



H'ARK Newsletter of ARK Theatre

ISSUE 12 JUNE 2017

ARK THEATRE PRESENTS
CINDERFELLA
A MODERN DAY PANTOMIME
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY JULIE CUNNINGHAM

JULY 6TH, 7TH 8.00 PM
AND JULY 8TH AT 2.00PM AND 8.00 PM
LILYDALE HEIGHTS COLLEGE PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE
GATE 2/17 NELSON RD, LILYDALE

TICKETS:
\$15 ADULTS
\$10 KIDS



BOOK VIA:
TRYBOOKING.COM/276553
OR CALL 0491 151 340

Not long to go now before the cast perform the pantomime *Cinderfella* - a twist on Cinderella. Julie has done an amazing job casting; the talent and experience of the cast has just blossomed over weeks of the trials and tribulations when a cast of fifteen has to be accommodated.

It seems a long time ago when Julie, Marion, Lesley and myself got together for dinner and Julie expressed that she would like to direct a panto and include as many ARK Theatre members as possible and also Youth ARK. We discussed that this would provide an opportunity for all ages to be involved and keep the ARK afloat, so to speak, because actors and actresses like to perform but we can't all be in every play.

I began to tell Julie how much I loved Cinderella and how in my earlier days we had done a send up. That began Julie's creative juices flowing and so morphed *Cinderfella*.

Please come along and enjoy this modern-day fairy tale, you will be assured of lots of laughs and surprises. Encourage your friends and relatives to come enjoy and have lots of fun!!!!

Thank you to Julie, cast and crew for giving up their precious time.

P.S. Look out on Facebook for weekly updates.

Evey Devitt



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President's Report for ARK Theatre's AGM on June 5 2017

The past year has been a busy and exciting one with the continued growth of both ARK Theatre and YouthARK. ARK Theatre has extended its seasons this year to incorporate a third performance coming up in July. YouthARK have successfully taken on *Disney's Camp Rock, The Musical* with an onstage band in January, as well as *Third Time Lucky* their signature annual festival of writing and performing within a 24 hour window. I have to applaud their gumption at even attempting a musical but not withstanding the size of the challenge, they sailed through as if they had been putting on musicals for many years.

Over the past year I have attended numerous productions around the state and am always amazed at the amount of talent, not only in performance aspects, but in all areas of local theatre from every area of production. This being said I am proud to say that ARK Theatre is just as professional and talented as other Theatre groups within Victoria, producing quality plays. 2016 saw us the newcomers to the VDL Awards, entering our first play into the VDL arena. We were ecstatic to come away with an Adjudicator's Award for Ross Pearce's wonderful rendition of *Too-Ra-Loo-Ra* in Terry Mervin's beautiful play *Daisy*. Although a newcomer to directing but not to stage, having walked the boards for quite a few years both in the Eastern Suburbs and at Geelong, Robert Trott was able to encapsulate the beauty behind dementia in a sad yet beautiful story of how this can affect a family. Speaking of the VDL's we have to acknowledge the very talented Chris Shaw, a founding member of ARK Theatre. While his most recent play wasn't performed at ARK, he directed *Sleuth* at the Basin, walking away with more awards than even he can remember! This goes to prove that ARK Theatre may be the new kid on the block but we've got the right stuff.

We started 2017 off with Neil Simon's *Jake's Women*. I have to say that both *Daisy* (2016) and *Jake's Women* were beautifully cast and the leading men and ladies in both productions were riveting and believable. As too were the rest of the casts. The chemistry between Fiona (Maggie) and Bruce (Jake) was undeniable and the fact that Bruce was on stage for the majority of the play deserves an award in itself. This was our VDL choice for 2017 and Lisa McNiven and her cast have done us proud. I have to make a special mention to Jimmy Dunne. For those of you that saw the set he so laboriously built you will understand why he needs a special mention. Breathtaking!

I would not be sitting here as President if it were not for the support of my committee colleagues. Thank you everyone for the work you have done throughout the year. Without these dedicated theatre lovers 2016/2017 season would not have happened. These guys work tirelessly behind the scenes both at committee level as well as performing everything from building sets, filling out paperwork to cleaning the toilets and making countless numbers of pastrami sandwiches!

We have amended our membership structure for 2017 to allow for one cohesive date that everyone's membership is due. This will mean less work in chasing people for membership fees. Moving forward membership will fall due on 30th May annually with a fee of \$10 being payable on this date to ensure all members are financial for each year's AGM.

In conclusion, ARK Theatre sincerely wishes all members a very successful season in 2017/2018 both within the ARK and outside in neighbouring theatre productions. Shameless plug time *Cinderfella* the pantomime July 6th – 8th.

Yours in theatre

Julie Cunningham

President 2016/2017 and now 2017/2018



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ARK THEATRE Inc.

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ARK THEATRE COMMITTEE 2017-18

PRESIDENT: JULIE CUNNINGHAM

VICE-PRESIDENT: ROBERT TROTT

SECRETARY: JIMMY DUNNE

TREASURER: CHRIS KEUKEN

GENERAL COMMITTEE: TOM BLACKBURN, ROSEY CULLINAN, EVELYN DEVITT, BRADY GRAY, LUCY MORRIS, ANN O'CONNOR

YouthARK Representative: Ashleigh Henry

ARK THEATRE VISION STATEMENT:

ARK Theatre is:

- 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
- Respectful of the contribution of performing arts to the social fabric of our community.

ARK THEATRE VALUES:

Inclusiveness

Respect

Rewarding

Equality

Mentoring

Encouragement

Social engagement

Achievement

Creativity

Fun and enjoyment

WOMINJEKA...WELCOME

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

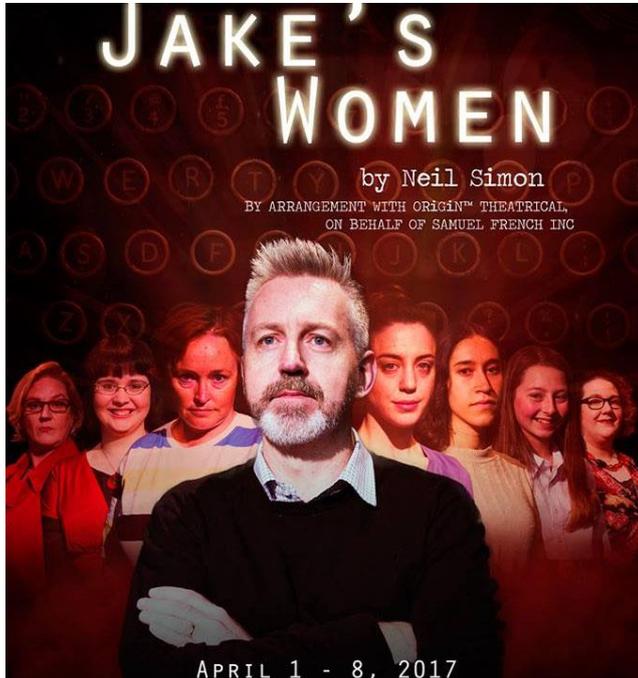
2017 PRODUCTIONS

- **ARK Theatre Season 2**
***Cinderfella* written and directed by Julie Cunningham**
July 6th, 7th at 8pm & 8th at 2pm and 8pm
- **ARK Theatre Season 3**
***Chekhov Comedies* by Anton Chekhov, Director Julie Cunningham.**
Dates: September tbc (but mostly likely September 29- 30, October 1, 5 -7 Watch this space!)



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Neil Simon's *Jake's Women* directed by Lisa McNiven was ARK Theatre's first offering for 2017. The cast led by Bruce Hardy (Jake) and the 6 women in his life showed us a man struggling to cope with the changing nature of his relationships: with his first wife Jenny (Alana Morris) and Maggie, his current wife (Fiona Carter). As a writer, his coping mechanism was to rewrite his life by imagined conversations with each of his women.

As his story unfolded, the audience was shown snapshots of key moments in Jake's life and imagined conversations between Jake and his sister (Connie Bram), his daughter Molly (played by Chloe Betiss as a child & Katheleen Espanda as present day) and his therapist (Alison Jones). Sometimes he even had real-time conversations with Maggie and with Sheila, his current girlfriend (Grace McNiven).

In recreating past scenes, Hardy, Carter and Morris were each required to assume much younger persona. All of them brought a wonderful energy and charm to these variations of themselves and gave the audience a peek into how Jake loved both of his wives and the charms they each saw in him (or at least the charms Jake believed they saw in him - he was after all writing these scripts!)

With Chris Keuken, her Lighting Designer, McNiven used nuanced lighting effects to indicate whether a scene was actual, imagined or remembered. With her Set Designer, Jimmy Dunne, McNiven created a stunning setting for the action to run right across LHCPAC's wide stage. Just as in *Hotel Sorrento*, utilising the whole stage gave our director the freedom to open up the vista for the audience and created a seamless transition between scenes.

JUST A FEW OF THE
COMMENTS FROM
PATRONS AT
JAKE'S WOMEN:

Very powerful acting –
deserving of great success

*Very professional
show ☺*

Wonderful, wonderful
production. Such great
acting!

**Emotive and very
believable. Well done
everyone – it was a
pleasure to be in the
audience**

What a fantastic
production! Well worth
coming out on a rainy
night



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ARK Theatre Life Membership

At the recent AGM on June 5th, Vice President Robert Trott presented ARK Theatre's first Life Membership award to Jimmy Dunne:

Tonight, I have the enormous pleasure to be able to announce that ARK Theatre has awarded its first life membership. The person receiving this, along with a few others, was instrumental in the formation of this remarkable company. This man had and still has the drive, the passion, the vision and the incredible positivity that has enabled ARK to grow rapidly since its inception just five years ago.

His house has become the company's unofficial office, workshop and storeroom. There have been occasions when he had no chairs to sit on and no table to eat at because his furniture was here on this stage as part of the sets for our shows.

Speaking of sets, directors simply need to give him a basic drawing of their ideas on a scrap of paper. He goes off scratching his head while quietly building ideas in his mind. He ponders on them for a time. Then in the last two weeks before showtime flies into a whirlwind of activity, rushes off to Bunnings in his trusty ute towing his rusty trailer, grabs a heap of timber, screws and paint and creates another WOW factor, masterpiece set.

Our first life member is a well-loved and respected, down to earth, adopted Aussie bloke, who always supports and encourages new and different ideas. And is usually first to step forward to welcome new faces.

So, members, friends and supporters of ARK Theatre, please show your appreciation for a man, who I am proud to call my friend, our first life member.

JIMMY DUNNE.



The much-lauded set Jimmy designed and built for *Jake's Women*



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Youth ARK Theatre news



That's this weekend – Don't miss it!!!

YouthARK is proud to announce that they have elected a new committee consisting of 5 brand new and 3 returning members! Ashleigh Henry was voted in as the new president and she urges any youth who may wish to be involved in the theatre to audition for our upcoming shows! With the election of the new committee some big changes have been made- a new logo, a social group, a new website and an exciting 2017-2018 show season planned.

The season is as follows: JUNE- *Gypsy Magic*, SEPTEMBER- *Missing Adi Farrow*, DECEMBER- *Gala performance*, JANUARY- *Play in a day (24 hour theatre event)*, APRIL- *Next To Normal*.

The new team is very excited to share their new ideas and performances with the community.

Their opening show with the new committee is *Gypsy Magic* a magic act written and performed by Bohdi Lindsey. It centers on a travelling, gypsy magician from America who, along with his assistant-Silent Cecilia, performs a number of mind blowing illusions. Although not a traditional theatre piece; it is just as, if not more, entertaining than your run of the mill play. Tickets are available at the door. [\$15 for adults, \$12 for YouthARK members and \$10 for children under 12]

In other exciting news for YouthARK, they will be holding auditions for *Missing Adi Farrow*, an original script written and directed by Candice Farrugia-Roberts. The plot follows a modern Australian family that doesn't truly understand how dysfunctional they are until the day their daughter, Adi, goes missing without warning. Using items of clothing, objects and conversations, the family works frantically to recall what little things they can, to capture a glimpse at what might have happened to her. But the thing about Adi is, she always was awfully good at pretending. It is through the reliving of past events, prompted by an officer's questioning, that they come to terms with how little they know of one another.

Auditions will be held on Tues 27/06/2017 from 5pm - 6:30pm & Sat 01/07/2017 from 6pm - 9pm at Lilydale Heights College PAC: Gate 2/17 Nelson Road, Lilydale VIC 3140.

More information can be found regarding the above and much more can be found at their new website: <http://youtharktheatre.weebly.com/>



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ISSUE 12 JUNE 2017

SAVE THESE DATES:

❖ TRIVIA NIGHT

- ❖ AUGUST 12TH @ LHCPAC DETAILS TO FOLLOW

❖ THE THIRD MAN; THE NOTICE; DEADLINE

❖ PREVIEW PERFORMANCES BEFORE THE ONE ACT PLAY FESTIVALS

- ❖ AUGUST 13TH at LHCPAC at 2:30pm
- ❖ Tickets only \$5 FOR 3 ONE ACT PLAYS

❖ FAMDA ONE ACT PLAY FESTIVAL

- ❖ AUGUST 19TH AND 20TH
- ❖ At Foster

ARK-ers out and about:

- Jimmy Dunne is directing and appearing in Board Shorts at The 1812
- Ann Quinn is rehearsing for The 1812's August season of *Last of the Summer Wine*
- Robert Trott performed in *Bad Girls* with Catprint Warburton Productions at The Memo in Healesville and the Upper Yarra Arts Centre in Warburton in May
- Peter Verhagen has headed off to London for 5 weeks of study with RADA (Royal Academy of Dramatic Art)
- It was wonderful to welcome Lucy & Steve Morris back from America for a short time. Lucy even volunteered to do Front of House for several performances of *Jake's Women*. At the request of her fellow committee members, Lucy has agreed to remain on committee, albeit in absentia. She is an apology for most meetings, but we value her input so much via email that we were loath to do without her contribution to discussion whilst she and Steve are living in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Astute patrons at *Jake's Women* might have noticed a map showing New Brunswick in the New York City themed foyer.

ARK-KNOWLEDGEMENTS:

We acknowledge and thank the following people and companies for the support they show us. Please support them if you have an opportunity to do so:

- VICKI CASCIANELLI at RAY WHITE LILYDALE
- AUSTRALIAN MILLENIUM LIFESTYLES – Jimmy Dunne
- CBS – Creative Branding Solutions – Merrell Harris



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WELLBEING TIPS

I think we would all agree that being part of community theatre creates a busy-ness for all of us. Though we are generous with our time we need to set boundaries so that we don't burn out or become overwhelmed. Hence if we fill up our cup with things that nourish us and feed our spirit we will create these boundaries.

"If you can spend a perfectly useless afternoon in a perfectly useless manner you have learned how to live". Lin Yutang

Enjoy your theatre and your life.

Choose Kindness, Evey

ARK Theatre is raising funds. Here's how you can help...

Help us raise money by buying an **Entertainment Membership**, and you can enjoy heaps of value - great over the school holidays. You'll receive hundreds of valuable offers for the \$70 and help our fundraising at the same time!

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