



Notations

A MUSICAL THEATRE NEWSLETTER

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President's Message

The curtain has just come down on our third fall production in recent times, *The Musical of Musical: The Musical*. With a budget of \$10,000, we can proudly say that we might have made a profit. As per usual attendance was slow for the first weekend but picked up substantially for the end of the run. Kudos to Meghan Crosby and her team for bringing such a fun musical to Saskatoon audiences.

On to another matter... we're moving! With three productions a year, we now need a rehearsal/storage space that is at our disposal year round. A building committee has been spending the summer looking at various properties for rent and/or for sale. We all thought that property was not cheap and now we know it firsthand. Our biggest decision is whether to rent or buy. It makes more sense to buy, and our current financial situation will allow it. However, it does mean committing future boards to a mortgage for at least ten years, and, putting a greater onus on the organization to produce financially successful musicals. With *Cinderella* and *Fiddler* we have shown that increased ticket prices and a change in venue can still result in a net profit and a healthy one at that. With *How to Succeed* as our next musical, our challenge will be to fill those seats right from opening night. The publicity committee has a tough job ahead of them. We had doubts, later proven unfounded, about the financial success of doing a show at Persephone. Having done it twice, we can do it a third time. See the website for information as it becomes available.

Short and sweet... I trust you all had a great Thanksgiving!

Dennis Deminchuk

SSP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Saturday, Nov. 14, at 1pm
Gateway Studio**

Notice is hereby given for the following amendment change to be voted on at the meeting:

Article VII. Directors, Article 5. "The term of office of a director shall be two years, renewable on re-election for up to 5 consecutive terms." to be replaced by, "The term of office of a director shall be two years with no term limit."

The board will be losing some key players in the form of Joel (working on his masters), Leanne (having babies), and Amanda (relocating to Australia) and there could be some others. We are therefore seeking out new blood to fill their places. If you have not yet been approached about the possibility of being on the board but are interested, send an email to Leanne at lhamm@gscs.sk.ca. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor. Once the new board is elected, duties will be assigned and re-assigned. We are therefore seeking persons whose strengths lie in publicity, fundraising, and facilities among others.

Please write to us with any questions, comments, musical theatre events, anecdotes, etc. and we'll address them in our newsletter.

Saskatoon Summer Players
Notations
Box 1941, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3S5
saskatoonsummerplayers@hotmail.com

Visit us online at:
www.saskatoonsummerplayers.ca

MUSICAL OF MUSICALS: THE MUSICAL... *what they said:*

"And the audience applauded wildly." That's one of the instructions given to the audience during *The Musical of Musicals: the Musical!*, the latest production from Saskatoon Summer Players. The audience didn't need it. This goofy parody, fine acting and incredible singing were more than enough.

... (Brennan) Richardson almost stole the show when he appeared as The Phantom. He was guilty of that crime, though, playing the stocking-clad emcee in *Speakeasy*. It was the night's most delicious performance.

Every cast member had many great moments. (Anne) Cooke showed her range, easily playing the nun-like mother and then the drunken tenant in the next act. (Keisha) Haines was sweet and neurotic at the same time and really impressed when rolling out the song "Juny with a J". (Bobby) Williston captured the leading man perfectly while also making fun of himself. With great pipes and presence, all four easily belted out the tunes while having a great time.

Rounding out the cast, though listed as a production apprentice, was Grade 9 Holy

Cross student Noah Stumborg. Essentially the show's narrator, his deadpan delivery scored big laughs.

... the Saskatoon Summer Players have provided a laugh-a-minute, song-a-second production for people who either love or hate musicals.

**Tom Eremondi, *The StarPhoenix*,
September 21, 2009**

"Years ago, I had a fantastic introduction to this show; I was surrounded by close theatre friends, and we laughed ourselves sore at the clever, non-stop, ridiculousness of the lyrics, stage directions and non-stop references. For me, the rehearsal process has been a constant reminder of that first experience, and *MoM* (as we've taken to calling her) has been a delight to share with all involved, including production staff, crew and cast. Up until the last rehearsals, we've been discovering new references in the text; perhaps you can share some new ones with us tonight!"

Meghan Crosby, Director

OUR NEXT PRODUCTIONS:



BROADWAY BASH VII

January 29 to 31, 2010

Directed by Ron Knoll

Musical Direction by
Doug Gilmour

HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING

June, 2010

Directed by Ian C. Nelson

Produced by Peter England

Being a Student in NYC

As someone who spends most of her time working with kids and adults who love theatre, I was so excited to have an opportunity to become a student again, and in New York City of all places. In July, my good friend Michelle and I packed our bags and headed to Broadway to attend the Music Theatre International Broadway Teachers Workshop. Five days, five shows, a bunch of workshops...WOW. So what did the student learn? I'm actually figuring that out as I continually process my experiences of a hectic five days, but here goes (with my top ten list)

ONE: If you want to see a hot show don't risk it, by hoping for the cheap tickets. Get your tickets in advance. We booked tickets to *Wicked* two months before we left and we were not disappointed. However several people attending the workshops had hoped for tickets from the Ticket Discounters and were disappointed as show after show was sold out.

TWO: It is wonderful catching up with old friends in Central Park. You never know who you will meet in New York, right Gavin? (One of the best things about this trip was experiencing Broadway with people who share the showtune passion)

THREE: When you leave your children and husband back in Saskatoon, everything you see becomes a souvenir for THEM. (I think its guilt)

FOUR: I discovered wonderful composers that were previously overshadowed by Schwartz, Ahrens and Flaherty, Sondheim and Webber. Check out Jeanine Tesori. She's the composer of *Shrek the Musical*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Violet* and *Caroline or Change*. Of course, having your music performed by the best, truly helps. Imagine being in a rehearsal room and listening to one of the most unique, haunting, powerful voices on Broadway

in the form of Chuck Cooper, performing live, a song from *Caroline or Change*, which featured his character lamenting over the death of John F Kennedy. As I type this I still get goosebumps. Amazing!

FIVE: Expect nothing and discover a delightful swamp. I will admit I went to *Shrek* expecting a cartoonish adaptation of the movie. (yawn) What I found was a technical masterpiece with great humour, originality even with the familiarity of the characters and a score that truly grows as you go. The staging was creative and the work particularly of Christopher Sieber who played Lord Farquard entirely on his knees was wonderful. Seeing Sutton Foster live, also a treat. When I went to the show I knew nothing about it, other than having seen the movie so it was great to be able to discover the show as I was watching it.

SIX: Never underestimate the power of children. I have always said that kids can do amazing things and you have to look no further than *Billy Elliot* to confirm that truth. The young boys who danced into our hearts as Billy and his friend Michael were nothing short of incredible. For most professionals it takes a lifetime of training to attain the level of dance these boys were able to do. When you consider that their "lifetime" of 11, has about 8 years of training, what they bring to each performance is nothing short of a miracle.

SEVEN: If you go see *Next to Normal* take kleenex. This Tony Award Winning Musical is powerful, but be prepared for an emotionally charged roller coaster ride. This was the other show I knew very little about. Again, it was a wonderful experience to discover a show as you are watching it. Alice Ripley is another amazing Tony Award winning leading lady. Her moment by moment exploration of mental illness was raw and so honest. I believe the composers wanted to challenge the audience to step into the world of

mental illness and they succeed brilliantly with a rock score reminiscent of *Rent* and a small but incredible cast led by Ripley.

EIGHT: You can be in a room full of people you hardly know at a workshop, and if the facilitators can create a safe environment, people will share even the most personal things. One of our workshops was about identifying our inner "vampires"...i.e the things that keep us from achieving our potential. It was an unforgettable two hours as everyday people from across North America, most of whom teach drama and work with kids shared their inner most secrets and discovered things about themselves that were perhaps buried or hidden away or categorized as being too difficult to deal with. I can't actually tell you what was discussed as we all took an oath that what happens in that room stays in that room, but I can tell you that it was certainly a life changing experience and what I learned is that you have to be prepared to put yourself out there in order to experience the most of a situation and you have to be honest with yourself which is something that many of us struggle with.

NINE: Books, music, chocolate, clothes and SHOES. New York has it all so pack light and go home heavy. Just wear everything first so it looks like you didn't buy it in New York.

TEN: After an emotionally charged week, end off on a funny note and there is nothing better than spending time on *Avenue Q*.

The student came home happy and excited to be doing whatever it is she does in her "real world". I was reminded about the endless possibilities that exist in theatre and I'm glad to be in a place like Saskatoon. It may not be Broadway, but on any given night there is usually a show or two going on somewhere!

Lorna Batycki

September in the BIG APPLE



September in New York City... there is nothing else like it! The excitement of the new season on Broadway is contagious. Each visit to every beautiful old theatre takes you back in time to another era and the grandeur of the stage. This year I was fortunate to take in four productions during my week visit. It began with a spectacular production of *HAIR*. The energy of the cast was amazing from beginning to end with fabulous performances by Will Swenson and Gavin Creel.

My second visit to the number one show, *WICKED* didn't disappoint. But I will also urge you to take in *Behind the Emerald Curtain*, on every Saturday morning at the famous Gershwin Theatre. It is a behind the scenes adventure with an up close look at sets, costumes and production that would interest even the casual theatre goer. (Enid and Doug, I thought of you both the whole time I was there!) I was fortunate enough to meet swing cast member, Anthony Galde who introduced me to his favorite restaurant for lunch and wonderful conversation. It was definitely a highlight of this year's trip.

I was also able to t in *CHICAGO* and the brilliant production of *AVENUE Q* just the week before it was moving from Broadway to Off Broadway. Mix great theatre with good food at the nostalgic Café Edison and cheesecake at Juniors restaurant next to Shubert Alley makes for another super good time in NYC til next year....

Stacey Tetreault

CONGRATULATIONS to our newly engaged couples...

Erin Trumbley and Blake Cumming are officially engaged after their summer vacation to the Big Apple, Meghan Crosby and Reid McDonald became engaged last month at church, and Gavin Logan and Meghan Keating are also newly engaged. To all couples, heartfelt wishes for a long, prosperous, and musical life together!

We Heart Heartbeats presents:

HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH

**December 2 to 5
224 – 25th Street West**

Directed by Ricardo Alvarado and starring Rafael Antonio Renderos

Further Information from **rafael.antonio.renderos@hotmail.com**

Hedwig and the Angry Inch is a 2001 American musical about a fictional rock and roll band confronted by an East German transgendered singer. Music and lyrics are by Stephen Trask. The musical has gathered a devoted cult following similar to that of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Sponsored by Saskatoon Summer Players.

SSP BOARD

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- Leanne Hamm**, Past President
- Joel J. Swaan**, Vice-President
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