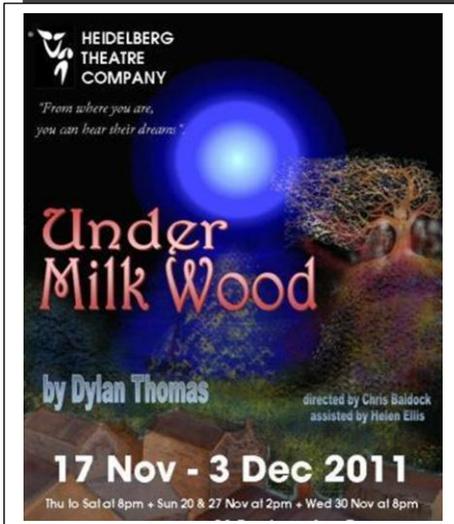


PROMPTS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE HEIDELBERG THEATRE COMPANY



Under Milk Wood

by Dylan Thomas

directed by Chris Baldock assisted by Helen Ellis

17th Nov – 3rd Dec, 2011

Evenings at 8.00pm

Matinees: Sundays 20th & 27th Nov at 2pm

Subscribers requiring to alter their chosen night or reserve their booking are asked to call the Box Office BEFORE Monday, 1st November, 2011.

Welcome to the magical, surreal, hilarious, charming, witty, delightful, moving and altogether brilliant Dylan Thomas' classic radio play, set in the small Welsh fishing village of LLareggub (spell it backwards and you get some idea of Thomas' mind!), which will be brought to colourful life by an incredibly talented cast of 15 on stage at HTC.

Presenting **Under Milk Wood** as our final production for 2011 is a fitting lead in to the Company's 60th Anniversary Year in 2012. It was first produced by HTC in 1981 in the Rechabite Hall and directed by the late David Ashton.

We know that both those members of our audience who were with us back in 1981 and those who have joined us since will be enthralled with this production.

We welcome back Chris Baldock as **Under Milk Wood** director. A talented all-rounder who directed the Company's In House Award winning production, **Cloudstreet** in 2009 and before that **The Grapes of Wrath**, **The Rise and Fall of Little Voice**, **Shirley Valentine** and starred in **The Judas Kiss**, last year's In House Award Winner and previously featured in **Side Man**, **The Knacker's ABC** and many other HTC productions.

A talented and tight-knit cast has been busily rehearsing under Chris' direction together with Assistant Director Helen Ellis. Members of the cast who have acted before at HTC are Janine Evans, Venetia Macken, Cate Dowling-Trask, Natasha Boyd, Elise Moorhouse, Barry Lockett, Paul Freeman, Alastair Rice and Tim Constantine. New to the HTC stage are Kris Weber, Kris directed **Bazaar & Rummage** for us in 2008, together with Glenda May, Pauline Snell, Stephen Shinkfield, Dan Hagan and James Phillips.

Our wonderful backstage crew includes: George Tranter on Set Design, Deryk Hartwick on Lighting Design, Original Music by Paul Karafillis. Joan Moriarty and Bruce Akers are Production Coordinators, Owen Evans heads the Set Building Team; Dennis Pain, Des Harris, Neville Wilkie, Jim Thomson, Paddy Moriarty, Doug McNaughton and Mal Cother, Wendy Drowley on costumes and Stage Manager Melanie Belcher.

You the audience will see into the lives and dreams of over 80 characters with Thomas' stunning lyricism being both heartbreaking and heartwarming. If you've never experienced this joyous celebration of life, don't miss this opportunity!

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EMAIL PROMPTS CAMPAIGN: Like to join HTC's email list and receive *Prompts* in digital format? It also saves us money on printing and postage. If so please send an email to prompts@htc.org.au and include your name, address & phone number

BOOKINGS – Online at www.htc.org.au or call 9457 4117



Review

The 39 Steps by John Buchan
adapted by Patrick Barlow
Directed by Justin Stephens
Reviewed by Maddison Snook
for Theatre People,
www.theatrepeople.com.au,
on Friday 23rd September, 2011.



Alfred Hitchcock's **The 39 Steps** tells the story of Richard Hannay, a Canadian man who finds himself wanted for a murder he did not commit. Hannay must find the secret behind **The 39 Steps**, a mystery which the victim had spoken of, and try to avoid capture long enough to clear his name. It is a challenging piece, and Heidelberg Theatre Company has more than done it justice. The audience was captivated from start to finish, with laughs and surprises throughout.

There are innumerable elements that made this play so entertaining, but much credit must firstly go to the four actors that made up the cast: Chris McLean, Adrian Carr, James Cutler and Kate Bowers. The characters in this piece were interesting and well-developed, each with very specific traits and idiosyncrasies. Three of the actors were playing several different characters throughout the show, and even within individual scenes. The way this was handled was extremely impressive. It certainly felt as if there was a much larger cast. The actors were able to lose themselves in each character to the point that it would be easy to forget that they were all portrayed by the same people. Likewise, the easy swapping between a wide array of accents was extremely well done. The acting was highly professional and clearly very well-rehearsed, yet still as full of life as if it were the first performance. The play was cast perfectly, and it really made the show.

The stage space itself appeared simple at first, but was designed by Merinda Backway in a manner that allowed for innovative use of props to create scenes. Almost everything in the show was multi-purpose, from the actors themselves (at one point playing roles of 'smelly bog', 'waterfall', 'rock' and 'cleft'), to the props and scenery, which were all on wheels for optimum versatility. For example, a door on wheels could be walked through, and then turned around to indicate that the scene had moved to another room. Pieces of scenery could also be turned around midway through scenes to achieve this effect. In this way, most scene changes occurred as part of the show, with the lights up and actors still in character. The few times there were blackouts, scene changes were quick and efficient.

The tech aspects of the show were all outstanding and seamless. The music heralded back to an earlier era, and was relied upon to set the tone

for various scenes. This, combined with the use of a broad range of sound effects, made it feel at times as though one was watching a film rather than a play. Every sound effect was timed to perfection. Credit for this goes to director Justin Stephens, who also designed and operated the sound for the show.

The lighting for **The 39 Steps**, designed by Deryk Hartwick, was complex and ever-changing, creating atmosphere and telling the story in many ways. One of the most impressive elements of the show was the use of shadows. During one scene, a screen is pulled across the front of the stage, and shadow puppets are used to show a man running away. Following this, Richard Hannay is trying to escape while planes pursue him. This could have easily been done poorly, but it was pulled off extremely well. Also, the use of smoke machines was effective, if occasionally somewhat distracting.

Costumes, by Sylvia Carr and Wendy Drowley, were kept relatively simple, and fit well with the pre-World War II time period. They also met the challenge of having to be extremely easy to remove and get into in a hurry. There were many extremely quick costume changes, and the actors always emerged looking put-together, and as though they had been wearing the new outfit for hours.

Every aspect of **The 39 Steps** coordinated perfectly to create a world, and transport the audience there with ease. This is a testament to the brilliant direction by Justin Stephens. The show was innovative, entertaining and professional. It is a roaring success, and all involved are to be highly commended.

Like a bit more clarity??

Then why not try out an **FM System Phonic Ear** (no hearing aid required) but you'll need to wear a headphone to access the sound. The headphones are now available for **all performances**, just ask at the Box Office or when making your booking.

(The FM System is being trialled with assistance from the Banyule City Council)

As well, an **Induction Loop System** is permanently installed at the Theatre and can be accessed by switching on the T switch on your hearing aid.

AUDITION NOTICE

Heidelberg Theatre Company's 60th Anniversary production of

THE LION IN WINTER

by James Goldman

directed by Karen Wakeman

Auditions will be held at the Theatre

36 Turnham Avenue Rosanna (Melway ref: 32A1)

Sunday 20th November 6.30 – 8.30pm

& Monday 21st November 7.30 – 9.30pm

Play Season: 23rd February to 10th March, 2012

Weeknights and Saturdays at 8:00pm Sundays at 2:00pm

Set in Henry's castle at Chinon, Christmas 1183, this play examines the behaviour of his family as each member struggles to determine which of his sons will one day succeed him to the throne of England.

Characters

THE PLANTAGENETS

Henry: King of England and a large part of Northern France. About 50, at the height of his powers. Political gamesmaster. Currently much engaged by matters of succession, holding and increasing his realm outside England, and managing members of his ambitious family. Sharp and intelligent but vulnerable where he loves.

Eleanor of Aquitaine: His wife and chief political opponent. A beauty still, aged 61. Almost unscrupulously dedicated to winning. She is witty, elegant, sophisticated, clever. Can be an ambivalent mother when her princely children stand in her way

John: About 17. Baby of the family, spoilt, greedy, inclined to petulance. Out of his depth in political wrangling, loyal only to himself and easily tempted by the unscrupulous, at the same time he is said to be adorable and charming.

Richard: 26, later known as Lionheart. Handsome, graceful, impressive, already an experienced soldier, also sensitive, ambitious, politically aware and strategically quick. Later the crusader championed by Robin Hood.

Geoffrey. Count of Brittany, 25. Has the family disease of ambition but is easily hurt by unwarranted feelings of being passed over or under estimated. Energetic, vivacious, charming and attractive; said to be the brainiest in a brainy family.

THE CAPETS

Philip: King of France. Young (17) but suave, attractive and filled with a courtly charm that hides a ruthlessly firm grasp of political necessity and of the characters of each of the Plantagenets.

Alais: 23, his sister. Raised by Eleanor and brought as a young girl to Henry's court for her dowry as future bride to Richard, she is now Henry's mistress. They are deeply in love. A spirited, accomplished and lovely young woman whose situation nonetheless makes her very vulnerable.

**For more details contact the Director
Karen Wakeman on 9836 6739**

BY POPULAR DEMAND!!!
THE COMMITTEE IS DELIGHTED TO
ANNOUNCE THE PLAYS FOR ITS 2012
60th ANNIVERSARY SEASON

PLAY 1 *The Lion In Winter*

by James Goldman, director Karen Wakeham
 23rd Feb. – 10th March.

PLAY 2 *An Inspector Calls*

by J.B. Priestley, director John Jenkins
 3rd – 19th May.

PLAY 3 *The Importance of Being Earnest*

by Oscar Wilde, director Wendy Drowley
 12th – 28th July.

PLAY 4 *Summer of the 17th Doll*

by Ray Lawler, director Paul King
 13th – 29th September.

PLAY 5 *Arsenic & Old Lace*

by Joseph Kesselring, director Wayne Pearn
 22nd Nov – 8th Dec.

More information on the plays will feature in the 2012 Playbill. A copy of the Playbill will be included with the final issue of Prompts, coming to you in a couple of weeks from now.

Details of Subscription Renewal, New Subscriptions, Gift Subscriptions, Gift Vouchers and Company Membership will be in the Playbill.

In our 60th Year, why not become an active member of our Company? Your participation will be greatly welcomed. Try something new or bring your well-practised talents to our theatre. There are plenty of opportunities to hone and use your skills, make new friends and have fun.

NOVEMBER

Saturday 5 th	10.30am	Working Bee with Lunch
Saturday 12 th	10.30am	Working Bee with Lunch
Thursday 17 th	8.00pm	FIRST NIGHT – UNDER MILK WOOD
Sunday 20 th	6.30 - 8.30pm	Audition – A Lion In Winter
Monday 21 st	7.30 – 9.30pm	Audition – A Lion In Winter
Tuesday 22 nd	7.15pm	Heidelberg Film Society – Smallest Show on Earth

DECEMBER

Saturday 3 rd	8.00pm	FINAL NIGHT – UNDER MILK WOOD
Sunday 11 th	3pm	Annual General Meeting, In House Awards and Christmas Party

Don't miss out on catching up with your fellow thespians.

HTC Capers 2010

Many thanks again go to Anne Smith for producing the delightful HTC Capers this year, again featuring our talented set builders together with a number of other talented members of the Company.

Anne again featured in many guises not least as jazz singer with her band, The Jazz Drive.

A variety of items were presented by our Members to an appreciative audience of their peers as well as subscribers and friends of the Company and the evening was rounded off with a delicious supper in the foyer with a chance to catch up with old friends.

**BLOCK BOOKING
 OPTIONS**

Preview Night & First Nighters' Specials – Groups of 50 – \$10 per ticket.

BOOK NOW -
 call our HTC Box Office on
9457 4117.

Groups of 10 or more - any performance – \$20 per tkt.

BOOK ONLINE at: htc.org.au
 or call the **HTC Box Office**
9457 4117

HELP!!!

needed at the

WORKING BEES *for*
UNDER MILK WOOD

Saturdays
5th & 12th November
from 10.30am
lunch is provided

So do come along. It's a great experience and a fun time too!
Working Bees not your style?
 How about assisting
 backstage or FOH.

**Like to know more – call the
 Theatre on 9455 3039**