
Theatre: Actor takes on many characters with vocal versatility

By Nancy Snipper

Alyson Leah has a peculiar talent. Aside from being a professional actor, she makes her voice turn into dozens of different characters for radio, animation and stage.

Her ordinary voice, which is both mellifluous and earthy, completely changes as she morphs into various characters, and she's also a singer in musical theatre where her honey sweet range soars into soprano and dips into low tones.

On the international cartoon TV series, *Arthur*, she plays three-year-old Vicita.

"It's fun doing her because I've been doing Vicita since I was ten years old, and I have to maintain the same voice that I used as a ten-year-old to play a three-year old. I'm presently 25 years old. I'm still called upon to play her. The series is in its 19th season."

She was the teenage gal voice for many commercials, including an SAQ commercial that played forever. She also played a spoilt university student for Nissan and an adolescent for Bell.

The most recent one is for a Fujitsu heat pump. "My title is 'annoying teenage girl.' In that commercial, I keep complaining about how hot I am, and my voice gets whinier and whinier."

Having graduated from Bishop's University, the NDG actor's favourite haunt is the stage. "I love all forms of acting, but theatre has always been my strongest passion. I love playing comedy and character roles – any kind of role where I can be challenged in some fun way."



To date, she has performed in *Godspell*, singing her heart at the Centaur, and in its lobby – performed the leading female role in an independent children’s musical, called *Don’t Touch the Glutch*.

“I thought this was a worthy play to participate in as it addressed issues about bullying, and I love doing children’s theatre. They really respond.”

She’s performed as a Bond girl spy in the play *Done to Death* at MAI (Montréal, arts interculturels), and doubled as a twenty-year old ingénue – a mime part.

In *The Clawfoot and Hot Tub interviews* – the first play she ever co-produced – she played five different highly eccentric roles ranging in age from 25 to 40.

She also produced the play *Boy Meets Girl: A Young Love Story* for this year’s Fringe Festival. It was directed by NDGer Sarit Klein. She played Katie in this two-character show.

“It’s about two five-year olds in love with one another, but we act as adults. The dialogue reveals our age. We say things kids would say. I talk about selling Girl Scout cookies, napping with other boys and basically show my precocious nature.”

Not only does she have a golden talent, she has a heart of gold. She organized and sang in an amazing musical theatre fund raiser for ovarian cancer – a production paying tribute to her former voice teacher who passed away from the disease.

Source: Page 4 The Free Press February 23, 2016

Vocabulary

mellifluous (adj)

something that is pleasant to hear, like a voice

earthy (adj)

basic and close to nature

spoilt (adj)

alternative form of spoiled; means not correctly raised by their parents

whinier (adj)

describes an annoying, repetitive quality of a voice; comparing two voices

haunt (noun)

a location that someone visits regularly

bullying (noun)

intimidating someone

ingénue (noun)

a person who is just beginning in some role, generally a female

Questions

Question 1

What is Alyson Leah's special talent that gets her work in commercials?

Question 2

Besides being a professional actor, what other job does Alyson do?

Question 3

How long has Alyson Leah been using her voice in media?

Question 4

What does Alyson have to do in order to play a 3-year-old?

Question 5

Where did Alyson study?

Question 6

Why does Alyson Leah enjoy doing children's theatre?

Question 7

What is the play Boy Meets Girl: A Young Love Story about? Name 2 of the 4 things.

Question 8

Why does Alyson have a heart of gold?

Answers

Answer 1

She makes her voice turn into dozens of different characters for radio, animation and stage.

Answer 2

She is also a singer.

Answer 3

She's been working since she was ten years old, or fifteen years.

Answer 4

She has to maintain the same voice that she used as a ten-year-old.

Answer 5

She studied at Bishop's University.

Answer 6

She loves doing children's theatre because the children in the audience really respond.

Answer 7

1. two 5-year-olds in love with one another
2. selling Girl Scout cookies
3. napping with other boys
4. her character's precocious nature

Answer 8

She organized and sang in an amazing musical theatre fundraiser for ovarian cancer.