

A Conversation: emotional intensity in confronting David Williamson play

A PLAY from Australia's most respected contemporary playwright comes to the Old Mill Theatre this August.

David Williamson's *A Conversation* – the second play in his Jack Manning trilogy – explores the use of “community conferencing”, a process where an offender and his victim discuss the perpetrator's actions and attempt to find a resolution.

Williamson is known for his extensive range of work including *Don's Party*, *The Club*, *Travelling North*, *Brilliant Lies* and *Money and Friends* and the screenplays *Gallipoli*, *The Year of Living Dangerously*, *Phar Lap* and *Balibo*.



Gino Cataldo and Lis Hoffmann play the parents of a rape and murder victim.

Director Brendan Ellis

previously directed *Face to Face*, the trilogy's first play, for Stirling Players last year. “Williamson is a well-known and respected Australian playwright, and in addition to being somewhat relevant to recent events in the eastern states, *A Conversation* is one of the best plays he's written,” he said.

“The Jack Manning trilogy was inspired by the process of community conferencing, pioneered by the organisation Transformative Justice Australia.

“It's an incredibly interesting concept that has had very little attention in WA.”

First performing as a four-year-old at an eisteddfod, Brendan has been involved with Stirling Players for the past decade and has undertaken a leadership role in its youth program over the past four years.

His production of *Hush Little Celia*, *Don't Say a Word*

In *A Conversation*, Scott is imprisoned for the rape and murder of a young woman and his struggling single mother Coral arranges a meeting with the victim's upper-class parents and the prison psychologist who counselled her son.

She asks Jack Manning to mediate but things gets off to a bumpy start when it's revealed Coral may have an ulterior motive.

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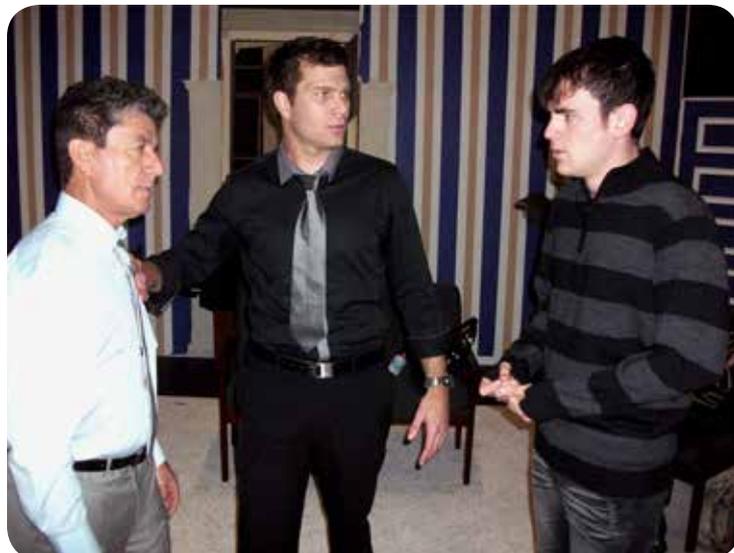
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Jack Manning (Rhett Clarke) tries to mediate between the victim's father Derek (Gino Cataldo) and the offender's brother Mick (Brodie Masini).

earned him a best director nomination at the 2010 Hills Festival of Theatre.

With *A Conversation*, Brendan feels the biggest challenge is the intensity of emotions his actors have to portray.

“It's easy to overplay and ‘perform’ them but I've made clear to my actors the importance of capturing the honesty and heart of the situation,” he said.

“These characters are real people and the things they deal with in the play could happen to anyone.

“I hope to portray these sensitively but also with a certain rawness – nothing's sugar-coated.”

The cast includes Rhett Clarke, Gino Cataldo, Brodie Masini, Lis Hoffmann, Gail Lusted, Andrew Watson, Katrina Murphy and Natasha Stiven.

Please note: the play contains adult themes and is not recommended for people under 18.

REMEMBER!

Book for opening night and enjoy cheese and wine after the show... and also meet and mingle with the cast.

David Williamson's *A Conversation* plays at 8pm, August 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16 and 17 with a 2pm matinee August 11.

Tickets are \$25, \$20 concession – book on 9367 8719, oldmilltheatre@inet.net.au or online at www.oldmilltheatre.com.au.



AUDITIONS

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

Directed by Neroli Burton

Audition: September 7-8

**Season: November
29-December 14**

IF YOU'VE ever fancied yourself as Snow White, one of the seven dwarfs or even the wicked stepmother, here's your chance.

Adults and children, aged nine and older, who are able to sing and act are required for a variety of roles (some parts require some dancing ability). Six dwarfs will be played by children with one adult as the head dwarf.

CAST REQUIRED

Snow White: requires dark hair and needs to be able to sing, act and dance (age limit TBA).



Prince: female required to play the principal boy. Needs to be able to sing, act and dance (if no there are no girls suitable, males will be considered - good-looking and able to sing and act).

Dame (Senna Pod): can played by a male or female.

Dwarfs: 1 Adult, 6 children (one adult will be the head dwarf and the rest will be children, aged nine and up)

Chorus: all ages required, male and female. Must be able to sing and act.

Wicked stepmother: typical character most people are familiar with.

Auditionees need to bring a backing tape and sing something to suit a pantomime. It can be from Disney's *Snow White*, although it is not the score being used. If you have a resume and photo, please bring them to the audition to save some time.

Children will be auditioned in blocks, so please indicate day/times preferred and be prepared to wait as necessary.

Email oldmilltheatre@iinet.net.au with your details and the role you are interested in. Please include a contact number and, if children, also indicate how old you are.

Review: BORN YESTERDAY

"A fine character study brilliantly performed"

Review by **GORDON THE OPTOM**
Extract from www.theatre.asn.au

BORN Yesterday is a very funny comedy by film and stage scriptwriter Garson Kanin.

He wrote this play about post-war corruption while in his mid-30s.

The play was a massive Broadway hit in the '40s and made into a film with leading lady Judy Holliday, winning an Oscar.

Broadway saw two more revivals, and the film was re-made in 1993 with Melanie Griffiths.

The two leads in this show are both American-born. Adam comes from Washington and Britni from Alabama so the accents were natural.

The rest of the cast did very well - one actor decided he would stick to a safe English accent, which is always better than a bad American drawl, and it did not detract.

The scriptwriter has created a collection of rich characters and they have been brought vividly to life with skill.

Britni Leslie was so exceptional in the role I find it hard to believe the Oscar-winning Judy Holliday could have done any better.

Britni's whole body oozed sex as she fawned over her loved one, her subtle body movements and facial expressions were hilarious - such as when she tried to read with her long-sighted vision.



Adam (Peterson, above left, with Valerie Dragojevic and Britni Leslie) was also excellent as the dim but bullying businessman.



Robert Ross and Britni Leslie in Born Yesterday

A good strong cast worked very well together, delivering great pace and energy with the stage being alive at all times.

It was a fine character study, brilliantly performed.

With the right contacts and a bit of luck, Britni could be a major star of the professional stage.

The set was immaculate; as the curtains opened it got a well-earned applause.

Tim Prosser's décor on the solid, well-designed frame was breathtaking.

The hatboxes, luggage and many of the props were from the period and of the highest quality.

The clothes ranged from Eddie's tasteless spiv-like outfits, to the stunning underwear and clothing of Billie (Dinah Zaicos).

The lighting and sound design (Graeme Johnson) and operation (Kath Carney with assistance from Ursula Andinach) was of the usual high quality.

Not much wonder many of the audience commented they wouldn't mind seeing it again before the end of the run.

A simple storyline but the wonderful characters ensure a good, fun night at the theatre.

Colour your world: check out the colour version of this edition at www.oldmilltheatre.com.au

History of the Old Mill Theatre

THE South Perth Historical Society, in conjunction with the theatre, is hosting the Garry Lawrence talk *History of the Old Mill Theatre* at 2pm, Sunday, July 21.

A long-time member of the Old Mill Theatre, Garry is a renowned conservation architect and has appeared in and directed many shows over the years.

His most recent was *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* where he took over the lead role at short notice after the original actor was injured.

The production was a finalist for best play at the annual Finley Awards.

Garry also oversaw a major



renovation of the theatre in 2002 and is patron of the Old Mill Theatre.

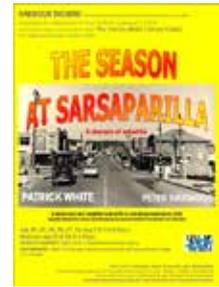
The South Perth Historical Society is now located in Heritage House (the building in front of the theatre, fronting Mill Point Road) and hosts various exhibitions of local interest throughout the year.

The venue has an extensive May Gibbs collection and is open Fridays, Saturdays and 1pm-4pm Sundays.

History of the Old Mill Theatre is \$5 to attend or \$2 if you are a historical society member. Afternoon teas are available and there is also a chance to talk to Garry after the event. RSVP on 9367 9243.

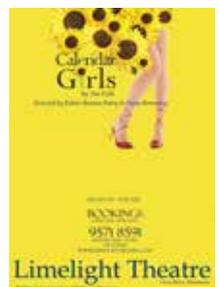
WHAT'S ON ELSEWHERE?

THE SEASON AT SARSAPARILLA
Harbour Theatre, Fremantle



A humorous and insightful look at Australian suburban life in 1961.
8pm July 19, 20, 24, 26, 27, 31, August 2 and 3 and 2pm July 21 and 28. Book on 9255 3336 or at www.TAZTix.com.au

CALENDAR GIRLS
Limelight Theatre, Wanneroo



A Women's Institute chapter fundraises by posing for a nude calendar.
8pm August 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16 and 17. Book on 9571 8591 or at www.limelighttheatre.com

COLDER THAN HERE
Melville Theatre



Comedy exploring a woman dying of bone cancer and her family's reaction.
8pm August 30, 31, September 5, 6, 7, 12, 13 and 14 and 2pm September 8. Book on 9330 4565 or at www.meltheco.org.au.

SORORITY HOUSE OF THE DEAD
Phoenix Theatre, Hamilton Hill



A 1980s "vampire" black comedy.
8pm August 29, 30, 31
September 5, 6 and 7 and 2pm September 7. Book on 9255 3336 or at www.TAZTix.com.au

Congratulations Simone

OLD Mill Theatre member Simone McMahon has been awarded an Order Of Australia in the mid-year honours list for her work as founder (and tireless involvement) in the Organ Donation and Transplant Foundation of WA.

Since becoming a transplant recipient in 1993, Simone embarked on a mission to raise community awareness about the need for organ and tissue donation.

She went on to university and graduated in 2003 with a bachelor of law degree.

In 2007, Simone was awarded the 3000th Winston Churchill Fellowship which allowed her to travel to the US, UK and Spain to identify international models of organ and tissue donation.

She also assessed promotional strategies that provide support to transplant recipients, donor families and living donors.

As a result, Simone shared her research findings with policy-makers, health professionals, key service providers and researchers to advocate for improved organ and tissue donation practices at a state and national level.

In 2008, Simone was named WA Young Australian of the Year.

"If you look at the surveys, the majority



of Australians support organ donation but less than half are registered to be a donor," she told *The West Australian*.

Simone is also a volunteer wish-granter with the Starlight Children's Foundation, spending much of her time encouraging seriously ill children and helping to grant their wishes.

More details about the Organ Donation and Transplant Foundation of WA can be found at www.odatwa.org.au.

COMING SOON



THREE one-act plays are coming your way at the Old Mill Theatre this September and October.

No Exit by Jean Paul Sartre, edited by Chris Thomas, is a depiction of the afterlife where three dead characters are punished by being locked into a room together for eternity.

Directed by Maree Grayden and Chris Thomas, this is the play that coined the phrase "hell is other people".

Harold Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter*, directed by Susie Conte, features Gus and Ben in a Birmingham basement.

They await instructions for their next job. Gus needs matches. Ben has a newspaper. Both men have revolvers...

Rounding out the season is another tale written by Noel O'Neill called *Snow and Ash*, directed by Valerie Dragojevic.

Two clowns from a travelling circus have been left behind. They are in a dictatorial country with no liberty or freedom of speech...

The three short plays perform on September 19, 20, 21, 22, October 3, 4 and 5 at the Old Mill Theatre.

For updates, go to www.oldmilltheatre.com.au (the above dates may be subject to change)

The Old Mill Times
PO Box 1390
South Perth WA 6951

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Play reading Now August *28*

YES, we have a date change for the next play reading.

The next one is now scheduled for 7pm, Wednesday,

August 28, and features the locally-written *Different Ways* by Old Mill member John Lewington.

Supper is provided so, for catering purposes, please let us know if you will be attending.

It's all held in the Constance Ord Room at the theatre.

For more details, call Siobhán O'Gara on 0409 374 731 or email siobhanog@westnet.com.au.

(Date *may* be subject to change again - keep an eye on the Old Mill website for updates)



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