

Something Creaky This Way Comes

Tonight was opening night for *You Have the Right to Remain Dead* and what an opening it was. For a Friday night during football season with many homecoming games going on, I thought the crowd was a decent size and it is very difficult to fill every seat in the venue. I still cannot say enough how gorgeous and amazing it is to be on the jewel of a stage. Both times I have been in shows at the Huber I have been spoiled.

I thought that among the best moments were some of the sound effects. There are many great effects that heighten the atmosphere of the show and tonight we had the heater going. Not to worry, because I was for a bit. Everyone I talked to in the audience thought the noise was part of the show... including a few friends who had a great time playing "whodunit." The entire audience seemed to get into the participation act but it could have started a bit sooner. And we were promised that the noise from the heater would be addressed.

Following the show while shedding my costume and persona of Harnell Chesterton, I learned that one of my castmates is a Red Sox fan (I won't hold that against him). My Yankee coat was hanging on a hangar and Alex noticed it and we each offered our condolences to each other. By the way, the Bombers are up 2-0 in the ALDS after beating the Twins 4-3 in 11 innings.

And I think I have made a new friend who has found out about my sterling personality. the director warned me to watch myself or she would find something to throw at me during the show. What is it that I do... honestly?

I think I have found a new favorite show that will be really hard to leave when Sunday's matinee is over. I think this will be number 3 replacing Rooster and right behind Donnie and "you-know-who."

Lets see... 14 hours 52 minutes to go...and counting.

I'm Lovin' It!

No, not McDonald's but the feeling this day always brings. Not sleeping much the night before (I think I finally got down about 3 this morning and slept until about 9). I watched Superman: The Movie to further unwind. I got up totally rested, totally excited, read my pal's blog post sending wishes to Travis, Mary, and I in our respective shows. Break a leg guys! I don't know even how to describe the feeling or if everyone gets the same as a show opening approaches, but it is TREMENDOUS! Giddy as a school boy (to coin a phrase) kind of feeling with a bit of the butterflies which is no more than the adrenaline and excitement building until that moment when the curtain rises and you have an audience looking up at you. So... in the next 5 hours and 52 minutes I will TRY to relax just a little, look over my lines a bit (as I always do) get to the theatre (maybe even before the director, herself), NO makeup (!!!!). WOO HOO!

Final Dress

Yes, tonight was the final dress rehearsal for [You Have the Right to Remain Dead](#). We had a few snags but nothing that will prevent us from having an AWESOME opening night tomorrow. We were instructed to come home, get a good night's sleep, relax tomorrow (glad I have the day off), and look over our lines. Very sound advice from a first time director who has done a sensational job! I love directors who just let the actors do their thing and offer critiques when they are needed AFTER the rehearsal is completed. Just another fantastic experience!

NOW my little pitch: to all of you readers who are planning to attend [Little Shop of Horrors](#) PLEASE do so. My request is this: the show I am in runs THIS WEEKEND ONLY (four shows, one Friday, two Saturday shows, and one Sunday matinee). *Little Shop* has a total of 7 performances over two weekends (one of which I WILL BE attending... three good friends in the cast notwithstanding). So you have ample opportunity to enjoy both because they are both excellent shows. Ok.. plug over.

After tonight's rehearsal, I came home and watched an EXCELLENT movie. I can only say this without giving away the whole movie because there is sooooo much to tell. *Inside Man* in a nutshell features a powerhouse cast of two Academy Award winners (Denzel Washington and Jodie Foster) plus the talented Clive Owen and Christopher Plummer. Of the plot, I will say that it concerns the perfect bank heist. Never boring and has many layers and intricacies. I find that cooling down from the excitement of the evening before a show opens is best spent indulging in not so ordinary things. I will watch the shows I have DVRed(?) at a later date.

Once again, I have had the pleasure of working with new cast members (I have now worked with TWO Heffelfinger guys) and once again ventured out into another fantastic venue! Thanks

everyone.

Here There Be Trekkers

Tonight was our first dress rehearsal complete with newspaper reviewer and minus one key character from the production... UGH! I dunno... week of opening with 4 rehearsals to go and one of the major cast members is at a meeting but I guess it must have been important. So we had a fill-in read lines from the audience. The reviewer for the Crescent is very personable and has been exceptionally favorable in a few of the WCCT shows he has critiqued and the first show I was in with the Village Players. He even quoted a line from a review of one of my characters: "A gleefully unrepentent psycho" or something like that. He must have remembered seeing *Grease*?

Before we began, the subject of *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* was addressed by Mr. Greer. Particularly, the *Enterprise's* fly over, around, and into the behemoth ship that took what seems an eternity to sit through. We then focused on the number of Trek fans in the cast of which there are many. The youngest female in the cast is named Katherine Janeway after the first female character to lead a Star Trek television series as captain of the *U.S.S. Voyager*. Another has a husband who has thousands of Trek books. I used to read the novels from time to time but have since lost track unless there is a really special one.

A third really got my interest soaring. It seems that she is a relative of DeForest Kelley (R.I.P) who played my personal favorite character of all Trekkdom: the inscrutable, crusty, curmudgeonly Dr. Leonard H. "Bones" McCoy. She, however, did not inherit the searing blue "Kelley eyes" as her brother had.

Ok... back to the rehearsal. I think that with the absence of one of our actors, it went awfully well. Hopefully, this will be the LAST time we are minus a performer. But how fun was that to discover something new about so many in our small cast? Hopefully, our kindly reviewer does not print TOO much about the murder mystery in his article... no spoilers. As soon as I see it, I will make note of it in another post.

3 Days, 22 Hours and counting...

It's A Wonderful Miracle

I am in a quandary. Next week, opening week of *You Have the Right to Remain Dead*, is audition dates for WCCT's production of *Miracle on 34th Street*, a show I dearly love. However, I do not see much in the way of a possibility to try out when there is rehearsal each of the three nights.

However, the next production of the Village Players is another holiday classic, *It's a Wonderful Life*. I'm not entirely sure when auditions for this show will be; since Travis (director for IAWL) and [Mare](#) and are both in *Little Shop of Horrors* at the same time as my show, I do not see them being held until after that. Maybe when our time-strapped tangenteer has time to read this post, she might be able to provide a bit of insight or I may be able to ask at our next gathering.

But I think either show would be fun to be a part of.

Off The Book & It Feels Soooo Fine

YAHOO!!! I took the plunge and ditched the script for the entire rehearsal. As a wise scientist once stated: "Once you set your mind to it, you can accomplish anything." I will not say that I was perfect but I felt good after the evening was complete. So fun and ultimately rewarding... now I can begin the tweaking of my character. We also attempted to run the show using the lights: extensive blackouts, many light tricks and sound effects that will definitely need to be worked out during the next three weeks. Hopefully, our tech crew will arrive soon to get all of their cues. The entire cast was fumbling around in the dark on numerous occasions tonight but no one was seriously injured... yet. I even got to provide a word following the run through. As I have stated previously, this show is much more than an audience-participatory murder-mystery, I think it closely rivals some of the best melodramas out there. I mentioned that most of the characters have lines that can be delivered as asides to the audience. That was one of my few complaints with the last melodrama I saw staged... there were asides but the director chose not to have them blatantly directed to the audience which limited the amount of booing and cat-calling.

This new internet is crazy cool. So much faster than the old Verizon. Just sitting here makes me feel like a kid in a candy store. Three weeks to go and our rehearsal schedule has changed so that we now have practices every night except Saturday. Well... if they are needed (and I think they are, there is just so much to work out technically as well as theatrically).

A Case of MPD?

Monday night at rehearsal, we had about half the cast present without either of the directors. This greatly limited the amount of work we could accomplish. It was decided that we would once again run lines. Quite often in these situations, actors are asked to read multiple roles. I ended up being three of the four male parts. At times this was quite humorous but most of the time it gave me even more insight into my own character; who is Harnell Chesterton and what makes him tick (or in terms most theatre performers can relate: What is his motivation? UGH!) I believe I have a firm grasp on Mr. Chesterton's persona. However, for reasons that will hopefully be quite clear to those in the audience, I am having a bit of trouble with his lines, but they are getting there. I have such a grasp that the assistant director told me that I was perfectly cast. Two weeks in and my reputation has already preceded me! C'est impossible! No worries... by week's end, I should be good. I just need to visit my area Goodwill's for a white dinner jacket.

I Am Playing The Part Of The Plant

000PS... wrong show... or is it?. Tonight was the read-through for my latest on-stage endeavor. I will say that reading the script with the actors (*sans* one) was an absolute RIOT! *You Have the Right to Remain Dead* is much more than an audience-

participatory murder mystery, it almost plays like a melodrama. I believe I alluded to the fact that this is a play-within-a-play with the actors portraying actors on stage as well as the characters within a very Tennessee Williams-esque production. It will be quite a challenge to keep under control as the hilarity ensues throughout. All of the actors are on stage throughout the entire show. Among the colorful cast of characters are the actors within the local community theatre, the director, the teenage backstage manager, and an inept detective who I believe will be very reminiscent of Columbo (rumpled trenchcoat, tattered notepad, and all).

The fun begins when one of the “actors” is murdered. Each of the remaining thespians (on and off stage) and the audience itself is suspect. Everyone has a different motive for doing the poor sap in and it is up to Officer Bainbridge to discover whodunit, how, and why. Nothing is as it seems, the clues pile up at a hilarious rate, until the guilty party is revealed. In order to find out who did what to whom and with what it was done to whom be sure to come to the Huber Theatre October 9-11. A double show on October 10. Judging from the read-through this will be yet another memorably great production but aren't they all memorable...good or bad?

I Hate Long Waits

WOW! This has to rank amongst the quickest audition results I have ever gotten. Monday morning at 10AM (mere hours after I auditioned), I got a phone call from the assistant director of *You Have the Right to Remain Dead* and was asked if I would like to accept the coveted, intrigal part of Harnell Chesterton. I'm not sure how much he's involved but from what I read, he has a LOT to say and a hilarious bit. Looks like

yet another great role!

Unlike another show I know that has been cast for a month and a half and has less than 8 weeks to curtain, rehearsals for this begin next Monday with a read-through. The costume matron (the same as for *Meet Me in St. Louis*) wants to get started immediately with her excellent ideas. If anyone saw MMiSL, you surely remember the wonderful costumes created/hunted down for that show... including the menagerie of hats worn by Grandpa Prophater. I can't wait to be back onstage in general but to be back on the Huber stage will be a treat!

AHHHH... show dates are October 9-11 with a matinee and evening show on Saturday. So those of you cast in Little Shop have no excuse for not seeing it.

The Only Fella At Auditions

Does this mean I got a part? If not, I will turn in my license to act tomorrow. Truthfully, I was the only male at tryouts. That is not to say that there were not other audition dates. In fact, this was the last one and the best time for me to go.

The play is entitled *You Have the Right to Remain Dead*. It is billed as an audience-participatory murder mystery comedy. The director describes the play in the play as Tennessee Williams on steroids. At least two character names made me think that (Fat Daddy and Blanche or Big Daddy from *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and Blanche from *Streetcar*...has anyone seen the Simpsons' episode in which Marge plays Blanche and Ned Flanders plays a bare-chested Stanley in a musical version).

The audition was almost too relaxed... but NOT complaining. We

sat around a table in the community room adjacent to the stage. Being 90+ degrees outside did not help to cool off the room a whole lot. However, it sure beat the alternative of walking upstairs. I was up there last winter and noticed the warmth then. So, we just sat around the table chatting a bit, going over the plot and characters for those of us who were in the dark, and read some scenes from the script. I said too relaxed because there were times that I forgot that I was actually auditioning and almost cracked myself up just reading the lines.

In attendance were the directors, another female auditioner who I knew as the costume designer from *Meet Me in St. Louis*, [Mare](#) (who was there to give moral support and serve as an additional line reader since she is in WCCT's *Little Shop of Horrors* whenever that is going to get started), and myself. We waited for two hours for others to come, but... We were having so much fun that we just kept reading lines, changing characters, and allowing me to become acquainted with the show in general. After, we sat around the table becoming acquainted with each other.

And I should be finding out tomorrow which if any part I get and the read-through is August 24th. Perfect, I hate long waits.