

SUMMER 2014

THE OFFICIAL CTC NEWSLETTER
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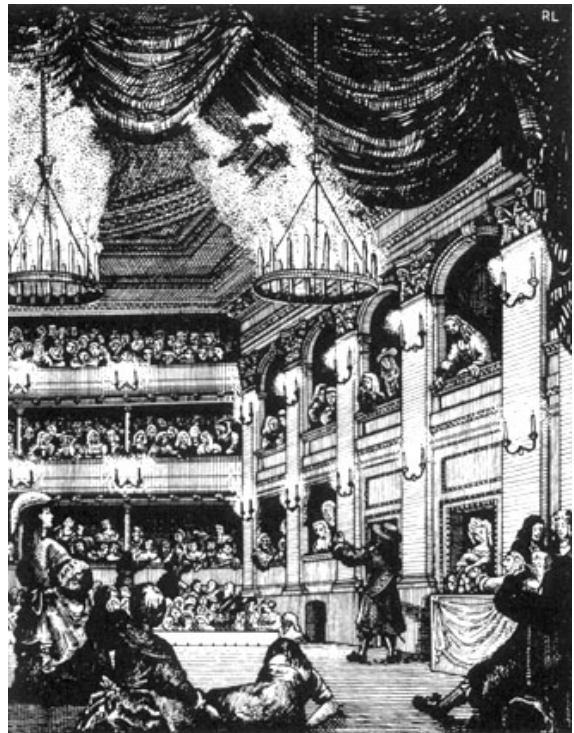
PLAYHOUSE CREATURES

Happy New Year to all our members and friends, this year I'm celebrating a fresh start with some new fonts – so if you're a font nerd, let me know what you think! It's the Chinese year of the Wooden Horse, so watch out for Trojans! Anyway...

What you really want to know is what the next CTC production is going to be. You've heard the name by now – it's *Playhouse Creatures* by English playwright April De Angelis, a writer who has also worked as an actress. De Angelis was inspired by a non-fiction account of early actresses in London called *The First English Actresses* written by Elizabeth Howe. In 2012 there was an exhibition of paintings at the National Portrait Gallery in London with the same title – so the subject is very popular at the moment. The script was written and first performed in 1997, and was staged last year in Perth at the Guild Studio. It's a comedy drama – very funny, but also dark and moving. The play is set in 1669, during the reign of Charles II. This era is referred to as the Restoration, as it was the restoration of the English Monarchy after decades of rule by the puritanical Parliamentarians under Cromwell. Charles II was intelligent, supported religious tolerance, was highly cultured and dedicated to women and pleasure! Up until this time female roles had always been played by young men, but Charles decreed that women should be allowed to tread the boards as well. One of his most famous mistresses was an actress, Nell Gwyn, who is a character in *Playhouse Creatures*. In fact all of the characters in the play were real actresses, apart from Doll Common, who was a character from a play written in the early 1600s by Ben Jonson, *The Alchemist*, in which Doll is a young prostitute. So she is resurrected in her old age for *Playhouse Creatures*. A reviewer of the recent Perth production said that it **'is such a funny, touching, play...I would go so far as to say that it is one of the strongest feminist statements I have seen in any medium, and one of the funniest plays I've seen in years.'**



Portrait of Nell Gwyn



Covent Garden Theatre circa 1674

The 5 Characters:

The cast consists of five women, as follows:

Doll Cotton – an old woman (a straight-talking ex tart, suitable for actors over 60)

Nell Gwyn – a sixteen-year-old girl (an aspirational and charismatic fire-cracker of a girl, suitable for actors aged between 15 and 25 – or up to 30 if you've got it!)

Mrs Betterton – an actress of fifty (the matriarch of the theatre, a demanding, nuanced role suitable for actors aged 45 to 65)

Mrs Marshall, an actress in her late twenties (for actors aged 30-50)

Mrs Farley, an actress in her early twenties (for actors aged 25-45, must be of believably 'child-bearing' age, and younger than Mrs Marshall)



Elizabeth Barry



Moll Davis

Auditions: To be held on 25th Jan, 10-4pm. Call Kate to make an appointment on 0431 998 707. You'll need to prepare a speech in advance – select one from the three available on our website at www.castlemaintheatrecompany.com

How great was CINDERELLA WITH THE LOT?

OMG if you didn't see this one, you really missed out! Yup Cinderella with The Lot was a run-away success, with packed houses and happy audiences. The kids did an amazing job, and their skills have really taken off in the last year, to the point that some were even comfortable improvising during the performance! This is a credit to their dedication, and to the skills of their fabulous facilitator and director Kirstie Babbage. Kirstie's directing was masterful, with great attention to detail – down to the backstage crew having their own characters, wearing hard hats and changing the set to 'The Girl from Ipenema', and interacting with the actors whilst they moved the furniture. The set was beautifully put together by Ken and John, and John's pyrotechnics added an extra dimension to the show.



Cinderella welcomes her stepsisters to the Pizza Shop



Stepmother and step sisters prepare for the dance comp in gorgeous matching tracksuits

The parents gave us so much help with backstage, dressing room and front of house assistance, and a special CTC thankyou goes out to them. The show really did have the lot – dance routines, audience participation, work-outs, and of course, plenty of magic. We got a great write up in the local paper from Lisa Dennis, which praised our talented young actors. Well done to everyone involved and a huge CTC thankyou to all of you! PS – more great Cinderella pics on the CTC website archive

The Actors Studio in Castlemaine

Mark Penzak helped out backstage on Cinderella, and you'll also know him from the acclaimed kids show *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* that was recently on at the Phee Broadway Theatre. Mark has put together a great course for actors wanting to brush up their skills. Over to Mark:

"As we all know, Castlemaine has an incredibly deep and diverse pool of theatrical talent, however as far as I know, there hasn't been much opportunity for performers to attend class and keep the artistic motor tuned. Starting in early Feb, in conjunction with the Castlemaine Continuing Education, we will be holding The Actors Studio - a space intended for experienced actors to work together, sharpen skills and explore technique. In this initial programme, seven theatre practitioners will present a one-off workshop in an area of their expertise. The emphasis is on creating a varied and invigorating workshop where the participants can try something new, experiment and get stagetime.

If this initial series finds support, then I'd like to see these classes become an on-going concern managed in a co-op structure. I feel certain that there's a great deal we could learn by sharing each other's skills and company.

Details are still being worked out but I hope to get everything sorted and announced very shortly. In the meantime, if you want to contact me, my email is markpenzak@gmail.com.



Busting the moves in the final scene of Cinderella

VINYL KNIGHTS presents AUSTRALIA DAY FUN AT THE BRIDGE

The Mysterious Masked DJs known as **The Vinyl Knights** will be spinning some good ol' Aussie numbers for you at the Bridge on Australia Day. Rumour has it the Vinyl Knights may actually be CTC members, some even suggest one of them may be on the Committee – but who knows...? For those of you unAustralian individuals who failed your citizenship test, Australia Day is Sunday 26th January, and The Bridge Hotel is found at 21 Walker Street Castlemaine. To find out what time they are playing, call The Bridge on 5472 1161.



Could this perhaps be one of the mystery DJs playing Aussie Hits at the Bridge on Australia Day?

WEBSITE UPDATE – How to Propose a Project

The lovely CTC website created for us by Green Graphics, continues to expand. I've added a new page to explain how to **propose a play** to the CTC. We are always looking for interesting projects so have a peek at <http://www.castlemainetheatrecompany.com/get-involved/proposing-a-play/>

I'll be adding more pictures and shows to our archive over the summer, and I'm interested in anyone who has information about the history of community theatre in the Castlemaine area, as I'd love to make our History page a really intriguing read....

PLEASE CONTRIBUTE TO HEADLINER

Please send me articles for Headliner, if you have been involved in a recent show I'd love to hear your story - or you could review a local production, or let us know about other things going on in the world of local theatre. Photos to accompany your articles are much appreciated. The next Headliner will be going out in April, and I'd like it to reflect the many diverse voices of the Castlemaine Theatre Company. Send your articles to castlemainetheatreco@gmail.com

That's all for now...enjoy the heatwave, it'll soon be over...like us on facebook, check out the website, support local theatre...see you there!