

POINT OF NO RETURN by Alaine Beek

COMPANY BIO – Essence Productions

Essence Productions was founded by Alaine Beek in 2003 and consists of a core group of professional actors and backstage crew. They focus on 'bringing Australia's pioneering history to life through performance.' Their main source of work is through Werribee Park where they perform as the resident theatre company each weekend all year round and have done so since 2003.

Werribee Park

The two plays performed regularly at Werribee Park are *What Was That?* (performed inside the historic mansion) AND '*Down to Earth*' (performed at the historic farm). Two different stories both performed promenade theatre style. The aim of both productions is to bring our 19th century Australian pastoral history to life through engaging performances filled with comedy, drama and scary elements. The plays have achieved enormous following from all around Australia (seen by more than 15,000 patrons) and is the highest rated product on Red Balloon's 'cultural/Entertainment' category.

Shepherd Kings

The most recent production Essence Productions is working on is *Shepherd Kings* which is a drama centring around the actual Chirside family - Thomas, Andrew, Mary and their son Andrew Spence. A much grander production that tells the Chirside story and how they became one of Australia's wealthiest pastoral pioneers. *Shepherd Kings* deals with not only their achievements but their challenges, failures and how they strived together as a family. Soon to be produced at Werribee Park. It will commence performance at the historic farm then guests will be moved to the mansion where they will be seated in the main hallway with performance happening all around them.

Point of No Return

This play came about through Alaine's discovery of the Point Puer prison whilst visiting Port Arthur in 2007. She went with her then 10 year old son and imagining him having to go through what these young boys endured was both disturbing and fascinating. Further research occurred including more trips to Port Arthur and eventually the play was written. It won three top awards at the National One Act Playwright competition in 2014 (both Judge's and People's choice) and after further development was selected to be part of the Wyndham Cultural Centres 2016 theatre season. The production was highly successful and embraced by audiences. Essence Productions has created further developments for Point and in 2016 it was selected by Australianplays.org for publication for 2017. Plans are on the way for a larger tour in 2018.

For further information about Alaine Beek and the Essence Productions actors go to:

www.essenceproductions.com.au for more information on Point of No Return go to

www.pointonr.com