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President's Message

As I sit to write my first president's message, I think back to the many president's messages I have read over the years, from talented and dedicated volunteers, and feel in awe of the role I have stepped into. I would like to thank our outgoing president, David Nash, for his guidance and dedication in the role of president over the past two years.

The Theatre Ontario Festival 2006 was held in Sarnia the May long weekend. Our thanks and congratulations go to The Curtain Club who represented ACT-CO at the festival with their production of *Proof* by David Auburn. The Curtain Club garnered awards for Outstanding Performance by a Female for Shannon L. Aguila as Catherine; Outstanding Visual Presentation for set, costumes, lights, props and set decor; Outstanding Coordinated Production chosen by the Festival Stage Manager; and Mary Jane Boon won the Perry Short Award of a Scholarship to a Theatre Ontario Summer Course for a competing set designer in the Festival.

As the 2006 Festival closes, the reigns are handed over to ACT-CO who will play host to the 2007 Festival next May in Newmarket. ACT-CO is leading the organization of the Festival and a Committee has been formed under the leadership of Jeff Burke, former president and ACT-CO life-time member. Volunteers are still needed and would be most welcome.

Thank you to those who attended the 2006 AGM in June and thank you to our hosts East Side Players for opening up their new home to us.

As many member groups relax and take some much deserved rest and relaxation this summer, other groups are still performing and even more are gearing up for new seasons. ACT-CO is busy preparing for our new year – with memberships being due, Festival packages on their way, and new workshops being planned.

I encourage you to become involved in ACT-CO and participate where you can. We are always seeking new board members, committee members and ideas. If you have any questions, comments or ideas about our programs and services, feel free to drop me or any board member a note, at the addresses inside.

Laura Elkin

2006 AGM Minutes

The Annual General Meeting Minutes are now available. Please contact Kim Collins for a copy at secretary@actco.ca. We will be posting them on the website shortly.

We would like all member groups to complete the Education survey so that we can plan workshops for next season. (form attached)

From Our Festival Chair: Margery Cruise

The Festival documents have been sent out by email (mail for those without email). If you did NOT get yours, you can download from the web www.actco.ca.

Please note your group must be a paid up member of ACT-CO by the Festival entry deadline in order to register for and participate in the ACT-CO Festival.

In response to request for an earlier start and to accommodate Theatre Ontario's request for an earlier finish, here is our NEW schedule:

The Festival will run from Friday, September 15, 2006 to Sunday, March 25, 2007 inclusive. The Gala will be held on Saturday, March 31, 2007. The Theatre Ontario Festival will be held at Newmarket Theatre on May 16 - 20, 2007.

The Festival entry deadline is Tuesday, September 5, 2006 at 4:00pm. The schedule will be final by Thursday, September 7, 2006.

Member Groups 2005/2006

As of September 17, 2005, the current member groups of ACT-CO are:

Althea Productions
Amicus Productions
Backwoods Players
Blackhorse Village Players
Bloor West Village Players
Borelians Community Theatre
Brampton Music Theatre
Burl-Oak Theatre Group
Caledon Townhall Players
Century Theatre Guild
Clarkson Music Theatre
Curtain Call Players
The Curtain Club
Durham Shoestring Performers
East Side Players
Etobicoke Musical Productions
Georgetown Globe Productions
Georgetown Little Theatre
Mississauga Players
Newmarket Stage Company
Nomads Acting Group - The NAGs
The Oakville Players
Onstage Performance Group
Oshawa Little Theatre
The Queensville Players
Scarborough Choral Society
Scarborough Music Theatre
Scarborough Players
Scarborough Theatre Guild
Scugog Choral Society
Theatre Aurora
Theatre Etobicoke
Toronto Finnish Theatre
Toronto Irish Players
Toronto Opera Repertoire
The Very Useful Theatre Company

If your group is not listed, it means your membership has expired. **However, it is not too late to renew.**

Membership forms are available on the website (www.actco.ca) or from Brandon Moore, Membership Secretary, at membership@actco.ca / 905-508-5253.

The Adjudicators for this year's Festival are:

Drama Category Chris Worsnop

Comedy Category Ron Cameron

Musical Category Laurel Smith

For more information about the ACT-CO Festival, visit www.actco.ca

This year the Festival will run a bit differently. The Festival Coordinator (instead of Chairperson) will handle the main communications with the adjudicators, set the schedule, and act as a central point of contact for groups. Each board member is mentoring a few groups. I suggest that groups communicate with their mentor and copy festival@actco.ca. Your mentor will be indicated on the web and will contact you during August.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need further clarification. Good luck this season!

Margery Cruise, Festival Coordinator
ACT-CO 2006-2007 Season

Meet the Adjudicators



Chris Worsnop - Drama Category

In his secret life, separate from his career as a curriculum specialist in Ontario public education, Chris has been connected with community theatre for 50+ years. He made his debut in a 1955 church youth club play in Blackpool, Lancashire. It is now 40 years since he played his first adult role with Ottawa's Phoenix Players.

Chris has done almost everything theatrical in that 40 year time period, including adjudicating Sears Festival and community theatre productions for 30+ years. He has played all kinds of roles on stage in both dramatic and musical productions. He has directed, written scripts, as well as organizing and hosting festivals and presenting play-polishing workshops.

He is no stranger to designing and operating sound and lighting and has often rolled up his sleeves for the often unsung theatrical roles of set load-ins and strikes, building and painting sets, props, costuming and set dressing, as well as programme design.

He is the proud winner of two acting Theas, and has awards also from EODL and (somewhere) one from that 1955 performance in Blackpool. His academic qualifications include 2 undergraduate and 2 masters' degrees in literature, film & media, and curriculum.

As an adjudicator he is as interested in being a listener and a learner as in being a speaker and teacher, and looks forward to exploring the challenges and triumphs of community theatre's magic with ACT-CO Festival community theatre groups.



Ron Cameron - Comedy Category

For over 33 years, Ron Cameron-Lewis has taught acting and directed shows for the Music Theatre Department at Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning in Oakville. As well, he teaches and directs for the joint Sheridan/UTM Theatre and Drama Studies program since its inception 16 years ago. He directed Theatre Erindale's smash hit *Thirteen Hands* which will be remounted in March 2007 at Hart House Theatre. Other recent credits include *Sweet Charity* for Theatre Sheridan and *Pride's Crossing* for Burl-Oak Theatre Group.

Ron has worked at the Charlottetown Festival, Huron Country Playhouse, Lighthouse Festival Theatre and the Arts & Culture Centre in St. John's. His textbook on acting technique *Acting Skills for Life* is in its third edition,

published by The Dundurn Group. It features acting exercises, improvisations, theory and excerpts from Canadian plays. He has worked extensively as production consultant and workshop leader with many community theatre groups throughout Ontario.

This is Mr. Cameron-Lewis' seventh time adjudicating for ACT-CO, and he has also covered the EODL and WODL festivals three times each and the Theatre Ontario Festival four times. In addition to his work throughout Ontario, he has adjudicated many times in the USA at state, regional and national levels of competition from Massachusetts to Texas. He stopped counting at 2,000 productions.

Graduating as a history major from the University of Western Ontario, Mr. Cameron-Lewis trained in theatre at the Banff Centre, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London (England) and the University of London.

He received the President's Award of Excellence at Sheridan and was awarded the 2004 Maggie



Bassett Award by Theatre Ontario for his sustained contribution to theatre in Ontario.

ACT-CO Board of Directors 2005-2006

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Laurel Smith - Musical Category

Laurel is a theatre director, playwright, producer and performer with a degree in music and opera performance from Wilfred Laurier University, an MBA in Arts and Media Administration from York University (graduating on the Dean's List) and theatre training at the Banff School of Fine Arts and the Drama Studio in London. She is currently an MA candidate at the Graduate Centre for the Study of Drama at University of Toronto.

Laurel has adjudicated for the Mississauga Arts Awards and for the Meadowvale Music Theatre Awards, and this season will be adjudicating the London One-Act Play Festival in May 2006. Favourite directing credits

include: *Hands - The Playwrights Guild of Canada Women Playwrights conference*; *The Mikado - Clarkson Music Theatre* (60th anniversary production - numerous ACTCO nominations and award for best set design); *My Fair Lady - City Centre Productions* (Audience Choice Award, Meadowvale Music Theatre Awards); *The Wager - Lost Carnival Productions*; *The Pirates of Penzance - Clarkson Musical Theatre* (Adjudicators Award for Best Direction, Meadowvale Music Theatre Awards); *The Gondoliers - Clarkson Musical Theatre*; *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Wrong Turn at Lungfish - Gryphon Theatre*. For three years, Laurel was Producer of Modern Times Stage Company, a professional Persian-Canadian theatre company based in Toronto. Currently, Laurel is the Artistic Producer of Burning Passions Theatre, producing and directing the premiere of *Fireweeds: Women of the Yukon* in 2000, followed by a variety of youth, community and professional theatre projects. Next season the company will be developing and producing one of Laurel's original scripts, *The Crush of Beauty*. Another of her plays, *The Reluctant Dragon*, recently workshopped with Carousel Players in St. Catharines, will also be developed by the company for the TYA market.

Call Board http://actco.ca/Call_Board.html

Brampton Music Theatre

Fiddler on the Roof

BMT requires men for their fall production of "Fiddler on the Roof".

Fyedka: (male 20s to 30s) Russian who falls in love with Chava. Strong actor/ singer with dance ability. Supporting character.

Sasha: (male 20s to 30s) Russian friend to Fyedka. Actor/singer with dance ability.

Mordcha: (male 30 to 50) The innkeeper. Comedic actor/singer. Supporting character.

Rabbi: (male 50 to 60s) Very strong comic actor. The one person everyone in the village turns to for guidance. Supporting character

Yussel: (male any age) A hatter. Actor/singer with dance ability.

Constable: (male 30 to 50s) Strong actor with authoritative presence. Supporting character.

Russian Singer: High Baritone/tenor
3 or 4 ensemble men who can dance to play Russians and bottle dancers. I could double cast Sasha and Russian Singer from this group.

Call Susan at 905-791-1908; email - sdoyle@bramptonmusictheatre.com or visit www.bramptonmusictheatre.com

Peel Players

There Goes the Bride

PPP is holding auditions for their October 2006 production of "There goes the Bride" written by Ray Cooney and John Chapman

Auditions: PPP Rehearsal Unit,

1100 Central Park Drive, Brampton, (between Torbram & Bramalea) left side door and down the stairs.

Audition dates: August 14th and 15th, 2006.

The cast needed: 4 females, 4 males.

You will be asked to read from the script.

Rehearsals: Mondays and Wednesdays from 7:30 to 10:00 starting the 21st of August.

Presented at Lester B. Pearson Theatre
October 19, 20, 21@ 8:00 pm, October 21 @ 2:00pm

Brampton Music Theatre

Anne of Green Gables

BMT is looking for directors for their "Anne of Green Gables Production which will be presented in March at the new Performing Arts "Rose" Theatre in Brampton.

Please send your proposal and resume to Louise Boutin at lboutin@bramptonmusictheatre.com or call (416) 200-2142 for more information.

GUIDELINES

E-mail submissions to:
action@actco.ca
or
mail submissions to:
Louise Boutin
279 Bell Air Dr.
Bolton, Ont.
L7E 2A2

Please ensure that all submissions for plays for the Callboard or for the Show Calendar include the name of the author(s) or specific credit for musicals.

DEADLINES

Nov/Dec	Oct. 15
Jan/Feb	Dec. 15
Mar/Apr	Feb. 15
May/June	Apr. 15
July/Aug	June 15
Sept/Oct	Aug 15

Subscriptions

We will email the newsletter to Groups going forward.

Please email Louise Boutin at action@actco.ca
With the email addresses you wish to have the newsletter sent to.

Be sure to include the name of your Group.

For More Information:
website: www.actco.ca

Theatre Ontario 2007 Festival

IT'S BAAA-AAACK! THEATRE ONTARIO FESTIVAL IN YOUR BACKYARD AGAIN.

The best of community theatre in Ontario is coming to a theatre near you! You can not only see a great week of theatre, you can be a star. In May, 2007, ACT-CO region takes its turn as host of the Theatre Ontario Festival, which brings together the winners of the festivals of the Western, Eastern and Quonta (formerly Quebec-Ontario, now basically Northern) regions. Four shows, four nights, at the Newmarket Theatre Centre, May 16 to 21, 2007. This year, because no single company has been able to take on the task of hosting, the ACT-CO Board will take the lead in this production, in partnership with Theatre Ontario, but we're looking for co-stars and supporting players, as well as good technicians. We have accepted responsibility for the overall production of this Festival. However, we are certain that there are people out there in the ACT-CO Region who would be ready to join our team for a meaningful experience that puts them in touch with our compatriots in the other regions in the interest of great theatre and great times. You could help with hospitality, programme and promotion, liaison with incoming theatre companies, technical support, fundraising, party-planning, etc., etc. If you are interested in any phase of Festival planning, hosting and operation, please get in touch with any Board member or our Festival Chairman, Jeff Burke, via the website (www.actco.ca). We'll be working on this grand event from here until May and it will never be too late to join the company!

Even if you can't be part of the organizing committee or sub-committees, you can still be an important part of Festival just by being there. Since 1994, I've attended nine Theatre Ontario Festivals, only once as a member of a competing entry. Am I crazy? No, I've just been one of the many, many people who actually 'vacation' at the Festival on a semi-regular basis. People go, not because they're competing, but because for one week, they really become part of something larger than their own corner of the artistic world and 'live' with people who share a common passion and bring a fresh range of experiences. You see the shows, exchange views, swap stories over drinks, salute the participating companies, stay up late (optional). Then, you get up early (sometimes difficult!) for the private adjudications (open to all and should be mandatory!) where you get a much closer view of a production than you ever would at the ACT-CO Festival. Four mornings of in-depth discussion bring you much closer to the heart of the matter. There are also workshops and play readings and a celebratory brunch. Take an extra long weekend (2 days off work, Thursday & Friday) and you're there. If that's out of the question, a Festival pass will get you four shows and after-shows for less than the price of a single ticket to the Royal Alex!

ACT-CO does have a different history with the Festival than the other regions. For us, this on-site Festival runs very differently to our own which sprawls from September to April, where the other regions all host on-site Festivals to choose their entry. The other regions really get the value of that one-week intensive; essentially, twice a year, they bond with their fellow artists. There are always more visitors from those regions to the Festival than from ACT-CO even – shocking to admit – when the Festival is in our area, a relatively short driving hop from almost anywhere in ACT-CO. Maybe we are spoiled for choice, with forty member groups mounting too many shows in a given year than I can ever get to. Maybe we already think we've seen the best that's on offer, right here in our region. Maybe we're wrong ... Let's turn the tide this year. ACT-CO always sends a high-calibre show to the Festival, no question – and it would be great to see us really back that show, wherever it comes from, in force in Newmarket in 2007. But some of the most memorable productions I've ever seen have been from theatre companies far (and not so far) away, performing with grace under the pressure of an 8 a.m. move-in and an 8 p.m. curtain. A high-wire act that we dare you to see come May 16 to 21, 2007. Mark those dates on your calendar. Watch this space. Again, the number to call if you want to be part of the show in any way is **416-469-5061** or email gala@actco.ca.

ACT-CO PRESIDENT'S AWARDS

It appears that nominations from some member groups for the ACT-CO Presidents' Awards went astray and were not received by me. If your group nominated someone who did not receive the award please resubmit the nomination to dnash@rogers.com (not through the ACT-CO website).

Please include all the relevant information and the address to which to mail the award.

David Nash
Past President