

**ABBNEY  
THEATRE  
ST ALBANS**

*She Kills Monsters*  
*Steel Magnolias*  
*Legally Blonde*  
*Elgar and Alice*  
*Pressure*  
*Love Letters*  
*New Writing Festival*  
*and more*

**JANUARY -  
JULY 2024**



**Drama, Comedy, Music,  
New Writing**

**Box Office:** 01727 857861  
**[www.abbeytheatre.org.uk](http://www.abbeytheatre.org.uk)**

Westminster Lodge, Holywell Hill,  
St Albans AL1 2DL

# Monsters, Machine Gunners, Magnolias and more

If there's one letter that sums up our forthcoming magnificent mixed menu, it's M. We begin with **She Kills Monsters** in January, bringing fantasy role-play to the fore in a story that's taken youth audiences in the US by storm. In February, the Company of Teens keeps youth in focus with their production of **The Machine Gunners**, based on Robert Westall's gripping and much-loved WW2 classic novel.

At the beginning of March, **Steel Magnolias** is the emotional all-woman drama that inspired the Hollywood blockbuster with Mesdames Field, MacLaine, Dukakis, Parton, Hannah and Roberts. In April, St Albans Youth Music Theatre steps up with their production of **Legally Blonde**, a musical adaptation of the film that's guaranteed to get all members of the family tapping their feet and humming tunes all the way home from the theatre.

Later in April **Elgar and Alice** sees a change of tone as Peter Sutton's play tells the fascinating story of a great composer's convoluted love life. We commemorate the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings in June with a production of David Haig's **Pressure**, the compelling story behind the weather forecasting on which Eisenhower based his momentous decision.

Also in June, the correspondence between Melissa Gardner and Andrew Makepeace Ladd III (yes, an American) in **Love Letters** provides an intimate insight into a relationship of which most romantics can only dream.

But if you're looking for unpredictability, freshness, variety and a chance to see tomorrow's stars today, don't miss our **New Writing Festival** in July. It might not be the most polished night out you'll have this summer but it could be the one you remember the most.

Besides the endeavours of the Company of Ten, we're delighted to welcome visiting companies to the theatre. Look out for familiar favourites, St Albans Jazz Ensemble, a student showcase for Theatrix, St Albans Chamber Opera's highly-anticipated **La Traviata** and the return of Ever After Productions with a fabulous Sondheim tribute.

Don't forget to check our website for other shows and events, and find out how you can become involved behind the scenes at the Abbey Theatre St Albans, your community theatre.



# JANUARY STAJE IN CONCERT

**ST ALBANS JAZZ ENSEMBLE**

STAJE has been delighting music lovers with its high-energy concerts for some fourteen years. Directed by Andy Baddaley, this collective of local professional and serious amateur musicians and vocalists showcases the incredible diversity that the world of Jazz has to offer. From Big Band Swing to Latin, Jazz-Funk to Soul, a STAJE concert always has something for everyone to enjoy.

11 Jan 2024, 8pm  
Booking open  
11 Apr 2024, 8pm  
Booking opens 1 Feb 2024  
**Main Stage**



# JANUARY–FEBRUARY SHE KILLS MONSTERS

**By Qui Nguyen  
COMPANY OF TEN**

This action-packed romp through the world of fantasy role-play follows Agnes, a young high school teacher, as she tries to come to terms with the deaths of her parents and teenage sister in a car accident. Having found Tilly's Dungeons & Dragons notebook, she sets out to discover who her sister really was.

*The play deals with issues of grief and sexual identity, and contains strong language and fantasy violence.*

26 Jan–3 Feb 2024, 8pm  
Sunday matinée 28 Jan,  
2.30pm  
Booking open  
**Studio**



# FEBRUARY THE PLAYLET'S THE THING

**THEATRIX SHOWCASE**

A variety show of Theatrix students' drama skills including wonderful play extracts, famous stories, panto, improvisation, movement and musical theatre.

Junior students:  
8 Feb 2024, 7.30pm & 10 Feb, 3.30pm  
Senior students:  
9 Feb 2024, 7.30pm & 10 Feb, 7.30pm  
Tickets £14 full price,  
£13 concessions,  
£8 13 & under  
Booking opens 1 Dec 2023  
(unreserved seating)  
**Main Stage**



# FEBRUARY THE MACHINE GUNNERS

**Adapted for the stage by Ali Taylor  
from the novel by Robert Westall  
COMPANY OF TEENS**

Set in the tumultuous world of 1940s Britain, spirited young Chas McGill is the town's second-best collector of war souvenirs. Amidst the chaos of air raids, bonds are forged and loyalties strained as Chas and his friends pilfer a machine gun from a downed German aircraft, attempting to impose their own brand of justice.

15–17 February 2024, 8pm  
Booking opens 1 Dec 2023  
Tickets £13 full price  
£11 concession  
**Main Stage**



# MARCH STEEL MAGNOLIAS

**By Robert Harling  
COMPANY OF TEN**

Secrets and joys are shared over shampoo and manicures in Truvy's salon at the heart of Chinquapin, Louisiana. Filled with wit and smart repartee, the play takes us on a complex journey from the joy of engagements and childbirth to the tragedy of loss, as the women show their strength and love for each other - and themselves

1–9 Mar 2024, 8pm  
Sunday matinée 3 Mar  
2024, 2.30pm  
Booking opens 1 Dec 2023  
**Main Stage**



# MARCH LA TRAVIATA

**By Giuseppe Verdi  
ST ALBANS CHAMBER OPERA**

*La Traviata* is famous for its rousing drinking song – a toast sung by Alfredo to Violetta, a Parisian courtesan, whom he has secretly loved since he first saw her. As he tries to convince her to live a life of bliss in the countryside with him, Violetta feels faint, questioning if she should abandon her life of pleasure for 'true love'.

17 Mar 2024, 2.30pm,  
£18 full price, £10 those in  
full time education  
19, 20, 22 & 23 Mar 2024,  
7.30pm Tickets £22.50  
Booking opens 1 Jan 2024  
**Main Stage**



# APRIL LEGALLY BLONDE

Music and Lyrics by Laurence O'Keefe and Nell Benjamin. Book by Heather Hach.  
Based on the novel by Amanda Brown and the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer motion picture.  
**ST ALBANS YOUTH MUSIC THEATRE**

When Elle Woods wants to win back her boyfriend she has to get serious about herself. Overcoming prejudice, Elle proves to everyone at Harvard, and beyond, that she's more than just an impeccably dressed fashionista with perfectly manicured nails. In this fabulous tale of self-care and self-discovery, Elle finds her true worth and her true friends.

4–6 Apr 2024, 7.30pm  
Saturday matinée  
6 Apr 2024, 2.30pm  
Booking opens 1 Dec 2023  
Tickets £13,  
Concessions £11  
**Main Stage**



# APRIL ELGAR AND ALICE

By Peter Sutton  
**COMPANY OF TEN**

Written to mark the 150th anniversary of Sir Edward Elgar's birth, this touching drama is set in 1920 as the great composer's popularity was waning. It provides a compelling glimpse into the lives of Elgar, his wife, Alice and his mistress and muse, Windflower. Their relationships were unconventional, yet inspired Elgar to compose some of the most iconic English music of all time.

19–27 Apr 2024, 8pm  
Sunday matinée 21 Apr  
2024, 2.30pm  
Booking opens 1 Jan 2024  
**Studio**



# MAY LADIES WHO LUNCH

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim  
**EVER AFTER PRODUCTIONS**

Ever After Productions returns to the main stage this May with Ladies Who Lunch, an all-female celebration of Stephen Sondheim's greatest leading ladies (and a few of his leading men too!)

18–19 May 2024, 7.30pm  
Booking opens 1 Mar 2024  
Tickets £20  
**Main Stage**



# JUNE PRESSURE

By David Haig  
**COMPANY OF TEN**

Everything is in place for the biggest invasion ever known in Europe, but one crucial question remains: Will the weather be right on the day? As the world watches and waits, General Eisenhower, Allied Supreme Commander, must make a decision which will not only seal the fates of thousands of men, but could determine the outcome of the entire war.

7–15 June 2024, 8pm  
Sunday matinée 9  
June 2024, 2.30pm  
Booking opens 1 Mar  
2024  
**Main Stage**



# JUNE LOVE LETTERS

By A. R. Gurney  
**COMPANY OF TEN**

A correspondence that starts with a thank you note continues throughout the lives of Melissa Gardner and Andrew Makepeace Ladd III. The notes and letters follow the characters through school and college and into their turbulent adult careers and relationships. Transcending success and failure, marriage and divorce, family turmoil and physical distance, their correspondence reveals a deep and lasting connection.

27–29 Jun 2024, 8pm  
Booking opens 1 Mar 2024  
**Studio**



# JULY NEW WRITING FESTIVAL

**COMPANY OF TEN**

Join us for an exciting festival of brand new one-act plays presented in the Abbey Theatre Studio. Throughout the first two weeks of July we will be showcasing previously unperformed writing from emerging playwrights, with a different programme each evening. Check our website nearer the time for more details.

3–13 Jul 2024, 8pm  
Booking opens 1 May 2024  
Tickets £5.00  
**Studio**



# BOOKING TICKETS

01727 857861  
Box Office opening hours  
**Monday-Friday, 9.30am-12 noon**

Please note that the Box Office closes from mid-July until 1 September.

You may book online at any time on our website.

Company of Ten productions: £14 full price, £12 concession (Other ticket prices may vary)

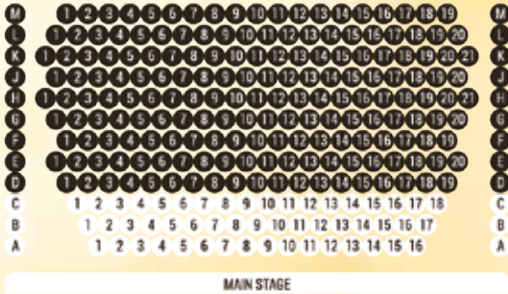
[www.abbeytheatre.org.uk](http://www.abbeytheatre.org.uk)

Please note that all productions are subject to alteration. Please check our website for the most up-to-date information.

# BOOKING

**ONLINE** at [www.abbeytheatre.org.uk](http://www.abbeytheatre.org.uk) where you may also sign up to receive our e-newsletter.

**BOX OFFICE** on 01727 857861 Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 12 noon, and thirty minutes before each performance. Closed from mid-July until 1 September.



In the main auditorium, rows A to C are at ground level, rows D to M are raked. In the Studio, seats are unreserved.

We are no longer able to send tickets by post. Discounts are available on bookings of more than ten full price seats.

The Box Office opens thirty minutes before each performance for collection of tickets. Latecomers will only be admitted at the discretion of the management.

All productions and dates may be subject to alteration. Please check online or contact the Box Office.

# VISITING

The Abbey Theatre is at Westminster Lodge, Holywell Hill, St Albans AL1 2DL, a short distance from the centre of St Albans and the Cathedral. There's plenty of parking nearby, including a number of blue badge bays.

We have a licensed bar, and coffee and ice cream are available during intervals. For the hard of hearing, Sennheiser infrared headsets are available from the Manager's Office. We warmly welcome wheelchair patrons but, as spaces are limited, please check availability when booking.

# JOINING

The Company of Ten is St Albans' longest established and most prestigious theatrical group, and the resident company at the Abbey Theatre. Although, as members, we are unpaid, we aim to run the theatre to a professional standard. Anyone can join. Besides acting, there are opportunities in stage management, design and construction, sound, lighting, props, wardrobe, marketing and front of house. You can also support us by becoming an Abbey Theatre Friend.

To find out more, please visit [www.abbeytheatre.org.uk](http://www.abbeytheatre.org.uk)

