

A belated Happy New Year to all Studio friends and supporters. We have a number of treats in store on stage and some important decisions to make that will carry our little theatre into the future.

Normally at this time of year, we are celebrating a clutch of nominations in the Daily Echo's Curtain Call Awards. Alas, the DECCAs are no more, which is a pity as the awards dinner was a marvellous celebration of thespian talent in the south and a chance to mix and mingle with our peers.

Williams, Wilde and Wordplay

But we still have plenty to celebrate with a successful season since July when Sam Luckman's Blanche DuBois lead a great ensemble cast in Tennessee Williams' steamy *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Real life American Terry D'Onofrio flexed his pecs as Stanley Kowalski, ending an impressive two-year stint with us, contributing both onstage and behind the scenes. As his secondment here finishes, he is heading back State-side at the end of January and Studio is sad to see him go.

Oscar Wilde's elegant and bitingly witty *An Ideal Husband* proved popular with our audiences, who enjoyed Wilde's wordplay. Wordplay of another sort, Ronnie Barker's mangling mispronunciation and misunderstanding about quantities of fork candles was an even bigger drawer in the pre-Christmas slot, selling every seat and rocking Studio with guffaws galore.

Our own cabinet reshuffle

Our AGM gave us a new chairman in Colin Hayman and a new Director of Productions in Rowena Greenaway, who is even now setting in motion the search for directors and plays for next season to tickle your fancy.

Online ticketing

One of the topics up for discussion both at committee meetings and the AGM was the introduction of online ticketing. It was decided to go ahead and we are in the process of setting up the system so that those who are computer literate can book their tickets online. We are hoping it will be in place for our celebration of women's right to vote, *Here Come the Girls*, in March.

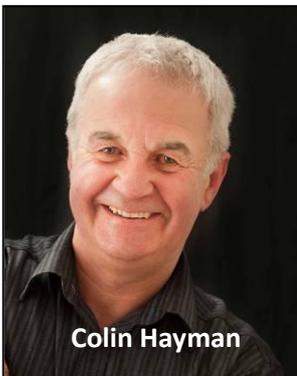
For those who are less confident on a computer keyboard, we are also working with Salisbury Information Centre so you can still book your tickets in the time-honoured fashion, either in person or by telephone. As soon as the system goes live, we'll let you know.

Building a better theatre update

The other major game-changer for Studio is the proposed extension to the theatre, which will give us additional rehearsal and dressing room space. The i's have almost been dotted and the t's crossed on the land transfer from Wiltshire Council, giving us the space for the extension. Our fundraising guru Jackie Pilkington has worked tirelessly since we launched our £350,000 fundraising bid in October 2016 and has so far totted up a tad over £82,750 in pledges or cash. The latest donation to drop through her letter box is a cheque for £2,500 from the Geoff and Fiona Squire Foundation based here in the Close, and we thank them for their generosity.



A Streetcar Named Desire



Colin Hayman



Rowena Greenaway

But she feels that we are unlikely to reach our target in the present financial climate and has put forward suggestions for alternative ways of achieving our goal. These ideas are currently being explored and in the meantime we are also looking for someone to step into Jackie's fund-raising shoes as she steps down from the role for personal reasons.

As ever, our favourite way of raising funds for our theatre is through our productions and our current season has these temptations to part you from your cash through ticket sales:



February 19-24: Les Misérables (Schools Edition). Join us at the barricades as Studio Youth Theatre proudly presents Alan Boublil's and Claude-Michel Schoenberg's iconic musical version of Victor Hugo's classic story of injustice, heroism and love set against the turbulent background of the 1832 June rebellion in Paris. This is the schools edition special adaptation, licensed by Music Theatre International and Cameron Mackintosh (Overseas) Ltd, for performance exclusively by young people. Reports from the rehearsal room are very encouraging and tickets are flying out of the box office door, so grab yours while you can. A must-see.

STOP PRESS: Les Mis Gala Evening Friday February 23 at 7pm

This performance will be a gala fundraising evening. Tickets at £20 will include a glass of fizz and canapes on arrival plus a programme.

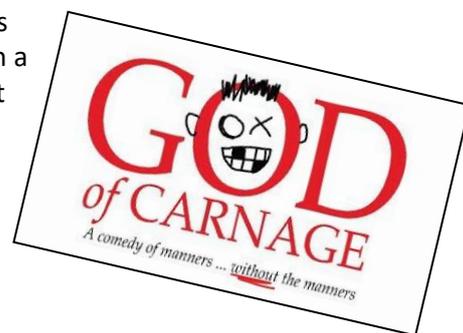
March 15-17: Here Come The Girls. A century after the landmark ruling giving women the right to vote, Studio celebrates the songs and plays written by the Actresses Franchise League and some of their famous literary supporters in the fight to turn public opinion and change British democracy forever. Lesley Bates has compiled an evening of songs, sketches and playlets, a smidge of history and a smattering of music hall melodies, which will also showcase our entries to the Totton Festival of Drama 2018.



May 21-26: Jane Eyre. Director Tamsin Jacson brings one of our best-loved classics to the Studio stage. Follow our spirited heroine as she journeys from unloved orphan to governess in a house where dark secrets lurk in Polly Teale's inspired adaptation of Charlotte Bronte's hauntingly romantic novel.

July 9-14: The God of Carnage. What lies beneath the surface of two respectable Parisien couples? This is Yasmina Reza's award-winning examination of what happens when a rational discussion about boys behaving badly gets out

of hand. The gloves come off as a youthful dust-up leads to fisticuffs - and that's just the parents. Jackie Pilkington and Ann Acton share the directing honours on this brutally funny modern classic. Contains strong language.



All performances take place at Studio Theatre in Ashley Road, Salisbury, unless otherwise stated. Our box office is now Salisbury Information Centre in Fish Row. Tickets are £10, under 16s £8, and performances start at 7.30pm, unless otherwise stated. Seats can be booked on 01722 342860.