



OVATIONS

MAY 2010

The official newsletter of the Auckland City Theatre Academy

**web: www.acta.co.nz
email: acta@xtra.co.nz
ph: (09) 443 0542**

To Be, Or Not to Be...

That was the question that was being asked and sadly the answer in this instance was the later.

It is fair to say that the slings and arrows were fought however in this instance the outrageous fortune required to keep the premises was unable to be raised in the time available to us.

Alas, twas not to be this time.

The hunt is now on for a new premises of equal benefit and we will keep you informed of progress in this regard.

The building has since been sold with vacant possession however the trustees of ACTA have reached agreement with the new owners that will allow us to stay until the end of June.

It remains the stated mission of the Trustees and Founders of ACTA that before we shuffle off this mortal coil, ACTA will reside in a permanent home such that generations of performers to come will have a home to learn and hone their skills such that they can take their place on any stage, screen or studio throughout the world and



show just how much this small country has to offer.

Perchance to dream...what dreams may come...

TEN QUESTIONS WITH HELEN MEDLYN



My favourite musical is..."Jesus Christ Superstar". I went along to the Mercury Theatre in 1983 to audition for the chorus and they gave me Mary Magdalene! I was a total unknown, so they took a huge gamble with me!

The role I would most like to play is...Carmen in the Bizet opera, "Carmen".

I am currently working on...a raft of things. I'm performing "The Marriage of Figaro" with the NBR NZ Opera, a one night performance with the APO in August. And, lastly but not leastly, Penny Dodd and I are working on a new cabaret show which we will present in September this year.

If I weren't an actress I would be...well, I AM a marriage celebrant, but I guess that's more of an "as well as"! So, if I wasn't involved in performance, I would love to have been a therapist whose practice entailed healing with touch, such as massage, cranial osteopathy or reiki.

My worst stage experience was...not a tragedy of any sort. It was, in fact, a laughing matter! I was playing Nettie in "Carousel" at the Mercury. One matinee, the inimitable Grant Bridger started "The Clam Bake Song" by singing the first verse with a stupid accent. Well, Granty doing the silly voice made me get the giggles and I corpsed...and I had to sing the next verse...and out came utter and complete gobbledygook! Tears were streaming down my face with laughter. I just could NOT get a hold of myself! Hopeless! Bleah!

My best memory of the theatre is...playing Joy Gresham in "Shadowlands" up in the Gods at the Mercury Theatre. A great role, a great play, great colleagues, great director. Just an all-round sublime experience.

See the rest of the questions on page 3

DINE AND DANCE



What A list celebrity will be patronizing the Dine and Dance this year?

Stay tuned, the announcement is just around the corner.

In the meantime, pencil this date in your diaries...

SATURDAY 27th NOVEMBER

Patron: Mr. Shane Cortese

Vice Patron: Sir Ross Jansen

Founders: Doreen and Ken Donnell

Registered Charitable Trust: CC33239

Auckland's only Music Theatre Academy for talented youth.

MARK'S MUSINGS - WHAT'S HAPPENING AT WAAPA



Mark Strom

Hi All,
We are just about to start 3 weeks of intense rehearsal for our major musical *Anything Goes*, which opens June 11th (we have been rehearsing the show

after everyday classes for the last couple of months now). My life now revolves around drilling numbers and cleaning choreography, it's fantastic. In other news, the Australian cast of *Cats* has recently been in Perth and we were lucky enough to have a dance master class

with the past WAAPA graduates in the show, (which make up about a third of the cast). It was incredibly rewarding and they gave us some great insight into what the industry holds for all of us once we graduate. I have my midyear assessments this week, so I

should probably go and finish my dramatic literature essay on *Cartography and Power in King Lear*. Yes, unfortunately there is a theory side to the course where you pretty much just sing and dance all day.

Till next time
Mark

ACTA FUNDRAISING

At ACTA we try not to burden families with time consuming fundraising programs like selling chocolates, car washes, sausage sizzles, raffles and cake stalls. We prefer to stage events that allow you to see how your children are progressing at ACTA. To experience first hand the benefits that performing arts training provides to kids of all ages.

Last year we only sold 50% of the tickets on offer and while this allowed the event to breakeven it left us with an operational funding shortfall. This year we need to sell every ticket and we need your help to do this. Please let everybody know that the ACTA mid year show *Final Call* is on.

See the flier on page 3 for booking details and lets give our kids a large and appreciative audience to perform to. We thank you for your support.



AROUND THE TRAPS



Erin Eckhoff

This month I am reviewing the Auckland Boys Grammar/Epsom Girls Grammar (AGS/EGGS) production of *The Sound of Music*.

The Sound of Music was the final musical written by Rodgers and Hammerstein. It has been made famous by the 1965 movie starring Julie Andrews and Christopher Plumber. The musical and movie are based on the memoir of Maria von Trap, "The Story of the Trapp Family Singers". The story follows Maria's journey who starts out as a novice nun who leaves her convent to become a governess to a Naval officer widower and his seven children. Maria eventually falls in love and marries the Naval officer (Georg) and she and the children then exodus from Austria to Switzerland shortly after the Nazi Germany's *Anschluss* of Austria in 1938.

The AGS/EGGS production was held at the beautiful new theatre at Epsom girls. The foyer was lavishly decorated with curtains, wild geese, brown paper packages tied up with string, stands of cupcakes, ice-cream and all my other favourite things.

The show itself was filled with promising young performers (we note ACTA student Olivia Hadlow played a lively young Austrian in the chorus). An adorable performance from the lead role Maria, played by Abby Hauraki who was vocally strong and endeared her charming character to the audience. Other notable performances from Emily Robertson as a mature and sophisticated *Baroness Elsa Schröder* and Rhys Landon-Lane and Emily Lauich, beautifully singing the roles of *Rolf* and *Liesl*. All in all, it was a delightful production and a great night out!

Next month: Avenue Q and Takapuna Grammar's *Fiddler on the Roof*



Auckland's only Music Theatre Academy for talented youth.

TEN QUESTIONS WITH HELEN MEDLYN...CONTINUED

The best advice I was ever given was... by the amazing actress, Lee Grant who said: "Say the wordies and get off". In other words, do the job. It's not about you...what it's about is how best you can serve the piece, serve your colleagues and serve your role. I like those words. They stop me from getting uppity.

My first paid acting gig was... the 1981 tour of "Evita"...I was employed as a dancer!!!

The advice I would give to somebody who wanted to do what I do is... "For an actress to be a success, she must have the face of Venus, the brains of Minerva, the grace of Terpsichore, the memory of Macaulay, the figure of Juno...and the hide of a rhinoceros"!!

I think the theatre is important because... it provides both audience and performers a place, even if only for a few hours, to put their own existence aside and embed themselves into something out of the ordinary - sometimes it's challenging, sometimes it's funny, sometimes it's heartbreaking - but nobody can come away from a piece of theatre unchanged. Even if they were unmoved by it or they hated it, there was still a reac-



Auckland City Theatre Academy
Proudly Presents...

Final Call!

Written by Janine Donnell



Bookings
Now Open

Ph (09) 361-1000

www.iticket.co.nz

Adults \$22.00 Children \$17.00 (15 yrs and under)

Seniors \$17.00 (+ booking/delivery fee)

WHEN?

Fri 2nd July at 7:30pm

Sat 3rd July at 7:30pm

Sun 4th July at 2pm

WHERE?

Centennial Theatre,
Auckland Grammar School
23 Mountain Rd, Epsom

Patron: Shane Cortese
A.C.T.A. Performing Arts Trust

Founders: Doreen & Ken Donnell
Performance Licensed by APRA

www.acta.co.nz

Set in JFK airport we follow the stories of passengers and staff who are stranded in the terminal when a snow storm grounds all flights. For some, the storm is a frustrating delay, but for others maybe a lucky break?

Featuring entertaining dialogue and the latest tunes from hit musicals including **Avenue Q** and **The Boy from Oz**, hard hitting dance routines (Janet & Michael Jackson's **SCREAM**) as well as Rock N Roll classics like **Rock Around the Clock**, **Final Call** has it all!

Final Call! is a fantastic night at the theatre for all the family. Hurry though — seats are limited.