



Friday 8 July 2016

THE DOORBELL - RYDE YOUTH THEATRE'S NEW PRODUCTION

...the beginning of a new movement of young people's theatre in Ryde

Ryde Youth Theatre's new production *The Doorbell* is the first in a new series of plays developed from the Underground Writers' Workshop.

Set in 1953 Amsterdam, *The Doorbell* is inspired by the true story of seventeen-year-old playwright Rachel Rasker's grandmother who survived the Holocaust hidden from the Nazis while her parents died in concentration camps.

The Doorbell is wholly created by young people for young people. It opens at Brush Farm House, 19 Lawson St Eastwood, on Friday 15 July and plays for eight performances over three weekends. Tickets are only \$5 plus booking fee and are available online now from Sticky Tickets www.sticktickets.com.au

Performance dates and times:

Friday 15 July, 7.30pm

Saturday 16 July, 7.30pm

Sunday 17 July, 5.00pm

Friday 22 July, 7.30pm

Saturday 23 July, 7.30pm

Sunday 24 July, 5pm

Thursday 28 July, 7.30pm

Friday 29 July, 7.30pm

Attachments: Photos 1. Eloise in the doorway. 2. Doorbell cast

For more information contact: RYT Artistic Director, Suzanne Hauser on 0410 353 118

The play

In the aftermath of one of the worst times in human history, Marja and Mischa must find a way to live in the present and make a meaningful future. How do you go to school, make friends and help with the housework after the Nazis have murdered your family?

Fairy tales and shadow puppets weave through this story of secrets, guilt, revenge, and an undeniable hope that surfaces every time the doorbell rings.

The playwright

Rachel Rasker has managed the almost impossible task of producing this touching, sad, funny, compelling and mature script while studying for her HSC.

Rachel and a small group of mostly seventeen-year-olds have been meeting every week with RYT Artistic Director, Suzanne Hauser since October last year to learn about the craft of playwrighting, discuss their ideas and share their work; they often say it's their favourite part of the week.

Rachel says about this experience: "Writing this play has taught me more than my HSC studies. I've learnt more memorable information about history, creative writing and religion in the past six months alone than I have in any of my subjects at school. I feel incredibly lucky to have met such an extraordinary amount of talented young people willing to work on a project like this for the sole enjoyment of creating something together. Come to this play and you will see it - the myth of the selfish, lazy, superficial teenage Australian is a lie. While I would love a job in this industry in future, I think that the pleasure of working with people who have no motive but the sheer fun of theatre is an experience I may never have as an adult."

Working on the play has given Rachel a wonderful chance to connect with her Jewish family history: "The play's given me the chance to discover more about my family history as I learnt the stories of my Dutch relatives, both alive and dead, who experienced this horrific time. They included Jewish children in hiding, Jewish adults in concentration camps and brave members of the Dutch resistance, fighting against the Nazis."

The cast

The Doorbell is the first of these new plays to be brought to the stage. The cast, Sam Folden, aged 16, Eloise Martin-Jones, aged 17 and Gian Vignando, aged 18, have spent most of their school holidays in rehearsal while the production's designer, seventeen-year-old Blake Hedley is bringing together the set and constructing shadow puppets for the magical fairy tale elements of the play.

Actor Sam Folden says, "I have been acting since I was 12 years old in school and inter-school stage and musical productions as well as out of school screen and television work but I've never been in a production with such a small cast. This cast of three, as well as the amazing group of people behind the scenes and creation of this play, have helped me grow as an actor and stage performer. Playing the character of Mischa has challenged me as an actor and helped me to improve my skills."

Underground Writers' Workshop

The Workshop aims to do two things; foster young writers through the daunting challenge of writing their first full-length play and to make exciting theatre by, for and about young people.

This play marks the beginning of a new movement of young people's theatre in Ryde which will provide a cheap and fabulous night at the theatre for everyone aged 14 and up.

*To find out more about RYT contact Suzanne Hauser, Artistic Director on 0410 353 118
suzannehauser@bigpond.com*