

Bringing honour to a journey of life and love

WHEN is love real and does it really last? That's the core theme of *Honour*, the latest offering at the Old Mill Theatre.

Written by Joanna Murray-Smith and directed by Dale James, *Honour* follows a couple's exhausting and confronting – yet also tender and poignant – journey through life and love.

George and Honor have been married for 32 years with a perfect understanding of each other.

But then a beautiful female journalist, sent to profile columnist George, methodically sets out to challenge that understanding. And George suddenly has eyes for someone else...

Honour has been produced in more than 35 countries, including productions on Broadway and at London's Royal National Theatre in London. It also scored a 1996 Victorian Premier's Literary Award.

"The play's title is a play on words, given it's the name of the wife and topic of the play, looking at whether there is honour in love," Dale said. "Does a history between two people deserve some honour?"

"It's a play about the eternal triangle and the respect, sense of duty and comfort between a couple who have been married for 32 years – what is it worth?"

Dale said the main challenge was how to transition from scene to scene.



Life suddenly changes in *Honour* when journalist Claudia (Ruhama Geiger, left) comes to profile George (Alan Kennedy).

"There is no timeframe given, as one scene flows into another, so it will be an interesting use of the stage, lighting and actors," she said.

First learning to dance at age four, Dale became involved with Patch Theatre as a 14-year-old – but it wasn't until the 1980s when she embraced her passion wholeheartedly, mainly at Garrick Theatre, working extensively as an actor, director and backstage.

She has several acting awards and nominations to her credit and currently serves as an Old Mill Theatre board member.

"*Honour* appealed because I admire Joanna Murray-Smith's writing and her use of words," Dale said.

"Joanna gives you a blank canvas by not writing in stage directions or timeframes – she leaves the canvas for you to create the work upon, supplying the equipment for you to use."

Honour plays at 8pm October 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21 and 22 with 2pm matinees October 9 and 16.

The cast features Alan Kennedy, Maree Grayden, Ruhama Geiger and Jessica Warriner.

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



Journalist Claudia (Ruhama Geiger, centre) causes ripples among family life with mother Honor (Maree Grayden, right) and daughter Sophie (Jessica Warriner, left).



WIDOW'S PEAK, MOBY DICK & UNDER THE RAINBOW

“...guaranteed to enjoy yourself...”

Extract by GORDON THE OPTOM

Source: www.ita.org.au

The Old Mill Theatre's short play season is a very diverse 80-minute selection.

Widow's Peak was written and directed by WA's Noel O'Neill. It is 1917 in a small, sparsely furnished room in Eire.

Two middle-aged women, Peggy (Denice Byrne) and Siobhán (Mairead Dempsey), are dressed in their widow's weeds discussing the loss, some months earlier in *The Rising*, of their husbands at the hands of the Black and Tans.

As they share a drink, young Moira (Roisin Nash) who is also a widow, calls around. They notice she has a 'bump' and her husband has been dead for almost a year – could it be a miracle? On the other hand, has Moira been unfaithful to her husband's memory? The older women have plenty to say.

This is a beautiful tale: touching and humorous with a powerful and angry message in the storyline. Noel has a wonderful ability to write dialogue that flows naturally and with which everyone can connect.

The three women are typical of those in a small community and are portrayed perfectly with genuine emotional depth by the cast. A fresh topic; most enjoyable.

Moby Dick is a 25-minute farce, in the unruly style known as “coarse acting”, which is a skit with things going wrong in theatre. This madcap adaptation of the 685-page novel by Herman Melville was by Mike Green and directed by Sarah Christiner.

A thumbs-up signal from the wings to the bio box sets the amateur approach (as deliberately requested in the script) of this talentless but self-admiring troupe to community theatre.



The cast of *Moby Dick*.



Yad Sand, Andrew Hobbs, Valerie Dragojevic and Cameron Leese in *Under The Rainbow*.

The lights come up and Ishmael (David Heder) makes a false entrance and exits quickly. He re-enters and does a short monologue, mispronouncing numerous words. He wanders into a local pub searching for crew, where he sees the landlady (Noah Humich) and a serving wench (Eileen Leake) taking jugs of beer to a rabble in the corner. Starbuck (Michael Dornan), Elijah (Phil Barnett) and friends are the worse for wear and volunteer for his crew.

A scarred seaman (Sarah Christiner) says he knows a talented harpooner, the highly-tattooed Queequeg (Josh Harris). As a carpenter (Kit Leake) joins the crew, the pub doors fly open and an old salt, Captain Ahab (Chris Thomas), staggers in on his peg leg. He wants to join the gang and wreak revenge upon the white whale known as Moby Dick who ate his limb!

There follows a series of quick-fire scenes, all of them a shambles. Props fail, the actors are under-rehearsed and the play staggers from bad to worse.

Director Sarah Christiner has grasped the fact that this type of sloppy presentation actually requires hard work and slick staging with the actors retaining unflinching poker faces.

This shambolic style of presentation is sim-

ilar to that in the *Farndale Avenue Housing Estate* series of plays. I found *Farndale* to be annoying because they are so close to the truth whereas with *Moby Dick*, because the whole genre is slapstick, the pandemonium works so much better.

There were plenty of belly laughs, fun props and the genre well-presented. However, I think the audience could be split 50-50, with some absolutely detesting the style.

Under The Rainbow was the evening's second play written and directed by Noel O'Neill. The scene is several years after Dorothy's magical trip to see the

Wizard of Oz.

Still dressed in scarlet shoes and her pale blue, gingham check dress, Dorothy (Valerie Dragojevic) goes to a rundown bar, known as Under the Rainbow. Despite the colourful rainbow design and twinkling lights on the bar front, the barman – known as Wiz (Noel O'Neill) – is less than welcoming.

Cackling in the corner is Witchy (Lindsay Cliff, alternating with Siobhán Robertson-Skinner), an enchantress determined to ruin Dorothy's night. Seated at a table, with party hats on their heads, are three old friends: soft-hearted Leo (Yad Sand), callous Rusty (Cameron Leese) and the lovable but brainless Mr Crow (Andrew Hobbs). Sadly, for Dorothy, as the evening goes on, the original warmth of the group seems missing.

Many of us will have been to school reunions and, for some, it is fun and a great success but, for others, it can be a regrettable embarrassment. Likewise, this dark comedy is really quite poignant, giving us an ingenious and novel look at a possible sequel to the world-famous tale.

The cast were delightful with each member totally embracing their characters.

The array of plays ranged from the sublime to the ridiculous so you are guaranteed to enjoy yourself.

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

Memberships due!



OLD MILL THEATRE
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 ☎ (08) 9367 8719 /e: oldmilltheatre@inet.net.au

Membership fees are due on **October 1** each year. Please complete ALL areas of the form below and post to the above address to receive information on the interesting mix of plays and theatre activities planned for 2017.

APPLICATION or RENEWAL—NEWSLETTER/ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP 2016-2017
 TAX INVOICE ABN 19250378001

NAME.....
 ADDRESS.....
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We appreciate people completing this form, even if you are a long-time member, because it helps us maintain up-to-date records. Please write email addresses LEGIBLY. If no change, write "as before". If you're a new member, welcome aboard!

SUBSCRIPTIONS from October 1, 2016, will be unchanged:
 Newsletter only: \$12 per year, full membership: \$20 per year (double/family \$30)
 [Full membership entitles you to act, direct and be an active member of the theatre. Our "membership year" runs from October 1 to September 30]

FOR ALL MEMBERS: If you would like to assist with front-of-house during a season, please tick this box and we will contact you.

For active members: please tick your areas of special interest: ACTING SINGING
 DIRECTING STAGE MANAGEMENT SET BUILDING LIGHTING/SOUND
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 ANYTHING ELSE? (please indicate).....

Cheques should be made payable to the Old Mill Theatre and sent with this completed form to the address at the top of the page. Alternatively, you can pay by credit card:

VISA/MASTERCARD number: Exp.....
 Amount: \$

OFFICE USE: Date received Amount Cheque/credit card
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FESTIVAL SUCCESS



THE Old Mill Theatre received several gongs at the recent Hills Festival of Theatre held at Marloo Theatre.

Sarah Christiner, pictured left, picked up the best director award for *Moby Dick* while the cast was recognised with an adjudicator's certificate for excellence in ensemble.

Noel O'Neill, writer and director of *Widow's Peak* and *Under The Rainbow*, also received an adjudicator's certificate for theatrical excellence.

And not forgetting Dramafest, where Noel picked up the Beryl Silvester Award for new writing for his two plays – and Andrew Hobbs received an adjudicator's encouragement award for his performance as Mr Crow in *Under The Rainbow*.

WHAT'S ON ELSEWHERE?

SKYLIGHT

Limelight Theatre, Wanneroo



Two people attempt to re-kindle their once passionate relationship.
 8pm October 1, 6, 7 & 8. Book on 0499 954 016 or at www.limelighttheatre.com.au

GUARDS! GUARDS!

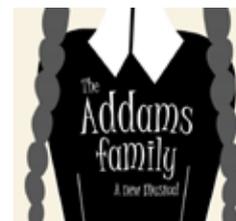
Latvian Centre Theatre, Belmont



Terry Pratchett's eighth Discworld novel on stage.
 8pm October 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, November 3, 4 & 5; 2pm October 23, 20 & November 6.
 Book on 9399 9947 or at www.trybooking.com/LUCB

THE ADDAMS FAMILY

Phoenix Theatre, Hamilton Hill



A new musical – and it's every father's nightmare.
 8pm November 24, 25, 26, December 1, 2, 3, 8, 9 & 10;
 2pm December 4
 Book at www.darkpsychicproductions.com

ONE MAN, TWO GUVNORS

Melville Theatre



Based on *The Servant of Two Masters* by Carlo Goldoni.
 8pm November 25, 26, December 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10;
 2pm December 4
 Book on 9330 4565 or at www.meltheco.org.au

Coming soon: SCROOGE



COMING to the Old Mill Theatre this December is *Scrooge*, a musical re-telling of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*.

Directed by Justin Freind, *Scrooge* is closely adapted from the music and screenplay used for the 1970 film of the same name.

It follows the classic tale of Ebenezer Scrooge who, through greed, has lost all that is good but undergoes redemption on Christmas Eve after being visited by the ghosts of Christmas past, present

and future. The story shows that changing what you don't like about yourself allows you a life full of things more than riches, such as laughter, friendship, family and goodwill.

What could be better just before Christmas? A beautiful classic story, brought to the stage in musical form.

Scrooge plays from December 2 to 16.

For advance bookings, call 9367 8719 or email oldmilltheatre@inet.net.au

The Old Mill Times
PO Box 1390
South Perth WA 6951

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Finley tickets on sale now

TICKETS are now on sale for the 42nd annual Robert Finley Awards.

This year's awards will be held at 7.30pm, December 17, at the Heath Ledger Theatre.

The Finley Awards, organised by the Independent Theatre Association, bring together the best of WA community and independent theatre for a night of celebration.

The evening includes performances from nominees, awards presentations, hall of fame inductions and a commemoration of the year that was.

Originally, the Finley Award was made annually to the best non-professional theatrical production. It was later altered to have two categories: best play and best musical.

In recent years, the awards have been expanded to include best actor and actress and many other categories.

Go to www.ita.org.au to book via the Ticketek link.

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