

Coming event

sponsored by our sister organisation



The poster features a beach scene with waves and a sun icon. The title 'Summer dreamin'' is written in a cursive font on the sand. The event details are listed on the left side.

Voices International
directed by Jean Schumacher

presents

Summer dreamin'

Friday 12 June - 20:00
Philharmonie, Luxembourg
Salle de Musique de Chambre

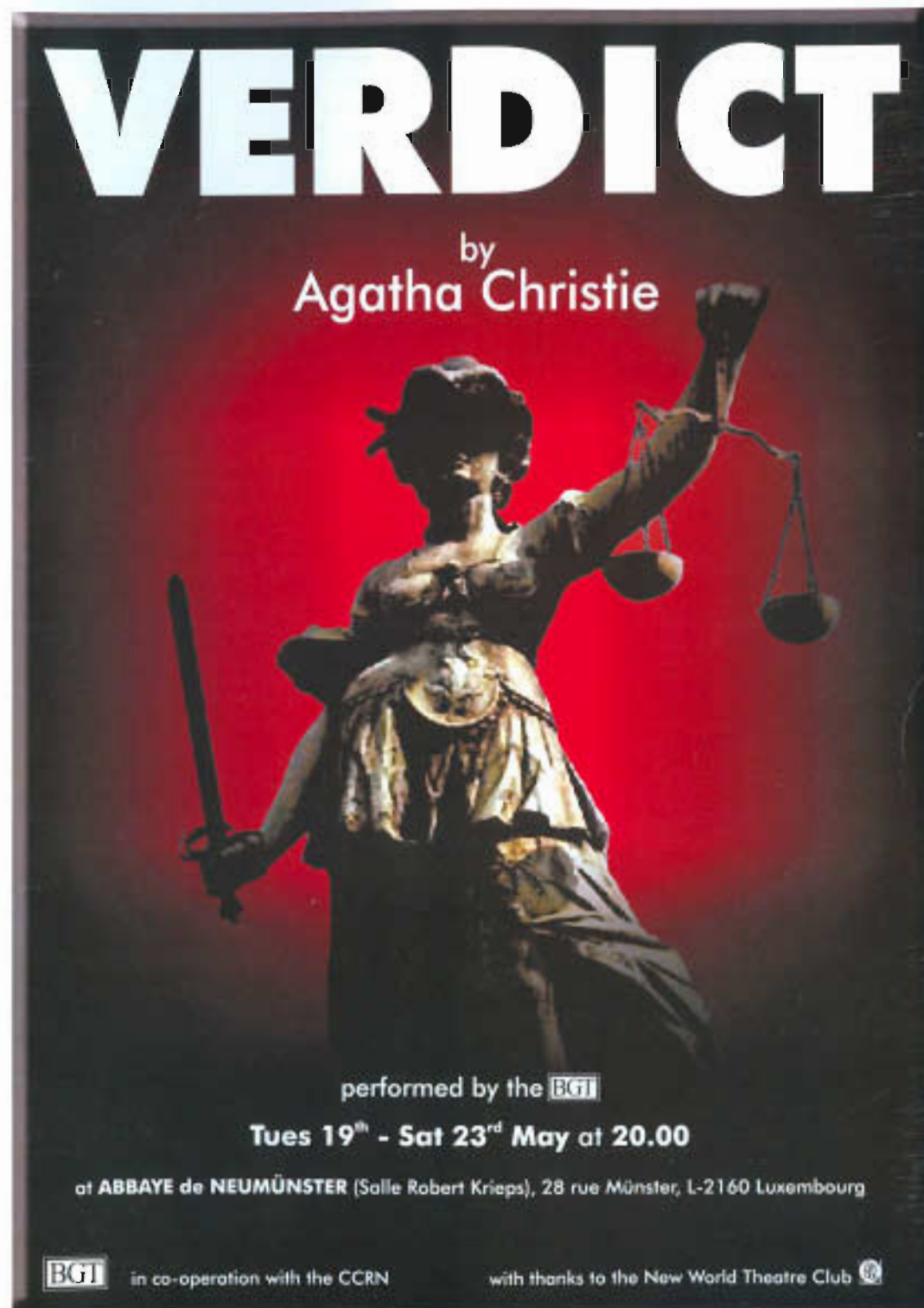
Saturday 13 June - 20:00
Centre Culturel "Am Duerf"
Junglinster, 8 rue du Village

Sunday 21 June - 18:00
"Fête de la Musique"
Abbaye de Neumünster
Luxembourg-Grund

Sunday 28 June - 17:00
Centre Arca
Bertrange, 17 rue Alert

Tickets at www.luxembourgticket.lu. E-mail ticketbu@cc.lu or phone 47 08 95-1
Tickets 16€ (Students 12€) - Free admission to the 21 June performance
Free admission to the 28 June performance for children under 8 years of age
All proceeds of our concerts will be donated to Children's Charities
www.voicesinternational.lu chairman@voicesinternational.lu or phone 921 - 24 04 21

*Please come out
and support this event*



The poster features a statue of Lady Justice holding scales and a sword, set against a red background. The title 'VERDICT' is in large white letters at the top.

VERDICT

by
Agatha Christie

performed by the **BGI**

Tues 19th - Sat 23rd May at 20.00

at **ABBAYE de NEUMÜNSTER** (Salle Robert Krieps), 28 rue Münster, L-2160 Luxembourg

BGI in co-operation with the CCRN with thanks to the New World Theatre Club

The CAST and CREW of VERDICT
would like to send their deepest condolences to

MICHELE JAMROZIK
for the tragic loss of her husband
RUDI.

Our heartfelt thoughts are with her and her children
SEBASTIAN and ALEXANDER
at this difficult time.



Luxembourg's First

10-minute plays are just as dramatic
or funny as you'll find anywhere.
They're just a lot shorter.

Directors/Ensemble Actors Wanted!

The NWTC is looking for directors to bring original 10-minute plays to life!
Scripts range from funny to surreal, dramatic to thought-provoking.
Sets are minimal and the festival will be under the guidance of
an overall director and stage manager.

Open auditions for actors in June for the November 10-minute Play festival.
Details soon: www.nwte.lu

If you are interested in participating, please contact:
Deborah Anderson
✉ deborah.lux@gmail.com ☎ 2633-1433

Sponsored by: New World Theatre Club & Creative Writing Club Luxembourg

VERDICT

by

Agatha Christie

Cast (in order of appearance)

Lester Cole, a student	Robin Edds
Mrs. Roper, a cleaning lady	June Lowery
Lisa Koletzky	Jessica Whiteley
Professor Karl Hendryk	Bjørn Clasen
Doctor Stoner	Steve Anderson
Anya Hendryk, Karl Hendryk's wife	Elke Murdock
Hélène Rollandre, a student	Ariane Spicq
Guillaume Rollandre, her father	Pierre-Yves Lanneau-Saint-Léger
Detective Inspector Ogden	Chris Albrecht
Detective Sergeant Pearce	Jim Colville



Set Design and Construction	Karl Pierce
Lighting	Kristian Sköld
Stage Manager	Rose Flammant
Props	Angela Milne
Makeup	Lindsay Wegleitner
Hair	Christopher Kraemer
Scenic Artist	Mea Bateman
Publicity Design	Florian Gärtner
Photos	Michele Jamrozik
Producer	June Lowery
Director	Tony Kingston

Produced by the BGT (Berliner Grundtheater e.V)
in association with Centre Culturel de Rencontre Neumünster
and with the kind assistance of the New World Theatre Club

With special thanks to

Fran Potasnik & Adrian Diffey; Maria & Marcus Foti;

Jean & Ronald Lowery; Marie-Paule Wagener; Deborah Anderson;

Mike Reynolds; Felly Kingston; Chantal Spoeth;

Eugenia Maria Mattenet; SMA asbl;

the staff and technical crew of the Abbaye

AND: the families & friends of all the cast and crew
for their patience during the last months.

The play is set in the Hendryks' flat in west London in the late 1950s.

Act 1, Scene 1

An afternoon in early spring

Act 1, Scene 2

Two weeks later. Late afternoon

15 minute interval

Act 2, Scene 1

Four days later around midday

Act 2, Scene 2

Later that evening

Act 2, Scene 3

Two months later.

The Berliner Grundtheater e.V (BGT) was founded in 1991 and is dedicated to producing as wide a range of English-language plays as possible. It has performed shows from authors as varied as Peter Shaffer, Anthony Minghella, Oscar Wilde and William Shakespeare. As well as playing in Berlin, the company has appeared in Luxembourg, at the Edinburgh Festival and at Anglo-German Festivals around Germany. Recent successes have included Christopher Hampton's "Les Liaisons Dangereuses", and a multi-media production of Marlowe's "Doctor Faustus". The BGT has twice visited Luxembourg, playing A.R. Gurney's "Another Antigone" and Michael Frayn's "Alarms and Excursions". With the help of the NEW WORLD THEATRE CLUB of Luxembourg, VERDICT is the BGT's 25th production and incorporates actors from Luxembourg.

Agatha Christie & Verdict

According to Agatha Christie, *Verdict* "satisfied me completely. I still think it is the best play I have written, with the exception of *Witness for the Prosecution*".

As Producer, I agree, and rate it even higher than *Witness*, whose ending now can seem melodramatic. *Verdict* did not run as long as the seemingly unstoppable *The Mousetrap*, which is still running in London after over 23,000 performances. But as Charles Osborne² points out, *Verdict* "may lack mystery: it does not lack suspense".

Christie's best writing, I believe, is when she writes for fun, as in her *Autobiography*; the archaeological memoir *Come tell me how you live*; the novels published under the pseudonym Mary Westmacott; and her plays.

Christie's first novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* - published in 1920 but written during breaks in work as a pharmacy assistant during WWI - was in reply to a challenge from her elder sister. Incidentally, it is the first Poirot novel, and the idea to make him Belgian came from Belgian First World War refugees then living near Christie's home. Delighted when it was published, Christie did not see herself as a writer until economic circumstances forced her to do so. She had developed the "habit of writing stories" as a creative pastime, like embroidering cushion-covers. She later wrote: "I had been dared to write a detective story; I had written a detective story; it had been accepted, and was going to appear in print. There, as far as I was concerned, the matter ended....I was the complete amateur - nothing of the professional about me. For me, writing was fun." But in 1926 her world changed dramatically. Her husband asked for a divorce, so he could marry another woman, provoking Christie's infamous 6-day "disappearance". By 1927, although already a successful crime writer with 6 novels published including the masterpiece *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, she now had to write to support herself and her daughter: "I was driven desperately on by the desire, indeed the necessity, to write another book and make some money. That was the moment when I changed from an amateur to a professional. I assumed the burden of a profession, which is to write even when you don't want to, don't much like what you are writing, and aren't writing particularly well."

1 Agatha Christie, *An Autobiography*

2 Charles Osborne, *The life and crimes of Agatha Christie*

Her first original play (*Black Coffee* involving Poirot) was as early as 1930, but she turned increasingly, and successfully, to the theatre after World War II, and by the 1950's she had successfully adapted 4 of her novels for the stage (motivated originally by annoyance over others' adaptations of her work). She noted in her autobiography, "Of course I knew that writing books was my steady, solid profession. I could go on inventing my plots and writing my books until I went gagawriting plays seemed to me entrancing, simply because it wasn't my job, because I hadn't got the feeling I had to think of a play – I only had to write the play I was already thinking of. Plays are much easier to write than books....I should always write my one book a year – I was sure of that. Dramatic writing would be my adventure - that would always be, and must always be - hit and miss... Yes, play-writing was not a thing I could be sure of. It was a glorious gamble every time, and I liked it that way." Probably everyone involved in theatre can recognise that sentiment!

Verdict is unusual since it is not the "sudoku" type of mystery for which Christie is renowned. It unfolds like a Greek tragedy. Everyone acts for the best and by doing so their fatal flaws bring destruction. In Christie's analysis: "... it was not a detective story or a thriller. It was a play that concerned murder, but its real background and point was that an idealist is always dangerous, a possible destroyer of those who love him - and poses the question of how far you can sacrifice, not yourself, but those you love, to what you believe in, even though they do not."

Verdict may not have been right for 1958. I feel this play is particularly in tune with our times, when differences between personal principles and national law, between what is right and what is lawful, are constantly discussed in contexts as varied as bankers' bonuses and the war on terror. Agatha Christie hoped to be remembered "as a good writer of detective and thriller stories". I hope after seeing *Verdict* you will agree that Agatha Christie should be remembered as an exceptionally good writer of detective and thriller stories – and also of plays. JLK

Fields of Amaranth

Christie's original title for this play was *No Fields of Amaranth*: *Verdict* she called "a bad title". "No fields of amaranth" is a quotation from the poet Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864) used in the play. If you are not familiar with the quotation or the word, do not worry: even at the play's premiere in 1958 the programme contained an explanatory note. Amaranth is a genus

of plants that includes "Love lies bleeding", and a grain that is a food staple in parts of the world. You may have "amaranth" food products offered in health food shops, as it offers exceptional protein levels and can lower cholesterol. The name comes from the Greek *amarantos* the "one that does not wither," or "never-fading (flower)".

The quotation comes from Landor's *Imaginary Conversations* (1829), a prose work of imagined conversations between pairs of characters, in this case, between Aesop and the Greek queen Rhodope:

There are no fields of amaranth on this side of the grave: there are no voices, O Rhodopè! that are not soon mute, however tuneful: there is no name, with whatever emphasis of passionate love repeated, of which the echo is not faint at last.



Bjørn Clasen as Karl and Jessica Whiteley as Lisa

Photo Michele Jamrozik, 2009