

Comedy all shook up with love of Elvis

Harbour Theatre Saturday, July 31st, 2021

LORD almighty! Elvis Presley, ice cream and 1970s Brooklyn have been whipped together for a comedy at Harbour Theatre.

Written and directed by prolific Perth playwright Noel O'Neill, *Confetti From Graceland* follows a house painter with a burnin' love for Elvis – and even celebrates the King's birthday.

The Brooklynite is about to invest in an ice cream parlour when his daughter arrives home with a ring on her finger, announcing she has to get married straight away.

"As a result, this leads to a variety of chaotic and comical situations," Noel said.

"There's an Italian-Brooklynese family I've known since I was 16 and they treated me like I was one of the family.

"I got to know them and their unique type of 'madness' very well.

"My biggest challenge is showing the cast how the behaviour exhibited by the family is absolutely normal.

"Over the years, I had observed all their little crazy ways and thought it was hilarious."

Born in Ireland, Noel moved to New York in his late teens and appeared in many off-Broadway productions before moving to Perth more than 20 years ago, clocking up numerous awards for writing and directing.

He has previously worked as a lecturer at the WA Academy of Performing Arts and Perth Actors' Collective and has staged plays at the Old Mill and KADS Theatres, Irish Club of WA, Subiaco Arts Centre, Bunbury History Museum and Carlisle Hotel.

Noel can also be seen as Watto in the ABC-TV series *The Heights*.

"I made Elvis a feature in *Confetti From Graceland* because I've never met anyone who didn't like him," he said.

"I thought it would be a great way to open the play and show how the family's lives were affected by him.

"I think I've always been a fan because his music always brings back pleasant memories."

Confetti From Graceland plays at 7.30pm August 13, 14, 18, 20, 21, 25, 27 and 28 with 2pm matinees August 15, 22 and 29. Tickets are \$25.50, \$23.50 concession and \$20.50 students – book at www.TAZTix.com.au or call TAZTix on 9255 3336.

Harbour Theatre is located at 16 Lochee Street, Mosman Park.

CAPTIONS

graceland1-2: Noel O'Neill, left, Narelle Belle, Meagan Harper, Sharon Menzies, Rex Gray, Kim Taylor and Indiana Powell in *Confetti From Graceland*.

Contact Profile

Harbour Theatre

Harbour Theatre was formed in December 1963 by eight enthusiastic amateurs, led by Jimmy Quinn, a very competent and experienced director. Since then Harbour Theatre has entertained thousands of people. The variety of plays we have offered the public range from drama to comedy, whodunit to tragedy, and murder to farce. About the only thing we haven't attempted is Shakespeare. Yet!! Over the years Harbour Theatre has produced hundreds of full length plays, countless one-act plays and many Christmas Revues. These have earned us many awards in several of the play festivals around Perth. Harbour Theatre initially performed in the Evans Davies Library in South Terrace, Fremantle (above what is now Dome). This was Harbour's home for its first 31 years. Over the years the theatre grew and grew, and in the 1970's a major restructuring of the theatre resulted in the stage and seating being completely changed, thus allowing for larger audiences and better facilities for the actors. With an Associate Membership in the hundreds, Harbour Theatre has always been self sufficient, never having to call on Government or other funding bodies for support.

Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond our control, in March 1995 we were forced to find another venue at which to perform. As a temporary measure, Harbour Theatre performed at the Tivoli Theatre, Applecross, for about 18 months, while searching for a location back in Fremantle. Finally, at the end of 1996, Harbour Theatre relocated back in Fremantle to the Princess May Building. The next few weeks were very hectic as the space we leased had to be converted into a theatre. Our members raised the money and we built the stage and seating and installed the lighting, in time for our last play of 1996. The Princess May Building became our home for the next 15 years. In 2007 the Fremantle Education Centre (who leased the Princess May Building from the City of Fremantle) refused to re-negotiate a lease and then in 2009 they received a Government Grant to build offices in the area occupied by the theatre. Despite months of lobbying State government representatives and local councillors, we were forced to move. The City of Fremantle then offered to rent us the Port Cineaste Building as a temporary venue. So, at the end of 2009, with the blood, sweat and tears of 33 of our members, we dismantled our beautiful theatre (and the only purpose built theatre in Fremantle) and moved lock, stock and barrel to the Port Cineaste Building. The major task of converting a cavernous cinema into an intimate performing arts space has been an enormous job undertaken by a number of our hardworking and dedicated members and involved many, many hours of volunteer labour. Against all the odds Harbour Theatre lives to perform another day and we look forward to bringing you many more years of exciting and entertaining theatre.

Noel O'Neill
P: 0419954353
W: www.harbourtheatre.org.au/
E: noelofnewyork@bigpond.com

graceland3: Tony (Noel O'Neill, left), Rose Nutz (Narelle Belle) and Angela (Meagan Harper) in *Confetti From Graceland*.

graceland4: *Confetti From Graceland* features Rex Gray, left as Pop Nutz, Kim Taylor as Vince Nutz and Meagan Harper as Angela.

File Library



