

When opportunity knocks – Casey Donovan page 18

FOLLOWING ON FROM THE SUCCESS OF 'THE SAPPHIRES', MULTI-TALENTED SINGER CASEY DONOVAN IS LANDING A LOT OF PRESTIGIOUS ACTING ROLES THESE DAYS.

This month, Casey will star as the singer Mama Cass in the new production 'Flower Children' – a musical about the turbulent lives of 1970s folk group The Mamas and the Papas.

Later in the year, she will also perform in her first Shakespearean role in 'As You Like It' at Sydney's Belvoir Street Theatre.

Casey says her critically acclaimed role in the musical 'The Sapphires' was a learning experience because she had to adjust to the rigours of touring and working to a tight script and schedule.



"Australian Idol fame has given me the opportunity to get out there in communities and help out kids. I was pretty much in the same position as them, wanting to do something but not knowing how to achieve it."

When opportunity knocks

"It was a massive change for me to go from being Casey Donovan on stage to being Cynthia McCrae in 'The Sapphires'. It was about getting my head around not just being able to do what I wanted when I wanted. We had a director and we had to do things the same every night.

"You have to find that 'newness' in the script to keep going when you're doing the long tours. You have to find that newness every night to keep going and keep enjoying what you're doing."

Despite the demands of the show, Casey says touring was a great experience.

"Going to places like South Korea and London, it was mind-blowing to see how people on the other side of the world reacted differently to the Australian audience. It was great to see them jump out of their seats and dance and really enjoy themselves."

Casey says she took some time out after *Australian Idol* to re-assess her life and direction.

"I got a job working in medical reception to test myself and see if music was what I wanted to do. In the end it was, and I found the love again. It was just great to take that time out.

"I think everyone should take that time out to re-assess their lives and ask themselves

Casey Donovan channels Mama Cass in her new theatre role.

if are they happy with their lives and what they're doing, and if they're not to make a change and make a change for the better. Because if I didn't go out and get a job and ask myself these questions, then God knows where I'd be.

"I am really happy that music is what I do and what I love, and until the day that I fall out of love with it then I'll keep doing it."

Casey has been working hard this year on her own show, as well as preparing for busy acting roles later in the year.

"I've been really busy getting my 'Big, Beautiful and Sexy' show to where I wanted it. This show is full of covers, but I also want to get it into people's heads that I also do original songs.

"On the back of *Flower Children*, I'll do a Mama Cass tribute show and then start rehearsals for Shakespeare for Company B Belvoir. I am playing Audrey in 'As You Like It' – I think I am a shepherd's wife."

Casey also lends her name and support to a lot of community events and organisations. She is an ambassador for APRA/AMCOS, and also an advocate for the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence.

"*Australian Idol* fame has given me the opportunity to get out there in communities and help out kids. I was pretty much in the same position as them: wanting to do something but not knowing how to achieve it. I love getting out there and helping out kids and also adults.

"A lot of adults these days are stuck in that hole of 'What am I doing?', so it is great to get out there and share my stories – to help them sing and get out on stage, teach them not to be ashamed and to give everything a go."



MAMA CASS

Flower Children
– The Mamas and Papas
Story, a new musical written
by Peter Fitzpatrick, is on at the
Theatre Works, St Kilda, Vic, from
29 August to 10 September.



Casey Donovan will star as the 60s singer Mama Cass in a new musical called *Flower Children*. It follows the experiences of the folk group *The Mamas and the Papas*. She is also rehearsing for her part in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*.

READ *When opportunity knocks* on page 18

ACTIVITY 1 BUILDING READING SKILLS

- skimming and scanning for information
- reading headings, sub-headings, text boxes and pictures
- reading for meaning
- making connections between the text and your world

There are three levels of comprehension questions:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Literal | The answer is located in one sentence in the text. |
| Inferred | You need to make links between text and graphics (such as photographs, illustrations, maps and tables) and what you already know. |
| Applied | The answer is in your background knowledge, what you already know or feel. |



Shade one bubble.

1. According to the text, Casey gained a lot of theatre experience from her role in

- As You Like It.*
- The Sapphires.*
- The Mamas and the Papas.*
- London.

(inferred)

2. In this text, how does the heading *When opportunity knocks* relate to Casey Donovan's experiences?

(applied)

3. What is the relationship between the photos and the main text?

(inferred)

4. What action are readers invited to take after reading this text?

(applied)

- go to Theatre Works St Kilda from 29 August to 10 September to see the show
- find out more about *The Sapphires*
- go to see *As You Like It*
- go on *Australian Idol*

ACTIVITY 2 LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS – SPELLING

The spelling mistakes in these sentences have been underlined.

Write the correct spelling for each word in the box.

1. She has had a lot of sucess.

2. This folows on from there.

3. She is getting some great acting rolls now.

4. She had to stick to a tight shedule.

5. She's gaining more recognishon now.

Each sentence has one word that is incorrect.

Write the correct spelling of the word in the box.

1. Audienses react differently.

2. She asked herself some hard qestions.

3. She is prepareing for the new show.

4. She has been writeing since she was young.

5. Casey is an ambasidor for APRA.

ACTIVITY 3 LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS – GRAMMAR

Shade one bubble.

1. It has her some great opportunities.

- give
- giving
- given
- gived

2. Which word correctly completes this sentence?

This is not Casey's first theatre production she is planning to star in more.

- besides
- and
- therefore
- otherwise

3. Which word or words are **not** needed in this sentence?

You can see *Flower Children* and the Theatre Works theatre in St Kilda.

- see
- Flower Children*
- theatre
- St Kilda



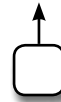
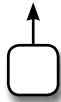
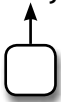
ACTIVITY 4 LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS – PUNCTUATION

Shade one bubble.

1. An apostrophe (') has been left out of this sentence.

Where does the missing apostrophe go?

Everyones jumping out of their seats and enjoying themselves.



2. Which of these has correct use of capital letters?

- "I'm going to see *flower children*," april said. "are you going too?"
- "I'm going to see *Flower Children*," april said. "are you going too?"
- "I'm going to see *Flower Children*," April said. "Are you going too?"
- "i'm going to see *Flower Children*," April said. "are you going too?"

3. Which sentence is punctuated correctly?

- Reviewers say that "the show is excellent."
- Reviewers say that the show is excellent.
- Reviewers "say" that the show is excellent.
- "Reviewers say that the show" is excellent.



ACTIVITY 5 WRITING A RESPONSE

A theatre review is persuasive writing that describes a production and makes a judgement about it.

Here's an example of a theatre review:

<p>Context historical background</p> <p>Description dialogue characters</p> <p>music</p> <p>Evaluation opinions about the production</p> <p>judgement</p>	<p><i>Flower Children: the Mamas and Papas Story</i> by Peter Fitzpatrick. Theatre Works, St Kilda, August 29. www.theaustralian.com.au</p> <p><i>Flower Children</i> is as original and impressive a piece of music theatre as you are likely to find. The Mamas and Papas story is perfect inspiration for this musical.</p> <p>The dialogue is fizzy, believable and natural. The structure is effective as band members take turns at narrating, starting with Cass, then John, Denny and sole survivor Michelle.</p> <p>Of course, none of the music in <i>Flower Children</i> is original. But the treatment of it is highly original, and remarkably illuminating. When Papa John (Matt Hetherington) presents a new song to the rest of the band, it's as if we're watching an episode of Classic Albums.</p> <p>In Aaron Joyner's confident and delightful production, there's little if any fakery. Performances that recreate the music of the 60s allow us to hear familiar music in a rare way. No amount of remastering of old recordings can match the high fidelity - the extended range, strong bass and dynamic percussion - of live performance. Here, the fidelity extends to all corners of the production.</p> <p>Tickets: \$48. Bookings (03) 9534 3388. Until September 10.</p>
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VIBE SCHOOL

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Write a REVIEW of your favourite theatre production, television program, video game or book.

Think about:

- examples, elaborations and evidence from your text to support your ideas.

Remember to:

- research your topic and plan your writing
- follow the structure of a review
- give examples to support your ideas
- write in sentences
- pay attention to your spelling and punctuation
- use a new paragraph for each new idea
- choose your words carefully to convince a reader of your opinions
- check and edit your writing so that it is clear for a reader.