

DRAMA STUFF # 23 December 2009

Dear Christmas Stuffers

A long time no hear from us! With the new online collection of dramas, book readings, short stories and comedies things have been extra, extra busy since August.

Drama and stories online

Well, the online collection seems to be very popular, but the message isn't getting to everyone who might be interested. We're still getting calls asking why we don't have any dramas and comedy specials and short stories online. Unbelievable!

So, please do us a favour and pass on the message whenever you can.

We're constantly tinkering with the audio collection and how it's set up and, in fact, since the last newsletter we've reorganized the links a little to make one of them 'comedy'.

Which reminds me to remind you to remind others that the **astonishing and acclaimed 4-part *Lonesome Buckwhips*** special is there in the comedy collection: radionz.co.nz

We are forever meeting people who rave on about the *Buckwhips* and haven't even heard the real story of how they got to where they were and why they are no longer where they got to. And, how can you possibly become part of the rising tide of *Buckwhips* trivia experts (thought to outnumber *Twilight* trivia freaks) unless you know the real story. So, catch the BW's and a whole lot more over summer on the RNZ website: radionz.co.nz (then click on Drama).

Winners and more winners! And twice-winners!

Last newsletter the Drama producers were about to start assessing the unprecedented number of 15 minute plays submitted in the annual *Student Shorts* competition – part of the series of writing for radio workshops we run each year across New Zealand.

Well, we did that and here are the fabulous winners (in no particular order):

- ❖ Gwyneth Hyndman
- ❖ Richard Finn
- ❖ Ness Simons
- ❖ Ole Maiava
- ❖ Ness Simons
- ❖ Rob Tuwhare



Crazy actors, Ban Abdul, Amy Tarleton, Kate Prior and Emily Regtien recording Student Short, Crazy in Love

You may have noticed that Ness Simons' name is mentioned twice? Well, that's because under the strict 'blind assessment' conditions both of her plays (you can submit two) were chosen! Good on ya Ness!

And you'll hear how very different those two plays are and, indeed, what a fantastic range of amazing writing we've produced when the Student Shorts go to air early in 2010 – see the schedule below.

Go Solo

Each year we have a look at the *GO SOLO* show from the graduating actors at Toi Whakaari and choose some pieces to be produced for radio. The choice is partly to do with performance quality (of course) but has a lot to do with the radio-friendliness of the pieces. The aim is to record them without having to change them beyond recognition. So, some other very good stage pieces just never make it to radio.

This year we have three fabulous and very different pieces from Jessica Grace Smith, Matariki Whatarau and Romy Hooper.

Stand by to hear those in the first 2010 season of new work with the Student Shorts.

EP Traineeship

Each year the Drama department works with the Toi Whakaari student actors across the three years of their training to introduce them to radio and some of the techniques required to work as a story reader or actor in radio.

At the end of that program the graduating year actors can apply to be part of the EP (Emerging Performers') traineeship. The traineeship is three weeks of workshops and real in-studio experience reading stories and working on a major self-devised (scripted) radio drama. This year's stunning trainees were:

Jessica Grace Smith

Aroha White

Romy Hooper

Emmett Skilton

It's always a hoot to have the EP's around and we wish them all the best and look forward to seeing them back at RNZ sometimes doing their stuff (in fact, one of them is here right now, as I write, with a major role in a major new drama. Good on you Emmett!).

Winners no less (in their own special way)

Congratulations to Nathan Meister and Hamish Bell – two intelligent and quick-off-the-mark stuffers who didn't stuff about naming Nietzsche as having said, "*In the mountains of truth you never climb in vain.*" And then got their names drawn out of the barrel (a cardboard box actually) for an RNZ beanie! Good on you soon-to-be warm-headed chaps.

In production at the moment

We are still working about 6-9 months ahead of schedule with producing major dramas. We have a bunch heading towards the studio including *On the Brink of Academia* (Justin Eade), *The 53rd Victim* (Pip Hall), *Supersize My Radio Play* (Paul Maunder), *The Blackening* (Paul Rothwell), *The Big Melt* (Stuart Hoar) and a musical from Frankie Emms -- yes!

As well we have more comedy coming up following on the success of Improv FM and Austen Found and Stand Up and Be Counted and The Lonesome Buckwhips. And if you missed some of those, you can catch them on the web! radionz.co.nz.

Coming up on air

The first season 2010 season of brand new drama will start in early February. It's soooo new it's almost still in the writers' heads! But it's actually standing by to go to air. You'll be able to get more details on the web radionz.co.nz closer to the time but meanwhile, here's a list:

Summer Season of Drama 2010 : The Newest of the New!

- 3:04p.m. Sun 31 Jan **Go Solo 2010**
Battered by Jessica Grace Smith
Who's Gonna do the Karanga? by Matariki Whatarau
Here ... Forever by Romy Hooper
- 3:04p.m. Sun 7 Feb **The Horse Whisperer**
(a BBC doco-drama with connections to the Kapiti Coast)
- 3:04p.m. Sun 14 Feb **Student Shorts 2010 Part 1**
Bridge to Portobello by Gwyneth Hyndman
Guitar Lessons by Richard Finn
Taking the Bait by Ness Simons
- 3:04p.m. Sun 21 Feb **Student Shorts 2010 Part 2**
Skin Deep by Ole Maiava
Crazy in Love by Ness Simons
Where's Wiki's House Gone Dad? By Rob Tuwhare
- 3:04p.m. Sun 28 Feb **The Circus of Errors** by Sam Trubridge
With original music composed and arranged by Phil Brownlee

Name the sage!

Who said this? (a tough one for Christmas)

"The optimist proclaims that we live in the best of all possible worlds; the pessimist fears this is true." (first 10 correct answers go into the draw to win one of two RNZ T-shirts)

Oh, and

Thanks for all your support this year. And special thanks to all the fabulous writers and actors we've worked with (that's close to 200 in total!).

Please, please pass on the information about this newsletter and about the website to anyone who may be interested at home or overseas.

All the best for the yuletide time and for summer. And, just in case you've forgotten, you can hear dramas, stories, kids stuff and comedy stuff on the Drama page at radionz.co.nz

To ask us something, make a comment and/or tell us what you thought of a drama (or to win a T-shirt by naming the sage!):

dramainfo@radionz.co.nz

To leave the *Dramastuff*list:

Simply send a blank email with an empty subject line to

drama-leave@lists.radionz.co.nz and respond to our confirmation email.

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Editor

DRAMASTUFF

December 2009