

The monthly newsletter for members, media partners, patrons and friends of Grinder Productions

June 2007

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Get your tickets for the shows this summer at the Ennotville Library and Belwood Hall!

But don't call the Fergus Grand Theatre box office...

Our summer box office phone number is 519-780-7593, and you can call any time.

June Jottings...

These are fast times at Grinder Productions. Since we sent out our last newsletter we've had a home show, the sixth production of our season, our first-ever fundraiser show and not one, not two, but four shows have gone into rehearsal!

So please accept my apologies for the delay in getting this month's newsletter published...

Things are relatively quiet at the moment, all things considered. Our first summer show at the Ennotville Library, Neil Simon's *I Ought to be in Pictures*, opens June 22nd. Please come on out and support this show - it's a masterpiece of comedic theatre, and it fits just perfectly in the intimate atmosphere of the library. We also have *Dirty Work* at the Crossroads closing out our season at the Fergus Grand Theatre June 28th - 30th. It is a show that takes great pride in NOT being a masterpiece of the comedic theatre, but it is nonetheless full of some of the funniest, craziest, side-splitting nonsense you can find onstage these days in a family-friendly production.

There are two other shows that have just begun rehearsals this month, Langford Wilson's *Talley's Folly* and Norm Foster's *The Melville Boys*. I'm looking forward to seeing both of these shows, which will open in mid-July, and I'd like to thank Arlene Callaghan and RD Branton for having the courage and inclination to be my first "artistic associates," directing these plays and taking the company to a whole new level. Over the course of the summer and in the coming months you will see many more company members make the leap into the director's circle, and new members come on board who have directed for other theatre companies.

We also have placed a call in this newsletter for some more individuals to assist the Grinder Productions executive. With the company growing so fast the Executive and I need your help! Please read on to discover how you can become a part of the engine that drives Grinder Productions.

And this just in... I'm pleased to announce the first-ever "Grinder awards," where we get to recognize a few of the exceptional contributions from our members both onstage and off over the past year and a half that have made this company so successful. The nominees are included on page ____, and the winners will be announced in our July newsletter.

Let the fast times roll,
Eric

Final Reports:

Fergus Lions Home Show

The weather was warm this past May 10th, 11th and 12th as we stood in the zamboni garage at the Fergus Arena and took part in the annual Fergus Lions Club Home and Leisure show. Our booth was situated perfectly, as it turned out, and we were able to meet and greet a great many people who were interested in our company and its endeavours.

A big thank-you to all those who helped make this event possible, and congratulations to the winners of our draw for tickets to various Grinder events throughout the year.

Picasso at the Lapin Agile

Undoubtedly the sleeper hit of the Fergus Grand season this spring, "Picasso" was truly a delight to work on. While there were a few tense moments when we wondered whether or not we would get the set to fall apart (on cue!) the final result has been a show that people can't stop talking about. The compliments I have been getting about the show just keep on coming, and I'd like to thank the cast and crew for making this such a memorable show.

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Progress Reports:

Dirty Work at the Crossroads:

The final show of the 2006-2007 season at the Fergus Grand Theatre promises to be a hoot. Bring the kids out and cheer on the hopeless hero, the hapless heroine and the country bumpkin as they do battle with the dastardly Munro Murgatroyd, a true villain's villain. From French maid's to railroad tracks this show's got it all—including a happy ending!

Dates: June 28th, 29th and 30th

Time: 8pm

Venue: Fergus Grand Theatre

Call for tickets: 519-787-1981

I Ought to be in Pictures:

We're finally ready!

Join us this June 22nd at the Ennotville Library for the opening of this great production about Herb, a struggling Hollywood scriptwriter who wakes up one morning to find Libby, the daughter he hasn't seen in 16 years, in his apartment with a smile on her face and stars in her eyes. She wants to be in pictures... or does she?

Run: Fridays 8pm, Saturdays 2pm and 8pm, from June 22nd to July 7th

Venue: Ennotville Library

Call for tickets: 519-780-7593

Talley's Folly:

In what is shaping up to be the most visually stunning show of the summer season, Talley's Folly is a tender, moving, sometimes funny, sometimes hopeful look at a country at war and two lost souls, each looking to reclaim something of the lives that have been stolen from them. Set in the deep South and featuring two versatile, talented actors, this Pulitzer-prize winning play is not one to be missed.

Run: Fridays 8pm, Saturdays 2pm and 8pm, from July 13th to August 4th

Venue: Ennotville Library

Call for tickets: 519-780-7593

The Melville Boys:

The magic and genius of Norm Foster's comedy returns to Centre Wellington with this early play about Lee and Owen Melville, two brothers who've escaped the factory for a weekend of fishing—and a very important conversation. But then two sisters Mary and Loretta show up, all plans get thrown out the window and so begins a whirlwind ride of dresses, dances and revelations that will change four lives forever.

Run: July 13th 8pm, July 14th 2pm and 8pm

Venue: Belwood Lions Hall

Call for tickets: 519-780-7593

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Hot Flashes: Revelations on the Dangerous Age

Grinder Productions entered a new era on May 25th and 26th with the production of Hot Flashes, the first ever fund-raiser production from Grinder Productions. It certainly won't be the last, and while we didn't make the biggest donation to the hospital that week (over \$100,000 in provincial funding for Groves Memorial was announced while we were in production), we were able to begin the process of establishing ourselves as active, caring community partners.

And we're looking for the next opportunity to do something for someone else in need, either here at home or farther abroad. Do you know of any person, event, organization or cause that could benefit from a Grinder Productions presentation? Talk to Eric about it today!

WANTED: EXECUTIVE VOLUNTEERS

We need YOU!

Ever wondered what makes Grinder tick? If you've ever worked on a show you know that countless hours of hard work by a vast number of people go into making the play a reality. Our theatre company works much the same way. I work full-time at Grinder Productions, and the members of the executive each contribute ten to thirty hours each per week to operational tasks.

We're getting a bit tired out!

In the interests of making sure that we don't burn ourselves out we have decided that it's time to ask you, the general membership, if you would be willing to assist us in the execution of some of the tasks involved in running the company. Here's just some of the ways you could help us out:

Production Assistant: Help produce a show, co-ordinate crew and production tasks, or offer to help in a specific area

Marketing Manager: Organize a subscription campaign, solicit group/tour sales, or promote a specific show or event

Project Manager: Produce a show, workshop, fundraiser or other event.

Fundraiser: Solicit program advertising, in-kind donations and small and large-scale corporate sponsorship

As you can see, these aren't simply "come on out and give us a hand" type jobs. They involve planning, good communication skills and a willingness to take on a certain degree of responsibility. Admittedly they aren't for everyone, but they can be very, very rewarding. And it's not like we'll leave you to fend for yourself; either myself or an Executive member will always be close at hand, ready to give you any assistance, advice or support you may need.

Please contact Eric at grinder@grinderproductions.org if you are interested. Tell us what you might like to do, and we'll see if we can get you on board. Our first job will be the Front-of-House Crewing for the summer, arranging for all the ushers and House Managers we'll need at the shows in Ennotville and Belwood. Think you've got what it takes to make that happen? Then come on out and show us what you can do!

Okay, so not that she needs any more accolades, but company member Becky Branton is now a national champion in two disciplines. After capturing gold in Ringette at the Canada Winter Games this past February Becky proved her academic prowess at the Skills Canada National finals in Saskatoon, taking home gold in the Job Interview Category. Congratulations, Becky!

Company member Stacey Ingham has started a blog about the process that has went into creating Dirty Work at the Crossroads. Check it out at www.dirtworkatthecrossroads.blogspot.com

The Grinder Awards

These 15 awards cover shows from October 2005 (Brother Andre's Heart) to May 2007 (Hot Flashes). I hope to make these awards an annual event from now on, so that we can regularly applaud the achievements of our fellow members.

Best Actor in a Leading Role

Andy Johnston: "Inspector Lord" in Spider's Web
 Brad Rooke: "Tim" in All My Sins Remembered
 Herbert Chamberlain: "Poirot" in Black Coffee
 Andy Johnston: "Captain Hastings" in Black Coffee
 Eric Regimbald: "Picasso," Picasso at the Lapin Agile

Best Actor in a Supporting Role

Kevin Kroetsch: "Hugo Birch" in Spider's Web
 Herbert Chamberlain: "Jim" in Bordertown Cafe
 Andy Johnston: "Hindley" in Wuthering Heights
 Shayne Monaghan: "Sam," All My Sins Remembered
 Dean Dunbar: "Dr. Carelli" in Black Coffee

Best Actress in a Leading Role

Jennifer Gordon: "Clarissa" in Spider's Web
 Robin Plein: "Betty" in The Effect of Gamma Rays...
 Kimberley Young: "Marion," Absurd Person Singular
 Julie Kennedy: "Catherine" in Wuthering Heights
 Becky Branton: "Jenny" in All My Sins Remembered

Best Actress in a Supporting Role

Georgie Landry: "Miss Peake" in Spider's Web
 Cailey Koornstra: "Ruth" in Gamma Rays...
 Mary Alies: "Maxine" in Bordertown Cafe
 Lisa Branton: "Isobel" in Wuthering Heights
 Lisa Branton : "Germaine," Picasso at the Lapin Agile

Best Design (Set, Costumes, LX or Sound)

Mary Alies: "Costumes" in Spider's Web
 Danielle Deckert: "Sound" in Everywoman
 Jennifer Gordon: "Sound" in All My Sins Remembered
 Andy Johnston: "Set" in Picasso at the Lapin Agile

Best Stage Manager

Alyssa Merrick: Spider's Web
 Sara De Jong: The Effect of Gamma Rays...
 Caitlyn Alexander: The Owl and the Pussycat
 Shayne Monaghan: Absurd Person Singular
 Judy Faires: Black Coffee
 Julie Kennedy: Picasso at the Lapin Agile

Best Assistant Stage Manager

Stephanie Sellers: Spider's Web
 Sarah Branton: Wuthering Heights
 Rosie Martin: Wuthering Heights
 Mattie Smith: All My Sins Remembered
 Julie Kennedy: Black Coffee

Best Technician (any production area)

Kevin Kroetsch: "Set" in Spider's Web
 Mary Alies: "Props" in The Effect of Gamma Rays...
 Brad Rooke: "Set" in All My Sins Remembered
 Megan Thoms: "Sound" in Black Coffee
 Andy Johnston: "Set" in Picasso at the Lapin Agile

Best Newcomer to Grinder Productions and/or theatre (any discipline)

Andy Johnston: Spider's Web
 Mary Alies: Spider's Web
 Herbert Chamberlain: Spider's Web
 Julie Kennedy: Wuthering Heights
 Henry Wichers: Black Coffee

Best promoter, promotional event or promotional design

Alan Argue: program for Absurd Person Singular
 Julie Kennedy: sandwich boards for Black Coffee and Picasso at the Lapin Agile
 Sarah McGoldrick: program ads for Black Coffee
 Dave Swart: poster design, Picasso at the Lapin Agile
 Jennifer Gordon: poster design for Hot Flashes

Best Youth (18 and under, any discipline)

Caitlyn Alexander : "Tillie" in Gamma Rays...
 Sarah Branton: "God" in Everywoman
 Megan Neely: "Death" in Everywoman
 Mackenzie Mathews: "Dance" in Future Stars
 Tyler Desormeaux: "Elvis" in Future Stars

Best Artistic Associate (Director, Ass't director, MD, Chor, Playwright, Dramaturg)

Danielle Deckert: choreography in Everywoman

Best Ensemble

Spider's Web
 The Effect of Gamma Rays...
 Wuthering Heights
 All My Sins Remembered
 Picasso at the Lapin Agile

Executive Director's Outstanding Achievement and Service Awards (all recipients)

Madison Walsh, for "Talk on Music"
 Geoff Vanderkooy, for overhauling the website
 Judy Faires
 Sarah McGoldrick
 The Grinder Productions Executive Committee

Lifetime Achievement Award

To be announced in our July Newsletter