



Wainuiomata Little Theatre Inc.

Established in 1955

NEWSLETTER

Les Misérables

2021 is Les Misérables and we're all go!

The production team is excited to be kickstarting our planning for Les Misérables 2021

Watch this space and our website for more details

- Show dates: 23/6/2021 – 10/7/2021

Good Bye Kelly



The time has come for WLT to farewell Kelly Hodgkin as she takes a new job and new opportunities in Christchurch. Kelly has been a huge part of our theatre family, with her first on stage role in JCSS in 2014. Since then Kelly has been involved in every WLT production, either on stage or in some other capacity, like front of house for Hairspray!

Over the years, Kelly has been a constant member of our committee and a huge part of our fundraising team, working hard many a cold, wet weekend making her famous onions and camped behind the BBQ for sausage sizzles at Mitre10 or Bunnings. Always with a smile and promoting our theatre in the best way!

Thank you for everything, Kelly. We will all miss you, and we wish you all the very best in your next adventure.

New Website

After a bit of a stutter, our new website is up and running and we're looking for feedback and any suggestions on what you'd like to see on it, but we'd also like to hear about things you have seen i.e. shows or festivals in or out of town you've been to or know are coming up to share with everyone.

Workshop

The first workshop will be held at the college hall on Sunday the 29th of November from 2:00pm –4:00pm. It's an open forum for people to ask questions with some coffee/tea and a biscuit for a gold coin. We'd love to see you there but we'd really love you to bring someone along who might be interested in helping or being part of the theatre.



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Contributions

- Editor: Rick.
Richard.Jonassen.rj@gmail.com
- If you have an idea for an article or would like to contribute please get in touch.

Presidents Message



Here we are in October already, another year nearly done, and it's hard to think where it's gone. What have we achieved? At the start of the year with so many plans, none of us could have imagined how things would throw our little piece of the world, and the entire world, into disarray. 2020 is certainly a year that most of us will be glad to see the back of!

Despite this, it has been heartening to see things coming back to a semblance of normal, or our new normal anyway. Here in New Zealand, I think we need to be thankful how we have so far come through the global pandemic in reasonable shape. It's great to see how many theatre groups have been able to rehearse and perform shows again with real audiences. Something that parts of the rest of the world can only envy.

So, what have we got planned for the

future? Well, our production of *Les Misérables*, which was postponed this year, will be coming in 2021. Sometimes you've just got to wait for the good things! There's no doubt that it has been an incredibly frustrating experience for everyone involved in the production this year. We couldn't bring the show to our stage in 2020 but, perseverance will pay off and we are looking forward to doing so in 2021. The production team has already started work again to get things moving, contacting cast, putting new schedules and plans in place towards next year. Hopefully, things will remain as stable as they are at the present and we can look forward to a great show next year.

Stay safe everyone. Be kind.

"Even the darkest night will end, and the sun will rise." – Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*.

Local Theatre

Great Face of Radio

Get ready for one rock n' rollicking escapade after another with *A Great Face for Radio!* The show follows the going ons, high jinx and hilarity back stage at the HCMT Radio! Proudly brought to you by Hutt City Musical Theatre.

Between Wednesday 4 November 2020 7:30 PM and Saturday 14 November 2020 7:30 PM

LOCATION

Epuni Hall
40 Mitchell Street, Epuni, Lower Hutt, 5011

Tickets :

[Available Here from](#)

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Acting Outs Wizards of Oz

This show was presented by Acting Out in the Wainuiomata High School auditorium over the period 01 to 04 October 2020 – most people will recognise the name Acting Out, it is Wainuiomata's youth theatre run by some people who have performed (and will continue to do so hopefully!) with the Wainuiomata Little Theatre. Some WLT members assisted Acting Out with sound and lighting.

The premise behind Acting Out is to provide a fun and safe theatre environment for children, where once a year, they have the opportunity to audition for a junior version of a well-known musical. It offers the local community a place where there children can learn musical theatre skills and improve their confidence at an affordable price.

Wizard of Oz was the third Acting Out show and they are just getting more and more polished: sets were very intricate, costumes brilliant and the acting standards are getting better and better. This is the third show that I have seen and you can definitely see the differences in the kids, especially the ones that have been in all the shows.

Hopefully, WLT will offer opportunities for the older kids as they get over the 16 years age limit. Next year's production is *Aladdin Jr* so make sure you look out for tickets around this time next year.



AGM

Annual General Meeting

Held 23rd September at 7:00pm

The Annual General meeting of the society was held recently and there have been some changes to our committee. Firstly Barry Paterson has stepped down as President to focus his energies on *Les Misérables*. As a result Trevor Williams was voted in as the new President. Kim Jonassen remains as the Secretary, with Karen McAuliffe as Treasurer. The rest of the committee is Alan Donaldson, Barbara Wray, Eileen Salmon, Fran Crossland, Makayla Paterson and Rick Jonassen. Cathy Davel and Kelly Hodgkin have stepped down and we'd like to thank them for their service, especially Kelly for her many fundraising activities but is probably best known for her sausage sizzles at Bunnings and Mitre10.

There was a new constitution presented and agreed to at the meeting, a copy of which can be found on the website in the members area. This refresh presents a lot of work by Trevor Williams and modernises the document and brings it in line with current legal requirements and trends.

At the time of writing, the latest on the hall is that the housing development has been temporarily halted. We will continue to monitor the situation but for now and at least next year and likely the year after that we should continue to enjoy access to the hall.

Rick will be in touch with the owners in early November to discuss the possibility of some collaborative work being carried out on the Hall especially in the area of the front of house and the toilets.

Memory Lane



Actor's Corner

This is the next in a series of resources to help actors.

If you're new to the theatre, or you've only ever acted in front of a camera, working on a play might be a new and strange experience. Theatre is visceral and alive, ethereal and thrilling. You'll soon discover it's also quite different from working on a film set. We've put together this handy guide to cover everything you'll need to know about treading the boards for the first time.

Stage Acting Tips?

Before we take a look at the process of working on a play, here are some key things to remember about performing in a theatre.

Voice

Use of your voice is critical. As a rule of thumb, you need to be heard by the back row! If someone in the audience can't hear you, the experience will be entirely lost on them. Theatres come in all different shapes and sizes and present all kinds of acoustic challenges. A good voice warm-up will give your voice the resonance and tone to reach the back row easily without you having to push it.

Physicality

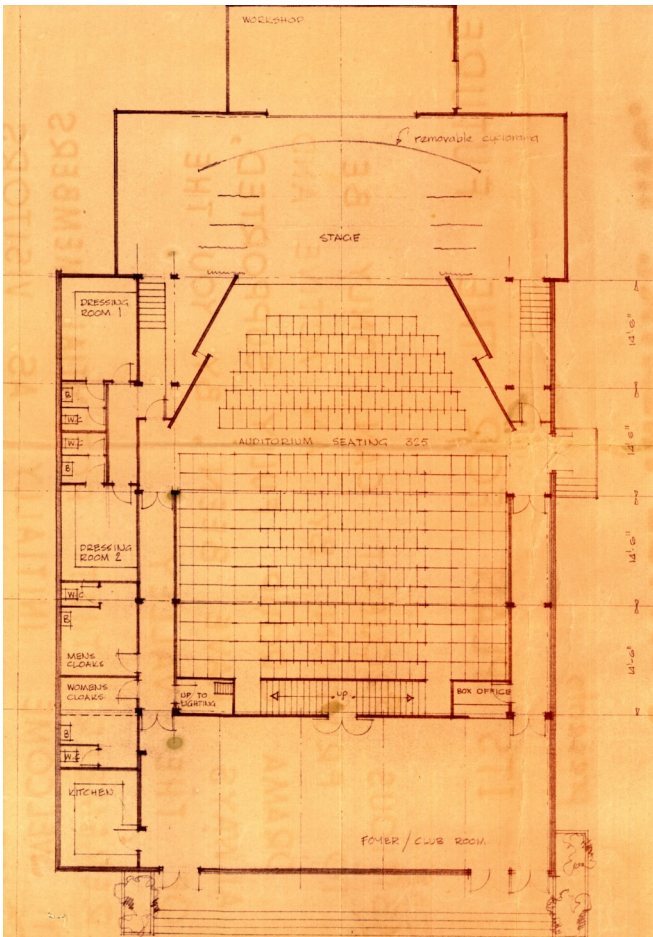
Likewise, the back row needs to be able to read your body, face and physical expression as clearly as your voice, so your performance might need to be a little, dare we say, bigger than what you might produce on camera. Listen to your director here, they are the audience's 'eye' and will help you manage how big your performance should be. Generally, you'll need to be engaging your entire body even in your smallest actions and committing physically to every choice you make.

Read the play

I mean, you knew that right? Great. Now read it again. It's never a waste of your time to read through a text a second, third, or tenth time. You will always uncover something new, make new connections between ideas, unearth new possibilities for your performance. While you do so, look out for any extra information that could help build your character.

From the WLT historical archives

Did you know that in 1963 the Wainuiomata Little Theatre was planning on building a theatre in the valley? Plans were actually submitted to the Council and the Council actually allocated land near Wise Park but for some (currently) unknown reason nothing ever came from these plans. It would be good to find out why they never went ahead but I'm not sure if anyone who was a member in 1963 are still around – so if you know anyone who may be able to shed some light on this then please get hold of a committee member.



Wainuiomata Little Theatre Inc.,
70 Hyde Street,
WAINUIOMATA.

16th September, 1963.

The Chairman,
Wainuiomata County Town Committee,
WAINUIOMATA.

Dear Sir,

We enclose copies of the drawings showing our proposed Little Theatre for Wainuiomata.

You will appreciate that the earmarking of a definite site for this building may have the effect of modifying some of the particular aspects of the design but the drawings show in principle the type of building we are aiming to have.

The coloured portion of the plan shows the part of the building that we would like to build in the near future to form a workshop-club rooms. We believe we would be able to finance this within the next 12 months.

Construction generally would be as follows:-

Structural frames, steel
Floors, timber
Exterior walls up to window sill stacked - bond concrete block (These walls would also show as painted concrete block on the inside)
Auditorium and stage tower, Fibrolite Shadowline on timber framing
Interior linings, fibrous plaster
Roof, galvanized Brownbult.

We consider the design quite realistic and within the means of both our society and the community generally within the foreseeable future. With the auditorium seating 325 persons and a stage as shown we feel that the Theatre can fill a variety of uses within the Valley being complementary to the Community Centre in such functions as dramatic presentations, musical recitals, public lectures, 16 mm. film showings etc. It was not our intention however to create a fully adaptable public hall at the expense of providing a building ideally suited to stage presentations.

Should your committee require any more details of the scheme, we would be happy to provide them and of course with your approval we

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would proceed to more detailed drawings and specifications for submission to the County Engineer.

We hope for your favourable consideration of the scheme.

Yours faithfully,

President.

HUTT COUNTY COUNCIL
BOWEN HOUSE, BOWEN STREET, WELLINGTON, C.I.

WHEN REPLYING
PLEASE QUOTE
155/9/4.

TELEPHONE 44-163
GR:JB

P.O. Box 8012
WELLINGTON, C.I.
27th November, 1963

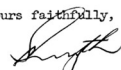
The President,
Wainuiomata Little Theatre Inc.,
70 Hyde Street,
WAINUIOMATA.

Dear Sir:

RE: PROPOSED LITTLE THEATRE, WAINUIOMATA.

With reference to your letter of 16th September last addressed to the Chairman of the Wainuiomata County Town Committee, I have to advise you that my Council has resolved that a site for the Little Theatre be reserved on Wise Park in the vicinity of the sub-station and proposed swimming baths, but that final details be deferred until the siting of the sub-station and swimming baths is finalised and subject to a clause to be inserted in the Licence to occupy, when issued, to the effect that if the Little Theatre is not completed within ten years the County repossesses the land and building and use it for whatever purpose they deem necessary.

Yours faithfully,


COUNTY CLERK.

The Biggest Broadway Trends of the Decade

1. Stage-to-Screen Musicals

At the 2009 Academy Awards, a Beyonce-backed Hugh Jackman whipped out jazz hands and declared to Tinsel Town, "The musical is back!" Rob Marshall's slick 2002 screen adaptation of Chicago reminded big-time talents that musicals could equate Oscar gold (Chicago won six) while hauling in \$170.6 million at the box office, the best showing of a screen tuner since 1978's Grease (still the king at \$188.3 million). Since then, a glut of Broadway-inspired flicks like Mamma Mia! (\$144.1 million), Hairspray (\$118.8 million), Dreamgirls (\$103.3 million) and Sweeney Todd (\$52.8 million) were greenlit with enthusiasm. Marshall's recent Nine may have been a misstep, but this trend's not going anywhere: Both In the Heights and Rock of Ages are in pre-production for big-screen treatment.

2. Niche Musicals on Broadway

Ten years ago, predicting that a high-art musical biography of a polygamous African revolutionary-cum-saxophone virtuoso, scored by an orgy of onstage jam-banders, would not only open on Broadway but score 11 Tony nominations might have gotten you committed. Now we know better. Fela! is part of a new landscape in which unique, experimental or "niche" shows like 2008's Passing Strange and 2009's Next to Normal and the current Everyday Rapture can see the light of day on Broadway. (For the record, all of those shows started off-Broadway, then made the jump.) Have audiences gotten more savvy, or are producers less conservative when it comes to picking content? Both—and not every risk pays off. But it does make for a diverse season, so here's hoping the pattern continues.

3. Jukebox Musicals

In 2001, Mamma Mia! took the music of disco royalty ABBA, wound it around a spun-sugar plot—and audiences packed the aisles. A parade of songbook shows followed, including Lennon, Good Vibrations, Jersey Boys, Rock of Ages, Come Fly Away, American Idiot and Million Dollar Quartet. Of course, not every juke-boxer can match the appeal of MM!, but they're a no-brainer for investor-fans of the music being served up. Jukebox tuners have put revues on life support (this season delivered just one: Sondheim on Sondheim) and kidney-punched the original musical itself—had Memphis been snubbed, 2010's Tony Award Best Musical category could have been populated entirely by mix-tape nominees.

4. Movie Stars on Stage

Broadway used to be where floundering screen stars went to hoof, belt and emote their way back to the top of the L.A. caste system (just ask Katharine Hepburn, whose commitment to The Philadelphia Story as both stage star and owner of the film rights evolved into an Oscar-nominated screen coup). Today, however, Broadway's more a public boot camp for A-listers looking to tone their acting abdominals, complete with a whirlwind of scrutinized previews followed by sold-out runs that scream, "Stars: We're Just Like You (Other Show People)!" That's not to say Hollywood's glitterati can't hold their own—check out this year's Best Actor in a Play Tony nominees. We're just pointing out that dragging James Bond off the soundstage for a three-month Broadway run might have been impossible 10 years ago.

5. Critics' Loss of Power

There was a time when a few harsh words from high-powered critics could be catastrophic for even the most star-heavy Broadway productions. But the rise of the Web paired with old-media downsizing (theatre critics are among the first to go) means that a single bad review is no longer the kiss of death. Just look at this season's The Addams Family, doing brisk business (\$1.274 million in last week's grosses) despite mixed reviews. It's the latest in a long line of shows, from 2001's Mamma Mia! and 2002's The Graduate to the most recent revival of Grease, to prove that audiences are more eager than ever to eschew elitist insider opinions and make up their own minds.

The Biggest Broadway Trends of the Decade

6. Scaled-Down Revivals

If the 80s and 90s were all about oversized musicals, the 00s took a more minimalistic turn. Director John Doyle brought us double-duty revivals of *Sweeney Todd* (2005) and *Company* (2006) featuring actors on nearly bare stages serving as both stars and instrument-playing orchestra members. In 2008, a naked Studio 54 stage and half-sized pit became the home of a Tony Award nominated revival of *Sunday in the Park with George*, and a scaled-down *La Cage Aux Falles* (half the glitter, twice the attitude) is currently blowing audiences away at the Longacre Theatre. Whether it's a response to the economic demand or simply a return to the less-is-more school of thought, Broadway seems to be all about quality over quantity these days.

7. Eye-Popping Projections

Tech advances have brought the world iPhones, iPads, iPods—and high tech-projection equipment that has changed the face of Broadway scenic design. In 2004, a tiny American flag projected onto a man's shirt in *Assassins* was one of the most powerful visual moments of the season. In 2008, the previously mentioned *Sunday in the Park with George* blasted a lush Seurat landscape in all its pixelated glory across the stage, pulling audible gasps from the audience. Within the last year, we've seen a stoner's trip come to life in *9 to 5*, enjoyed karaoke-style sing-along assistance in *Fela!* and chatted with *Sondheim* himself in *Sondheim on Sondheim*, all with the help of Broadway's new projection obsession.

8. The Internet

Once upon a time, theatre fans had to wait for touring productions to come to town, get the news from a weekly *New York Times* column, hoard original cast recordings or trek to New York to experience Broadway themselves. Now, a few clicks of the mouse can connect you with *Rentheads in Peru*, call up bootleg clips from *Sweeney Todd* on YouTube or list entire season's worth of cast albums ready to be downloaded, all in a matter of minutes. Online videos and photo galleries bring opening nights and backstage visits onto computer screens

Did you know?

- In 1841 New Zealand's first theatre – the Albert Theatre – was set up in the back room of an Auckland hotel. The first purpose-built theatre was Wellington's Royal Victoria, which opened in 1843.
- From the turn of the century local government took a strong role in building public entertainment venues. Whanganui's council led the way, opening an opera house in 1900.
- The 1910s saw the rise of cinemas. Films had been shown in New Zealand at theatres and halls since the 1890s, but the first purpose-built cinema opened in Wellington in 1910 – 'the Kings'.
- As cinema's popularity grew, increasingly lavish picture theatres were built up and down the country. So were new theatres for live performances. The last of the ornate neoclassical-style theatres were built in the 1920s. From then on theatres were built in modern styles, such as art deco.
- After the Second World War the government gave communities subsidies to build halls as war memorials. Over 300 war memorial halls were built in small towns and city suburbs.
- Cinema admissions peaked in 1961. After that they declined rapidly, as New Zealanders turned to television instead. During the 1970s and 1980s many cinemas had to close.
- From the 1970s town halls and theatres were built in modernist style. Old theatres were sometimes demolished, and at other times saved and restored.
- In the 1990s, there was a cinema revival, and New Zealanders rediscovered the thrill of the big screen. This was encouraged by the arrival of multiplex cinemas with several auditoriums in one building. Between 1991 and 2010 the number of cinema screens in New Zealand rose from 140 to 411.