

# sedos grapevine

february 2012



## Feel the sisterly love

Have you got your tickets for Three Sisters yet? Sedos's first show of 2012 is on next week, so the Grapevine caught up with director Roger Beaumont

"As far as I can see, anyone who breathes and is old enough to ask themselves what they are doing

here will get something from Three Sisters," says Roger. "It may not answer the question for them, but they will see that they are not alone in pondering the meaning and purpose of our lives. It is also quite funny, which helps."

Indeed. We like to be entertained alongside having our thoughts provoked in Sedos.

Roger is a newcomer to the society, but has extensive directing experience with our friends at Tower Theatre.

"I joined the Tower Theatre, which was then based in Islington, about 20 years ago on the recommendation of a friend," he says. "I've been directing for them, Questors Theatre in Ealing and fringe productions ever since. I'm delighted to have the opportunity to work with Sedos."

So how did Roger hear about Sedos?

He explains: "I've known Chris de Pury, the Sedos chairman, for 15 years or so, since he assisted me directing Aladdin for the Tower. He has clearly gone up in the world of amateur theatre since then, while I am still toiling away in much the same way trying to understand how it all works!"

Well, Roger understood how amateur theatre

works well enough to make a successful pitch to Sedos! Clearly his passion for the show helped.

"For me, making good theatre starts with good writing and writing doesn't get much better than Chekhov," he says. "I've been fortunate to direct some great plays in the past few years — Waiting for Godot, The Birthday Party, A Doll's House, Miss Julie — and they all speak clearly and perceptively about the human condition.

"They entertain us but, just as importantly, they also ask questions about how and why we choose to live our lives the way we do. I believe Three Sisters is recognised as a great play because it asks these universal questions."

As a director, Roger says he expects his actors to put in some homework before they start rehearsing.

"I've been lucky enough to work with some great directors and actors over the years — Richard Eyre, Bill Gaskill, Mike Alfreds and many others," he says. "Quite frankly, I've 'nicked' or 'borrowed' ideas from them all — particular approaches, methods and ways of working. They all start with the text and that is my approach too. Put simply acting might be described as 'Want', 'Do', 'Feel' (Mike Alfreds) and most of what the actor wants, does, and then feels can be learned from the text."

We look forward to seeing the results next week.



Ed O'Shaughnessy  
(Tuzenbach) and Simon  
Roberts (Vershinin)



Emily Lake (Irina), Claire  
Boynton (Olga) and Aurora  
Bowkett (Masha)

Pictures by Michael Smith

### Five minutes with the Three Sisters

We asked the three actresses playing the three sisters three questions:

1. What's the best/worst thing about the

**Claire Boynton (Olga) said:**

1. Aurora has the most stunning, stunning singing voice. Emily is just gorgeous. There's nothing bad about either of them, they're my sisters remember. It would be disloyal!

2. I'm an only child.

3. I would definitely be controlling and bossy! Even if I was a little sister.

**Aurora Bowkett (Masha) said:**

1. Claire: best — her wonderful hugs; worst — the fact she looks good in that hat and I don't! [we won't ask, Ed]. Emily: best — she makes me laugh when I'm feeling very tired; worst — her horrendous "Irena" laugh!

2. My sister is wonderful in many ways, she's generous, kind, funny, understanding, beautiful and she also drives me mental about 50% of the time. But that in itself is what I find wonderful about siblings, you love to hate each other as much as love each other. No matter what happens, what arguments we have, she will always be there for me when I need her.

other two actors playing your "Two Sisters"?

2. Do you have any real life sisters? If so, what's the best/worst thing about her/them?
3. What kind of sister are you/would you be?

3. I'm a caring sister who will do anything for my siblings when it comes to it. It's the same for Masha — although she puts herself first, she's very protective of her sisters, especially Irina.

**Emily Lake (Irina) said:**

1. The best thing about the other two is they're so much fun to work with. I couldn't possibly say what the worst thing is about them because there is no worst thing (and also I just don't want them to hit me).

2. I have a younger sister — the best thing about her is her sense of humour — she's the craziest, funniest person I know. The worst thing about her when we lived together was she'd always steal my clothes and lie about it, even if she was wearing my clothes while she was lying to me.

3. I'm the best sister in the whole world unless you steal my clothes — ask my sister...

Three Sisters is on 28 February-  
3 March at the Bridewell  
Theatre. Get your tickets at  
[sedos.co.uk](http://sedos.co.uk).

## Sedos to support Mousetrap Theatre Projects

Sedos is working with a new charity of the year for 2012, after five years supporting Half Moon Young People's Theatre.

The chosen charity — which receives 50% of proceeds from one performance of every show, around £5,000 in a year — is Mousetrap Theatre Projects.

Mousetrap Theatre Projects is dedicated to bringing the magic of theatre into the lives of disadvantaged young people. This small theatre education charity takes 12,000 young people to see a top London production each year. For many of them it is their first time ever in a theatre.

Mousetrap enhances that experience with education programmes in schools and communities, using theatre as a catalyst to explore ideas, learn skills, develop creativity and offer new perspectives.

The charity recently took nearly 200 pupils with special needs to see The Lion King and followed this up with drama workshops.

Among the many thank you notes the charity received was one from Aidan Meech, a teacher at John Chiltern School, which read: "THANK YOU so much for organising our Lion King tickets! The children loved it. Many said



was the best day of their lives... One boy came out and said he felt as if he was 'flying', he was so happy (he is a wheelchair user)! Thanks for all your hard work. You do such a crucial and amazing job and you should all be proud!"

Gayle Bryans, Sedos stalwart and Mousetrap Theatre Projects' development manager, said: "It is fantastic to have the support of a company like Sedos, whose members all share with us a huge love of theatre. We feel that we have gained not just one supporter, but 200 more! I hope lots of you get involved over the coming year."



## News in brief

- The Sedos AGM is on 25 April at 7pm (7.30pm start) in The Albion, EC4V 6AA. Come along to vote in the committee who will run the society for the next year, hear about how 2011's shows fared financially and more.

- After taking an advert in the A Little Night Music programme, Pizza Express St Bride St have offered everyone from Sedos a 20% discount off their whole bill any time they visit. Just mention that you are part of Sedos and that Zana (the manager) authorised your special local business promotion.

## Help out with Amateur Stage Expo

Amateur Stage Expo (31 March-1 April at the Business Design Centre, Islington) promises to be an exciting weekend, bringing together amateur theatre groups, traders, industry professionals and amateur theatre audiences. The two days involve workshops, discussion groups, live performances and exhibits and Sedos needs your help to make the most of this fun event.

Sedos has a stand where we'll be spreading the word about the City of London's premier amateur theatre company, drumming up new memberships, potential new audiences, increasing our mailing list, selling tickets and generally telling everyone about us! The cast of Spring Awakening will also be performing on Sunday afternoon.

We need volunteers to help on the stand on the day, but also people to help plan Sedos's effort. If you want to be involved in any way, email Stephen Beeny (stephen.beeny@qsoft.co.uk).

Visit [www.amateurstageexpo.co.uk](http://www.amateurstageexpo.co.uk) to learn more about the event.



## Dates for the diary

### 22 February

Producers' Workshop

### 28 February-3 March

Three Sisters performances

### 20 March

Five-year plan workshop

### 25 March-31 March

6Plays7Days

### 31 March-1 April

Amateur Stage Expo

### 25 April

AGM

### 9-19 May

Spring Awakening performances

## Contacts

### In charge of the Grapevine

Pippa Roome

### She makes it look beautiful

Nicole Rush

### Contact the Grapevine at

[grapevine@sedos.co.uk](mailto:grapevine@sedos.co.uk)

### Sedos website

[sedos.co.uk](http://sedos.co.uk)

### Find us at

[facebook.com/sedostheatre](http://facebook.com/sedostheatre)

[twitter.com/sedos](http://twitter.com/sedos) [flickr.com/sedos](http://flickr.com/sedos)

[youtube.com/sedosvideo](http://youtube.com/sedosvideo)

### Sedos committee

Chris de Pury (chairman), Matt Gould (secretary), Craig Topp (treasurer), Jacqui Adams, Stephen Beeny, Dawn Harrison-Wallace, Will Harrison-Wallace, Matt Hudson, Deborah Lean, Matt Prince

### Contact the committee at:

[admin@sedos.co.uk](mailto:admin@sedos.co.uk)

## Contribute to our five-year plan

Few current members probably realise that less than a decade ago Sedos had very little money in the bank, no regular performing space and a dwindling membership of about 30.

Fortunately, with a centenary on the horizon, that small group of Sedos stalwarts decided it was time to "save Sedos" and put a plan in place to do so. So how was this achieved? With a little bit of planning and a lot of hard work. We carried out a survey and held a couple of workshops. That helped us decide on our main goals for the next five years:

- To raise awareness of Sedos in the city and attract support from City firms
- To increase our membership from around 30 to around 150
- To return to our remit of supporting charities.

Nearly seven years on Sedos has come a

long way, but like any thriving organisation we should never sit on our laurels and become complacent.

So we have decided that it is time to consider where we want to be in the years to come. In five years:

- What will we be doing?
- What will people be saying about Sedos?
- What will we have achieved?

To answer the above questions and more we are holding a members' workshop on 20 March. At the workshop the committee will lead you through some of their ideas and you will have plenty of chance to comment/input your own ideas and have a say in what the next five years should hold for Sedos.

For those unable to attend and for those that can, you can have your say by completing the survey that will be circulated before the workshop.

## News in brief



Emma Butler in West Side Story

- Sedos member Emma Butler (Fransica in last year's West Side Story) is running the London marathon on 22 April for Help the Hospices in memory of her father, who died of cancer 10 years ago. Sponsor her at [justgiving.com/ELKBUTLER](http://justgiving.com/ELKBUTLER). Sedos committee member Matt Hudson, who

is in Spring Awakening (9-19 May), is also taking on the challenge in aid of Stonewall. Find his sponsorship page at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/MattHudson>.

- Sedos now has a business membership of Zipcar, which means we can join up new drivers for just £10 a head.

The weekend hourly rate for a Zipvan is £10, so it may be the most economical and efficient way to transport things for your get-in, get-out or workshop. Contact Mia Bennett for details ([mia.bennett@btinternet.com](mailto:mia.bennett@btinternet.com)).



## A whirlwind of theatre

Do you think Sedos can write, cast, direct, produce and perform six plays in just seven days? We're going to try!

6Plays7Days starts with a meet and greet on Sunday, 25 March, after which six writers are sent off to write a 15min play each over the next five days. The directors are sent their play on Friday, 30 March and allocated actors and a producer. The teams meet on Friday night to begin rehearsals, continuing all day on Saturday, before a performance at the Winterflood Theatre on Saturday night.



The Winterflood Theatre will host the shows

This project needs six writers, six directors, six producers and around 30 actors, so if you want to be involved, email Becky Smith ([rebecca.m.smith@gmail.com](mailto:rebecca.m.smith@gmail.com)). More information on the Sedos website: [sedos.co.uk](http://sedos.co.uk).

## Producers' workshop

Don't forget the Producers' Workshop on Wednesday this week (22 February).

The session will be led by Dominic Lindesay-Bethune and offers an opportunity for Sedos producers — both experienced and aspiring — to glean tips and insight, as well as swapping ideas.

Dominic has been a professional producer for seven years and is executive producer for Theatre6. He has produced over 15 commercial productions, three festivals with over 100 plays between them, two national tours and an international tour.

To attend, please register with Matt Hudson ([mattkhudson@gmail.com](mailto:mattkhudson@gmail.com)) with the subject line PRODUCERS' WORKSHOP.

## Get involved in marketing

Pippa Roome has taken over as chair of the marketing subcommittee and the core committee now consists of Chris Warner, Stephen Beeney and Adrian Johnson, with a helping hand from Leonardo Greco, Steve Whiteside, Douglas Mayo and Sharon Burrell.

Many thanks to Angharad Davies (chair), Lauren Mole and Becs Weymouth who have recently stepped down.

The committee meets about once every six weeks to discuss marketing shows and other events, Sedos branding, member communications and more. Our next meeting is on 7 March and we need more members — do contact Pippa if you would like to get involved ([pippa\\_roome@ipcmedia.com](mailto:pippa_roome@ipcmedia.com)).

# spring awakening

## Something different

Our next musical is the relatively new, edgy rock-pop musical, Spring Awakening. With a cast now firmly in place, we chatted with director Chris Warner, musical director Ryan Macaulay, choreographer Tim Garrad and creative director Max Wilson about what Sedos audiences can expect from the production

### If we'd never heard of Spring Awakening, how would you describe it?

Chris: It's incredible! It was born from an 1890s Frank Wedekind play about teenagers taking the first steps in discovering what it means to be an adult in a world where they are told who they are and what they should do. A large part of that is the discovery of their sexuality. The show deals with authority and power while tackling challenging subjects like suicide and abuse — the play was often banned from being performed.

Steven Sater and Duncan Sheik, who devised the musical, added a score which pulls the piece into a more modern context. And that's the beauty of Spring Awakening the musical — the music shows you the themes are timeless, despite being written over 100 years ago.

### Why is this a great show for Sedos?

Chris: Sedos is a society for the unexpected and challenging. It is what first attracted me to (when we did The Wild Party) and that, coupled with our extremely talented membership, is why Sedos is so good.

Also, the Bridewell Theatre is the perfect venue. The theatre was built in the Victorian era, when the play was written. So much of the aesthetic of the Bridewell lends itself to some of our design concepts.

Audiences on Broadway and the West End have fallen in love with the haunted characters and the incredible score and I genuinely believe Sedos members will do the same.

### What can audiences expect?

Chris: Hopefully something fresh, new and edgy. We're trying to create an experience, and so there might be a few things that surprise Sedos regulars. The show will definitely be "in your face". We're also playing on the rock-concert vibes of the show and want audiences to feel, to a degree, like they're at an intimate gig.

It's a show of contrasts, too; light vs. dark. Do expect some bleak, haunting scenes, but this is not just a show of harrowing themes. The darkness is very much juxtaposed by energetic, beautiful and hopeful songs.

### So the music in Spring Awakening is rocky and modern. What challenges does that present?

Ryan: You mean besides finding a violinist that can rock out on electric guitar? Vocally, this show is incredibly demanding so we're going to be spending a lot of time helping our (already extremely talented) cast build up vocal stamina so the girls can belt their top Es and the guys' falsetto soars for the two-week run. I love harmony and this show has it in abundance. I really want the harmony to sound raw and

alive (not just a choir of voices), so it's finding that balance of feeling real and spontaneous without sounding messy.

### What kind of sound are you aiming for?

Ryan: For me, the most important thing is that the sound is true to the dramatic arc of the show. We've had a lot of discussions about gigs and concerts so the rock numbers will feel like you're at the O2 immersed in sound, while the quieter ballads will have an intimate, acoustic flavour (think your front room, a stool and a guitar).

### What influences are you drawing on when creating your choreography?

Tim: The choreography is influenced by an eclectic mix of rock/pop style concerts with a contemporary twist. There are a few numbers where it will be everybody letting rip, but there are also numbers where the cast will need to express their characters' emotions (often repressed and dark) through the movement of their body.

### What song are you most looking forward to choreographing and why?

Tim: Totally Fu\*\*\*d :-) This is one of the few numbers with the whole cast and they can really let their inner rock god out and just let rip. I want it to be a great mix of choreo and freestyle and hopefully the cast will love performing it too.

### Max, you're creative director for the show. How does that work?

Max: In a nutshell it means I oversee the realisation of set, costume and publicity, with the aim of creating a cohesive and consistent vision. I collaborate with a number of other designers and creative-type people (and with Chris of course!) to get the vision off the page. Chris and I tried it out when we staged Lippa's Wild Party when we were at university and it seemed to work, so we're sticking with it!

### Describe Spring Awakening as if it were a picture!

Max: In true Spring Awakening style, it's two pictures at once! At any one moment it's both a sepia photo, perfectly composed and restrained, while at the very same moment it's also the photo you take at the end of a night out; a blurred explosion of light and colour; electric and free.

### Why should readers see the show?

Chris: This is a musical unlike any other. It's youthful, energetic, raw, dark, rocky and full of emotion. But the themes are ageless — everyone will have at some point experienced some of the feelings that the characters in Spring Awakening are discovering. Come for something new, something different, something challenging. Oh, also, the music is insanely good...



Spring Awakening is on  
9-19 May at the Bridewell  
Theatre. Tickets will be on sale  
soon at [sedos.co.uk](http://sedos.co.uk).



## Having a ball

The Sedos Bridewell Christmas Ball on 17 December was the social event of 2011. Nearly 100 people turned out to celebrate the start of Sedos' partnership with the theatre and enjoy an evening of fun. Many thanks go to Dawn Harrison-Wallace and Angharad Davies for organising the ball superbly and Matt Gould and Chloë Faine for the fabulous entertainment, in which a talented ensemble of members brought back memories of shows Sedos has performed at the Bridewell. Selecting the pictures for this page was a difficult task — who remembers the photobooth, the fake snow, the tablequizzes, the speeches, heads or tails, the dancing, the aftermath in the bar? — so do head to [flickr.com/sedos](http://flickr.com/sedos) (and select the relevant "sets" from the right-hand panel) to see the rest.

*Pictures by Michael Smith and friends*

## Going Wilde In The City

Thursday, 17 November last year was the public performance of *The Importance of Being Earnest* at the London Stock Exchange, the culmination of Sedos's *In The City* tour for 2011. This was the first time the society has moved away from Shakespeare for *In The City*, with director Emma Knott bringing Oscar Wilde's best-

known play to life with an office setting and a strong cast who were mainly newcomers to Sedos. The team also put on five performances in offices — at The Office of Fair Trading, McCann London, Markit, Deloitte and Sainsbury's.

*Pictures by Jacqui Adams*



## Send in some Sondheim

A Little Night Music closed Sedos's hugely successful 2011 season. A review in the Sondheim Society December magazine — which also praised our August production of Assassins — said that Sedos "should be credited as one of the premier [amateur] companies in the country, as their track record for staging professional-standard shows proves". The piece noted: "...it was a genius stroke by co-directors Roger Harwood and Dawn Harrison-Wallace to stage the entire show as a flashback" and that the "casting was difficult to fault", singling out several actors. Costumes won praise and the band was a highlight too: "[musical director] David Griffiths and his musicians... gave a performance grander than many of those you'd hear in West End theatres". A four-star review on Remote Goat commended the set and described the show as "masterful in both dramatic and auditory terms".



Pictures by nickchronnell.com

## A glass of wine with... Sedos member Bronia Kupczyk

**When did you join Sedos and what was your first show?**

I was assistant stage manager for EuroSedos, the re-enactment of the cheesiest bits of the Eurovision Song contest, ever. I still believe it was the funniest thing I saw on stage. That's what got me hooked.

**Are you in a Sedos show at present?**

I am producing Three Sisters. Come and see the play. It's profound, visually stunning and moving... not like EuroSedos. Although Three Sisters has a lot of humour to it.

**What's the best thing about Sedos?**

The "sure, we can" attitude.

**What do you do in "real life"?**

I split my time between teaching French to business people and looking for ways to fund a human rights campaigning youth workshop.

**What's your worst experience on stage?**

Thinking it would be a good move to pull down my skirt and readjust my pantaloons. Upstage. In front of all my future school teachers. I was seven. I should have known better. Some things should just stay private.

**Describe your perfect night out.**

Great food. Cheese. Vodka. Friends

**Bearing in mind what Sedos stands for, have you ever owned any stocks?**

I do. The fact they are stocks from a Spanish bank will tell you why I avoid reading the FT.

**And if you could exchange one thing, what would it be?**



My short-term memory is rubbish, but my long-term memory is great... which means I forget the beginning of my sentences, but I do bear grudges. I'd exchange one for the other.

**If you had to represent your country, what would it be for?**

It's a tie between gulping upside down flans — the small ones, like Flamby ... it's a French thing! — and making up words.

**Any unusual dreams recently?**

Nothing unusual about going to work half naked or forgetting to wear shoes anymore... In dreams, I mean in dreams... not in real life.

**Ever had a Hollywood diva moment?**

Apart from pulling down my skirt on stage?

**If you were a kangaroo what would you keep in your pocket?**

I would carry a little notepad, some pencils and a camera. I would also have my passport tucked in safely.

**A good production begins with...?**

People knowing what they are meant to do.

**And ends with....?**

Them realising they did things differently. For the better.

## Name that show

In each Grapevine issue we bring you a small part of a poster or a photo from an old Sedos show. Your task? To name the show. Answer at the bottom of the page.



## In the wings with... Grapevine editor Pippa Roome

**You know you're a member of Sedos when:**

- the acronym OH instantly means Ocean House
- you know which steps going up to the Bridewell lighting desk creak
- ...and which bits of the floor behind the seats to avoid when backstage
- drinking in the Seahorse until the early hours on week nights is perfectly normal
- you say amazeballs regularly (or that might mean you've just spent too long with Karen Lister)
- most of your facebook pictures show you in costume – or at parties with other Sedos members



**You know it's show week when:**

- three of your last four meals have been a bowl of cereal
- you're massively excited by the prospect of a hot meal
- ...or more than five hours sleep
- your boss tries to fix a meeting date and you pull from your bag a roll of masking tape, six cable ties and a handful of screws before your diary
- you give up trying to decide what to wear to

work and put on your show shirt

- the only conversation you have with your partner is anxious sleep talking
- you have run out of pants you are willing to display in the dressing room

How do you know you're a Sedos member or it's show week? Let us know at [grapevine@sedos.co.uk](mailto:grapevine@sedos.co.uk).

*By day, Pippa is reports and eventing editor on weekly magazine Horse & Hound. For Sedos, she is currently working on marketing for Spring Awakening.*