

**ABBNEY  
THEATRE  
ST ALBANS**

*Di and Viv and Rose*  
*The Penelopiad*  
*To Have and to Hold*  
*Me and My Girl*  
*George Orwell's 1984*  
*The Taming of the Shrew*  
*The Girl on the Train*  
*Sheila's Island*

**JANUARY -  
JULY 2026**



**Comedy, Drama, Opera, Music**

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

Westminster Lodge, Holywell Hill,  
St Albans AL1 2DL

# A New Year Full of Stories

There's plenty to catch the eye in our new season, which kicks off in January with **Di and Viv and Rose** in the Studio. Amelia Bullmore's play explores a friendship between three women that changes over the years, promising virtuoso performances and plenty to get you thinking about what friendship really means.

In February, the Company of Teens offers a very different take on the female experience with Margaret Atwood's **The Penelopiad** – the story of the women and girls left behind by Odysseus during the Trojan War. Also in February, we've Richard Bean's comedy **To Have and to Hold** (he of One Man, Two Guvnors fame), which is a sharp and tender look at a Yorkshire couple whose grown-up children have grown away from them, and not necessarily for the better.

St Albans Youth Music Theatre brings a modern twist to **Me and My Girl** in March. Based on a script updated by Stephen Fry, this musical comedy explores the kind of clashes you might find on social media – *Made in Chelsea* types versus *EastEnders* types. It's a funny, toe-tapping, feel-good show you won't want to miss. In a spectacular change of

tone, we're also presenting Ryan Craig's adaptation of **George Orwell's 1984** in March and April. But be careful, because as you're watching it, Big Brother might be watching you.

In May, Alison Wright's re-telling of Shakespeare's **The Taming of the Shrew** gives the story a fresh new angle – this version might not be quite the one you remember. That's followed in June by **The Girl on the Train**, a gripping stage adaptation of the bestselling thriller that will keep you on the edge of your (train) seat until the final stop. There's also **Sheila's Island** in July, a female-only comedy about a corporate team-building exercise that goes horribly, hilariously wrong.

Keep an eye on our website ([www.abbeytheatre.org.uk](http://www.abbeytheatre.org.uk)) for updates, including the addition of guest productions to our schedule. Theatrix, St Albans Chamber Opera and Ever After are already booked in, but you never know what might appear at short notice.

And if you'd like to get involved yourself, you'll also find details online about joining us as a volunteer. We're always happy to welcome new faces, both on stage and behind the scenes.



## JANUARY STAJE IN CONCERT

### ST ALBANS JAZZ ENSEMBLE

The ever-popular big band STAJE returns to the Abbey Theatre. Expect an evening that showcases a wide spectrum of Jazz, Blues, Soul, Funk, Latin and more, with feature performances from outstanding guest vocalists, including Craig Garrett, Lucy Lock and Danielle Cresswell. STAJE is now in its 16th year and continues to delight and entertain audiences with its high-energy performances.

8 Jan 2026, 8pm  
Tickets £15 full price,  
£12.50 15 & under  
Booking open  
9 Apr 2026, booking  
opens 1 Feb 2026  
**Main Stage**



## JANUARY DI AND VIV AND ROSE

### By Amelia Bullmore COMPANY OF TEN

This sharp, warm, and emotionally resonant play about the enduring power of female friendship follows three very different women who meet as university students in the 1980s. As the years pass, life tests them with love, betrayal, grief, and personal reinvention. Through it all, their friendship is both a source of strength and vulnerability, showing how deep connections can support, challenge, and ultimately define us.

23–31 Jan 2026, 8pm  
Matinées 24 & 25 Jan  
2026, 2.30pm  
Booking open  
**Studio**



## FEBRUARY THE PENELOPIAD

### By Margaret Atwood COMPANY OF TEENS

Penelope – wife of Odysseus and cousin of the beautiful Helen of Troy – dutifully endures twenty years of waiting when her husband goes to fight in the Trojan War. As she fends off the attentions of a hundred greedy suitors, travelling minstrels regale her with news of Odysseus' epic and romantic adventures around the Mediterranean. But when Odysseus finally comes home, what will happen to her, her suitors and her maids?

5-7 Feb 2026, 8pm  
Booking open  
**Studio**



## FEBRUARY THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

### by W A Mozart, English translation by Edward Dent ST ALBANS CHAMBER OPERA

Figaro and Susanna are ready to marry - but one exhausting, chaotic day throws everything into question. Their plans are disrupted by their boss and by an unexpected rival with a contract and a grudge. As secrets fly, disguises pile up and alliances shift, what begins as a simple wedding spirals into deception, mistaken identity, and surprise revelations.

10, 11 & 13 Feb, 7.30pm  
8 & 14 Feb, 2.30pm  
Booking open.  
Tue 10 Feb, £19 full price,  
£10 full time education.  
All other performances  
£24 full price,  
£10 full time education  
**Main Stage**



## FEBRUARY–MARCH TO HAVE AND TO HOLD

### By Richard Bean COMPANY OF TEN

After sixty years of marriage, Jack and Florence are living in quiet retirement in Yorkshire. They've refined the art of bickering into something almost elegant and have carved out a life they can both tolerate. But life is about to get louder. Their children arrive, bringing with them concerns, secrets and expectations. Old tensions stir, the rhythms of home are thrown off and buried truths begin to emerge.

27 Feb–7 Mar 2026, 8pm  
Sunday matinée 1 Mar 2026, 2.30pm  
Booking open  
**Main Stage**



## MARCH THE PLAYLET'S THE THING

### THEATRIX

An exciting and original entertainment displaying our talented young students, based on their work with Trinity College London. From Shakespeare to their own original new works, our young actors showcase that all their plays are just the thing!

Junior Students  
14 Mar 2026, 3.30pm  
Senior Students  
14 Mar 2026, 7.30pm  
Booking opens 1 Jan 2026  
Tickets - Full price £15,  
Concessions £13,  
Children 13 & under £8  
**Main Stage**



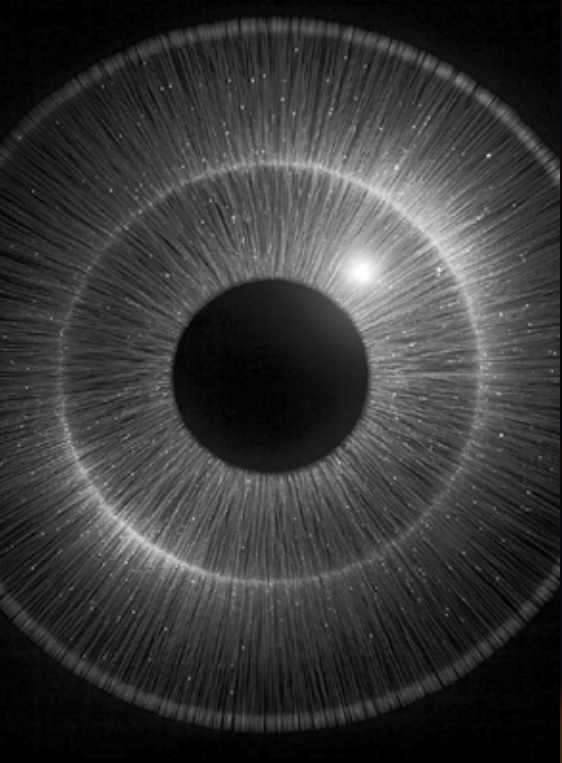
## MARCH ME AND MY GIRL

### Book & Lyrics by L Arthur Rose and Douglas Furber, Music by Noel Gay ST ALBANS YOUTH MUSIC THEATRE

When cheeky Cockney Bill learns he's the long-lost heir to the Earl of Hareford, he's suddenly whisked from the streets of London to the grand halls of aristocracy. To become a proper gentleman, he's expected to leave behind his roots and Sally, the girl he loves. In this new interpretation, *EastEnders* meets *Made in Chelsea* as Bill tries to fit in. But what will win – love and loyalty, or dress codes and etiquette?

26–28 Mar 2026, 7.30pm  
Saturday matinée  
28 Mar 2026, 2.30pm  
Booking opens 1 Jan 2026  
**Main Stage**





## APRIL–MAY GEORGE ORWELL'S 1984

Adapted by Ryan Craig  
COMPANY OF TEN

Step into a world where every thought is watched, every word is controlled, and rebellion is treason. George Orwell's landmark novel springs to urgent life in Ryan Craig's stage adaptation, a searing exploration of truth, control and resistance in a surveillance state. When every word is monitored, every memory rewritten and every act of love is treason, Winston Smith dares to imagine freedom.

24 Apr–2 May 2026, 8pm  
Sunday matinée 26 Apr 2026, 2.30pm  
Booking opens 1 Feb 2026  
Main Stage

## MAY THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

By William Shakespeare,  
adapted by Alison Wright  
COMPANY OF TEN

Shakespeare's battle of the sexes gets a bold new spin in this reimagining. It's the bard's razor-sharp text through a fresh, contemporary lens – playful, surprising and utterly relatable. Beneath the hilarity and bawdiness, the story probes timeless questions about love, power and who really gets the last word.

15–23 May 2026, 8pm  
Matinées 16 & 17 May  
2026, 2.30pm  
Booking opens  
1 Mar 2026  
Studio



## MAY WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN

Book by Jeffrey Lane  
Music & Lyrics by David Yazbek  
EVER AFTER PRODUCTIONS

Based on the 1988 Pedro Almodóvar film, the musical tells the tale of a group of women in late 20th Century Madrid whose relationships with men lead to a tumultuous forty-eight hours of love, confusion and passion.

20–23 May 2026, 7.30pm  
Saturday matinée  
23 May 2026, 2.30pm  
Booking opens  
1 Mar 2026  
Main Stage



## JUNE THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN

Based on the bestselling novel by  
Paula Hawkins and the Dreamworks film  
Adapted by Rachel Wagstaff and Duncan Abel  
COMPANY OF TEN

Step aboard a gripping psychological thriller where memory is unreliable, obsession is relentless and truth lurks just out of reach. This play pulls you into the world of Rachel Watson, an alcoholic haunted by blackouts, who is desperate to piece together what really happened to a woman she watched from her daily commute.

12–20 June 2026, 8pm  
Sunday matinée 14 June 2026, 2.30pm  
Booking opens 1 Mar 2026  
Main Stage



## JULY SHEILA'S ISLAND

By Tim Firth  
COMPANY OF TEN

Sheila, Denise, Julie and Fay embark on a corporate teambuilding exercise in the Lake District. But a navigational misstep strands them on a tiny island in Derwentwater and their carefully managed office lives turn into a survival scenario. In this darkly humorous play, friendships fray, secrets emerge and each woman must confront who she really is. The island may be small, but the emotional stakes are huge.

3–11 July 2026, 8pm  
Matinées 4 & 5 July 2026,  
2.30pm  
Booking opens  
1 Apr 2026  
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, £15 full price,  
£13 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)

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