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Mt. Waverley 3149

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ail  
tickets@peridot.com.au, or ring 9808 0170

## 30 Years of Peridot Theatre

PERIDOT THEATRE presents

SANDRA FOWLER  
GRAHAM FLETCHER  
MARITA ROBERTSON

in **MOVING**  
by STANLEY PRICE  
at **MONASH HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE**  
DURSDIN ST. NORTH CLAYTON

DIRECTED BY EDNA JONES

VICKI BARRETT GAYE GAY TINA HERBERT  
PETER CLARKE CYRIL THOMPSON MARTIN TRAINOR BOB WILLIAMS

**FIVE NIGHTS ONLY**  
WED AUG. 14<sup>th</sup> to SAT 17<sup>th</sup> at 8-15pm  
and SUN 18<sup>th</sup> at 6-00pm

TICKETS \$8 — CONCESSION \$6  
sherry and supper included

BOOK NOW RING LILIAN ON 8981026

Thirty years ago, in 1985, a fledgling theatre company called Peridot staged its very first performance, a light-hearted comedy about the toils and troubles of moving house. Just five performances in a borrowed theatre, directed by one of the company's founders, Edna Jones, it went very well, got a good review in a local paper and encouraged them to go ahead with one more play that year, a rather more somber drama, *Who's Life Is It Anyway?* by Brian Clark, also directed by Edna. These were the early stepping stones for a company which has over the years gained a fine reputation on the local non-professional scene for excellent theatre based on a hardworking committee, a great bunch of supporters and volunteers, and talented actors and directors whilst offering a warm and friendly welcome to each and every audience member who has come along to see what we have to offer.

Our latest play, *Lend Me a Tenor* will be our 121<sup>st</sup> full-scale production, a very funny piece which, with the enthusiastic cast, fine director and all the other people who work so hard to get every play up and running, will be a lot of fun!

### Auditions

#### **Already Getting Ready for Season 4**

Our August production *Lend Me a Tenor* is about to start very soon but, as usual, we are already planning for our final offering for 2015 in November, Yasmina Reza's sharp edge comedy *God of Carnage*, and our director for this excellent play, Tim Long, is gearing up for his Auditions.

*God of Carnage* asks the question "What happens when two sets of parents meet up to deal with the unruly behavior of their children? A calm and rational debate between grown-ups about the need to teach kids how to behave properly? Or a hysterical night of name-calling, tantrums and tears before bedtime? Boys will be boys, they say, but adults are usually worse – much worse!

Tim needs two men and two women; all characters are listed as being in their 40s, however Tim will not limit himself to that. It will be more important that couples gel and appear comfortable with each other. However, all characters are upper/middle class and are based in the suburbs of Brooklyn. All four roles are strong and offer each actor a wide range to "play" in – by way of these brief descriptions:

**Alan Raleigh** – A corporate lawyer, frequently interrupting the conversation with phone calls about a developing law suit. He's a little quicker to tell you what he's really thinking than the others in the group.

**Annette Raleigh** – Perhaps a little highly strung, she starts out on a path of reconciliation, but before long becomes the more destructive of the four.

**Michael Novak** – Appears to be the most "Normal" of the group, however as the conversation breaks down we see a more callous and uncouth nature.

**Veronica Novak** - A writer who has brought together the group with a view to reconciliation, however as the discussion develops she becomes more judgmental and aggressive.

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The Auditions will be held at our Unicorn theatre, Lechte Road, Mt. Waverley on **Sunday, August 9 at 6.00pm**

You can contact Tim on 0429 995 699 if you would like more information

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*God of Carnage* will run from November 20 to December 5

### And a Reminder...

*In between "Lend Me a Tenor" and "God of Carnage" there will be in September, this year's Monash One Act Play Festival, when numerous theatre companies from around Victoria come along in friendly competition, will again be hosted by Peridot. Look out for lots of information next month.*

## OUR NEXT PRODUCTION



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Everyone likes a good laugh from time to time and we can guarantee there will be plenty for you if you come along and see our third presentation for 2015, Ken Ludwig's madcap screwball comedy *Lend Me a Tenor*, which is being directed for us by Loretta Bishop (who you may recall brought the highly entertaining *Busybody* to the Unicorn a couple of years ago). Winner of 3 Tony awards and 4 Drama Desk Awards, *Lend Me a Tenor* is set in September 1934. Saunders, the general manager of the Cleveland Grand Opera Company, is primed to welcome world famous Tito Merelli, II Stupendo, the greatest tenor of his generation, to appear for one night only as Otello. The star arrives late and, through a hilarious series of mishaps, is given a double dose of tranquilizers and passes out. His pulse is so low that Saunders and his assistant Max believe he's dead. In a frantic attempt to salvage the evening, Saunders persuades Max to get into Merelli's Otello costume and fool the audience into thinking he's Il Stupendo. Max succeeds admirably but Merelli comes to and gets into his other costume ready to perform. Now two Otellos are running around in costume and two women are running around in lingerie, each thinking she is with Il Stupendo. A sensation on Broadway and in London's West End, this madcap screwball comedy is guaranteed to leave audiences teary-eyed with laughter – definitely not one to be missed!

Just a few of the terrific reviews

*Lend Me a Tenor* has gathered;

*"A remarkable piece of theatre...a masterpiece...Author Ken Ludwig has verve, a sound grasp of plot mechanics and a rare ability to couple high art with low comedy."* – The London Times.

*"One of two great farces by a living writer."* – The New York Times.

*"Ken Ludwig's 1989 Tony winning comedy is one of only two classic farces by a living playwright, the other being Michael Frayn's 'Noises Off.'"* – Daily News.

*"The most inventive, original farce in a long time."* – Punch.

*"A furiously paced comedy with more than a touch of the Marx Brothers...a marvelous combination of wonderful farcical moments and funny lines."* – Time Out New York.

*"Hilariously over the top."* - The Manchester Guardian.

*"Fills the theatre with the sound of laughter."* –The Sunday Express, London.

*"Free flowing honest-to-goodness unforced farce,"* - New York Magazine.

*"It's hilarious...the funniest show on Broadway."* - WNEW.

*"A rollercoaster of fun for everyone in the building...a solid, constantly accelerating snowball of a comedy."* – Phoenix News Times.

*"Non-stop laughter."* - Variety

*"A rib-tickling comedy."* –New York Post

*"Is this the funniest thing I have ever seen? On reflection – yes, I think it is."* – Time Out

*"Do not miss it!"* – Daily Mail, London

(The last comment is very important. Book now! – Ed.)

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*Lend Me a Tenor* ran for 13 months in New York in 1989 and was revived there in 2010 (with the fine Australian actor Anthony La Paglia as Tito, the world's most renowned opera tenor and notorious ladies man) after opening in London's Globe Theatre for ten months in 1986. Hugely popular with professional and non-professional companies it has been translated into 16 languages and has been produced in 25 countries worldwide. Now it's your turn so get ready for a laugh.

\*

*Lend Me a Tenor* will run from August 7-8, 12-15 and 19-22 at 8pm with Matinees on Sunday August 9 and Saturday 15 at 2.15pm plus a Twilight Matinees on Sunday 16 at 4pm.

Bookings can be made either on 9808 0770 or on [tickets@peridot.com.au](mailto:tickets@peridot.com.au)

### ***Review: "Shush" by Elaine Murphy***

#### **A Lovely "Chat in Two Acts" at Peridot**

*Reviewed for the VDL's "Theatrecraft" by David Small*

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This is a rare occasion as Peridot stages the Australian Premiere and World Non-Professional Premiere season of *Shush*, and the author's Australian debut.

Peter Crawley, chief theatre critic with *The Irish Times*, wrote "There is no subtitle to Elaine Murphy's second full-length play, *Shush*, but its form, structure and main concerns could be encapsulated as "a chat in two acts". He was not implying that the play was boring because indeed it is not. Another Irish play featuring five women, but *Dancing at Lughnasa* it is not, nothing like it.

Set in suburban Dublin, these five women speak down-to-earth 21<sup>st</sup> century dialogue with lashings of Irish humour, while harboring secrets that understandably surface only in Act II. The director, Richard Keown, assembled a very capable cast of experienced actors, each of whom reached such heights as they may have never reached before.



*Our lovely "Shush" Ladies Jodie, Jeanne, Carol, Janice and Hayley after the final performance.*

Jeanne Snider is the despondent Breda, whose mood fluctuates after her house is invaded by four uninvited friends to celebrate her birthday. The first three arrive together. Marie (Carol Shelbourn), a long-time loyal friend of Breda's, who means well but her sharp tongue can do more damage than good. Her daughter, Clare (Hayley Lawson-Smith) is practical and generally resists her mother's uninvited disclosures, and Irene (Janis Schneider), a much simpler much-married person who every now and then is the only one who makes sense. This is especially so, near the play's end;

A late arrival is Ursula (Jodie Sibley), Breda's trendy next-door neighbour. She never would acknowledge any difficulties to her own friends but feels safe with Breda and company because they are so far removed from her own social circle. Along with actions, moods and booze, they all participate in discussing a range of topics that glide seamlessly throughout: a tribute to Murphy's skilful writing, fine acting by our ladies and Mr. Keown's meticulous direction.

This all takes place within a splendid set designed by Steve Karandais who, with Damian Jones and Helen McIntosh, brought it to reality: a solid set with no doors (they were hidden within recesses). Michelle Barber and assistant



director Denise Wellington gave it a thoroughly lived-in look with appropriate furniture and decoration, splendidly cluttered down to the last detail with props by Kate Deavin and set decoration by an army of Peridot officials, actors and loyal worker bees. Denise Wellington is also responsible for the costumes on these five different women. Nothing much more than 'suburban' or 'online', and suitable for a cold night; they were worn well.

Lighting by Deryk Hartwick is the best I have seen in years – the wide stage having even cover, recesses ideally subdued and functional table lamps.

It is also been years since I have heard cars arriving, beeping and leaving, not only from the correct side of the stage, but muted to a level that Goldilocks would have described as "just right!"

Sound, designed by the director, compiled by John Jennings and Aaron Toman and operated by Kendall Brown, came on cue from the character's mobile phones, as did the Van Morrison songs from a player on the table...songs in keeping with the way things were going; songs that were bound to include "Days Like This".

Elaine Murphy's first play, *Little Gem*, brought her a string of coveted writing awards. Both plays have been staged at Dublin's prestigious Abbey Theatre where the atmosphere still reeks of bygone male writers: the likes of Beckett, Congreve, Doyle, Farquhar, Friel, Goldsmith, Joyce, McGuinness, Shaw, Wilde and Yeats. It may not be long before the bright, sweet name of Elaine Murphy blossoms there. In the meantime, when the name *Little Gems* is short-listed in the VDL's "Auditions" and "What's On" columns, don't be surprised.

### ***Front of House at Peridot***

We've mentioned on page one that we are clocking up thirty years of theatre with *Lend Me a Tenor* and we are highly chuffed in that all this time we do feel that we have made our audiences welcome and comfortable, and much of this has been achieved by our cheerful band of Front of House volunteers. We have a fine band of supporters but with fourteen performances (thirteen normal plus one Charity Preview) our indefatigable FOH Organiser Bev Matthey sometimes has a bit of a struggle to find four people per performance and is always grateful when someone contacts her and offers a hand. So, if you feel you could come along for just one performance (a couple coming together is even nicer!) she would be absolutely delighted to hear from you. You can contact her by email on [sheoaks@bigpond.com](mailto:sheoaks@bigpond.com) or on 9882 9985.

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### ***\*WhatsOn\*WhatsOn\*WhatsOn\*WhatsOn\****

August is always a busy month in the non-professional theatre scene in our neck of the woods so, as well as coming to see our *Lend Me a Tenor*, you might fancy one or more of these:

From August 19 to September 5, **Lilydale Athenaeum Theatre** is presenting the interestingly titled comedy *Daddy's Dyin'... Who's Got the Will* by Del Shores, which is being directed by our good friend Helen Ellis so it's bound to be good. Book on 9735 1777.

Another Peridot friend Annie Blood (she directed *The Hallelujah Girls* for us last year) is directing *Time Stands*

Still for **Brighton Theatre** from August 20 to September 5, a “thoughtful drama” by Donald Margulies. Bookings here on 1300 752 126 or on [www.brightontheatreco.com](http://www.brightontheatreco.com).

Two interesting plays that will run from August 21-September 5 are *Sweeney Todd – The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* by Christopher Bond at the **Beaumaris Theatre** ([beaumaristheatre.com.au](http://beaumaristheatre.com.au) or 9583 6896) and *The Mystery of* *Continued on page 4....*

*Edwin Drood*, with book, music and lyrics by Rupert Holmes, based on the book by Charles Dickens, at **Malvern Theatre** (1300 131 552.)

Two often staged but always popular plays both running from August 28 to September 12 are *84 Charing Cross Road* by James Roose Evans at **Mordialloc Theatre** (another great Peridot stalwart and terrific director, Peter Newling is in charge here), bookings on 9587 5141, and *Lost in Yonkers* by the ever reliable Neil Simon at the **Eltham Little Theatre** at its home in the Eltham Performing Arts Centre, 1603 Main Road, Research; bookings on 0411 713 095

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### **And a special “WhatsOn” for Amy...**

Peridot is very lucky to have many excellent and experienced people in charge backstage in the highly important role of Stage Manager and one of those is **Amy Sampson**, who has stage managed many productions for us with great skill and enthusiasm. She is very excited to tell us that in August she will be stage managing her first musical, *Merrily We Roll Along* by Stephen Sondheim for the JYM Theatre, who will be performing this entertaining production at the Phoenix Theatre in Elwood from August 22 to September 5.

Sondheim is regarded as being one of the finest theatre composers of all time, with many fine musicals such as *Gypsy*, *A Little Night Music*, *Company*, *Follies*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Saturday Night* and *In the Woods*, and we are sure Amy and her companions will stage an entertaining evening for their audiences.

If you fancy a musical night out, you can book for *Merrily* on <http://www.jymtheatre.com/#/tickets/c1sw3>

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### **Boy! Didn't They Get It Right!!!**

\* “We don't like their sound. Groups of guitars are on the way out” said some bright spark at Decca Recording Company when turning down the Beatles in 1962. The group was also turned down by Pye, Columbia and HMV before Parlophone took a chance on them.

\* “Far too noisy, my dear Mozart. Far too many notes” said the Emperor Ferdinand after the first performance of *The Marriage of Figaro*.

\* “Rembrandt is not to be compared in the painting of character with our extraordinarily gifted English artist Mr. Ripplingill” said John Hunt (1775-1848)

\* “Flight by machines heavier than air is unpractical and insignificant, if not utterly impossible” said Simon Newcomb (1835-1909). The first flight by the Wright Brothers eighteen months afterwards did not affect his opinion.

\* “If Beethoven's seventh Symphony is not by some means abridged, it will soon fall into disuse” said Philip Hale, Boston Music critic 1837.

\* “You will never amount to very much” – A Munich Schoolmaster to Albert Einstein, aged 10

\* “I played over the music of that scoundrel Brahms. What a giftless bastard! It annoys me that this self-inflated mediocrity is hailed as a genius!” – Tchaikovsky's diary, 1886.

### *...the last word*

#### *A couple of true little Box Office stories*

A revival of Oliver Goldsmith's play *She Stoops to Conquer* was playing on Broadway a few years ago and a man, with no money on him, dearly wanted to see it. He walked up to the box-office and said to the young attendant, “Pass me in please.” The attendant laughed and replied, “And why should I do that?” The man drew himself up to his fullest height and snapped, “Why? Because *I'm* Oliver Goldsmith and I wrote the damned play.” *Continued...*

“I beg your pardon, sir,” stammered the young attendant and quickly gave the man a complimentary ticket for a box.

A slightly older person may have known that Oliver Goldsmith died in 1774!

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Another man rang a theatre booking office and said, “I want a box for two for tomorrow”.

“I'm sorry, Sir,” replied the man at the other end, “but we don't make boxes for two.”

“What do you mean, you don't make – say, is that the Globe Theatre?” spluttered the caller.

“Oh no, Sir. This is Lappam Lead's Undertakers Parlour.”

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A rather stout elderly lady had booked two seats in the stalls and told the booking clerk that she would be occupying both seats as she wished to be comfortable.

“But, I'm sorry, madam, you can't do that because...” the clerk began.

“There's no reason why I shouldn't” the lady interrupted.

“None whatsoever” replied the clerk, “except that the two seats you have booked are on the opposite sides of the aisle.”

*And a few little stories about some great names...*

At a performance given by a string quartet, the ever grumpy George Bernard Shaw's companion told him that the four men had been playing together for twelve years.

“Surely,” said Shaw, “we've been sitting here longer than that.”

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After the first night flop of an Oscar Wilde play, a friend asked him how the play had been received. “Oh,” replied Wilde loftily, “the play was a great success, but the audience was a total failure.”

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Another little Oscar Wilde story. After a not terribly good performance of his *The Importance of Being Earnest*, which he had watched, he called the company together after the final curtain and complimented them and then said, “You know, it reminds me of a play I once wrote.”

\*

Orson Welles once turned up to give a lecture in a small Western town, with hardly anyone present to listen, not even the woman who should have introduced him, so he introduced himself. “Ladies and Gentlemen,” he said, “I will tell you the highlights of my life. I am a director of plays. I am a producer of plays. I am an actor on the legitimate stage. I am a writer of motion pictures. I am a producer of motion films. I am an actor in motion pictures. I write, direct and act on the radio. I am a magician. I also paint and sketch. I am a book publisher. I am a violinist and a pianist”. Here Welles paused, leaned towards the small audience and said, “Isn't it a shame that there are so many of me and so few of you?”

\*

There was a direct radio broadcast in Adelaide from the reception for the eminent English conductor, the late Sir Malcolm Sargent on the ABC. A well-known lady from *Adelaide's Establishment* was doing the radio introduction.

“When I was asked to introduce Sir Malcolm tonight”, she said breathlessly on air, “I thought I'd better find out more about him. So looked up the Who's Who columns and was staggered to learn Sir Malcolm has over six inches!”

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*Is this the most useless piece of trivia ever?*

The record for opening and closing a door in a London West End show belongs to Julie Rutherford. As Stage Manager of John Well's play *Anyone for Denis?* At the Whitehall Theatre, she had to open and close a sliding door 54 times during each performance. The show opened on May 7, 1981 and closed on 22 May, 1982, so during 9 previews and 381 performances Ms Rutherford opened and closed the door 20592 times. This proves that working backstage in a West End show can open doors in the theatrical profession!