

# SUN-TRIBUNE PEOPLE

## Motus O adopting Match Girl

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A cultural revolution and puppets.

Two things one would not instinctively put together. But add Stouffville's dance theatre troupe, Motus O, to the mix and the combination makes sense.

Motus O's latest original production is an adaptation of Hans Christian Anderson's book *The Little Match Girl*, which premieres May 31 at the Lebovic Centre for Arts and Entertainment - Nineteen on the Park.

"It's a story within a story, based a lot on what the composer actually went through," said Cynthia Croker, one of the troupe's artistic directors.

The composer, An-Lun Huang, is a Chinese Canadian who, in 1977 was asked by his government to create a western-style ballet score that would be performed by the Beijing Ballet School in China.

Mr. Huang, according to Motus O, chose *The Little Match Girl* story because he felt it mirrored the chaos and deprivation he witnessed in his own country.

### DEBUT OF PUPPETS

Mr. Christian Anderson's book is about a little girl who, when she lights matches, dreams about an iron stove with shiny brass knobs warming her frozen and shoeless feet; a goose dinner; a big, beautiful Christmas tree and her dead grandmother.

In Motus O's rendition, a father/daughter street performing team prepare to present a puppet-version of *The Little Match Girl* when two Red Guards forbid them from doing so. The father is jailed and the girl retreats into her imaginary world that is filled with dancing snowflakes and life-sized puppets.

"Dreams are still being pursued in the midst of oppression," Mrs. Croker said of the production's theme.

This is the first time the dancers have worked with giant flags and puppets.

"It put a fun element into it. She's pretty cute," Mrs. Croker said of the puppet.

The *Little Match Girl* was first brought to the group's attention a few years ago as a suggested Christmas piece. But Motus O already had *A Christmas Carol*, so it did not pursue it.

A year later, Mr. Huang presented Motus O with a score to the story, which they could not pass up. However, it still took them three years to get the production staged, according to Mrs. Croker.

Motus O's adaptation of *The Little Match Girl* will be staged at 7 p.m. May 31, June 1 and 2.

Ticket prices are \$20 and \$10 for students.



PHOTO/JAMES CROKER

Sarah Felschow will appear in *The Little Match Girl* next week in Stouffville.

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### Lights, camera: Charity parties run in family

Thirteen short films were screened and awarded prizes as part of Philip Harker's 10th birthday party Saturday.

Billed as the Philip Philm Fest, guests were invited to submit a self-made movie between three and five minutes in duration. The films were shown at the party, which took place at the Lemonville Community Centre.

In lieu of gifts, each guest was asked to make a \$10 donation to the Latcham Gallery, as that is where the Stouffville resident has taken many art classes.

In 2010, his father Michael held an invitation-only 40th birthday party, which was also a fundraiser, but for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. The party raised \$20,000.

### Cops busy with fireworks

York Regional Police responded to 20 firework-related calls across the region during the weekend.

Const. Blair McQuillan could only confirm the number of calls and not the details of the incidents or if charges were laid.

Meanwhile, officers were also busy on the roads all weekend, making nine impaired driving arrests and issuing 439 speeding tickets, 35 distracted driving charges and 20 seatbelt offences.

At 8 p.m. Saturday, officers patrolling the area of 11th Concession and 16th Sideroad in King Township clocked a motorcycle travelling at 129 km/h in a 60 km/h zone.

The 26-year-old male driver from Toronto was charged with excessive speed, speeding and use plate not authorized for vehicle.

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