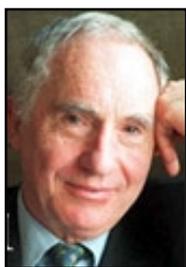


CHASING PEGASUS (A PLAY IN TEN CHORDS)

MEDIA RELEASE



SIR NIGEL HAWTHORNE

***Chasing Pegasus* was written to honour the memory of acclaimed British actor and close mentor, Sir Nigel Hawthorne**

In 1997, while living in London and with her first film (*A Little Rain Must Fall*) in post-production, Sally McLean decided that finding an Honorary Patron for her fledgling film production outfit, Salmac Productions, might be a good idea to help give some additional credibility to future submissions for funding and production, as well as provide an industry expert that could be turned to for advice, support and guidance in the coming years.

Being an actor herself (in addition to being a writer and producer), she naturally turned to actors who had achieved a high profile in the industry and whom might be interested in helping out a group of emerging actors, writers and filmmakers.

She selected a group of ten acting luminaries in the UK entertainment industry and began sending out personal letters to each one. After eight rejections, usually from the actors' personal assistants, she was starting to think that maybe this was too ambitious an idea, when a small envelope containing a handwritten note appeared in her mail. Expecting another rejection, it took her three reads of the note to realize that this was not in fact a rejection, but instead an expression of interest wanting to know more:

"Certainly your heart seems to be in the right place and you speak of 'amazing teamwork, dedication, energy, enthusiasm – never say die!' – all those vital ingredients. So, yes, in theory, I'd be delighted to be your patron". The note was from Nigel Hawthorne.

A request to see the rough cut of *A Little Rain Must Fall* before his final decision on being patron was hastily complied with and a few weeks later a typed note from Nigel arrived containing the following: "*A Little Rain Must Fall* is a splendid piece and you should be very proud of it. I would be more than happy to be your honorary patron."

And so began a working relationship that spanned four years and provided the foundation for all of Sally McLean's work within both film and theatre – not just as a writer and producer, but also as an actor. During this time, Nigel became an invaluable confidante and mentor and a font of wisdom and information about the industry.

Not long before his death, the discussion had begun regarding Salmac Productions' expansion into theatre, which made sense as both Nigel's and Sally's origins as actors were on the stage. Sally looked forward to beginning this new venture as a writer and director with helpful hints and advice from Nigel, but it was not to be. Sadly, before Incognita Enterprises (Salmac's theatre arm) came into existence, Nigel passed away, suffering a heart attack after a long battle with pancreatic cancer - the same illness that had taken Sally's grandfather just over ten years earlier.

After a bout of depression following Nigel's death (which had closely followed the deaths of another mentor, Judith McLorinan (*Prisoner Cell Block H*) and another good friend, James McKeand), Sally picked herself up and decided to write a play about hope, following dreams and taking back the power to make your life all you want it to be. And so, out of great loss, *Chasing Pegasus* was born.

(Cont'd/...)

Chasing Pegasus is therefore dedicated with great love and gratitude to Sir Nigel Hawthorne who took so much interest in a young actor/writer on the other side of the world, who just wanted to follow her dream.

Under agreement with Sir Nigel's estate, he remains listed as Salmac Productions' honorary patron as testament to his generosity, support, guidance and kindness.

"Chasing Pegasus (a play in ten chords) is a 'slice of life' insight into what makes us as human beings tick. Well-written and even, dare I say, inspirational, *Chasing Pegasus* deftly holds up a mirror to the audience, reflecting back our foibles and frailties without, thankfully, falling into cliché or over-sentimentality." – *TheatreTalk*

Note: A percentage of the profits from all performances will be donated to the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Centre at Austin Health and Beyond Blue.

Chasing Pegasus will be performed as part of the Melbourne Fringe Festival at Gasworks Arts Park Main Theatre from October 3 to 7, 2006:

Dates:

Tuesday to Saturday Evenings: Curtain up @ 9.15pm | Saturday Matinee: Curtain up @ 4.30pm

Tickets:

Tuesday 3 Oct (Preview): All tickets \$10

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday Evenings:

\$16.50 Adult | \$12.50 Conc. | \$11 Seniors | \$11 ea per Group of 10

Saturday Matinee: All tickets \$12.50 | All Seniors Tickets: \$11

There will be an additional season at Mt Martha House, Crn The Esplanade & Dominion Road, Mt Martha from October 18 to 22, 2006:

Dates:

Wednesday to Saturday: Curtain up @ 8pm | Sunday: Curtain up @ 4pm

Tickets:

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday evenings:

\$16 Adult | \$12 Conc. | \$11 Seniors | \$11 ea Group of 10 or more

Sunday Matinee: All Tickets \$12.50 | All Seniors Tickets: \$11

For ticket booking information, visit www.chasingpegasus.com

The play runs at 70 minutes without an interval