

2004



52nd
SEASON

The Newsletter of
the
Heidelberg
Theatre
Company Inc.
Inc. No. A0008432X

PROMPTS

No. 2.
April, 2004

36 Turnham Ave
Rosanna 3084

General Enquiries
Phone 9455 3039
Fax 9457 2078
Heidelbergtheatrecompany@hotmail.com

Bookings and
Subscriptions
9457 4117

Prompts Online: -
<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~htc/>
email to Prompts on:-
htcprompts@hotmail.com



Hungarian playwright, Ferenc Molnar's **Play At The Castle** was written in 1926. This has been freely adapted by the prolific playwright Tom Stoppard and first performed in 1984 in London as **Rough Crossing** a clever, witty, comedy set in 1930 on the high seas.

Stoppard is quoted as saying, "For someone like me who enjoys writing dialogue, but has a terrible time writing plays, adaptation is joy time. You go around with a bag of tools doing jobs between personal plays." *from an interview with Mel Gussow in the New York Times, July 1979.*

Wendy Drowley is directing the show, after recovering from **I'm Not Rappaport** last year. A great cast has been assembled, three oldies and three newies. Chris Maclean and John Keogh, as *Turai* and *Gal*, the Playwrights, played in **Imaginary Invalid** together in 2003. Chris also appeared in **Kindertransport** and John as *Doolittle* in **Pygmalion**. Barry James as *Ivor*, the leading actor, also played in **Imaginary Invalid** and **The Cherry Orchard**.

We welcome Diana Mazaris as *Natasha*, the leading lady, who has worked at Moreland T.C. Ian Frost as *Adam*, the composer has worked with the Savoy Opera Company and Joshua Parnell as *Dvornicheck*, the slightly sozzled waiter, has worked at Hartwell T.C.

Anne Smith is Co-ordinator Extraordinaire, Tim McLaughlan is designing sound, Stelios Karagiannis is designing lighting.

Wendy and Ted Drowley are designing the set with Ted undertaking the role of chief organiser of the usual great team of set builders. Lois Connor will costume in the 1930's style and Ed Hassell will take the role of Musical Director. Yes, we have songs in this, the music is by André Previn. So don't miss this one!

ROUGH CROSSING

by Tom Stoppard
directed by Wendy Drowley

28th April. – 15th May, 2004
Wednesday to Saturday at 8.15pm
Matinee Sunday May 9th at 3pm

BOOKINGS – 9457 4117

Subscribers requiring to alter their chosen night or reserve their booking are asked to call BEFORE Monday, 19th April, 2004

THE PLAY'S THE THING, THE PLAY AT THE CASTLE, ROUGH CROSSING 1961 - 2004

When I auditioned for Tom Stoppard's **Rough Crossing**, and read that it was freely adapted from Ferenc Molnar's **The Play At The Castle**, bells rang in the recesses of my memory. I had been in a play by Ferenc Molnar back in 1961 but it had been called **The Play's The Thing**.

I rummaged for forty minutes or so and came up with an old folder containing the script, which was half typescript on the old foolscap size, and half very early and fading photocopy. It was **The Play's The Thing** and though it was set in a castle, the story line was the same as that in **Rough Crossing** as were the characters, even down to the same names being used. I have enclosed a cutting from *The Age* of 29/9/61. In those days *The Age* and *The Herald* used to review if not all, then some amateur productions and some readers will remember that the Russell Street Theatre was for hire when the Melbourne Theatre Company weren't using it.

The G & T Dramatic Society mentioned in the cutting was the Green and Tan Dramatic Society which was run by ex students of University High School. I was not one of these but in the late 50's and early 60's I was very heavily involved in the amateur theatre scene and the director, Lindsay Moore, who also played *Sandor Turai* in the play asked me to play the role of the ham actor (typecasting!) *Almady*. In Stoppard's version, directed by Wendy, he is *Ivor Fish* and is played by Barry James.

I was a little put out that Wendy wouldn't even let me audition for the 'old ham' as I thought I was the right age for it now. In 1961 I was 25 and had had to grey my hair for the role. Forty-three years later I don't have to do that and there is much less hair anyway.

John Keogh

Molnar Play at Russell Street The Age 9/9/61
After a rather flat 1st Act, Ferenc Molnar's high-spirited comedy begins to snap and crackle. This production needed the lift brought in the 2nd Act by John Keogh and Carole Donnelly. Their perfectly matched teamwork as the "old hat" ham and the young, impressionable prima donna took advantage of the brilliant lines provided them.

It was a performance which justified the author's merry-making mixture of melodrama and sophistication.

Continued page 3



REVIEW

Dinner With Friends by Donald Margulies
directed by Brian Moroney. Reviewed by Graeme Cope for
3CR's Curtain Up – Sundays at One (855AM).

Donald Margulies' **Dinner With Friends** won a Pulitzer prize in 2000. But it's hard to see why! Must have been a bad year or tells us something about the eccentricities of judges! Such tripe - even tho the program tells us the author's a consummate playwright! Reminds me of Marsha Norman's two-hander '**Night, Mother** that did the same some twenty years ago. But we're not here to crit the play as a script, are we? What did director Brian Moroney and his quartet of actors make of it? Perhaps not a mountain from the molehill but certainly a fine fist of extracting what little point the whole thing really has.

If pushed and comparing, for instance, the Act II scenes where each gender works in isolation from the other - the two boys at a bar, the two girls lunching - I'd give the acting honors to the women over the men by a short length of Max Factor no.5 but there's really no doubt that all four performers work very nicely together to give this piece its only real interest. They're burdened by the fact that their yuppie New York metro cum Connecticut characters are just so bland and the "meaningful" crises they face so monumentally insignificant in the larger scale of things that we basically couldn't care a proverbial tinker's about what they do and say about the angsts of the stale marriage and the separation that are the engines driving the plot. So, it's to everyone's credit that they're as successful as they are with material that's frankly so unengaging and, I reckon, gets even more so as the evening passes. Something's surely amiss when the recipes, for instance, for the flourless almond and lemon polenta cake, are more tempting than the action! Indeed, overhearing interval chitchat, what we liked was how the actors worked so nimbly to establish *Karen* and *Gabe* and *Beth* and *Tom* as both (sort of) credible individuals and couples. All in all, an impressive team effort from (respectively) Suzanne Shubart, Andrew McAlicie, Emma Dawson and Tim Wade. Also most proficiently blocked, I thought, with each character given his or her little mannerisms and some excellent registrations.

The sets (by Dennis Pain and the director) are serviceable rather than spectacular and use Heidelberg's revolve effectively to cover the five or six necessarily different locations in Connecticut, the Big Apple and Martha's Vineyard. Notable too, because of their chosen style, for being one of the few cases where I don't need to get stropky about a lack of skirtings and architraves! Compared with the lighting, which a tad patchy (for example, the lightning and sunset effects), the sound, especially that of those horrid little brats trying to work the offstage video while mom and pop shout from downstairs, was first-rate - thanks, as usual, to the inimitable George Bisset.

As you've no doubt gathered, many more marks for the production than for the play.

A footnote: since **Dinner With Friends** makes such a thing of cooking, was that really a shallot I saw the hapless *Beth* trying to slice or what Americans call a green onion, a spring onion to us.

DINNER WITH FRIENDS – from the DIRECTOR

Dinner with Friends concluded with over booked performances due to an accomplished and dedicated cast and crew. One intangible but decisive measure of the success of a play is the sense of confidence, satisfaction and achievement that is imbued in its performance. I sensed this to be very powerfully present with **Dinner with Friends**. All concerned were most acutely aware that they had brought the play to its full potential.

This was clearly articulated whilst the play was "on stage" and reinforced by the remarks of John Gilbert, Maureen McInerney, Kim Wattie and the cast at the aft

My thanks and congrats. to all concerned.

*"After seeing
Dinner With
Friends all this
seems rather
passé."*



DINNER MUSIC - There proved to be much interest in the music used for **Dinner With Friends** so here is a list of the music played:

Before the Play - The Spagetti Opera's: Mozart - Overture Marriage of Figaro, Bellini – Son vergin vezzosa, Cimarosa – Il Matrimonio Segreto, Rossini – Largo Al Factotum Della Cirila.

Act I - Scene 2 – Alone: Humperdinck – Hansel & Gretel.

Scene 3 – None Shall Sleep: Puccini – Nessun Dorma.

Interval – Night Into Day: Puccini – E luceuon le stelle, Sartos – Time to say goodbye, Vivaldi – Manchester Sonata Largo, Gounod – L'asr des bijox, Mozart – Vedra, curino, Huang Z – The Lotus Song.

Act II – Scene 2 - Another Day in the Sun: Gluck – Cet asile aimable et tranquille,

Scene 3 – Off to the bar: Bach – Preludio,

Scene 4 – Meditative: Pucini – Signore, ascolta.

End – Mozart – Ach, ich fiehts, Catalani – La Wally

LIGHTING & SOUND WORKSHOPS A GREAT SUCCESS

Thanks to Joan Moriarty and Genevieve Meehan for organising the Workshops held at the Theatre and attended by interested HTC Youth members as well subscribers and members who 'ticked the box' on the 2004 Playbill indicating these were areas of interest to them.

And of course a great big thankyou to the leaders at the Workshops: George Bissett and Tim McLaughlan, Sound and Maureen White and Brian Marriner, Lighting.

HTC YOUTH AT THE BANYULE FESTIVAL

On Sunday 21 March the Company, in conjunction with HTC Youth, conducted a stall as part of this years Banyule Festival. The day was very successful in gaining publicity for the Company. A good time was had by all, (except those poor unfortunates who lost their keys!! Sorry, Anne)

Many thanks to all those who helped out on the day, in particular Anne Smith and Maureen McInerney for all their help setting up, Thanks too to Wendy Drowley, Dennis Pain, Joan and Paddy Moriarty, Jim Thomson and Luke Dixon and to HTC Youth members who helped on the day, including Natalie Lynch, Megan Burke and Carlie Dole. Here's to making this an annual event!

HTC YOUTH THEATRE SPORTS & WORKSHOPS

HTC Youth are about to embark on a series of workshops, theatre sports and related activities. If you would like to come along or want to know more, please call Luke Dixon - on 0417 996 108.



2003

heidelberg theatre company

Amateur Theatre, Professional Productions

[YOUTH]

by arrangement with Kubler Auckland Management presents

X-Stacy

Cast:

Racheal Waller (Zoe)
Debbie Govorari (Stacy)
Katherine Weaver (Anne)
Cameron Dewar (Ben)
Leigh Moulden (Fergus)
Sean Murphy (Paul)

by Margery Forde
directed by: Gen Meehan
assistant director: Anne Smith
production co-ordinator: Vladimir Tsyganov
stage manager: Simon Brophy

Season: 20, 21 & 22 of May - 8:15pm - 10:00pm**Heidelberg Theatre Company 36 Turnham Ave Rosanna**

Ecstasy can be achieved through many ways: religion, music or a drug of the same name. "X-Stacy" explores the differences and similarities of the three, as well as presenting aspects of rave culture, teenage life, family relationships and the pain people cause each other. The play is not for faint-hearted and does not shy away from anything.

Bookings: 9457 4117**Tickets: \$10**

WHAT'S THE GOSS

WHO, WHAT WHERE.....?

In Eltham's last production, Coward's **Present Laughter**, not **Sing On**, as your Editor wrote in Prompts – and apologises for any confusion caused – you would have seen our own Jim Thomson in the lead being very ably supported by Luke Dixon, one of the dynamos behind HTC Youth and David Macrea, another HTC regular. Well done guys!

Equally Divided, 29 April – 15 May is ETC's next show featuring actors from HTC's **This Old Man**; David Hunt, Cheryl Ballantine and Diane Deeming. Mick Poor, also well known at HTC, is directing. Bookings on **9437 1574**.

Our great lighting and sound team, David Meagher and Struan McGregor are currently working at Waverley T.C. on **The Cripple Of Inishmaan**, and no doubt doing as great a job there as they do at HTC.

Congratulations to James and Fiona Hutson, on the birth of Charlotte, and for making Marie Mackrell a first time grandmother. Congratulations also to Tamasin Tunny who played *Toinette* in **The Invalid** on the birth of her daughter, Thea and best wishes for a speedy recovery from the Company to Val Pagram following her recent accident.

HTC POPPING UP EVERYWHERE

"*On Heidelberg Station*" will be the cry. That's the latest spot where HTC will advertise its shows. Look out for our display – great work from Lena, Doug and James. So, what with that and the wonderful pic from **The Imaginary Invalid** in the 2004 Banyule Calendar, and Jenny Mikakos, Member for Jika Jika, offering to display our posters on her Community Notice board, the Company is certainly 'raising its profile' in the community, let's hope that soon there won't be an empty seat in the house. And there almost wasn't for our first show, so a reminder for subscribers to please book early and if you need to change nights, please get in quick!

While on the subject of seats, June, our Ticket Secretary, urges subscribers who, for whatever reason, cannot attend a show to pass on their ticket to a friend or relation and introduce them to the pleasures of a night out at HTC, they may become subscribers too.

Speaking of which, it is not too late to subscribe for this year's season, the option for 4 or 3 plays is still available, if you would like more details call June on **9457 4117**.

ART IN THE FOYER

There was much interest and praise for the collages, quilts and ceramics in the foyer display for **Friends**, thanks and congratulations to Jan Howe for organising and setting up the exhibition.

SECRETARY NEEDED AT HTC

The HTC Committee needs a person to fill the position of Secretary. If you feel you would like to be a part of the team and would like more details or would like to volunteer, please contact our President, John Gilbert on 9521 5877.

TATA TERMITES!

Everyone will be relieved to know that the termites have been eradicated from the Theatre. The Company's grateful thanks to Banyule Council for dealing with this problem, which proved to be a bit out of range for your average amateur actor!

(continued from page 1 - The Age 29/9/61)

Good work was also done by Lindsay Moore as *Sandor Turai* the dramatist. He was not quite audible at times, but his movements and dialogue were well-timed.

He would have been more appreciated if he had been given stronger support from Wallace Smith, who never seemed to enter his character completely."



NE
Organic & Natural Enterprise
Group Pty Ltd

Manufacturers of Miessence™ & Mivitality™

The range includes:-

Skin Care
Personal Care
Health Care

Hair Care
Cosmetics
Household Items

World's First
Certified
Organic Skin
Care
& Other
Products

NO chemicals
NO genetically
modified
ingredients

For more information contact:-
Julie Hall 0417 398 670
email: julihall@alphalink.com.au

2004



presents



Don't miss it!
Season:
28th April. until 15th May

BOOKINGS
9457 4117

COMING EVENTS AT HTC

APRIL

Saturday 17th 10.30am
Saturday 24th 10.30am
Wednesday 28th 8.15pm
Tuesday 20th 7.30pm

Working Bee with Lunch
Working Bee with Lunch
FIRST NIGHT – ROUGH CROSSING.
Heidelberg Film Society – *The Diplomat*

MAY

Sunday 9th 3.00pm
Saturday 15th 8.15pm
Tuesday 18th 7.30pm
Thursday 20th 8.15pm
Friday 21st 8.15pm
Saturday 22nd 8.15pm

MATINEE - ROUGH CROSSING.
FINAL NIGHT – ROUGH CROSSING.
Heidelberg Film Society – *Where Danger Lives*
HTC YOUTH – X-Stacy
HTC YOUTH – X-Stacy
HTC YOUTH – X-Stacy

JUNE

Tuesday 15th 7.30pm

Heidelberg Film Society – *Sumo Do Sumo Don't*

HELP!!!

**needed at the
WORKING BEES**

for
**ROUGH
CROSSING**

**Saturdays
17th & 24th April**

from 10.30am

Lunch is provided

*A great chance to begin, resume
or continue YOUR involvement
with HTC and have lots of
enjoyment into the bargain!*

or

Working Bees not your style?

How about

**backstage or foh for
ROUGH CROSSING**

**Like to know more – call Anne at the
Theatre on**

9455 3039