

ATOD

NEWSLETTER

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AUSTRALIAN
THEATRE
OF THE
DEAF

VICTORIAN/TASMANIAN TOUR

Another tour...another place! This recent tour in May/June proved to be successful both in Victoria and Tasmania.

Under the guidance of the Victorian Arts Council the actors travelled around rural Victoria as well as spending some time in Melbourne staying in South Yarra (enjoying all the uptown cafes, restaurants and chic fashion stores!). Hundreds of school children saw our show **JUKEBOX** and the response was overwhelming. An overnight boat trip on the Spirit of Tasmania was fun - mingling in the bar and meeting some new Tasmanian contacts!

Our tour to Tasmania was funded by Playing Australia, the Federal Government's arts touring program.

We spent the first week in Hobart in conjunction with the National Deafness Conference. Mike and Pam were there to join us and our community show **HANDS & TALES** was a hit. Many participants from the Conference come to see us perform at the Theatre Royal (Australia's oldest theatre) for 2 nights. All the seats were filled up and some people even dared sit on the floor!

Throughout the week, we performed **JUKEBOX** to several schools, including Claremont Primary School (it has an excellent Deaf unit). Visual Communication workshops were also presented. These schools were thrilled to see us and it was a pleasure meeting them all.

During the 2nd week of the tour we grabbed our free weekend to travel inland to Cradle Mountain and spent a night in a cozy wooden cabin with an open fire - perfect set up for a real winter's night! Other highlights in Tasmania were visiting Port Arthur, seeing some Tasmanian Devils and visiting the Cadburys Chocolate Factory.

Next destination was Launceston with **HANDS & TALES** scheduled for 2 nights at the Earl Arts Centre. Again, we had large audience numbers who obviously enjoyed themselves. We then headed north to Ulverstone for a performance of **JUKEBOX** at a school.

Then back on the Spirit of Tasmania to Melbourne for 2 more weeks of **JUKEBOX** in Victoria.

Feedback from schools in Tasmania and Victoria was very positive, they were impressed with the level of professionalism in our work and have already requested another ATOD visit sometime in the near future. Here are some comments: "Children were very excited...loved the humour within the performance...an interesting message...very responsive - students didn't move throughout the performance...thank you for a wonderful experience". It was a good tour that went without a hitch!

QUIZ NIGHT

This fundraising event held in Deaf Pride Week in August proved to be a successful night and a great time was had by everyone there. The cold atmosphere of Petersham Town Hall at the beginning of the night soon became warm and cozy as 18 tables full of people put their heads together to answer endless questions of serious and crazy trivia. One of the actors, Caroline, was the Master of Ceremonies. Mike, our artistic director and Gillian, our general manager, had the fun task of baffling everyone's minds with questions! The questions covered a variety of subjects e.g. sport, history, TV/film, geography, literature, etc. We also had questions about the Deaf community and the actors did some in our own VV (Visual Vernacular) theatre style leaving the contestants to guess what they were acting out...everything from the Road Runner to Michael Jackson.



Throughout the evening, "surprise" prizes were given out to tables without warning! Such awards were the greatest cheating table, the most mischievous table, the fanciest table, the quietest table, the most serious table, creating a lot of laughs during the night.

The highest scoring teams - Australian Caption Centre, North Rocks and ACON walked away with 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes respectively. Fabulous prize collections were given to these teams to share. A couple of bottles of wine were on hand to cheer the lowest scoring team.

This event raised approximately \$2,500 and our thanks go to the following who generously donated prizes for the evening:

- The Good Buy Gift Shop
- Oggi Haircutters
- Swift & Moore Pty Ltd
- Welcome Home Manchester
- PRIDE
- The Toolshed
- The Bakery
- Ilsa Retail

Many thanks to the Board of ATOD and Sofya Gollan for their time and support which helped make Quiz Night such a wonderful evening.

Special thanks to our chairperson, Mitzi Zaphir for her efforts and Marrickville Council for the donation of Petersham Town Hall.

TV WORK

Foxtel

Foxtel Cable TV contacted us for an interview on their children's show KLUBHOUSE. The actors Robert, Nina and Medina went along for the interview with the show's hosts and Pam was there to interpret. It was a good interview about ATOD, its shows, children's reactions, the actors and their dreams and hopes. We had Robert and Nina sign singing to the KLUBHOUSE show theme song, "Fox Kids" at the beginning of that afternoon's program.

CHANNEL 7

We were contacted by Channel 7 to appear in their promotional ads leading to the Atlanta Olympics. Our actor, Caroline, was filmed signing several different lines and Mike was standing by as her Auslan Consultant.

E-MAIL ADDRESS!!!

ATOD has joined the fast growing ranks of Electronic Mail and here is our new E-mail address: atod@mpx.com.au

Give us a buzz - we'd love to hear from you...

NEW STAFF MEMBER

We extend a warm welcome to Harry Koponen who is our Sponsorship and Development Co-ordinator. This is a new position on a part-time basis which will focus on securing sponsorship and developing audiences for the Company. Keep reading to get to know Harry...after graduating from the University of New England in 1992, Harry started working as a freelance stage manager and production manager in theatre. In 1993 he formed his own business organising special events and is happy to join ATOD in this new challenging role. Contact Harry if your business is interested in supporting ATOD.

DEAF DRAMA WEEKEND II

Eight Deaf, hearing impaired and CODA teenagers from all over Sydney were the participants in our second Deaf Drama Weekend.

The program of activities was similar to the weekend for the younger children, only moderations were made to suit these elders!

We had the same guest teachers, Sofya Gollan - acrobatics, Louise de Beuzeville - circus skills and Helen Dallas - dance. Mike and Caroline led some workshops in visual theatre with the help of the ATOD actors.

The weekend went smoothly and it certainly was different from the first weekend. Just think about it - the difference between 20 kids (7-12 yrs) and 8 older kids (13-18 yrs).

These 2 Deaf Drama Weekends are a 'first' for ATOD and we are keen to develop these programs for the future. We are currently looking at ways to improve on a few issues e.g. accommodation, for next year.

ACTORS TRAINING

For 2 weeks in July, the actors had some intensive training in different aspects of theatre work. ATOD hired 3 teachers - Steve Matthews, Glenn McGilivray and Richard Hayes Marshall. Here are a few areas that were explored:

- Improvisation and development of characters
- externalism and internalism in relation to space, objects and within the actor
- exploration of the philosophical side of the different speed of paces when walking

The actors experimented working on Shakespeare's King Lear with Glenn and translated it to the Company's visual mode.

The training was very successful and was of great benefit for all the actors.

ATOD T-SHIRTS

Orders have been made for our next stock of ATOD t-shirts. These t-shirts will remain in our very own trademark colours - blue and black. our petite sized members and children will be pleased to know that we will have new sizes - small and medium. If these are the sizes you have been waiting for then call now for your hottest fashion order.

INTERPRETING WORKSHOP

ATOD and ASLIA (Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association) joined forces to conduct a Theatre Interpreting Workshop. Mike Canfield and Della Goswell led the workshop. It proved to be a challenge and a valuable learning experience for the 7 participants. They left the workshop with a better understanding of the procedures of interpreting for a theatre production including script interpretation and working on the stage.

NEWCASTLE SOJOURN

At the end of August ATOD went to Newcastle. Further north, JUKEBOX was enthusiastically enjoyed by all the kids at Raymond Terrace Primary School. During the evening locals came to see our show HANDS & TALES at the Civic Centre in the heart of Newcastle. An overnight stay ended the long day and in the morning we headed back to Sydney. Pam and Mike (and his Mum who was here from USA on a holiday) came to be with us for the evening show - Mike was our MC and Pam was our interpreter.

We extend our thanks to David Barnes and Robyn of the Deaf Society at Newcastle for all their assistance towards this successful 'little' trip.


EXTRA ACTIVITIES

The Sydney Deaf Festival could not have been more perfect! Early on a fresh Sunday morning under clear blue skies approximately 25 different groups within the Deaf community set up their stalls. Throughout the day hundreds of people browsed around to gather new information, buy the latest merchandise or simply to catch up with friends and meet new faces.

Various forms of entertainment continued throughout the day and ATOD presented an excerpt from SHOW & TELL and the ever popular 'Fairytales' from HANDS & TALES. Our t-shirts were all sold out by the end of the day and there were orders for more! Our KISS THE STAR BOOTH attracted some kisses at the kissable cost of 50¢ a kiss!

Renwick College was in the process of doing a Computer Signs Technology Project when they contacted ATOD requesting some "faces and hands" for the photographs. Mike, Caroline and Robert were photographed signing thousands of computer signs under the direction of Adam Schembri who was involved in the project. This project is now completed and is in the form of a brilliant new book full of photographs and information relating to computer signs. This book will be a very useful resource for Deaf and hearing people working in technical areas such as science and computing.

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TWO MEN AND A MOUSE

A DTP, GRAPHIC DESIGN AND PRINTING BUREAU RUN BY DEAF STAFF FOR DEAF CLIENTS. WE DO LOGOS, BUSINESS CARDS, FLYERS, ANNUAL REPORTS, BROCHURES, ETC. FOR MORE INFORMATION & QUOTES, PLEASE VISIT OR CONTACT US AT:
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