



Semi-Circle triumphs at FEATS 2019!

Semi Circle's entry at the recent Festival of European Anglophone Theatre Societies (FEATS) was hailed as a great success! Our entry, "Playing with Daisy" by the UK playwright Eleanor Fossey, had been performed in Basel in November last year and was revived for this prestigious international competition, hosted by Entity Theatre Munich, and held this year in the Wolf-Ferrari Theatre Ottobrunn, from May 30-June 2nd. Twelve teams from around Europe competed for the awards.

Prior to going on stage, the team had received words of encouragement, positive vibes and a bouquet of flowers from the playwright, and the team's performance of her play went on to win three trophies and two nominations - our biggest ever haul at the FEATS competition! In addition to winning the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg award for best Stage Presentation, the Stage Management award and the BATS trophy for 3rd place overall in the competition (of 12 teams), we also received nominations for Best Actress (Zuzana Cox) and the Adjudicator's Discretionary award for Costumes.

The festival adjudicator, Jan Palmer-Sayers, said that she had seen the play on a number of occasions, but this was the best staging and performance she had seen yet. Given this extremely positive feedback from the competition adjudicator, and the festival audience, we had anticipated a high placing. However, as we learned later, the competition and scoring had been incredibly tight. There were only 2 points difference (out of a total of 100) between the 1st and 3rd-placed plays and we were delighted to achieve 3rd place overall at the awards ceremony on the last night of the festival. Once awarded 3rd place, we were eligible for four other awards. Of these we won two and we were nominated for the other two - an amazing achievement which the club should be justly proud of.

Zuzana Cox (as 'Daisy') and Liz Shaw (as 'Esther') both gave brilliantly memorable and flawless **acting performances** which received tumultuous applause from the audience, and a high level of critical acclaim from the festival adjudicator. In her words "Both of these experienced actresses made maximum use of the stage and voice projection to signpost the story line and keep the audience engaged throughout the 45' playing time." We were eagerly anticipating a best actress award for either or both of our actresses, although sadly on this occasion it was not meant to be.

Focussing most of the play's action downstage, our **stage presentation** was without parallel, heralded by the adjudicator as "truly excellent and mesmerizing, with a level of perfection that is rarely seen in festival presentations. This team really knew what they were doing and what they wanted to create." Our stage presentation was appreciated and applauded by the audience as soon as the curtain went up and before a single word of text had been spoken by the actors – something that happens only very rarely at FEATS!

The laudation from the Festival Stage Management Team - who awarded us the discretionary award for best **stage management** was as follows: "We enjoyed working with you. Early on in the process, you presented a concrete vision for the image you wanted on stage, making good use of the technical options available in the light plot, and you were able to communicate that vision clearly. Your lighting plan was the best from all the other teams. That counts for a lot. And that moment, when the curtain opened on the stage with just the cyclorama lit, was indeed magical – receiving a reaction and applause from the audience. It was great communication from your Stage Manager (Scott Holland) and good calling of cues."

Interested to hear more about our experience at FEATS 2019? The team is going to prepare a presentation for the club entitled "Selection and preparation of a play for success at an international theatre festival" which will be shown to club members later in the year on a date to be finalised. Hopefully this should provide an interesting retrospective insight into the "Daisy" project over the last 12 months and how the club can apply the experience, gained from participation at this year's FEATS festival, to any future festivals it may wish to enter.

In addition to our team of nine members, four non-participating members and a number of friends also travelled to Munich to support the team. The performance by Geneva English Drama Society (GEDS) won 3 awards making it a great evening for English-speaking theatre in Switzerland!

On a final note, the whole "Daisy" team would again like to thank the committee and acknowledge its generous and kind support to enable us to represent the club at FEATS 2019 and achieve our biggest success in this competition so far! Thanks also to IMPLENIA AG for providing the team with 'Daisy' T-shirts and sweets.

David Cox

Basel, June 5th, 2019

On behalf of the Semi-Circle FEATS 2019 team:

Zuzana Cox	Actor 'Daisy'
Elizabeth Shaw	Actor 'Esther'
David Cox	Director, Lighting & Sound Design
Scott Holland	Stage Manager
Susan Aeschbach	Prompt, Crew, Background Actor
Michael Clarke	Lighting Operator
Jon Apted	Sound Operator
Chris Jones	Crew
Ann Apted	Crew

