

Kids get to dance with pros in Stouffville company

Stouffville's Motus O Dance Theatre will perform "A Midsummer Night's Dream" this Friday, Feb. 21, and will then go on to give young dancers a chance to perform with the company during three more performances in Newmarket and Markham.

Friday's performance is the first in a series supported by the Trillium Foundation.

Motus O brought its innovative dance theatre workshops to a number of York Region elementary and secondary schools last year. Students had a chance to study a role and then perform at their school with the company's professional dancers.

Motus O's artistic directors, Cindy and James Croker and Jack Langenhuisen, have worked individually and collectively on a variety of group and educational projects since 1980. They began their first project as a collective in 1988 and in 1990 formed Motus O, as a not-for-profit dance the-

OUR TOWN HANNELORE VOLPE

atre. Since then they have created seven full length productions, including Delusions, Human Knots, Alice, The Little Prince and Petroushka.

Motus O will be holding auditions for student performers at schools throughout York Region in June. Rehearsals for the play will most likely begin in August, said Cindy Croker.

"To actually perform with professionals means students learn so much more about performance than by just watching or having us direct them. We will be bringing in students to watch the show and watch their peers perform," she added. The company uses innovative costumes, props, sets and music to explore emotions and movement.

The Motus O performance of "A Midsummer Night's

Dream" ties in with the York Region District School Board's Grade 11 English curriculum where students study Shakespeare.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream" combines dance, theatre and video to bring the Shakespeare play to life. The dress rehearsal performance on Friday begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Markham Theatre. The performance is open to the public on a "pay what you can" basis with a minimum of \$5 per person requested.

For more information on the play or on the upcoming auditions, please call the dance theatre at 905-640-8647.

Town pantomime turns 10 this month

Men in voluminous skirts and garish make-up thankfully aren't the rule in staid Stouffville — until the English pantomime hits town.

That's when children, teens and adults from Christ Church

Anglican use song, dance, satire, and audience participation to poke fun at things local and far away while performing in true pantomime style.

This year's play is "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves". The script has been adapted by Charlie Parker, who originally brought this theatrical form to Christ Church Anglican a decade ago.

The play will be held at Latcham Hall, on Park Dr. South in Stouffville, on Friday, Feb. 28 at 7:30 p.m. and on Saturday, March 1 at 2 and 7:30 p.m. A special seniors' performance will be held at Parkview Village on Friday, March 28 at 7 p.m.

"The unusual tradition of males playing female roles has its origin in theatrical history, when women were prohibited from appearing onstage," said Mr. Parker. The young people of Christ Church Anglican are playing all of the roles besides Ali Baba's elaborately dressed mother (played by Charlie

Parker, who every year delights in the role of the "Dame") and the evil Jahandar, Grand Vizier of Baghdad, portrayed by perennial bad guy, Dr. Peter Markle.

The band of 40 thieves are of varying nationalities, with outlandish accents, and "most of the time, these thieves are on strike, not unlike our own public servants," said Dr. Markle.

This is the tenth production that director Denise Pettit has

been involved in. She is assisted by Julia Topping and music director Mark Peters. Joe Sweeney is the special effects expert while Nancy Feasby and Susan Fockler are creating the costumes, including fanciful turbans, shoes and baggy trousers.

Tickets at \$10 for adults and \$7 for children 12 and under are available from Christ Church Anglican at 905-640-1461 and at Stouffville Florist, 6343 Main St.

Town wins injunction over arena

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problem with buckets. At the same time, they were redirecting the water with garden hoses. This situation had a health and safety component," said Mr. Klees.

While hockey players and figure skaters have been putting up with water dripping on their faces and backs while they skate, the town launched a court action against Proctor and Redfern Group Engineers from Toronto and Fish General Contractors.

After years of legal wrangling, the town "won the court injunction," said Mr. Emmerson. "It's been a long court battle. We're now in the process of making a settlement."

With legal action going on, the town

patched and re-patched the arena roof. "The roof should have been put on in the summer time. But, I understand there was pressure to put it up sooner," said Mr. Emmerson. "The old arena (on Park Drive) had been condemned. We're making sure this roof goes on when the weather is nice."

Construction on the new roof is slated to get underway in May. The project is expected to take about two months. The arena is scheduled to re-open in mid-August. Two weeks ago, Provincial Industrial Roofing and Sheet Metal, a Concord-based company, was awarded the contract to replace the roof.

Mr. Klees said the province is more than pleased to be part of the local

rebuilding project. "Our government's SuperBuild investments are making communities across Ontario strong, healthy and prosperous," said Mr. Klees. SuperBuild investment in sports and tourism facilities is only one part of an overall \$20 billion strategy to build Ontario's future, he added.

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TIP OF THE WEEK

Everything is funny as long as it is happening to someone else


Will Rogers

Thos. E. Winters
640-1867




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