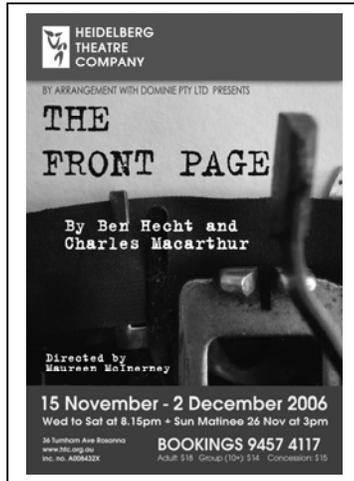


PROMPTS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE HEIDELBERG THEATRE COMPANY



THE FRONT PAGE

by Ben Hecht and Charles Macarthur
directed by Maureen McInerney

15th Nov – 2nd Dec, 2006

Wednesday to Saturday at 8.15pm,
Matinee Sunday 26th Nov. at 3pm

Subscribers requiring to alter their chosen night or reserve their booking are asked to call BEFORE Monday, 30th October, 2006.

by arrangement with Dominie Pty Ltd.

Well it has certainly been worth the wait! The Company has wanted to stage **The Front Page** for years and is delighted to finally be bringing the show to its stage and doubly delighted to have **Maureen McInerney** directing the piece with very able assistance from Margaret Hassall.

It's a great show to end the year. A classic modern American comedy set in Chicago in 1928 with a wonderful array of larger than life characters; the naïve fiancé, the hard bitten newspaper reporters, the gangster's moll, the politically cunning mayor and many others.

The Company is very pleased to welcome lots of newcomers to Heidelberg for **The Front Page**: **Becca Posterino, Bill Connolly, Jeff Saliba, Gaetano Santo, Christine Dick, Fiona Brett, David Miller, Paul Rochford, and Paul Knox** will play together with actors well known to HTC audiences; **Jim Murphy, Jim Thomson, Kim Watty, David Hunt, David Macrae, Jonne Finnemore and Rod Chappel.**

So as you can see it is a huge cast and the backstage contingent is just as awesome! Once again **George Bissett** and **Tim McLaughlan** are joint Production Co-ordinators and Sound Designers. The Sound Operation is in the capable hands of **Struan McGregor**. The Company is delighted to have **Stelios Karigiannis** to design the Lighting, and the wonderful **Shelley McKemmish** as Stage Manager for the show. Costumes are being handled by **Maureen McInerney, Lois Connor, Wendy Drowley** and Swinburne Student

Georgiana Russell-Head. Set Art and Décor are in the hands of the talented **Marie Mackrell** and **Leanne Cole.**

Set Design is by **Mark Wager** and has been adapted for the HTC stage by **Dennis Pain.** All the sets and props are from Camberwell Grammar School, who did the show last year. So this is a set with a difference for HTC, and we have a large and capable team of Set Builders who are already putting it all together and tweaking it to fit. Team members are **Doug McNaughton, Tony Brady, Dennis Pain, Ted Drowley, Paddy Moriarty, Ron Young, Des Harris, Jim Thomson Ashley Phillips and Adrian Boyce.**

So it's a huge team both on and off the stage for a great show to round off our 2006 Season. Don't miss **The Front Page**, it's going to be a stunner!!

Please note:

When BOOKING TICKETS for HTC productions, please phone our Ticket Box on – 9457 4117 or fax to 9457 2078.

Please **DO NOT** use email to make Bookings or for any queries regarding tickets.

2006 VDL AWARDS

The Victorian Drama League Awards are on again this year, Sunday 17th December and HTC's entry is **ART** directed by Wayne Pearn.

The Company has used its allocated ten tickets for the Awards night, any members wanting to attend should contact the VDL directly.

P.O Box 141, Rosanna VIC 3084
Enquiries 9455 3039
Fax 9457 2078
Web www.htc.org.au
Email htc@htc.org.au
Inc. No. A008432X

EMAIL PROMPTS CAMPAIGN: Like to join HTC's email list and receive *Prompts* in digital format? It also saves us money on printing and postage. If so please send an email to prompts@htc.org.au and include your name, address & phone number

BOOKINGS & SUBSCRIPTIONS 9457 4117



REVIEW

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof

by Tennessee Williams

Directed by Geoff Hickey

Viewed Thursday 14th September 2006 and Reviewed by Frances Devlin-Glass for

3CR's CURTAIN UP – Sundays at One (855 AM)

One expects obsession, steamy sexuality and family dysfunction from Tennessee Williams, and it's a great pleasure to see one of the lesser-known plays. I was delighted to have been uncontaminated by the famous film version of the play, and to be seeing it for the first time in Geoff Hickey's able hands at Heidelberg.

The play is long and repetitive, perhaps too much so for a modern audience, and I think a bit of judicious cutting might have improved the experience. I heard rather too often about 'spastic colons' for my liking. I realise that part of the technique of the play is to create the sense of long hot leisured afternoons which thicken the brain and make conversation slow and ritualised, but even so, times and standards have changed. So, some of my disquiet comes from the script itself. If you can take a blue pencil to Shakespeare, then Tennessee Williams' longueurs are also edible.

It's an intriguing play which makes some expected, and unexpected, changes of direction. It involves two families who are predatory on *Big Daddy's* grand southern estate, and are hovering for the death. Those families involve some feuding siblings and sisters-in-law, and it was fun to see those pathologies play out. *Brick*, the tortured gay, made a nice foil for his corporate brother, *Gooper*, played by Dan Purdey. *Brick* has a key role in the play because he is at the centre of several difficult relationships, mostly with his economically predatory wife, *Maggie*, but also with his Father who wants closeness with him but can't achieve it. I was a long way from the stage and am a bit short-sighted, but I felt Angelo De Cata overdid impassivity. I'd have liked more (subtle) variation in facial expression. He was, however, terrific in his explosive scenes. One had the sense of a drum of explosive going off, not at all in his control, which was excellent. He plays a closet gay, and the elaboration of what it was to be that in the 1950s in puritanical America was perhaps one of the most fascinating aspects of the play. The dilemma for all those in the know - for wife, father and the gay man himself - was almost unspeakable. Indeed one of the key themes of the play was how difficult real interpersonal communication is. In representing homosexuality, Williams was certainly boldly venturing into uncharted waters, and one is aware of the ways in which he was silenced by moral and legal attitudes because of the way in which the plot drops the issue later in the second half.

Maggie's role is a plum one, and Deborah McKelvey looked terrific as the vamp-on-the-make (the silk slip and the red dress were sensational), but I did have some problems with her chattering mono-tonal voice. I know she's characterised as a vapid southern belle, who bores her husband witless, but the risk is that she bores the audience too, and being a chatterer doesn't necessarily rule

Heidelberg Theatre Company

is delighted to announce the

2007 Season of Plays

Your copy of the **2007 Playbill** will be included with the final issue of *Prompts*, coming to you in a couple of weeks from now. Details of subscription renewal, new subscriptions, Gift Subscriptions and Gift Vouchers will be found in the **Playbill**.

Play 1. Caravan by Donald Macdonald.

directed by Dianne Mileo

Season: February 14th - March 3rd, matinee February 25th.

Play 2. Dinner by Moira Buffini.

directed by Joan Moriarty

Season: April 18th - May 5th, matinee April 29th.

Play 3. The Grapes of Wrath adapted by

Frank Galati from the novel by John Steinbeck

directed by Chris Baldock

Season: July 4th - 21st, matinee July 15th.

Play 4. The Memory of Water by Sheelagh

Stephenson, directed by Chris McLean.

Season: 12th - 29th September, matinee September 23rd.

Play 5: The Lady in the Van

by Alan Bennett, directed by David Dare.

Season: Nov 14th - Dec 1st, matinee Nov 25th.

out some vocal variety. I found, too, that she was gesturally caught short: too much vamping, sometimes not quite as well-timed as it might be. On occasions, when the gestural was over-the-top, it was also very expressive (eg., when powdering her arms and underarms - terrific), but it was the predatory moving from A to B, the flouncing, that I found embarrassing. I still don't know for sure if it was modelled on an old film, but, if so, I want to see her being truer to herself. I'm sure she has a fine-line in contemporary eroticism hard-wired into her body, and we could have seen more of that.

When *Big Mama* and *Big Daddy* burst onto the stage, they always seized the attention. The redoubtable Sandy Green was a treat, and I loved the characteristic running gesture. She looked fabulous in the part in her floral number. Bob Crawford was terrifying (and masterful) as the patriarch - full of arrogance, swagger, chutzpah, and attack. A very effective, indeed huge, characterisation.

Ron Chapman and Leeann Cairnduff had small roles as the doctor and Maggie's sister-in-law respectively. Leeann could have done with more in the way of claws (a bit too bourgeois for my liking). Ron created an equivocal doctor in thrall in a somewhat befuddled way to the needs of the family, rather walked upon by the larger-than-life family. I enjoyed his role.

The set for this play was terrific: the apartment was sumptuously furnished, in a credible style, and looked out on two balconies with a view into treetops adorned with parasitic plants which are signifiers to me of southern heat and humidity. It was good to see those outdoor spaces used as the room must have seemed to its inhabitants a gilded cage, as Maggie commented.

So, certainly worth a look, as it's a funny and very intense play, but it has dated quite a bit. **Frances Devlin-Glass.**

HTC YOUTH presents COSÌ
8-9 & 13-16 December 2006

It's the early 70s. A questionable war is raging and the community is divided. Free love, freedom of expression and individuality will soon give way to 'no free lunches'. As usual, the unfortunates, those deemed 'not normal' are ignored and mostly unheard of, kept out of sight and 'out of mind'. It's then. It could be now.

In Melbourne, Lewis, a young man takes on the challenge of working with a group of these people to 'bring them out of their shells'. In the shell of an old hall we witness this as they face the daunting, nigh impossible task of mounting a production of *Così Fan Tutte*, no less. There is chaos and confrontation mixed with great hilarity. With patience and perseverance (and a few changes!) it all works out.

The play, and the play within reveal the participants' strengths, weaknesses and insights. They both ask questions about the nature of love, trust, fidelity and commitment. What's important? What makes us tick?

Behold, **HTC Youth's** production of Louis Nowra's **Così**. The cast features familiar and new talent on the HTC stage. **Don't miss it!**



HEIDELBERG
THEATRE
COMPANY

YOUTH

by Louis Nowra
directed by A K Boyce

by arrangement with
HLA Management



8-9 & 13-16 Dec 2006 at 8.15pm

ENQUIRIES 9457 4117

All Tickets \$10



36 Turnham Ave Rosanna

www.htc.org.au inc. no. A008432X

AUDITION NOTICE

Sunday 19 November from 6pm

Monday 20 November from 7:30 pm

at Heidelberg Theatre Company, 36 Turnham Avenue, Rosanna

CARAVAN

by Donald McDonald directed by Dianne Mileo

Season: Wednesday 14th February – Saturday 3rd March, 2007

Sunday Matinee 25th February at 3pm

Parkes, the no-longer-30ish proud owner of a not-quite-so-luxury caravan and "the wife" of similar age, *Penny*, are on their annual summer holiday. Aah, but this year it will be a little bit different ... because this year they are to be accompanied by three equally "established" friends: the always-elegant *Monica* and her husband *Rodney* and the confirmed bachelor, *Pierce* - who has somewhat complicated matters by bringing along his latest girlfriend ... his very young girlfriend ... *Gwendolyn*.

Two weeks with six people in one van - add in secrets and liaisons, mishaps and temper tantrums, then finish with a splash of wet feet and the result is ... *!

CHARACTERS

- Parkes** 40ish. Proud owner of the caravan in question, has a temper.
Penny 40ish. Long suffering wife of Parkes, believes everything will be OK if you act as though it is.
Rodney 40ish. Long time friend of both Penny & Parkes.
Monica 40ish. Rodney's wife, elegant but dominant & bitchy.
Pierce 40ish. Friend of both couples, a bachelor, he has never grown up.
Gwendolyn Early 20's. Pierce's latest in a long line of girlfriends.

Further queries:

Please ring the Director, Dianne Mileo on 9744 6123

**A Response to Cat on a Hot Tin Roof
Cats on our mind**

The rollercoaster of quality coming out of the Heidelberg Theatre is the mainstay of its charm. A regular season ticket holder for many years now, we have thrilled at finesse and mourned disaster for this most riveting of small theatre companies. When all said and done it really comes down to choice - the choice of the play, choice of the Director and of course the choice of the actors. These are a motley bunch. Having said that, the choice of this month's production of **Cat on a Hot Tin Roof by Tennessee Williams** is the piece de resistance. If you missed it, you missed a brilliant rendition.

At first, the thick Mississippi drawl causes the audience to pull back but we soon settle in. There is something so deliciously confronting about live theatre. There's no remote control to flick. At first worried that I wouldn't make it through the entire play because of the difficult accents I soon warmed to the southern tones and fell head, line and sinker into the drama. Intense and challenging dialogue in long tracts of soliloquy once again makes you ponder the actor's skills. How on earth do they remember all those lines?

The female lead (Deborah McKelvey), the cat herself, evokes beguilement. We struggle to understand her thinking which is exactly what we are supposed to do. Her husband, the Brick, (Angelo De Cata) is a glassy eyed alcoholic grappling with his sexual tendencies and convincing in every aspect. Big Daddy, the patriarch (Bob Crawford) gives us a neck gorging, red faced, explosive and totally believable rendition of a father troubled by "mendacity" - its lies, lies, lies!

The highlight however, I think is Big Momma (Sandy Green) who embraces the stage with her vigor, heavily strutting across the floor in a truly exhausting and excellent portrayal. Standing up to her full height (which isn't great) she shows us the persistence of women in times of inequality and we wonder at her true

What's the Goss?

**ALL MEMBERS,
SUBSCRIBERS & FRIENDS**
of the
**HEIDELBERG THEATRE
COMPANY**

are cordially invited to the
**Annual General Meeting,
In House Awards &
Christmas Party**
on **Sunday 17th**

December

commencing at **3pm.**

The champagne corks start popping around 4.30pm, so come and catch up with fellow Thespians and celebrate another great year at HTC, *YOUR* Theatre Company.

IN-HOUSE AWARDS

Adjudicating the five productions this year:

**The Knacker's ABC,
Emma Celebrazione, ART,
Cat On A Hot Tin Roof and
The Front Page**

are Judi Clark, David Dare and Helen Robinson.

The Awards follow the **AGM** which commences at 3pm.

Don't Miss Out!

power in this male dominated cotton dominion. She's a gem.

Accents appeared to trouble some of the actors at times particularly the supporting crew and I think this is the difficulty with a few of the plays chosen for the Theatre. Accents are pivotal to believability and we seem to have had many overseas plays in the last little while. However, this was really the only negative I could find for the entire play. The set as usual was delightful to behold. Must admit

WHO, WHAT, WHERE???

A big thank you from the Company to **Vlady T** and **Jessica Cole** for the great job they did operating the Lighting for the season of **Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.**

Did you see Rose lugging a big bag of goodies on TV at the big MTC Sale? Wendy and Maureen were there too, (naturally!) but managed to evade the cameras!

New chairs at HTC? Where? - In the Foyer. Very stylish!

Leanne Cole, currently studying at the Victorian College of the Arts, who painted the wonderful backdrop for **Cat**, will have her work on display at the VCA Graduation Show from 22nd Nov - 2nd December. More details of the Show can be found on these websites - <http://www.vca.unimelb.edu.au/> or <http://www.leannecole.com/>.

HTC YOUTH

Studies finished for the year and looking for a stimulating and engrossing pastime? If you are in the 15 to 25 age group and would like to work on the HTC Youth production, **Cosi**, in any capacity; actor, technician, behind the scenes or on set realisation give Anne a call at the Theatre on **9455 3039.**

though I do love the turntable stage being used! The music was subtle and appropriate.

If you missed this dramatic play, you missed a doozy! Thanks once again to all at the Heidelberg Theatre and especially to those diligent hosts at front of house - don't ever get rid of the sherry, this is what local theatre is all about! **Sue Rochford** HTC Subscriber.

NOVEMBER

Saturday 4 th	10.30am	Working Bee with Lunch
Saturday 11 th	10.30am	Working Bee with Lunch
Wednesday 15 th	8.15pm	FIRST NIGHT - Front Page
Sunday 19 th	6.00pm	AUDITION: Caravan
Monday 20 th	7.30pm	AUDITION: Caravan
Tuesday 21 st	7.30pm	Heidelberg Film Society - Good Neighbour Sam.

DECEMBER

Saturday 2 nd	8.15pm	FINAL NIGHT - Front Page
Fri 8 th & Sat 9 th	8.15pm	HTC Youth Production - COSI
Wed 13 th to Sat 16 th	8.15pm	HTC Youth Production - COSI
Sunday 17 th	3.00pm	HTC Annual General Meeting, In-House Awards and Christmas Party

HELP!!! needed at the
WORKING BEES
for **FRONT PAGE**

Saturdays
4th & 11th November
from 10.30am
lunch is provided

So do come along, it's a great experience and a fun time too!
Working Bees not your style? How about assisting backstage or foh
Like to know more - call the Theatre on
9455 3039