



AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY

*Fiercely funny and biting sad,
a family meltdown that is packed with unforgettable
characters and dozens of quotable lines.*

by Tracy Letts directed by Joan Moriarty

2nd May – 18th May, 2013

Evenings at 8.00pm

Matinees: Sundays 5th & 12th May at 2pm

Subscribers requiring to alter their chosen night or reserve their booking are asked to call BEFORE Wednesday, 17th April, 2013.

Please note: the play contains some smoking, contemporary language and adult themes.

From the world-renowned Steppenwolf Theatre Company comes this multi-award winning black comedy.

This is certainly not a family anyone would choose to belong to but it makes for great theatre.

A cast of thirteen – a three storied house - this is a big show.

The production is in the capable and creative hands of Joan Moriarty, a name well known to HTC audiences. Joan has many productions to her credit, from drama to rollicking comedy. She last directed for us in 2010.

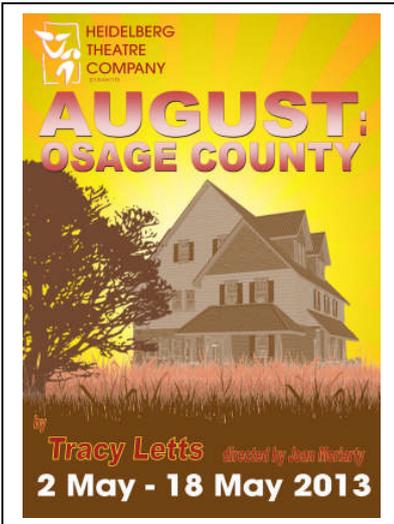
Louise Whiteman returns to HTC to play *Violet*, the family matriarch. There are many other well known faces in the cast, Anne Smith, Rhonda Chung, Tom Travers, Bob Tyers, Tony Costa, Andrew McNess and Gavin Baker.

We welcome newcomers to the HTC stage, Carol Shelbourn, Geoff Arnold, Sarah Crock, Steph Gonelli and Reeni Ekanayake.

PROMPTS

61st Year

No. 2 April, 2013



Our set builders, Owen, Paddy, Neville, Doug, Sam, Lou, Ian, Mal and other HTC members certainly have their time cut out.

Marie Mackrell has designed a fabulous set. Karen Wakeham is assisting Joan with the huge cast. Margaret Hassall is production co-ordinator and the redoubtable Melanie Belcher is stage manager ably assisted by Bobby Parish and Christian Dell'Olio. Maureen McInerney is looking after costumes, Craig Pearcey is designing an intricate lighting plot and George Bissett will create another imaginative sound plot.

All in all this will be a big night out for everyone.

REHEARSAL SHOTS FOR AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY

From the scenes below, captured by HTC photographer David Belton during an early rehearsal, the play promises plenty of action and variety. Tony Costa's character *Steve Heidebrecht* is right in there. When he's not cuddling up to one character, Photo 1, he's fending off another, Photo 3, and getting his lines down at the same time. In Photo 2, director Joan Moriarty can be seen positioning the actors while in the background the set begins to take shape. Photo 3 shows the Production Team, Joan, Melanie the stage manager and Karen the production assistant engrossed as the plot unfolds. In Photo 4 Tony is in trouble again, this time he appears to have upset all the characters in the scene. These and more photos will be on display in the foyer during the run.



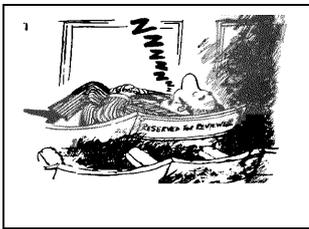
BOOKINGS – Online at www.htc.org.au or call 9457 4117

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P.O Box 141, Rosanna VIC 3084

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Review

The Dresser by Ronald Harwood

Directed by Karen Wakeham.

Reviewed on Sunday 3rd March, 2013 by Phyll Freeman of Theatrecraft published by the Victorian Drama League.

Ronald Harwood is a prolific writer of books, plays and also film scripts. This wonderful play is partly autobiographical, which adds to the pleasure. His long interest in the history of the WWII period is also evident here.

Such a wonderful play needs a top-rate cast and Heidelberg and Karen Wakeham have just that. Each character is well-drawn by the individual actors with all the finely nuanced lines to illustrate all the hidden feelings.

What is a dresser? Well, it's a person who looks after a leading star of the theatre. The dresser is called upon to be mother, father confessor and confidante. He also bears the brunt of the star's whims and fancies. John Cheshire beautifully inhabits Norman, the dresser to Sir, a leading Shakespearean actor, in charge of his own travelling players. John showed the many tasks allotted to him. Keeping people away, placating Her Ladyship and making sure everything runs smoothly... his loyalty is paramount.

Laurie Jezard played Sir with a mixture of dignity, leadership and childishness which led to forgetfulness and a gradual tiredness. Quite wonderful to watch—thank you, Laurie. As Her Ladyship, Julie Arnold played a somewhat bossy role with vigour. Her concern over Sir's state of health came through at every turn. As Madge, the company stage manager, Maureen McInerney was in charge of running their production of *King Lear*. She appears completely devoid of feeling but we did get to see a chink in her armour near the end. The youngest member of the troupe was the blonde Basileia Paras as Irene, who was intent on making her way up the ladder. Norman makes short work of her!

As competent, young actors were in the armed services for WWII, Sir had to make do with whomever he could to fill the smaller roles. David Dodds as Geoffrey and Gavin Baker as Oxenby, had to be taken on board. They illustrated the maxim that the show must go on.

Set in 1942 wartime Britain, the costumes by Diane Brennan, were spot on. Seamed stockings and no-nonsense lace-up shoes with thick heels for all the ladies, and Her Ladyship's street frock were in the correct era. Madge's hairdo epitomised her no-nonsense attitude, with masses of curls for the other female actors. Lighting by Deryk Hartwick together with excellent sound (storm at beginning of Act II) were by Bruce Moorhouse.

The spacious set by Lisa McVilly showed us the interior of dressing room No. 1 for Sir. It contained a large table with mirror plus chair, upstage centre, with comfortable, old couch against the back wall and a hand basin in the corner. A tea table, ironing board, wicker costume basket and costumes on hangers were placed around the perimeter. On audience left was a telephone on



above: The cast, crew and director of **The Dresser** pose for the camera.

below: This time the set designer, set building team and stage manager for **The Dresser** have their turn in front of the camera.



the wall and downstage audience right was the stage manager's desk complete with light. A great collection of sound instruments were placed down right for the storm sequence.

All this was punctuated, sound-wise, by air raid sirens as the German bombers arrived overhead, causing a gibbering Norman to announce to the audience that even if they leave for the air raid shelters, the actors would still carry on! British stoicism at its best!

Such was my interest that I literally hung on every syllable, especially at the end. Mesmerising! Thanks very much to Heidelberg, director, cast and crew for an enthralling afternoon.

Looking for ways to treat your group or club members to an enjoyable evening and raise money at the same time?

**Group Bookings
to the plays in
The Heidelberg Theatre Company's
2013 Season of Plays
Is your answer!**

Groups of 10 or more \$20 per ticket
Preview Night & First Night

Groups of 50 or more \$10 per ticket: **9457 4117**

AUDITION NOTICE

Heidelberg Theatre Company's production of

Blithe Spirit

by **Noel Coward**

"Coward's most whimsical and intriguing comedy."

Directed by Wendy Drowley

Auditions will be held at the Theatre

36 Turnham Avenue Rosanna (Melway ref: 32 A1)

**Sunday May 5 from 6.30pm
& Monday May 6 from 7.00pm**

Play Season: 11th – 27th July 2013

Weeknights and Saturdays at 8:00pm

Sundays at 2:00pm

The play is set in England, 1941.

Cast

Charles Condomine - Age 40. - author, suave, "*nice looking man.*"

Ruth Condomine - Age middle 30s. – 'smart looking', confident woman, Charles' 2nd wife.

Elvira – Age late 20s to early 30s. - Mischievous but determined woman. Charles' 1st wife.
Elegant, able to move gracefully, she is 'The Spirit'.

Dr Bradman – middle aged. - '*pleasant looking*'. A doctor of medicine.

Mrs Bradman - Age 40s. - '*fair and rather faded*'.

Madame Arcati – Age mid 40s to mid 60s. - the Clairvoyant, an eccentric '*striking woman*'.

Edith – Age young, early 20s – a maid, and the 'medium' who causes the chaos.

Descriptions in parenthesis are as used by Coward in his script.
Cultured English accents will be required for the first 6 characters.

Edith could have a Cockney/ Irish/ Welsh/ whatever, accent.

Auditions by appointment

To make an appointment, please email Wendy Drowley
at edrowley@bigpond.com

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HEIDELBERG THEATRE COMPANY

Enquires with **FOH** or call **9457 2078**

PERSONALITY PROFILE –

MELANIE BELCHER



Above: Melanie dressed for her role as Stage Manager at HTC



Above: Melanie, Queen of Stage Managers, reclines on her chaise surrounded by her team for **The Dresser**: from left, Sheelagh, Bobbie, Bruce & Sam

Melanie, better known to her friends as Mel, came to HTC to work front-of-house, her first taste of backstage was as crew for **The 39 Steps** and shortly thereafter was astounded to find herself Stage Manager of **Under Milk Wood**, a job that entailed ensuring the good behaviour of our temperamental stage revolve, and that of the less volatile, but very large cast.

This turned out to be work she liked. In fact Mel enjoyed herself so much that she managed all the plays in last year's program, except for **Summer of the Seventeenth Doll** (though she was ASM for that) and this year, she had no sooner finished **The Dresser** than she plunged into the vast and complex **August: Osage County**.

Mel's temperament and talents fit her perfectly for this job, and she performs it with professional skill. She attends - and helps run - auditions, meetings and rehearsals, and keeps 'the book', a record of what the director is doing with the text, the actors' moves and all technical cues to keep the performance running smoothly. She looks after rehearsal props, attends set-builds and assembles and trains her team of assistants. She is endlessly patient, tolerant and thoughtful, but once the show opens, she is known for her firmness and decisiveness in looking after every aspect of the show. It is Mel, also, who keeps her backstage company happy during the run with bowls of lollies, icy poles in summer, and on special occasions, her famous chocolate brownies!

Very few of us, however much we enjoy being part of a show, are able to work on several consecutive productions. However, Mel considers her work in the theatre to be pleasurable relaxation. For her, and very fortunately for those who work with her, it is a welcome change from her responsible and demanding day-job. In her other life, she is a clinical nurse-specialist.

APRIL

Saturday 20th 10.30am **Working Bee** with Lunch
Saturday 27th 10.30am **Working Bee** with Lunch

MAY

Thursday 2nd 8.00pm **FIRST NIGHT – August: Osage County**
Sunday 5th 6.30pm **Audition – Blithe Spirit**
Monday 6th 7.00pm **Audition – Blithe Spirit**
Saturday 19th 8.00pm **FINAL NIGHT – August: Osage County**

WHO, WHAT, WHERE???

The Woman in Black

at The Basin Theatre Company has in its cast our own Chris McLean and Justin Stephens is directing the show. Our large wicker basket, last seen on stage at HTC as a prop in **The Dresser**, will also feature in the show. **Season: 17 May – 8th June. Bookings 1300 784 668**

The Brooklyn Curse Continues!!

Sighs of relief abound around the traps from actors who weren't cast in **Arsenic and Old Lace**. Why? Because the Brooklyn Curse has stuck again!! This time it fell – well actually he fell, that's Bruce Akers who directed the show - while holidaying in New Zealand in February and broke his fibula.

Pleased to report that both Bruce and Sandy Green – the B.C.'s first victim – are on the mend.

Chris Baldock is directing 'How I Learned to Drive'

for the Mockingbird Theatre Company at the Brunswick Mechanics Institute Performing Arts Centre from Friday May 3rd to Sat 18th, booking details at www.mockingbirdtheatre.com.au. Don't miss this one!

LOOKING FOR A PLAYWRIGHT

who can produce a play that incorporates actors wearing a man's silk singlet, a great big lady's hat, a 20s number that has been remodelled by a student from Swinburne Institute and a beaded gown. Never mind the plot, it's all about the costumes! Why? Because Wendy has added these items to our already bursting wardrobe after a visit to a Sale of Vintage Clothes at Como run by the National Trust. She had a lovely time!

HELP!!!

Needed at the

WORKING BEES

for

'August: Osage County'

Saturdays
20th & 27th April
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 front of house.

Like to know more – call the Theatre on 9455 3039