



Grinder's Grumblings

March 2007

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

Notes From the Director's Chair

Features This Month

The weather has finally broken!

I shuddered when I heard we were in for an extended cold snap the first two weeks of February. When you rehearse where we do battling the cold seems like a never-ending exercise in futility sometimes, and it's not very conducive to creativity. Many, many thanks to Sarah McGoldrick, graciously opening her home to us for the first few rehearsals of Black Coffee. Though slightly cramped, the work we were able to get done was more than could have been accomplished in the cold. Now that the weather is starting to co-operate a bit more though, it's time to make the heaters earn their keep and high time we got working on a full-sized set.

While Black Coffee has certainly taken up most of my time this past month, I haven't forgotten about what's going on in the rest of the company. I'm very happy to report that we completed a very successful Director's workshop this past month, with four directors who will be a part of next seasons' programming. I think this was an important step in the growth and development of our company, and I hope that I can entice more people to take up the directing challenge as we move forward.

And as you can see from this newsletter, I'm already starting to think about the summer. More details will follow in upcoming newsletters, but rest assured there will be plenty of great theatre going on to keep us all occupied.

Eric

Summer Preparations

It's cold right now, but summer is just around the corner at Grinder Productions. By the end of March I'll be actively preparing for all five our summer shows, in conjunction with the directors. Please see the last page of this newsletter for information about the opportunities we have coming up to get involved on the production side of things this summer, and watch for more information in the April newsletter about how you can help us sell this season.

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Contact Info

Grinder Productions
6132 Jones Baseline
RR 2 Elora, ON
NOB 1S0

Phone:

519-780-7593

Tickets:

519-787-1981

E-mail Eric:

grinder@
grinderproductions.org

E-mail Sarah:

publicity
@grinderproductions.org

Progress Report: Black Coffee

Rehearsals are now well underway for our second-annual Agatha Christie Revival Showcase Production. The large, talented cast of Grinder veterans and newcomers continues to surprise me week after week with the freshness and vitality they all bring to the rehearsal process, and their seemingly infinite patience in the face of my ever-changing directions! Seriously, though, I do have to say a big thank-you to the cast for all the work they have done on this show so far. It is a joy and a relief to be working with people who show such great respect for the rehearsal process, and are willing to work so hard to make this show work.

Things are also progressing quite nicely on the production side as well. The set has been built and painted according to the production schedule, and the cast has already had their preliminary costume fitting (special thanks to Lis Peiper and the Elora Community Theatre for allowing us access to their costume inventory). We have now actively begun the search for props, furniture and set dressing pieces, so please keep an eye on your e-mail for any “all-calls” about props we are looking for that you might either have or know where we might be able to find.

And of course, the publicity campaign continues, but that’s the one area that we could really, really, really use your help! With one-third of the show already sold out, you’d think the other two nights would fill up fast, but the truth is Black Coffee needs to be promoted just as aggressively as any other show. If you can spare the time to help us by putting up posters, handing out flyers, helping in the box office on one of the show nights, anything, please don’t hesitate to contact either me or Sarah.

And if nothing else, make sure you come on out and see what I’m sure will be a wonderful production!

Progress Report: Girl Power

What can I say, it’s been a busy month... More details to follow in the next newsletter....

Progress Report: Picasso at the Lapin Agile

I know this show is a ways off, but since many of you have been quite interested in it, I’ll just let you know that preparations are getting underway this week. Please let me know if you’d like to help out in any production capacity.

March Workshop in Sound Design

The realm of the sound designer has changed a lot in the theatre, even in the last ten years. It has gone from being an extra effect to an integral design element, crucial to setting the mood of a show, reinforcing action and moving the story forward. Vast technological advances have brought professional sound design capabilities to every level of theatre (though not all theatres are so wise as to make adequate use of these capabilities).

Our workshop will focus on the aesthetic aspects of sound design, rather than the operations of specific sound engineering software, but will include an overview of the set-up and operation of a theatrical sound system.

We will cover what to look for in a script when thinking of sound, as well as how sound can be used effectively (and ineffectively) to comment on the action of the play. We will go through the production process to understand the differing roles of Sound Designer, Sound Engineer and Sound Operator, roles quite often combined into a single person. Though not specifically in the realm of the workshop, we will also cover some elements of musical theatre, and the unique requirements of operating sound in that medium.

This workshop will be held on Wednesday, March 7th, from 7pm to 9pm. Please call or E-mail Eric to sign up, or for more information. The cost for this workshop will be \$20.

Summer Crewing Openings

This summer is going to be a very, very busy one at Grinder Productions! We'll be producing five shows in the space of just over 12 weeks in two locations. As such, we have LOTS of opportunities for members to get involved and help us make these shows happen. I've listed below all the positions we'll need help with. As always, no experience is necessary for any of these positions, we'll get you trained up to where you need to be in no time. There are small, medium and large-sized commitments here, so whether you're looking for something to occupy your time this summer or can just spare an evening or two, there's a place for your talents this summer at Grinder Productions. Please call or e-mail me, and we'll get you added to the list!

Stage Managers—1 per show

Assistant Stage Managers—1 for each show at Belwood

Set Designer—1 per show

Carpenters—As many as we can get

Set Painters—As many as we can get

Production Assistants—Responsible for securing all Props and Costumes, ideally 1 per show

Sound Designers—1 per show

Lighting Designers—1 for the season, likely just working in Belwood

Running Crew—Will depend on the show, but will likely need 2-3 for Noises Off

FOH Crew—Ushers and House Managers for all performances. Ennotville will only need one house manager per performance, but Belwood will require a house manager and at least two ushers.

Publicity—As always, we need EVERYBODY to help us sell these shows, but in particular we need people to put up posters, hand out flyers, and do other marketing-related tasks.

Box Office—Our ticket-selling situation is still up in the air for the summer at this time. We may require people to staff a box office for us, either just before a show or during the daytime. More information to follow.