

REPERTOIRE

THE HOBART REPERTORY THEATRE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2017

An illustration featuring a large, dark-colored hound with its mouth wide open, showing sharp teeth, on the left side. On the right side, there is a portrait of a man with dark, curly hair wearing a brown hat and a brown jacket over a white shirt and a dark bow tie. The background is a dark green with a faint blue moon in the upper left corner.

IN
"THE
HOUND
BASKERVILLES"
OF
THE
IN

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S MOST
CELEBRATED SHERLOCK HOLMES THRILLER

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy New Year to you all and welcome to a new year of theatre. I hope you all had a wonderful break over the Christmas period.

Welcome back to our regular directors and a warm welcome to Ellen Roe in her maiden directorial role for Hobart Rep. I am very excited about our season.

Our first play of the 2017 season is filled with laughs and moments of fear. *Hound of the Baskervilles* is a great classic, with a difference, and a great play to begin our year. As stage manager of this production I have seen it grow. There hasn't been a rehearsal where we haven't laughed at the comedy in the play. Ian McQueen, Roger Chevalier and Mark Morgan have the difficult task of bringing to the stage over a dozen characters for you. Thank you to Scott Hunt and a hard-working cast and crew for their work and commitment to the show. I feel confident you will enjoy this production.

In January, all the committees combined at a meeting to look at the role each of the committees plays in the running of our society.

Congratulations to all our Errol's nominees. Each of our 5 plays in 2016 were nominated. A full list is in this newsletter.

Cheers,

Liz



We thank our volunteers and supporters.

We could not function without you.

2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's AGM will be held on **TUESDAY 14 MARCH 2017** in the Playhouse Theatre, 6pm for a 6.15pm start. Entrance will be by the side door off Mather's Lane and refreshments will be provided. All members are invited to attend to read & hear of the past year's achievements and participate in the election of office-bearers including the Executive positions of President & Treasurer, the General committee convenor positions for Finance & Marketing, along with the position of Board Minute Secretary. Nominations have been received for positions and further nominations can be received up to the day before the AGM. A motion to amend the Constitution to reflect current & better practice will be proposed. General information, the agenda and nomination forms have already been mailed or emailed to all members.

Tony Webb

Secretary/Public Officer

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

The Hound of the Baskervilles is at the Playhouse Theatre, 106 Bathurst Street, Hobart from 24 February to 11 March 2017. Performances are 8:00 pm Wednesday to Saturday, with matinees on Sunday 5 March at 3:00 pm and Saturday 11 March at 2:00 pm.

Book at Centertainment on 6234 5998 or www.centertainment.com.au.



THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

Conan Doyle's Consulting Detective On The Case

The game is afoot for lovers of theatre and fans of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle this February as the Hobart Repertory Theatre Society presents *The Hound of the Baskervilles* at the Playhouse Theatre.

Adapted for the stage by John Nicholson and Steven Canny, and directed by local theatre veteran Scott Hunt, the production is a postmodern comedy full of sly jabs at the theatre industry.

It features Conan Doyle's celebrated consulting detective Sherlock Holmes and his bemused offsider Dr John Watson in a madcap retelling of the terrifying tale of a fearsome beast that prowls the moors.

What's more, all characters in the show are played by just three actors, making for a fast-moving and hilariously funny show.

Scott says the challenge of staging a production of the most adapted Sherlock Holmes story is one that he approaches with the same enthusiasm as the famous detective tackling his latest case.

"I'm only serious about comedy, but I want this production to be so terrifying that people jump out of their seats," Scott says.

Scott's directorial approach marries this humour with the supernatural horror of the original, for a unique production that he promises will leave the audience "too scared to laugh."



Rehearsal Shots: Ian (left), Mark (centre) and Roger in an early run through.



Director, Scott Hunt

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

Conan Doyle's Consulting Detective On The Case

The production reunites Scott with veteran Hobart actors Mark Morgan as Sherlock Holmes and Roger Chevalier as Dr Watson.

The three previously collaborated for Hobart Rep's 2016 comedy smash *Habeus Corpus*.

Five-time Deloraine Drama Festival Best Actor winner Ian McQueen rounds out the small but dynamic cast.



Things look a little more advanced here. By all reports the play should be a hoot. (And terrifying too!) Get some friends together and have a great night out. With all things Holmes and Watson being very "in" at the moment it's an ideal opportunity to experience the thrill of a LIVE production.



It looks like Rep's new production is going places.

Roger Chevalier, Ian McQueen and Mark Morgan will not only serve up plenty of cheese, but lots of laughs as well

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

Interview with Director Scott Hunt

You've worked in a number of mediums, having been a TV presenter, musician, and author. What made you choose theatre directing?

At the moment it's really cool. It occupies my every waking moment. I feel the same as when I did *Habeas Corpus*. I find that nearly everything I've ever done before seems to inform my directing. I don't know if that's a good thing or not, but I find myself in many cases directing the way I would cut vision.

When you make a movie or you're doing things with video you can go to closeups – you can take the audience wherever you want to take them visually. They don't have to make the decision. You need to decide what part of the frame you're looking at. Because you can't do that onstage I tend to try and do it by moving people about. And from radio I have an aversion to dead air. I really like to engage the audience and hold 'em. I hate for them to be able to look away as if they were listening to the radio. So I try to keep things moving.

The secret to making TV or movies, for me, is to offer revelation and intimacy. You can look at someone's face closely, and keep looking at them, if they're on a screen, but you can't do that in real life. Revelation is easy on film, you just keep changing your angle, cutting, zooming – all of these things will reveal new things so people can't look away. Onstage you have to keep things moving. I've got experience in music audio effects & soundscapes, once again from doing a lot of radio acting. I was really pleased to be able to get my mate Greg Gurr to design the audio for this.

How much research did you do for this production?

Not a lot. Holmes is the most portrayed character in all of crime fiction. So many films, tv shows, radio plays have been done, and I don't like to look at other movies, or other productions on film, because really, I'm not interested if you take away the creative element. I start with the script, where the gags are.

Having said that, you can't just rewrite a great novel, and this script really does have every character from the book in it, and all the action from the book – it's the same plot. So I've made sure that I've stuck with that and tried to make it look like it's not just a parody. I've always been into comedy since I was a kid, I've told jokes since I was a kid. I'm not really drawn to drama or romance or tragedy, but I'm very happy to use those things as relief for comedy. I think if there's a gag embedded in anything it gives it a nobler purpose and makes it more worthwhile.

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

Interview with Director Scott Hunt (cont.)

I'm trying to make this as scary as it's meant to be. It's a horror story. It came out the same time as Dracula. It's mystery overlaid with horror, and I think those two genres are the reason for its popularity. I think the opportunity to juxtapose comedy on top of that is a rare one and one that I'm eager to explore. I think people are more likely to laugh if they're embarrassed or s**t scared. Nonetheless, we're sticking to the time setting, which is the 1900s, and we're trying very much to make our trains all steam trains and our steam rooms clunky, and our peasants rustic.

There are a number of characters in the show, and only three actors. How is it directing that so that each of the performances is distinct?

The challenge is just to get good actors. And to get three actors within a particular age group so that they're believable. For me there's all kinds of things that make a good actor. There's naturalism and there's being able to be a different character and walk a different way and talk with an accent. There's stagecraft on top of that. The three actors I've got here have got those things in great measure.

Many would have cast Rog as Holmes as he looks the most like Basil Rathbone. I've cast Mark as Holmes, and it means he has to play three women. He's a good actor and a versatile actor. The more I see this in rehearsal, the more I'm glad I went the way I did. Theatre's about the script, the cast, and the audience. No matter how elaborate your set is, it's only gonna work if the audience believes, and as we've proved with Habeas Corpus, a chair's enough if you've got a good cast and you keep everybody busy in the audience.

The biggest challenge with this is keeping the pace up. We've got 40 scene changes and the thought of people sitting in the dark thinking about what happens in the last scene while they're waiting for the next one to materialise... at the heart of all this, if you've got a good cast they should have the skills to just keep the audience believing, just keep 'em engaged, and that's what I hope will happen. And to not only do that, but take 'em through a gamut of emotions... I want to scare the bejeezus out of them in the first five minutes and keep 'em surprised for everything that happens after that.



THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

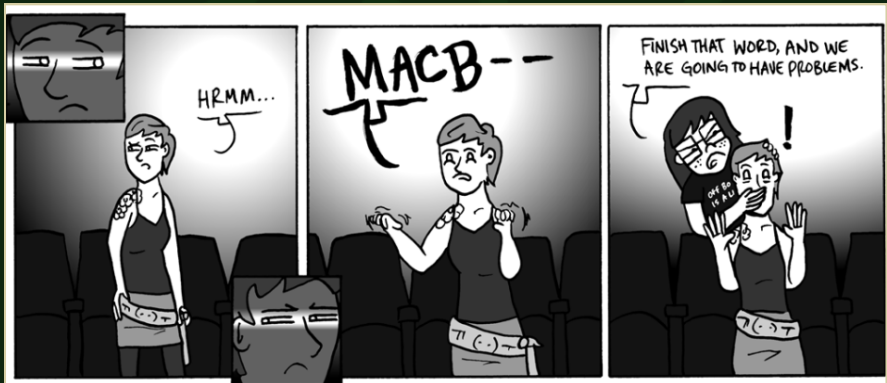
Interview with Director Scott Hunt (cont.)

What would you want Rep to say at your funeral?

I'd just like 'em to think I was okay. I'd be happy if they thought I was a good contributor. I love the Rep. I like hangin' round with the people at the rep. The first time I sat in this room in between acts, sets, scenes was back in the '90s doing witness for the prosecution, and I'm still friends with all the people in that cast. And that's what I came away with – not wanting to do more theatre, but wanting to hang out with those people, because they're not doing it for fame or money, but scaring the bejeezus out of themselves onstage seeing if they'll remember their lines... it's the edge and no safety net.

I was fascinated to hear Ian McQueen, one of the finest actors I've ever worked with, to say he's terrified of opening nights, and how nervous he gets, and the guy's such a superb actor that it really surprised me. Funny, eh?

MEANWHILE...



2017 ERROL AWARDS

Hobart Repertory Theatre Nominees—Community Theatre

The Elephant Man

Best Performance in a Leading Role (Male): **Jon Lenthall**

Best Performance in a Supporting Role (Female): **Leah Venettacci**

Habeas Corpus

Best Production

Best Direction: **Scott Hunt**

Best Ensemble

Best Performance in a Leading Role (Female): **Fransina Kennedy**

Best Performance in a Leading Role (Female): **Kathy Spencer**

Macbeth

Best Performance in a Leading Role (Female): **Karen Kluss**

Best Performance in a Supporting Role (Female): **Sophie Hope**

Best Design (Sound / Lighting / Video or Film): **Chris Hamley** (Lighting & Sound)

Best Design (Set / Costume): **Chris Hamley** (Set Design)

Up For Grabs

Best Production

Best Direction: **Nick Lahey**

Best Performance in a Leading Role (Female): **Lillie McNamara**

Best Performance in a Supporting Role (Female): **Sarah Phillips**

Best Design (Set / Costume): **Nick Lahey** (Set Design)

Something's Afoot

Best Performance in a Supporting Role (Female): **Samantha James-Radford**

Best Performance in a Supporting Role (Male): **Jack Norris**

Best Design (Sound / Light / Video or Film): **Blake Talbot & Robert Manion**

Best Design (Set / Costume): **Robert Manion** (Set Design)

CONGRATULATIONS

Jacqui Crouch



Congratulations to Jacqui Crouch for her nomination for *Clarence City Council Australia Day Citizen Award 2017*. The Acorn Committee of *Li-Ve*, a major disability support organisation nominated Jacqui because of her community volunteer work over many years, in brief: *Hospice, Disabilities, Acorn Committee and also an Acorn Theatre Player, Howrah, RHH Auxiliary, the Blackcherries ensemble, Hobart Rep usher 10 years and the Rep Wardrobe for 7 years.*

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE



On January 21st we had a combined committees meeting to discuss the focus and path for Rep for 2017

2017 SHOW SPONSORS

We welcome our sponsors for the 2017 season:

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