

STUDIO61 is supported by the following patrons

Mr & Mrs D P Allen

Mr & Mrs J Bate

Mr & Mrs R Beardsmore

Mr & Mrs A Bennett

Mr & Mrs D Bennett

Mr P Bradshaw

Ms V Brook

Ms V Bunce

Ms H Campbell

Mr & Mrs M E Carter

Mrs V Corser

Mr A Cox

Mr & Mrs B Dudek

Mr & Mrs B Gilson

Mr & Mrs D Jones

Mr P Needham

Mr & Mrs I Parry

Mr & Mrs N J Payne

Mrs M Philpott

Mr & Mrs K Stott

Mr K Thompson

Mrs J Towlson

THANKS TO THE ABOVE FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT

Patronage entitles you to attend social events plus the annual patrons' evening at which you are entitled to vote in the selection of one of the plays for the following season.

At a minimum of £1.50 p/m (£18 p/a), patronage is for up to two people, so those of you signing up individually are welcome to bring a guest to social events and to the patrons' evening.

If you would like to become a patron, please get in touch with Martin Smith on 01902 651828 or studio61martin@gmail.com



**AN EXPERIMENT WITH
AN AIR PUMP**
BY SHELAGH STEPHENSON

26TH - 28TH JUNE 2024

STUDIO61.ORG.UK

NEWHAMPTON ARTS CENTRE

NEWHAMPTONARTSCENTRE.CO.UK

This amateur production of "An Experiment with an Air Pump" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

I first heard of this play when friends from a neighbouring drama group were enthusing about how great it had been to perform. I didn't see the production but it stuck in my mind, particularly after directing *Arcadia*, another work spanning two time periods. When I finally got round to reading it I was immediately completely drawn into its exploration of several themes, done through diverse and rounded characters and a considerable amount of wit, all bound together by a dramatic, disturbing sub plot. I have to say that carried away by the dialogue as I was, it was only when I came to start directing it that I appreciated the practical complexities of its production! My particular thanks to Andy Cox for his imagination and skills in meeting these.



An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump by Joseph Wright of Derby (1768)
Source: National Gallery, London

So the work was inspired by the characters depicted in the oil-on-canvas *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump*, painted by Joseph Wright of Derby in 1768, the experiment being that described in Robert Boyle's hypothesis of 1660.

It reflects the emerging importance of the age of Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution and inspired Shelagh Stephenson's themes. There is the natural philosopher, now dubbed a "scientist", exploring a thesis regardless of his experiment's effect on life, in this case a bird. There is the disinterest of some, the dispassionate fascination shown by the young man and then the highly emotional reaction of the young girl. All depict the accepted gender roles of the period. Through scenes set in the same house in Newcastle upon Tyne approaching New Year's Eve at the end of 1799 and 1999 we explore how these roles have developed and also examine how scientific ethics have changed. Or have they? Was the custom of grave robbing in order to provide bodies for the examination of physical deformities so much worse than the elimination of embryos identified as having those same deformities? How much has capitalism impinged on the direction of scientific enquiry? Are relationships where both partners are accepted as having equal career opportunities necessarily easier and more fulfilling than those of a previous era when only men could, or do they simply engender different sources of disharmony? I hope that tonight's performance leaves you debating all these issues, plus a few more!

I have been blessed with an exceptionally talented cast for this production and would particularly like to welcome our two new members, Emma and Matt. I have also had the invaluable support of assistant director, Richard, and an experienced, scarily competent backstage, props, set, costume, publicity and tech crew which has all contributed to making this a hugely enjoyable production to direct, so my heartfelt thanks to every one of them.

Thank you for being here this evening and enjoy the show...



MATT ANSON
as **PETER MARK ROGET**

This is Matt's first production with Studio 61. He has always had a passion for the performing arts and has been acting in amdrum groups since he was 9. Most recently, Matt graduated from an acting course at Dudley College. He has loved every second of rehearsals for "An Experiment with an Air Pump" and always enjoys the opportunity to play characters with a slightly geekier side.



SARAH CARTER
as **KATE**

As soon as Sarah heard that Studio 61 were producing the play inspired by her favourite painting, she knew she had to be involved. She wishes she had Kate's scientific rigour (if not her blunt conversation...) This role will join the pantheon of small comedic characters that Sarah has adored playing over her 20 years in amdrum such as Chloe Coverly in "Arcadia" and Ruby Birtle in "When We Are Married".



JOHN FROST
as **THOMAS ARMSTRONG**

John is delighted to have the opportunity to tread the boards with Studio 61 once again, after his debut as Theseus in their 2023 production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream". Although he has enjoyed the opportunity to play a sociopathic, grave-robbing creep, he would like to reassure the audience that he's nothing like Thomas Armstrong in real life... honest.



LEAH GRIFFITHS**as ISOBEL BRIDIE**

Leah is excited to be back for her second show with Studio 61, previously playing Hippolyta in "A Midsummer Night's Dream". This play has been a fun and challenging experience for Leah.

"Isobel is a hard character to play. Her movement, accent, strong will and naivety are things that have allowed me to push myself. This has been an exciting experience and I've loved bringing Isobel to life with the help of Jane, cast and crew."

**KEVIN PORTER****as JOSEPH FENWICK/TOM**

Kevin joined Studio 61 in 2013. He has directed five productions, most recently "Picnic at Hanging Rock". He played Bottom in our production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream". Kevin prefers dramatic roles and is looking forward to the challenge of portraying both Fenwick and Tom in this production.

**DAVID KINGHORN****as PHIL**

David has been dabbling in amdram since his teenage years. He studied drama at university and has additional acting awards from LAMDA. Over the years he has worked with a number of local groups (Histon's Players, Secga Theatre Company & Studio 61). His most notable performances include Torvald Helmer in "A Doll's House", Inspector Pratt in Peter Gordon's "Inspector Pratt" trilogy and Jack in "The Weir".

**CAITLIN SAYCE****as MARIA FENWICK**

This will be Caitlin's third production with Studio 61 since joining in 2023. She has performed last year in both our summer production of "A Midsummer Nights Dream" portraying Hermia and our winter production of "Picnic at Hanging Rock" portraying policeman and Miss McGraw. Caitlin plays Maria in this production, who is most expert at sulking.

**EMMA LENNON****as SUSANNAH FENWICK/ELLEN**

Emma is really excited to be joining Studio 61 after many years of neglecting this passion of hers. She studied performing arts many moons ago and taught children's theatre before embarking on a change in career. She has often wanted to be part of the excitement of theatre again and looks forward to being involved in many more future productions. She feels very lucky to have found these fellow artists.

**CHELSEA WALE****as HARRIET FENWICK**

Introducing Chelsea, this is her second production with Studio 61 after joining in 2023. Her first production with Studio 61 was "Picnic at Hanging Rock" where she portrayed a British school girl named Edith and an Australian named Albert. Unlike her character Harriet, Chelsea has little interest in Science. However, she can definitely be given to rages.



AN EXPERIMENT WITH AN AIR PUMP

BY SHELAGH STEPHENSON



CAST

JOSEPH FENWICK/TOM Kevin Porter

SUSANNAH FENWICK/ELLEN Emma Lennon

HARRIET FENWICK Chelsea Wale

MARIA FENWICK Caitlin Sayce

PETER MARK ROGET Matt Anson

THOMAS ARMSTRONG John Frost

ISOBEL BRIDIE Leah Griffiths

KATE Sarah Carter

PHIL David Kinghorn

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Josh and the staff at NAC

The staff at Bradmore Arms

The Church At Perton

Sue and Bob Hay

The total running time will be approximately 150 minutes.

This will include an interval of 20 minutes.

Please ensure that all mobile phones are turned off during the performance.

CREW

DIRECTOR Jane Fosbrook

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Richard Corser

STAGE MANAGER Maggie Smith

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER Anna Wright

PROMPT Ann Bickley

PROPERTIES Anna Wright

STAGE CREW Martin Smith
David Bickley

PROPS CONSTRUCTION Andy Cox

LIGHTING AND SOUND Jane Alsop

WARDROBE Suzanne Smith

DRESSERS Suzanne Smith
Maz Taylor

FRONT OF HOUSE MANAGER Chris Porter

FRONT OF HOUSE Members of the Society

In the event of an emergency the front of house staff will guide you to the emergency exit.



Himley Cricket Club is proud to sponsor S61

Clubhouse hire – parties; christenings; wakes; corporate events
Junior cricket for boys and girls aged 5 to 15
Senior cricket for ages 13+
Ground hire for cricket and outdoor events

www.himleycc.co.uk

01902 898239

Stourbridge Road
Himley
Staffordshire
DY3 4LB



FAIRTRADE

Change the world with your shopping basket.

Why not put a Fairtrade item in your basket every time you shop?
Like tea, coffee, sugar, chocolate and bananas.

Look out for the Fairtrade mark.

It is one simple way of fighting the unfairness of World Trade.

There is a Fairtrade shop in Wolverhampton Mander Centre next to
the YMCA shop opposite Bon Marché.

Opening times are Tue - Sat 10am - 5pm.

Wolverhampton has been a Fairtrade city since 2004.

BECOME A SPONSOR OF STUDIO 61

Are you interested in becoming a sponsor of Studio 61 and having an advertisement in our programmes? For more information, please contact Anna Wright at annakwright10@outlook.com.

JOIN STUDIO 61: UNLEASH YOUR CREATIVITY ON AND OFF THE STAGE!

Discover the world of theatre and find your place at Studio 61. Whether you're interested in acting or working backstage, our inclusive community welcomes individuals of all levels of experience and backgrounds. Join us in exploring the exciting realms of artistic expression and teamwork.

At Studio 61, we hold rehearsals twice a week on Monday and Wednesday evenings at the Bradmore Arms pub on Trysull Rd, Wolverhampton. Our supportive and engaging environment offers a space to develop acting skills and immerse yourself in storytelling. If you prefer working behind the scenes, we have opportunities in stage management, set design, costume creation, lighting, sound, and more.

Membership at Studio 61 starts at just £3 per month, ensuring accessibility for all. We encourage anyone interested to attend our rehearsals without obligation, getting to know the company and finding out if we're the right fit for you. We produce three productions each year at Newhampton Arts Centre, entertaining audiences in the Spring, Summer, and Winter.

In addition to our performances, Studio 61 hosts various social events, including the Patrons' Evening. Connect with us on our website at www.studio61.org.uk or through our social media handles: Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, and TikTok (@studio61drama) for updates, behind-the-scenes glimpses, and more.

Join Studio 61 today and become part of a vibrant community where passion meets creativity. We look forward to welcoming you!



UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS FROM STUDIO 61



WINTER PRODUCTION

Bleak Expectations

by Mark Evans

13th - 15th November 2024

The story Charles Dickens might have written after drinking too much gin...

Follow half-orphan Pip's extraordinary exploits with his sisters and best friend, as they attempt to escape the calculating clutches of the dastardly Mr Gently Benevolent, and deflect disaster at every turn! Will evil be vanquished by virtue? Can love triumph over hate?

SAVE THE DATES FOR OUR 2025 PRODUCTIONS

Make sure to keep your diary free for Studio 61's next season of plays.

Spring: 26th - 28th March

Summer: 25th - 27th June

Winter: 26th - 28th November

These plays will be revealed later this year following their selection and announcement at our Patrons' Evening.

STUDIO 61'S AFFILIATES

Discover a wealth of outstanding amateur theatre in our local area. Treat yourself to a show presented by one of our affiliated groups.

Wordsley Amateur Dramatic Society

Blood Brothers (Play Version)

by Willy Russell

26th - 29th June & 12th - 13th July 2024

Box Office: 01384 270228

www.wordsleyamdram.co.uk



Stafford Players

The Last of The Haussmans

by Stephen Beresford

23rd - 27th July 2024

Box Office: 01785 619080

www.gatehousetheatre.co.uk



Dudley Little Theatre

The Hound of the Baskervilles

adapted by Steven Canny and John Nicholson

5th - 8th September 2024

Box Office: ticketsource.co.uk/dudleylittletheatre

www.dudleylittletheatre.org



Wombourne Players

Lord Arthur Saville's Crime

adapted by Constance Cox

16th - 19th October 2024

Box Office: 01902 881184

www.wombourneplayers.org.uk



Pattingham Drama Group

Cinderella

by Alan P. Frayn

5th - 8th December 2024

Box Office: 01902 700748

www.pattinghamdramagroup.co.uk



STUDIO 61 PATRONS' CALENDAR 2024

Thank you for your invaluable support of Studio 61! Throughout the year, we host a variety of special events exclusively for our valued patrons. Enjoy a sneak peek at the exciting calendar we have planned for you, and mark those dates in your diary! See the back page for information on becoming a patron.

Thank you to everyone who attended our **CHARITY FUNDRAISER EVENING**

Heroes and Villains

We raised a total of **£400** in aid of Mind (www.mind.org.uk)



ESCAPE ROOM

The Magician's Studio

written by Escape This Podcast

Wednesday 7th August 2024 at Bradmore Arms

You're an amateur magician going backstage to meet your magical idol, but you soon find yourself trapped in a doorless room filled with tricks, traps and torment. Can you escape your magical prison before the curtain falls and what secrets will you uncover in the process?



PLAY READING

The Safari Party

by Tim Firth

Wednesday 24th July 2024 at Bradmore Arms

Three households have agreed to hold a 'safari party' - a dinner party, with each course served in a different house. The hors d'oeuvres are served by Daniel and Adam, the entrées by Lol and Esther, and the desserts by Inga. However: there's the question of the table...



PATRONS' EVENING

2025 Season Announcement

Thursday 15th August 2024 at Himley Cricket Club

Mark your calendars for the unveiling of Studio 61's exciting 2025 season at our exclusive Patrons' Evening! This special evening will not only reveal the upcoming theatrical delights but also empower you, our esteemed patrons, to choose the Patrons' Choice Production from three captivating excerpts performed live on stage.



QUIZ NIGHT

Trivial Pursuit

Wednesday 31st July 2024 at Bradmore Arms

Assemble your brainiest squad and prepare to conquer every category at our Trivial Pursuit Quiz Night! This epic battle of wits features rounds dedicated to each iconic Trivial Pursuit wedge, testing your knowledge across diverse fields like history, entertainment, and more. Unleash your inner know-it-all and work together with your team to claim trivia glory!



CHRISTMAS PARTY

Open Mic Night

Thursday 12th December 2024 at Himley Cricket Club

Ho ho ho! Celebrate the season at our Christmas Open Mic Night! Unleash your inner bard and share your holiday spirit with heartwarming stories, jolly poems, or merry musical ditties. Feeling shy? No worries! Just soak in the festive atmosphere. Dust off your Santa hats and join us for a heartwarming evening of community, creativity, and Christmas joy!

