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february update

17th February 2015

150+ shows

In November 2014 Auslan Stage Left celebrated the milestone of providing access to over 150 shows around Australia. Interpreters, consultants, volunteers, some dedicated patrons, and supporting organisations attended a party at Tradeblock Café at the Victorian College for the Deaf. One of the most exciting announcements of the night was which show was number 150. It was Strictly Ballroom in Sydney, and we were pleased to have one of its interpreters, Alex Jones, present for our special event. Guests enjoyed live music, a caricature artist and some dancing towards the end to a variety of musical numbers (special mention to the "dancers" for your fine entertainment!). Auslan Stage Left would like to thank everyone involved in making the evening happen, and for all who were present on the night – you have contributed so much to our organisation. Thank you!

Medina and Susan at the 150+ party

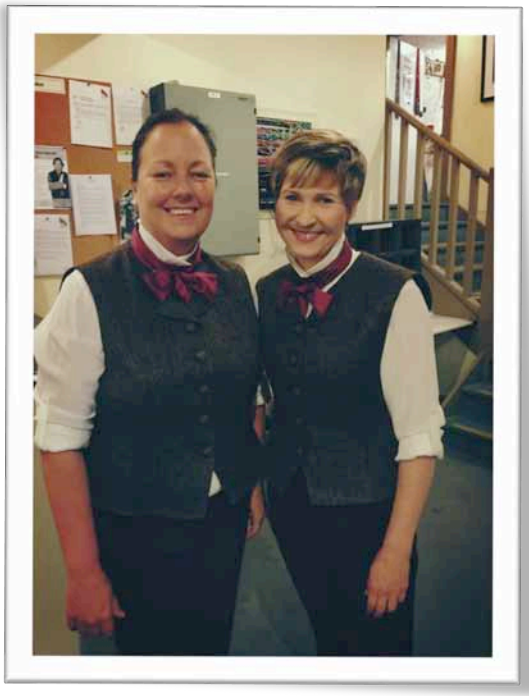
In breaking news, Auslan Stage Left is pleased to announce we have appointed two patrons – Todd McKenney and Erin James. See auslanstageleft.com.au for more information.

Our new patrons

Language/ Cultural Consultant experience – Marnie Kerridge

"Mum! My teacher at school was saying he was off to the French Revolution and the Barricade tonight. I was the only one in my class who knew he was talking about Les Miserables! So embarrassing! It's all your fault!"

Welcome to my family and life! My teenagers have a good appreciation of musical theatre through me, although they don't appreciate me belting out the songs badly out of tune and pitch and just look at me strangely when I flap my hands about signing songs instead to spare their ears. I just can't win! Luckily Auslan Stage Left and other deaf theatregoers share my musical passion!



Being asked to be the language consultant for Les Mis was a dream come true. I was nervous, I was scared but above all I felt so incredibly thrilled and honored to be considered and asked for this role. My job was made so much easier by the two wonderfully dedicated, skilled and experienced interpreters, Karen and Susan. It wasn't hard to twist my arm to come to more rehearsals than usual. Anything was better than the soccer and cooking shows on offer by the male Kerridges at home.

Seeing the show a few times was a bonus and I learnt different things at each performance. My favorite part was being able to analyze the lyrics, the sub-text and explore the religious and revolution undertones within the script with Karen and Susan. Being a qualified English teacher and a lover of literature, I was in my element. There were so many layers upon layer of meanings and a dozen different ways to interpret a line. It was an immense challenge and they pulled it off. Watching the actual interpreted performance was fantastic and breathtaking. I was a bit of a nutcase and hopefully the next time, if I am a consultant, I shall be a lot calmer before the performance! I may have scared off a few patrons!

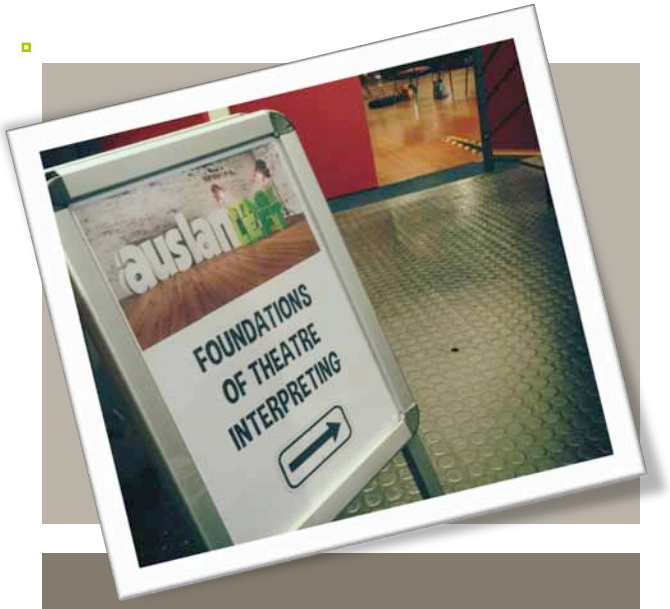
Thank you Auslan Stage Left for the opportunity to be a consultant to such a magnificent show, and to Karen and Susan for their wonderful support and professionalism. Les Mis was definitely the highlight of 2014 for me. I no longer "dreamed a dream"; I lived it!

Mentor Program

Auslan Stage Left is pleased to announce the mentees for 2015. Rachelle Stevens (Language/ Cultural Consultant) and Melissa Martin (Interpreter) will have the opportunity to observe different interpreters and teams at work – during prep time, rehearsal and performance, with the view to working alongside an experienced team at the end of the year. Welcome, and good luck!

Foundations of Theatre Interpreting.

Melbourne



Testimonial
Sarah Sudweeks (VIC)

Thank you to Auslan Stage Left for their brilliant Foundations of Theatre Interpreting workshop. The weekend offered something for everyone - new or experienced and was done in a relaxed and meaningful way. Within the first few hours, Alex and Della had me completely at ease and tuned into their teaching. They had skillfully and carefully unlocked many of the barriers I had long battled with regarding theatre Interpreting (in particular script translation) and had opened my eyes to new techniques and tools. The atmosphere was warm and safe, there was absolutely no pressure to do anything you weren't ready for and the organisation was seamless. Congratulations, bravo and thank you Susan and Medina!

Testimonial
Christy Filipich (WA)

The workshop was held in the Malthouse Theatre, a great venue, with plenty of workspaces, a café, and a bar – very useful after a long day of script analysis and Shakespeare translations. Did I say Shakespeare? The name that puts fear into the hearts and hands of Interpreters! After a morning discussing general concepts related to theatre interpreting, the process, translation issues, and the role of Auslan consultants; we were placed in teams and given the theatrical piece that would be performed on stage the next afternoon. And yes, one of those pieces was 'Hamlet', the other 'A Streetcar Named Desire'.

The afternoon was spent putting the theory from the morning session into practice by putting together a first draft translation of our selected piece – without the benefit of the Auslan consultant. During this time, the Auslan consultants were having their own session with Alex. My tandem and I put together what we thought was a reasonable first draft. Little did we know…

Sunday morning we met with our Auslan consultants and proudly showed off our translations. This was the part that was most valuable for me, as we rarely have the opportunity to work with Auslan consultants in Perth. Having Deaf eyes critique a translation that was the result of many hours of analysis, research and ultimately trial & error could be difficult, but I found the consultant to be highly knowledgeable in translation, and skilled in providing useful feedback to enhance the end performance. The translation improved 10 fold; it's incredible how much value the Auslan consultants add to the process.

Finally, Sunday afternoon we had the chance to perform our translations to the group! Alex was marvellous explaining the parts of the story that were missed along the way and everyone's performance was incredible. With fantastic training from Della and Alex, and invaluable input from the Deaf consultants, the translations look like the work of weeks of practice not hours!

On the whole it was a fantastic weekend of training with a real opportunity to practice, polish and perform, bringing theory and practical skills together. The Auslan consultants were awesome, I want one with me all the time for all my work, and their feedback was perfect. Della and Alex are incredibly knowledgeable about their craft and it was a pleasure to learn from. Team Gravediggers – aka Sandi and Marnie, it was a highly enjoyable experience working with you on Hamlet, I hope we have the opportunity to work together as a real team in the future. Auslan Stage Left have put together an amazing professional development opportunity for theatre interpreters and Deaf consultants and I highly recommend it to anyone and everyone.

Testimonial
Cheryl Sandilands (VIC)

Susan has kindly asked me to put together a few words about my experience at the recent Theatre Interpreting Workshop…so in a nutshell….I simply LOVED it!!

Right from the start the vibe in the room at the Malthouse was positive. I must admit I was feeling rather apprehensive – what would I be expected to do? What would my colleagues think…would I be clumsy … would I feel challenged …. Would; would; would well far from it! I walked into the room and felt a sense of collegiality; a sense of positive anticipation; and friendliness!

I loved that Auslan was the language we used at the start of the day; Della and Alex set the scene for a positive learning experience. Their skill in both encouraging and challenging us at the same time was exemplary. I so enjoyed working with my colleague (Therese you're a star!), and I valued the advice and contribution of our wonderful consultants (Kate & Anna such gems).

The whole experience was valuable and worthwhile. I feel more equipped now to work in the realm of theatre interpreting and look forward to more opportunities to learn!

Thanks Auslan Stage Left!

Testimonial
Nicole Clark (NSW)

As a Sydney interpreter participating in the Melbourne Auslan Stage Left theatre workshop I felt welcomed and at ease. It was one of the most beneficial and challenging workshops I have ever participated in, the greatest asset was the fact that we experienced the whole process in the space of two days from being given the script and watching the piece for the first time, being allocated a co-terp and consultant, translating together, rehearsals and finally performance!

It was so authentic and extremely nurturing. The chance to train with a consultant was extremely beneficial, I gained so much from the experience. I would like to thank everyone who participated in the workshop, the presenters and the Auslan Stage Left team. I would highly recommend this workshop to all interpreters of skill and experience. Bring on stage two!

What's next?

The next training will focus on musical theatre and sign singing. Only one weekend event will be held – for interpreters Australia wide – and there will be a selection process. Stay tuned for more details!

Partnerships

Auslan Stage Left is pleased to have formed partnerships with like-minded organisations such as Vicdeaf and SLC NSW. We look forward to working with both organisations over the next year to further promote Auslan and interpreter access for the deaf community.

We also wish to thank Arts Access Victoria, Accessible Arts NSW and Deaf Arts Network for their ongoing support.

Upcoming Shows

New South Wales

22 February - Fair Day @ Victoria Park, Sydney. Interpreter Rosemary Profilio

4 March – Club Swizzle @ Sydney Opera House. Interpreter Nicole Clark

22 March – Walking with Dinosaurs @ All Phones Arena. Interpreter Susan Emerson

22 April – Dinosaur Zoo @ Sydney Opera House. Interpreter TBC

Queensland

5 April – Walking with Dinosaurs @ Brisbane Entertainment Centre. Interpreter Susan Emerson

Western Australia

7 April – The Witches @ Subiaco Arts Centre. Interpreter Paula Norman

19 April – Walking with Dinosaurs @ Perth Arena. Interpreter TBC

South Australia

19 February – Four Eyed Guide to the Galaxy @ East Village. Interpreter Sarah Leitner

14 March – Left @ The Lotus Palace. Interpreter Sarah Leitner

26 April – Walking with Dinosaurs @ Adelaide Entertainment Centre. Interpreter Susan Emerson

Victoria

22 March – Strictly Ballroom @ Her Majesty's Theatre. Interpreters Alex Jones & Chevoy Sweeney

29 March – Walking with Dinosaurs @ Hisense Arena. Interpreter Susan Emerson

17 & 18 April – 26 Storey Treehouse @ Arts Centre. Interpreters Nicole Maher & Cina Hossack.

21 June – The Lion King @ Regent Theatre. Interpreters Daniel Hately & Susan Emerson

29 June – Mister Maker @ Arts Centre. Interpreter Michelle Ashley

Cina @ The Spiegeltent

Dani @ Paramour Prize Launch

Joanna & Katie @ Yabun Festival

Mikey & Leanne @ Brisbane Carols

Susan, Michelle A & Nic @ Midsumma Comedy Gala

Danielle & Karen @ Whitehorse Australia Day Concert

Danielle & Marc @ Calpurnia Descending

Karen @ Whitehorse Carols

Mikey @ Black Diggers

Michelle A & Melissa @ The Wiggles

Nic @ Four Eyed Guide to the Galaxy

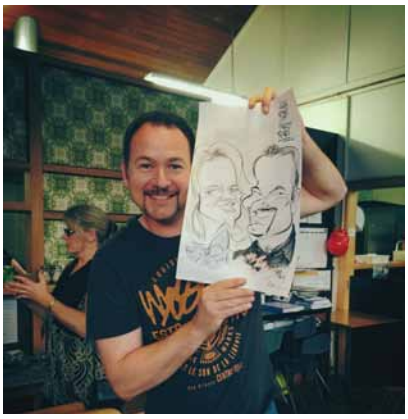
Michelle A & Cina @ Tiger Who Came to Tea

Interpreters & deaf patrons @ Radiance

Michelle A & Daniel @ Midsumma

Michelle M, Rosemary & Joanna @ Radiance

Thanks Ilana for the live music!



150+ Party @ Tradeblock Cafe

The Wiggles
Melissa Martin

On Saturday December 13th I was so fortunate to be one of the interpreters for The Wiggles. I was excited to work on this and to be working with Michelle Ashley and Melissa Bryson added to the excitement. Michelle and I met and listened to the music (which stays in your head for days on end!) and divvied up the songs. This is where the fun begins, working together on our duets and working on our individual songs at home.

Working together on the duets was a lot of fun and I'm sure driving along in my car while signing hot potato and Twinkle Twinkle Little Star was of some amusement to those who passed by. Auslan translations to The Wiggles songs are not as straightforward as one may think, but they sure are catchy and put a smile on your face.

Meeting The Wiggles at Rod Laver Arena was a highlight and they are just as energising and friendly in person as they are on screen. The nerves were plentiful as we walked into the arena with scores of children and adults alike but the energy was palpable, the show was fun and the children danced (as did the adults). Emma (yellow wiggle) and Andy (a wiggles friend) did a song sign-dancing, which was lovely to see.

A huge thank you to Auslan Stage Left for such a wonderful opportunity, it was such an honour and one I will always be grateful for.

2015 Young Australian of the Year visits Les Miserable in Perth

"The show was marvelous and even more so with the provision of Auslan interpreters that allowed me to access the performance through my language. I look forward to more Auslan interpreted performances and to highlight our right to access shows in Auslan."

Drisana Levitzke-Gray (WA)

Thank you Stella Young

It was with much sadness that we farewelled Stella Young last December. Stella was one of the few who didn't just talk the talk. Her comedy shows demonstrated universal access, including use of Auslan interpreters. Susan Emerson was fortunate enough to work with Stella on a number of these shows, the last one being in Traralgon on 31st October. Thank you for making your shows accessible Stella. We will always remember your wicked humour, your commitment to accessibility and your friendliness to, and consideration of, deaf audiences.

auslanstageleft.com.au

Have you checked out our website lately? It is constantly updated with the latest information so make sure you keep up to date and don't miss out! Our website lists upcoming shows, information on how to get tickets and who the interpreters are, along with Auslan videos. You can also keep up with the news on our Facebook page "Auslan Stage Left" and Instagram "auslanstageleft".

work with us!

If you are interested in working with Auslan Stage Left as an interpreter, language/ cultural consultant or volunteer, please email auslanstageleft@gmail.com.

brisbane visit

Auslan Stage Left will be visiting Brisbane early in 2015 to meet with interpreters, the deaf community and production companies. We look forward to seeing you soon.

resources

Auslan Stage Left has developed resources for interpreters, consultants and audience members – check out our website for etiquette and vocab guides.

Welcome to our new volunteers

Auslan Stage Left would like to welcome two new Administration volunteers to our non-for profit, community organisation. You can learn more about them at auslanstageleft.com.au

Elle Evangelista (Sydney) is originally from Perth and has a Bachelor of Arts in English and graduated in 2013 from The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) with a Bachelor of Arts in Dance. She has performed in the Perth Fringe Festival and as an ensemble member in The King and I with Opera Australia. Elle is currently studying Auslan with the aim of becoming an Interpreter.

Wendy Boase (Melbourne) is a Paraprofessional Interpreter and a theatre enthusiast, enjoying large and small productions. With a background in corporate sales, Wendy enjoys now working in a profession and capacity more in line with her personal values and looks forward to joining the Auslan Stage Left team to help provide more access to the deaf community.