

LILYDALE ATHENAEUM THEATRE COMPANY

NEWSLETTER & UPDATES AUGUST 2023

FROM HOBBY TO CAREER



When Emily Carter first walked through the doors of the Lilydale Athenaeum Theatre (LATC) to volunteer backstage she would never have believed that this was the beginning of her career and life in theatre. That was 2007. It really all began through her mother, Fiona Carter (many of you will know her as our Theatre Manager, actor and backstage volunteer), that Emily was introduced to the magic that is

produced on stage. Emily's taste for theatre was ignited when she first performed on stage at age 4 years as a mouse in *Cinderella*. Emily has had a hand in many, many LATC productions helping to build & paint the set, acting as Assistant Stage Manager and finally Stage Manager – running the shows. This practical experience gave her the impetus to apply to the VCA Bachelor of Fine Arts course, production majority in Stage Management and graduating in 2020. Her first professional engagement was with the **Australian Shakespeare Company** on the production *MacBeth*. Emily is currently employed with the **Australian Ballet** and has just returned from stage managing the *Gala* at the **Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London**. Amazing! From

Lilydale to London... with just a little hard work, passion and determination!



SEASON 4 2023 SHOW

The playwrights, Adam Long, Daniel Singer & Jess Winfield, premiered their preposterous masterwork comedy at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 1987. It quickly became a worldwide phenomenon, earning the title of London's longest-running comedy

after a decade at the Criterion Theatre. **THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (ABRIDGED) [REVISED] [AGAIN]** is one of the world's most frequently produced comedies and features all 37 of Shakespeare's plays, meant to be performed in 97 minutes, by three very energetic actors. It is **fast paced, witty, and physical** and **full of laughter** for Shakespeare lovers and haters alike. **Beautifully directed by KJ AMEY, don't wait to book, this show will have you laughing till it hurts.** Book via website www.lilydaleatc.com or phone us at the Box Office on **9735 1777** (Mon, Tue & Fri 10am to 2pm)

KEEP AN EYE OPEN

- *Subscriber Tickets for 2024 will be open for sale shortly – look out for the email invitation to book for the 2024 season*
- *Do you know a young person who wants to gain some confidence, experience or has a passion for live theatre? Call us at the Box Office for a chat to get involved as a volunteer*

SPOTLIGHT ON STAGE MANAGERS

Non-professional community theatre companies are a training ground for gaining confidence, life skills and working in a team. No one knows this better than our featured artist, Emily Carter. We ask her about what it takes to be a Stage Manager.

What responsibilities do you have as a Stage Manager (SM)? As a Stage Manager (SM) I am responsible for building the prompt copy (which holds all the technical

cues for the production to the score), running Technical Rehearsals, working with all other departments across all elements of the production, organising all props, assisting with any rehearsal requirements while in the studio. I am also responsible for the health & safety of the dancers. During performances I 'call' every technical element from the prompt copy that is finalised through a series of plot sessions, Technical and Dress Rehearsals.

What personality traits does one need to be a SM? It's important to have very good people skills and to be able to deal with any situation calmly and confidently. I would say 90% of the job is people management and a calm SM at the helm trickles through to other technical departments and the performers in a very high pressure workplace...especially when things go wrong...which they do!

Continued page 3....



SWITZERLAND

29 JUNE to 15 JULY 2023

The story behind the play: Patricia Highsmith, real life author of crime novels such as *Strangers on a Train*, *The Talented Mr Ripley* and *The Price of Salt* (adapted into 2015 movie *Carol*) was considered the grande dame of crime literature. Patricia lived out her life in a village in the Swiss Alps, choosing to live alone with her numerous cats and hundreds of snails. She had an impressive collection of books,

and a somewhat sinister collection of guns and knives. She found solace in her seclusion, her cats, her alcohol and cigarettes. Considered by some to be “a mean, cruel, hard, unlovable, unloving human being ... but her books? BRILLIANT.” And then others thought “She was very rough, very difficult ... But she was also plain-spoken, dryly funny, and great fun to be around.”

She died age 74 from lung cancer and aplastic anaemia in Locarno, Switzerland.

In our outstanding Season 3 production of SWITZERLAND, **Angela Glennie**

portrayed Patricia Highsmith as she has been described: a foul mouthed, hard drinking woman who seemed to have had enough of life.

Travis Handcock portrayed Edward Ridgeway, the supposed employee of her New York Agent: mild mannered, meek and timid at first, who then turns into a tiger at the end.

We must also thank the Director, **Helen Ellis**, whose vision brought this dark story to life before our eyes.

If you missed this one, here are a few of our audience reviews below.

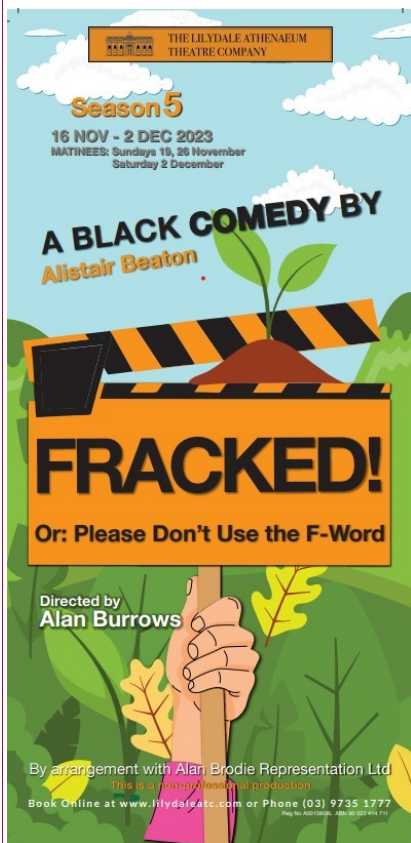


Photography by Alexandra Carter

AUDIENCE REVIEWS:

- ◆ “...Switzerland by Joanna Murray-Smith... this play has a cast of two brilliant actors...they presented it with feeling that has you sitting on the edge of your seat...” Brian Amos, Radio 98.1 Eastern FM
- ◆ “Add three more to the list who loved this play. Went with wife and daughter... both actors brilliant. Very funny one minute, suspenseful and dark the next. Third play of the year and another corker. Deserves to be seen by many.” - Craig
- ◆ “Angela Glennie, amazing, always is. I held right to the end. Travis Handcock brilliant too. First time at Lilydale.” - Carol
- ◆ “Absolutely riveting. Beautiful theatre.” – Greg
- ◆ “WOW ! The show was spectacular. Angela and Travis were brilliant in their roles. I felt captivated throughout the whole show. Simply fabulous. Thank you for putting on such a high class production.” – Sally
- ◆ **THE WINNER OF A BOTTLE OF ROB DOLAN SPARKLING WINE FROM OUR AUDIENCE REVIEWS**— drawn from a hat: “I attended the production on Saturday night Cudos to both cast members – what a huge amount of dialogue to get down pat whilst acting appropriately and professionally at the time.” – **Sheila**. Enjoy the bubbles Sheila.

2023- SEASON 5



The last production for the 2023 year is: **FRACKED! Or: Please Don't Use the F-Word**, by Alistair Beaton. A provocative razor sharp black comedy directed by Alan Burrows.

How would you feel about sitting in front of that nice old village pub on a sunny afternoon while six feet away convoys of 40-ton tankers roll past? Deerland Energy's plans to drill for shale gas in the pretty village of Fenstock are going well. The company is looking at big profits with scientists, working in university departments funded by the energy companies, and Councillor Pilbeam, Chair of the Planning Committee, open to lucrative offers.

The only slight snag is a ragged band of protesters, reluctantly headed by retired academic, Elizabeth Black-

wood – surely she's just another 'mad old biddy' as characterised by ruthless P R guru Joe Boxberg. . . End the year in a festive mood with a play that will make you laugh and also make you think .

FRACKED! OPENS ON THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER AND RUNS UNTIL SATURDAY 2 DECEMBER.



In the Limelight:

In the 1800s, stages were lit by heating mineral line, which created a bright white light for the performers to be seen by all. Therefore, if you're at the centre of attention, you're said to be in the 'limelight'.

DID YOU KNOW ... WE TAKE TOURS OF THEATRE

Do you enjoy lunch at Gracious Grace or Harrow & Harvest? Why not pop over to the theatre after lunch and enjoy a tour of our historic 1888 theatre. Fiona, Angela or Lucy will guide you through the interesting highlights of its 135 years. The theatre is available for group tours too – call during office hours to pre-arrange an out of hours tour for groups and clubs. Telephone the office and have a chat about what we can offer – 9735 1777 Mon, Tues & Fri



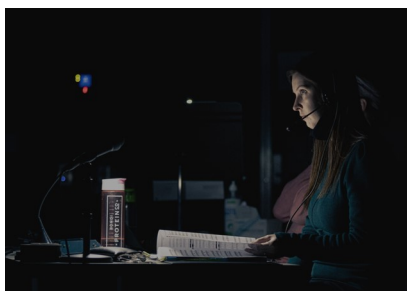
*Don't Say M*cbeth*

One of the theatre's biggest superstitions is that of the Scottish Play, the M-Word: Macbeth. Some believe that during the three witches scene, real spells are cast, but there are other reasons as to why people believe the play is cursed. Supposedly, at the premiere of the play, the actor playing Lady Macbeth died when a real dagger was used instead of the intended prop, and the Bard had to step in to finish the performance. However, it could just be an old hazing ritual between actors. Whatever the reason, just don't say it. You have been warned!

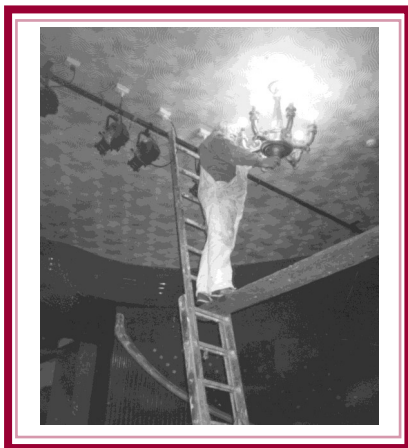
SPOTLIGHT ON STAGE MANAGERS cont'd

Would you say that the Lilydale Athenaeum Theatre was a training ground for your eventual career? Absolutely. I was given so many opportunities at Lilydale (LATC) and it truly shaped me as a Stage Manager and I'll always be grateful for that.

What are the differences between professional & non-professional theatre SM? It is so dependent on the company and the way the show is run...this is the same in the professional industry too. The main differences are the experience and scale of the shows.



Emily at work, stage managing at the **Australian Ballet**.



ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A NEW HOBBY?

If you are looking to find a way to connect with the community, make new friends or would just like to help our theatre, we would warmly welcome your contribution - giving as little or as much time as you like.



Whistling:

This isn't strictly a saying, but something we felt you should know. Back in the day, backstage crews were hired from the crews of ships as much of the rigging in theatres was similar to that of a ship. The sailors would use codes in the form of whistles to communicate the scene changes. If an actor whistled backstage, it might confuse the crew into initiating a scene change, risking injury and even possible death of a performer. It's probably less likely to have that sort of effect nowadays, but still, don't whistle during a show.

'WRITE A REVIEW' - WINNER

At every show, our audience is invited to write a review for a chance to win a bottle of **ROB DOLAN** Sparkling wine.

Why not be like our latest winner SHEILA and write a review at the next show.

Remember, a **REVIEW BOX** will be in the foyer for each show—write a review for your chance to win the next bottle of **ROB DOLAN** Sparkling Wine!



L: Winner of the audience **REVIEWS**, Sheila, receives her bottle of **ROB DOLAN** Sparkling Wine from Theatre Manager, Fiona Carter



Above: Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London—1889



Above: Emily Carter with **Reg Gorman** at the 2014 production of *Fawty Towers* when Emily worked as Stage Manager.



What is Lilydale Athenaeum Theatre's connection with the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London?

Dame Nellie Melba performed at the Royal Opera House many, many times, calling it “my artistic home”. Dame Nellie performed here at the Athenaeum Hall four times... and now our own Emily Carter has worked at both theatres too!



LILYDALE ATHENAEUM THEATRE COMPANY INC

Office Hours: MON, TUE, FRI 10am—2pm

Phone: 9735 1777

Email: a.t.c@bigpond.net.au Website: www.lilydaleatc.com

'POSTCARDS' on CHANNEL 9 & 9NOW

Don't forget to watch **POSTCARDS** this **Sunday 3 September** at **5.30pm** to see our beautiful theatre featured in the programme!