

## Company of Musical Theatre 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Alumni Newsletter

My goodness! 2005 has been another busy year for CMT alumni, with at least a few big happenings to note. As I get back in touch with more of our members, it's getting harder to keep track of everything! Here's another 3<sup>rd</sup> person summary of this year past....

### Theatre in Ottawa

Around the Ottawa theatre community, you're almost always bound to find someone backstage or on-stage with a CMT connection. This year was no exception, starting with **Bob Lackey** who wasn't busy enough directing Orpheus's March production of *Damn Yankees*. He also decided that it was a good time to be playing the role of Tom Duncan in OLT's January production of *Maggie's Getting Married*. Rounding out his team at Orpheus were **John McGovern** (musical director), **Derek Eyamie** (choreographer), and **Joy Lackey** (costume designer), while **Sharron McGuirl** and **Tim Hillock** appeared in the cast as Doris and a guard, respectively.

Also this year at Orpheus, **Debbie Millett** choreographed *Oliver*, and she's now preparing to set out the dance numbers for next year's production of *Victor/Victoria* which will have **Gabriel Leury** as musical director. **Tanya Chang** just wrapped up the November production of *Meet Me In St. Louis* as a member of the dance chorus, and she'll be joining choreographer **Linda Fournier** as one of her dance captains for *West Side Story* (with **Brian Boggs** providing musical direction).

Returning to her roots, **Tanya** also appeared in the pit playing flute alongside **Doug Cumming** on bassoon for Woodroffe High School's spring production of *Into the Woods*.

In February, **Robin Guy** appeared as Chris in Kanata Theatre's *Dancing at Lughnasa*.

Other alumni appearances this year included:

- **Brian Cano** as lighting designer for OLT's *The Subject Was Roses*
- **Gabriel Leury** as musical director and **Tanya Chang** as Sister Berthe/Baroness Elberfeld/dance captain for Suzart Production's *The Sound of Music*
- **MariLyn Kelly** as Mother McGuinty in Dancing on Water Theatre Company's *Bye Bye Bytown*
- **Sharron McGuirl** in the Lakeside Players' production of *Cinderella*

On the operatic front, **Shannon Mercer** made her Opera Lyra debut in January in a couple of stellar performances in *The Old Maid and the Thief* and *The Telephone*.

### Theatre outside Ottawa

Many of our alumni are making their mark at the Stratford Festival, particularly in recent years. This year was no exception. **Jen Waiser** played a spunky Little Red Riding Hood in *Into the Woods* while **Adrienne Gould** played the lead role of Miranda in *The Tempest*. **Adrienne** could also be seen in the ensemble of *As You Like It* while **Jen**, **Gabriel Wolinsky** and **Michael Falcucci** all appeared in the ensemble cast of *Hello Dolly*.

While in Stratford, I also bumped into **Mark Allan**



who was heading to Port Hope to work on a production of *My Fair Lady*. He followed that up in *Girl Crazy* for Smile Theatre.

Following their appearance in the hit musical *Hairspray* in 2004, **Alison Smyth** played the lead (Doris) in Canada's Wonderland's production of *School of Rock* while **Nicolas Dromard** filled the many shoes of swing and understudy for Fiyero, the Witch's Father, an Ozian Official, and Chistery in the musical *Wicked*. **Nicolas** is now on the North American tour, which is set to fly back into Toronto next fall.

Other productions outside of Ottawa included:

- *Bat Boy* at the Bathurst Theatre with **Laura Caswell** as Shelley
- *Chicago* at the Neptune Theatre in Halifax with **Melanie McInenly** as Annie and understudying Roxie
- *Nunsense* at Theatre Collingwood with **Laura Caswell** as Sister Mary Leo
- *Cabaret* in Montreal with **Melanie McInenly**

Outside of Ottawa, some alumni also dabbled in opera: **Bryan Estabrooks** and **Miriam Khalil** appeared at the Jane Mallett Theatre in Toronto in Sergei Prokofiev's *L'Amour des Trois Oranges*.

And in recent news, I found out that **Jen Waiser** has been cast in Michael Boubliil and Claude-Michel Shonberg's *The Pirate Queen* which will open initially in Chicago and move to Broadway for the 2006-2007 season. ([www.thepiratequeen.com](http://www.thepiratequeen.com))



## Film & Television

Early this year, CBC's *The Doodlebops* hit morning television with a burst of energy. **Chad McNamara** appears as Rooney Doodle in this #1 kids' television show. ([www.doodlebops.com](http://www.doodlebops.com))

In November, **Maya Chang** appeared as Police Constable #3 in *DaVinci's City Hall* (a spin-off of *DaVinci's Inquest*) while **Meredith Henderson** showed us that she can definitely give some country music stars a run for their money as Eileen Twain in *Shania: A Life in 8 Albums*.

## Variety Performances, Concerts, etc.

In January, the bi-annual competition for the Brian Law Opera Scholarship was held, and **Bryan Estabrooks** earned a spot as a finalist.

In February, Canterbury High School held its annual *Canterbury Stars Return* event at which **Stephanie Cadman**, **Kosta Haitas** and **Rachel Hamilton** each performed. **Stephanie** also appeared at the Brott Summer Music Festival.

To end the 2004-2005 season, **Bob Lackey** appeared in a Broadway cabaret designed to help liven up the Wellington West area, and **Tanya Chang** appeared as The Ringmaster in Allegro Danceworks' annual recital where **Katie Locke** also performed.

In November, **Robin Guy** competed with the Orpheus team in Tone Cluster's musical theatre challenge, winning 1<sup>st</sup> prize. She also appeared in SJ Productions' *Crime on Broadway* alongside other CMT alumni: **Paul Melsness**, **Vivian Melsness**, **Shawna Morgan**, and **Tanya Chang**.

## Other Stuff

This year, I discovered two wonderful music CDs featuring our alumni. **Chantelle Wilson** is part of "Swing Rosie", a trio that serenades with 1940's style music. Their album is called "Sing Cool

Swing Hot” and is at the top of the charts on the college radio stations across the country. ([www.swingrosie.com](http://www.swingrosie.com)).

Also at the top of the charts – for children – is the Doodlebops’ “Get On The Bus” with **Chad McNamara** as Rooney.

And another CD to add to your collection is “English Fancy” featuring soprano **Shannon Mercer** with the Montreal ensemble called Masques.

On the awards front, congratulations have to be extended to **Jen Waiser** who was nominated for a Dora Award for outstanding musical performance in *Urinetown*. The musical won for best musical and best direction.



And speaking of awards, I was poking around on the web and noticed that Ericka Yang was in attendance at the 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Tony Awards. If that isn’t a dream come true, what is?

I also received a lovely email from **Erin Cavanaugh** who is a co-founder and director at Pointe of Grace Dance Company in Stittsville. And earlier in the year, **Christy Bindhardt** was offering workshops in scenic design and backstage administration in Almonte.

Finally, in news outside of theatre and the arts, **Alyssa Delle Palme** has graduated from the Canadian College of Performing Arts (where **Melanie McInenly** and **Maya Chang** studied) and is now studying broadcast journalism at Loyalst College. And **Megan Murphy** is studying in her first year of law school.

## Last Word

And while many of us are still keeping our feet firmly entrenched on the stage, life goes on. My husband and I moved to Bridlewood this year – still close enough to all the activities I’m involved in, but in a larger neighbourhood. Mom and Dad also retired in March, leaving them time to travel across Canada and the United States... and Maya came home at the end of November, with her new husband!

*Have a wonderful holiday season! Be safe and happy!*

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