

ARC Newsletter

Issue: 17, January 2006



From the President

What a hectic (but productive) few months it has been for the Committee of 2005/2006. We held our 2005 SGM on 6th November to discuss the future direction of the company. ARC's 10-year reunion on 26th November saw a night of reminiscing and entertainment. The Committee chose 'Hot Mikado' as ARC's 2006 musical and are very excited about our new and enthusiastic artistic team. The 2005 guild awards were brilliant, with a knock-out performance from ARC's three lovely witches. We've been continuing to spend many hours compiling ARC's asset inventory (to be completed in March). ARC's promotional DVD is about to be sent out to local schools, while ARCappella completed its Christmas performances and is about to hold its first-ever meeting on 5th February.

Catherine Sharples has announced that she's moving to Queensland and has resigned from her General Committee position. We wish Cath all the best; she's been a valued member of ARC's Committee and cast for a number of years. She's promised to come see 'Hot Mikado' – we're going to hold you to that Cath! With Cath's departure imminent, we've found a new ARCian who is eager to help and be part of the team; I'd like to welcome Caroline Dalfonso to ARC – she's going to be a valued member of the Committee and has already thrown herself into the deep end, helping us with our most recent Asset Inventory day at Kew. Welcome Caroline!

"no-one more deserving" this editor certainly agrees, however, that does leave room for someone being equally as deserving. In his natural modesty our President has kept from mentioning his achievement of a ROOSTA and induction into life membership of ARC. So congratulations Adrian, our hats go off to you. Now there is no escape! - Ed.

The 2005 Guild Awards

ARC's production of 'The Witches of Eastwick' was one that the judging panel of the Music Theatre Guild of Victoria could not ignore. This was helped by the enthusiasm of the cast, the spectacular performances, and Bryce's conversation with the judges during his ad-lib in the tennis scene. The talent of our three witches – Laura Burzacott, Virginia Crouch, and Alana Kiely – was duly recognised when they were asked to perform a song from tWoE, 'Make Him Mine', at the Guild Awards in December; the first time ARC would perform at the Guilds, and hopefully not the last. Anticipation and excitement built up in the five months leading up to the awards, with the Committee organising a group of 30 to attend, most of the tickets being snapped up within a couple of days.

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Melissa Ventura and I have touched base with the youth co-ordinators from both Darebin & Banyule City Councils to discuss ARC. We also met with the principal of Viewbank College (owner of Banyule theatre) in December 2005 to discuss ARC's current relationship with the school. We've had great feedback from all meetings and it's a really encouraging start to the year. We will continue to see how ARC and local schools can benefit each other and will hopefully build on this over the course of 2006.

On a final note, I'd like to personally congratulate Andrew Jame-son on becoming a life member of ARC. He received a ROOSTA (Recognition Of Outstanding Service To ARC) at the 10-year reunion in November. I have worked closely with Andrew on the Committee and there's no-one more deserving of this award. He's a great friend to anyone who has the pleasure of knowing him and is always the first person to put up his hand for any job ARC can hurl at him. He's done it all: Committee (including President for 2 years), Director, Stage Manager, Set Construction manager, Cast member (many lead roles), creator of ARC's budgeting system and Member database, and more recently – Webmaster. Congratulations Andy!

Adrian Ventura

ARC's 10 Year Anniversary

The 26th of November marked a very special occasion for ARC, as the company celebrated 10 fantastic years of existence by hosting its 10 year reunion. The night was filled with highlight performances from all 10 musicals that ARC has performed – a big thank you to Matthew Spiteri, Adrian Ventura, Andrew Jame-son, Lidia Mancini, Luciano Parissi, Robyn-Jane Lacey, Kate Faye, Robert Clark, Paul Odorissio, Bec Gooley, Melissa Ven-tura, Laura Burzacott, Virginia Crouch, Alana Kiely, and all the ARCappella members who performed on the night.

Hosts – and company founders – Anthony Ventura and Amelia van Lint, shared with us some of their fond memories from the early beginnings of the theatre company, with photo displays from past shows, camps, parties and rehearsals.

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The 2005 Guild Awards – Continued from front page

Four weeks from the big event, the ARC message board was inundated with congratulatory messages to Alana, who garnered a nomination for Best Female Performer in a Leading Role, as well as Virginia who received a commendation for her performance, and James Cutler who received a commendation for direction. Other gifted ARCians recognised by the Guild by being nominated for non-ARC productions were: Damien Calvert, Best Lighting in "The Full Monty" with PLOS Musical Productions; James Cutler, Best Male Performer in a Leading Role in "Baby" with Fab Nobs Theatre; and Tyler Hess, Best Male Performer in a Supporting Role in "Oliver" with Catchment Players of Darebin.

Not to mention the mystery Judges Award that ARC was guaranteed of receiving! As the Judges Awards are bestowed by each judge for notable achievement in any area of his or her choosing, speculation was rife on who or what would be the recipient of the award, including: Best Ventriloquist Dummy Award (to be awarded to Fidel), and Best Transvestite Award (to be awarded to Adrian). The Gala Presentation was a fantastic event, filled with glitz, glamour and drag queens. After everyone had downed their gratis glass of wine and complemented everyone else on their gorgeous dress/hairstyle/shoes/tie, it was time for the show and the presentation of the Bruce Awards themselves.

The mystery was finally revealed when the Judge's Award was presented to Laura for her interpretation of "Alex" in "The Witches of Eastwick". Congratulations! A highlight of the evening was when our three lovely ladies blew everyone away with their performance of *Make Him Mine*, and received a standing ovation from the ARC section of the audience. If there was an award for the Greatest Volume Cheering or the Most Enthusiastic Whoohoo-ing, ARC would've received a brick for sure.



Luciano Parissi, Seb Dworkin, John McTiernan, Andrew Jameson and Frank Saladino all looking quite dapper.

ARC's 10 Year Anniversary – Continued from front page

A big thank you and congratulations again to them for not only beginning this company but helping conduct the night in such a smooth and elegant manner.



Just before their performance at the 2005 Guild Awards, ARC's Witches – Alana Kiely, Virginia Crouch and Laura Burzacott – do us proud once again with a fantastic performance.

It was with great pleasure that the current Committee was able to grant two of its incredibly dedicated and loyal members the honour of life membership. In accordance with guidelines established at the 2005 AGM, current President and longest-serving Committee Member Adrian Ventura and former President and Director Andrew Jameson were presented with Life Membership awards. Adrian and Andrew are two of ARC's longest serving members, both joining the company when they were teenagers. Their dedication and passion for ARC were recognised and celebrated at the conclusion of the night, and the Committee congratulates them once again on their achievement.

It was fantastic to see many familiar faces enjoy this special night and our thanks extends to everyone that was able to attend. A special thank you must also go to Matt Galgano (pianist for the night) Damien Calvert, Marty Accari and Lisa Hun (lighting and stage design) Andrew Jameson and Adrian Ventura (audio visual) and our supportive network of friends and family who made this night the fabulous occasion it was. We look forward to continuing the strong traditions of ARC for many more years to come!

ARCappella News

ARCappella, ARC's very own unaccompanied choir, has had a very successful year. In December, we performed a vibrant and fun program of traditional Christmas favourites and international Christmas-themed songs at three successive Christmas performances. First off was 'Carols by Candlelight' for Footscray YMCA Disability Service and Support Organisation on the 16th, second was the Darebin 'Carols in the Park' on the 17th, and third the Darebin Ivanhoe Christmas Lights performance on the 20th.

We extend a big warm welcome to new member Alex Twining who joined ARCappella in November. Alex is new to both ARC and ARCappella and has already proved an invaluable Soprano.

If you are interested in getting involved in the fast and furious choral world that is ARCappella, come down to the ARCappella General Meeting. Details on the website www.arc-theatre.com at the News tab.

SGM 2005 Debrief

Following suggestions made at the 2005 ARC AGM, a Special General Meeting was held on the 6th of November to discuss the direction in which ARC members would like the company to head for the next 5-10 years and beyond. With the ever-increasing budgets, technical quality, and audience interest of ARC productions, the members felt it was time to take a step back and rethink the unique fundamentals of the company and why we aim to be a unique company.

It cannot be denied that the past few ARC productions have been incredibly popular and advanced in their standard – both technically and artistically – with more and more people auditioning and creating a buzz around the company. However, it seems that this trend has come at a cost to ARC. The absence of youth and enthusiasm in the theatre company to take up off-stage, technical and Committee roles is a concern as ARC was founded to provide opportunities in all aspects of theatre for young people, not merely on-stage roles. With these issues in mind, ARC has taken a new and daring step in relation to its casting policy. The members present passed a vote that 30% of cast members must firstly be under 20 years of age and/or secondly have never performed in an amateur theatre production (i.e. outside of school) before.

By implementing this rule we anticipate that we will get more youth involved in the company as a whole who are keen to stay around and be the future leaders of ARC. The success of these new rulings will be reviewed at ARC's next AGM.

Another concern raised at the SGM was the limited amount of space for the ever-increasing amount of assets and rehearsal room required by ARC. Subsequently, a huge amount of hard work by Adrian and Melissa Ventura has been invested into securing a place for us to store our costumes, sets, props and tools; as well as being a venue to conduct rehearsals and set construction. Adrian and Mel have been busy liaising with local high schools and youth support services trying to look into such locations. While no immediate results have presented themselves, it has been an incredibly important and on-going exercise which has allowed us to stretch our network of support and has no doubt increased our chances for future opportunities.

We love your input and would be grateful for any suggestions for spaces suitable for set construction, costume and set storage areas and rehearsal spaces you may know or would like us to look into. Alternately, you may know a small business interested in sponsoring us. If so please e-mail us at: info@arc-theatre.com

On behalf of the Committee and the ARC membership I would like to say a huge thanks to both Mel and Adrian for the countless hours they have put into building these valuable relationships and researching all avenues for ARC's next steps.

**Minutes from ARC recent SGM can be viewed on the ARC website in the Members section.*

ARCappella Meeting

ARCappella is holding a meeting on Sunday 5th February. Discussions will include: ARCappella's aims and objectives for 2006, rehearsal venues and times, suggestions for new songs to add to our repertoire and ideas on new events, competitions and venues to sing at. Current ARCappella members and those interested in joining the fun and diverse a cappella choir are encouraged to come.

Venue: Adrian and Melissa Ventura's house: 9 Byfield Street Reservoir

Time: 2:00 pm onwards

For further information please contact Melissa on 0416 289 845, or e-mail info@arc-theatre.com

Production Team Needed!

We are now looking for people interested in becoming part of the production team for our 2006 musical Hot Mikado. Roles include:

- Stage manager
- Assistant stage manager
- Costume designer/co-ordinator
- Set designer
- Ticket secretary
- Hair/ make-up design
- Front of house co-coordinator
- Graphic designer
- Set construction leader
- Sound operator
- Lighting Designer

If any of these positions are of interest to you, or you would like to know more about what they involve, please call 0402 291 567, email info@arc-theatre.com, or check the position descriptions on the ARC website www.arc-theatre.com. Interviews for these positions will be held at the same time as the Hot Mikado cast auditions, on Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th of February at Preston Creative Living Centre, 648 High St. Reservoir.

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As always, a huge thanks to our sponsors. if you know of any company willing to support ARC in any manner, please contact: info@arc-theatre.com

The 2006 Artistic Team

The selection of Artistic Team members for an ARC musical is never an easy one for the Committee to make. As such, we thought we'd let the ARC community know just how this Committee went about selecting our team. From the outset, it was important to us to select a "team", rather than a "group of individuals". We needed to assess each applicant, not just based on their artistic abilities or experience, but also on their leadership, mentoring, team-work and understanding and embracing of the aims and objectives of ARC. We felt that this last point in particular was crucial, based largely on input received from ARC members at the 2005 AGM and SGM.

After advertising through the usual channels, we received 17 expressions of interest, for all our positions, significantly higher than in previous years. Each applicant was then emailed a comprehensive list of the aims and objectives of ARC, what it means to be an ARC member, and specific selection criteria for each role. This narrowed the field down to 11 formal applicants, who now had a very good appreciation of what ARC stood for, and how it differs from other amateur theatre companies.

Hot Mikado Auditions

Bookings are now being taken for the 2006 production of Hot Mikado: East meets West head-on in this hilarious 1940's-style updating of the perennial Gilbert and Sullivan classic. With the music transmuted into blues, Cab Calloway swing, hot gospel, scorching torch songs and "Three Little Maids" turned into an Andrews Sisters' show-stopper. This Zoot-suited, tap-dancing colourful show is certain to provide the ideal evening out for the whole family.

The auditions will follow the usual format of ARC auditions: two contrasting songs in the style of the show (but not from the show) displaying your vocal ability, reading if requested and a compulsory dance audition. Sheet music – including piano accompaniment – of the songs you have prepared must be provided in the correct key (see www.sheetmusicplus.com, www.sheetmusicstore.com or Alans Music Stores for help). You will also need to bring a photo of yourself (and a CV if already prepared) and may be required for a call back.

Saturday 18th February

Sunday 19th February

Saturday 25th February

**Sunday 26th February
(compulsory dance audition only)**

Saturday 4th of March (call backs if required)

Auditions will be held at Preston Creative Living Centre, 648 High St. Reservoir. Auditions will be between 10:30am and 6:00pm.

See www.arc-theatre.com for more details.

Call **0402 291 567** to book.

The interested applicants were then interviewed by the Committee over the course of three days. Being armed with all the information they could want about ARC, this permitted for a deep level of integrated discussion, allowing the Committee and the applicants to get to know one another, and begin working in a common direction to making the 2006 show happen. The standard of applicants was remarkably high, and we welcomed the tough decisions to select the best possible team. We are therefore happy to announce that the all-new 2006 ARC artistic team will be:

Director – Stewart McGregor

Assistant Director – James Cook

Music Director – Malcolm Fawcett

Co-choreographers – Tanya Mamo and Aminee Majid

We wish them the best of luck for a fun, productive and successful 2006 ARC Musical!



The 2006 Artistic Team: Tanya Mamo (back), Aminee Majid, Stewart McGregor, James Cook and Malcolm Fawcett (front).

For Your Diary

Auditions and Production Team Interviews

February 18th, 19th, 25th, 26th and March 4th

Trivia Night

April 23rd

Karaoke Night

June 9th

Performances

June 23rd, 24th, 29th, 30th, July 1st (Matinee & evening)

Annual General Meeting

August 20th