

Hi all,

It's been a while since my last missive, but I have been keeping busy and I just wanted to send a note to let you all know about some of things I've got coming up.

**WHAT I HAVE DONE:**

**ACTING:**

I have a couple of shows coming up if anyone is interested - and they are all in Manhattan this time! The first is an improv show that my class is putting on at the Upright Citizen's Brigade. I have just completed Level 1 of an improv form called "The Harold", which was pioneered by Del Close, one of the all time improv gurus. I'm sure most of you don't know the name (I didn't), but the vast majority of Saturday Night Live players (past and present) studied with Del Close either in Chicago or New York. Alas he died a few years ago so I am not studying with him, but rather with one of his protégés, a very young, but competent teacher named Ari.

The show is more of a demo than a performance, but some of my fellow students are very good and it might be fun to watch. Essentially we improvise full scenes from a suggestion provided by the audience. This differs from short form (what I had been studying), which is more like Drew Carey's show "Who's Line is it Anyway?" Below is the show information. I'm pretty sure it's free.

Saturday, November 2 at 4:15pm at Upright Citizen's Brigade - 161 West 22nd St. (btwn 6th & 7th). About an hour in length.

I am also appearing in a production of Shakespeare's "TROIUS & CRESSIDA" in November. This is one of his lesser-known works, but it is quite good. It is essentially the story of the Iliad focusing on the last few years of the Trojan War. For those of you who need to brush up your Greek mythology, this war pitted Agamemnon and the Greeks against Hector and the Trojans, a conflict that started when Menelaus, the King of Sparta's queen Helen ran off with the Trojan prince Paris. You remember now? The face that launched a thousand ships? The play is unique in that it has never fit cleanly into any of the main Shakespeare buckets; comedies, tragedies or histories. It's all three actually. I play Menelaus who, despite being mentioned a heck of a lot during the play, is only a supporting character. But I am on stage quite a bit (usually brooding over the fact that my wife left me for another man) and I get a cool fighting scene.

Again, my standard caveat on this one - don't come just to see me, but if you like Shakespeare this is a good one with a pretty good cast. It is also a fairly original, era-crossing interpretation with the Trojans wearing Napoleonic period costumes and the Greeks dressed in combat fatigues. All you Shakespeare purists out there do not fret, the language has not been altered. The director works at the Metropolitan Opera. Interestingly he said what caught his eye in my case was the "War & Peace" credit on my resume which he worked on as well. See, you never know when a piece of work will eventually land you something bigger. It's all about networking! Anyway, here are the show dates. Tickets are a modest \$10.

Tuesday, November 5th thru Saturday, November 9th at 8pm and Sunday, November 10th at 3pm at the American Theatre of Actors (ATA - Chernuchin Theatre) -

314 West 54th Street. Tickets and info at Smartix (212) 206-1515 or [www.smarttix.com](http://www.smarttix.com). Also, [www.shakespeareinthewild.org](http://www.shakespeareinthewild.org). FYI...show is about 2 ¼ hours.

I have also begun to help in the establishment of a theatre company here in New York. It is called the Greenland Theatre Collective and it is the brainchild of stage director Daniel Dinero and actor/director Chad Ryan. The mission statement is to put up plays concerning social issues that do not get the attention they deserve. LONLEY PLANET was the inaugural production, which dealt with the fear of HIV and AIDS. My unsuccessful audition for this show was chronicled in HWI#8. My role in this endeavor will be as a producer helping with matters such as finding venues, fund raising and marketing and promotions. We already have a website in the works being created by icrossingdesigns ([www.icrossingdesigns.com](http://www.icrossingdesigns.com)) the guys who created my aroljahns website. It should be up soon at [www.greenlandtc.org](http://www.greenlandtc.org). Check it out. While the next play that GTC will put up will be one that I will have a principal role in (a nice benefit of being a producer!) the first production will be a musical benefit on November 18th for both an AIDS charity as well as to raise money for GTC. My friend Kandela Cox (introduced to me by a Hollywood Insider reader and good friend of mine) will be taking the stage to sing "I Know You by Heart" by Eva Cassidy and "Kissing You" by Des'ree. When I have more details on time and venue I will let you all know. It would be great if you could come out and show your support.

#### **THE JOB-JOB:**

I have been pursuing various part time assignments to help support my fledgling acting career. Most notably I have been writing reports for a company called Conference Call Notes. Several recent Columbia business school MBAs founded the company, which hires writers to record and transcribe earnings calls for all the companies in the Russell 1,000. The finished reports are then sold to investment banks or financial information services companies. At first I thought I had found the perfect part-time job. Writers work from the comforts of their own homes, set their availability schedule and get paid roughly \$100 per call. In addition, writers can choose their industry. I had chosen media and entertainment and have been writing reports on film studios (MGM) and publishing companies (Gannett). What a great way to learn about the companies in my field of interest! However, I am realizing that this type of work is one of the mundane, tedious tasks I abhorred about my Wall Street job. Listening over and over to these boring CEOs and CFOs whining about market conditions and making excuses for their piss pour results. Also, the darn things take about five or six hours to complete well so on an hourly basis we make only about \$16. But it's work. Actually if any of you are looking for temporary employment yourselves, the CCN guys are always seeking pedigreed writers. Give 'em a call.

Last week I completed my first stint as a temp for the Wall Street Services agency. They pimped me out to JP Morgan Chase for a three-day assignment covering for an assistant who was on vacation. It was a very interesting study in human nature to see how these "professionals" treated someone whom they saw as just a struggling actor temping. When they explained things to me, like how to transfer phone calls and how to use Microsoft Outlook, they spoke very slowly and suggested I write things down so I wouldn't forget. Of course I didn't tell them that there were probably a few tricks with both Outlook and the phone bank that I could have shared with them. I just nodded. It would be my little secret.

I was working for the Distributed Computer Infrastructure group within the IT department and, to be fair, they were all pretty nice to me. Many of them stopped by my desk to ask how things were going. Some asked me about my career ambitions and whether I was looking for a permanent assistant position, lamenting that in this market those spots would be hard to come by.

I did get one amusing phone call during my tour of duty. A call came in from a sales guy at StorageNetworks, a well-known Boston-based data storage service provider. He was the new sales rep for JP Morgan Chase and he was trying to set up appointments to meet with several of the big cheeses in IT including my boss Kim. He was in a panic when he called me because he had inadvertently left a message for Kim, whom he had never met or spoken to. Apparently he thought he was leaving it for one of his other IT contacts that he knew better and was begging me to erase it before Kim listened to it. The message was clearly inappropriate for a self-introduction. I politely told him that I could not do that, but that he shouldn't worry. Kim was a reasonable woman and that I would explain the situation to her and I'm sure she would understand. This seemed to calm him down a bit and he proceeded to inquire about how and what I was doing. Actually, he called back about four times that day ostensibly just to chat with me, but really to check if Kim had deleted the voicemail yet. I guess this was the natural salesman in him coming out. He now had a reason to kiss my ass and he was going for it. To be honest he was making anything but a professional first impression.

I told him that I was an aspiring actor blah, blah, blah. What I didn't tell him was that I used to be the investment banker for his company and having worked closely with the management team on the IPO and an assortment of other deals when I was at Goldman Sachs, I knew his bosses very well and in fact still keep in touch with some of them. So of course I immediately shot off an email to Paul the COO letting him know what a boob his NY based sales guy was. Paul replied that he would have him fired immediately. The moral of this story is, always be courteous and professional no matter whom you are speaking to because you never know whom they know.....

#### **WRITING:**

As I mentioned last time I have begun to pursue agency representation and a publisher for a book based on the Hollywood Insider. My friend John provided an introduction to a prominent literary agent in California who took a look at my proposal and said she was interested in the idea and that it appeared to have a built in market (actually two markets, actors and business people). However, because the Insiders would have to be rewritten in a novel form with interesting character developments, etc. she said she would have to see a few finished chapters before making any kind of commitment. Well that's encouragement enough for me and so I have begun transforming some of the more interesting segments of the Insider into flowing prose. To this end I have re-instituted "writing hour" to help discipline myself.

#### **MUSIC:**

While ZUZU is still on hiatus (both the lead singer and lead guitarist welcomed new babies (is that redundant?) into the world) I have decided to look for a singer/guitarist to form the second half of an acoustic duo to do the NYC coffee house circuit. I think this is something that I would really enjoy doing. I plan to put an ad in backstage magazine, but if anybody knows anyone who plays guitar well and can sing, let me know.

**THIS ISSUE'S STATISTICS:**

Days Since Becoming an "Actor": 474  
Number of Films: 3  
Number of TV Shows: 1  
Number of Theatre Shows: 7  
Number of Subscribers to the Insider: 159  
Website Hits: 2,580 (www.aroljahns.com)

**Mood Meter:** Mixed. While I am happy to be busy with my first Shakespeare production, I have been spending more time lately on making money to pay the rent, etc. than on my more creative pursuits. I guess this is what it is like for most actors and why so few of them succeed. They get caught up in trying to survive. I also had a rude awakening to the world of journalism. I got a call from a Businessweek journalist who was doing a story on what former wall streeters are doing in this difficult job market (some of you may have seen it yesterday). I thought it might be good press for my acting career and spent several hours on the phone telling my story. As it turns out it was really a story on bankers that have been laid off and how they cannot find jobs in finance. What I was informed would be a somewhat lengthy article about my career switch turned into two sentences about how I got laid off and couldn't find work so I had to get a job as the chess knight at Toys R US. Investigative journalism is b.s. They clearly had a story they wanted to tell and they bent the facts to fit it nicely into their story's frame. Now I know better.

**LAST ISSUE'S STATISTICS:**

Days Since Becoming an "Actor": 431  
Number of Films: 3  
Number of TV Shows: 1  
Number of Theatre Shows: 6  
Number of Subscribers to the Insider: 157  
Website Hits: 2,211 (www.aroljahns.com)

**Mood Meter:** Mixed. I am very excited about doing more film and TV, but I realize that it won't be easy to even get auditions for these roles. My agent told me plain and simple that since I don't have Yale Drama School or an MFA from NYU on my resume and I haven't been struggling at it for ten years, casting directors won't even look at me unless I am 100% appropriate for the part. Well, I was raised on "if there's a will, there's a way" and I am confident that I will make it happen for myself without the acting pedigree.