives of four women, and sets the enormous social changes of the previous century against the desire to love and be loved.

"In its revelation of mother-daughter emotions over the years, the play is without its rivals. It is a classic." The Times

Come and join us for what should be a lovely playreading. It takes place on **Wednesday 22nd September at 19.30 (starting at 20.00)** at Café Carels II, Saenredamstraat 32 in Amsterdam Oud Zuid.

Carels Café II is situated between Hobbemankade and Ferdinand Bolstraat. Trams 16, 24 and 26 pass nearby. Look carefully on the map, as there is another café with the same name in Amsterdam.



Is there a play you would like to hear read? If so, contact Mike Williams
mjw41a@hotmail.com (020) 623 0665

In general we arrange the place to be and the practical things around the play reading, the only thing you as a participant need to do is participate and pay for your own drinks in the bar.

Workshops

From Friday 24th September we have the use of The Spieilerij every Friday night throughout the year. The space will be used either to host workshops or as rehearsal space for future productions. As you may know, many previous In Players productions such as Dr Hairy, Drought and Three Sisters began their life at the workshop stage. Workshops can also be used for other things such as developing certain theatrical skills or trying out new ideas / experiments etc. If you would like to host a workshop or a series of workshops on a Friday evening then get in touch with our contact person, Polly Perkins (020) 623 0665. For those participating, the cost of the workshops are FREE to In Players members and 2 euros for non-members.

In recent years we may not have had a regular place to perform, but now at least we have a place to play!

The Merry Wives of Windsor Workshops

The first series of workshops will be on Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor* and will be presented by Svarupa. It is one of Shakespeare's most bawdy, dirty, hilarious and indeed accessible comedies. As a script it is very flexible, has been performed in a variety of ways and lends itself well to modern interpretation and improvisation. There has also been talk of setting some of the songs to original music. So who knows, maybe the In Players will have a Christmas musical after all!

The workshops will begin on Friday September 24th at 7.30pm (starting at 8pm) at The Spieilerij, Rozengracht 73. Meanwhile, as a taster, here is a synopsis of the play followed by a personal message from Svarupa:

Merry Wives of Windsor - Synopsis

Sir John Falstaff, a knight down on both luck and cash, hatches a scheme to raise funds. He will seduce Mistress Ford and Mistress Page in an attempt to get at their husbands' money. Falstaff, however, has overestimated his ingenuity; the two women compare their letters, and—finding them identical—hatch a plan of their own to make a buffoon of the knight. They

send him letters in return to encourage his advances. In the meantime, Pistol and Nym, whom Falstaff has sacked, go to Ford and Page's husbands with the news. Ford, who is jealous and paranoid, disguises himself and meets Falstaff. He pretends to be an illicit lover who wishes to hire Falstaff to woo Mistress Ford on his behalf, to which Falstaff agrees.

As Mistresses Ford and Page pursue their sport, Falstaff is first hidden in a basket of dirty laundry and cast into the Thames, then later dressed as a woman and beaten. Finally, the women tell their husbands about their secret revenge, and all plot one last humiliation for the feckless Falstaff. As this is going on, Page's daughter, Anne, is being courted by three suitors, only one of which she actually cares for: Fenton. Anne is included in the plans for Falstaff; she is to lead the children of the town—all dressed as fairies—in an attack on the knight as he waits in the woods for Mistress Ford and Mistress Page. As they prepare for the final prank, the husband Page pulls Slender (one of Anne's suitors) aside and tells him to elope with her that evening; Mistress Page pulls her favorite suitor, Doctor Caius, aside and says she wants him to elope with Anne. The two men are to recognize Anne (she'll be wearing a mask, after all) by the color of dress she wears. To add to this, Anne makes plans of her own to elope with her beloved Fenton.

Falstaff, dressed as Herne (complete with antlers), is mercilessly tormented by the children dressed as fairies. The wives and husbands eventually reveal themselves to the much chagrined Falstaff, who is forgiven by all. In the midst of this resolution, Slender and Doctor Caius reappear. It seems that Slender thought Anne was to wear a white dress; Caius believed her to be wearing green. Both men, having erred on the color of her dress, mistakenly ran off with boys instead of Anne. Fenton arrives with Anne in their wake; the two have married, and Anne's parents begrudgingly accept the fact.

"Why sir, what think you of the Merry Wives as musical"?

"Suits me well, me lord. Suits me well."

Just to add a note to Mike's. As he said, "Merry Wives is bad, mad, and deliciously dirty. The rumour is that Queen Elizabeth was so taken with the character of Falstaff in Henry 1V that she requested Shakespeare to write a comedy with Falstaff as lover. This he accomplished in short order and in prose. His one and only prose play. So we shall no difficulty with the Bard's poetry! In the past, "Merry Wives" has been puffed up to double its original size and also cut in half. We shall work from a script which has cut the scenes that slow the action and have no meaning for us today.

"Merry wives," is listed as a comedy. In truth it is a farce. He has created characters that are so rich in their idiosyncrasies that one can imagine his actors, (in direct disobedience to his, Advice To The Players, in Hamlet).....as going over the top in the playing of their parts. Shakespeare did not shy away from sending a put down towards personal enemies that might be sitting in the audience.

In other words "Merry Wives," was topical and there is no reason why this should not be so today. It all depends upon the actors - their liveliness and imagination. The only truly sane characters in "Merry Wives," are the woman. This might be in wise deference to the Lady who requested the "made to order" comedy and echoes nicely with the laments of recent feminism.

Obviously, we have a play for all seasons. Still it is very important that the script be read in it's entirety, the endless plottings and counter plottings of the characters, so that in our first meeting we can read quickly through the script, both cutting and changing obscure words to current ones so that we can get to the fun part of creating and playing these wonderful people.

The American Book Center..(ABC) has a data base listed on line that has many publications of Merry Wives. I noticed that two of the listed publications..(paperbacks) are in the price range of 3.50 Euros. Also that if they do not have them in stock, it would be wise to give 3 to 4 weeks for the arrival of an order.

PS Hey was Hamlet written after Merry Wives?..in which case maybe the advice to the players was because of.....?

Svarupa

Thanks Svarupa. In order to get the best out of these workshops you will need to have read the play beforehand. A FREE copy can be downloaded from <http://www.abacci.com/books/book.asp?bookID=1329>

Also, so that Svarupa can plan effectively she would like some idea as to the numbers attending each week so, if you would like to join her on what promises to be a wonderful adventure of fun and mirth, please contact her beforehand. 020 - 665 6963 / dal.rem@wanadoo.nl

Claudia Sehnaoui

We were sorry to hear that former In Players member, Claudia Sehnaoui recently passed away. Claude died in hospital in Nice on 27th June at 1200. Her burial was also in Nice. She was 49 and would've been 50 on 7th January. She leaves behind her daughter, Frederique, and two lovely grandchildren.

Claude was a lovely person whose charm and patience endeared her to all who met her. She did some wonderful work as a costume designer for The In Players working on many shows including *Great Catherine* and *Puss In Boots*. I'm sure everyone in *Puss In Boots* will remember going round to her house in the Hemonystraat to be personally fitted with the headwear she designed individually for each member off the cast - there were some really wonderful creations for what was an extremely large cast. But her work didn't end there. Each performance evening she would meticulously check everybody before they went on stage dealing with any problems they may have occurred with her customary good grace and humour.

Our condolences go out to all her family and those who knew her well.

Membership

Have you forgotten to pay your annual membership? Or would you like to renew your membership?

As you know, membership of the In Players is very inexpensive but is greatly appreciated! Our group exists pretty much on a shoestring so the good will and kind contributions of our members goes some way towards helping us keep afloat. In return for your small donation you will be provided with such an array of entertainments and opportunities that you will feel as though you have cheated your grandmother out of her life savings! So sign up NOW! You know it makes sense!

If you haven't made a contribution in recent months (or years), or if you would like to remain on the In Players database, please feel free to fill in the enclosed pay slip or send your payment to :

Rekening 3633494 In Players International Drama Group, Postbus 11437, 1001 GK

Amsterdam In Players Membership costs: 40 euros for individual members; 50 euros for families

New Committee

As mentioned in May's Newsletter, Christine, Caroline and Louise have stepped down from the committee. I'm sure you would like to join me in thanking them for all their hard work and dedication throughout what was a difficult time for The In Players. Well done the three of you - you kept the show on the road! Remaining on the committee are Ken and Luud and they have been joined by Nathalie Koch and Mike Williams.

Here, Caroline says goodbye:

"Dear members,

Two years in the In Players committee is short but very interesting and fun. Due to demanding work and lack of time I've decided to leave the committee and my main task of writing the Newsletter. I'm happy to hand it over to Mike Williams who I'm convinced will do a great job with the Newsletter, and keep you all informed what's going on. Do support him by sending in your contributions to make the Newsletter even more interesting. I would like to wish the new committee great success and good fun! See you all at a future activity. Caroline"

Would you like to join the committee? We are still looking for one, maybe two people.

Being on the committee means meeting up once a month and then following up on the things that have been agreed at that meeting. It's a chance to help steer the group in a way that you think will benefit it as well at the same time making use of a particular skill or attribute. Although we are particularly looking for someone with *publicity* skills, please feel free to call us anyway, our meetings are always very informal and your input would be most welcome - you can contact any of the committee members whose details are at the end of this newsletter.



The committee are currently looking into the possibility of new theatre space with a view to staging our **next production in November/ December**. If you would like to propose an idea please contact us by August 31st.



The Open Stanza

If you are interested in watching or performing English poetry, there is The Open Stanza.

The Open Stanza generally consists of 4 invited poets and a musician. NB this is not an open mike! At the moment The Open Stanza is on holiday but will return in autumn - watch this space!

Open Stanza Info: www.wordsinhere.com

Submissions to openstanza@wordsinhere.com or contact Jeremy Keighley (020-770 4984)

Open Mike Night

The ABC Treehouse on Voetboogstraat has a regular open mike night for singers, poets, musicians' etc which is generally on the last Friday of the month - if you would like to perform or attend please contact curatorsclub@abc.nl or 020 - 5352573. The next night is Friday 30th July at 8pm, price 4.50 euros. More info <http://www.treehouse.abc.nl/>

ENGLISH CASTING seeks
Native English Speaking Actresses
Actors/Performers.
Tel 0204270301/ 023 5577989
Send C.V, Photo to info@englishcasting.com

Deadline for Next Newsletter

If you would like me to include an item in the next newsletter please contact me by August 31st. mjw41a@hotmail.com / Westerdoksdijk 41a 1013 AD Amsterdam. I would be particularly interested in:

- Theatre reviews
- Film reviews
- Going on Holiday? - why not send a postcard to us and we'll print in the September Newsletter - address at the end
- Opinion and Comment, Stories, Jokes etc

Meanwhile, have a great summer,

Your editor

Mike

Did You Hear About the teacher who went cross-eyed?

He couldn't control his pupils

In Players Committee

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