

CMT Newsletter – December 2002 (revised)

## A year in review... and the year ahead

Hello, fellow CMT alumni!

This past year has been a busy one for many CMT members. Although I'm only in touch with a fraction of the people who were once involved with the Company of Musical Theatre, many are accomplishing amazing things in the world of the arts so I thought I'd send out a bit of a "newsletter" to those people for whom I have email addresses. If you know of anyone else who might enjoy keeping in touch with other CMT members, please let me know and I'll add their email address to my list. Also, I'm always happy to hear what you're all up to and will gladly share your news on the CMT website (<http://welcome.to/cmt>). We were all part of something pretty special and it certainly doesn't hurt to blow our own horns every once in a while!

### On-stage

CMT alumni are everywhere in the Ottawa community theatre scene... at the Ottawa Little Theatre, Orpheus Musical Theatre Society, GOYA Theatre Productions, The Savoy Society and Sock'n'Buskin Theatre Company – just to name a few, I'm sure. Members have been busy not only acting on-stage, but filling production positions and working backstage. We've got directors, choreographers, musical directors, designers, stage managers among us, and that is not ever likely to change, thank goodness! It's always nice to see old friends at the theatre. If I start naming all the individual shows and alumni, this newsletter is going to get much longer than it should be for a summary!

On the professional stage, **Sarah Connell** is currently appearing in "Robin Hood" at the Elgin Theatre in Toronto, and **Jen Waiser** is flying high as Wendy in Theatre Aquarius' production of "Peter Pan". **Arthur Kyeyune** continues his successful turn with "The Lion King", and **Chad McNamara** and **Crystal Martinez** are busy with "Mamma Mia".

Earlier this year, a couple of our members marked major milestones in their careers: **Nicolas Dromard** headed for The Big Apple to join the cast of "Oklahoma", and **Ericka Yang** left Toronto's production of "The Lion King" to make her mark on the Broadway stage as a member of the company of the revival of "Flower Drum Song".

### Film & television

Sometimes you meet old acquaintances in the unlikeliest of places. This past November, I managed to get my first paying job as an actor doing background work on a movie called "Outrage" starring Alexandra Paul (of "Baywatch" fame). Lo and behold, **Diane White** was also called for the same day. Considering Diane and I had both originally met working in the CMT pit orchestra, it was neat to see we had both moved on to doing film work – regardless of the size of our roles in the movie!

Other appearances by CMT alumni on-screen include **Sarah Connell** in "Bollywood Hollywood" and **Stephanie Cadman** in "Tiny Magic".

On the small screen, **Meredith Henderson's** series "Myth Quest" in which she starred as Cleo Bellows aired on CBC this fall. And both **Derek (DJ) Eyamie** and **Chad Connell** landed roles in the MTV series "Undressed."

## Variety performances & concerts

Several CMT alumni have continued to appear in area concerts as soloists and some have appeared in solo recitals to raise money for charity. These members include **Derek Eyamie**, **Stacey Ingrey** (this year's ORMTA Young Artist), **Konstantinos Haitas** and **Shannon Mercer**.

Some CMT members appeared in variety show fundraisers throughout the year, and then others were part of a group from Orpheus who got together to form the Electric Cake Cabaret Company. **John McGovern** was the musical director for a show at the NAC Fourth Stage called "Season of Love" which featured CMT alumni **Shawna (nee McSheffrey) Morgan**, **Nicole (nee Milne) Williams**, **Bob Lackey** and **Pierre Huneault**.

## New additions!

**Paul and Vivian (nee Burns) Melsness** – who met during CMT's production of "Anne of Green Gables" in 1992 - became the proud parents of a little girl, **Clara Michelle**, on February 12<sup>th</sup> this year. And **Beki (Rebecca) Henderson** became the proud mother of a little boy, **Austin**, on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Beki, of course, was one of our two orphan Annies in 1993, and her entire family (sisters **Meredith** and **Beth**, brother **Noah**, dad **Mark** and mom **Laura**) were all involved with the CMT both on- and off-stage.

## What the new year holds in store...

I think the most exciting news for 2003 at this point is the air date for the new TV-movie version of "The Music Man" starring Matthew Broderick (not a member, alas!). As if **Ericka Yang** didn't have enough to do with a hit musical in Toronto and a Broadway debut, she also appears in "The Music Man" which is scheduled to air on **February 23<sup>rd</sup>** on ABC (so don't forget to set those VCRs!).

On the local stage (in Ottawa), look out for **Robin Guy** in OLT's production of "The Wisdom of Eve" in January. At the end of February, Orpheus presents "Grease" at Centrepointe Theatre with **Derek Eyamie** playing Danny opposite **Shawna Morgan's** Sandy with a chorus including CMT members **Andréa Black**, **Alyssa Delle Palme** and **Nicole Williams** (Rizzo). **Debbie (nee Jones) Millett** and **Joy Lackey** round out CMT's involvement as choreographer and costume designer, respectively.

In March, the Savoy Society of Ottawa presents "The Sorcerer" with artistic direction by **Mari Lyn Kelly**, musical direction by **Allison Woyiwada** and choreography by **Joan Scarcella**. I'll also be singing in the chorus and assisting Joan as her dance captain.

Finally (or maybe not since there are always more productions on the horizon!), **Brian Boggs** will be providing musical direction for Orpheus' production of "Rags", with set design by **Christy Bindhardt**.

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Phew! So much for a quick summary of the year, but I don't think I'm the only one who finds that they have a smile on their face when they recognize the names that are associated with all the different accomplishments. CMT may not have been a starting point for everyone's interest in theatre, but it was a meeting point and something we'll all remember.

For those people who continue to be interested in working in theatre, I launched my own personal Ottawa Theatre website earlier this year. (Yup, this is a plug!) The website, and the associated email distribution list, were a result of my own failed attempts to find useful audition information on the web relating to productions in Ottawa. I hope you'll all take a peek and leave your comments in the guestbook. The URL is [http://www.geocities.com/ottawa\\_theatre](http://www.geocities.com/ottawa_theatre) .

I hope everyone continues to enjoy theatre whether you're still involved or simply participate as a valued audience member. "Break a leg" to all who persist with auditions, "thank you" to those who remain the creative force behind each production, and "congratulations" to everyone for your continued involvement in the arts. Keep in touch!

**Have a safe & happy holiday season,  
And best wishes for the New Year!**

Love,  
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