

Just Chatting



Bringing the best of community theatre to the Coffs Coast and Region

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Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller

Curtain Up!

Rehearsals are going full steam ahead for the July opening of *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller and director, Rex Madigan, has nothing but praise for the cast and crew who have already given up so much of their time and talent to this amazing play.

'It's a classic and a play I have always wanted to direct,' says Rex.

The opening night on July 15 will be a gala occasion with many invited guests (family members of the cast and crew mainly) and local dignitaries, who will all gather to enjoy drinks and nibbles before the show and during intermission. Tickets are still available for opening night and all later shows and the Box Office is open Tues-Fri, 12-4pm.

Jetty Memorial Theatre: 6652 8088 or online at www.jettytheatre.com

See Page 4 for a wonderful article by Clare Collins which has a profile of two of our fabulous actors Marty Elliott and Andrew deWaard.



CHATS is on FACEBOOK
Check it out.



Performance Dates and Times

Jetty Memorial Theatre, Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour

8pm performances: Wed 15 July, Fri 17 July, Sat 18 July,
Wed 22 July (all tix \$20), Fri 24 July, Sat 25 July

2pm performances: Sun 19 July (all tix \$20), Sun 26 July

Standard ticket prices: Adult \$25, Concession \$22 + JMT Booking Fee

Tel JMT Box Office on 02-6652 8088 or book online at the JMT website: www.jettytheatre.com.au

President's Report

Dear Members,

Mums the Word Teenagers is done and dusted and what a great play it was with CHATS once again bringing up-to-date, topical theatre to Coffs Harbour. MTWT had it all sex, drugs and rock and roll. Well done to the fabulous cast who acted their backsides off through some real life drama on and off stage without missing a beat.

Arlene is on the mend after her illness that forced her off the stage during MTWT. She made a much more attractive news reader than me.

I thanked all the volunteers who work so hard in my last report, but thanks again anyway the combined effort of all is what makes us so strong.

Our next production *Death of a Salesman* is well into rehearsal and looking great if I do say so myself. It is a pleasure to work with such a talented bunch of actors, which includes some faces that have come out of retirement to be in this classic, as well as a couple of newbies.

CHATS along with all of the local theatre companies have been asked to put forward a letter of support for a grant to put new seating into JMT. Obviously I did not hesitate, so we hope that we may see some comfy seats in the future.

I think that's it from me. I look forward to seeing you all at *Death of a Salesman* in July.

Rex Madigan
CHATS President

News in Brief...

- ◆ Fundability Workshops in August and September - SEE PAGE 5
- ◆ Congratulations to all the participants and committee of the **Coffs Harbour Eisteddfod** for all their hard work. Some fantastic performances!
- ◆ Thanks to Coffs Harbour Writers Group for staging the **Grassroots Festival** this year at the Neighbourhood Village - brilliant turn-out for some truly wonderful, inspiring writers.
- ◆ **Live and Local** - LOVING IT! The Jetty Theatre hosted a live link to the Sydney Writers' Festival which ran over 3 days from 22-24 May. It was only \$20 for all six sessions featuring speakers such as speechwriter Don Watson, former Queensland Premier Anna Bligh and actor Alan Cumming (*The Goodwife*). If you missed it, I am assured it's on again next year.
- ◆ **PLAY-READING** of Birthrights - SEE page 3

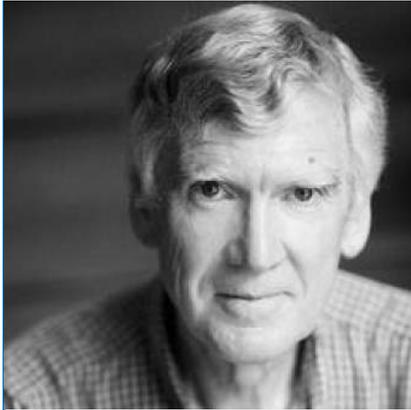
CHATS website
www.chats.org.au
for all the latest news

The Downtown Abbey quote of the week from the great Dame Maggie Smith.

Violet (Dowager Countess): **"First electricity, now telephones. Sometimes I feel as if I were living in an H.G. Wells novel."**

Thanks to Lyn Crossley for all the DA contributions!





Play-reading News

Everyone welcome!

Play-reading and Information session
'Birthrights' by David Williamson
Mud Hut, Duke Street,
Coffs Harbour. (opposite Centrelink)

SATURDAY 13th JUNE, 2pm

We will be reading the whole play.
All interested actors and crew members
are invited to come along and find out all
about it, but... this is NOT an audition!
Expressions of interest are welcome
though.

Mum's the Word Teenagers!

It's a wrap!

What a wonderful show MTW Teenagers turned out to be - funny, sad, crazy, but always right on the money about the pleasures and perils of bringing up teenagers.

Who can forget the super-zero mums? Or the souped-up soccer mums? Or the Talking Titties? And that saucy little backside disappearing back into the shower - there was something for everyone.

So, if you didn't see it... that's what you missed.

Thanks to our lovely audiences who got into the spirit of things and enjoyed a grand night out.

And thanks to the hard-working behind-the-scenes team who gave us sound and light and costumes that (mostly) stayed put. See you all again soon!



Calling all would-be Directors!

Have you ever thought about directing a play? Ever had a dream to do a particular piece but never had the opportunity? If the answer is 'yes', or even a hesitant 'maybe', then the CHATS committee would like to hear from you.

It is part of our brief to provide opportunities for aspiring directors, actors and crew in community theatre. For some younger members and friends, it can be a chance to build a strong and varied CV that will help them to further their career in theatre or film, or to get into drama school.

For those of us who are a little older, it's a chance to achieve a dream or fulfil a creative need. For me, it is to write and without CHATS, I could never have hoped to write and direct my first full-length play.

Call me or Rex, our president, and let us know if there is a particular play that you would like to direct. The committee has a wealth of experience to assist you and we can offer intensive Director Workshops to take you through everything you'll need to know from the audition process, play analysis, the 'admin' side of things, staging requirements, rehearsal scheduling, publicity through to bumping in and out.

We are looking for at least two directors for works coming up in 2016.

Penny Dennis,
Secretary

Death of a Salesman

This year, 2015, marks the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Arthur Miller, who has given us so many great plays- The Crucible , View From the Bridge, All our Sons, and arguably the greatest of all, Death of a Salesman, which CHATS Productions will present in July to mark the occasion. Death of Salesman was recognised as a classic straight away, and was the Recipient of 1949 Pulitzer Prize for Drama , as well as the Tony Award for Best Play.

The Royal Shakespeare Company describes it thus:

"In the land of the free, each man is in charge of his own destiny. Willy Loman knows and cherishes this truth. After a life of honest hard work, it's Willy's birthright to retire with his loving wife and watch his two athletic, handsome sons continue his legacy. Yet as old age begins to take hold and retirement beckons, Willy's dream seems further away than ever. Decades of hard work have somehow failed to translate into wealth and his eldest son refuses to follow the path his father has chosen for him. As actions buried in his past re-surface, Willy struggles to reconcile his long cherished dream with the life he has actually lived".



ANDREW DE WAARD

Andrew cut his teeth as a performer in Sydney with experimental physical theatre companies Vis a Vis and Dwakonie, playing several seasons of devised work at the Seymour Theatre in the mid-late 2000s. He moved to Dorriggo in early

2013 and immediately joined the DDC. His first show there, in July 2013, saw him portraying a borderline-psycho-pathic, cross-dressing ex-student hell bent on revenge in the darkly hilarious two-hander

"Break My Bones". This paved the way for his follow-up outing at the Old Gazette in July 2014, playing a newly quadriplegic sculptor coming to terms with his predicament, making the moral and, ultimately, legal arguments for the right to end his own life in the harrowing, yet strangely uplifting "Whose Life is it Anyway". Such was the acclaim for this production that the DDC was compelled to re-stage the show at the Jetty Memorial Theatre in Coffs Harbour for a limited season. Commitments in Coffs this year have enabled Andrew to participate in the upcoming CHATS production of Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman".



MARTY ELLIOTT

Marty Elliott first got involved in community theatre in 2005 through the Dorriggo Dramatic Club whilst living on the Dorriggo Plateau, after 'answering the call' for 'newcomers' to try out for a season of one act plays to celebrate the Club's 50th anniversary year. He was cast as a hippie in 'A Place in the Present', directed by Julie Pollard and followed up in 2006, playing the part of 'Aslan' in 'The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe,' directed by Michael Vlasto. Later that year he played his first lead role when he was cast in the very successful production of 'Arms and the Man', directed by Shirley Barnett.

Since moving to Coffs Harbour in 2007 and becoming a member of CHATS, he has performed principle roles in many CHATS productions, including such classics as 'Reedy River', 'Arsenic and Old Lace', 'Hamlet', 'Seven Little Australians', 'Summer of the Seventeenth Doll', 'Brilliant Lies' and most recently, in Neil Simon's 'Rumours'.



Other events and happenings

FUNDABILITY PHYSICAL THEATRE WORKSHOPS

CHATS Productions Inc. is very pleased to announce that they will be presenting a project in September for children aged from 9-15 with disabilities, from the Coffs Harbour area.

Participation is free, as the event is funded by Fundability and sponsored by CHATS Productions Inc. We would like your help in identifying children of mixed abilities who may benefit from such a workshop.

The project will be run by Sue Broadway, assisted by local dance artist Karolyn Gibson and will consist of a number of workshops culminating in a presentation for an invited audience of parents, local theatre directors, and friends. The workshops will take place between August 29th and September 6th. Times will be decided later, but will be basically weekends.

Sue Broadway (pictured) is a highly regarded director and teacher in the area of physical theatre, and will bring to the project her experience working with people of mixed abilities. Most recently she facilitated and directed a show for Westside Circus in Melbourne which featured eighteen students from the Westside Circus Mixed ability classes and twenty students from Furlong Park School for the Deaf. You can see a video about this project here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HODSjGIK-Cc>



We believe that this will be an exciting and valuable experience for all who participate, building capacity and confidence and increasing understanding across the community. We hope it will lead to increasing possibilities in performance for the participants.

Please contact us if you have any questions or suggestions, or wish to participate.

Phone Shirley 0434 402 960 email shirlbarnett@me.com

More details on the CHATS website www.chats.org.au

FRONT-OF-HOUSE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you would like to help out at the theatre by ushering for at least two performances of *Death of a Salesman*, please contact me with your preferred dates and times.

We are compiling the roster now.

Penny on 0407396038 or info@chats.org.au

Suggestions for plays for 2016

We always like to know what ideas you - our members and friends - have for plays you would like to see produced in the future.

It is important that CHATS is a member-focused organisation and, so, we really do like to have your input. It is also important that we reflect our current audiences tastes and interests. So, please if you have suggestions for plays you would like to see done at the theatre next year, let us know now.

Call Rex Madigan or email us at info@chats.org.au