

AT&D NEWSLETTER

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VIETNAM AND HONG KONG

WITH the financial assistance of AsioLink, Australian Embassy in Hanoi, Australian Theatre of the Deaf, Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong and North Rocks Institute for Deaf & Blind Children Sydney, Mike Canfield (our Artistic Director) travelled to Vietnam and Hong Kong to work on several projects. He was accompanied by Pam Spicer, Sign Language Interpreter.

From 7 July, five weeks were spent in Hanoi, Vietnam, directing a non-verbal production called *THE REQUEST OF SPRING*. This was written by Vietnamese playwright Le Quy Duong, and performed by the Vietnamese National Theatre Company. This was Mike's first time directing a full hearing cast (actually 2 casts!) and also working with two interpreters - i.e. with Pam from Sign Language to spoken English, and with Nguyen Dinh Thi from English to Vietnamese... and vice versa. The production was a huge success being Vietnam's first experience in visual theatre. The Vice Prime Minister of Vietnam and the Australian Ambassador were among the guests on Opening Night.

PS: One night Mike was seen drinking snake blood and eating a snake's heart!

Then off to Ho Chi Minh City for one week where Mike conducted visual theatre workshops with students from the College of Theatre and Cinema. The Australian Consul General attended the Presentation.

In Hong Kong, Mike worked for three weeks on two projects. Firstly with a group of hearing people from different professions (e.g. Teachers, Actors, Directors, etc.) teaching visual communication. The second project was directing a play called *NO MORE LESSER* performed by the Hong Kong Theatre of the Deaf. The play was performed at the Fringe Club Theatre and will tour Schools in October.

After nine weeks of noodles, chopsticks, bicycles, humidity, crowded streets, noise, temples and bottled water, Mike and Pam are glad to be home but would not have missed this wonderful experience, both personally and professionally, for the world.



ACT AND VICTORIA TOUR

CAROLINE, MEDINA and ALEX have arrived back in Sydney after their 5 week tour. All three shows - *JUKEBOX*, *THE SIGN IS RIGHT* and *SHOW & TELL* - were well received by the various schools with positive feedback from the students and teachers.

The evening show *SIGNED SEALED DELIVERED* was a roaring success in Canberra and especially in Melbourne. Phil Harper (Victorian Council of Deaf People) wrote to us saying "The Theatre night was a great success overall with a record number in attendance - 510. Many were turned away prior to and on the night. Sounds like next time, we will have to either go to a bigger venue or do two nights". The Actors obviously did a wonderful job!

SIGNED SEALED DELIVERED Sydney Area

ALL shows were well attended. Parramatta and Wollongong attracted our regular audience and in Bondi and Penrith it was the first time we performed our evening shows. After the great response, it looks like we should perform there yearly! Our special show for the Deaf Senior Citizens at Granville was, of course, thoroughly enjoyed by all.

STAFF & ACTORS

MANY changes will be happening to the Company over the next few months. Nina Mishriky no longer works with us as an Actor. Caroline Conlon has decided to resign after a long period of 7 years as Actor/Liaison Officer. Gillian Minervini has resigned as General Manager. Harry Koponen will also be leaving the Company as our Sponsorship & Development Co-ordinator. We want to thank them all for their hard work and wish them all the best for the future.

We are now on the lookout for a new Actor and General Manager starting 1998.

AUSTRALIAN THEATRE OF THE DEAF

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TRAINING & CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

DURING July the Actors had training in Brecht Technique - especially working on the play *MOTHER COURAGE*. This is in preparation for next year's mainstage production called *CHILD OF COURAGE* written by Sofya Gollan - an ex Actor with ATOD. During October the Actors worked with Sofya on the "Creative Development" of the play.

ODD JOBS

OUR stall at the Deaf Festival in August at Darling Harbour was busy with many enquiries from the public about our shows. Thanks to Harry and our Board members for staffing the stall.

Mike and the Actors have been busy showing their other talents such as running workshops (for Sign Language Interpreters in Canberra), filming (in *HOME AND AWAY*) and special performances for Sydney University (Conference) and Wollongong University (Disability Week). Also recently they did special performances for the Westpac Bank (Service Awards), University of Sydney (Cumberland College) and the NSW State Deaf Conference. Coming up the Actors will be performing at the Lane Cove Festival and a school reunion in Wollongong. Mike will be giving a workshop for students at the University of Western Sydney.

COMPETITION WINNERS

THE winner of the best story competition is Vineeta Mala who comes from Suva, Fiji. She wrote some very amusing stories. Trevor Johnston was the winner of the raffle at the Deaf Festival. Both will receive the Minicom IV TTY (Telephone Typewriter) with compliments from Printacall. Congratulations to both!

AHEAD?

ON 3 November Caroline, Medina and Alex will head off to South West NSW and to Adelaide on a 4 week tour.... on the road again!

QUIZ NIGHT

WHAT a huge success that was! With over 120 people battling for prizes at the Petersham

Town Hall on 26 October. The overall winning table was a group who called themselves "Charlie Angels"! Best decorated tables were "ACE" and "JAM"! Thanks to the following people who donated prizes:



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SYDNEY GAY & LESBIAN MARDI GRAS

NOT JUKEBOX... IT'S "PUKEBOX"

ON the Victorian tour, right after a beautiful lunch on Eden's beach on the south coast, Caroline, Medina and Alex started another exciting afternoon show at a Catholic school. In the middle of the show, all of a sudden... a boy stood up and vomited in front of everybody and was immediately removed from the audience. The show went on with a puddle on the carpet covered with paper towels and surrounded by other boys and girls covering their faces with shirts, watching the actors for another 25 minutes! The Actors left the school wondering when they will clean the puddle since it was still there... "Pukebox".

NEXT YEAR

PLANS FOR 1998:

- Mainstage production of "CHILD OF COURAGE" to be performed in Sydney around June/July.
- Tour to schools in Victoria & NSW country areas.
- Tour to New Zealand in September.

MEMBERSHIP CLUB

1998 MEMBERSHIPS ARE NOW OPEN

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TWO MEN AND A MOUSE

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