

Welcome to the latest edition of View From The Wings and news of what's past, present and yet to come at Studio Theatre. As I write, our July production of **Noises Off** (our second sold out production since Christmas) is underway, we are saying a fond farewell to one President and a warm welcome to a new one, and gearing up for an exciting season to come, which kicks off with something new: Say hello to the Studio Fringe.

## The season so far....

But first, a quick round up of the season so far which began with a new sound desk and lighting console in place. On stage was the poignant and timely **Be My Baby** about forced adoption in mother and baby homes in the 1960s. Our Thursday evening performance was followed by a brief talk and Q&A session with Linda Johnson from the Movement for Adoption Apology (MAA) - an organisation currently seeking a formal apology from Westminster for the



practice that robbed so many mothers of children and vice versa.

We staked our dramatic reputation – see what I did there – on a production of **Dracula** in May, which sold out all public performances plus a private performance booked for an audience of appreciative school children studying the text.

Our summer show, **Noises Off**, sold out four weeks in advance. Only recently released for amateurs after its 40<sup>th</sup> birthday tour and West End run, it demands a revolving two storey set to show what's on stage and what's going on behind. It's something we've never done before and hats off to designer Alistair Faulkner and his set-building team plus the entire backstage team for making it happen. (Oh, the cast worked quite hard too!)

Each of the productions in the second half of our 2024/25 season under outgoing Director of Productions Tamsin Jacson has

been entered into the prestigious Rose Bowl Awards – a scheme recognising those deemed to be best from the South West's amateur drama and musical societies. The awards ceremony is in November and we'll let you know how we get on.

## C@ST carries on with monthly meets

In between our productions, there have been monthly C@ST events for members (and sometimes their friends) ranging from script-in-hand performances – one of them a premiere of a play by Philip Goulding – a fight workshop with the maulers of ASW

South wrestling school (who are actually really nice people, but don't tell anyone) and a re-enactment of film short Dinner For One, which is required viewing on New Year's Eve in some countries across the globe. In July, we hope to hold an end of term garden party (weather permitting) in our refurbished garden area – thanks to Jemma Clark working miracles with mulch, a cunningly disguised cesspit, and clever planting. A specially commissioned bench dedicated to the memory of much-missed member Anna Lomax is also scheduled to be installed.

## Barney becomes Studio President, James stars on stage and Renata goes to the Palace

In June, Christopher Biggins, who has been our President for the last few years and visited on several occasions, stepped down with regret. Happily, award-winning playwright, novelist and former Studio Theatre alumnus, Barney Norris (pictured left), who has been our Patron for the last ten years, agreed to step into Biggins' shoes.



It was also ten years ago that VFTW recorded that member James Bradwell had won a place at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. Since then, with training complete, James has been on stage and screen and we are pleased to report that a number of us travelled to Bristol Old Vic this summer to see James in the professional production of the thought-provoking *The Beautiful Future is Coming*. Nice to note that the DSM on this production was Karen Habens, who was highly valued backstage at Studio before she went off to train.

Renata McKinnell had to take a day off from rehearsals for *Noises Off* recently to attend her investiture as an MBE at Buckingham Palace for services to the Army. Congratulations from all of us.



Moving on, we have a new season, curated by current DOP Rowena Greenaway, to announce, beginning with.....

### THE STUDIO FRINGE

A week of events including a play premiere, a burlesque workshop, a dance spectacular and a conversation with a best-selling author.

**September 2-4: 7.30pm – Love and Other Passions.** Premiere of Peter Liney's comedy. £10.

**September 5: 6pm – Burlesque Workshop.** 18+ only. £15.

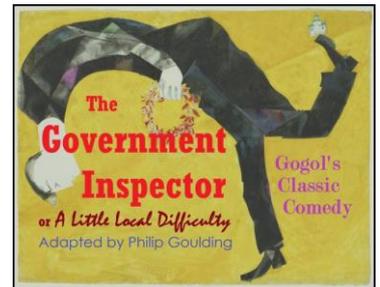
**8.15pm – The Flaming Feathers.** Vintage dance spectacular. Early bird tickets £15 until midnight on July 31<sup>st</sup>, then £17.

**September 6: 7.30pm.** Best-selling author of the Atticus Priest novels **Mark Dawson in conversation** with Michael Bowyer. £5.

**Tickets for all Studio Fringe events are on sale now.**

### Our new season 2025/26.....

**October 13-18: The Government Inspector.** George Gouling directs his brother Philip's updated adaption of Gogol's classic comedy of deception, corruption and small-town snobbery. Mayor Wyndham-Pitts has been told by the powers that be that an inspector will call, but is John Petty the man the town bigwigs think he is.....?



**December 5-13: The Ice Queen – a**

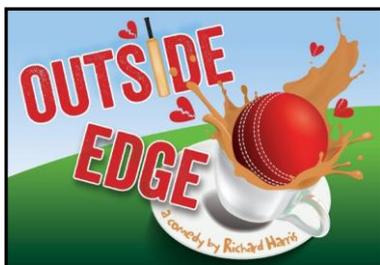
**pantomime.** The return of Studio's family pantomime – this time based on Hans Anderson's The Snow Queen, penned by Ian Flindell, who wrote our sellout Pirate Panto – Treasure Island. Jill Redston takes the reins. Evening

performances: 7pm. (Dates and a Saturday matinee tbc)

**February 16-21: Outlying Islands.** Tensions mount on a remote Scottish island as Britain edges towards war in 1939. Dour Mr Kirk and his niece Ellen live



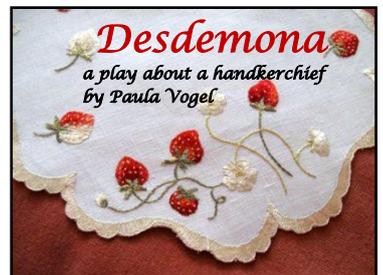
surrounded by nature in David Greig's rarely revived drama. Their solitude is shattered when two young scientists arrive ostensibly to study the island's birdlife. But is there more to their visit? Joanna Daniel and Tamsin Jacson co-direct.



**March 23-28: Outside Edge.** English summers and cricket go hand in hand – cricket teas, assembling a team each week, threats of rain, not to mention bowling maidens over. Roger has his work cut out and supportive wife Miriam is

running thin on patience in Richard Harris's very British comedy. Colin Hayman directs.

**May 11-16: Desdemona – A Play About A Handkerchief.** Pulitzer prize-winning playwright Paula Vogel's take on the three women in Othello. Meet Desdemona, Emilia and Bianca, but not as you think you know them from Shakespeare. Lorna



Matthews-Keel brings this intriguing all-female play to the Studio stage.

**July 6-11: Hands Across the Sea/Still Life.** A Noel Coward double bill, helmed by Jackie Pilkington and Jill Redston. Taken from Coward's Tonight at 8.30, Hands Across the Sea is a light drawing room comedy of very bad manners and Still Life is the one-act play that inspired the iconic weepie, Brief Encounter.

**Plus**

Studio is hosting performances from Stagecoach Performing Arts in August and Elevate Dance Company in October.



All performances take place at Studio Theatre in Ashley Road, Salisbury, unless otherwise stated. The box office for Studio Theatre productions is Salisbury Information Centre in Fish Row. Seats can be booked on 01722 342860 or online at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/studiotheatresalisbury](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/studiotheatresalisbury)