



# H'ARK

## Newsletter of ARK Theatre

ISSUE 8 DECEMBER 2015



**YouthARK Theatre presents:**  
*"Robin Hood - Pantomime with a Twist".*  
 Friday Dec 11<sup>th</sup> & Saturday Dec 12<sup>th</sup>  
 at 7:30pm, YouthARK presents its first show since its July launch *First Time Out 2 Plays in 2 Days*. The venue is of course Lilydale Heights College Performing Arts Centre, 17 Nelson Rd Lilydale (enter via gate 2). Written by ARK Theatre member Julie Cunningham and Directed by Peter Verhagen & Molly MacKinnon, the young cast has been rehearsing around school exams and other commitments.  
**Bring the whole family for a fun-filled evening's entertainment.**  
**Tickets are only \$10 for adults and \$5 for children and can be purchased online at Trybooking.**  
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This show will be Directed by Fiona Carter and written specifically for ARK Theatre by Colin Mockett

### H'ARK! DID YOU HEAR?

Warm congratulations to Eve Devitt on her retirement – enjoy doing what you choose to do rather than what you need to do Eve.

*We had radio stars in our publicity for Hotel Sorrento – Michelle Swann was interviewed by Peter Kemp on 88.3FM; Robert Trott was on Yarra Valley FM and Elise D'Amico was interviewed for Eastern FM. Our own Frank Unsworth is a regular host on Eastern FM – listen out for his dulcet tones.*

The cast of *Down Came a Jumbuck* recorded a radio play version for Eastern FM. We'll keep you posted about the on-air date

**LOOKING FOR CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS?** How about an ARK Theatre Gift Certificate?

You choose the value and the recipient chooses which show and which session they'd like to see. **Call ARK Theatre mob: 0491 151 340 to order today**



### ARK THEATRE VISION STATEMENT:

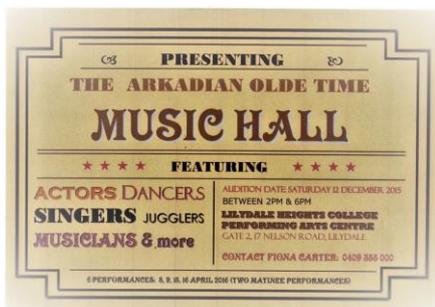
- ☑ Dedicated to engaging with performers and audiences, of all ages, interests and capabilities
- ☑ Dedicated to providing mentoring in both the performance and technical content of theatre
- ☑ Respect and enjoy the contribution of performing arts to the social fabric of our community.

### ARK THEATRE VALUES:

- Inclusiveness
- Rewarding
- Encouragement
- Creativity
- Respect
- Equality
- Social engagements
- Fun and enjoyment
- Mentoring
- Achievement

### WOMINJEKA... WELCOME

ARK Theatre acknowledges the Wurundjeri people, the traditional owners of the land where we perform



**AUDITION CALL** for ARK Theatre's 2016 first season. Varied talent is sought for *The Arkadian Olde Time Music Hall*.



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### ARKstraliana Season 2

### **HOTEL SORRENTO** BY HANNIE RAYSON Directed by MICHELLE SWANN

### THE BEACH



**Curtain Call: Cast I-r Ann Quinn, Robert Trott, Caillan Soutar, Grant Lepan-Walker, Jennie Kellaway, Elise D'Amico, Rachel Negus, Frank Unsworth**



**Café scene**

*Hotel Sorrento* gave ARK Theatre its biggest audience boost so far. Excellent reviews via word of mouth and local media prompted many new people to come along to see what ARK Theatre is all about. And from all accounts, they weren't disappointed!

Michelle Swann's creative direction of the Rayson classic gave the audience a feast for all the senses. Her wonderful cast worked so well as family groups or friends and gave the audience real characters they could love or loathe or at least empathise with. Each of the fine actors gave very real performances. They were the stoic Hilary (Jennie Kellaway), her spoilt younger sister Pip (Elise D'Amico), estranged expat sister Meg (Rachel Negus) and her fussy husband Edward (Grant Lepan-Walker), Hilary's larrikin dad Wal (Frank Unsworth in his first speaking role in a play), and her son Troy (Caillan Soutar), the teenager with attitude whose life is once again turned upside down. Rounding out the characters were locals Marge (Ann Quinn) and Dick (Robert Trott) who offered a commentary and perspective when they found themselves caught up in the drama.

In a play that is complicated and scene heavy (Act 1 has 22 scenes and Act 11 has 19), Michelle's choreography provided a smooth transition between scenes. This was ably carried out by backstage crew of Alison Jones (Stage Manager) Lesley Jenkin (ASM) and Rosey Cullinan (Ass Dir), who kept blackout times to a minimum for audiences.

Designed by Steve Karandais, in collaboration with Michelle, and built by Jimmy Dunne, Steve, Dave Swann, Tom Blackburn, Robert Trott & Gary Rens, the set provided great visual interest and assisted with the seamless transitions. The central jetty and its beach worked brilliantly and gave a fantastic sense of the beachside location. A first for ARK Theatre, scenic painting was provided to great effect by Emily Carter. Lighting and Sound was designed by Michelle and Dave (What a team!) and operated by Chris Keuken, Gina Ingham and Chris Collins; these FX gave the audience a very real sense of place and time with appropriate birdsong, wave effects and music so evocative of the era.

Front of House, as expected for ARK Theatre productions, began the beach experience in the foyer. FoH Manager, Angela McCulloch and her band of loud-shirted helpers provided refreshments that included mini-pavs and hot chips complete with a flock of seagulls (can't get more quintessentially Australian!)



**"Get the cat out!"**

With a bathing box ticket office and a beach tableau, including life guards and coastal pictures, the audience immediately was drawn into the beach theme of this 2<sup>nd</sup> ARKstraliana season. ARK Theatre thanks Maddie Willingham for providing her wonderfully realistic seagulls & lifeguards and beachside details.

With the committee decision to move the seasons to school holidays to avoid the need to bump out between the 2 weekends, Grand Final day provided its own issues. This meant the first week had 4 performances while the second had only 2. Ticket sales for the Sunday 4pm matinee were slow to take off but it eventually had quite good numbers. Several people took advantage of the early finish to go straight out for dinner afterwards. The Saturday afternoon matinee again had disappointing ticket sales and will be reviewed as to its viability.

Perhaps the most telling figures were the 90 or so patrons who attended the second Friday night session. This demonstrated the actual capacity of the venue. Yes there is seating for 250 but the foyer certainly cannot cope with more than 90 people during interval.

Possibly, in future, HOUSE FULL signs will be required and patrons will need to book their tickets instead of relying on being able to just walk up on the day. We hope so!



**Lunch Time**



**A quiet moment on the jetty**



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A very ARKy Christmas party was held on the 29<sup>th</sup> November: the afternoon started with champagne and nibbles on arrival. After an ARKy welcome and chat we moved on to an afternoon of spontaneous delights of entertainment. Tom introduced the entertainers and thanked everyone for their contributions for the year. Youth Ark set up our equipment and started off with some songs from Pete, Gina and crew. Eve did an "Ode to Jumbuck" as a tribute to the cast of Jumbuck. Several people sang songs including Ann Quinn, Joe Tuppenney, Robert Trott, Lesley Jenkin, our own Jimmy, YouthARK's Jack and our very own Marilyn (alias Rosey Cullinan). The evening continued with a highlights reel put together by Chris Keuken. Emma Gardner and her daughter Elyssia serenaded us - everyone enjoyed them so much. We can't imagine where Elyssia got her performing genes!!

At five we served dinner followed by sweets and continued on with Karaoke for the rest of the evening. What a pleasant relaxing way to spend a Sunday. Thank you to the organizing sub-committee Rosey, Chris and Eve, the committee who assisted and provided delicious salads and sweets and to those who were able to attend.

### MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!

#### ARK-KNOWLEDGEMENTS

A shout-out of appreciation to:

- ✓ **Peter Verhagen** for the design & upload of our new-look website (we hope you got a good mark Pete!)
- ✓ **Maddie Willingham** for beachside décor
- & Our Recent Generous Sponsors:
  - ✓ **Australian Finance and Property Solutions** from whom ARK Theatre received a Community Grant of \$1000 (Thanks to all who voted so we won 1 of the 5 grants on offer)
    - ✓ **Burden's Plumbing, Lilydale** and
  - ✓ **Bunnings** – both for donations to **YouthARK**
    - ✓ **First Impressions, Mitcham**
  - ✓ **Australian Millenium Lifestyles** – Jimmy Dunne
    - ✓ **Shire of Yarra Ranges**

### UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS

- Dec 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> YouthARK Theatre presents **Robin Hood** by Julie Cunningham, Directed by Peter Verhagen and Molly MacKinnon
- **2016 ARK Theatre Season 1**  
**The ARKadian Olde Time Music Hall** by Colin Mockett, Director Fiona Carter. Dates April: 8, 9, 15, 16
- **YouthARK 2 Plays in 2 Days** July 4 & 5
- **2016 ARK Theatre Season 2**  
**Daisy** by Terry Mervin, Director Robert Trott. Dates: Sept 23, 24, 30 & Oct 1

### IMPORTANT DATES

- **December 12<sup>th</sup> 2-6pm**  
**AUDITION CALL: The ARKadian Olde Time Music Hall** at LHCPAC.  
Call Director Fiona on 0409 355 000
- **December 18<sup>th</sup> 8pm** - Christmas drinks at Eve's place, at 92 Cave Hill Rd Lilydale. BYO drinks and nibbles to share.
- **January 26<sup>th</sup>** – ARKstralia Day Pool party at Tom and Thelma's details to follow
- **January TBC** - Rehearsals begin for Music Hall

\*We welcome input for H'ARK or any feedback. Please send any items for future newsletters to [ark\\_theatre@yahoo.com.au](mailto:ark_theatre@yahoo.com.au) Att: Editors\*

### ARK THEATRE Inc.

PO Box 277, Mooroolbark 3138  
e-mail: [ark\\_theatre@yahoo.com.au](mailto:ark_theatre@yahoo.com.au)  
website: [www.arktheatremelb.com](http://www.arktheatremelb.com)

phone: **0491 151 340**

**ARK COMMITTEE 2015/16**

PRESIDENT: TOM BLACKBURN

VICE-PRESIDENT: ROBERT TROTT

SECRETARY: JIMMY DUNNE

TREASURER: ANGELA McCULLOCH

GENERAL COMMITTEE: ROSEY CULLINAN, EVELYN DEVITT, CHRIS KEUKEN, LUCY MORRIS