



That's a wrap!

Our fabulous Spring/Summer season finished on a high with the Summer Social and the new-look Quay Awards, which were a great success and a huge amount of fun!

Like everyone who submitted their award nominations I found it an extremely hard task as the quality of all shows, the breadth of performances and stunning sets made it almost impossible to favour one or the other. This is the mark of a successful season and I would like to thank all of you who have been involved to make it so. We are told time and again that the theatre has a 'buzz' and we are seeing both an upturn in ticket sales and the number of people getting involved in shows. Auditions are hotly fought and we are attracting new members - some are even coming back for more!

Here's to a lovely summer and I look forward to welcoming you all back in September!

Chairman • Sarah Williams

Tickets will be on General Sale from 9am Monday 27 August. Members will have a 2 week priority booking window from Monday 13 August.

Copy deadline

If you have any articles or notices you wish to feature in the next newsletter, please contact us by email : publicity@wharftheatre.co.uk by Monday August 06

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Broken Wing

When I first read Annie L Cooper's script, I knew two things : it had to be put on, and it would not be a crowd pleaser! I was correct in both predictions. It is a wonderful play but very challenging and it required two phenomenally talented teenagers to pull it off. I was more than lucky to have those youngsters turn up to audition. Bea Watts and Sophie Wilson turned up out of the blue and were perfect for the roles of troubled adopted daughter Thea and refugee Layee. During Sophie's long monologue in which Layee's ordeal at the hands of a band of marauding soldiers is described in excruciating detail, you could have heard a pin drop in the auditorium. A brilliant piece of acting. The adult roles were not easy either and so my heartfelt thanks to Laura Bartle who undertook the mammoth part of Zara with aplomb, well supported by Stuart Mayling, Claire Abraham and Oli Beech.

Artistic notes

The AW18 season is now complete with new brochures available from early August. Tess Richards has cast her opening show, Sir Alan Ayckbourn's chilling thriller, Snake in the Grass, which will kick off the season, running from September 24 - 29.

Then Emily Holmes opens her Little Shop of Horrors on October 26. She has already assembled a hugely talented cast, making it a worthy successor to A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, which was a huge sell-out success. The winning team of Oliver Phipps and John Winterton return for the pantomime season with Kidnap in Pantoland, which will take to the stage in December, a thoroughly entertaining start to the Christmas season.

Having been thwarted from obtaining the performance rights to Neil Simon's Chapter Two, my plan was to begin the New Year with Shakespeare's wonderful comedy, Twelfth Night. Dame Fortune intervened however, with Liz Sharman offering to direct another Shakespeare comedy, As You Like It. Well, I know you can't get too much of the Bard, but two Shakespeares in one season is a little like over indulgence! What to do? The theatrical moguls of New York came to the rescue by suddenly giving the Wharf the rights to Chapter Two, and so the Autumn/Winter season is now complete.

I am already well on in finalising Spring/Summer 2019 and, with the critical success of Broken Wing in mind, looking to finish it with another new play by a local writer. Have you a script in a drawer somewhere that you rather fancy is a winner? Let me see it please : lewis@thecowens.force9.co.uk or call 07523 050 961.

Artistic Director • Lewis Cowen

With a minimal set, the sound and lighting were particularly important and I was fortunate indeed to have the help of Rob Bourne, Jess Brown and John Winterton. With Stephen White as Stage Manager (and set painter) I had the dream team onboard.

The word which more than any other came up in reviews and audience comment was "brave". I think it was brave for the Wharf to put on a new play by a local author but even more so to air subjects that are all too often brushed under the carpet.

I hope Broken Wing has a life beyond its five-night run at the Wharf Theatre. It is a stunning piece of writing and should be seen in London and even more widely. I have asked Annie Cooper to send me more of her work and I hope to be able to mount it at the Wharf in years to come.

Director • Lewis Cowen