

SPOTLIGHT

NEWSLETTER OF PHOENIX PLAYERS

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Welcome to our November/December edition of Spotlight. This issue contains:

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MISS SAIGON

Well, as the character Chris would say "What a party that was". Admittedly, he says that after a tense moment with a gun, but you get the idea. Miss Saigon is over! All the magic has gone back into boxes and trucks and all that is left is an empty stage.

The show started back with auditions in May and as of Saturday November 28 it has ended.

Along the way we had,

- 38 adult cast
- 38 raffia hats
- 16 rifles
- 15 musicians
- 15 Vietnamese beers
- 10 crew
- 8 American flags
- 8 GI uniforms
- 6 blonde wigs
- 6 red banners
- 5 top hats
- 2 pistols
- 3 Tams
- 2 communist uniforms
- 1 black pony tail
- 1 Buddha
- 1 Ho Chi Min
- 1 murder
- 1 suicide
- 1 very large jar of fake blood.

Andapproximately 3400 audience members.



The show was a mix of a lot of fun and merriment and then a lot of tears and angst. Both onstage and offstage! This show really pushed our wonderful **cast** to their creative limits and gave them all opportunities to shine. Our performers really captured the characters and made the audience a part of the story. The outstanding work they did translating a complex story through their vocals was supported by an equally outstanding **orchestra**. Never have we had a show where so many talented musicians *wanted* to be a part of a production. The score is quite complex and includes many unusual instruments and they made it all look so easy. We are truly grateful for all the time our musos have dedicated to this show. Our great **crew** ensured all those smooth scene transitions and fast changes happened. They also handled lighting-fast props changovers. The team from **Eclipse Lighting and Sound** took things to a new high when it came to the technical aspects of the show. Literally a high, getting the helicopter up into the air and getting it running would not have been possible without their expertise. Thanks to lighting operator **Berin Denham** and great sound effects and design by **James McPherson**. Along with the running of our "Bui Doi" orphan footage, I will remain forever grateful to **Chris Neal**. The other visual elements of the show came together with the creative talents of **Brian Sudding** and **Ian Croker** on set, **Judy Satrapa** on costumes and **Jess Cook** on props. All this was coordinated by **Jennie Norberry** and **Garrick Smith** our Production Manager and Stage Manager. There was also a team of Front of House personnel headed up by **Jenny Wookey** and **Suzan Cooper** and no one would have known the show was on if it was not for **Gaby Schmid**, **Tony Falla**, **Ruth Boddy** and **Coralie Wood** handling publicity.



As this was the first time we have ever collaborated with another company, we should acknowledge all the work done by our three Steering Committee representatives, **Pam McManus**, **Graham Bauerle** and **Richard Block** and also the representatives from Supa's committee, **Suzan Cooper**, **Jenny Wookey** and **Paul Adams**. They have looked after the business aspects of the show and all the coordination across both companies.

We also need to thank the wonderful sponsors, Canberra Labor Club, Contact Internet providers, Instant Colour Press, Eclipse Lighting and Sound, Dance City, Teatro Vivaldis, Voodoo Design, First Class Dry Cleaners, Pirana Music, Fivefold Creative and finally Goddard and Howse Small World Journeys for their donation of a trip to Vietnam!

The audience response to the show has been quite overwhelming. We received formal critiques from The Canberra Times, City News and The Word, but then people took it upon themselves to write to the Miss Saigon email address and add critiques to RiotAct website. Alistair Coe MLA spoke in the ACT Legislative Assembly about the quality of the show and applauded the Cast and Crew. He then used his remaining time to read into Hansard the Production Team, Cast, Crew and Orchestra names. Talk about an honour! Never did I think a musical would end up in Hansard. You can read all the crits at www.miss-saigon-canberra.com.

On a personal note I am extremely grateful to Phoenix for allowing me to direct this show. It has been an honour to bring this story to life for the first time in Canberra and I need to especially acknowledge the support and expertise of the rest of the "Girl Power" team. The lovely **Amy Fitzpatrick**, who created the sleaze in the bar scene, the might and power of the Communist Army and the ultimate American Dream. The musically gifted **Andrea Clifford** whose talent is incredible and her ability to communicate these aspects with the cast is astounding. Thank you to them both for always encouraging me when I had days where I doubted I could do this.

Finally I need to acknowledge all the audience members who came along and embraced what we did. The tears that you shed and the applause that you gave made all the hard work worthwhile.

"To Miss Saigon"

Kelda McManus
Director

CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE

The Committee wish to thank everyone involved in making the Canberra Premiere of *Miss Saigon* such a success. We feel very proud of you all. Many thanks to Supa Productions also for being part of this exciting joint production.

WINNER OF THE TRIP TO VIETNAM PRIZE

The winner of the trip to Vietnam is Heather Peacock of Kambah (who saw the show on Thursday 26 November).

Congratulations Heather!

We hope she enjoys the "A scent of Green Papaya" tour!

PHOENIX PLAYERS CHRISTMAS PARTY

This year Phoenix will have our Christmas Party on Sunday 6 December from 1pm – a BBQ at the Lake Ginninderra Western Foreshores (McDermott Place, Joynton-Smith Drive) – the tables near the children's play equipment (if we can get them)...



Phoenix Players will supply sausages, onions, bread rolls, tomato sauce, and something for dessert. Please bring your own drinks and salad (and some to share perhaps) and a chair or blanket to sit on. If you'd like something besides sausages on the BBQ, bring that too ☺

We will also be doing our traditional present swap, so bring a unisex present (max value \$10) and Santa (☺) will distribute.

For catering purposes please RSVP by Friday 4 December to Pam McManus on 0409 822 744 or pamelamcmanus@bigpond.com. If it is raining, the alternate place for the BBQ is Judy Satrapa and Sean Ladlow's place – 15 Merriman Crescent, Macarthur.

Hope to see you there ☺

OUTCOME OF SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

You may be aware that we held a Special General Meeting last night, 1 December 2009, to consider the procedure for member access to committee minutes. This was a decision that was made at the AGM.

Due to the number of comments on the procedure at the meeting, it was decided to send out the "Procedure for access to Committee Minutes" to members for feedback and comment, prior to presenting it at another general meeting next year.

We will send this procedure out again shortly (probably after Christmas, as it is coming into the busy, silly season) for your feedback.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU...

Congratulations and happy birthday to our members (and special guests) who celebrated their birthdays in November and will celebrate them in December:

Richard Block	3	November
Graham Bauerle	4	November
Jason Duval	5	November
Oliver Bailey	13	November
Kathy Thomas	14	November
Jennie Norberry	17	November
Tran Huong	18	November
John Kelly	20	November
Elaine Crilly	21	November
Thompson Quan Wing	21	November
Christine Van	22	November
Kelda McManus	24	November
Rina Policarpio	24	November
Pam Kelly	26	November
Cornelia Carson	27	November
Craig Francis	1	December
Donald Harvey	9	December
Grant Pegg	13	December
Glenn Couchman	22	December
Michael Heming	27	December

Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)

Your element: Water
Your ruling planets: Pluto
Symbol: The Scorpion
Your stone: Topaz
Life Pursuit: To survive against all opposition
Vibration: Resilient
Scorpio's Secret Desire: To triumph

Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)

Your element: Fire
Your ruling planets: Jupiter
Symbol: The Archer
Your stone: Turquoise
Life Pursuit: To live the good life
Vibration: Overly expressive - frequent burnouts
Sagittarian's Secret Desire: To make a difference in the world

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

Your element: Earth
Your ruling planets: Saturn
Symbol: The Goat
Your stone: Garnet
Life Pursuit: To be proud of their achievements
Vibration: Powerful resilient energy
Capricorn Secret Desire: to be admired by their family and friends and the world at large



Note: If you have any objections to having your birthday published in the newsletter, please email the editor a few months before your birthday on gaby.schmid@finance.gov.au

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

Don't forget to renew your membership, or join if you are new to Phoenix Players!

Everyone in a Phoenix show needs to be a member to be covered by insurance. And there are also some other great benefits such as regular updates via Spotlight and tickets to Phoenix shows at member prices. And now there are some NEW benefits, just for Phoenix Players members:

- **Southern Cross Health Club** – \$199 joining fee waived for Phoenix members
- **Belconnen Stationery** – 15% discount on all personal purchases and a 15% discount on the first trade purchase (i.e. business) made by Phoenix members
- **Instant Colour Press** – 15% off all personal purchases and a 15% discount of the first trade purchase for all new clients.

So send in your membership form now! The membership application/renewal form can be found on our website at <http://www.phoenixplayers.com.au/images/membershipform.pdf>

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Let us know what is happening with you – it's always fun to know what our friends in theatre are up to around town. Just send your information to the Phoenix Players email address or direct to the editor (info on front page).

FREE ACTING WORKSHOP

The Actors College of Theatre & Television (ACTT), is holding a **FREE ACTING & INFORMATION WORKSHOP in Canberra at The Gorman Arts Centre on Dec 13, from 1:30pm – 3:30pm.**



YOU ARE INVITED...



Sunday 13 December from 1:30pm – 3:30pm, Lesley Watson Director of Sydney's Actors College of Theatre & Television (ACTT) will lead a **FREE ACTING WORKSHOP AND INFO SESSION** at DNA, Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon. (15+ only)

ACTT runs accredited courses in **Acting, Music Theatre, Technical Production and Stage Management**, offering students practical experience, skills and qualifications and opening up career opportunities in these increasingly popular creative fields.

So bring a friend and come along ready for creative fun and a unique learning experience.

BOOKINGS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:

Go to www.actt.edu.au or call 02 9213 4500

Bookings essential: <http://www.actt.edu.au/courses/short+courses>

THEATRE AROUND CANBERRA

canberralocaltheatre.info

theatre in Canberra - information for local theatre goers

Click on this link to get all the info:

<http://www.canberralocaltheatre.info/>

Some Highlights...

Canberra Rep present *It Runs in the Family* from 20 November to 12 December, at Theatre 3, Thursday – Saturday, 8pm; Matinees: 28 November, 5 & 12 December, 2pm; Twilight: 29 November & 6 December, 5pm. Advertised single ticket prices - Adult \$35; Concession/ Preview/ Matinee/ Twilight \$27, Members \$25; group ticket prices for numbers 10+ with \$2 off each ticket.

Bookings: 6257 1950 or book online <https://www.patronbase.com/CRS/Productions/>

Freshly Ground Theatre and Made In Canberra present *Not Axel Harrison* until 5 December at the Street Theatre. Bookings: 6247 1223, or www.thestreet.org.au

Ickle Pickle Productions presents *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* from 5 - 13 December at the Canberra Southern Cross Club, Woden. Bookings: 6283 7200.

2009 ACTEWAGL CAT AWARDS

The 2009 ACTEWAGL CAT Awards will be on Saturday 20 February 2010 at the Canberra Theatre. Bookings 6275 2700. Adults \$49 Concessions \$33.



But if you want the goss, and be one of the first to know the contenders, the Nominations Party for 2009 ACTEWAGL CAT AWARDS is at Teatro Vivaldi's Restaurant on Monday 14 December at 5.30pm - Cost \$20 Adults \$15. Payment at the door.

http://www.catawards.com.au/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1