

World premiere of fun nun comedy delivers David vs Goliath story

A DAVID versus Goliath story comes to the fore at the Old Mill Theatre this April as a group of nuns try to save their convent from demolition and being turned into a housing estate.

Written and directed by prolific Perth playwright Noel O'Neill, *Hail Mary* is an irreverent comedy about some unconventional nuns who discover their Swan Valley convent is to be sold because of its high operating costs.

A young nun 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.

Visitors flock to the convent and the spin-off from selling the nuns' home-made wine and bread soon helps to raise money.

The Archbishop hurries to find out what's going on and, although initially suspicious, concedes the money-making efforts do not contravene any Christian principles.

Ideas and a little fun

"I really have no idea where half of my ideas come from," Noel said. "I wanted to do something comedic about nuns."

"I do have great respect for those who devote their lives to one religious order or another but the comedic side of me allowed me to indulge in a little fun, hopefully without being too offensive."

Born in Ireland, Noel moved to New York in his late teens and studied acting with Lee Strasberg and Herbert Berghof, appearing in many off-Broadway productions including *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* and *Of Mice and Men*.

Since moving to Perth 14 years ago, he has appeared on stage and directed and written numerous shows for the Old Mill and KADS Theatres, Graduate Dramatic Society and Irish Theatre Players.

Noel has won numerous awards for writing and directing and currently lectures for the WA Academy of Performing Arts and Perth Actors' Collective.

In recent years, his plays *No Bed of Roses*, *It's All Greek To Me* and *Under Any Old Gum Tree* have been staged at the Old Mill. He has also directed *Born Yesterday* and *Dinner With Friends* at the theatre.

With *Hail Mary*, Noel says the convent is fictional and the challenge is to put an enormous amount of energy into each character he has created.

"To assist me in directing, I have Valerie Dragojevic



Old Mill Theatre presents

Hail Mary

an irreverent comedy by
Noel O'Neill

directed by
Noel O'Neill

Tickets:
\$25 / \$20
(10+ all \$20)

Bookings:
(08) 9367 8719
www.oldmilltheatre.com.au/tickets

Where:
Old Mill Theatre, Mends Street,
South Perth, (opposite Windsor Hotel)

April 2015
10, 11, 15, 16,
17, 18, 22, 23,
24 – 8.00pm
19 (matinée)
– 2.00pm

who directed my script *It's All Greek to Me* last year, and Caroline McDonnell, who assisted me with *The Big Casino*, also in 2014," Noel said.

"Given their skill in helping to bring my works to life, I'm in safe hands."

The cast of *Hail Mary* features Norma Davis, Julia Trefeli, Caroline McDonnell, Vivienne Marshall, Valerie Dragojevic, Noel O'Neill, Rex Gray and Jesse McGinn.

Hail Mary plays at 8pm April 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23 and 24 with a 2pm matinee April 19.

It is the second show in a year of all-Australian plays at the Old Mill Theatre to commemorate the centenary of the Gallipoli landing in 2015.

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: Wolf Lullaby

Director: Alida Chaney

Auditions: May 31/June 1

Location: Old Mill Theatre

Season: July 31-August 14

CAST REQUIRED (all stage ages):

LIZZIE GAEL, 9 years old

ANGELA GAEL, late 20s/early 30s, Lizzie's mother

WARREN GAEL, late 20s/early 30s, Lizzie's father

SERGEANT RAY ARMSTRONG, 50ish

Please note: one of the female roles is a child but the actor needs to be over 18 and able to play a nine-year-old convincingly.



Is there intrinsic evil in the world? In a bleak, remote town, a small child is murdered. Suspicion falls on nine-year-old Lizzie.

Convinced her daughter is guilty, Lizzie's young mother must make the torturous choice between ignoring her intuition and presenting Lizzie to the police.

Lizzie is not the only one who is changed forever by the act. The adults around her, bewildered and full of denial, find their accepted beliefs crumbling around them in a play that explores the sources of violence and its legacy.

Please email director Alida Chaney at alida.chaney60@gmail.com for scripts and to arrange an audition time and/or for more details.

Call for 2016 submissions HEY YOU!



It may seem like we've just started the year but the call is already out for potential productions at the Old Mill Theatre in 2016.

Planning ahead is important so, if you have a production you might like to stage, contact Norma Davis on 9367 8719, oldmilltheatre@iinet.net.au or davisnl@iinet.net.au.

Review: JIGSAWS

"professional show in all aspects... strongly recommended"

Extract by GORDON THE OPTOM

Source: www.ita.org.au

THE curtains open to reveal another excellent set. Designed by director Adam Salathiel and built by Adam, Ben Davis and Tim Prosser, it is of an old-fashioned Perth sitting room at Christmas 1987.

We join a family Christmas reunion and the spirit of Christmas is definitely missing. Pedantic perfectionist Monica (Danni Close) is whingeing about all the extra work she has to do, looking after her elderly grandmother Emma (Beryl Francis), although no one has actually asked her to do it.

Next to an armchair, where her easygoing, non-house-proud, slightly supercilious sister, Alex (Hayley Currie, giving a strong first acting performance) has been sitting, Monica spots a coffee stain on the carpet. In seconds, Monica is down scrubbing.

Auntie Pat (Tracy Bolton) enters the room and catches the end of Alex's phone call. Pat drags from Alex that, while living in Melbourne, she has moved into a flat with a divorced doctor. For the sake of all concerned – and Christmas spirit – Pat begs Alex not to tell her matriarchal mother, Sylvia (Judi Johnson), who seems to have quite a few chips on her shoulder, permanently.

We can see the love and appreciation in the group, their problems with their miserable husbands and how the years have seen them drift apart. Each one seems to be heading for disaster but will the strength of their blood ties hold them together?

Why let a sensitive sitting dog lie when things NEED to be discussed and pointed out? Forget sensitivities or family bonds: just let the feelings flow forth. Do these relatives REALLY want to bring about an equitable agreement?

One-act plays FREE PARKING!

THREE one-act plays have been confirmed for a short season in September.

In keeping with this year's commemoration of the Gallipoli centenary, all have an Anzac theme:

- *The Anzac Tapes*, written by John Lewington, directed by Phil Barnett.
- *Dolls From the Sky* written by Yvette Wall, directed by Yvette Wall and Mary Wolfla.
- *Armistice Day*, written and directed by Noel O'Neill.

The production dates are September 4, 5, 10, 11 and 12.

Updates will be posted at www.oldmilltheatre.com.au and forthcoming editions of *The Old Mill Times*.



A surprise guest in one of the *Jigsaws*' audiences was the daughter of the show's author... Katherine Rogers is pictured, centre, with the cast.

Not surprisingly, the dedication of the cast is reflected in the distance they have had to travel with some of the cast coming from Mandurah for rehearsals and shows. This demonstrates their enthusiasm and the faith they have in well-respected director Adam Salathiel. The whole cast have years of experience and it shows in the wonderful chemistry between the actors.

Christmas dinner and the "relaxation period" afterwards can be one of the most stressful periods of the year and, in this superbly written dialogue, I am sure many couples will have nudged each other during the performance, as to say "Do you recognise the situation?" or "That is you!"

This play shows us how the square peg does not fit the round hole or that, in a jigsaw, there is always an odd piece that does not quite fit. You will squirm slightly as you recognise yourself as one of the characters.

Beryl's monologue was a real tissue job. Plenty of laughs and gasps as the family relationships unfurled.

A professional show in all aspects. Strongly recommended.



DID you know there is free parking after 5pm, just a couple of minutes' walk from the theatre?

Off Mill Point Road, opposite Darley Street and Soprano's Restaurant, is a large car park where many zoo visitors park during the day.

But after 5pm, you don't have to buy a ticket – it's free.

And then it's just a hop, skip and jump to the Old Mill.

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

Winners are grinners



THE results are in – the winners of the 2014 Milly Awards have been announced during a fun-filled evening of mirth, merriment and more featuring play excerpts, gourmet canapes, the sounds of a string quartet and MC Jarrod Buttery's ever-changing selection of ties.

And the winners are...

Best Production – *It's All Greek To Me*.

Best Director – Valerie Dragojevic, *It's All Greek To Me*.

Best Actor – Kim Taylor, *It's All Greek To Me* [Phil Barnett and Michael Dornan from *Dinner With Friends* and Joe Tareha from *The Glass Menagerie* also received nominations].

Best Actress – Aisling McGrogan, *The Glass Menagerie* [Sarah Cosstick (*The Hatpin*), Vivienne Marshall (*It's All Greek To Me*), Laila Gampfer (*Dinner With Friends*) received nominations. Maree Grayden was also nominated for both her performances in *Dinner With Friends* and *The Glass Menagerie*].

Best Supporting Actor – Cameron Leese, *It's All Greek To Me* [Angelino Schintu from *The Hatpin* and Tim Prosser and Neil Cartmell, both from *The Wizard of Oz*, also received nominations].

Best Supporting Actress – Madeleine Shaw, *The Hatpin* [Jessica Stenglein and Nada Dilevska

(both *It's All Greek To Me*), Judi Johnson and Andrea van Bertouch (both *The Hatpin*) and Nicole Miller and Sarah Christiner (both *The Wizard of Oz*) also received nominations].

Adjudicators' Achievement Award (Memorable Milly) – Maree Grayden, for outstanding performances in *Dinner With Friends* and *The Glass Menagerie* and for her direction of *The Wizard of Oz*.

Silly Milly Award – Sue Sator, for agreeing to stage manage *The Wizard of Oz*, then spraining her ankle.

Member(s) of the Year – Graeme Johnson and Kath Carney.

Adjudicators – Jarrod Buttery, Meredith Cook, Graeme Johnson.

FINLEY AWARDS

Congratulations go to:

- Everyone involved with *It's All Greek To Me* and *Dinner With Friends*, both featured in the top 10 plays for the year.
- Tim Prosser who received an adjudicator's certificate for "painting the stunning backdrop in *The Hatpin*".
- Kian and Caiden Cartmell, who also received adjudicator's certificates, for their "cute and energetic portrayal of munchkins in *The Wizard of Oz*".

No Names, No Packdrill

THE next play reading on Wednesday, May 6, is the Old Mill Theatre's last play of the year, *No Names, No Pack Drill*, directed by Tim Prosser.

It's a chance to familiarise yourself with the script before auditions.

No Names, No Pack Drill, written by Bob Herbert, is set in wartime Sydney in 1942. After recovering from a gunshot wound, 24-year-old Marine Sergeant Harry 'Rebel' Porter docks in Sydney and decides he's had enough of fighting.

After drowning his sorrows in a Kings Cross pub, Rebel is invited to a party in a young woman's apartment and ends up crashing the night.

Sydney postal worker Kathy McLeod is 28 with both her husband and brother both away fighting in Papua New Guinea.

Kath finds the US Marine asleep in her lounge room and wants to rid herself quickly of the uninvited guest. But later that morning a telegram arrives and her whole world changes...

The play reading on May 6 is a 6.30pm for a 7pm start in the theatre's Constance Ord Room.

Supper will be provided so please RSVP on 9367 8719 or oldmilltheatre@inet.net.au for catering purposes.

BRIEFS



SOME dates for your diary below (so get those pens and/or smartphones out):

- An informal morning tea for the theatre's front-of-house staff is on at 10.30am, **Sunday, March 29**. Let Norma Davis know if you're coming on 9367 8719 (if you haven't already).
- Maree Grayden and Kylie Maree Bywaters are running school holiday classes for children 6-10 and 11-15 from **9.30am-2.30pm, April 14-16**. For enrolment, contact Maree on 0407 936 800 or mlgrayden@gmail.com.
- Justin Freind's next Sunday Serenade concert is **May 3**. Contact Bel Canto Productions at belcanto@westnet.com.au.
- The Real Sing, an acapella choir, is holding a concert at the theatre on **May 16**.

WHAT'S ON ELSEWHERE?

NOT ME
Subiaco Arts Centre



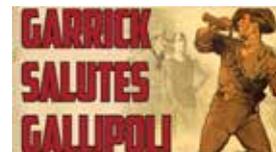
A call to turn off iPads and iPhones, step back and get real.
7.30pm, March 26, 27, 28. Book at www.actorshub.net.

RUBY MOON
Latvian Centre, Belmont



Fractured fairytale and twisted whodunit set in sinister suburbia.
8pm March 27, 28, April 2, 3, 4, 16, 17 & 18; 2pm March 29 & April 5. Book on 9497 5140.

GARRICK SALUTES GALLIPOLI
Garrick Theatre, Guildford



Old-time music hall and melodrama.
8pm April 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24 & 25; 2pm April 12 & 19.

Book on 9378 1990 or bookings@garricktheatre.asn.au

THE DARLING BUDS OF MAY
Limelight Theatre, Wanneroo



The TV adaptation that shot Catherine Zeta-Jones to fame.
8pm April 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23 & 24. Book at www.limelighttheatre.com

UNDER ANY OLD GUM TREE
Shenton Park Community Centre



Award-winning tribute to Victoria Cross soldier's life of hell.
7pm, May 1 & 2; 2pm May 3.
Book at www.trybooking.com/HEGN

...COMING SOON...



AN Australian classic comes to the Old Mill Theatre this June: *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, written by Ray Lawley and directed by Trevor Dhu.

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. The play is an unusual, integrity and realistic portrayal of a compelling love story.

This compelling Australian play was a success in London and hailed by critics in New York for its vigour, 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. *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* will run from June 5 to 20. Advance bookings can be made on 9367 8719 or oldmilltheatre@inet.net.au. For updates, go to www.oldmilltheatre.com.au.

The Old Mill Times
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CHAMPAGNE breakfast: April 19



IT'S time to clink those glasses once again at the Old Mill Theatre's annual champagne breakfast on Sunday, April 19.

Kicking off at 9am, it's a relaxed morning that

includes a cooked breakfast (bacon, eggs, toast, etc), healthy options such as fruit salad, orange juice and tea and coffee. Oh, and champagne. Let's not forget the champagne.

It's all prepared and cooked for you as well. All this for just \$7. That's right: \$7.

All members and friends welcome - be sure to RSVP by April 12 on 9367 8719 or oldmilltheatre@inet.net.au for catering purposes.

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