

Teen theatre troupe celebrates tenth year by welcoming back alum for directorial debut

A decade after Teens at Garrick (TAG) launched in 2014, *Poe: Dreams of Madness* by Alyssa Hynes, will be first production co-directed by a former a TAG alumnus Paris Jenner, alongside theatre veteran and TAG director Gail Lusted.

The TAG production will feature a cast of all ages and levels of experience, who together, will invite audiences into the romantic and dark world of American writer and poet Edgar Allan Poe's signature Gothic horror stories in *Poe: Dreams of Madness*.

Originally started by Gail at Garrick Theatre to encourage more young people into community theatre, TAG has been instrumental in introducing dozens of teens to the stage over the years.

One such teen was Paris Jenner who joined TAG four years ago. Now she returns to Garrick Theatre for her directorial debut, hoping to pay the favour forward to the newest generation of actors.

"TAG has been such a significant part of my theatre journey and I felt it was the perfect place to take the next step into directing," Paris explained.

"The community and collaborative spirit at TAG is contagious – it's a place where creativity thrives and everyone is encouraged to bring their unique talents and ideas to the table.

"It's incredibly exhilarating and humbling to now be in the director's chair alongside Gail for a TAG production – seeing the cast bring the story to life, and knowing I've played a role in that, is incredibly fulfilling."

Bringing former TAG members back to take the reins on directing has always been a long-term goal, Gail Lusted explained.

"Many of our former members are adults and are finally ready to try directing," Gail said.

"I've watched Paris grow so much over the years, both personally as an actor, and I feel privileged to be able to help her find her feet as a director as well.

"I can't think of better way to celebrate TAG's tenth birthday than bringing one of our own back."

Speaking on the play itself, Gail and Paris agree that with themes based on the darker side of the human experience, it will resonate personally with most audience members.

"Our story delves into universal themes of love, loss, and resilience – these all are normal things that humans experience at one point in their life," they said.

"The script challenges us to step into the mind of complex, tormented characters," Paris added.

"It's a thrilling opportunity to explore the depths of emotion and psychological tension, which is both demanding and incredibly rewarding as an actor.

"The cast is a talented and passionate group and it's been a privilege to watch them bring the characters to life with such depth and nuance."

Book your tickets now at <http://www.taztix.com.au/garricktheatre> or call 9255 3336.

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Performance Dates: September 27, 28, 29* and October 4, 5*, 5, 6*, 11, 12

All evening shows at 7.30pm. *denotes matinee show at 2pm.

Tickets: Adult \$28, Concession \$23, Members \$22, Children \$15. Processing fees apply.

About Poe Dreams of Madness

A TAG Production featuring teens and adults. A drama by Alyssa Hynes. Directed by Paris Jenner and Gail Lusted.

Macabre author Edgar Allan Poe's classic tales come to life in this award-winning adaptation that's both original and familiar, with classic elements from several of his most famous stories.

It's nearly midnight, of course, and our troubled protagonist is having difficulty sleeping... or at least he thinks he is: "I am haunted by dreams, even when I wake. And so I wander in this dazed stupor, unsure if I am awake or asleep, unsure if I am alive."

With the Raven acting as a grim and mischievous tour guide, both the positively dead and the presumed living give breath to thrilling Poe retellings that have a finger firmly on the pulse of his greatest Gothic works, including "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Pit and the Pendulum," "The Masque of the Red Death," "The Raven," and more.

Will Poe ever rest easy again? Will you? So sayeth the Raven: nevermore.

About Teens at Garrick (TAG)

Running since 2014, Teens at Garrick (TAG) is an opportunity for students aged 13 to 18 to explore all things acting and theatre through monthly workshops and an annual TAG production. In 2024, TAG is celebrating its 10th year.

It is not just about acting. It is a supportive and inclusive environment where students feel free to explore, create and develop their skills. TAG gives members the opportunity to create strong bonds with one another – laughing, learning and growing together. Interacting with other like-minded young people in a performing arts setting is a great way to form new friendships and overcome shyness. The benefits of youth theatre extends far beyond the stage – it also fosters critical thinking, communication skills, emotional intelligence, collaboration, self-confidence and creativity, ultimately enriching a child's academic journey and personal development.

TAG productions have included 'James and the Giant Peach', 'The Snow Queen', 'Dreamjobs', 'Game of Tiaras', Shakespeare's 'The Tempest' and 'Dracula'.

TAG meets one Saturday a month, 11am – 2pm and costs \$30 per year.

For more information about TAG please contact TAG founder and director, Gail Lusted at glusted@westnet.com.au

About Gail Lusted

Gail was born dramatic and luckily was able to channel this into a Drama B.Ed (Hons) and Grad. Dip Secondary Dance/Drama. She arrived in Perth, late 2003, and became involved in many areas of theatre including Master Coach at Stargate Actors Academy, Barking Gecko, Majkidz and StageCoach, as tutor, writer and director and even local host for Australian Idol.

Gail is the director of Teens at Garrick - a monthly theatre group for teenagers, directing/assisting Snow Queen, Dreamjobs, Game of Tiaras, The Tempest, Agatha Rex and Shirley Holmes and Jenny Watson; Hound of the Baskervilles and Trap.

As Gail likes to practice what she preaches, she also treads the boards. Since moving to Perth she has performed at Old Mill Theatre in Jakes Women, - Karen (2008), We Happy Few –Helen (2009), Hamlet – Gertrude (2011) and A Conversation – Coral (2013).

In 2012 she played Ruth in Calendar Girls, at Garrick Theatre, winning the Best Actress Award for that year. This was reprised at Stirling Theatre (2016.) Silver Linings, as Hope at Garrick; Hay Fever as Judith Bliss (2022) at Old Mill Theatre.

About Paris Jenner

Paris Jenner has been immersed in the world of acting since the age of seven, cultivating a deep connection with the performing arts. However, it wasn't until they turned sixteen that their passion for directing and working behind the scenes truly blossomed. This newfound love for storytelling from behind the camera led Paris to explore the intricacies of theatre and film production, shaping their creative journey.

In 2020, Paris joined the Theatre Arts Group (TAG), where they rekindled their love for theatre and were given the incredible opportunity to be part of various productions. TAG provided a nurturing environment for Paris to hone their skills and expand their artistic vision. Over the years, Paris has embraced every opportunity to grow as a director, bringing their unique perspective to the stage.

Currently pursuing an Advanced Diploma in Screen and Media, Paris has gained invaluable experience working on professional film sets alongside industry professionals. This academic and practical training has deepened their understanding of the filmmaking process, equipping them with the tools needed to bring complex narratives to life.

Paris is particularly passionate about the power of collaboration and the magic that happens when creative minds come together. They are excited to be working alongside Gail to bring the script "Dreams of Madness" to life. The choice of this script was deeply personal for Paris, as they were drawn to its structure—how each scene represents a different story or poem by Edgar Allan Poe, yet they all weave together into a cohesive narrative. The diversity of the scenes offers Paris the opportunity to explore various storytelling techniques, creating a rich tapestry of emotions and experiences on stage.

Paris Jenner continues to push the boundaries of their creativity, driven by a strong passion for creating compelling stories that resonate with audiences. They are grateful for every opportunity to share their vision and contribute to the world of theatre and film.