

Noises OFF

"ART"

For those members of the audience who had previously attended Pinter's *Betrayal* in December of last year, we could be forgiven for experiencing a slight feeling of déjà vu whilst enjoying *Art* in the Studio Theatre this week. A three-hander, a stripped-back set, friendships between middle-

aged men laid bare, examined and tested to destruction. Even the cast - Alex Scrivenor and Chris Williamson - and the director Graham Smith - were back for more. Only the irrepressible Sarah Nias was missing (although spotted among the audience - she just can't keep away), the third hand being taken up by Andrew Middleton, last seen as the mild-mannered detective in *Witness for the Prosecution*, and now playing the equally mild-mannered,

inoffensive and somewhat bewildered Yvan to perfection.

Obviously it does little justice to *Art* to make lengthy comparisons with another play. It is a splendid work in its own right. Whereas the title might not be the most inviting, there is no doubt that the debate concerning the questions: What is Art? When does being "cultured" cross over into being pretentious? How do you affirm friendship while being





honest with your friends? - are presented in the cleverest, lightest and funniest of ways. The audience, of which I was a part, were relaxed and laughing within seconds of the play's beginning, and our enjoyment, engagement and focus never let up.

Alex and Chris as Marc and Serge made a great pairing, probing and prodding each other's attitudes and

opinions, and occasionally ganging up on the hapless Yvan, who was horrified to witness the apparent disintegration of his friends' relationship, while inadvertently acting as a catalyst for their exasperation.

This was an absolute tour de force by all three - a huge task to master the script, yet performed with confidence, aplomb and faultless

stagecraft. Congratulations to all three, and to Graham, who, although not a very longstanding APS member, has already assembled an impressive portfolio of directorial successes with us. As ever, the audience members left the theatre with the warmest of praise and compliments. The APS bar has been raised yet again!

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THE COMMITTEE

There has been a change to personnel on the committee, with Patrick Knox temporarily taking over as Treasurer. Thank you, Patrick, for coming to help in our hour of need!

THE 100 CLUB

As we regularly report, the 100 Club exists to give vital support to our fund-raising efforts on behalf of the Theatre, and in its short existence we have already raised over £2500. But there are plenty of tickets remaining, and more than a half of the total of APS members

have not yet joined up - **please do so as soon as you can**. The 100 Club, as of now, raises around £2000 per year, which is ring-fenced to fund our ambition to install new seating. If all remaining APS members who have not yet joined, were to join the 100 Club, we would raise

around £5000 each year, and our new seating would soon be within our grasp. Please see "Support Us" on the website, or email sst100club@gmail.com

The last draw took place on 12th August, and the lucky winner received a cash prize of nearly £40.

The next draw will take place on October 14th.

all so moved and inspired. So much so that I've been dancing and jigging round the lounge all morning!! Huge thanks and congratulations to the director for creating something so mesmerisingly phenomenal. We'll be booking tickets for next Saturday in Yeovil - just have to see it again".

At APS, we worry about timing our entrances, through a doorway, on the ground. In this production, four dancers

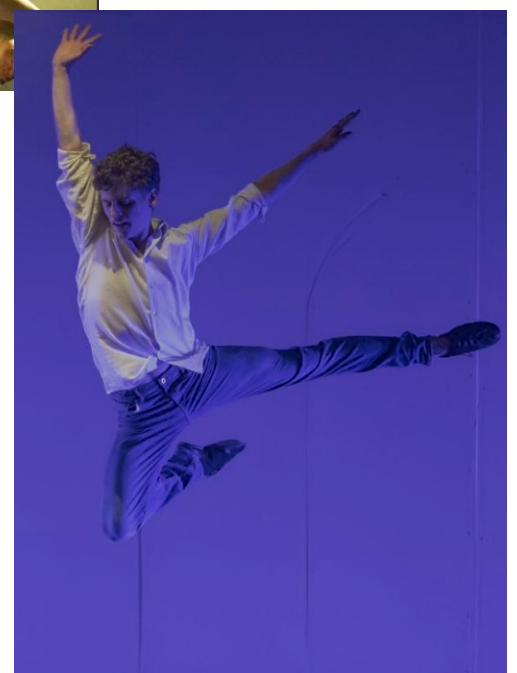
entered stage right, airborne, seemingly flying, having launched their breathtaking leaps with absolute precision timing.

For all of us, it was a wonderful feeling to have so many APS members together away from the theatre - the largest 'APS night-out' away from our theatre in living memory, and a thoroughly enjoyable one at that. We ought to do this sort of thing more often.

"GROWING PAINS" – PROJECT DANCE

At the end of July, 19 APS members attended the Première Performance of *Growing Pains* by Project Dance, and what an amazing experience that was.

It was a story told entirely through dance, and just through imaginative choreography managed to be a heart-rending, warming and moving piece of dance theatre. The astonishing talent of the young cast had us all captivated from the first seconds of the opening sequence. Sara Danesh-Pour best summed it up by writing "Wow, just wow. What a heartbreaking yet exhilarating journey, hitting every note pitch perfectly. The cast were beyond exceptional, truly. We were





PLAYREADING - "THEFT"

Imagine returning from a pleasant anniversary celebration to find your houses has been burgled. In this witty thriller the culprit is still in the house and , for a while, he convinces the returning couples that he is a policeman. Unmasked as the thief, Spriggs reveals he knows a number of uncomfortable truths that disrupt two seemingly happy marriages and one formerly strong friendship.

A dozen or so APS members gathered on a warm August evening to enjoy the latest of our play-readings, *Theft*, by Eric

Chappell. The play was thoroughly enjoyed by all present, and, as a candidate for performance in the future, it was agreed that it could be an excellent choice. We are grateful to Jessica Colson who organised the evening. It also gave us the opportunity to christen our new Premises Licence with an open bar - which also proved popular!

NEW MEMBER

We are delighted to welcome Frits Hutchinson as a new member of APS, and hope that you will have a long, active and rewarding relationship with us.

COMING UP...

December 4th - 9th 2023 - 'Twelfth Night' by William Shakespeare directed by John Crabtree

January 2024 - 'A Wife for all Reasons' by Stef Easton. Directed by Adrian Harding.

March 2024 - 'Bouncers' by John Godber. Directed by Sarah Nias.

June 2024 - one of... 'Relatively Speaking' by Alan Ayckbourn, or 'Sylvia' by A R Gurney, or 'Theft' by Eric Chappell

September 2024 - 'My Mother Said I Never Should' by Charlotte Keatley. (Director needed)

December 2024 - 'The Importance of Being Earnest' by Oscar Wilde, directed by John Crabtree.

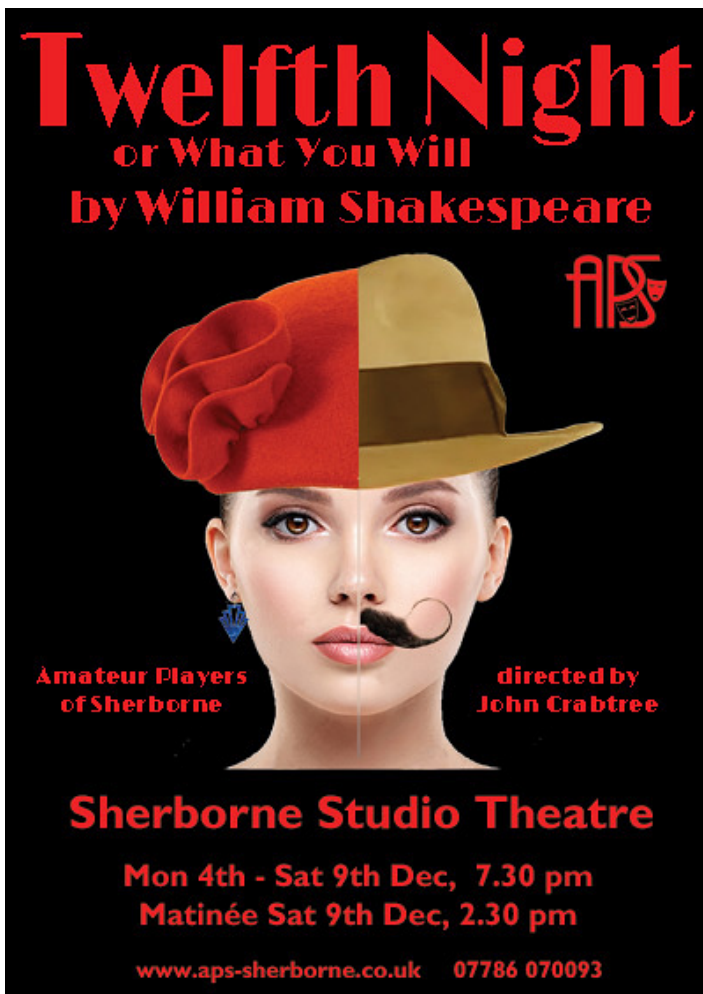
MAJOR PROJECT - GRANT APPLICATION

Over the course of the summer a number of committee members, in particular Adrian Harding and Richard Jones, put in a tremendous amount of work on behalf of the APS in order to submit a bid for funding. The bid was for a grant from the snappily-named *Wolfson Foundation Theatres Trust Theatre Improvement Scheme for Improving Environmental Sustainability*,

and the hope is that, if successful, we will receive funding towards the replacement of our stock of lighting with state-of-the-art LED lights. The benefits of these are that they clearly use a great deal less electricity and thus enhance our already-impressive "green credentials", but also that they give off far less heat. The issue of an overheated stage and auditorium in the summer is a

perennial one for us, and gives us a lot of concern for the comfort of actors, audience, and especially the gallery crew.

We are confident that Adrian and Richard have put together a strong bid, but there will be a great deal of competition, and the outcome will not be known until December. Wish us luck!



Twelfth Night
or What You Will
by William Shakespeare

APS

Amateur Players of Sherborne

directed by John Crabtree

Sherborne Studio Theatre

Mon 4th - Sat 9th Dec, 7.30 pm
Matinée Sat 9th Dec, 2.30 pm

www.aps-sherborne.co.uk 07786 070093

NEXT PRODUCTION

Our December production of Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" has been cast and is ready to begin rehearsal as soon as *Art* has cleared the stage.

An everlasting popular and much-loved play, this is certain to be a huge hit with our audiences on the upcoming cold winter nights.

We will be bringing you updates as the weeks go by - but is never too early to remind you: this will be a sell-out, so get your tickets early!

Tickets will go on sale through the usual channels in early November.