

Hallelujah! Nuns back for more fun in sidesplitting sequel to *Hail Mary*

FATHER Costello and his flock of nuns are back in the habit this August when their previous high spirits are dashed by a troublesome ghost.

Written and directed by prolific Perth playwright Noel O'Neill, *Hail Mary 2: The Haunting* comes to the Old Mill Theatre this August, presented in conjunction with Maverick Theatre Productions.

The convent of Our Lady of the Vines is again under threat but this time it's a haunting causing concern.

Having previously saved themselves from shutting their doors by various slightly-questionable means, the nuns again face the threat of closure from the church hierarchy unless the haunting can be exorcised.

The nuns rally to try and cast out the devil that plagues them – and their efforts lead to hilarious consequences.

"The biggest challenge in any sequel is to always try and make them funnier than the original," Noel said.

"The new ideas come from what an audience can associate itself with.

"In the first *Hail Mary*, I wanted to show the comical side of how nuns might behave among themselves – we had real nuns in the audience who thought it was very funny.

"There are no constraints when it comes to comedy, other than to keep the humour a little bawdy but not offensive."

You might have heard of Noel... he's done one or three plays at the Old Mill in the past few years (*It's All Greek To Me* and its sequel spring to mind) and is generally regarded as part-man, part-machine when it comes to writing, directing and acting.



Caroline McDonnell, left, and Valerie Dragojevic are appearing in *Hail Mary 2: The Haunting* at the Old Mill Theatre. Picture: John Spurling

He's also won numerous awards for writing and directing, including several Milly Awards and Finley Award nominations for the original *Hail Mary*.

Noel also reprises his role as Father Costello in *Hail Mary 2*.

"The biggest challenge directing myself is thinking as the character throughout the play without thinking as the director," he said. "The thought process is always a juggling act.

"As for it being a sequel, I think people can watch the play easily without any prior knowledge, simply because of the circumstances."

The cast features Norma Davis, Susan Meikle, Valerie Dragojevic, Vivienne Marshall, Rex Gray, Noel O'Neill, Sofie Reidy-Crofts and Caroline McDonnell.

Hail Mary 2: The Haunting plays at 8pm August 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26 and 27 with 2pm matinees August 20, 21 and 28.

Tickets are \$27, \$22 concession – book at <https://www.trybooking.com/LOBK> or call 9367 8719 or oldmilltheatre@inet.net.au



The rebellious and independent nuns from the Our Lady of the Vines convent – and Archbishop Monticello – are back in *Hail Mary 2: The Haunting*. Picture: John Spurling



AUDITION: Honour

Director: Dale James

Playwright: Joanna Murray-Smith

Auditions: 2pm, August 13

Location: Old Mill Theatre

Season: October 7-22

SYNOPSIS: George and Honour have been happily married for 32 years.

They have a perfect understanding of each other until a beautiful female journalist, sent to profile columnist George, methodically sets out to challenge that understanding.

With love, hope and raw emotion, Honour tells this affecting tale of thoughtless conceit from the perspective of the three women involved.

The play is about middle class morality where the main players like words more than people.

"The moral imperative of words, their uses and abuses - *Honour* is a synthesis of words, meaning, rhythm and context is masterful, as is its orchestration and timing." - Katherine Brisbane AM (Currency Press theatre journalist for 21 years).

CAST REQUIRED (stage ages)

Honor - an elegant, well-spoken woman of 60.

George - an attractive, youthful man, about 60ish.

Sophie - an articulate, young attractive woman, 24 (George and Honour's daughter).

Claudia - an attractive, young journalist around 30.

Actors will be auditioned as a group with cold reads individually and then as a group of four.

ALSO REQUIRED

Stage Manager, Lighting Operator, Sound Operator.

To express an interest or for more information, please email Dale James at dalejames911@iinet.net.au.

Patrick Marber's CLOSER

"acting is strong and heartfelt throughout"

Extract by KIMBERLEY SHAW

Source: www.stagewhispers.com.au

THE Old Mill Theatre's matinee audiences are typically very mature, but *Closer*, by Patrick Marber, billed 'for mature audiences' may have been a little surprising in its content, judging from the whispered buzz in the auditorium.

The show's poster has already sparked some controversy for its explicit nature, being discussed on radio station 6PR and 6PR's Facebook page, causing observer John Nicholls to remark: "It's not my mum's Old Mill. Where's the vicar? Where are the delightful misunderstandings?"

While *Closer* does include some misunderstandings, it is essentially about the inter-relationships of four people. It is sexy, includes strong language and demands great skills from its cast of four.

Excellent performances from Georgina Hamer, Jeff Watkins, Dylan James and Anna Head, as they work in a variety of



combinations to tell this complex story. Acting is strong and heartfelt throughout - the characters flawed, realistic and believable.

John Woolrych's lighting design has great impact, using colour to effect, sound (Vanessa Gudgeon) and video effects (Vanessa Gudgeon and Duncan Shaw) are effective. Jenny Prosser's costumes are nicely chosen.

Closer is a production that was well-marketed and nicely executed, with some performances well worth seeing.

What is coarse acting?



AS WE have space this issue, we thought we'd tell you more about coarse acting, given the teaser on page 4.

It all begins with *The Art of Coarse Acting* by British journalist Michael Green.

He describes a coarse actor as:

Screen scene

FOLLOWING the purchase of a projector, the Old Mill now has the all-important screen, which is fully motorised and retracts into a black box.

Expect to see it make its Old Mill debut in *Scrooge!*

- One who knows when to come on stage but not where.
- One who knows everyone else's lines but their own.
- One who addresses the scenery instead of the audience.

One infallible sign of coarse acting is that, no matter what has gone wrong with a show (such as the collapse of a set or the failure of someone to appear on stage), the cast firmly believe no one has noticed.

There is also coarse direction, revealed by ghastly groupings and cliched moves (such as where a king only ever speaks when he jumps on a rostrum).

Coarse stage management rears its head as well such as when a curtain may move four feet (or metric equivalent) and then sticks.

Says Green, of his coarse acting plays: "If anyone said they were spoofs of amateur dramatics I wouldn't disagree, except that they are also spoofs of some professional dramatics, too."

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

Look... more auditions!

Scrooge

A Musical Play in Two Acts
Old Mill Theatre - South Perth 2016



Director/Musical Director: Justin Freind
Production Manager: Sheila Wileman
Auditions: 10am, September 18
Location: Old Mill Theatre
Season: December 2-16 (10 performances, 7.30pm evenings and 2pm Sundays). If season sells out, December 14 may be added.
Production week: You MUST be available for this week on November 28, 29, 30 and December 1.

For an audition time, please email director **Justin Freind** at belcanto@westnet.com.au or phone **0408 855 458**.

ABOUT THE SHOW

Scrooge is a musical play in two acts, based on Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, with book and music by James Leisy. Scrooge is visited by the spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Future, who reveal the misery of Christmas for the poor.

AUDITION DETAILS

- Please bring a current CV with photo attached.
 - A CD player will be provided for backing CDs for songs.
 - A piano is available but you must provide your own accompanist for auditions
- Audition Requirements:**
- All auditionees will be required to do a closed audition.
 - In this audition, you will be asked to sing a song and may also be asked to sing a scale or two.
 - You may be required to do a script reading depending on your suitability for a character role and at the discretion of the audition panel. If you are not asked to read for the panel this does not mean that you are not being considered for a role or part in the show.

CHARACTERS (singing and speaking roles)

Scrooge: the only heavy part. He appears in every scene, sings two songs alone and sings with entire company on the last song. He must, first of all, be a good actor and his singing voice distinctive rather than pleasant; mean and nasal in his first song, but less so in the second.

Thomas, Richard, Harold (Scrooge's stooges): they speak little but sing as a

trio with Scrooge in one song and alone as a trio in another. These three characters furnish the comic relief for the play so their voices also need not be chosen for beauty.

Fred (Scrooge's nephew): he sings the show's first solo and should have a pleasant medium voice with solo quality. Fred also speaks in the first and last scenes.

Marley's Ghost: speaks in Act I, Scene 2. His speaking is more important than his singing of Clock of Chain, which may almost be chanted. Should have a deep "ghostly" voice.

Spirit of Christmas Past: speaks and sings in Act I, Scene 3. This part requires a soft, gentle female speaking voice and a soprano singing voice.

Spirit of Christmas Present: speaks and sings in Act II, Scene 1. This should be a jolly speaking and singing voice, capable of stylising his solo.

Tiny Tim: child voice. Sings the last solo and speaks in Act II, Scene 1 and 3.

CHARACTERS (speaking roles)

Bob Cratchit: speaks in three of six scenes. Should be a good actor with a pleasant, sincere voice, fairly high to contrast with Scrooge.

Mrs Cratchit: speaks in Act II, Scenes 1 and 3.

Belinda and Martha: both speak in Act II, Scenes 1 and 3.

Peter Cratchit: a teenage boy, who neither speaks nor sings except with the company in the finale.

Topper, Polly and Emily: small speaking parts in the first and last scenes.

First and Second Ladies: both speak in the first and last scenes.

Scrooge (as a boy), Sister Fan, Fezziwig, Dick Wilkins, Scrooge (as a young man) and Scrooge's Fiancée: all have small speaking parts in Act I, Scene 3.

Spirit of Christmas Future: Neither speaks nor sings. Grim Reaper figure.

First, Second and Third Merchants, Joe the Pawnbroker, The Undertaker's Assistant, Mrs Filcher, Mrs Dilber: all speak in Act II, Scenes 2 and 3.

WHAT'S ON ELSEWHERE?

BAD GIRLS - THE MUSICAL
Chrissie Parrott Arts, Maylands



Blak Yak Theatre presents the musical based on the popular British TV series.

8pm August 4, 5, 6, 11, 12 & 13;
2pm August 7

Book at www.blayak.com.au

RUN FOR YOUR WIFE
Limelight Theatre, Wanneroo



Double wife, double life, double strife in Ray Cooney's classic comedy farce.

8pm August 4, 5, 6, 11, 12 & 13.
Book on 0499 954 016 or at www.limelighttheatre.com.au

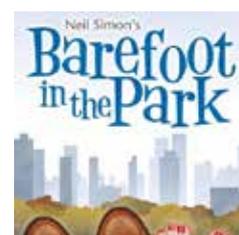
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
Latvian Centre Theatre, Belmont



One of Shakespeare's most popular comedies, first performed in 1598.

8pm August 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19 & 20; 2pm August 7 & 14
www.trybooking.com/LUDK

BAREFOOT IN THE PARK
Melville Theatre



Neil Simon's romantic comedy about a newly-wed couple learning to live together.

8pm September 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, & 17; 2pm September 11

Book on 9330 4565 or at www.meltheco.org.au

Moby Dick and more!



TIME'S ticking away and the **September one-act season is creeping up on us.**

To be held September 7-10, we have Michael Green's *Moby Dick* confirmed, as well as two more still to be decided as this issue went to press.

Directed by Sarah Christiner, *Moby Dick* done is in a "coarse acting" style (and yes, that is spelt right).

So what does this mean?

The play is a rather over-ambitious attempt to reduce the epic novel (685 pages long) into a series of quick-fire scenes.

Everything that can conceivably go

wrong does so: sets collapse, actors fail to appear on stage and props fall to pieces – but the coarse cast carry on, firmly believing the audience won't notice a thing.

At least one of the other plays will be written by Noel O'Neill [told you he was part-man, part-machine (see page 1)].

All updates will be made available at www.oldmilltheatre.com.au and in the Old Mill Facebook group: <http://tiny.cc/oldmilltheatre>

Earlybird bookings can be made by calling **9367 8719** or email oldmilltheatre@inet.net.au

For more on coarse acting, turn to page 2.

The Old Mill Times
PO Box 1390
South Perth WA 6951

Surface
Mail

Registered by AUSTRALIA POST
PP 642409/00009

Play reading

ARE you ready for the next play reading on Wednesday, August 3?

This time around it's *You Scratch My Back* by local playwright and Old Mill member John Lewington.

The play has been through Stages WA dramaturgy and was scheduled for a public reading until the untimely demise of Stages WA occurred.

Stages WA assessors wrote they were impressed by the clever plot construction of the play, describing it as "fiendishly clever". Another acknowledged the plot as "elegantly constructed".

John Lewington has been writing plays since 2008 with several staged by Pocket, Marloo and Garrick Theatres.

And for the all-important details:

Time: 6.30pm for light refreshments and 7pm for the start of the play reading in the theatre's Constance Ord Room.

To RSVP (for catering purposes), contact Siobhán O'Gara on 0409 374 731 or siobhanog@westnet.com.au

Old Mill Theatre 2016 Board of Management



Rex Gray
Chairman



Phil Barnett
Vice Chairman



Paul Bray
Treasurer



Madaleine Rennie
Board Member



Dale James
Board Member



Mary Wolfla
Board Member



Justin Freind
Board Member