



## **TAKING THE STAGE**

**Former resident returns to give guidance to Stage North actors**

**See page A3**



STAGE NORTH presents

# DEATH and the MAIDEN

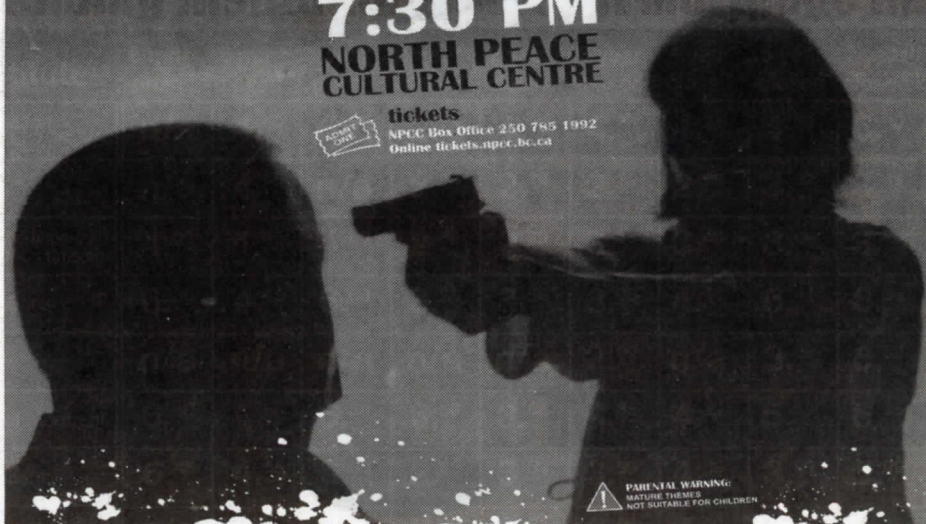
BY ARIEL DORFMAN

DIRECTED BY ROB LAVENTURE

MAY 3, 4, 5  
7:30 PM  
NORTH PEACE  
CULTURAL CENTRE

tickets

NPCC Box Office 250 785 1992  
Online tickets.npcc.bc.ca



PARENTAL WARNING:  
MATURE THEMES  
NOT SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN

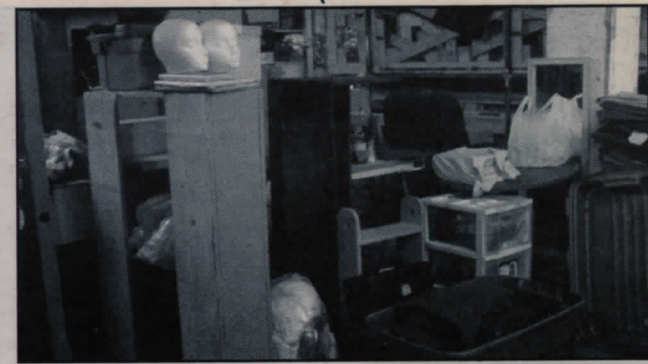
# Is it curtains for Stage North?

By Sue Popesku  
Submitted article

All packed up and nowhere to go. Stage North Theatre Society has scouted out suitable spaces for rent and discovered, as a non-profit organization, they cannot afford any of those available spaces.

As of March 30, Stage North no longer has a home to rehearse shows nor build sets. This could mean no season of productions for Stage North next year in the North Peace Cultural Centre. With no place to mount a production, which takes about 3 months preparation, Stage North will have no shows to perform.

The membership of the theatre society has been sorting and packing set pieces, costumes and tools since they were given 30 days to vacate the basement premises of the old COOP. The 30 days notice was no surprise since it was part and parcel of the



Submitted photos

*Backdrops, flats, stairs, platforms, costumes, props and more are part of the massive volume that Stage North is storing until they can find a place to rehearse and build sets. The search is on for a suitable, affordable space for this non-profit group on a limited budget.*

affordable rental agreement. Previous to moving into the Coop about 4 years ago, Stage North found similar affordable arrangements with Tracker Contracting before they also opted to renovate their premises.

After nearly 15 years of development, Stage North is homeless. Packed into two C-cans with costumes stored in a dry temporary location, Stage North is searching for a heated space of about 2000 square feet with a washroom. Stage North President Oliver Hachmeister said that a shared space is possible. "Our rehearsals are in the evenings and on weekends since everyone is a volunteer with a career job elsewhere or is a student. However, sets are constructed early and they remain in place until we truck them to the Cultural Centre for performances."

Stage North has few options. Finding affordable, suitable space is the best answer and an immediate solution. The problem is the affordability. Stage North's fundraising capabilities are already stretched to the maximum and commercial rents in Fort St. John are not within Stage North's range. Hachmeister said, "Stage North can afford about \$25,000 per year to rent rehearsal space." He explained that rehearsal space, the cost of each production and the fees for performance space are the major line items in the annual Stage North budget.

Another option is pursuing the construction of a permanent space which would involve the purchase of land and a long-term fundraising program plus sustainable funding for operation. Stage North is a volunteer non-profit organization dedicated to providing quality theatre for residents and visitors and mentor-

ing youth in presentation and technical skills of production.

Without on-going support from the community, this major project is not possible.

A third option is to return to the days of producing plays with small casts in make-shift locations only when a space is available for rehearsals. Theatre in Fort St. John, as far back as the 1940's, found nooks and crannies to rehearse and perform. The casts were small; there was no program of mentoring youth; and technical instruction was non-existent.

It has only been in the last 20 years since the North Peace Cultural Centre opened in 1992 that a proper theatre facility has been available for performances. Local theatre has taken huge strides with larger musical productions, youth theatre summer schools, acting workshops, and instruction in production and technical aspects of theatre. Stage North provides production support for other community organizations and costumes for schools shows, talent shows and more. The opportunities for honing personal presentation skills for the young and the not-so-young provide another benefit to the community.

Stage North pays \$30-40,000 each year in performance fees to the North Peace Cultural Centre. This, along with all the other indirect economic benefits to Fort St. John, will be lost if Stage North cannot mount a season of shows.

Stage North is open for suggestions and partnerships with other organizations in solving the problem of lack of space for non-profits in this community. Contact Oliver at 261-1639 or [stagenorth@stagenorth.ca](mailto:stagenorth@stagenorth.ca) with any possible solutions.

# A cult classic brought to life

By Kyla Corpuz

FORT ST. JOHN – Without even watching the feature film, local actor and radio personality, Ted Sloan, took on the role to direct an adaption of John Hughes' *The Breakfast Club*.

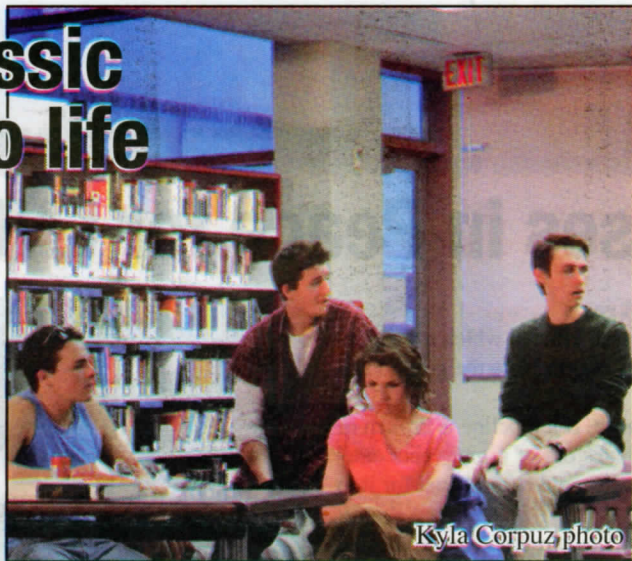
The cult classic is a story about five students, who find themselves in detention on a Saturday. Despite their apparent differences, they slowly start to find common ground with one another.

"I watched it once, and as soon as I casted it, no one was allowed to watch it," said Sloan.

The cast that made up the five stereotypical high school characters were Spenser Dunlop, 19 (Bender), Jeryn Mackey, 17 (Claire), Cody McGillvray, 28 (Andrew), Carlianne Yance, 17 (Allison) and Braden Lock, 17 (Brian).

"It's an interesting thing when you do something that's so iconic, because everyone knows what the *Breakfast Club* is," he said.

Sloan said he didn't want the actors to copy exactly how the original was played out.



Kyla Corpuz photo

where we wanted to do it exactly like the movie," said Sloan, like the script and the dance moves.

However, as the director, he said it was important to have moments that were created very separately; to allow the actors a chance to explore their characters.

"We can all be mimics, but I wanted to direct and help the actors grow," said Sloan. "Had the play been executed as a mirrored copy of the movie, Sloan said, "it would have been great, but it would have been hollow. Tonight, like all nights, it's really great to see them bring their hearts."

Seventeen-year-old Lock, who played Brian, helped stage the script. He also

on the *Breakfast Club* in Fort St. John.

"It seemed natural to pitch the idea of [doing the *Breakfast Club*], there are lots of teenagers who can act, who want to act, who want to be involved, we could do this show," explained Lock.

Two years later Sloan was approached with the opportunity to direct it, which he said turned out to be pretty "serendipitous."

"It was really neat 'cause I had just come back on tour as an actor and every actor thinks, 'Hm, I should direct something,' and it was quite a blessing."

While it has been a growing point for Sloan in his theater career, he prefers the acting



# Auditions



will be held at the North Peace Cultural Centre on September 21 and 22 for **James and the Giant Peach** directed by Oliver Hachmeister which will run in February and for the Christmas classic **The Nutcracker** directed by Shawna Milne of Studio2Stage. The Nutcracker will run Dec 20-23. There are multiple character roles for men and women and dance roles as well as a children's chorus for young people between the ages of 7 and 14.

**AUDITIONS: Friday, Sept 21 from 5:30 - 9:00 pm,  
and on Saturday, Sept 22 from 11:00 am - 4:00 pm**

Interested only in The Nutcracker? For Character roles 1pm and for dance 3pm on Sat.  
**at the North Peace Cultural Centre.**

# Stage North's latest production is just peachy

By Kyla Corpuz

FORT ST. JOHN – What do you get when you mix together a rolling fruit, critters and a little boy? Easy: Roald Dahl's James and the Giant Peach, the latest production by Stage North.

Oliver Hachmeister directs the play with a diverse cast. The actors' ages and experience range from one end of the spectrum to other. The youngest stage member is five years old.

Hachmeister said having such a varied group of people to work with was one of his favourite aspects about directing James and the Giant Peach.

"I really wanted to get a mixture of experienced actors [and] new adult actors, most of the kids are fairly new [to performing]," he said. "It gave a chance for experienced stage people to mentor the new comers, it was really something great to see that happen."

Daryl Lo, who gave a captive performance in Stage North's Legally Blonde, plays James. JP Wood plays the over-confident centipede, the friendly lady bug is played by

Fort St. John librarian Morgan Peltier, Gilles Francoeur plays the cynical—but hilarious—earthworm, Ted Sloan plays the wise grasshopper and Gemini Bougie plays the spider.

In some ways each of the actors' personal character also exudes in their on-stage character.

"I think that every actor has to bring a part of themselves into the roles that play in some sense," said Hachmeister. "When I audition people I look at who they are first and if who they are fits something of the character, sometimes ... there's a specific trait that I'm looking for and everything else is different as long as there's one thing that I find, it works out very well."

Doing a family-friendly production was on the agenda for Stage North, as the production company got a lot of feedback to pursue a show catering to a young audience.

"Well last year, we didn't do anything that involved children that they could go and see and enjoy it, and we heard from a large portion of

the community say that's what they wanted."

Hachmeister went through a couple of Roald Dahl stories and stumbled upon one of his childhood favourites: James and the Giant Peach.

One of the main features that makes this play entertaining is the simple, but engaging set change.

The use of props and cast members makes the stage come to life and the audience is welcome to participate in some of the scenes.

"Theater doesn't always have to be serious, it can be fun. A lot of time, the shared experience people have is watching a TV show together or a movie together, but [in James and the Giant Peach] there's audience interaction," said Hachmeister.

"As the audience they are invited to take part in keeping the peach up in the air and shouting to the tour guide."

If you're curious as to what this all means, check out the show that runs from Feb. 21 to 23 at 7 p.m. at the North Peace Cultural Centre.



Submitted photo  
*The main cast of Stage North's James and the Giant Peach. Catch them in full costume at the North Peace Cultural Centre from Feb. 21 to 23. They have already done two performances.*

STAGE-KID-FRIENDLY THEATRE PRESENTS

# JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH

STORY BY ROALD DAHL  
 DIRECTED BY OLIVER HACHMEISTER

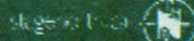


**FEB**  
 15, 16,  
 21, 22, 23


KID FRIENDLY TIME!  
**7:00PM**  
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**TICKETS** \$20 \$16 \$12

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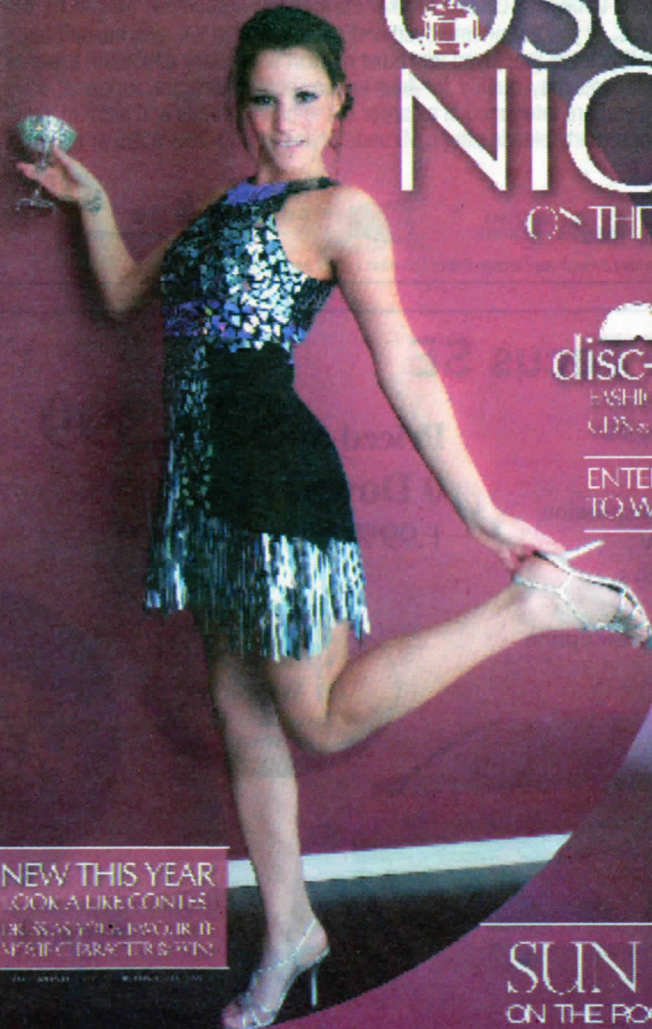


WATCH THE ACADEMY AWARDS



# OSCAR NIGHT

ON THE BIG SCREEN



disc-continued  
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11:00AM-12:00PM  
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**SUN FEB 24**  
 ON THE ROCKS NIGHTCLUB

RED CARPET 7:00PM  
 FASHION ART COMPETITION 8:00PM  
 OSCAR AWARDS 8:00PM  
 THE CARPET SHOW & DANCE 9:00PM





## Disc Continued

*The second annual Fashion in Form competition was held at On The Rocks during the screening of the Oscars on Feb. 24. Contestants made fashion pieces using CDs and DVDs. The event was hosted by Stage North. More on page 30.*

Kyla Corpuz photo



# Disc Continued

FORT ST. JOHN - The theme of this year's Fashion in Form was using CDs and DVDs to create fashion pieces. From a flapper girl dress, to a kilt and a geisha, Fort St. John designers brought their creativity to On The Rocks during an Oscars showing on Feb. 24 hosted by Stage North.



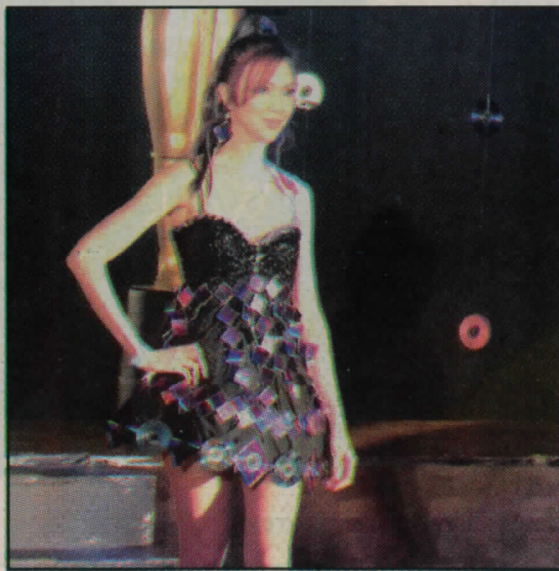


**Disc-Continued**

**fashion night**



Fort St. John was just as fashionable as the red carpet at Stage North's annual Oscar Night on the Big Screen on Feb. 24. The Disc-Continued Fashion Show featured outfits created from old CDs and DVDs. (Aleisha Hendry Photos)



# PEACE RIVER ZONE THEATRE FESTIVAL

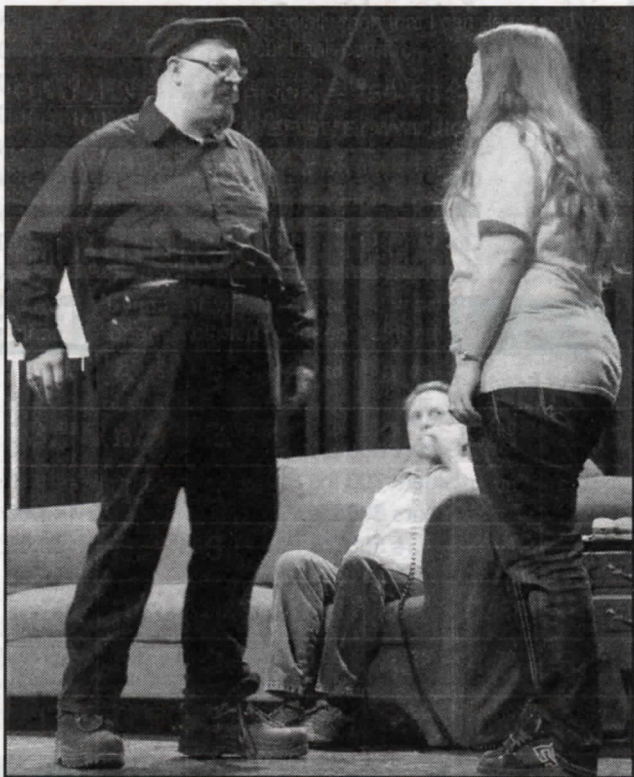
By Kyla Corpuz

The annual theatre festival kicked off at the North Peace Cultural Centre on May 16 with a comedy by Westley M. Pederson, *Take Five*. It was directed by Dale Hillman. On May 17, *The Breakfast Club*, directed by Ted Sloan, hit the stage and last was *Hallways*,

written and directed by high school student Mason Temple.

All three plays were judged by Stephen Drover, a widely acclaimed theatre connoisseur.

The winner of the Peace River Zone Theatre Festival will travel to Kamloops in July for Mainstage.



Kyla Corpuz photo

*Audience members were in for a hilarious treat as the cast of *Take Five* took the stage on May 16.*



Thea Mackey modeled her geisha-inspired creation at the Disc-Continued Fashion Show on Feb. 24. Turn to Page 17 for more photos from the show.