

Festival Apprentices Report

This year I had the great privilege of being RLT's apprentice at TheatreFest 2005. I have never been to festival before, so I had a lot of new learning: both participating in a show, and participating as an apprentice.

As a member of the RLT production of *Unity (1918)*, I learned a lot about the challenges involved in moving a production into an unfamiliar space. We did a very good job, under fairly difficult circumstances, and I want to thank all the members of our production who worked so hard to make our production a success.

As a festival apprentice, I saw 6 other plays over the 7 days of festival, sat in on all of the adjudications, and participated in a play workshop that covered all the phases of a production, focusing on directing. The workshop was led by June Mayhew, and provided a good general overview for anyone involved with a production.

At the conclusion of the week, the apprentices presented scenes from Carol Shields' play *Departures and Arrivals*. This marked my first venture onto the stage since high school. I was quite taken with the experience, and will be planning to try it again sometime soon.

Most of the plays presented at the festival were comedies, with *Unity* being the single exception.

- Crocus '80 Theatre (Weyburn) presented *Steel Magnolias*
- RLT presented *Unity (1918)*
- Moose Jaw Community Theatre presented *Don't Be Afraid of the Dark*
- Swift Current Little Theatre presented *All This and Moonlight, too.*
- Saskatoon Gateway Players presented *We Must Kill Toni*
- Paper Bag Players (Yorkton) presented *A Couple of White Chicks Sitting Around Talking*
- Prince Albert Community Players presented *Arsenic and Old Lace*

RLT came home with several awards including:

Best Actor in a Supporting Role: Mark Claxton "Hart Thorsen"

Best Actress in a Supporting Role: Nora Berg "Rose"

In addition, RLT's production received several honourable mentions:

Honourable Mention in the Best Actress Category: Megan Gates as "Sissy"

Honourable Mention in the Best Supporting Actor Category: Josh Strait as "Stan"

As well as an honourable mention for Riley Richter as a first time stage manager.

Of the plays presented by other groups, I was particularly taken with *We Must Kill Toni* and *A Couple of White Chicks Sitting Around Talking*, and I recommend that the RLT Play Selection Committee consider one or both of these plays in a future season.

I learned lots from the Adjudicator, Fran Gebhart. She did an excellent job of tailoring her adjudications to the strengths and weaknesses of each individual production.

I want to thank RLT for the opportunity to attend as the apprentice. I highly recommend the experience to any member, and would love to do it again, myself.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Wilson