



The Semi-Circle
production

**THREE
ONE-ACT
PLAYS**

**EXPERT IN
FLOWERS**

by Krista Jaquet

**SHOP FOR
CHARITY**

by Charles Mander

**THE
CELEBRATION**

by Anton Chekhov

May 4, 5, 6, and 8,
10, 11 & 12, 2007
at Schönes Haus



www.semi-circle.ch

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WELCOME



This is one of my first official tasks as president of the Semi-Circle and I extend a warm welcome to you the audience and thank you for supporting our club.

Once again the club has worked hard to put together an entertaining evening of theatre for you. The three plays offer a diversity of situations, covering a broad span of emotions and situations, as you can see by the authors of the plays.

It is important for the club to nurture and develop our own home-grown authors, as well as presenting traditional pieces for you to enjoy.

This evening of three short plays presents an ideal situation for club members to develop and present their own work, or to put a fresh face onto old favourites.

We will start the evening with our very own home-grown author, presenting her first work, followed by a well known British author and finishing the evening with classic Chekhov.

We thank you for coming this evening, hope you will enjoy the production and perhaps be inspired to join our club.

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PROGRAMME



Expert in Flowers

by Krista Jaquet

Directed by Krista Jaquet

Music composed by Helen Super and Ueli Afflerbach

Music performed by Ueli Afflerbach

Assistant Director: Mary Sinnott

Four mid-lifers dealing with the sudden death of their wife / close friend, Vivi. Through tears and giggles, excitement and numbness, they realize that a part of them is gone. Their relationship to Vivi brought something out of them all - good and bad - that no one else ever will. The dynamics of the group is altered – nothing is the same as before.

Cast in order of appearance

Vivi	Deirdre Hertog - Buurman
Pascal	David Cox
Sonya	Zuzana Cox
Larry	Michael Clarke
Tammy	Sasha Buff

INTERVAL OF 20 MINUTES WITH BAR SERVICE

Shop for Charity

by Charles Mander

Directed by Diana Zuger

Assistant Director / Prompter: Helen Baldomero

This amusing play is about the value of charity shops: do they really help the Third World or are they just a sop to the consciences of middleclass people who run them?

Cast in order of appearance

Hilda	Susan Aeschbach-Jagger
Doris	Penny Rettig
Brenda	Joy Scherer
Mrs. Pike	Valerie Walder
Mr. Galbraith	Eric Collino

The Celebration

by Anton Chekhov

Directed by Jamie Sievert

Anton Chekhov is one of the greatest playwrights to have ever lived. Along with Henrik Ibsen, he helped usher in modern theatre. The difference between Ibsen and Chekhov, however, has been summed up nicely in this way: Ibsen would write a play about a man who commits suicide because he lost a million dollars. Chekhov would write a play about a man who commits suicide because he won a million dollars. Chekhov wrote a number of one-act plays. They are generally farces, and “The Celebration” is no exception. In this play, a bank president is derailed in his attempt to celebrate the bank’s anniversary by an insolent employee, a frivolous wife and a demanding client. The play ends in a riot of confusion and frustration as the bank’s directors attempt and fail to go ahead with the celebration.

Cast in order of appearance

Kuzma Nikolayevitch Hirin	Andrew Thompson
Andrey Andreyevitch Shipuchin	Chris Morrison
Tatian Alexeyevna	Deirdre Hertog - Buurman
Nastasia Fiodorovna Merchutkin	Natacha Berthelon
Bank Board Member	Peter Hilton
Bank Board Member	Bernhard Rytz

**DAVID
CUSACK
1/4
as before**

EXPERT IN FLOWERS



Krista Jaquet

Writing a play has always been my dream. Jamie, without your generous guidance, constructive critique and inspiring support this play could not have been written. The Semi-Circle, many thanks for courageously producing it. Talents, thank you for lending lives to the characters. Helen & Ueli, thank you for composing the immortal part. Urs, you made the play dimensional. Mary and Suzy, you polished it. Family and friends, your love and care make dreams come true.

An Amsterdammer by birth, Deirdre Hertog returned to Basel recently with her family after a prolonged stay in the south of France. The opportunity to rediscover her old passion – the stage – was too much to resist. This unusual double appearance with the Semi-Circle afforded Deirdre a great opportunity to play both a dead and an alive person on the same night.

Deirdre Hertog



David Cox

Having taken a long break from Semi-Circle productions David returns to the stage in the role of a hateful war reporter and grieving husband. For your information David is neither hateful nor an “expert-in-flowers” ... although he is quite adept at dodging bullets in his everyday combat zone of the Basel Pharmaceutical industry !“

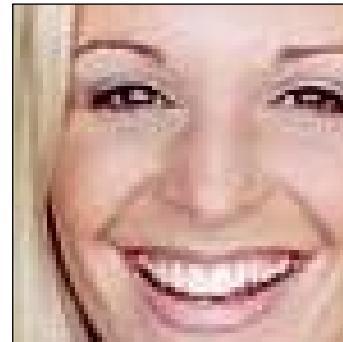


Zuzana Cox

The part of Sonya was a challenge for me. Sonya is funny and sad, serious and sarcastic, she has spots and imperfections, she is beautiful and ugly. She has her loves, her hates, her friends and her family. She is average and special. Sometimes she is happy, angry, sad and irrational. She is a real woman. I know many women like Sonya; this part is dedicated to them. To the real women of this world!

Even before I joined the Semi-Circle – which, believe me, was a long time ago – I had the ambition of persuading house plants (other than cacti) to survive for at least a minimal period of time in my apartment. All in vain! If ever there were a Movement for the Liberation of House Plants, I would be their prime target! It was a great joy, therefore, to be invited to take the role of Larry and for once in my life become the “True Expert in Flowers“.

Michael Clarke



Sasha Buff

Sasha Buff was born in Sydney in 1974. She trained as a TV and Film Actress in Zürich where she now lives. This will be her stage debut, and she’s looking forward to the challenge. During the last few months she has concentrated on “living” the role of Tammy. She’s become quite an “expert in flowers” ;-).

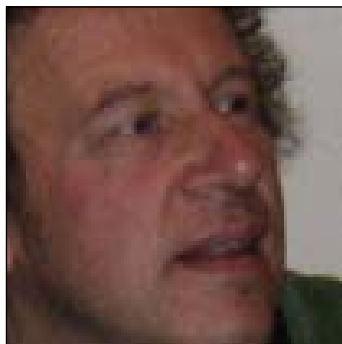
With the prospect of fun with the writer-director, a play I was very enthused about and a witty, energetic cast and a fabulous production manager, I was unable to say no. I don’t know what I am doing exactly but we hope you like the outcome.

Mary Sinnott



Over 30 years has Ueli been picking and grabbing in and on the strings of electric and acoustic guitars. He's one of the few people who started his stage career at the tender age of 14 - at the famous Basler Atlantis - followed by diverse stages of clubs, concert halls and open airs with known acts like Bockmeiers Best, Outland and Anni Bootz Band. Besides composing and arranging he also works as a freelance sound engineer. Since 2007 he has been playing the bass with the new "Helen Super Trio".

Ueli Afflerbach



Helen Super

Helen Super is a professional singer and composer. She received her musical education at Berkley University, California and has had numerous live performances from clubs in Basel to Las Vegas casinos - performing together with majors such as B.B. King, Johnny Cash, Huey Lewis and Engelbert Humperdick, and recorded several CD's. Music is not her only sphere - she works as a medium and healer, and runs her own Psychic Institute which provides work shops and training sessions.

helen super trio

Helen Super, vocals

Rolf Stucki, guitar

Ueli Afflerbach, bass

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SHOP FOR CHARITY



Diana Zuger

After playing the mistress in charge of all her "sweeties" in "The Cagebirds" I am once again in charge, but not on stage. This is for real! "Shop for Charity" is an amusing play, thought provoking and full of "characters". We've had a great time rehearsing, so enjoy!

Penny started her theatre career many aeons ago in Botswana, when a request to be production manager developed into props, prompt and 'noises off' as well. Since then she has acted, directed as well as assisted backstage in many productions. Her first involvement with the Semi-Circle was as stage-manager for Oliver in 2003 and her stage role was the Mirrored Gazer in the recent production of Cagebirds.

Penny Rettig



Susan Aeschbach

So far (touch wood) I have managed to avoid hospitalization during rehearsals for this play & am determined to appear on stage! Penny & I were both cast at auditions and are still going strong. Although I have my age and place of origin in common with Hilda, I would like to think I am a little less scary and more sensitive. However, I know quite a few "Hilda's" upon whom I have based my characterisation.



Joy Scherer

Joy Scherer has been a member of The Semi-Circle since the mid-1980s and has performed a variety of roles on-stage, backstage and front-of-house. In “Shop for Charity” she plays Brenda, a vociferous lady with a fondness for gin - a role quite in contrast to some of the more genteel characters she has portrayed.

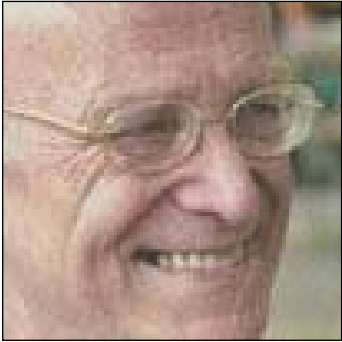
A ghost of seventy, a charlady with jazzy pink slippers, a woman having an affair with a married man, a gallery owner - and now a deaf old lady who is slightly batty - which one is the true me? I have a horrible feeling it may be the last!

Valerie Walder



Eric Collino

Eric has appeared several times on stage with the Semi-Circle. Audiences either do not notice him or at least seem to tolerate him. So far nobody has thrown anything at him. Perhaps his luck will persist in this performance also? Some people aver that, in this role, he is type-cast. Onlookers will judge for themselves.



Helen Baldomero, a native Brit, has been a member of the Semi Circle since 1987 and has been involved in many different aspects of the group both on stage and off. This time she is back stage again, offering her services as prompter to the ladies at ‘The Charity Shop’ and as a support to Diana Zuger, the Director.

Helen Baldemero



THE CELEBRATION



Jamie Sievert

Directing a play is very different from acting in one. As an actor, everyone takes care of you. As a director, you take care of everyone else. By the time the play opens, you become the discarded grandparent that no one has any use for anymore. Nevertheless, it is splendid to see the actors’ development, the dedication of the backstage crew and the appreciation of the audience.

Being the treasurer of the Semi-Circle, a person who is careless about his appearance, and highly task-oriented, I am type-cast for the role. I differ, however, in one salient respect: If I were to chase after women it would not be for the same reason as Hirin does.

Andrew Thompson



Chris Morrison

Chris Morrison came to Basel about seven years ago to work in a local pharmaceutical factory. Having survived five years as a timpanist he decided to go for something much more down-market here and joined The Semi-Circle shortly after arriving in Basel. Recent roles have been the weirdo in ‘A talk in the Park’ and Mr. Bumble in ‘Oliver!’ He’s very glad to have finally been given a straight and serious character to play in a very straight and serious play.





Natacha Berthelon

I turned up at the auditions and, after exchanging a few short grins, I was conned into filling out a form. Then I read the part of a lady called Natascha, described as a “horrible, repulsive hag”, begging for money. Too much of a coincidence for my acting debut?! Unfortunately, the director agreed.

An Amsterdammer by birth, Deirdre Hertog returned to Basel recently with her family after a prolonged stay in the south of France. The opportunity to rediscover her old passion – the stage – was too much to resist. This unusual double appearance with the Semi-Circle afforded Deirdre a great opportunity to play both a dead and an alive person on the same night.

Deirdre Hertog



Peter Hilton

Peter Hilton has always wanted to play a person of importance on stage. It fulfils all of his latent feelings of power to play the part of a bank director. Peter has acted in and directed a number of plays for Semi-Circle in the past and looks forward to continuing this relationship in the future. He is from Britain and came to Switzerland some 14 years ago.

As an expressive youngster, Bernhard studied with the Kleine Akademie für Darstellende Kunst in Freiburg, Germany. His command of drama lead him to receiving an audition with the prestigious Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Succumbing to family pressure, however, he instead pursued a career in Economics. Leaving the corporate world behind, Bernhard is now awaiting a response to his application to the Drama Studio of London.

Bernhard Rytz



SEMI-CIRCLE NEWS

FEATS - Festival of European Anglophone Theatrical Societies - is an annual competition between English-speaking amateur theatrical groups resident in mainland Europe to see who can put on the best production. It will take place in the Hague 25-29.5.2007. This year “Expert in Flowers” is representing the Semi-Circle at the competition.

Based on the success at FEATS we can undisputedly call the Semi-Circle one of the leading amateur theater groups in Europe. The Semi-Circle has had 4 entries and has won 4 prizes and 1 commendation!

2004: “Feeding the Ducks” by Michael Park, directed by Diana Zuger. Best Actor Award Michael Clarke.

2002: “Guts” by Jamie Sievert, directed by Andy Tobler. Discretionary award for the director and for stage management (stage manager: Mary Sinnott).

2001: “Hard Candy” by Jonathon Rand, directed by Rebecca Scriven. Discretionary award for team work.

1999: “An Englishman Abroad” by Alan Bennett, directed by Richard Levitt. Commendation: Norman Koeth.

FEATS is also a chance to see four evenings of first-class entertainment consisting of three one-act plays per evening. If you want to visit the Festival please see www.feats2007.org for more information.

Wish good luck to the cast and crew of “Expert in Flowers”!

KOMM TEXT

1/2

as before

PRODUCTION TEAM

Production manager	Suzan Wilson
Publicity	Michael Clarke, Tony O'Sullivan
Programme and publishing	Christine Comerci, Krista Jaquet
Tickets and mailings	Suzan Wilson and crew
Lighting and sound	Ron Sitter, Gay Beggars
Stage manager	Conny Heim
Stage design / Expert in Flowers	Urs Albrecht
Stage, scenery and set building	Carolein den Reijer, Robbie Pipoz, Doreen Sitter
Make-up and hair	Stephanie Nemeth-Parker, Christine Mapes, Liliane Carando
Production support / prompters	Helen Baldomero, Peter Hilton Suzy Weingarten
Box office and ushers	Helga Keller, Anne Maerki, Nina Meier, Claudia Seper, Martin Palmer Rusty Swarts, Jen Warren
Bar manager and bar team	Susanne Thommen Peter Hilton, Christine Comerci, Francesca Buehler, Tony O'Sullivan Veronika Berrie, Peter Berrie
Video photography	Aidan Bell and crew
Still photography	Ute Kessel
Printing	WBZ - www.wbz.ch

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JOIN US!

As you sit there waiting for the lights to go down, the music to play and the story to unfold, you may wonder how all this is arranged and organised, who are the people involved and why?

Well, it is just a bit puzzling. After all, our spare time is precious to us, so why spend it involved in amateur dramatics? Some explanation is to be found in the biographies of the cast and director. Of course, other than those you see on stage, there are many more less visible team members who help plan, organise, support and execute the action that is seen on stage, from sound and lighting to props and paying the royalties; more such retiring creatures are to be found serving behind the bar, pushing buttons at the lighting and sound desks and sneaking behind the curtain. Our members come from many different countries and backgrounds. If you are curious enough to try-out, either on stage or in a less conspicuous place please ring Suzan Wilson (the president of the Semi-Circle) - +41 -(0)78 710 1226, or fill in the card in this programme or visit our website www.semi-circle.ch.



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