

# Throw Him In The Pit

Tonight was the first rehearsal for which we had an ORCHESTRA. And I am pleased to say that it went remarkably well. We finally started about 7.30 and got to the end of Act I shortly after 9. Remarkably, we stopped very little although there were some problems with lines but only once or twice did anyone call for a line. Good, bad, or indifferent we mae it through. I was even surprised by the young girls playing Agnes and Tootie. But for getting through the act in just over an hour-and-a-half was remarkable... evn the director said so after she delivered her long list of notes. The one note she had for Grandpa was the necessity to learn the Scene 2 song which we have not practiced a great deal.

Performing with an orchestra can be a very interesting predicament. You really have to be on your toes and know where you are in the music. We were informed that most productions do not get the benefit of the orchestra until the week of a shows opening. We have 8 rehearsals remaining, but it is STILL great to be on stage taking to heart all the comments and making note to find ways to improve upon the character. Thursday nights Act II REHEARSAL SHOULD BE JUST AS INTERESTING. □

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# Stalking Deer In St. Louis

Last night was the first night we have been on the Huber stage. I have been in the audience to watch a production of School House Rock, Jr (think I've mentioned that before). However, stepping onto the stage was something else entirely. An actual stage raised above the audience with an orchestra

pit beneath. Even a balcony in the audience and a thrust stage. For being our first time on the stage, I thought it went really well. We did manage to plunder our way through Act 1.

When I was not needed on stage, I was in the costume room looking for costumes. I was enamored by the number of hats I found... everything from a fez, to a beret, to a genuine deerstalker which Sherlock Holmes himself would feel at home in. I just need to find a light, summery suit. Meet Me in St. Louis is set over the course of one full year so the actors on stage need to convey the change of seasons. There is a Halloween and a Christmas scene as well as summer and spring. Many costume changes. Ever time I come on stage, I have at least one article of clothing unlike any other I wore previously. So... night one on a new stage was fun and inspiring. Different, not necessarily better, from the stages I have been on in the past few years ☐

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## Walzing On The Trolley

Today was one of those hectic, busy days that I just love. Work til 2 then immediately have to make my way to rehearsal. Fortunately, the time clock is set 5 minutes fast. Rehearsal was just as fun as I had imagined it would be. The principal cast and members of the chorus were given a lesson in waltzing by the choreographer. Actually not as bad as I had feared although it was only a rudimentary lesson. In the ballroom scene, Grandpa actually has to appear to be moving somewhere during his graceful dance with Esther. We also got to watch the big chorus number on board the trolley begin to take shape. Just so long as it isn't a bunch of people sitting on board moving up and down, up and down to simulate the

movement. While listening to chorus members practice, one of the male singers was asked which part he sang... Bass. And by golly, he was indeed a bass. I could never in my wildest dreams hit some of the notes he was able to. There are basses and then there are BASSES!!!

Then it was over my home theatre where we were having three meetings as well as a surprise 21st birthday party for a dear friend who is in *Over the Tavern*. Apparently, she was surprised because she was amazed that I could keep a secret. I just told her that I had to come over for the meetings.

Following the meetings, some of us went across the way to eat. I had no money with me... something about misplacing my wallet. This never happens to anyone else, right? I did find it when I returned home.

OK... The End of The Spy Who Loved Me

*James Bond Will Return in*

*For Your Eyes Only.*

But he returned in *Moonraker* (yuck) first.

Happy 21st, Megan.

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## A New Season Opens

Tonight was the opening for the WCCT's first show of the 2009-2010 season. [Over the Tavern](#) tells the story of Rudy, a young Catholic boy who questions his upbringing in the church. The young man finds himself at odds with his teacher, the formidable 'ster Clarissa. Life at home is not much

better. I will call it nearly normal. Not quite insane enough to be termed dysfunctional; but nowhere the idyllic lifestyle which Rudy longs for: the world of 50s family series television headed by Robert Young (of *Father Knows Best*). If anyone tells you that their family is the picture of perfection, they are either delusional or pulling your leg. Each member of Pazinski clan (father Chet, mother Ellen, oldest brother Eddie, sister Annie, Rudolph, and little Georgie ... HE HAS TO BE SEEN TO BE BELIEVED) each have life experiences which play into the drama.

Each member of the cast was just great from veterans who have been on stage several times to the young boys who are just beginning to step on stage. Those of us who were raised in a Catholic home were transported back to the classroom in which the fear of God was instilled in you with a ruler cracking your hand. Rudy and Eddie in the bedroom on bunk beds took me back to my childhood when I shared a room with my older brother and the battles therein.

I would feel terrible if I did not mention my friend's return to the stage. Megan was just terrific. Although I have shared the stage with her before, I have never had the pleasure of seeing her on stage. Her facial expressions, timing, entire characterization made everyone believe that she was 16 years old going through her own life's trials and whose hair belongs to her parents until she is 21. Ironically, Carol reminded me that that would be in a few short days. I told Megan that I hope it is not another 2 seasons before she graces the stage.

The whole cast, set, the entire production of *Over the Tavern* kicked off the new theatre season in hilarious fashion. I arrived a bit early to offer good wishes to all and found myself stuffing programs and running into the frantic director who typically appeared to be quite frazzled for whatever reason.

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# **One... Two... Three aaand One... Two... Three**

Tonight's rehearsal was full of fun. We had a visitor from an area newspaper who may also be of help in the costuming area. She was there to discuss the show individually when we were not needed in a scene. "John Truitt" and I happened to be available at the same time (it was not the scene in which we are part of). As I introduced myself to the interviewer, "John" said "I know who you are. You look just like your brother." Apparently, the young man is a self-acclaimed nuisance to my oldest brother at school by dropping in on him quite frequently with computer problems. Knowing my brother quite well, I doubt if he sees the teenager as a nuisance.

Part of the fun was watching people attempt to waltz as well as trying to dance myself. Then, the real challenge came: waltzing and talking at the same time. At least I only have one line to remember while I dance. Hopefully, waltzing will come back to me on Sunday when the choreographer joins us.

I also found a lot of other humorous possibilities as well as some very quick costume changes... how fun THOSE will be.

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# **Fun In A Different Costume**

# Room

Tonight's rehearsal was extremely interesting and cut short because of our limited space. The stage was being used for final dress rehearsals for the production of [Steel Magnolias](#) going up this weekend. The community room in the building (which has been used as our practice area prior to the stage opening up) was being used by another civic organization. Our final option was to use the costume room. On Sunday afternoon when I found out that this was where we would be practicing, I had to laugh. The WCCT costume facility is wall to wall, floor to ceiling, full of rods, shelves, totes, and boxes full of clothes with very little space to move around. Tonight, I walked into a room that was much larger and less packed with clothes. Maybe this was because it seemed that there was a fraction of the costumes present. There was still a limited amount of space.

Before we began, I met the young man who will be playing John Truitt, the "boy next door." We have something in common: both of us are featured in a youtube video. And of course, this led to the introduction by everyone's favorite Liswathistani. This drew quite a reaction (a good reaction) from everyone there. I made sure to invite everyone to look up the video. "John" and "Grandpa" share one brief moment on stage together. One of the highlights of the evening was seeing "John" learn how to take an on-stage punch from a girl. I had an experience taking an on-screen punch during a melodrama. In one performance, the hero's fist actually collided with me... OOPS ☐ OOPS again, I took an on-STAGE punch.

By the time we had finished (early), we had blocked the largest scene in the musical and one smaller scene. Some good Grandpa moments in those scenes including a very lovely, tender moment with Esther... right before we do that thing that will be taught this weekend... looking forward to that ☐ .

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# Give 'Em The Old Razzle Dazzle

HEHE... much to a friend's chagrin, I have entitled my first post with my new them after one of the signature numbers from the musical, *Chicago*. From what I gather, the producer for our community theatre's production of the musical was fond of using the phrase whenever he could. ("This show is full of razzle dazzle," etc.). Unfortunately, I was not yet involved in the group when this production was presented. I do however know that I would like to play the role of Mr. Cellophane, himself, Amos Hart. However, as most know, I am not one to stand in the shadows. For better or worse, I do tend to stand out. I dunno.

Perhaps I should have waited a few weeks to celebrate the first year of our little group of bloggers, but I was looking through various themes and came upon this little number. I kinda like it. So... don't be afraid to comment on the blog of Morat's new look.[poll id="16"]

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# I Need To Know About A Super Weekend Under The Sea

This weekend has been one of the busiest but most fun I have had in sometime. It all started Thursday night when a group of us met at the theatre to practice singing the songs we had selected for our concert on Saturday night. I did not get to

practice mine because circuits got crossed and the clip that held the accompaniment to my piece was not there. But it was fun to see some of the others practice. Chris practiced his two selections from [Jekyll & Hyde](#). I had forgotten that the song "I Need to Know" (one of my favorites from the show) had eventually been taken out of the Broadway production. It was replaced by "Lost in the Darkness" which is sung by Jekyll over his comatose father. I often listen to the Anthony Warlow Gothic Musical Thriller version and find it far superior. Chris also shone brightly on "Confrontation" which is sung toward the end of the musical as Jekyll battles the evil that has risen to the surface and is about to totally consume him.

On Friday morning, I had to go to church to practice singing the songs I would lead the congregation in Saturday night. Then I returned home to practice the song I eventually chose to perform Saturday night at the theatre. When I decided to sing this weekend, I had two selections picked out that were very special to me and I thought would challenge me; however, they were deemed "not modern enough." The theme for the concert was musicals of the past decade. I eventually chose "Under the Sea" from *The Little Mermaid*. Very fun piece. However (and I don't know why it bothers me), I was not able to memorize the entire piece. But I had fun with it and heard many compliments from some close friends and also from newcomers to the theatre group. Megan even noted that she could see me one day performing the role of Sebastian on stage. Another great character with not one but two very memorable songs. Carol also expressed an interest in eventually performing a duet with me in the near future. I would relish the opportunity to perform a duet with Chris and one with Carol. I loved Carol's duet of "Feed the Birds" from *Mary Poppins*. The song really lends itself well to beautiful harmonies. I must say that all of the performers as well as the MCs were very good and the evening was a great success.



Super Bowl Sunday found me at work then immediately onto rehearsal. We got to watch some of the choreography begin to take shape. One of the signature pieces from *Meet Me in St. Louis* is the "Trolley Song." Just in the beginning of the staging of the song, I can see that it will be very intensive but fun. However, Grandpa does not get to ride the car. After rehearsal, I made my way to a game party. I thought the game was good; sad to say the team I picked was not victorious but it is always fun to watch the game with a large group of friends as spirited as mine. I will watch the Super Office Special episode tomorrow.

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## **New Venue... Same Drama**

The other night before rehearsal really got started (before it was supposed to begin), I got a chance to become further acquainted with some of the people involved in the up-coming production of *Meet Me in St. Louis*. While the theatre and people involved may be different, one thing remains the same: the drama involved in operating a community theatre. The director for the musical described how she became the board's president after the previous head stepped down. She then made it known that she is the thorn in many a side. If I had not known better, I would say WCCT had changed faces and buildings. Then, "Lon" passed around invitations to an up-coming membership drive ("No thank you, one is enough for now... thanks" ☐ ).

We also discussed more on things that would be needed for Grandpa; particularly, the necessity of having multiple versions of the same item. A different one for each scene he is in (which is quite a few). How's that for cryptic? But for being the first week of rehearsals, I think it is going

well... of course, we have yet to add an orchestra. I suggested that we do as a few Broadway shows have done recently, have the actors on stage play. I believe that recent productions of [Company](#) and [Sweeney Todd](#) have each had principal players playing instruments. I can see Grandpa Prophater blowing away on a tuba on stage when not singing.

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## It's Time To Sing The Music Of The Night

The local community theatre has added a new weekend series of entertainment to its offerings. The first month of shows has showcased "Broadway Through the Years" and has highlighted talented singers from the area... some familiar faces from past shows and some newbies. This weekend was the first show I have been able to attend and was actually quite impressed. A dear friend sang "Tell Me It's Not True" from [Blood Brothers](#). I really love the music from this show and the story; hopefully, one day I will be able to be part of a production.

I must say that a new young lady who has apparently conveyed an interest in auditioning for future productions showed an immense display of talent. Performing DIFFICULT selections from *Ragtime*, *Songs for a New World*, and *Parade*, I began to wonder where this young lady has been hiding.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the talent of the young women who have organized the series of concerts. The two were highlighted in pieces of their own. My favorite was a duet from [Assassins](#). "Unworthy of Your Love" is a beautiful ballad sung by John Hinckley and Squeaky Fromme in the musical. They are both singing to the objects of their affection; Hinckley

to Jodie Foster and Fromme to Charles Manson. Yet another musical I know about, see clips of via youtube, love everything about it... but will it ever be staged by this area. Most likely not no matter the number of people who suggest it.

Finally, rounding out the evening was the delightfully entertaining emcee for the evening. Very quick with a quip and able to improvise while performers were searching for music. A good way to "get butts in the seats" for the upcoming production of [Over the Tavern](#).