

Term 1 - March 2009

A Roadmap to Nurture and Challenge our Students

A big welcome to all our students, especially those new to the Children's Performing Company of Australia (CPCA). We are very excited about our plans for 2009!

The Youth Theatre program encourages students to acquire dramatic and personal skills, and gain promotion through a four level class hierarchy. These levels are Youth Theatre Training, Players, Actors Ensemble, and Actors Studio.

We believe this structure nurtures committed and talented students and continues to develop the performance skills of all age groups and levels.

Students are provided with a clear developmental roadmap as each level in the hierarchy has specific criteria for promotion. For example, a student at Training level would be offered a promotion to Players when they have developed strong projection and articulation skills.

This semester, the curriculum and performance material has been designed to reflect the aims of the Youth Theatre; that is, to assist the students in continually improving their dramatic skills so as to reach a high standard of performance.

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and development, with the curriculum incorporating optional activities and tasks for students to undertake outside their usual rehearsals.

Developing a strong rehearsal routine is essential – rehearsal directors will be encouraging students to explore their dramatic creativity, whilst equipping them with important performance skills in a positive and supportive environment.

Training Groups/Players Groups

The Youth Theatre groups will be working on two different dramatic pieces for their mid-year performance this semester. The 'chorus piece' aims to continue advancing students vocal techniques (including projection, articulation and clarity) and introduce dramatic elements such as object transformation and non-naturalism. The 'scripted piece', will allow students to begin exploring character development, and

for those more experienced students, to continue developing their ability to construct, conceptualise and 'perform' character types.

Actors Ensemble

The Actors Ensemble and the Senior Actors Ensemble groups will be focusing on the connection between stagecraft elements, dramatic elements and performance this semester. The Actor's Ensemble are working on a puppet spectacular, performing the well known Roald Dahl classic, *The BFG*. The Senior Actors Ensemble groups are working on a new performance piece incorporating musicality and soundscapes - *1001 Nights... The Tale of Scheherazade*. The intention is for students to explore new ways to perform a narrative that can enhance a dramatic performance.



Actors Studio

Our top performing group, Actors Studio, are working with Special Guest Director Jason Geary on specialised improvisational skills and will be showcasing their new talents at the mid year performances. Jason has been involved with Australia's premiere improvisation company, *Impro Melbourne*, as performer, director and co-creator. Recently he has been seen on Channel Ten's *Thank God You're Here*, *SkitHouse*, *Micallef Tonight* (Nine), *Welcher and Welcher* (ABC), and three series of the Logie award winning *Micallef Programme*.

cPCA head office

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venue managers

DANIEL BESE (0429 326 017): Essendon

KATE CONLAN (0417 326 666): Hoppers Crossing,
Taylors Lakes

JAMES CONLAN (0417 326 555): Footscray.

JAN DIXON (0417 326 444): Bentleigh, Berwick, Frankston.

RHIANNON FISH (0417 326 777): Hawthorn (Wed & Thur)

LENE KRISTENSEN (0417 326 222): Bundoora,
Hawthorn (Sat)

JESIE METZ (0429 326 020): Templestowe

SCOTT SANTINON (0417 326 333): Croydon.



Photo highlights from the 2008
Victorian Youth Theatre end of year performances



CPCA News

Students in the News

Emily-Jayne McLean (Broadway Chorus - The Show Chorus) has been cast in *Billy Elliot* as one of the ballet-school girls.

Michael Zinner (Broadway Chorus - The Show Chorus) went to Sydney last October to compete in the South Pacific Ballroom Dancing Championships. One of the events Michael entered, with dance partner of ten months Taylor Ferguson, was the *Junior 10 Dance Event* which involves having to perform ten dances: five standard (eg waltz) and five Latin American (eg cha cha).

Michael and Taylor won this event and are now going to represent Australia in Moscow, Russia this month.

Emily Metcalfe (Broadway Chorus - The Troupe) has been cast in a lead role in a short film *Eternal Spring* which will be entered into the Sony 2009 Tropfest Competition.

Billy Doyle (The Croydon Players and Croydon Intermediate Youth Theatre) has been cast in a feature role in 'Problem Gambling' TV commercial.

Chloe Savannah (Broadway Chorus - Triple Threat), **Christopher Sciberras** (Broadway Chorus - Intermediate Company), and **Namit Gupta** (Mount Waverley Senior Youth Theatre) have all been cast in a Beyond Blue 'Youth' TV commercial campaign.

Nine year old **Mia Herrick** (Broadway Chorus - Croydon Intermediate Chorus 1) entered the song *Rainbows, Flowers* into the Australian Children's Music Foundation's 2008 Songwriting Competition, that she and another little girl from her school wrote. Mia and her friend won first prize in Category 2 (Grade 3 and 4). The song was performed at the Sydney Festival in January by the Sydney Youth Orchestra and the Australian Youth Choir.

You can listen to *Rainbows, Flowers* on ACFM's web site at www.acmf.com.au following the links through to the 2008 Competition winners.

Congratulations to all our students!

Teachers in the News

Mathew Frank (CPCA Musical Director) has been working as the Associate Musical Director for

the Melbourne Theatre Company production of *Poor Boy* which is playing at the Sumner Theatre until 15 March.

Petra Glieson (Drama Rehearsal Director) is performing in 'The Glass Threshold' with the Machination Theatre Ensemble. For more information: www.machinationtheatreensemble.com Petra also has a guest role in the TV Series 'City Homicide'.

Andrew Kroenert is performing with the Australian tour of *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Musical*.

Talent Company of Australia Registrations to enter our talent agency will be taking place on Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 April, and Sunday, 26 April at the CPCA head office. More details to follow soon...

Email us with your News

No student news is too big or too small (admin@cpc.com.au).

Teacher profile – Spotlight on Beth Thomson (Head of Drama)



What is your role at the CPCA?

My new role is the Head of Drama for the CPCA's three courses (Victorian Youth Theatre, Broadway

Chorus and Beginners OnStage). I oversee all drama repertoire and drama teaching curriculum, and for the Youth Theatre I also oversee the performances, taking on an overall artistic director role.

What professional training have you done?

I have completed a BA, a Dip Ed (Drama and Psychology), a Postgraduate in Applied Business and a Cert IV in workplace training and assessment. I have taught for the CPCA for over five years and have worked in numerous schools

(both primary and secondary).

Who do you most admire in the world of theatre?

I don't really have one person whom I most admire in the theatre world as there are lots of people who contribute to 'getting the show on' and making theatre exciting and successful. So really I admire directors, actors, costume departments, sound and lighting technicians, front of house crew, backstage crew – without these people 'theatre' as we know it and view it would not be so great!

What is your favourite play?

Tough question! I have lots and lots of favourite plays, I love classics such as *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Street Car Named Desire* and *Waiting for Godot* and also really enjoy going to see new performance pieces (always so much on in Melbourne), for example last week I saw *Poor Boy* (an MTC Production). I also

really enjoy a musical – *Grease* was the first musical I remember seeing and from then on, I was hooked!

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I love cooking and really enjoy sun-baking on the beach with a good book.

What do you look for in a good student?

I think a good student demonstrates initiative, practices positive rehearsal technique and is supportive of peers. Students who also take responsibility for their own performance and consistently contribute to the rehearsal are qualities which fabulous students possess.

What advice can you give students who would like to perform professionally?

My advice is to keep building on and extending your skills – don't think that you will ever stop learning.

Student profile – Spotlight on Holly O’Connell-Paladino



How long have you been a student with the CPCA?

I have been a student with the CPCA, within the Youth Theatre for six years this year.

What do you enjoy about the Youth Theatre program?

I really enjoy being part of the Youth Theatre as it has become the basis for many friendships, wonderful experiences and further education in the dramatic arts.

What has been the highlight of your time with the Youth Theatre?

The highlight of my time here changes each year, with the one

main constant being the feeling of such a positive connection with your group ensemble during the time of performances. Its a lovely feeling of elation which everyone shares - when you look back at how you have all grown, and see the development of the play itself.

What other performing experience have you had outside the CPCA?

Outside of CPCA I perform in my college productions and have made minor television appearances on the *Elephant Princess* and *Syn 1700*.

What is your favourite play?

Under Milk Wood a radio play by Dylan Thomas, may just be my favourite, the poetry of the words and the wonderful characters are delightful! I loved performing in the play *The Killing Game* or *Here*

Come’s the Chopper as it was something in a strikingly different style and had a very powerful effect on the audience as well as the actors.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

In my spare time I enjoy being in the company of good friends, and simple things like walking and observing, hearing live music and sharing smiles and laughter.

General Notices

Rehearsal and Performance Schedules

Look out for rehearsal and performance schedules which will be issued in March. This schedule includes all rehearsals, workshop and performance dates for each student. Please put workshop and performance dates into your diary.

Venue Managers for 2009

Due to our change in structure, we have some new venue managers in 2009. Please take a moment to write down your venue manager and their mobile number for this year. Better still log it into your mobile phone! A list of all Youth Theatre venue managers can be found on the front page of this newsletter.

Apologies for Class Abscence

CPCA policy requires that if a student cannot attend a class, an apology should be sent to your venue manager via an SMS message, including the child’s name, venue and group.

Medical Details

Further to any CPCA medical form filled out, parents/guardians are required to verbally inform their

venue manager if a student has a medical condition. This process is required each year due to changes in venue managers.

Uniform

Please make sure you are wearing your uniform to class each week. If you do not yet have uniform, please see your venue manager. The correct Youth Theatre uniform includes:

- Youth Theatre T-Shirt
- Black pants or shorts
- Any shoes

Nut-free Policy

The CPCA has a nut free policy at all of our training and performance venues. Children, parents and CPCA staff are prohibited to bring any food that contains nut products to these venues. Parents are requested to inform the CPCA in writing of any allergic reaction that their child suffers to nut products.

Mobile-free Zone

Mobile phones are to be either turned off or on silent in class.

Car Pooling

Towards the end of March your venue manager will have a car pooling list available to view. Enquiries regarding car pooling

before the end of March can be made to the CPCA head office.

Upcoming Public Holidays

Please note classes WILL be held on Labour Day, Monday, 9 March and Anzac Day, Saturday, 25 April.

Costume Hire for Schools

The CPCA has a substantial and varied costume collection from our many performances, such as *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Sound of Music*, *Calamity Jane*, and *The King and I*. Large sets of ensemble costumes (minimum quantity 20), as well as some principals, are available for hire for a nominal fee. Please contact Jennifer at CPCA on 9384-1644 or email wardrobe@cPCA.com.au