

A Character Of Pure Evil

Tonight, the cast of *It's a Wonderful Life* met to have a mass read-through of the script. I must say that I did not know that there were so many characters of such evil intentions in the literature surrounding what is traditionally known as the "most wonderful time of the year." First, we have Ebenezer Scrooge (I really want to see the new version coming next weekend). Years later, the Grinch very nearly stole Christmas from "every Who down in Whoville." Now, I have been introduced to a character who has so many unredeemable qualities that he puts both of them to shame. Henry F. Potter is going to be a magnificent role to portray. I have been an evil HENCHMAN before; however, I have never before been **THE** evil character with his own entourage. Just reading the script, I could tell how delicious this will be.

I will once again be on the glorious Huber stage with a large cast both young and older and some of which I have been fortunate to work with before. Another WCCTer will be making his debut on the stage. He was even taking pictures of the bare stage and marveling at the size. People have asked me where I prefer to perform: anywhere they will have me. How's that for a diplomatic answer?

I did manage to get home by the third inning of Game 2. I had to call my pals and relate my excitement! Sorry I interrupted *The Office*. I could not believe that they were actually able to watch as it was broadcast. And I am extra excited because the series is now tied 1-1 and tomorrow is a travel day to the City of Brotherly Love. **Four Games to go!!!**

Overall, A Series-ly Wonderful Day

Ok... the big item. The Yankees are off to THE WORLD SERIES! After a bit of speculation about the pitching decision (I thought all along that Andy Pettite was the way to go since he as pitched in numerous big games and now has the most post-season wins of any pitcher). Once again, a great game and I was flabbergasted when the combo of Buck and McCarver began to be silenced when the Angels remarkably made two errors in a row. The quartet of players who were flying high in the late '90s (Captain Jeter, Pettite, Jorge Posada, and closer extraordinaire, MARIANO RIVERA) will be joined by second year skipper, Joe Girardi (who was also the catcher in the late 90s and now is the fourth person to play on a World Series Yankee team and later coach another to the series).

NOW, for even better news on a personal level (close but yes even better), I will be playing the role of the eeeeeevil Mr. Potter in the Village Players' production of *It's A Wonderful Life*. Travis called me earlier and informed me that I need to put on my mean face. I love playing the villain. Can't wait to get started! And it is now projected to run 2 weekends (December 11-13 & 18-20).

GO YANKEES!!!! AND NOW I CAN TRY OUT THOSE ERASABLE HIGHLIGHTERS (I was hoping that it would not be a long wait).
BOOYAH!

Often Imitated But Never Duplicated

Tonight, following an extra long day at work, I will be heading over to the Huber to audition for a role in the holiday classic *It's a Wonderful Life*. There are so many great roles in the show starting with George Bailey, himself. I'm tempted but 300+ lines sounds a bit daunting to me. I thing Clearance would be fun to play. I love playing an evil villain so Mr. Potter is definitely on my radar. Of course, there is the duo of Bert and Ernie whom I have been looking into and the people behind *Sesame Street* state uncatagorically that it is mere coincidence that the muppet friends are named as such. Of course, I will be pleased to accept any role offered to me. So many great roles in the beloved tale that ironically was a flop when it was released in 1946. So many variations on the theme but has it ever been duplicated?

Two In One

Day two of three of the play saw both an afternoon matinee as well as an evening show. I am glad that we had the extra performance so that some of my friends in the Little Shop cast could come and watch our show. I saw two of them, but the third must have been in a hurry to get out. Lucky [Mare](#) pretty well gave away the huge clue of the show during the audience participation part and she swore that she did not know but just used her deductive talents. However, the cast glossed over the revelation until the proper time.

Following the matinee, we walked to the nearby home of one of

our youngest cast members who graciously hosted a cast party between shows. Ate some chili and other goodies. As a tip of the hat to the show, I took some donuts. Really fun time getting to know the cast further. Great times and we played some Apples to Apples.

I think our best audience so far was tonight's crowd and not just because I had quite a few family members and friends who are like family. And I got a gift bag! Erasable highlighters... very cool with two bottles of Coke Zero and a can of Lay's Chips. And a surprise guest that I did not see coming... Cathy DUKES! THANKS ALL! Extremely easy to perform for an audience who is really receptive and participates. I REALLY like these shows. A small faux pas, I was responsible for some minor set damage, but we won't get into that.

Tomorrow, the wrap up but like I said in a previous post... "whenever one door closes, another is soon to open."

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!

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 Treeldom: 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...

Putting It Together... Again

The title seems vaguely familiar so, I added to it. The next week will be exciting, nerve wracking, late, but overall great fun. The week leading up to the performance. The cast and crew got a taste of that this evening when the elaborate effects were added for the first time. There are many light cues and sound effects throughout the play. It took a bit of time to get them all set up so we got started with the rehearsal a bit later than usual which was fine with all involved. We would have to do it eventually anyway. It gave

those of us on stage a chance to reminisce about some of the worst movies ever made. Bo Derek in the blockbuster movie [Tarzan the Ape Man](#) was tossed out. Honestly, I have never seen that version of the legend. Some mentioned that Ms. Derek's role in the feature *10* was better since her role was nothing more than running along the beach. Has anyone seen the (I imagine) horror classic, [Basket Case](#)? Me, neither. Finally, we did get to the Ed Wood classic [Plan 9 From Outer Space](#) which I have seen and I agree with most critics in saying that IT IS the worst movie ever made. However, I still think it is hard to beat the original holiday classic [Santa Claus Conquers the Martians](#).

Finally, about a half-hour late, we did get through the show with only minor trouble. However, with still a few rehearsals left, I'm sure it will be all good. At least we did not wait until Sunday to put it all together. The rain outside also added a new dimension of intrigue.

I just learned that if you are interested in attending a performance (October 9-11), you may now make reservations on-line through the following [link](#)

Ah, the excitement is building!

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.

Another Thespian In The Family?

On Tuesday nights, my niece Elizabeth and nephew Noah come to the house while their older brother is taken to Boy Scouts. Last night after returning from rehearsal, I asked Elizabeth when her school play is going to be. I never got the dates but I remember last year's was sometime in November. I was able to drag out that she has the title role in *Mulan, Junior*. I was excited for her and even had to ask again to make sure I heard correctly. How awesome is that?! I asked if Joshua got a part... forgetting that he is too old to be in the 4th and 5th grade show.

I must admit... and I don't know why... but I have never seen the movie. It must have been because I lost track of Disney movies in the years following *The Lion King* up until Pixar joined the studio with *Toy Story*. I do remember that Lea Salonga was the title voice with Donny Osmond and Eddie Murphy also voicing roles.

Another aspect of Elizabeth that amazes me is her voracious reading. For her birthday, I gave her two books: a mid-level

edition of *Marley and Me* and a Peter Pan prequel (it had Disney's stamp of approval for whatever that's worth). I thought the first book looked a bit simple for her (she has read all 7 Harry Potter books) but, eh. I was right because I asked how far she had gotten in them and she finished the first and started Peter Pan earlier that day and was already beyond the first 100 of 500 pages.

Apparently, school children are rewarded for outside reading far more than I was. When I was in elementary school, we received a coupon for a free personal pan pizza from Pizza Hut after reading so many books. Today, children can read a book go onto a website, take a quiz, and earn points which they can build up to obtain all kinds of fabulous gifts. I had no idea there was such a thing until my cousin asked if I made sure the books were on the [AR](#) list? I think it is a neat idea but for one thing: The points do not carry over from year to year. I really don't have a problem with rewarding those who enjoy reading and I don't believe that the incentive is connected with the classroom.

Not trying to take anything away from the fabulous news of Elizabeth's first lead role, so CONGRATS! Break a leg! OH... my brother came in the store tonight and he had no idea of the news when I asked him about the show dates. And I was informed as I walked into the house last night? Priorities.