

The newsletter for Grinder Productions members, media contacts, patrons and friends

## Notes From the Director's Chair

Ah, the holidays.

I think it was best described on a sweater I once saw at a Christmas party: A very annoyed-looking cat sitting under a caption that read: "Two bahs and a hum-bug... to go. Easy on the fa-la-la's."

Seriously though, I do enjoy this time of year. If nothing else, it's a time to take stock of where you are and how you've gotten there. When I think back over this past year at Grinder Productions I can't help but recall the many, many times the members of this company have gone above and beyond the call of duty for the sake of a show. Time and time again, when push came to shove, there was always someone there to help pick up the slack, even when that slack was the result of my own very-forgettable year.



**Above:** Brad Rooke as Heathcliff and Julie Kennedy as Catherine Earnshaw, the central romantic couple in *Wuthering Heights*. Coincidentally Rooke and Kennedy will also be appearing together in *All My Sins Remembered*, only this time they're playing two characters who hate each other's guts.

As you have seen in past newsletters, and can see further in this one, we've got some pretty ambitious ideas for 2007. I hope we can continue to build upon all that we have gained in 2006, and I hope we can continue to make Grinder Productions an exciting, inviting place to make our stories come alive.

Happy Holidays!  
Eric

### Features This Month

Production Manager Job	1
Everywoman	2
Future Stars	2
All My Sins Remembered	2
Open Auditions	3
Volunteer Opportunity	3
Introducing Stage Four	3
Audition Information	4

## Wanted! One Good Production Manager

Grinder Productions needs a Production Manager!

I received exactly zero responses from my ad in the paper for this, so I'll throw it out to the membership. Feel free to forward this notice along to anyone who might be interested in a little extra cash. Starting on *All My Sins Remembered* I would like to have a Production Manager, who would be responsible for either doing or delegating all the non-marketing, non-artistic duties on our productions. This does NOT require an extensive knowledge of technical theatre. It does require organization, excellent people skills, a positive attitude and a willingness to learn new things. Compensation to be provided at \$200 per contract. For more information or to apply, please give me a call or an e-mail.

### Contact Information

#### Mail

6132 Jones Baseline RR 2  
Elora, ON NOB 1S0

#### Phone

Box Office: (519) 787-1981  
Admin: (519) 780-7593

#### E-mail

Eric Goudie, Creative and Executive Director  
grinder@grinderproduction.org  
Sarah McGoldrick, Director of Marketing  
publicity@grinderproductions.org

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## Progress Report: Everywoman

What a difference a month makes. This show has changed completely from my original conception of it, due to the severest cast attrition I've ever had to contend with. Fortunately, this is the one show that is resilient enough to withstand almost anything, and I'm pleased to report that the ten plucky individuals who have been working so hard on this (seven actors, two stage managers, and a choreographer) are in the process of creating something truly breath-taking. I'm especially indebted to Danielle Deckert, our choreographer, for her understanding, patience and professionalism.

The visual imagery in this show is going to be great. And despite lines that are over half a millennia old the cast are picking those up and doing very well with them too. When combined with a few simple but effective technical effects that we'll add on once we're in the theatre I'm convinced that we're going to have a unique, amazing show.

All we need now are ticket sales! Please, please, please get out to the show yourself, but also, sell, sell sell it to everyone you know! This is great show for the holidays, suitable for the family, and not too, too long. It's funny, it's serious, it's theatrical. Show dates are December 14th, 15th, 16th at 8pm. Call 519-787-1981.

## Progress Report: Future Stars

I still have some room left for people who want to be in this event, so don't wait for me to call you, call me and tell me you want to be in this show!

I'll have more to say on Future Stars in the January Newsletter, but for now I can tell you that I'm really looking forward to it. There are so many young people in this community who are just itching to get up onstage and show the world what they can do (if you're ever in doubt, just as Alan at the theatre, he gets a calls from parents looking for stuff to put their kids into on an almost weekly basis). If you or someone you know has something that might be interesting to others, or even if you just have the desire to get up there and do *something*, then give me a call.

### Shane Monaghan

Shane first joined Grinder Productions as a stage manager for Absurd Person Singular. He joins us again, this time as an actor, in All My Sins Remembered. You may remember Shane as a performer in the highly-acclaimed play dealing with teenage suicide "A Permanent Solution" which played at the Grand last year, as part of an extensive tour of Southern Ontario. Keep up the good work, Shane; we need more people in this business of theatre who aren't afraid to take on the heavy issues. You did and you made us laugh at the same time.



## Progress Report: All My Sins Remembered

I'd like to include something similar to the following on all our publicity for this one. Please keep it in mind before inviting your Catholic Italian grandmother to be your date.

Viewer discretion is advised: Some scenes thankfully contain violence, coarse language and adult situations. Some viewers may be offended by my sense of humour.

Rehearsals are set to begin very soon for the fourth play in our winter season. Casting has now been completed, and I'm really looking forward to working with this small but talented group of people, three of whom you've already seen in this newsletter. The other two players are Stacie Osborne and Sandy Lai. Stacie was last seen onstage with Grinder in The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds, where she played the smug, obnoxious Janice Vickery. This time she plays two characters, both teenagers who have made some bad choices in their lives. Sandy's involvement with Grinder goes right back to its very first production, Home Farm, where she played opposite yours truly in our homage to the vanishing rural way of life. Sandy was also in our first production at the Ennotville Library, Butterflies Are Free. In All My Sins Remembered she takes on a variety of characters, from the innocent and unaware to the victimized but unafraid.

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## Open Auditions

It's that time of year again! Once again it's time to expand the current and future membership of Grinder Productions and conduct preliminary casting for all our shows in the 2007-2008 summer and winter seasons on four stages. Sound ambitious? You bet! There are so many shows that we have to cast there's almost a guarantee that if you show up for these auditions you will be asked to play at least one part onstage somewhere, sometime, as part of Grinder Productions.

Now you're probably wondering if you've already auditioned for me once, do you have to audition again to be considered?



***You could  
be here!***

No, you don't, but you are welcome to if you wish. The reason for that is that I will only be directing a few of the shows next year, so these auditions will be as much for me as for all of next year's directors, and while I can certainly suggest to them people whom I think would be good for their plays they would much rather see people in person.

The auditions will be held on Saturday, January 13th at the Fergus Grand Theatre, from 10am to 5pm, in one-hour sessions. Call or e-mail me to sign up, and see the back page of this newsletter for complete information on the shows being cast.

## Volunteer Opportunity— Mailing List Editing

Are you a student looking for your 40 hours of community service, or do you know someone who is? If so, Grinder needs you!

We need someone to go through our entire mailing list of groups and tours and do a little online research, updating our contact information for the bus tour operators in Ontario that could do business with us next summer. We'd also love to expand our list (the one it was originally taken from was several years old and is by now bound to be somewhat out of date) and would appreciate someone who's good with Google to see if there are some more groups and tour companies out there that we can tap into.

If you're good with computers, have access to unlimited internet time, and want to help us out in a REALLY big way, then please give me a call or an e-mail and I will get the database to you.

## Introducing Stage Four

If you were reading the article about our upcoming open auditions above you may have noticed that I said we'd be performing on four stages in 2007-2008. That wasn't a typo. In addition to the Fergus Grand Theatre, the Ennotville Library and the Belwood Hall I'd also like to start a "fourth stage" (hence the name "Stage Four" - thanks Sarah). This will be a place where we do smaller productions, ones perhaps not always considered "audience-friendly" in the mainstream theatre. I don't even know where this space is going to be located yet, though I'm thinking of somewhere in Elora, and I'm open to suggestions as well. I would like to use Stage Four to bring back a certain dynamic to the company, one that got lost for a while in the struggle just to do well enough for the company to survive. It's an expectation that theatre can do more, can be more, must be more, than escapism. While we never want to deny anyone of their pleasure they get from an evening at the theatre there are many, many other ways in which theatre can speak to us that is pleasurable, that differs from the "traditional" fare most often seen on area stages. Tapping into some of those other ways is what the theatre of Stage Four is going to be all about.

# Audition Information - January 13th - Pass it Along!

**Who can audition:** Anyone! We are looking for people of all sizes, types, ages, levels of experience. Our company is so diverse that there are plenty of opportunities for everyone to get involved.

**What is required of me if I am cast?** If you are cast in a show we will expect you to attend all rehearsals and performances, learn your lines and character, and do what you can to assist with ticket sales and production tasks. When you come to the auditions you will be given a sheet with all the shows listed below along with their rehearsal and performance dates. PLEASE BRING YOUR CALENDAR WITH YOU so that you can see which shows you are available for, and indicate as such on the audition form.

## Shows being cast:

*Selected parts in shows in remainder of 2007 Winter Season at the Fergus Grand Theatre*

**Future Stars** - a showcase for kids

**Black Coffee** - An Agatha Christie Murder Mystery

**Picasso at the Lapin Agile** - A comedy by Steve Martin

**Dirty Work at the Crossroads** - A "Gay Nineties" Melodrama

*Shows at the Ennotville Summer Theatre*

**I Ought to be in Pictures** - A comedy by Neil Simon

**Talley's Folly** - A romantic comedy by Lanford Wilson

**Billy Bishop Goes to War** - A Canadian musical by John Gray

*Shows at the Belwood Hall*

**The Melville Boys** - A comedy by Norm Foster

**Noises Off** - A Farce by Michael Frayn

*A Touring One-act play TBA*

We are going to tour a 1-act play to local seniors homes, schools, community events and anywhere else that will take us. Rehearsals and performances are during the day, so availability then is required. Rehearsals the week of February 4<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> with our "tour" from February 11<sup>th</sup> to March 3<sup>rd</sup>. All shows in the greater Wellington county area.

## ALL SHOWS BEYOND THIS POINT ARE IN PRELIMINARY PLANNING AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE!

*2007 - 2008 Fall-Winter-Spring Season at the Fergus Grand Theatre*

**Cowgirls** - A country musical

**Frankenstein** - Based on Mary Shelley's Gothic Novel

**The Gifts of the Magi** - Based on the short stories by O. Henry

**At My Heart's Core** - A satire by Robertson Davies

**Verdict** - An Agatha Christie Murder Mystery

**The Diary of Anne Frank** - The stage version of the classic book

**Caught in the Villain's Web** - Another "Gay Nineties" Melodrama

*2007 - 2008 Season at Stage 4*

**Hangin' in the Balance** - An original play by Eric Goudie

**Eleemosynary** - A comedy/drama by Lee Blessing

**The Blue Room** - A steamy free adaptation of Schnitzler's La Ronde by David Hare

**School Shooting** - An original thriller by Eric Goudie

**Endgame** - An absurdist drama by Samuel Beckett