

Prompt:

the newsletter for **Teignmouth Players** and **TYKES**

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March 2020

!!!!STOP PRESS!!!!

Just at the moment we were about to go to press, the Government has changed it's COVID19 advice which now states that we should now actively practice social distancing including the avoidance of gatherings such as pubs and **theatres**.

With this in mind, the Ice Factory Studio Theatre is officially **CLOSED!**

This means that you should not go to the theatre at all. The access key has been removed and anyone wishing to enter the theatre should contact Daniel Saint (our Chairman) in advance.

This also means that we will not be in a position to rehearse for Foundation for Murder, which is now postponed until a future date.

Arrangements are being taken for the cast of Travel Notes to rehearse remotely for the next month.

If you have any queries, please email info@teignmouthplayers.com

We apologise for any outdated information contained in this issue as a result of this update

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME.

Where do I start??

First we had Storm Ciara, then Dennis, and Tempest. I wasn't expecting us to go back to the letter 'C' again!

I had prepared my usual introduction blurb immediately after The Tempest, but things have changed in a way none of us could have forecast in the past few days.

Unless you have spent the last week to ten days on the moon, you will already have guessed much of the content of this edition of Prompt. We are in very odd times that none of us have experienced

on this scale, and we, as a society, community and part of the extended Amateur Dramatics community need to be ready for some game changing weeks ahead.

As many will be aware by now, TADDFest has been postponed until the Autumn, dates TBC.

At the time of writing, postponements and cancellations I can confirm are:

ABS Theatre have taken the difficult decision to postpone their ground breaking production of 4000 days. We have this pencilled in dates for later in the year.

I understand (although we have not at this moment had confirmation from them) that the Poetry Festival is not going ahead.

Roger Smith is finding out TAAG's plans for the coming weeks, and their use of the downstairs room.

We have, today (Sunday 15th March), held auditions for Travel Notes, and we made the offer of remote auditions for anyone who felt attending would compromise themselves and others. Arrangements for song material and remote rehearsal materials for this production are being made if it becomes impossible for normal rehearsals to take place.

Your committee and trustees are working hard to try and find our way through this awful situation everyone is in, and I have to be honest with you all, I can't at this point say with any certainty when our programme for 2020 will be back on track. We will be reviewing things as we go, and that is all we can do.

There is a Teignmouth Players Members group on Facebook which, if you are not part of (46 members are in the group!), I urge you to join this group if you can, or ask someone who is part of the group to keep you up to date with these fast moving events. If you can't find the group, please contact us on info@teignmouthplayers.com and we will point you in the right direction.

I appreciate that there are members who do not have internet access or do not use Social media, but to enable us to get information out as quickly as possible, electronic methods are the best ones. I would urge you to 'buddy up' with members who have access to the various on-line resources we have, to keep yourselves up to date with developments

The good news is, we are in a financial position to ride this storm, although it will obviously put a dent in where we want to be for this year, but it is one of those things we have to take on the chin.

Whilst 2020 is still very young and looks to be very disrupted, 2021 season is now very much in our sights, and we are looking for directors to come forward for the season. If you have the necessary skills, please make your availability known so we can get the planning process under way for the next season. Please, in the first instance, let me know at info@teignmouthplayers.com and I will take your name forward to the committee. We are also looking for production co-ordinators, a vital rôle to assist directors who choose to have the help in organising their production, corralling cast information, liaising with others outside the Players where necessary, arranging production meetings and simply keeping everything together. Full training and guidance will be given to those volunteering to help.

I know it can be a dangerous precedent to single members out for special mention, but there is one unsung hero who I suspect many don't know is helping us out as much as she is. **Pat Rowley** can be found cleaning the Ice Factory Studio Theatre every week, and I am sure you will join me in saying a huge 'thank you' to her for her efforts. I know most do, but please can we all help Pat by tidying and cleaning up after ourselves. Every bit of help we can give will make the job that she does voluntarily that little bit easier.

To keep everyone safe, the two cupboards on the right as you enter the downstairs room are now to be kept locked at all times. All hazardous materials, including paints and chemicals are to be kept in the cupboard that now has COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) notices on the door, and tools should be kept in the cupboard next to this.

Remember, if you have any comments, suggestions or ideas that you think might improve the Players, let me know (info@teignmouthplayers.com). I promise to get back to you as soon as possible.

I will sign off by saying a huge 'thank you' to all members who have helped with the start of what will be a very unusual 2020, and for all the support and encouragement individuals have shown me personally since I have found myself in this new rôle within the Society.

Please, stay safe and the phrase 'sit back and enjoy the ride' comes to mind, although I'm not sure 'enjoy' is the right word at the moment.

Daniel Saint

Chairman, Teignmouth Players

PRODUCTION NEWS.

Foundation for Murder – Ice Factory Studio Theatre, 5th – 9th May

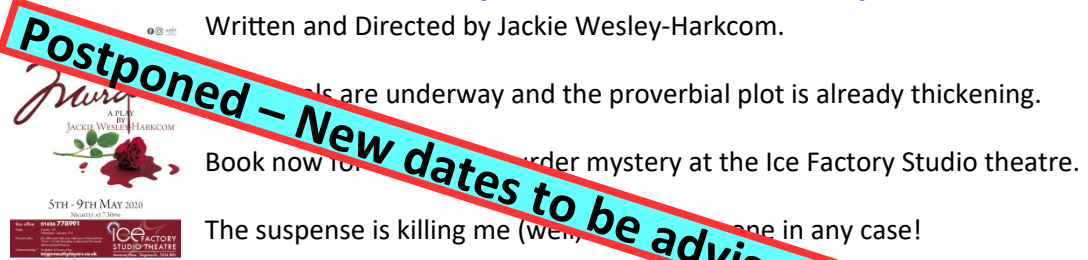
Written and Directed by Jackie Wesley-Harkcom.

...s are underway and the proverbial plot is already thickening.

Book now to... murder mystery at the Ice Factory Studio theatre.

5TH - 9TH MAY 2020

The suspense is killing me (well, one in any case!



Travel Notes – Pavilions Teignmouth, 16th – 18th July

Written and musically directed by Jeff Hocking, Directed by Steve Wreford.



If you didn't get the opportunity to audition for our July musical production due to worries about Covid-19, we are happy to audition by video. Contact info@teignmouthplayers.com

TRAVEL NOTES – Behind the Scenes Call to Arms!

This promises to be a wonderful colourful, bright, lively show, which will include some traditional costumes, songs and dances, but it doesn't come without help behind the scenes, so please can we have some volunteers for the following to make this inaugural musical show something to be remembered.

Wardrobe Coordinator

To attend production meetings to discuss costume requirements with director, Steve Wreford and Musical Director, Jeff Hocking.

- To take cast measurements.
- To liaise with the wardrobe department of other societies for costumes.
- To source costumes not available from our wardrobe or from other societies.
- To organise a sewing bee for costumes that can't be bought or hired.
- To liaise with Jane Athey, TPs' resident Wardrobe Mistress, who is unable to be involved with this production, but will be on hand to offer advice and help.

We have links with other societies that have provided us with costumes in the past, and the show is set in the modern day so the cast will be able to supply their own in a number of cases.

Sewing Bee Volunteers

We need pinners and cutter outerers as well anyone that can bring and use their sewing machines. We can keep these secure at The Ice Factory for you.

Seamstresses

For anyone who may prefer to be responsible for one costume in the comfort of your own home.

Stage Hands and Tech. Crew

As a Stage Hand you would be given instructions on what to do and when. Tech. Crew would need some degree of knowledge of lighting and sound.

Ideally, you would need to be available for all four shows, plus the dress and tech rehearsals, but if you can only make a couple of shows then we'd rather that than not at all.

For any of the above, please email me on membership@teignmouthplayers.com or call and leave a message (01626) 778991

Chaperones

Nathan is also looking for chaperones to look after the children taking part. They will be aged 10 years and upwards. If you're interested, but don't hold a chaperone licence, we can organise training (a one day course in Exeter).

For more information about becoming a chaperone and what it involves, please email Nathan on safe.guarding@teignmouthplayers.com or again, call and leave a message on the above number.

Margaret

Production Coordinator

Blackadder – Pavilions Teignmouth, 1st – 5th September

Written by Ben Elton & Richard Curtis; Directed by Amy Burton-Smith



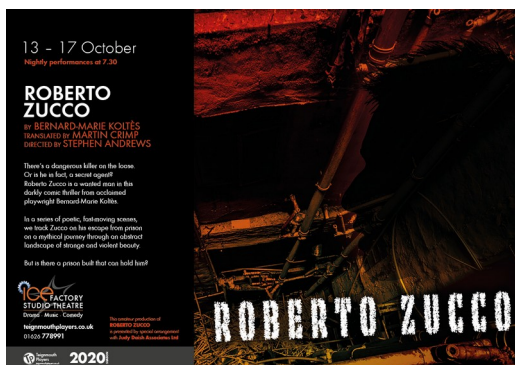
Back by popular demand, this year we will be performing three episodes from season II including: -

- Head
- Money
- Chains

With such great characters as Baldrick, Lord Percy, Queen Elizabeth 1st, Nursie & Edmund Lord Blackadder, we are all in for a bit of a giggle.

Roberto Zucco – Ice Factory Studio Theatre, 13th – 17th October

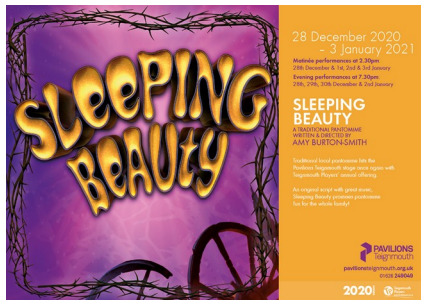
Written by Bernard-Marie Koltès, Directed by Steve Andrews



Robert Succo was born in Mestre. On 9 April 1981 he fatally stabbed his mother Maria 32 times, and his father, a police officer, who had refused to lend him their car. He hid their bodies in the bathtub covered in water and lime to delay the discovery of the murders and fled with his father's service pistol. In 1988, Bernard-Marie Koltès wrote a play (Roberto Zucco)[a] loosely based on Succo's life and crimes.

Keep an eye on Prompt and your email for details of the reading and auditions for this production.

Sleeping Beauty (Pantomime) – Pavilions Teignmouth, 28th December – 3rd January



Written and directed by Amy Burton-Smith.

Reading and auditions for this year's pantomime will take place in a few months. Watch this place, our member's facebook page and your email for more details.

The Tempest – Review



“Our Revels are Now Ended”

The Tempest, one of Shakespeare's later plays, is considered to be predominantly inspired by the events of a voyager en route to recently colonised Bermuda. The unnamed voyager recounts meeting a tempestuous storm, and details the devastation that occurs as a result of the hurricane's violence.

It is therefore no surprise that Shakespeare's narrative, starting in media res, plunges the audience into the epicentre of a galling storm. However, the plot that ensues is anything but straightforward. For Shakespeare's story is far more than a tale of stormy weathers and human betrayal, but one that reflects the tumultuous and tempestuous state of society under the reign of King James.

As a result, the play can be a challenge to realise on the stage effectively. From the outset, the writing requires imaginative direction, as the first scene details the savage effects of the tempest on the King's ship. For this to be convincing, the atmosphere needs to be chaotic, and the pace urgent. But most importantly the scene needs to establish a sense of realism. For though this scene contains spectacle, the audience must not lose the thread of the narrative: Shakespeare threatening the lives of his characters before the play has even begun. Nicole Davall's interpretation achieved this cleverly, as a mixture of stylised choreography and carefully considered technical choices enabled the audience to experience the howling storm and the concept of the little ship tossing its passengers around ruthlessly. Innovatively, Davall had reconsidered the space within Teignmouth's studio theatre, allowing for the performance to be an almost immersive experience in which the audience found themselves also held ransom on Prospero's island.

In stark contrast to the dramatic opening, we are then taken to Prospero's 'cell.' Imprisoned on the island, since being unjustly exiled, it is no surprise that Prospero summons the storm in an act of vengeance for his undeserved banishment. Prospero, the most complex of the play's characters is not easy to sympathise with. His insistence on regaling his tale of woe to his inattentive daughter makes him easy to dislike, as does his need to impose power on those that still remain bound to him. Stephen Andrews captured the essence of Prospero superbly, by shifting from moments of incandescent rage to instances of poignant vulnerability, which were deftly expressed by his physicality and tone of voice. As a result the audience succumbed to the knowledge that the 'real' tempest churned deeply inside the play's complicated protagonist.

Prospero's use and possession of magical knowledge renders him extremely powerful, and tethered to him is Ariel, a spirit of the isle, who seeks nothing more than 'her' liberty. Similarly to Prospero, Ariel is in turmoil. Though Prospero's bidding is always completed, Ariel shares her elemental nature with the audience, revelling in the desire to: "swim, dive into the fire and ride on curl'd clouds." Ariel requires an imaginative actor to capture this multifaceted character. Amy Burton-Smith's Ariel skilfully exposed Ariel's deepest vulnerabilities as well as treasuring the aesthetic, by beautifully delivering poetic verse that enabled Ariel to symbolise all that is delightful and good in the world. Similarly obligated to Prospero is Caliban- his 'slave.' Caliban's entitlement as 'slave' symbolises the Jacobean conflict of Western power versus native islanders, and reflects the falsified image of the 'other culture,' within an omnipotent white society. Caliban mirrors the anger of displaced communities in his introductory dialogue with Prospero, and thus it is hard not to feel sympathetic towards Prospero's captive. Stephen Day certainly captured Caliban's frustration and anger towards his master, yet at times could have perhaps revealed a little more of Caliban's sensitive side, especially as his speeches on the island provided some of the most affecting imagery in the play. However, in contrast to Andrew's commanding Prospero, Day competently depicted an abandoned orphan oppressed by greater powers.

Perhaps one of the most tragic elements of the play comes from the comic scenes. Caliban becomes a parody of himself as he recounts how he once took time to show his master the natural beauties of the Island. Yet a few scenes later and we witness Caliban fawning over drunken Stephano and his 'magical' liqueur. Lo and behold Caliban offers obsequious subservience to Stephano. In a desperate bid to escape his master's clutches, he resolves to overthrow Prospero and install inebriated Stephano as King and Master of the Island. To the audience this is ridiculous, and for it to be so, Stephano has to be played as a very drunken fool. Gordon Mellor delivered this, playing the swaggering boastful braggart who displayed much enthusiasm at being Caliban's object of reverence. His counterpart Trinculo resents Caliban's worship of his drunkard friend, yet readily follows along with the plan to kill Prospero and usurp him from his role on the island. As the narrative progresses, Trinculo is delighted to have Caliban as his revering subordinate, and as a result, much of the play's comedy is derived from these characters interactions. Nathan Swain- Sachs is a natural comic performer and throughout the performance he displayed an understanding of Shakespeare's subtle and explicit uses of humour, portraying the King's Jester as both coward and fool.

In this version of the play, Nicole Davall had subverted the expectation of Antonio being played by a male actor, and Jaz Weyer Brown's interpretation was excellent. From her entrance onto the stage, she exuded malice, delivered through piercing glares and clipped words. Her characterisation had been carefully considered, and even at the play's resolution, she snarled at the audience, allowing us to understand that this character showed no remorse for her conniving ways. Similarly, Sebastian showed little contrition for his part in overthrowing Prospero. Howie Watkins depicted this role fittingly, appearing at times rather dense and fallible. This in turn allowed him to be easily manipulated by the power-hungry Antonio, and as a result our sympathies were ever so slightly evoked for him by the play's conclusion.

Not all relationships are formed organically within the play. Miranda and Ferdinand's relationship is manipulated by Prospero from its genesis. Both characters are naive and innocent, falling in love with each other almost instantaneously. Mia Kenney captured Miranda's compassionate side from

the outset of the play, depicting Miranda as a gentle and loving character. Though written as a passive heroine, at times Miranda does assert herself, and occasionally Kenney's speeches were a little rushed causing some of the dialogue to be lost. However, her coupling with Sam Chamberlain's Ferdinand worked very well. Chamberlain played Ferdinand sensitively, portraying the character as a thoughtful young man bowled over by Miranda's pure beauty. Together these two illustrated the exuberance of youth in contrast to the more worldly characters around them. The elder generation in the guise of Gonzalo and King Alonso were portrayed by Roger Tarrant and Ken Swan respectively. Tarrant showed a great understanding of the character, serving as counsellor and mentor, whilst remaining loyal to the usurped Prospero. He stood as a beacon of kindness and displayed a great aptitude to pick up on Shakespeare's subtleties, remaining steadfast in the face of ridicule and dutiful to those he had served. Ken Swann created a regal air, and his moments of hesitancy worked well in symbolising Alonso's somewhat skewed moral compass. However, at times I would have liked to have witnessed Alonso's arrogance manifest more strongly. I always considered his character to be an allegory for Shakespeare's perception of the flawed leadership ruling Renaissance England.

When we heard Andrew's Prospero recite his modest epilogue at the end of the play, after laying down his enchanted staff, the audience were left feeling that the magic they had just experienced was too charming and mighty not to be enduring. Aesthetically, the production was beautifully effective. The minimal set was balanced perfectly by the bold colours and striking shadows of Daniel Saint's lighting design, combined with an impressive array of soundscapes and music, which seemingly effortlessly captured the ever changing atmosphere. This was a cleverly crafted performance in which the audience was left questioning the legitimacy of power and the concepts of repentance and forgiveness.

Layla Crabtree

TAAG at the Ice Factory

We are delighted to be welcoming our friends at TAAG to the Ice Factory during the building works they are carrying out across the road as part of the major re-development of the area. Please make them feel welcome, and it is more important than ever that the downstairs room is kept clear and tidy.

If you need to check the availability of the downstairs room, or any part of the Ice Factory Studio Theatre, please email bookings@teignmouthplayers.com with the dates you need to check, and availability will be advised as soon as possible to you.

FRONT OF HOUSE COORDINATOR

I have been lucky enough to find a lovely group of people to help as Front of House, Bar and morning Box Office volunteers. Some can help on a regular basis, and some only once in a while.

It is now at the point where it's ready to hand over for someone to run.

I currently organise FOH and Bar for the duration of any show, and also the morning Box Office for the two weeks prior and the week of any show. The only qualification you really need to have a bit of an organised mind.

If someone would consider taking over one of these roles that would be wonderful. I can meet you at more or less anytime to chat through what the role/s involve. There wouldn't be any pressure to take the role on, even if you just wanted see how it went for a few months.

It's not too arduous and some periods are busier than others; on average, we put on a production about six times a year, and occasionally there are outside companies that come in who want FOH and Bar services.

If you'd like to find out more, please email me on membership@teignmouthplayers.com or call the Box Office on (01626) 778991.

Margaret

Membership Secretary

Claiming Expenses

If you have spent money for a production and wish to claim it back as expenses, please follow the following process: -

1 – You must get authorisation prior to spending anything that the Teignmouth Players will ultimately pay. Please contact the Production Co-ordinator who will guide you. If you are spending money on anything else other than for a show, then contact the Chairman or Treasurer who will confirm whether you can claim it back.

2 – Please draw up a claim sheet that lists the following: -

- The date of purchase
- The supplier
- The reason for purchase
- The amount you are claiming

At the bottom of your claim sheet, please add up each expense and provide a total for your claim.

Don't forget to put your name on the sheet and if we have not paid you before, please also include your bank account details.

3 – You MUST provide a receipt for every item you are claiming for. No receipt, no payment.

4 – Email your claim to treasurer@teignmouthplayers.com. (If you are unable to scan in your receipts and claim sheet, drop them into the treasurer's tray at the Ice Factory and we will sort it out. (This method is slower as it relies on our assistant treasurer scanning it and sending it to the treasurer on your behalf.

If you have any queries or are unsure, please contact (Paul Gibbons) the treasurer. 07710272897