

A TaLi Lo Production

So ends yet another wonderful, memorable experience. TaLi Lo is a new non-profit production company in its infancy started by a true theatre lover with the help of her two sisters. I think this is just great. She plans to have stage extravaganzas periodically at the Quarterline Cafe. A portion of each ticket sale will go to a group of her choosing that is near to her heart. Two dollars from each ticket for *He Crossed That Line* is going to the county hospital's cardiac wing.

As for the show itself, it was a delightful murder-mystery full of suspense, suspicion, and improvisation fun! The victim, Joe Coffee (the evening's Elvis tribute artist) has been murdered. FBI Agent Herman Clueso (no relation) is called in on his first case after finishing 97th out of 103rd in his graduating class.

The Suspects:

- Miss Honey Dew... the 19 year-old widow of the 40 year old victim. Funny how she has no clue who the King of Rock and Roll is.
- Mrs. Lola Finkelmeyer... married to golf pro, Lester (Less for short, "Less is apparently more"). It seems that old Tiger Woods has been hitting 18 hoes (err. holes). A close school friend of the victim.
- Lacy Loveless... pregnant school mate of Joe and Lola. But all is not as it seems.
- Boobsie McGee another classmate of Lacy, Joe, and Lola. Seems to have very close ties to Lacy.
- Guido Zuckerstein... the owner of the restaurant where the murder took place. An Italian-Jew... mother Italian, father Jewish ("eh, This is a America"). Possible ties to organized crime and to Honey Dew.
- Brittawney Rockefeller Dinglesmoocher... yet another

schoolmate of Joe, Lola, Lacy, and Boobsie. Apparently, a descendant of the Rockefeller clan.

Agent Clueso's (and the audience's) mission... to piece together the clues and determine whodunit and why. The clues come at a terrific pace while the characters and audience enjoy a sumptuous buffet until all the clues are announced and Clueso (in his ultimate wisdom, after just completing his training as an FBI agent after 5 attempts. He had a little trouble in weapons class!) announces who he believes the murderer is. Unfortunately, he misses it by "that much" and the real murder reveals him/herself only to be thwarted by the genius who is Clueso, Herman Clueso.

I had an absolute delightful time in my first improv show! Although, we were given the basic outline of the event, everything else was unscripted so you never knew what was going to happen. The culprit was not announced to the actor playing the role (and only to that actor) until just before the doors were unlocked each night. Thank you everyone in the cast, to producer, director Lisa (not that Lisa), and all the audience members who joined in the fun.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A NIGHT MAKES!

TONIGHT'S PERFORMANCE WAS PURE MAGICAL GOLD! We had 15 reservations tonight and by the time we started our evening of mystery and mayhem, I'm sure we had at least 30. Quite a switch from the nine we had last night. I AM SO PSYCHED! I know I mentioned that I was scared to death when this improv thing came up but after tonight, I am hooked. Thanks in no small part to a larger than I anticipated table at the front

of the murder scene. One of my best friends decided to spread the word about the entertainment via a mass email that really worked! I knew a couple of them were speculating about coming tomorrow but I am so glad that they came tonight along with a third visitor and then two more came along! HEHEHEHE!!!!

While last night's audience was very fun and we were able to play off of them really well... nothing beats interacting with a large crowd of VERY receptive participants. There were moments of physicality that no one was anticipating that I found (as a performer) very exciting! And it was all out of the blue! That's improv folks and I love it! Never judge something until you've done it yourself? I hope the video came off well enough to post highlights on youtube so I can share some of it!

There is something new already brewing for my return to the stage! As with anything involving the stage, I am already pumped about it! Stay tuned for more info as it becomes available!

We Are The World 25 For Haiti

Some different lyrics, different styles thrown in but the basic concept remains the same.

What do you think?

Of course, this in no way takes away from the tragedy of the [luge competition](#) which remains under investigation by Olympic officials. Human error was pronounced initially, but upon reading the statement and seeing video much more should have been in place to allow for the athletes' safety.

A Very Intimate Beginning

Tonight was the opening for the murder-mystery dinner theatre at the Quarterline Cafe. It was really intimate because we had a grand total of **5 audience members!** But it was really fun, the paying customers seemed to enjoy themselves as they played along and attempted to guess whodunit and why to win a fantastic prize. Our overall effect had to change a bit and hopefully when we get more audience members, it can go back to our original plan! But improv... what can you say? If the paying public is entertained then it is all good!

I must give a shout out to the crashers who shall remain nameless. They traipsed right on in. "Stella" went out to greet them, then they walked out. I attempted to fit them into the plot by acknowledging the late comers and suggesting that they may be two more possible suspects. It must have worked because after we wrapped, I told the cast who they were and everyone knew that I must have known them. Apparently, they were making reservations to one of the remaining two performances.

So, while fun and intimate, a few more audience members would be helpful so that we can do some of the more physical bits we had been working on. Call for reservations (419)485-0253!

A Movie Suggestion For An Upcoming Date Night

Prior to viewing *Sherlock Holmes* amongst all the needless ads, I did see a trailer for a movie that is definitely high on my list for viewing. Although NOTHING can take away the comedic genius which he brings to his portrayal of Michael Scott, Steve Carrel has made some great movies as well. Some of my favorites: *Little Miss Sunshine*, *Evan Almighty* (I actually enjoyed it more than its predecessor, *Bruce Almighty*), and the updated *Get Smart*. This spring, he will be paired with his female counterpart, Tina Fey in the new movie *Date Night*. Sure to be a hilarious movie coming April 9.

Dearly Departed We Are Gathered Here Today...

I hope that I am not stepping on too many toes by posting on a show that some readers have not seen so I will try not to give too much away. [WCCT](#) opened its 2010 season in high form with the hysterically touching comedy *Dearly Departed*. Every redneck stereotype (southern Baptist... correct?... ministers, beer bellied loafers, etc) you can imagine is put on huge display. It was almost a lost episode of *Mama's Family*. In fact, Deb's performance as the family matriarch made me flashback to Vicki Lawrence herself. An extended group of hicks gather to say their farewells to its beloved(?) head of the family.

As with any family centered piece, the dirty laundry is aired and there is a lot to share! It is so much fun to sit back and watch friends on stage create such lively characters. Fellow tangenteer, [justj](#) positively stole the show in not one but two outstanding roles.

So... if you haven't already, be sure to catch one of the remaining performances of the premiere show of the season.

Light At The End Of The Snow

Bank

Can it be? There does seem to be an end to the winter. After the last two days of up to 10" of snow, I got a cheery email ad. MLB pitchers and catchers are to report on February 17 (THAT IS ONE WEEK FROM TODAY FOLKS!). Full team squad report on the 23rd. Spring training game one for the Bombers is March 3rd against the Pittsburgh Pirates.

In unrelated sporting news... can you believe that there is a lack of snow at the site for the Olympic Games. Snow had to be transported to Canada for the start of the games on Friday. Seems inconceivable with the storms that have ravaged the East coast in New York, D.C. has had multiple storms measured in feet instead of inches. I'm sure most of us would gladly relinquish some of the white stuff to our neighbors to the north.

A Super Weekend With Family Guy and A Robot

I had two days packed with fun and a little work. Saturday night, I arrived late for what was dubbed Michaelpalooza at the home of some of my new friends I made over the past year through the Village Players. While some of the revelers played some games, the rest of us were treated to two hilarious... if not totally family-friendly spoofs of *Star Wars*.

The [Robot Chicken](#) (an animated series definitely best left to overnight television on Cartoon Network) episode was more of a spoof of the entire six films.

[Family Guy](#) actually had a previous spoof dealing with the original film. We watched the episode based upon *The Empire Strikes Back*. Several questions were raised by the episode.

One being why Lando Calrissian wore Han Solo's uniform at the end of the movie. And if you watch closely, he actually does.

Also, a very obscure factoid about the movie *Teen Wolf* (one of my favorites growing up... please skip the horrendous sequel) was alluded to. One which obviously missed the censors but I have it on good authority actually exists. If you are curious, you will have to do your own research because I do like to run a family-friendly blog. I will lead you to the crowd in the stands of the final basketball game.

Today, Super Bowl Sunday, I had to work, go to play practice for our dinner theatre coming up NEXT WEEKEND folks, and then went to our annual game bash full of fun, awesome friends, lots of laughs, and a new addition that I will let [taylhis](#) share... but he is adorable. In case you did not know.. the Saints defeated the Colts 31-17. Thoughts on the game? The ads? Da Who? Will we ever get beyond the Boobygate scandal and have quit having grandpa and company perform... although the drummer looked like he was not even thought of in the Pinball Wizard's heyday?

There Comes a Time

When we heed a certain call

When the world must come together as one.

Twenty-five years ago, a group of the best-known pop, country, and r&b artists gathered at a recording studio following the American Music Awards to record a song that would raise money

to help the millions of needy people in Africa. Singers like Michael Jackson, Lionel Richie. Bruce Springsteen, Ray Charles, Kenny Rogers, Harry Belafonte, Willie Nelson, and stars like Dan Aykroyd in all 43 superstars from numerous genres were part of U.S.A for Africa.

Recently, a large group of today's artists and some who have been around for a bit, gathered at the same recording studio to record an updated version of ["We are the World"](#) (including a hip-hop bit) to benefit the relief efforts of the devastation caused by the Haitian earthquakes. I don't see many repeaters aside from Janet, Tito, and Randy Jackson. Janet will be performing the solo parts recorded by her late brother. Today's pop stars like Miley Cyrus, the Jonas Brothers, Celine Dion, and Rob Thomas joined with Barbra Streisand, Tony Bennett, Harry Connick, Jr., Josh Groban plus Faith Evans, Gladys Knight and Vince Vaughn? An astonishing 78 artists on one recording... the ego in the studio must have been great. Hopefully not only will the recording be successful artistically but also help the relief effort in Haiti.

For those of you too young to remember the original or for those of us who have not seen the once (now twice) in a lifetime gathering here it is. The new version is set to be released during the Olympics on NBC.

And The Nominees Are...

This morning, the Academy Award nominations were announced.

The big news this year: the expansion of the Best Picture Category from 5 nods to 10. As the list proves, this was done in order to pay homage to not only the “good” films but also to the popular films that everyday joes are likely to have seen. There is also another first among the nominees which I will get to.

And AWAAAAAY We Go

Best Actress In A Supporting Role:

- Penelope Cruz (*Nine*)
- Vera Farmiga (*Up in the Air*)
- Maggie Gyllenhaal (*Crazy Heart*)
- Anna Kendrick (*Up in the Air*)
- Mo’Nique (*Precious: Based on the Novel ‘Push’ by Sapphire*)

Best Actor In A Supporting Role:

- Matt Damon (*Invictus*)
- Woody Harrelson (*The Meesenger* not for the other big WH movie of the year: *Zombieland*)
- Christopher Plummer (*The Last Station*)
- Stanley Tucci (*The Lovely Bones*)
- Christoph Waltz (*Inglourious Basterds*)

Best Actress In A Leading Role:

- Sandra Bullock (*The Blind Side*... the sweetheart of this year’s list)
- Helen Mirren (*The Last Station*)
- Carey Mulligan (*An Education*)

- Gabourey Sidibe (*Precious...*, the Dark horse in this race)
- Meryl Streep (*Julie/Julia...* enough said)

Best Actor In A Leading Role:

- Jeff Bridges (*Crazy Heart*)
- George Clooney (*Up in the Air...* speculation of a Bridges/Clooney battle)
- Colin Firth (*A Single Man*)
- Morgan Freeman (*Invictus...* portrayals of historical figures, hmm)
- Jeremy Renner (*The Hurt Locker*)

Best Animated Feature:

- *Coraline* (Henry Selick, director)
- *Fantastic Mr. Fox* (Wes Anderson)
- *The Princess and the Frog* (John Musker and Ron Clements... Disney's first classic animation feature since the Pixar revolution)
- *The Secret of Kells* (Tomm Moore)
- *Up* (Pete Docter... Disney/Pixar's best to date)

Best Director:

- James Cameron (*Avatar*)
- Kathryn Bigelow (*The Hurt Locker...* Mr. Cameron's ex-wife the first time a former couple has ever been nominated for the award... she could also come off as the first female Best Director winner)
- Quentin Tarantino (*Inglourious Basterds*)
- Lee Daniels (*Precious...*)
- Jason Reitman (*Up in the Air*)

Best Picture:

- *Avatar* (James Cameron and Jon Landau, Producers)
- *The Blind Side* (Nominees to be determined? Don't we know who produced it?)
- *District 9* (Peter Jackson and Carolynne Cunningham,

Producers)

- *An Education* (Finola Dwyer and Amanda Posey, Producers)
- *The Hurt Locker* (Nominees to be determined?)
- *Inglourious Basterds* (Lawrence Bender, Producer)
- *Precious...* (Lee Daniels, Sarah Siegel-Magness, and Gary Magness, Producers)
- *A Serious Man* (Joel Coen and Ethan Coen, Producers)
- *Up* (Jonas Rivera, Producer)
- *Up in the Air* (Daniel Dubiecki, Ivan Reitman, and Jason Reitman, Producers)

There you have them. The MAJOR nominees for this years Oscar parties. Grab your ballots, make your choices, and watch ABC on March 7th when Alec Baldwin and Steve Martin co-host the 81st (or is it 82nd... conflicting details) Annual Academy Awards. Co-hosts? For the rest of the nominees, check them out at abc.com

Final Tally:

- *Avatar* and *The Hurt Locker* tied with 9 nods apiece
- *Inglourious Basterds* with 8
- *Precious* and *Up in the Air* with 6
- *Up* received 4 nominations