

What A Feelin' :)

This afternoon I got to sit with some friends at our local Business and Industry show in order to promote our theatre. When we had passers-by inquiring about upcoming shows, it was kind of fun. Even when we had no one to inform, it was enjoyable to sit, chat, and people watch.

There were several people who asked me, personally, what my next role would be. That is really great!. I just finished doing the dinner theatre and am always eager to do the next show. But to have people actually come up to you, tell you that they enjoy your performances, and actually ask what is on the horizon... just indescribable. Even people I do not know approached me about it. It is just soooo cool!!!!!! Then there were a few who found it strange that I would be involved in a theatre group. Apparently, they do not know me very well, do they. Just trying to describe how much joy I get being involved in any way large or small is phenomenal.

What is on the horizon for me? Welllll... I just found out that there are several male roles in [Little Women](#). I read the novel years ago but did not remember too many male characters, but I will be sure to research the musical before auditions. This summer a local group is also staging [The Music Man](#). I found this very strange because the classic musical has been done so much that it seems stale. I also love the play *The Nerd* which I know I will be trying out for. So there are at least three productions that I have a great interest in.

Just knowing that there are people who see and remember shows you are involved in creates such a fantastic feeling.

Can You Feel The Love This Morning?

Last night's excursion to Too-lee-doo was full of thrills, chills and did I mention I saw The Lion King? Getting there and enjoying the breathtaking splendor of live theatre was great, getting back was another story entirely. I will concentrate on the show and leave the adventure getting home for another time.

As I noted in a previous blog, the stage production of Lion King includes several songs which were not in the movie. Some of these include: Morning Report, Endless Night, and Shadowland. My favorite new song has always been Endless Night. It is sung by Simba in Act II. It is a beautiful soliloquy in which the lion struggles to decide whether or not to return to the Pride Lands and fight for the throne which is rightfully his or stay and remain hidden in his new life of Hakuna Matata.

Aside from the new songs, everything about seeing the masterpiece on stage is brilliant. The puppetry used to personify several characters (towering giraffes, leopards, antelope, and countless other animals) must have taken hours to design and be implemented. The choreography is stunning. Perhaps even more spectacular is the use of African-style chant to enhance the atmosphere. My companions and I were curious as to the English translation for the lyrics. Also of interest was the number of African natives who made up members of the cast. Surely some degree of pride must be felt among them as they sing words native to their homeland.

I would HIGHLY recommend taking the entire family to see this excellent production. One or two of the scenes may be a bit intense for the very young; however, if they have ever seen the movie, it is no more intense than what is seen in it.

There were several children in the audience (perhaps no younger than 5) with looks of utter awe and wonder. It is a great way to introduce the whole family to the spectacular world of live theatre..

Dinner And A Show

Tonight was Williams County Community Theatre's second performance of *Murder with a Silver Spoon* at Rita's Family Dining in Bryan, Ohio. It was a very different venue than the country club where we presented it last weekend. Rita's had a very cramped banquet room in which the audience enjoyed a three course meal between acts. Although space was extremely limited, it lent itself even more to drawing the audience into the action and allowed for even more audience/cast interaction. Because the space was so small, the number of audience members was extremely limited. However, the event was sold out which was great for our group and the theatre-goers all seemed to enjoy themselves tremendously. For those poor, unfortunates who did not get tickets for whatever reason (trouble finding a sitter :), etc), tentative plans are being made to again perform the show at a venue near you.

Impossible Things Happen Every Day

There have been countless interpretations of the classic tale of "Cinderella." There is the classic Disney film, *Ella*

Enchanted, Pretty Woman, Cinderfella (starring Jerry Lewis in a movie with a male twist to the tale), and several others in all media. My personal favorite is the Rodgers and Hammerstein version which began as a television special in 1957 starring a young Julie Andrews (fresh from her role as Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*).

I believe the role of the fairy godmother in this version is different than most interpretations. She not only creates a fancy dress, a wonderful carriage, and all the accessories to get Cinderella to the Prince's ball; she also encourages the young lady to get up and get out of her life of servitude to her evil stepmother. "Fal-do-ral and Fiddle-de-de. Fiddly faddly foodle; All the dreamers in the world are silly in the noodle." It is fine to dream about something but if you are unwilling to try and pursue a dream then a dream is all it will be.

Of course any musical is only as good as its supporting characters. One of the most memorable roles in *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella* is the Herald. He has the dauntless task of announcing to the townspeople that "The Prince is giving a ball." He has to sing through the mile long list that is the Prince's name as well as the King's and Queen's. The Prince's name: Christopher Rupert Vwindemere Vlademere Carl Alexander Francois Reginald Lancelot Herman. Quite a mouthful! The Queen's name: Queen Constantina Charlotte Ermintrude Guinevere Maizie. The King's name: King Maxmillian Godfrey Ladislaus Leopold Sydney. Hope I did not forget anyone.

This version has been made into three other films and has been staged by numerous theatres. Most recently, a version was seen on television in 1995 starring Whitney Houston, Brandy, Whoopi Goldberg, Victor Garber, **AND** Jason Alexander. A perfect movie for the whole family.

QUIET!!!!

Ok... so last night was dress rehearsal for *Murder with a Silver Spoon* to be presented Saturday night at Orchard Hills Country Club in Bryan, Ohio. Let's just say it was an interesting rehearsal. To begin, our stage was cut from a huge space which was three smaller rooms minus retractable walls to one small area. Apparently, we were sharing the club with a group who was having a banquet. The space was not the important part. While waiting in the hall for their entrances, a few actors were told by the other group to keep the noise down... seriously. This proved to be very difficult especially for one performer who is full of energy and found it hard to keep the volume down while maintaining his energetic persona. He had to be constantly reminded to tone it down so we would not disturb the other room. Following the dress rehearsal, the director jokingly commented that she had trouble hearing anyone and that the energy was lacking. It was a good thing that Wednesday night's rehearsal was such a success.

The Lion Roars

☒ So... the "Disneyfication" of Broadway continues. There have now been 5 Disney movies made into Broadway shows (*Beauty and the Beast*, *The Lion King*, *Tarzan*, *Mary Poppins*, and now *The Little Mermaid*). Many critics suggest that these will be the downfall of the musical itself because the shows are not original and are only tailored to little children. I feel that any chance to introduce a ten year old child to a theatrical

experience is well worth the critics panning. After all, there are more than 5 theatres on and off-Broadway.

I was fortunate enough to have seen *Beauty* on stage during its final previews on Broadway. It was an excellent spectacle (which is something else which has been another favorite critical complaint). The set draws the audience into the world of a small French village and to the dark castle in which the Beast resides. All of the characters from the movie are there. The music is fun along with a few new numbers added to the show. "Be Our Guest" is a show stopper with the dancing plates, cutlery, and other enchanted household objects. "If I Can't Love Her" is sung by the Beast at the end of the first act as he falls into even more despair. Actually a fun show which will delight everyone.

The touring cast of *The Lion King* is coming to the [Toledo Stranahan](#) theatre this weekend through March 30. I do not know of any other show that has been performed for that long at this theatre. Apparently, they are expecting sell outs the entire run.

From everything I have read and heard, this production is supposed to be magical. Realistic puppets for background characters while other actors perform behind masks and other costumes. Again, all of the songs from the movie are featured as well as new songs such as "Morning Report" and "Endless Night."

Beauty and the Beast and *The Lion King* are just two of the 5 Disney movies turned into musical extravaganzas. I do think that there should be some point at which more original productions are created which introduce children to theatre as well as entertain adults. Beginning with the **END OF HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL** (but since that is already a stage show... UGH!!!!). But I do not think Broadway is in any danger of being overrun by Disney. What would be next... DisneyYork?



Silver Spoon

Ok... so there are 10 days until Williams County Community Theatre presents an evening of MURDER and dinner, too. Our first show is for a group of Kiwanis members at Orchard Hills Country Club on March 1st. We also have two performances at Rita's on the Square in Bryan, OH for the general public on March 7th and 8th.

I have never before been cast in a dinner theatre performance. I saw a performance of *Nunsense* in which the actors interacted with the audience between dinner courses while on my high school senior trip and it was fun. The performers kept picking on ME?!. That may have been because I called attention to myself and was sitting in the front row.

Murder with a Silver Spoon was written by one of our own community theatre members. It is just a fun, very light bit of theatre. It involves a 3rd rate (or maybe 4th rate) novelist who comes to a small town in order to promote her new book, *Murder with a Silver Spoon* (ironic, isn't it?). During the course of the play and meal, there is a murder and everyone is a suspect. The bumbling sergeant and his ever-reliable, very intelligent, and quite dashing deputy attempt to solve the case.

SO.... for an evening of dining, murder, singing, and comedy be sure to call for reservations: 1-888-569-9228.

All In The Family

Ok, OK, **OK!!!!** Some people may get sick of me talking about this (hopefully not many) but for the past month the [Bryan Times](#) (a newspaper in rural Northwest Ohio) has had a feature entitled "The Love of My Life." Various people have commented on their spouses, families, other people, and a few have described activities they enjoy. While I have yet to find that special female, I would find it very difficult to distance myself from the theatrical world. There is just something so magical about stepping onto a stage and transporting an audience into another place and time and allowing them to see into that world for a brief moment. I believe that the goal of any performer should be to entertain. However, there are times when the people on stage have the power to move and to educate an audience.

The magic of theatre is not limited to the performance. The sense of camaraderie people feel who have been in multiple shows together creates a sense of family. There is set building, set unbuilding, rehearsals, show planning committies, and countless other aspects of preparation to undertake. Most important of all (well.... maybe not) come the parties!!!!!! There does not even need to be a reason to have a party just a chance to get together and play games (Balderdash is a good game, "spizzerinctum" anyone?). The spizzerinctum at the party emitted a very strange odor. I dunno... can spizzerinctum have an odor? Yes, but of course.

But no matter if you are willing to stand upon a stage in front of 10 or 10,000 audience members, work behind the scenes, or just sit in the audience there is always a place for everyone in the theatrical family. Not all of us can paint a wall and make it look pretty.