

GOOD DOCTOR
SPECIAL

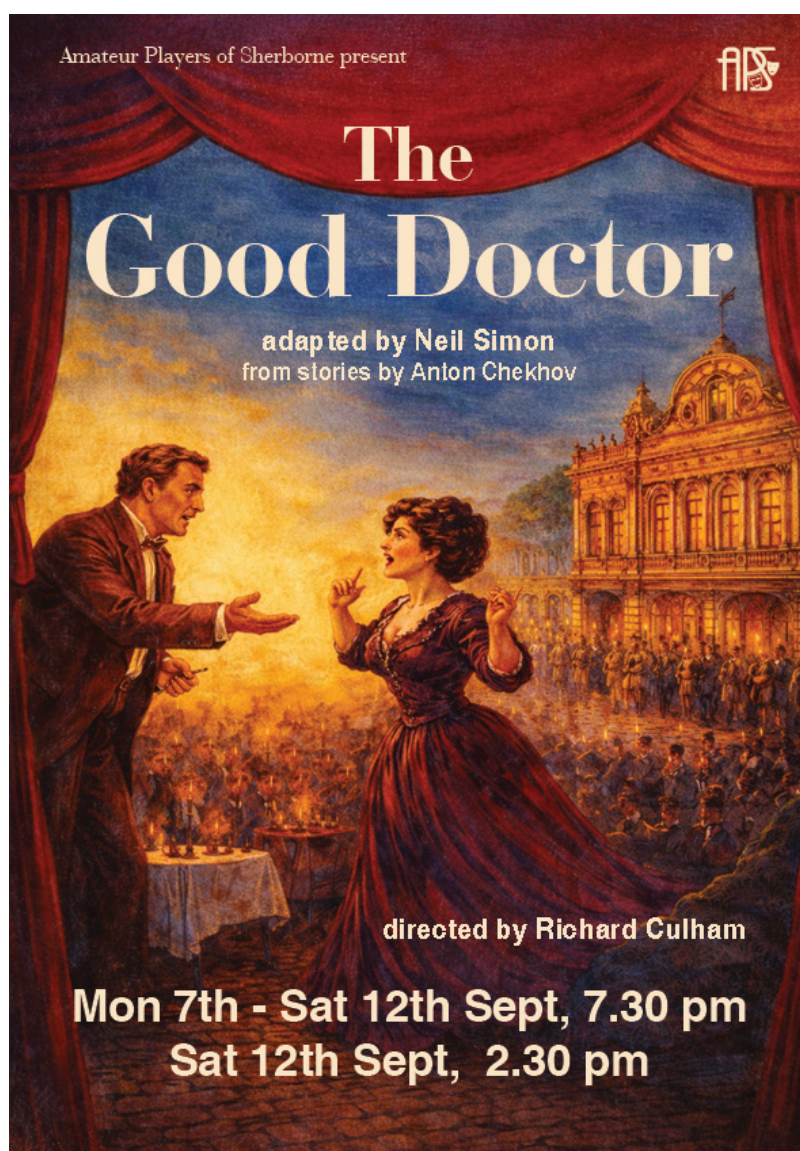
NOISES OFF

THE GOOD DOCTOR

'Another great evening'; 'such fun'; 'fabulous', were just a few of the comments overheard as the audience left the theatre on Monday evening. *The Good Doctor* had, judging from the laughter and applause, been much appreciated and with good reason.

Neil Simon's adaptations from Chekhov short stories, as well as some Simon originals, presented a range of human situations that revealed the complexities and timelessness of human behaviour. Our human frailties and foibles, our strengths and weaknesses, our kindness and cruelty were highlighted in the eleven scenes.

The audience arrived to find themselves at an



intimate nineteenth century Moscow Arts theatre; Russian signs, candlelit tables and the Russian voice that welcomed us all to the start of the evening's performance set the scene perfectly.

The Writer, played by Alex Scrivenor, presented a somewhat diffident Chekhov, a man who, although a consummate writer of short stories, revealed some doubts about his abilities. He introduced each scene, often with a shy smile and wry sense of humour, providing an insight into the characters and the complexity of their behaviour.

The eleven strong cast responded with empathy and enthusiasm to the demands of playing nineteen contrasting roles. We, the audience, witnessed a range of human experiences and emotions: love, lust and loneliness; the funny, farcical, unkind and greedy. In the first half, the audience laughed at Cherdyakov's (played by Richard Jones) embarrassing sneeze, which subsequently haunts him, yet had some sympathy for his clumsy attempts to rectify the situation. The Writer queries why it is that we enjoy and

laugh at others' misfortunes. Certainly the agony and farcical nature of the Sexton's toothache and extraction, handled expertly by Cameron Thrower and Rachel Butcher, was greeted with much laughter and appreciation. The mood of the evening then switched to the tentative encounter between an Old Man and Woman, sensitively played by Martin Williams and Sally Matthews. Their loneliness and isolation were made even more poignant by being told through hesitant spoken words and song.

Another mood swing was cleverly carried through by Alex, who, with a shrug, a saucy look at the audience and change of jacket, transformed from Writer to

Seducer; a man more interested in the game of seduction and his own cleverness in his manipulation of the husband and wife, played by Richard Jones and Samantha Elgar, than he was in carrying through the actual act.

In the second half the often hilarious 'war' of words between the retired Army and Naval Officers, well played by Richard Gaunt and Adrian Harding, as they took turns to compile the perfect meal, was thoroughly enjoyed by the audience. Samantha Elgar's insensitive, persistent and incessant chatter wore down not only the Bank Manager, suffering with excruciating gout, but also the audience. And yet the





"The Writer"



"The Governess"



"The Audition"



"A Defenceless Creature"



"The Seduction"



"The Drowned Man"



"Surgery"



"Too Late for Happiness"



"A Quiet War"



"The Arrangement"



"The Sneeze"

situation still provoked much laughter. In contrast Sarah Probert's nervous, garrulous young woman, who so wants to act in a Moscow theatre, transforms when she manages to persuade the Director to allow her to perform the closing scene from *Three Sisters*. Like the Director we, the audience, suddenly appreciate her ability, sensitivity and potential as a young actress.

The Good Doctor, directed by Richard Culham, certainly gave its audiences throughout the week a most enjoyable, uplifting visit to the theatre. Thank you to everyone involved.

Caroline Wallace

We at APS are no great believers in false modesty, and so are very pleased to be able to share with you some of the comments published by one of the experienced critics who attended our Monday night show:

It is quite brilliant....

...a delightful, illuminating, thought-provoking and very funny evening...

...the astonishing depth and breadth of talent among the company members....

...a triumph, not many companies could muster the forces to do it so very well...

Read the full report at

<https://www.thefttr.co.uk/the-good-doctor-amateur-players-of-sherborne/>

NEW MEMBERS

The following new members have joined APS since the last edition of *Noises Off*. We are delighted to welcome you, and hope that you will have a long and productive association with the Players.

Nicole Forbes-Marshall
Holly Robson
Rachel Carter
George Lipop

Are you a patron of our shows, but not a member, or perhaps just on our mailing list - isn't it time you joined us? Just go to aps-sherborne.co.uk/join-us.html Most of our members are not actors, but folk who want to support the APS and keep in touch with our activities.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our Annual General Meeting took place on August 21st and was very well-attended. President Mark Lambert and Chairperson Jessica Colson reflected on another very successful year, both in terms of artistic endeavours, and of the development and improvement of the building. Patrick Knox, our Treasurer, presented a report on the

APS's robust finances, while Secretary Richard Culham outlined our plans for the coming year.

Once the formal business was over, it was time for the Summer Party, and all present enjoyed the excellent refreshments provided by Gilly, Sarah and Jessica.



SHERBORNE STUDIO THEATRE – NATIONAL AWARD FINALIST!

We are thrilled to be able to announce that the Sherborne Studio Theatre has been nominated as a finalist in the **Great Amateur Theatre** category of Theatres Trust's **Great British Theatres Awards**.

The Great British Theatres Awards recognise the theatres that are making an outstanding contribution to the UK's cultural life. The awards were launched as part of Theatres Trust's 50th anniversary celebrations.

The Great Amateur Theatre award celebrates the breadth of extraordinary ambition showed by volunteer-led theatres in providing great buildings for their communities.

We have made a shortlist of only 4, out of a total of 200 entries to the Theatres Trusts awards, and are obviously hugely proud of this achievement, whatever the final outcome, which will be revealed at the Great British Theatres



GREAT
BRITISH
THEATRES
AWARDS

**Great Amateur
Theatre Finalist**

Awards ceremony at Central Hall Westminster on November 2nd. Our congratulations, in addition, go to our friends and colleagues at the Swan Theatre, Yeovil, who have also been nominated in the same category.

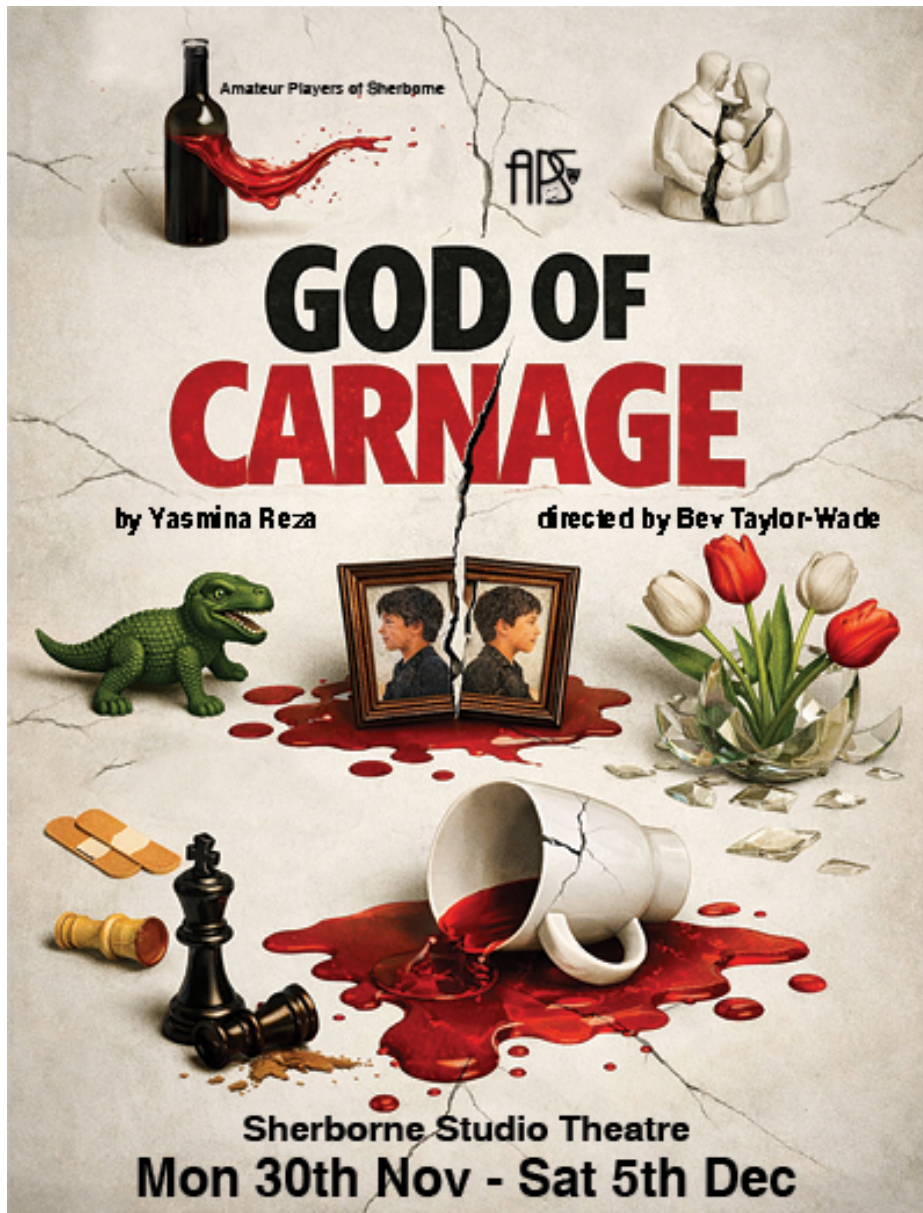
This award was open to any amateur theatre building that has undergone a retrofit or refurbishment project to better meet the needs of modern and future audiences within the last five years. We have been recognised for the effort and commitment we have made to improve accessibility –

the newly surfaced approach to the main entrance and hearing loop – and environmental sustainability – insulated walls, draught-proofed floor and use of 100% renewable energy.

Joshua McTaggart, CEO of Theatres Trust says, *“From ... insulating draughty buildings to installing hearing loops...., these finalists showed how amateur theatres can play an outsized role in connecting their communities. Theatres Trust knew there was a need to celebrate theatres, but our judges had an incredibly hard time selecting the finalists. I want to extend my congratulations to every one of them.”*

Naturally, we will notify APS members of the outcome following the awards ceremony.

NEXT PRODUCTION



God of Carnage dives deep into one of the most dangerous places on Earth: parenthood. Two sets of parents meet up to deal with the unruly behaviour of their children, Ferdinand and Bruno. During an

argument in a public park, resulting from Ferdinand refusing to let Bruno join his "gang", Ferdinand has knocked out two of Bruno's teeth with a stick. What happens? A calm and rational debate

between four grown-ups about the need to teach kids how to behave properly? Unfortunately not: in the event, the parents become increasingly childish and the meeting descends into a chaotic night of name-calling, tantrums and tears before bedtime.

Boys will be boys, but the adults are worse - much worse. Using irrational arguments, their increasingly hysterical discussion covers loaded topics including sexism, racial prejudice and homophobia. *God of Carnage* is a comedy of manners - without the manners.

The play was published in 2008. Originally written by Yasmina Reza in French, it was first performed at the Gielgud Theatre in London, starring Ralph Fiennes, Tamsin Greig, Janet McTeer and Ken Stott. The 2009 Broadway production drew much acclaim and became one of the 21st Century's longest-running plays.

Tickets for the APS production of *God of Carnage*, which is directed by Bev Taylor-Wade, will go on sale from **October 19th**.

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 well over £10000. This has enabled us to complete various projects - new auditorium seating, new floor and insulation, improvements to the bar area, new doors, installation of a hearing loop and wifi - and plenty more too. Our thoughts are now turning towards improving and updating our stage lighting, as well as doing something about the temperature in the building - and we hope to realise this dream in the not too distant future, thanks largely to the 100 Club. But there is plenty

of room for new members, and more than a half of the total of APS members have not yet joined up - please do so as soon as you can. However, you do not have to be an APS member to join the 100 Club. Please see "Support Us" on the APS website, or email sst100club@gmail.com in order to join.

Since the last *Noises Off*, we have been pleased to welcome **Cameron Thrower** and **Richard Gaunt** as our latest members to join the 100 Club.

The most recent draw took place on August 8th, and the lucky winner took home £49.20. Next time this could be you!

The next draw will take place on **October 10th**.

BIRTHDAY BOY!



The cast and crew for *The Good Doctor* were delighted to celebrate the significant birthday of APS President Mark Lambert after the Dress Rehearsal on Sunday September 6th.

Mark is our longest-serving APS member, having joined 34 years ago, and remains the most active continuous contributor to APS life. As well as being our President, Mark is also Box Office Manager, Sound Designer & Technician, Website Manager, Programme Designer, PR Guru and Lead Set Constructor. Recognising his achievement of a venerable age was the least that we could do in return.

Thank you to Samantha Elgar for baking and decorating a wonderful birthday cake.

Adrian Harding

MONTHLY SOCIALS

APS members and their friends gather on the last Friday of most months for an informal get-together and chat, starting from 7.00pm. What has become known as "the best value

bar in Sherborne" is always open! Why not come along and join us? The next get-togethers will be on **25th September**, **30th October** and **27th November**.

A NIGHT AT THE OPERA

We are delighted to welcome, for one night only, the Exeter Opera Group as part of their autumn tour of *Samson et Dalila* by Camille Saint-Saëns.

Exeter Opera Group presents this powerful opera in an engaging and accessible format. Performed in the original French, with piano accompaniment, the production is supported by English narration that helps guide the audience through the story and its dramatic developments. This approach highlights both the beauty of Saint-Saëns' music and the emotional depth of the opera, while making it easy to follow for all listeners. Exeter Opera Group is proud to feature a cast of very talented singers, whose strong vocal performances bring intensity and colour to this iconic work.

As this edition of *Noises Off* goes to press, **tickets have already been put on sale** (initially for members only), and are sure to sell very quickly.

Members are urged to visit the APS website for information on how to obtain tickets - if you have not already done so! *Samson et Dalila* will be

performed in the Sherborne Studio Theatre on **Saturday 10th October**, starting at 7.30pm.

C. Saint-Saëns
'SAMSON ET DALILA'

A tale of passion, betrayal and unstoppable strength.

CAST:
 Samson – Robert Felstead
 Dalila – Iryna Illytska
 Le Grand Pretre de Dagon – Ian Spackman
 Abimelech – Nick Young
 Un Vieillard Hebreu – Edwin Dizer and Marco Orazio Mazzarella
 Un Messager Philistin – Lee Andreae
 Premier Philistin – Sara Trumper
 Deuxieme Philistin – Stephen Moseley

CHORUS
 of Exeter Opera Group

Director – Nick Lawrence
Music Director – Stephen Moseley
Piano – Richard Lucas

PERFORMANCE:
 Sherborne Studio Theatre
 Marston Rd
 Sherborne
 DT9 4LB
 October 10th @ 7:30pm
TICKETS: £12 and £14
 via www.aps-sherborne.co.uk

POWER. DESIRE. DESTINY.
 EXPERIENCE ONE OF OPERA'S GREATEST MASTERPIECES.

COMING UP....

**One Servant,
Two Masters**

by Carlo Goldoni

directed by
Martin Williams

for Amateur Players
of Sherborne

Sherborne Studio Theatre
Mon 8th - Sat 13th March
aps-sherborne.co.uk 07353 074944

Our Spring production is to be *One Servant, Two Masters*, directed by Martin Williams.

With its roots firmly planted in the tradition of Italian

"Commedia dell'Arte", Carlo Goldoni's 1746 play has long been a favourite of modern translators and has been adapted in countless ways and into countless languages. This is not

surprising, as the piece has remained hugely popular ever since, overflowing with absurd misunderstandings, mistaken identities, improbable disguises and generally hilarious chaotic nonsense. One recent (2011) adaptation (*One Man, Two Guvnors*) was an enormous hit in the National Theatre, the West End, Broadway and world-wide.

Translated by John Crabtree and adapted by Martin Williams for APS, we move the action from the 18th to the late 20th century, but keep the sun-soaked backdrop of Venice with a thoroughly and distinctly Italian flavour throughout. We also remain conscious of the Commedia tradition: the characters of Pantaloon, Harlequin, Columbine and so on may have different names, but their characters and behaviours are easily recognisable.

Do not try to find deep explorations of the human condition, or philosophical reflections on the nature of reality in this play! It is a piece of sheer absurdity, guaranteed to be great fun for all.

A read-through of the play will be held on **Friday 13th November**, 7.30pm, and auditions will be held on **Tuesday 17th** (7.00pm) and **Sunday 22nd November** (2.30pm). All are welcome.