

KLAUS RASCAL & THE SQUIVETTS - 1984

Children's Production

CAST: Robert Aaland, Laura Allen, Kelly Alsip, Amy Anderson, Marlene Baer, Baxter Baldwin, Heidi Beil, Jennifer Belling, Melanie Belling, Julia Bringloe, Monica Burgess, Elizabeth Chandler, Catherine Conoley, Sarah Cullom, Amy Cummings, Gavin Cummings, Leslie Curran, Melissa Davis, Shannon Donahoe, Treavor Donnelly, Kim Eastman, Richard Edmonson, Sabrina Fiander, Jordan Friedman, Jennifer Friedrich, Abe Golden, Jessica Harris, Jennie Hyde, Darah Johnston, David Jones, Megan Judd, Michelle Kaizula, Jacquil Karr, Julee Kueckelhan, Katie Lampert, Kristin Larson, Robb Leroy, Stacy Leroy, Meredith Lewis, Jeremy Lind, Sheila McClure, Mary McCormic, Jason McGrew, Jay McKinstry, Mike Morrisroe, Allison Mount, Amy Mount, Andrew Nelson, Karl Nichols, Malia O'Brien, Erin Parrish, Jenny Phillips, Deonn Ritchie, Holly Saccanno, Mark Schurman, Susie Sekits, Brian Seyl, Colleen Stafford, Adam Steinberg, Darya Swingle, Retha Tinker, Geoff Walton, Katie Walton, Ryan White, Samara Wilson, Tim Wilson

Director & Design: Dennis South

Writer & Music Score: David Peevers

Costume Chairman: Kathy Baer

Set Construction Co-Chairs: George Harvey

Vocal Director: Karen Rice



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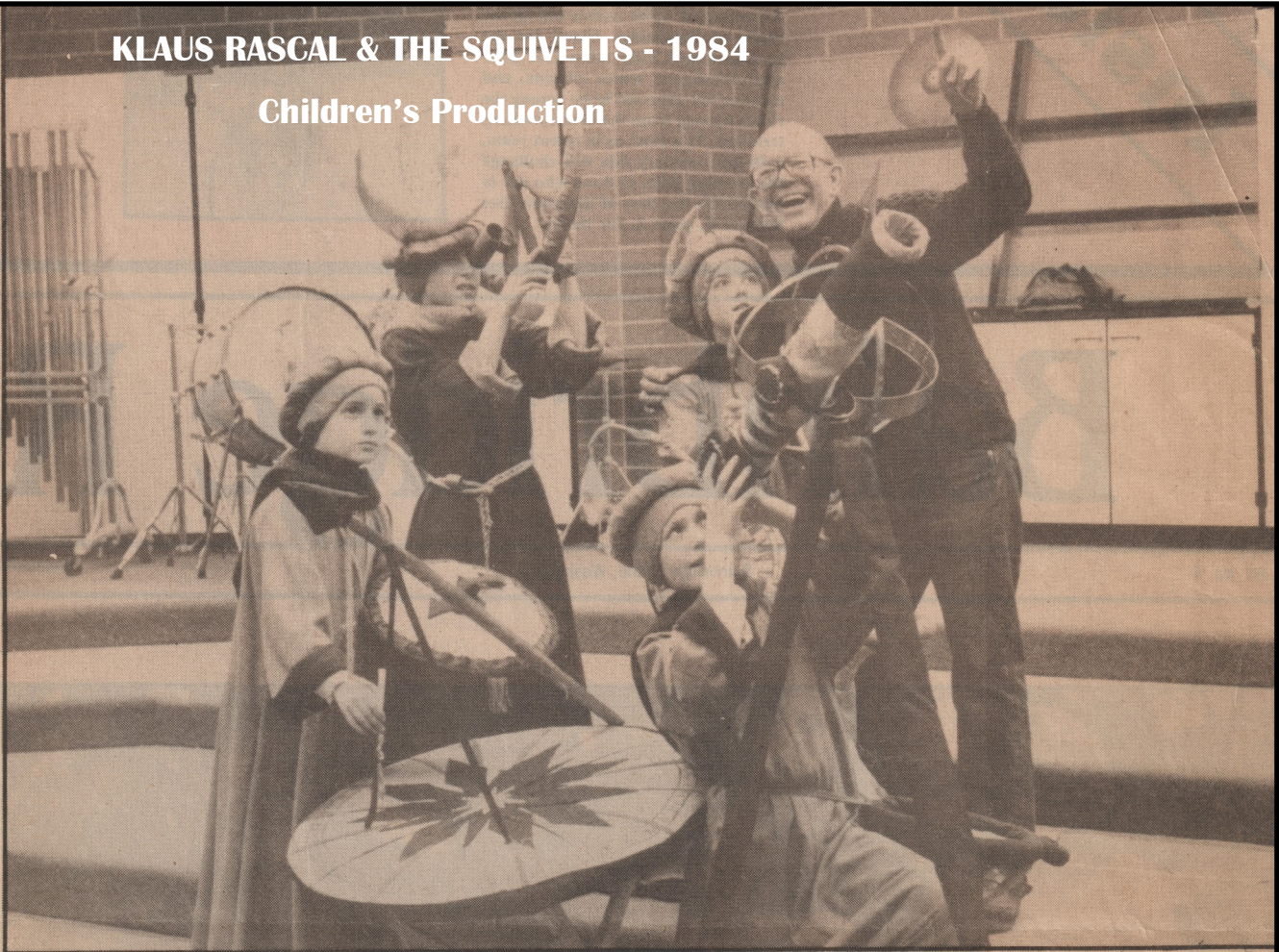
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Children's Theater director Dennis South isn't nearly as mean as he thinks he is. Why, as he positioned these actors for the upcoming "Klaus Rascal and the Squivetts, or How Schnitzeldorf Lost a Day," he ac-

tually smiled. South directs 71 children in the play which opens Saturday, March 3 and runs through Sunday, March 18.

Squivetts, Schnitzels sing praises for director

By THERESA MORROW

"Don't talk — ACT!" Dennis South yells across the room, gesturing madly.

Silence descends where moments before there were just a few murmurs that would go unnoticed by any but this particular director. Pairs of actors' eyes look at the director somewhat apologetically after this outburst, but no one seems upset: it is obviously not the first time the actors have been screamed at.

One might think that any actors — especially some that are around the age of 10 — would resent the tone of voice. But one by one, all the Squivetts, Oughtas, and Schnitzels tell how they feel about their sometimes bullying mentor. "Dennis is excellent," one little girl with a bouncing star on her head says. She looks adoringly at South and adds, "I just love him."

Then Klaus Rascal (who has another name when he's not the hero of "Klaus Rascal and the Squivetts, or How Schnitzeldorf Lost a Day,") tells his version, sounding like an actor from the Big Screen: "I've worked with Dennis for six or seven performances. He's great."

Of South's gruff moods, another

little actor says, "He has to be that way. Being a director has a lot of stress involved in it."

"I'm terrible. I'm absolutely horrible to them," South himself says in a booming voice. "But kids are a wonder. They don't see it as a personal attack. They know it's for the good of the whole show."

Dennis South is well known on Bainbridge Island not only for directing adults and children in such performances as the recent "Oliver," but also for being idolized by a large group of young actors in the Bainbridge Performing Arts Children's Theatre. He is presently working on "Squivetts," as it's affectionately called, but has a long list of credits ranging from Hansel and Gretel (he used children for walls of the house), to Peter Pan and Tom Sawyer and many, many more.

South graduated from North Kitsap High School — "I spent 10 years denying that," he jokes. After he got his Master's in Theatre from the University of Washington, he decided he would be discovered in Hollywood.

For nine months he listened to people tell him, "come back in 10 years and you'll be a character." He had a bit part in Divorce Court for TV and some in movies where, he says, you

could see a leg here and there that could be identified as his.

After that, South was a social worker for 12 years, and when he returned to Bainbridge for the second time in the 1970s, BPA grabbed him as a director. His first children's play on the island was Hansel and Gretel, and involved 140 children. He started giving children's theatre workshops in the summers, and the little actors became more and more professional.

"Squivetts" has 71 children, and South turned down 40 who auditioned. The actors don't have to have participated in the workshops, but they do learn how to conduct themselves in the theater and so are more likely to get parts, South says.

South has written all but two of the scripts the children have worked with. Those that you can pull off a shelf, he says, are so "repetitive and cumbersome. They're boring and kids are not that dumb."

Making it professional

Part of South's success, BPA's Karen Rice says, is that he "tries for professional surroundings for kids. He does not go out with makeshift sets and costumes."

Part of his success, too, might be that he knows the importance of every

part in the play. And he acts them all during a performance, behind the scenes of course. "The kids ask me why I'm so tired, and I tell them I just played 72 parts while they just had one," he says. And then too, there is the animation. South jumps around the room during rehearsal, shouts lines when an actor is too lackadaisical, and strikes poses befitting any Hollywood director. The little actors obviously love it, and him.

And that affection may be part of the secret of South's success as well. For all the yelling he does, he notices each and every actor and actress and tells them what they are doing that's right as well as what's wrong. And, in a folder with the script, he carries lots of valentines from his actors — something not many Hollywood directors could do.

Since Dennis South sounds like a kind of White Knight, it's only fair to report that there is some criticism of him from his actors. They hate the fact that he chain-smokes so badly, lighting a cigarette while holding a still smoldering one in his hand, and they let him know they don't like it. "But this is the worst thing I do," South says wistfully.

Ah, well, the stress of being a director . . .

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Children's Production



Klaus Rascal and the Squivetts
or HOW SCNITZELDORF LOST A DAY By David Peevers

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