



# Notes From The Director's Chair

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

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## New Season, Old Heroes

Fall is here, and with it work on our 5th anniversary season is well underway. The Ennotville Library is still cooling off after what was without a doubt our most successful summer season. The word on the street in Belwood is that theatre is back and it's better than ever, with our second production, **Noises Off**, receiving numerous accolades, endorsements, and even repeat business! Suffice to say we'll be back in both summer venues in 2008.

At the Grand (which is celebrating it's 80th anniversary in 2008) our first production of the season, **Future Stars II**, has just come to a smashingly successful conclusion.

And of course our fall shows, **Frankenstein** (at the Fergus Grand) and **Hangin' in the Balance** (our first show from Stage 4, at the Elora Centre for the Arts) are just beginning rehearsals.

And I'm pleased to announce the creation of a new, very exclusive club at Grinder Productions. See page 3 for the details of this new way we're honouring some of our most deserving members.

### Acting Workshops

The workshop series resumes this fall with a one-day extravaganza all about being an actor in community theatre. Due to rehearsal hall time limitations we've had to reschedule these workshops, and both the kids and teens session (for ages 8 to 18) and the adult session will take place on Saturday, September 29th. Kids and teens will be from 10am to 12pm, followed by the adults from 1pm to 4pm. Starting with the understanding that there is no one "right way" to "act," we will begin with some exercises that actors use to warm-up their minds and bodies, as well as some theatre games that build creativity and confidence. Then, using some short, simple two and three person scenes, we'll illustrate the process an actor goes through in taking stories and characters "from page to stage." The cost for each of the workshops is \$50 and will take place at the rehearsal hall. For more information or to register please contact Eric at 519-780-7593 or e-mail [grinder@grinderproductions.org](mailto:grinder@grinderproductions.org).

# Show Reports

## Final Report: Soccer Moms

The Ennotville Summer Theatre's most successful season is now over! Thanks to Julie and the girls who made this show so great. It was truly a joy to come to the theatre every night and be with this cast before the show. This season has really raised the bar at the library—I think this venue has truly “come-of-age” this summer.

## Final Report: Noises Off

Wow! That's all I can say to sum up the second production at the Belwood Hall this summer. I have to admit, I was a little worried about this one. Much to my pleasant surprise, though, the community's reaction to this production has been wonderful. People are coming up to me on the street telling me how much they enjoyed this show. I was so accosted in Tim Hortons one night someone remarked that I was the next JK Rowling (who does most of her writing in cafes)!

## Final Report: Future Stars 2

The stars have shone! The second Future Stars 2 went up this Saturday, September 8th at 7pm at the Fergus Grand Theatre. Many thanks to all the participants, and a big thank-you to Sara Dunbar, for agreeing to produce this event. I'm also happy to report that there were people who were unavailable for this show but said “Call me for next time!” so watch this newsletter for details on when and where we'll bring you Future Stars 3!

## Progress Report—

### Hangin' in the Balance

Not much to report on this one yet—unless you count getting the script finished! Rehearsals are just getting underway, so watch the October newsletter for more information about this little show, one of the most special, most personal projects ever undertaken in this company.

## Progress Report—Frankenstein

It's here! The second production of the Fergus Grand season is on the cusp of rehearsals. Preparations have already been going on for months, with Director Georgie Landry and Stage Manager Julie Kennedy busy assembling the cast and crew, organizing schedules and making production decisions. The sizeable set is well on its way to being completed, and prop and costume preparations are underway as well.

I'm very excited that Grinder Productions is doing this show. It will be, without a doubt, one of the largest, most complex shows we've ever done. It will be challenging, and you can be sure that in the next newsletter there will be a call for people to help us out with the various areas of production. I see this show as an incredible opportunity for our company, a chance to stretch ourselves further and see what we are capable of doing, and to show off that capability to our audiences. And, if we all pull together to make it happen, we will all have a lot of fun.

## Grinder's Angels

I am starting a new, very exclusive club at Grinder Productions, Grinder's Angels.

In order to become an Angel you have to do something that literally rescues a show, season, or even the entire company from artistic and financial destruction. While there are certainly many people who could qualify for this honour (and I will be adding to the list in the coming months) this recognition is only for the most extra-ordinary contributions. So that being said, here's the first group of honourees.

### **Stephanie Russell for "Seeing Red"**

Grinder Productions was almost killed before it was born, before Stephanie stepped in the night before the staged reading of my first play.

### **Sandy Lai for "Butterflies Are Free"**

This show was already open and running before I learned my cast member would be dropping out. In two weeks Sandy prepared for a leading role in this difficult play.

### **Stacey Ingham for "Dirty Work at the Crossroads"**

One week away from opening night Stacey was confronted with playing a French Maid in a Melodrama. An impossible task if ever there was one, but not only did she manage to learn the lines, her performance almost stole the show!

### **Shane Monaghan for "The Melville Boys"**

He was off-book for the first scene by the second rehearsal, had the lines completely down a week later, and by opening night was able to play some very, very tricky comedic and emotional scenes so well that audience members were moved to laughter and tears.

### **Becky Branton for "The Melville Boys"**

Performing another play, finishing exams and teaching swimming lessons weren't enough to stop Becky from tackling a complex, mature role and excelling at it, all the while taking direction from her own father.

### **Congratulations Everyone!**

So what do you get for being an Angel? Well, besides my undying respect and admiration (and I hope the respect and admiration of everyone in the company) there is really nothing that I can give these people to adequately express my gratitude for what they have done for Grinder Productions. As a small token of appreciation though, the people on this list have, from this day forward, **Free Admission** to any Grinder Productions event. Anytime, any show, these five individuals are always welcome. Most of you know that I do not offer complimentary tickets to our shows lightly. In fact, I've even been called stingy (no, seriously!), but extra-ordinary people who do extra-ordinary things for us deserve the most extra-ordinary recognition we can give them.