



Essendon Theatre Company

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or

Online www.essendontheatrecompany.com

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We've come to the pointy end of a fabulous year at etc. Our first play "The Glass Menagerie" was a fabulous production, which was directed by Rachael Holt and Travis Handcock. The audiences appreciated all the hard work, which went into the production from the director, cast and crew and enjoyed it immensely. I think we'll do well at the VDL Awards but if we don't it doesn't matter because we're proud of the production we've put forward.

The 1 act play season "Something with a Twist" went extremely well both at etc. and at the 1 act play festivals. We had "Your Guide" by Hayley Lawson-Smith, directed by Joshua Wolter, "A Formal Tradition" by Julie Johnston, directed by Sonia Zabala and "Something Old, Something New" by Chris Hodson, directed by myself. It was great working with such a talented and enthusiastic team.

New to etc this year were the Children's workshops. Michele, Travis and Ceinwin put in a lot of work and it certainly paid off. The kids gained numerous new skills and were brimming with confidence, which was evident in their performances in "Jack and the Beanstalk". As I keep saying, these kids are the future of our company so we're planning workshops for kids and teens in 2015 to increase their skills. In effect, we will have the beginnings of the Essendon Youth Theatre Co.

"Jack and the Beanstalk" by Michael Bentley and directed by Michele Heywood was highly successful both financially and in relation to audience appeal. Michelle was very patient with her excitable cast and made the play an extension of the youth workshops. Everyone had a fabulous time doing the play.

We've had a great start to our final production with Travis successfully casting a number of very talented people. I'm looking forward to seeing this production, which promises to be a great mix of drama and comedy with some amazing characters. Please don't miss out on seeing it.

There are so many THANK YOU's to make that it's hard to know where to start. Firstly, to all of the actors who have graced our stage during 2014 and represented etc admirably, thank you for your hard work and enthusiasm. Next, to the directors who work tirelessly behind the scenes to bring their vision to life, thank you for making us proud. To all of the crew who build the sets, set up and run the lights and sound, manage the stage and props, make costumes and work front of house a huge THANK YOU. A show doesn't go on without the hard work in the background.

And, of course, a HUGE THANK YOU to the 2014 Committee - Christine, Ros, Rhiannon, Fiona, Travis, Ben, Zac, Meika and Cienwen. We all have busy lives outside etc so I appreciate that people put in whatever time they can to help keep the company going.

I'd love to expand the Committee in 2015. So if you're any where from 14 years upwards and would like to help to run a theatre company, please put Monday 9th February in your diary and come along to our AGM.

I wish you all a happy and safe holiday season and hope to see you all in 2015.

Love to all,

Dawn

UPCOMING AUDITIONS

THE FREEDOM OF THE CITY

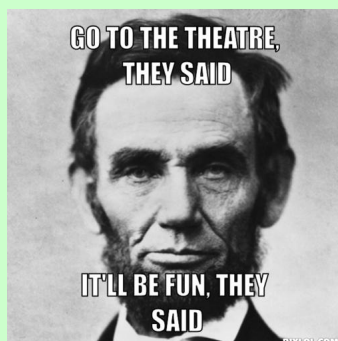
Tuesday 9th December

Sunday 11th December

PRIVATE LIVES

Tuesday 14th April

Sunday 19th April



The Faculty Room
By Bridget Carpenter
Directed by Travis Handcock

We have reached the final production for the season and let's just say it has everything. The Faculty Room is set in Madison Feury High's dilapidated staff room and follows the lives of four teachers and the Principal of the school. Carver Durand (played by Robert Ruscitti) arrives at the school, full of bright ideas and a bubbling energy to fix a school that has lowered its standards over the years. Adam Younger (Bruce Carboon), the school's English teacher and Zoe Bartholomew (Steph Morrell), the school's Drama teacher have all but given up on the school and don't have much respect for themselves or each other.

The disembodied voice of Principal Dennis (Hayley D'Ath) rings out through the staff room as she also attempts to find new ways to pull the school out of the slump. However, Principal Dennis' ideas have become more and more ridiculous over the years. Bill Dunn (James O'Brien) is the school's Ethics teacher and is a man of very few words. He would be, what is called, an observer.

As the teachers spiral out of control the school spirals with them, while Carver clings desperately onto his vision of fixing the school and hiding his dark secret. A black comedy that has plenty of heart and will drag you from pillar to post as it takes you on a frantic rollercoaster ride of emotions.

The Faculty Room shows you a truly twisted view on what happens inside the teacher's staffroom. It delves into themes of teacher/student relationships, spiritual fanaticism, drug use, guns in schools and many more issues jam packed into the one school.

The cast of The Faculty Room sees a return of two actors and three newbies to etc. Each and every one of them have worked harder than you can possibly imagine to bring a brutal honesty to each of their characters and deliver a fast-paced, interesting and breathtaking show to the stage.

This is one show you cannot miss and it opens this Thursday. Get your bookings in via the website essendontheatrecompany.com

Trav

The Faculty Room



Jack and the Beanstalk Review

Published in Theatrecraft by the Victorian Drama League

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

By Michael Bentley

Essendon Theatre Company

Directed by Michele Haywood

Reviewed by Alison Campbell Rate -
September 26, 2014

The audience of young families and grandparents was buzzing at the prospect of the afternoon's entertainment from ETC and was rewarded with a fun, energetic, engaging production. Using just a few adult performers, ETC used the talents and enthusiasm of a big cast of children and young teens for this show. Not all 'had the goods,' as it were, but all had the enthusiasm and would have had a ball putting the finished product together and improving their skills and confidence along the way. So, yes a few components were a little rough round the edges but it didn't detract from the success of the production.

This well-worn tale was given a lift with the introduction of a friend for Jack (Jill), a wicked landlord Baron Waste, a fairy godmother with attitude and a frankly weird collection of lost and straying people called collectively the Regiment of Berts (Cuthbert, Bertha, Bertie, Sherbert... etc.) who serve the mythical giant in his cloudy land. Some gags for the adults, a bit of hip-hop dance and an over-the-

top Gloria-Gaynor-type moment in Act 2 for Jack's mother all added to the mix.

The essential pantomime dame was the character of Jack's mother, Dolly, played wonderfully by Travis Handcock. His projection, characterisation and delivery were exactly right for the young audience and his character carried right across to them, generating a lot of appreciative laughs and applause. The not-particularly smart Jack was played confidently by Dean Crowley who also used his face well to convey the story to the audience. His musical number was also very good - well done. Samantha Harris confidently created a fun and feisty Jill and these two young actors worked well together. Marina Labib as the opinionated Fairy Godmother was another impressive young performer. Marina had great projection, a speaking face, good sense of comic timing and created an entertaining, memorable character.

Kyle Roberts as Jill's Father, Baron Waste, strutted around as the archetypal oily and self-serving villain, using voice and mannerisms well. Occasionally Kyle's projection didn't make it

over the fairly continual undercurrent of noise from the youngest audience members. The same comment applies to the Baron's henchmen played by Tiffany Basta and Leon Kuhlmann. Both young people were great in their roles as standover guys - comically threatening and just a bit stupid - but both needed to deliver their lines more deliberately and make their characters just a bit bigger as suits the pantomime style of performance. Andrea Mentikowski played Narrator. I enjoyed her measured, tongue-in-cheek delivery but again felt this performance needed to be a bit bigger.

The audience loved Strawberry the pantomime cow, inhabited gracefully by Grace and Holly Kemp. A host of well-rehearsed children, teens and attendant adult actors played villagers in the first act, and later, the regiment of Bert. Two of the youngest Berts (Robert, played by Xavier Brown, and girl with ponytail - sorry but I couldn't clearly see the 'Bert' name on her T-shirt!) had their fair share of lines to say and said them

exceptionally well. Smallest Bert of all, Cuthbert, played by Miles Brown, pretended to be the giant on top of another Bert's shoulders - a funny moment.

Sets were simple but effective and fun, Jack and Dolly's poor cottage and the painted rural backdrop looked good. Costuming was suitable: the Baron was dapper; the Berts were uniform; Henchmen 2 sported a great set of fake (I hope!) tats; Dolly broke out into a show-stopping gold lame and heels ensemble to sing a version of Geri Halliwell's 'It's Raining Men,' re-worded to 'The Giant's Dead.' All in all, the whole cast and crew should have felt well rewarded by the obviously happy and attentive audience. Great work by ETC in encouraging and mentoring the next generation of the VDL!

2015 ETC PLAYBILL

THE FREEDOM OF THE CITY

By Brian Friel

Directed by Rachael Holt and Travis Handcock
Auditions: Tuesday 9th & Thursday 11th December 2014, 7:30pm

Production Dates: April 9 - 18

Audition Bookings Contact
Travis 0424 494 829 or handycsu@hotmail.com

PRIVATE LIVES

By Noel Coward

Directed by Joshua Wolter
Auditions: Tuesday 14th April 7:30pm & Sunday 19th April 2:00pm

Production Dates: June 25 - 28 & July 2 - 4

Audition Bookings Contact
Joshua 0415 896 700 or jbwolter@gmail.com

BULL & THE UGLY ONE

By Mike Bartlett & Marius von Mayenburg

Directed by James Antonas
Auditions: Tuesday 30th June 7:30pm & Sunday 5th July 2:00pm

Production Dates: September 10 - 19

Audition Bookings Contact
James 0410 490 707 or jfantonas@hotmail.com

BOEING BOEING

By Marc Camoletti

Directed by Terese Maurici Ryan
Auditions: Tuesday 15th September 7:30PM & Sunday 20th September 2:00PM

Production Dates: November 26- 29 & December 3 - 5

Audition bookings Contact
Tess 0449 932 921 or terese_m@hotmail.com