

## Community theatre benefits from \$420,000 one off funding injection

Eighteen independent theatre groups dedicated to enriching community arts and culture have received a \$420,000 funding boost for facilities, marketing and production through the Department of Culture and the Arts, Independent Theatre Initiative.

The largest single grant of \$48,000 was awarded to Narrogin Repertory Club to increase seating capacity, install air conditioning and provide general upgrades to the Thorton Theatre.

The theatre currently seats 45 and the club is forced to turn away audiences for each of its productions. These funds will increase seating by 50 per cent.

Playlovers Inc, a community theatre company based in Floreat, received \$10,000 in funding to increase their audience database and market their productions more effectively.

Independent Theatre Association President Kimberley Shaw said the community theatre sector is a vital and dynamic part of the Western Australian arts community.

"These funds allow many theatre companies to fulfill projects that they have been dreaming about for years and will increase the enjoyment and comfort of thousands of audience members across the state." Ms Shaw said.



## Noosa One Act Playwriting Competition 2009

Get national exposure for your new short play as National One-Act Playwriting Competition joins forces with NoosaLongWeekend!

Entries are now being accepted for Noosa Arts Theatre's One-Act Playwriting Competition 2009. Entries close 30 November 2008.

The 3 finalist plays will be performed at Noosa Arts Theatre as part of the annual One-Act Play Festival, presented as part of the Noosa Long Weekend cultural festival, which gets national media coverage.

From a small beginning in 1978, the National One Act Playwriting Competition at Noosa Arts Theatre has become a national festival attracting over 70 entries a year from around Australia and overseas.

The Audience's Choice at the festival, is awarded the Nancy Cato Award and has their script published by Maverick Musicals. Since 2000, Maverick Musicals have published the audiences favourite play, with the writers achieving exposure and income via publication.

Titles such as Michael Olsen's *Two Women and a Chair* (Winner in 2001) are top sellers both here and in NZ and Jane Tara's *Bombshells* (Winner in 2000) went on to acclaimed production in New York. More recently, Hugh O'Brien has had 3 plays achieve success at the festival, and these are now performed as a trilogy titled *Love, Love, Love*.

The Sunshine Coast Regional Council donates prize money of \$2500, to be shared among the three finalist playwrights.

Theatre Patron and Australia's most well-renowned playwright, David Williamson will take on a new advisory role within the adjudication reading panel for 2009.

Playwrights wishing to enter a short script for the 2009 National One Act Play Competition, should contact Synda Turnbull on 07 5449 9972, or download an entry form from the COMPETITIONS page <http://www.noosaartstheatre.org.au/competitions.aspx>.

Natalie Lapham, an ex member of Geraldton's Community Theatre Scene has been working with the BBC on the series *The Bill*. Fawty Towers may be on the cards for Theatre 8 at Geraldton, if the director reads this, look at page 8, there's your Basil.

## YEAR 2008 ITA COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Free Publicity & Advertising . ITA Website: www.theatre.asn.au . Over 40,000 people visit per month. Details can be published in the "What's On" section. Email: theatre@theatre.asn.au or ph: 9420 7242

**ITA Membership Fees** (July '07 to June 08) Metro Clubs \$90; Country Clubs \$50; Individuals \$25. The ITA Office is open on a part time basis.

If a matter is urgent contact 0424 926 438 **Advertising in the ITA LINK** Present and forthcoming production/audition information is published free to member clubs. Rates for other ads in ITA Link are available from the secretary or the editor.

## AROUND THE TRAPS (or should it be BOARDS)

**Roleystone Theatre** reported the marriage of Malita & Henry and announced a 1930's Movie Night at the theatre in November & December. **Playlovers** extolled their new musical BARE due up on the 14th November. **Northam** advertised "Alice the musical", announced moves to start a new Community Choir and thanked the Shire of Northam for funding to help towards maintenance of their 100 year old building. Someone lost a pair of earrings at **Stirling**, Brendan Ellis was given kudos for stage managing YouthFest and Fran was justly proud of her "Trust" team who did so well at DramaFest. **Spectrum at Albany** reported that Marianne (ex president) was moving interstate and welcomed their new committee Eve Wilkinson, Lucy Hoeksema, Charles Danger and Sheelagh McDonagh (Bron France president). **Melville** sadly reported the passing of Denny Kermani on Sept 28th, Jeff Hansen advised that he'll be directing their first season 'Doctor in the House' and they've been in the business for 25 years!



**Look out in 2009 for  
 The Finley Nominees Party  
 The Finleys  
 InterAct  
 YouthFest  
 DramaFest  
 and so much more from Your ITA**



## CALLING ALL NEWSLETTER EDITORS....

Would you be interested in working with other newsletter editors in WA to pool resources and information to make our jobs just that little easier. If you'd like to throw some thoughts into the pot send me an email at itaperth@gmail.com. Ed

For those of you who enjoy playing Charades, you'll understand the above title, it doesn't really have any relevance to the show discussed below, then, most of the comments that appeared on Theatre Australia about this show didn't (in my opinion) have much relevance either.

Gordon the Optom started the ball with.....

## 'Apocalypse Perth'

written by Kate Rice is a joint Blue Room and Always Working Artists production, showing at the Blue Room Studio, 53 James Street in Northbridge at 6.30 each evening until 8th November. There are late shows on Friday and Saturday at 9.15 pm. On this web site in January and February this year, an amateur production, 'Rock Apocalypse', received an unfavourable review. There then followed an assassination of every aspect of the show and its venue. The actors and crew tried in vain to raise sympathy and put forward their case, but the insults continued unabated.

On recently re-reading these forty, or so, postings I wondered how playwright Kate Rice (last play at the Blue Room was 'The Mozart Factor', which won much acclaim, and achieved several nominations in the Actors' Equity Guild awards) could make any sense of such drivel, let alone construct an interesting script. I suppose that there are some books, e.g. Shakespeare and Pinter, which on reading for the first time have given the same belief, yet in the right hands turn out to be stunning. Kate does not merely list the string of contributions to the web thread, but has blended them with interviews, great characterisation, and even a song. There is plenty of humour and several gasps as some of the claptrap written on the web, is performed face to face by the writers with the people that they have denigrated.

With a superb choice of four very different cast member who, under the direction of Jeremy Rice, give us about six characters each. Greg McNeill's portrayals include Tim, the show's director who abandoned the play two weeks from opening and then returned as a performer. One of the leading performers, Kelly (Whitney Richards) emotionally explains her heartbreak as she sees her dream of an acting career drain rapidly away. The committee member in charge of catering (Vanessa Trengove) is even attacked for charging \$1 for orange cordial.

One of the final comments was from one of the show's musicians (Craig Williams) 'one Powerball and we will put the show on again - properly!' I for one would love to see this show and decide for myself whether all this heartbreak and mental torture was justified.

All [trolls](#), and generally nasty people, should see this unusual play and so discover how what they think is 'a little bit of fun' can

actually do to those concerned. I can recommend this show to the cast of 'Rock Apocalypse' to see that all of their hard work was not in vein. Composer Ashley Gibson Greig decided upon quite a heavy, but very effective style of music, similar to the radio detective serial themes of the fifties such as 'Dick Barton'.

With only a black drape set, the lighting by Lucy Birkenshaw was required to take us from the homes of the show's performers, to the rehearsal room, the stage and committee rooms. Most effective with the use of an unusual style and mix of lamps.

I must be honest, I expected something dull and trite, but this show covered many emotions and the cast did a brilliant job. A very well constructed script, delivered with power, emotion, and at times finely choreographed movement. Most enjoyable. There then followed a series of posts asking things like, "how many people were in the audience? Is it attracting much of a crowd?" or "Is it a musical?" or "What about the money" and then there was more talk of money, sums of \$6000 or \$12000 were bandied about. We were even treated to a degree of 'poetry' something that rhymed anyway...

*Craig Williams went on to say...*

"We perform this show in our underwear so we don't have to pay for a costume budget. We sing a capella so we don't have to pay any musicians. We never actually wrote anything down, so technically we didn't even use a writer. I walk around at work arguing with people all day, so basically THEY are paying me to 'rehearse' for free. (It's not like there's a script I had to learn or anything!). The Blue Room gave us the venue, the equipment, and ALL of our advertising budget for free, and DON'T take a cut of the door, so every dollar paid for a ticket is going straight into our pockets making us very very rich. They also generously ALLOW us to take all the profit from behind the bar. There was no need to EARN or compete for this right by creating a worthy submission, a budget and an artistic treatment, because hey, they just give them away to anyone for free, right? We used our huge professional influence to extort FREE labour from the lighting designer, the composer, the tech operator, and the set decorator, on threat of them never working in this town again. The contracts that were given to the hapless contributors from the internet had very-very-very fine-print clauses which gave us a loophole freeing us from ever needing to give them a cent, allowing us free access to the balance of their superannuation funds, and guaranteeing us 17% of their future children's earnings...!

The little excursion to the Padbury community hall DIDN'T earn us bugger-all because they DIDN'T charge us the \$50/hour rate or make us hire and install our own lighting and sound equipment; we EASILY packed the place to the rafters; we DIDN'T give away the cordial for free; and the gear, petrol and transport to lug it all was GIVEN to us by a passing philanthropist.

Grant actually pays me to contribute here, why do you think I'm online all the time?

So yes, you might think you are correct to guess that we are all paying off our second mortgages and yachts from the profits we are exploiting from this show.

But here's where I have to correct you. Unfortunately 'Always Working Artists' are NOT going to recoup their costs from this show, and in fact have had to force their kids into child-labour contracts with dodgy advertising companies...because Greg, Whitney, Vanessa and I are PROFESSIONAL!

Most of us have interstate agents negotiating our contracts, we have the industrial might of the hugely-powerful Actor's Union



fighting for our exorbitant wage rates, we demand full-star treatment, glossy magazine exposure, personal trainers and masseurs, luxury trailers, unlimited supply of caviar, champagne and mangoes, and dressing rooms with hot and cold running showgirls. Both Greg and I can both command thousands of dollars for a single 30-second radio commercial...so imagine the fee we are each charging for a full 60 minutes of spoken dialogue!

While I believe I may have heard that some people may actually entertain the notion of 'giving back to the community', 'sharing the wealth', and 'recognising those who've helped you along the way', I can safely say that I have NO intention of doing anything of the sort! I pay NO attention to anything that goes on in the amateur world around me, I actively oppose being generous or assisting others to learn and grow, and I refuse to even consider that anyone else may deserve to get the breaks I myself have had. Isn't it enough that I grace you with my hefty and awesome talent?

If I had my way, I wouldn't even let you come and see the performance...you're not worthy. If it wasn't for some legal loophole in the Blue Room agreement...I'll have to get my team of lawyers to put a stop to that!

I think it's a shame that the amateur community at large has no idea, and mostly assumes that we are doing this 'for the love of it', or because the project 'has merit'. What, did you think we might be doing this to demonstrate the power of creativity over petty negativity? To celebrate and share our skill and love of producing interesting theatre? To merely entertain??

Thankfully a few of you obviously know better, have seen through the glam and sham, and have exposed this seedy operation for what it really is, an exercise in ripping off all the community theatres in the world, squeezing every ill-gained drop of money and blood from the poor innocent contributors to these forums, thumbing our noses at all and sundry who actually care about theatre arts, riding off into the sunset to our villas overlooking the Riviera and laughing derisively over our shoulders at you poor, poor hopeless fools who complain."

*Murray Jackson then weighed in with his rather unique style*

*Christ you know it ain't easy*

*You know how hard it can be*

*The way things are going*

*They're gonna crucify me*

So sang John Lennon in The Ballad of John and Oko.

You may be forgiven for thinking I'm using this as an illustration of how the casts of both Rock Apocalypse and Apocalypse Perth may feel....but you're wrong.

I had the pleasure of meeting the writer of Apocalypse Perth, Kate Rice (y'know, wife of that tosser Jeremy Rice ) prior to last night's performance. Judging by the anxiety she expressed, I'm wondering if she had the above song rattling round in her head. And that's when the penny finally dropped - Kate cares about her play, her players, but she also cares about the cast and crew of the play this piece is based on and doing them some justice. If she had intended to lampoon community theatre or the such then she was acting very well to display the opposite.

We open in darkness - perhaps a manifestation of someone powering on their PC or laptop from start-up. A girl is illuminated and stands before us innocently asking whether anyone had seen local production Rock Apocalypse and could they post a review.

What follows is a whirlwind of characters weighing in with their heavy criticisms of the show, each identified by their posting moniker and time and date of posting. This is cleverly handled with the characters interacting with those that had already posted so as to produce the effect of a group of people having a live discussion. In some instances they surround one poster and aim their comments at them, accusing, cajoling, teasing, reminiscent of school yard bullying. This was quite eye-opening because it brings home the added impact of what's typed online

when it's personified and body language added. There it was in all its ugliness - accusation, counter-accusation, anger, hurt, silliness, pontification, pickiness - pack mentality laid out for what it was. If you've ever wondered what your words may stir in people, see this play. Every person who has ever thought it was a harmless bit of fun to be a troll should see this play.

Interspersed with the acting out of the original online postings is a selection of interview segments the writer gleaned from her discussions with a number of the people who posted and some of the cast and crew of Rock Apocalypse itself. This is another clever device because it further humanises the people and events outlined in the forum and it's threads - we start to see them as real people and not the disembodied voices they were originally. This is confronting for us as an audience because until this time we have been able to laugh at the stupidity, the rudeness, and the callousness of the posters and their respondents but now we're forced to confront the consequences of those actions which was best personified in the experience of one of the cast when she saw the forum - a segment that illustrates that person's soul laid bare for all to see - quite unsettling. Through this we find ourselves asking the question "Where would I have been in all this?" Would you have added fuel to the fire? Would you have joined the trolls or the side of those defending the cast and crew? Would you use words as weapons? Would you have stayed on the sidelines and simply amused yourself by reading what unfolded? What does that, in itself, say about you?

The production is well serviced by an excellent soundtrack which imposes itself at the right moments and wisely keeps out when it isn't needed.

The performers were uniformly excellent. Greg McNeill shone in the role of Tim the director and at one stage carried off the difficult task of having a conversation with himself with aplomb. Whitney Richards played roles that required her to be in one moment an effusive teenager and the next a girl with a shattered self esteem. The latter was particularly confronting. Craig Williams bounced round the stage easily slipping into any one of half a dozen characters. Vanessa Trengrove belied the fact that she was appearing in her first professional show and more than held her own in the company of her more experienced cast mates and provided a link to the original production as she is a member of JETS who produced Rock Apocalypse on which the whole saga is based.

They were well coralled by Jeremy Rice who ensured that the whole piece, which, if the pace had not been kept snappy and the energy allowed to ebb, may have seen the whole thing come unglued like a poorly prepared risotto. We got a tight and entertaining hour of verbatim theatre.

Final thoughts on Kate's script. I thought that originally you were playing with fire by tackling this topic. Had I known you would approach it so cleverly and explore the real themes and questions it evokes, I would have shut up. The fact is that this piece isn't a dissertation on Rock Apocalypse itself - it's an autopsy of the whole internet blogging/posting universe and a meditation on how anonymity, for some people, makes them feel powerful, and how words can provoke emotions and consequences we never intended them to. It's a powerful statement about the choices we all face when we log on and type something in a public forum and begs the question "Who is this person/people I'm having dialogue with and how are they interpreting what I'm saying about them?".

*It was good to see that some in the audience were from the original production and listening to the cast on the "meet and greet" night, it was enthusiasm all round. I just wonder who will put the original show on again and whether it will be at Burswood. For my two penneth, it was entertaining and I really enjoyed it. Ed*

# TREADING THE BOARDS..



Treading the Boards was an event designed to showcase the diversity of talent across the ITA clubs in Western Australia. Originally designed as a forum that would also allow the announcement of the Ignite Grants, it was decided to go ahead with the event, despite the change of government and changing circumstances.

The event featured performers representing almost every metropolitan club, all performing songs based on the theme Treading the Boards. We saw songs about auditioning, singing, dancing, learning to sing, dancing for a living and a plethora of onstage and backstage situations. We also saw



previews of two of the end of year productions with musical or theatrical themes, with excerpts from The Sound of Music and bare.

Intended as a 'trial run' for bigger and more publicised incarnations of this type of event, its success means that we will have more of these events in the future.

If you have ideas for themes or would like to help organise future showcases, please contact the ITA.....

[itaperth@gmail.com](mailto:itaperth@gmail.com)

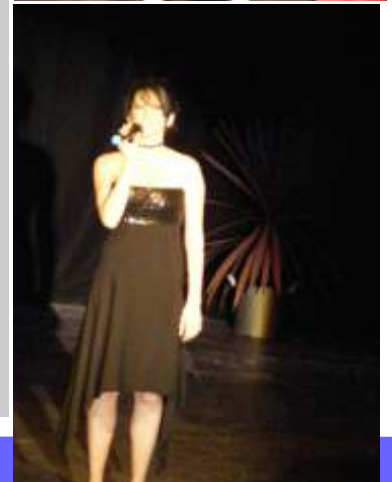
## Finley Nominees Night

The ITA will announce the Finley Nominees (not best play or musical) and will take this opportunity to honour the 2008 Finley Adjudicators and introduce the Finley Adjudicators for 2009 during a Party (good excuse to dress up in your party frocks or smart casual attire) on January 3rd 2009 at Lotteries House West Perth from 7.30pm.

We'll provide entertainment, finger food and soft drinks (for \$15 per head) or include wine & beer (for \$25 per head).. This is a great opportunity to catch up with friends and fellow cast members and to find out who is on the list for one of those coveted (by many) awards.

Come along and join us in starting the Community Theatre New Year with a bang.

Tickets can be purchased by contacting 9335 2255 (Mon-Fri 10 - 3pm) or [itaperth@gmail.com](mailto:itaperth@gmail.com) with payment by paypal (all you'll need is a bank account or credit card) or cheque etc, but get in quick this event will be popular.





INSPIRING: Pride of Australia 2008 Medal winners, from left, Marcelle Coakley (Community Spirit), Marnie Giroud (Environment), Ernie Redman (True Blue), Kerri Hilton (Role Model), Kirsty Sinclair (Mateship), Daniel Rawlings (Young Aussie), Jacqueline Stutt (Fair Go) and Joanne Lucas (Bravery). Picture: TOMASZ MACHNIK

## Neighbourhood heroes

### Age no bar to our community medal winners

By BRADEN QUARTERMAINE

AN inspirational new group of unsung WA heroes was honoured for a variety of outstanding achievements at The Sunday Times Pride of Australia medal ceremony yesterday.

Remarkable people of all ages were recognised for their courage, selflessness and community spirit. They showed the spirit of goodwill was alive and well throughout the state, with the winners coming from all corners and as far afield as Newman, Onslow and Kalbarri to the north and Esperance and Albany in the south. The medals were awarded for the fourth time at a breakfast function in Kings Park.

There were nine categories: Bravery, Courage, Young Aussie, Community Spirit, Role Model, Mateship, True Blue, Environment and Fair Go.

Some winners cried as they accepted their medals on stage, while others in the crowd fought back tears as they listened to the nine inspirational tales.

The winners felt slightly uneasy at the plaudits thrown their way and were in awe of their elite company and the achievements of other winners.

But the recognition means a lot to the winners. Paul Naomis, last year's Courage medal winner, died in June this year and was buried with his treasured Pride of Australia medal.

Adding to the success of the event was the attendance of winners from the previous three years of the awards, who were there to welcome the newest members of the club.

Albany volunteer lifesaver Joanne Lucas won the Bravery award for swimming out to save swimmer Jason Cull after he was attacked by a shark.

Yesterday she said she accepted the medal on behalf of all of WA's surf lifesavers.

Ms Lucas joked about how her training automatically kicked in despite the heart-thumping terror of the situation.

"He had blood everywhere and he was so with it and then I introduced myself - now I look

back, that was quite ludicrous," she said.

"He made it so much easier in that he wasn't panicking."

Busselton's Kaylene Brennan won the Courage award for her fight against adversity.

Fourteen-year-old carer Daniel Rawlings won the Young Aussie medal and the Community Spirit award was given to Marcelle Coakley for her work in Onslow.

Drama teacher Kerri Hilton won the Role Model award and the Mateship medal went to Kalbarri teacher Kirsty Sinclair.

The True Blue medal was awarded to 81-year-old Esperance war veteran Ernie Redman.

The Environment award went

to Marnie Giroud and the Fair Go medal to Jacqueline Stutt.

Five judges - The Sunday Times managing editor Ish Davies, editor Sam Weir, Olympic gymnast-turned-pistol shooter Allana Slater, and Perth businessmen John Hughes and Wayne Teo - spent weeks evaluating a flood of nominations.

Weir said this year's awards demonstrated the incredible contribution everyday heroes made to our community.

"We should all feel proud that we live in a state where so many people are willing to perform such a variety of selfless acts to help others," he said.

■ Meet WA's unsung heroes: Pages 24-25

### ITA PRINT AWARD

worth \$500

for Programmes/Posters

& any Print Related Promotional Material

The ITA is pleased to announce a New Award which will form part of the Finley Awards Ceremony, but will not be a Finley Award.

This award will be the Docuprint Award for the Best Programme, Poster or Print Related promotion and will have a value of \$500 (to be spent at Docuprint).

It is the ITA's wish to encourage Community Theatre to improve the quality of their programmes, both in content and design. There will be a panel of judges who will be part of the ITA's committee and include a representative of Docuprint whose decision will be final and binding.

You are invited to send your current (2008 year) posters/programmes and any other print related promotional material to the ITA at Lotteries House if you'd like to enter.

If you'd like further information, contact an ITA Committee member who'll help or get someone who can help you. ENTER YOUR PROGRAMME, POSTER OR ANY OTHER PRINT RELATED PROMOTION OR NEW IDEA. YOUR CLUB COULD WALK AWAY WITH \$500 TO SPEND ON PRINT!



### KERRI HILTON

The drama teacher has taught with skill and dedication for 24 years, inspiring students to achieve into adulthood.

A host of her former students work as actors, technicians, industry managers and singers and songwriters nationally and overseas.

Her dedication extends into involvement in many school activities, committees and even the self-funded production of an education DVD.

She was nominated by former student and former WA Young Australian of the Year Simone McMahon, who said Ms Hilton taught her students they could achieve great things through the arts.

"Her primary concern is to develop students' self-esteem as well as their love for theatre so that it stays with them for life," Ms McMahon said.

# Scripts down or working together as a team.. who knows?

*Free Pizza for an answer I can understand.ed*

Recently it's occurred to me that there is a curious phenomenon in theatre.

Consider the relationship between a director and their cast. At first glance it appears both parties have a common ideal – to present the best possible show for a paying audience. I've certainly never happened upon a production where this wasn't the mission statement.

Sure it's all about having some fun, meeting new people, and trying to drink the theatre bar dry on closing night but above all else the satisfaction of Joe and Joanne Public is at heart. Right? Well, here's the kicker.

In order for that objective to be attained, both director and cast have to work in unity and harmony. They both have to have

similar targets in mind otherwise things can go pear-shaped.

Why is it then that in virtually every show I've ever been in there is an inverse relationship viz a viz the director's expectation for lines down and the actor's appetite for learning their script?

It's a no-brainer when you think about it. The director wants scripts down ASAP so that they can work on character development, alter blocking in need, bring in props as soon as humanly possible, etc, etc, etc. It's for the betterment of the play.

And yet the bloody actors do everything in their power to delay the hour of lines perfection – preferably (if they can get away with it) until dress or tech rehearsal.

I'm a serial offender myself.

My best effort (and by that I mean worst) was to perfect my lines the second week of the season. Now I'm not proud of that (not a whole lot anyway) but I use it as an illustration to assure you I am an authority on this subject and you can therefore take it from me that I am qualified to provide the answers to the time honoured question;

"Why has it taken you so long to get your lines down?"

Firstly, there's procrastination.

Don't these directors understand how much interesting, informative and downright NECESSARY television there is to be watched these days?

Am I seriously expected to sacrifice Today Tonight in favour of some poxy

David Mamet text? Will Shakespeare (no pun intended) lose out in favour of Hole In the Wall?

This leads us quickly to the "gonna" theory - the idea that you WILL slot in time for learning that script.....as soon as you've washed the dishes, ironed the clothes, had a shower, been to the gym, cleaned the car, made dinner, made love, made penance, made a difference in an ever complicated world....."phew".....after all that you're gonna find time to learn that script, yessiree.



That time turns out to be 5 minutes to midnight at which time your undiagnosed narcolepsy kicks in, you collapse forward and find yourself with a face full of Ray Cooney at half past six the following morning as you wake in the vain hope that the text has somehow osmosed it's way into your brain overnight.

Yeah, that'll work! Still, the house is clean, you're fit, and your partner is looking pretty darn happy so there's an upside. Right?

Secondly, there's stupidity.

Trying to learn your lines as you drive to work with the script balanced between your knees and the steering wheel is a recipe for disaster. Think about it.

How the hell are you going to answer your mobile if it rings? One distraction at a time.

Then there are those dyslexic types who always seem to be given the parts with all the lines containing foreign names and extremely long words.

You know who I'm talking about – you're at rehearsal and there's no flow because some idiot keeps tripping over a simple line like "I hear say Mademoiselle Fiorentine de Basillesque has expeditiously attended to defenestration of her aubergine eunuch" time and time again!!! How difficult is it to commit such dialogue to memory?

And finally, there's lack of motivation.

What actor in there right mind can actually be arsed learning the text?

Or performing for that matter?

Just give us the bloody applause and accolades now without making us do all this hard work – please!!!

Ultimately we only want the glory moments, not all the hard work leading up to them.

Theatre would be so much more fun if we could simply skip to the bit where people are patting you on the back, saying kind words, buying you drinks in the bar, and showering you with awards as you lean back and regale them all with the fact that the production would have been soooooo much better if only the cursed director had any sort of vision for the piece whatsoever.

Yep, when you take into account apathy, dangerous driving practices, and the distractions of modern life, it's a wonder anything makes it to curtain up.

The only hope for the modern director is that Nintendo Wii will come out with a game that makes script learning fun or else, sadly, I can see you're all destined to become old, shattered, nervous wrecks. Actors are not evolving – they're devolving!

Now it may seem I have been rather harsh in my estimation of actors as a whole and by association my good self but when you consider how self evident these truths are, how stupid are these directors when they call for lines down? I mean – HELLO – are we all on the same page here?

Why even ask for what you know will never happen?

You can point out the logic but actors are like cats – pampered, selfish, cruel, expecting love by right not by deed. Directors on the other hand are dogs - obedient, looking to be loved, faithfully sticking around even when abused.

I'll leave you with this as I depart with tongue firmly in cheek.

Chookas  
Murray



**MUSINGS OF OUR GORDON** *the optom*

*(The term "optometry" comes from the Greek word optos, meaning eye or vision, and metria, meaning measurement.)*

Editor Alan sent me an email which asked if I would like to attend an ITA judges training session, 'No obligation of course!'

I asked, 'Why would anyone want to become a pariah by choice?'

'Far from it, the judges are loved and respected by all the WA theatres, their members and especially their Presidents – and besides...' Alan added 'I know where you live.'

I wasn't sure what he meant by the last comment, but it was obvious that I should do something urgently about my shrinking circle of friends. The course was to be held in The Old Mill Theatre during the lunch break, on the second day of Dramafest. This was my chance to mix with the famous and be able to tell my grandchildren that I knew many of the actors and theatrical talent before they received their Oscars.

It was a glorious day, not a cloud in the sky; did I really want to go? Not really, but I had promised. It was pointed out that the previous judges had all left, what did they know that I didn't? After I was introduced to the other volunteers, then we gathered in a circle and sat in silent contemplation awaiting our mentor. She was called Kerry, I didn't catch her surname, but I think that she must be of French descent, as someone referred to her as 'Madam La Bitch'.

There followed an hour of explanation as to how the marks should be awarded. About two dozen sections covered everything, including scenery, voice projection and costumes. I recalled a Peter Sellers film named 'Only Two Can Play' in which Sellers was the local librarian, who, as a sideline reviewed plays for the local newspaper. Due to his amorous affairs, he would often write the critique in advance and send it to the editor, just in case he didn't actually manage to attend the theatre on the night. On asking Madam if this would be acceptable from me, should I be busy, I was assured that would be quite normal, as no one could really be expected to leave the warmth of their house on a cold and stormy night.

We were asked to see the two of the Dramafest plays which were still showing that same afternoon; one must have heard about our judging skills and withdrew, supposedly due to illness. At the end of seeing the plays we were asked to go home and write a critical evaluation of the performances, and to attend a further meeting at ITA Headquarters the following Saturday, when our assessments would be discussed.

At the next meeting, as well as the trainees, were Alan and French Kerry. We read our appraisals to each other, and then politely reviewed them. We were taught not to be so polite, nor to employ terms like 'nice' all the time, but were introduced to exciting new terms like 'wooden', 'totally crap' and 'pathetic'. These words, we were assured, would bring a closer understanding of our precious thoughts, and that our names would be noted in theatrical circles forever.

Handy hints like, 'the best position to stab someone is between the shoulder blades', and then Kerry taught us how to do the final twist of the blade. We all qualified, passed with flying colours.

As we were about to go home, we heard how, should we be chosen, a mysterious but thrilling judge's kit would be posted to each of us in the near future. I have since learnt that it consists of a framed picture of Alan and Kerry to be hung above the bed, and a bright rosette with 'Judge' written boldly in the centre. Alan got dozens cheaply from a friend, who worked at the cattle section of the Royal Show. A hand bell that we are required to ring, to advise people that we are approaching – probably so that they can prepare a warm welcome for us.

Finally, there were some long pins, wax and a selection of hair clippings, gleaned from the makeup area of every community theatre in WA - along with instructions of how to use them.

I am looking forward to having friends again and being loved, so many club members will be so jealous and annoyed that they too didn't apply for the job.

**John Cleese is still alive and living at Marloo?**

That's the first thing I saw when I looked at these pictures (taken by Katy Mitton, yes she is back) that Sallie Ketteringham sent me... but no it's not Fawltw Towers, it's the upcoming Peter Pan, directed by Douglas Southerland-Bruce. Starts Nov 19th at Marloo Theatre and you can book with Gwyne on 9255 1783.



**Governmentium**

A major research institution has recently announced the discovery of the heaviest element yet known to science. The new element has been named "Governmentium." Governmentium has one neutron, 12 assistant neutrons, 75 deputy neutrons, and 224 assistant deputy neutrons, giving it an atomic mass of 312. These 312 particles are held together by forces called morons, which are surrounded by vast quantities of particles called peons. Since Governmentium has no electrons, it is inert. However, it can be detected, because it impedes every reaction with which it comes into contact. A minute amount of Governmentium causes one reaction to take over four days to complete, when it would normally take less than a second. Governmentium has a normal half-life of 4 years; it does not decay, but instead undergoes a reorganization in which a portion of the assistant neutrons and deputy neutrons exchange places. In fact, Governmentium's mass will actually increase over time, since each reorganization will cause more morons to become neutrons, forming isodopes. This characteristic of moron promotion leads some scientists to believe that Governmentium is formed whenever morons reach a certain quantity in concentration. This hypothetical quantity is referred to as "Critical Morass." When catalyzed with money, Governmentium becomes Administratium - an element which radiates just as much energy as the Governmentium since it has half as many peons but twice as many morons.

*Graeme Johnson*

**Bullshit Bingo**

Do you keep falling asleep in meetings and seminars? What about those long and boring conference calls? Here is a way to change all of that!

**How to play:** Check off each block when you hear these words during a meeting, seminar, or phone call. When you get five blocks horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, stand up and shout **BULLSHIT!!**

Synergy	Strategic Fit	Core Competencies	Best Practice	Bottom Line
Revisit	Take That Offline	24/7	Out of the Loop	Benchmark
Value-Added	Proactive	Win-Win	Think Outside the Box	Fast Track
Result-Driven	Empower [or] Empowerment	Knowledge Base	At the End of the Day	Touch Base
Mindset	Spin	Ball Park	Game Plan	Leverage

**Testimonials from satisfied players:**

- "I had only been in the meeting for five minutes when I won." -Jack W. - Boston
- "My attention span at meetings has improved dramatically." -David D. - Florida
- "What a gas. Meetings will never be the same for me after my first win." -Bill R - New York City
- "The atmosphere was tense in the last process meeting as 14 of us waited for the 5<sup>th</sup> box." -Ben G. - Denver
- "The speaker was stunned as eight of us screamed 'Bullshit' for the third time in 2 hours." - Kathleen L. - Atlanta