

Jigsaws pieces together puzzling parts of family



THE Old Mill Theatre is starting 2015 with the incisive and witty family drama *Jigsaws* – set in Perth in the late 1980s – by Jennifer Rogers.

Directed by Adam Salathiel, the show opens in February and is the first in a year of all-Australian plays to commemorate the centenary of the Gallipoli landing.

Jigsaws is about three generations of women in the same family where life seems like a jigsaw puzzle: sometimes the pieces fit, sometimes they don't and often it's incomplete.

As the play opens, a Christmas visit has been taking place and the reunion is not exactly fulfilling the spirit of the season.

Revelations and indiscretions from the past and present surface, matched with family members changing attitudes and circumstances, while they all try to come to terms with each other.

Adam says the play deals with sensitive issues and is a fresh, bold and rewarding look at life.

"It's a superbly written play which, even though set in the '80s, has a lot of the messages and themes that are still extremely relevant in today's society," he said.

"I want the audience to connect with the various cast members and relate to them and their issues as they are portrayed on stage.

"I also want them to laugh in all the right places yet also feel for the actors and also possibly shed a tear or two.

"Some of the scenes may remind the audience of their own families and issues they might be struggling with themselves."

First performing as a 10-year-old in 1984, Adam has been involved in theatre in a variety of ways – as an actor, director, producer, lighting and sound operator and working backstage with numerous companies including the Old

Mill, Kwinana, Roleystone, Phoenix, Marloo and Mandurah Little Theatres, Murray Music and Drama and the Mandurah Performing Arts and Koornly Arts Centres.

Currently, Adam is artistic director of Laughing Horse Productions where he directed the company's inaugural production *The Pirates of Penzance* in 2013.

He's also scored several awards and nominations over the years for best supporting actor, director, production, stage manager, costumes and set.

In 2010, Adam was involved with a Kwinana Theatre Workshop production of *Jigsaws* as a sound technician.

"It was directed by the late Sue Hayward and I fell in love with the script," he said. "I've always wanted to see it return to the stage.

"And now five years on, thanks to the Old Mill Theatre, I am getting that chance."

The cast of *Jigsaws* features Tracy Bolton, Beryl Francis and Hayley Currie, Judi Johnson and Danni Close, all seen at the Old Mill in *The Hatpin* last year.

Jigsaws plays at 8pm February 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20 and 21 with a 2pm matinee February 15.

The February 7 performance is being devoted to the African charity Nakuru Hope's Gabriel's Orphanage. Bookings for this one performance must be made through www.trybooking.com. All tickets are \$25.

REMEMBER! Book for opening night and enjoy cheese and wine during interval then mingle with the cast after the show.

Tickets are \$25, \$20 concession – book at <http://oldmilltheatre.com.au/tickets> or call 9367 8719.



AUDITION: Ray Lawler's Summer of the 17th Doll

Director: Trevor Dhu
Auditions: 10am onwards, Saturday, March 7
Callbacks (if necessary): Saturday, March 16
Location: Old Mill Theatre
Season: June 5-20
CAST REQUIRED (all stage ages):
 Two women, two men, all late 30s
 One woman, about 60ish
 One woman, early 20s
 One male, young



Regarded as an Australian classic, this compelling play was a success in London and hailed by critics in New York for its vigour, integrity and realistic portrayal of two itinerant cane cutters: Barney, a swaggering little scrapper, and Roo, a big roughneck.

They have spent the past 16 summers off with two ladies in a southern Australian city.

Every year, Roo has brought a tinsel doll to Olive, his girl, as a gift to symbolise their relationship, but this 17th summer is different somehow.

Old patterns must be broken, new ways found, as all four lovers come to face certain unpleasant truths about themselves.

Please contact director Trevor Dhu on 0409 373 374 or email trevordhuta@gmail.com to arrange an audition time and/or for more details.

Champagne!

IT may be a couple of months away but it's worth noting this in your diary.

The Old Mill's annual champagne breakfast will be held on Sunday, April 19, from 9.30am at the theatre.

All members and friends are welcome – cost is \$7 per person. Be sure to book on 9367 8719 or oldmilltheatre@inet.net.au.

Review: THE WIZARD OF OZ “magical elements... wonderful performances”



Extract by GORDON THE OPTOM

Source: www.ita.org.au

The Wizard of Oz is a quality, traditional British pantomime from Limelight Scripts UK. It has all the essentials of a pantomime: colour, singing, dancing, visual comedy and audience participation.

The children, aged from five to 14, played the loveable, happy munchkins and the diabolical, trouble-making monkeys.

They were magnificent: the munchkins smiled constantly as they performed, danced in perfect sync and sang with gusto.

Their costumes (as for all the others, they were designed by Jenny Prosser, Susan Sator and Maree Grayden) were delightful.

The monkeys, with their threatening baboon-like faces, glowered and snarled as they leapt around doing cartwheels.

Their makeup (designed by Nicole Miller and Lisa Piggott) was most impressive and, considering the number of youngsters, involved a huge amount of work.

Jenny Prosser made most of the costumes. The Tinman's costume really rattled

and clanged as he walked – poor Sarah [Christiner] must have suffered inside but it was worth it.

Once again, the sets needed that extra sparkle and with Maree Grayden, Ben Davis and Phil Barnett's input, Tim Prosser has done another sterling job with artworks for his set painting.

The Old Mill has several LED lights that gives a new dimension to the scenery and atmosphere. Ben and Flynn Vincent operated Ben's complex lighting design.

Bree Vreedenburgh's sound design required one or two unusual snippets but this went well with crisp control by Jeremy Skinner.

As musical director, Bree Vreedenburgh had a huge amount of singing and dancing to cope with but the whole team worked very well.

Director Maree Grayden and her assistant Kylie Bywater's can be most proud of this pantomime: it has all of the magical elements with some wonderful performances from the main characters.

Thoroughly enjoyable, children of all ages will love it – oh no they won't – oh yes they WILL!

Old Mill nomination sensations

THE Old Mill Theatre has received several Finley Award nominations.

Michael Dornan (*Dinner With Friends*), Kim Taylor (*It's All Greek To Me*) and Joe Tareha (*The Glass Menagerie*) are all up for best actor in a play.



Neil Cartmell (*The Wizard of Oz*) received a best male musical theatre performer nomination and Madeleine Shaw (*The Hatpin*) has been nominated for best other than a lead in a musical – female.

By the time you read this, the 40th Annual Robert Finley Awards will have been announced, so please visit www.oldmilltheatre.com.au for any updates.

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

AGM: Chairman's report

AS PART of the Old Mill Theatre's annual general meeting on December 8, 2014, chairman Phil Barnett delivered his yearly report.

The meeting saw the departure of Maree Grayden from the board and Dale James taking the vacant spot.

An extract is provided below... a full transcript is available at www.oldmilltheatre.com.au.

This year has been a busy and productive one for the theatre – we decided we would downsize to five seasons plus a possible short one-act season. This, we thought, would give outside companies a chance to stage a production at the Old Mill. In this, we were fairly successful with firstly Emma and Ben Davis presenting a children's show entitled *Squisher and Squasher*. And later in the year, we had another season from Serial Productions, which was a further entry in the *Blackadder* series.

Our first show for the 2013-14 year (which actually occurred in November and December) was the pantomime *Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs*. This was wonderfully received with the performances being virtually booked out before opening night.

Next, in February, came *Dinner with Friends*, a serious comedy-drama. This production was not without its own dramas as there was a change of director halfway through rehearsals. However, this did not detract from the final result.

The second season was a new play by local favourite Noel O'Neill called *It's All Greek to Me*. Also well-received, although a few of our more conservative audience members thought some of the language a little strong.

July saw a complete change of pace with the first performance in WA (outside of WAAPA) of the very dark musical *The Hatpin*. The subject matter was based on the true story about baby-farming in the late 1890s in Sydney.

Next, in September, came the Tennessee Williams classic *The Glass Menagerie*, sensitively directed by Susie Conte with a well-chosen cast. This garnered rave reviews and a satisfied audience.

Overall, spread across the year's productions, the theatre achieved an 80 per cent capacity audience... a feat that many a professional company would envy.

September saw a short season of two one-act plays by Noel O'Neill: *Under Any Old Gum Tree* and *October*. *Gum Tree* was also entered into Dramafest where it received several awards for writing and acting, including the People's Choice Award.

Justin Freind of Bel Canto Productions continued his series of Sunday afternoon concerts, which attract an audience who enjoy the varied program of mostly well-known show songs with afternoon tea. These will continue in 2015.

The series of bi-monthly play readings, coordi-

nated by Siobhan O'Gara, continued with the usual dedicated group. We read WA author Jennifer Rogers' play *Jigsaws* at one session and, as a result, have programmed this into 2015. The play readings have attracted a small but enthusiastic core group of people.

Late April 2014 was our annual champagne breakfast, an event always enjoyed by all – including the hard-working catering team.

We have not spent all of our energies on shows – this year we are embarking on more theatre upgrades and refurbishment of the foyers and dressing rooms (the last is long overdue). These are works-in-progress: so far we have almost finished the larger downstairs dressing room with a set of brand new cupboards and a new make-up bench and lights. Also, the small dressing room on the other side of the stage has now been converted with make-up bench and lighting. We have purchased new LED stage lights, which are being seen to full effect in *The Wizard of Oz*, and a projector which is also being put to good use.

There are many people to thank for the (mostly) smooth running of the theatre, starting with the hard-working board who take on a multitude of tasks.

Many, many people – too numerous to mention – help out, mostly unseen and sometimes not acknowledged. I refer to our set-builders, painters, odd-job people and absolutely everyone who lends a hand in getting a production up and running. They are the unseen part of the iceberg, the top of which you see on stage! A huge thank you to all of you. And, of course, to our board of management who keep the place on an even keel.

Before ending, I wish to thank Maree Grayden, vice president for the past two years, who has decided not to re-nominate for the board this year due to outside work commitments. We thank her for her dedication to the theatre and are certain we will see her involved in various ways in the coming year. Also on the thank you list is Ben Davis, who has ably overseen the re-vamp of our lighting system, and, of course, Tim Prosser – set painter extraordinaire – for his wonderful scenic works of art.

Last, but by no means least, on the thank you list is our team of front-of house personnel. Led by Brenda Oliver-Harry, they are the people who greet you as you enter, offer raffle tickets, serve you with a smile with tea and coffee, work behind the bar and generally contribute to your enjoyment of the theatrical experience. We receive many comments on how friendly the atmosphere is at the Old Mill.

Thank you all for listening and we hope to see you at all our productions in 2015, which will be a whole year of Australian plays dedicated to the commemoration of the centenary of the Gallipoli campaign.



WHAT'S ON ELSEWHERE?

PANIC STATIONS
Garrick Theatre, Guildford



A farce full of eccentric characters and misunderstandings.
8pm, Jan 29, 30, 31, Feb 5, 6, 7, 12, 13 & 14; 2pm Feb 1, 8 & 14.
Book on 9378 1990 or bookings@garricktheatre.asn.au

13 - THE MUSICAL
Playlovers, Floreat



The first Broadway production to star an all-teenage cast.
7.30pm, February 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13 & 14; 5pm Feb 8; 2pm Feb 14.
Book at www.fringeworld.com.au.

DEADLY RELATIONS/SIRENS/SCREAMING INSIDE
Limelight Theatre, Wanneroo



Three one-act plays.
8pm, Feb 19, 20, 21, 26, 27 & 28.
Book at www.limelighttheatre.com

SUMMER SHORTS
Melville Theatre



Three short plays: *Under The Bright Sun*, *An Unwritten Page* and *That's What Friends Are For*.
8pm, Feb 27, 28, March 5, 6 & 7; 2pm March 1. Book on 9330 4565 or at meltheco.org.au

THE BROKEN SLIPPER/ A PIECE OF CAKE
Playlovers, Floreat



Cinderella & Marie Antoinette as you've never seen them before!
7.30pm & 8.45pm, Feb 19, 20, 21 & 22; 2pm & 3.15pm Feb 22.
Book at www.fringeworld.com.au

Coming soon: HAIL MARY



NOEL O'Neill's latest comedy comes to the Old Mill Theatre this April.

Hail Mary is about a group of unconventional nuns who discover their convent is to be sold because it is costing too much to continue operating.

Together with the local priest, they devise various dubious schemes to prevent this happening.

One of the young nuns with a vivid imagination insists she has seen the Virgin Mary walking on the convent roof, inspiring the nuns to proclaim the convent a holy place.

This results in visitors flocking to the place and the spin-off from selling the nuns' home-made wine and bread soon fills the coffers.

The Archbishop hears of these events and hurries to find out what's going on and, although initially suspicious, eventually concedes making money by these means doesn't contravene any Christian principles.

Decidedly irreverent without being blasphemous, anyone with a sense of humour will see the funny side – and a few truths as well.

Hail Mary will run from April 3 to 18. Advance bookings can be made on 9367 8719 or oldmilltheatre@inet.net.au.

For updates, go to www.oldmilltheatre.com.au.

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Registered by AUSTRALIA POST
PP 642409/00009

MILLY AWARDS: January 23



THE Old Mill Theatre's own night of nights, the Milly Awards, is being held from 7pm, Friday, January 23.

To be held at the theatre, all members are cordially invited to attend. There will be several play excerpts from 2014, live music and the presentation of a plethora of awards.

Supper will be served and the bar will be open. It's always a fun-filled evening of mirth, merriment and more.

This is a FREE event but please RSVP to 9367 8719 or oldmilltheatre@inet.net.au for catering purposes.

Old Mill Theatre 2015 Board of Management



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