



Essendon Theatre Company Quarterly Newsletter 2011

Bradshaw Street, West Essendon

Issue 2

Bookings: 03 9330 4808

June 2011

EDITORS COMMENTS

Hi Again!

So, the 2011 season is coming along nicely, our second production 'Rope' is coming along nicely - there was a slight hitch early on but rehearsals are coming along brilliantly and the set will be completed this weekend.

I am helping out backstage this time, its great to be able to get back into the swing of things.

(It's been a while)

ETC Garage Sale went well, we managed to get tidy up and 'get rid' of a few things.

Upcoming Fundraisers include a GIANT Tupperware party and a Trivia Night

Once again, if you are keen to get amongst the theatre world and interested in volunteering for one of our productions this year, take the leap and fill in the volunteer form at:

www.essendontheatrecompany.com/getinvolved.php

Until Next Issue....

Cat xo

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'LIVING TOGETHER' REVIEW

LIVING TOGETHER

By Sir Alan Ayckbourn
Essendon Theatre Company
Directed by Tess Maurici Ryan
Reviewed by Barry O'Neill - April 1, 2011

Sir Alan Ayckbourn's trilogy, under the title *The Norman Conquests*, concerns six characters during one weekend in three different parts of the same house. This play is the second of the three. I had not seen any of the plays previously and since the author is not one of my favourite playwrights I was a little apprehensive about the night ahead. However, my concerns were ill-founded.

Director Tess Maurici Ryan provided sound and lighting design (with John Degabriele), both of which were straightforward but effective. She also designed the comprehensive setting of a lounge room in an English country house. The room was appropriately decorated and furnished with settee, comfy chairs, tables, bookcase plus upstage window and entrance door offering glimpses of a very realistic garden.

The storyline is thin and meaningless. However, it does bring together a group of very unlikely characters and relationships which provide the basis for the farcical comedy. Annie lives at home looking after her invalid mother (who is never seen). Her brother Reg with his wife Sarah come to stay to allow Annie to get away for the weekend. Her plan is to spend the time with her sister Ruth's husband Norman but she calls this off at the last minute after Norman arrives. A neighbour, Tom, who is sort of involved with Annie is also part of the plot.

Norman is best described as a raffish Lothario although anyone

less likely to fit the description was wonderfully played by James Antonas — raffish, yes; a Lothario, never. Why anybody would be attracted to him (the character that is) is a mystery but he manages to seduce Annie and Sarah plus reinvigorate his relationship with wife Ruth, all at different times on a symbolic shag pile rug. A difficult drunk scene (i.e. getting blind drunk in 5 minutes) was very well handled. Kathryn Moloney gave a nicely balanced portrayal of the long suffering Annie, frustrated by Norman, her mother, and her neighbour. I thought Xavier Ryan was a little too dim-witted to be a vet, or Annie's suitor, but he carried the role consistently and was particularly effective when confused by the simplest situations. As Norman's acerbic wife Ruth, Jackie Fraser was a delight. Her cutting one-liners aimed at Annie and Norman (or anyone else who came within range) made the audience cringe and laugh at the same time. Craig Ryan played Sarah's henpecked husband Reg to perfection. He often elicited spontaneous laughter with the simplest facial expressions and no dialogue; an excellent display of understating a role. A particular highlight was his animated description of a chess game, the bishop being a classic.

Notwithstanding these great performances, Pauline Snell took the honours with a sterling performance as Reg's uptight, anally retentive wife Sarah. With her Hyacinth 'Bouquet' accent she gently ordered proceedings until things just got too much and she totally lost the plot, only to revert to type at the blink of an eye with a disarming smile. Her inward but obvious delight at eventually being seduced by Norman was hilarious.

Congratulations to Tess Maurici Ryan on her Directorial debut with Essendon. She kept the actors moving and used the large stage to best advantage. The outstanding feature of the production was the timing: knowing, or being directed, exactly when to deliver a line is crucial to maximise humour and this cast did it in spades. The writing at times was stodgy but it was worth suffering these passages for the uninhibited comedy that inevitably followed.

2011 ETC

Productions

The Norman Conquests – Living Together

24th March – 2nd April 2011

Rope

23rd June – 2nd July 2011

Black Rock

8th Sept – 17th Sept 2011

Beyond a Joke

24th Nov – 3rd Dec 2011

Subscriptions Due 1st March

If you haven't already paid, please do so as soon as possible.

\$20 - Single

\$25 - Family

\$15 - Pensioners/Students

PRESIDENTS REPORT MAY 2011

Those of you who saw our last play *'Living Together'* enjoyed a treat. The same cast appeared in our 2010 end-of-year production *'Table Manners'* and they did it again!!

Congratulations to Tess and her cast, who obviously love working together, please read the review in this Newsletter which speaks for itself. We took the plunge and entered this one for our VDL Award entry and I think we did the right thing. As you might know we had to scrap our plans to produce *'Twelve Angry Men'* to be Directed by Rachel Holt due to the fact we could not get the rights to perform. But Rachael wants to apply again for next year, 2012 and we have promised she can do it providing rights are still not withheld. Rachel is still directing the 3rd play for this year, 2011.

These things happen in Amateur Theatre, so the show must go on!!

CURRENT PLAY

'ROPE' By Patrick Hamilton – adapted by Bruce Cochrane - Directed by Karen Parrot. Karen has finally cast *'Rope'*. She has had a few hiccups with the leading man, with several outstanding candidates pulling out for various reasons. Bevan Uren, who we all know and love, was originally cast, but had to back out for medical reasons. Sorry to lose you in this role Bevan, but I know you can't keep a good man down and no doubt you will be 'treading the boards' again in the near future. Set building is underway under the eagle eyes of Tony and John and Karen is looking forward to bringing this one to our audiences.

4TH PLAY - 'BEYOND A JOKE' By Derek Benfield

This will be our last play for the year, a comedy to be Directed by the lovely Mel De Bono. This will be Mel's first play with ETC and we are looking forward to experiencing Mel's unique talent as a Director. Look out Tony and John, Mel wants a full set consisting of a Living Room and a Garden, where all of the action takes place, so we all have our work cut out to meet Mel's standards.

GARAGE SALE

In other news, we had a Garage Sale in March and made about \$800. This gave us an opportunity to clean out the wardrobe room and the shed. It was hard to let go of some of the items as most of them have had some sort of emotional value to us who have seen them used in various productions over the years. Nevertheless, these things have to happen and we needed the space.

FAREWELL

Sadly my last task is to say goodbye to our Life Member and good friend Adam Smigielski who died in April. Adam came to us as a teenager in our very early years. His job was to bring his brother Ed, Angelo Bisognano and Ian Robinson, who were drama students at the high school, encouraged by their teacher to join an Amateur group. Adam became part of our 'Youth Group' which was also attended amongst others by my children. Who could forget Adam as 'Dangles', the best man, in *'Dimboola'*, "Who's for a burl with Shirl?", and the guitar playing 'Tippy Hippy' in *'Fantasmargorical'*.

Adam became a firm fixture always there, always reliable, whether it be Set Building, Lighting, Back Stage, you name it he was there. Turning up in his 'Adam Bomb' with his dog 'Roadie' always in tow.

Adam was in fact the instigator of the 'Life Membership' Awards held for the first time in 1986 at the Essendon Bowling Club, where several of us were presented with our badges. Adam moved to Queensland in the '90's to pursue a career in set construction with some of the big Production companies doing movies up there, but he always kept in touch. He came down to Melbourne for our 25th Anniversary and met up with Kerin Britton, another one of our Life Members, who had also moved to Queensland. They had met years before, but this time 'sparks flew' and before we knew it they were married on 23rd March 2003 at Queens Park in Melbourne. This was the one and only time most of us had ever seen Adam in shoes!!

Sadly on 7th April this year Adam was taken from us. He leaves Kerin, Benjamin aged 7 and Megan aged 3, His father, Wincenty, brothers Ed and Steve and sister Helen and several nieces and nephews, to whom Adam "don't call me the 'U' word" was the world.

Farewell to our long haired, lovable friend.

**ADAM WINCENTY SMIGIELSKI
19.08.1959 – 07.04.2011**

'THONGS FOR THE MEMORY'

Eileen



ROPE –

By Patrick Hamilton

Adapted by Bruce Cochran and Lance Reenstiena

Directed by Karen Parrott



Branden wants excitement at any price. He persuades his weak minded friend Charles, to assist him in the murder of a fellow undergraduate. Ronald Kentley. They place the body in a wooden chest and invite some acquaintances, including the dead man's father, to a party. The horror and tension work up gradually and we see the reactions of the two murderers, closely watched but the suspicious Robert Cadell...will he be able to catch them...

The Cast:

Branden – Brayden Germaine
Charles – Robert Wightwick
Mr Kentley – Andrew Gemmell
Kenneth – Jaime Cerd
Leila – Madeline French
Debra – Leigh Tangee
Sascha – Rosalin Shafik-Eid
Robert - Michael Finemore-Cocks

Production Dates:

Thursday June 23rd, Friday 24th,
Saturday 25th at 8.00PM
June 26th Sunday Matinee at
2:00PM
Thursday June 30th, Friday July 1st,
and Saturday 2nd at 8:00PM

*Doors open half an hour before the
show start time*

Venue:

West Essendon Community Centre
Bradshaw Street West Essendon
(Enter via Buckley Street)

Bookings:

Call Eileen on 9330 4808



Performed
“Theatre Restaurant style”
BYO FOOD AND DRINKS

Upcoming Auditions

BLACK ROCK – by Nick Enright

Directed by – Rachael Holt

Synopsis:

Its Toby Ackland's birthday party at the beach near a surf club. It should mean alcohol, drugs and good CLEAN fun. But by morning, a young girl is dead. She's been raped by 3 boys and bashed with a rock.

Season:

8-Sep-11 to 17-Sep-11

Audition Time/Date:

Monday 5th July – 7.30pm

Thursday 7th July – 7.30pm

Enquiries: 0402 939 096

Expressions of Interest

Essendon Theatre Company is calling for Directors for the 2012 and 2013 Season. If you are Interested please email:
essendontheatrecompany@gmail.com
or call Eileen on 03 9330 4808

2011 ETC COMMITTEE

President – Eileen Bentley
Vice President – John Degabriele
Secretary – Rosilin Shafik-Eid
Treasurer – Christine Nilsson
Newsletter – Cat Dwyer
Set Design – Tony Leach
Member – Sam Ellen Bound

Sponsors & Supporters:



Gabrielle Nilsson - Personal Trainer

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based in and around AIRPORT
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