

Please can you help a young, ambitious Australian, achieve her acting dream?

RUBY VADIVALOO 18, HAS BEEN ACCEPTED into the prestigious American Academy of Dramatic Arts in Madison Avenue, New York. This is a huge achievement and an extraordinary honour as few Australians make it to an audition, let alone be accepted.

With your help, Ruby will follow in the footsteps of stars including Anne Hathaway, Grace Kelly, Kim Cattrall and Spencer Tracy all of whom studied at the oldest acting school in the English-speaking world. Ruby now needs help to finance this dream.

Ruby's story: I've always known that I would end up acting. It's been my passion as long as I can remember. But for a while performing really terrified me. It still does. I feel sick as I'm waiting in the wings. I have to sit down with my head between my legs, but once I'm on stage it's like I'm no longer myself, my character somehow is strong enough to cope and I'm simply the conduit for the story. I love performing, and that terror somehow brings something more to the role.

Since childhood I have been single-minded about my career. Every decision I have made around school subjects and extra curricular activities has related to dance, drama and voice training. My sole parent mum, Amanda, has

been amazing, paying for classes for years and driving me all over Melbourne. She has never pushed me but has always sought to support my dream. I have performed in countless productions but my favourite, by far, was the character of Rizzo in Grease.

Last year, during year 12, I auditioned for Australian performing arts colleges and to schools in the US. My chances felt like a million to one. Then my focus was firmly directed on my year 12 exams and the mad terror of the performance assessments in music, drama and dance. In late December, I found out I had received a perfect score for my year 12 drama performance and was invited to audition for Top Acts.



“

I simply have to act. It's always been my dream. When I was six, I started writing musicals while lying on my top bunk. I'd write a script, song lyrics, the choreography – the whole production would be happening in my head. They'd go for hours. Thirteen years later, an extraordinary opportunity has come my way.

”

Then in February I received an invitation to audition, in Melbourne, for the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. To my utter amazement, I've been accepted and invited to begin a Certificate of Advanced Studies in Acting at the Academy on Madison Avenue, New York City, in September this year.



LEFT TO RIGHT: RIZZO IN GREASE, AN AIR HOSTESS WITH THE MOSTEST AND GRACE IN ANNIE.



Thank you so much for helping me make my dream come true

Giving back

In recent years, I have enjoyed being a leader and mentor to younger women. While at Melbourne Girls' College in Richmond, I was the Arts Captain and led many productions involving younger students. I saw how performance could raise the self-esteem of girls during their vulnerable teenage years. I want to share the thrill of daring to try, to help them find their voices, to discover strength, wonder and confidence. I've been blessed to have some great female role models in my life – my mum, the incredible arts teachers at Melbourne Girls' College, four aunties who have supported by quest and a very strong older sister! I'd like to be a role model and mentor for young Australian girls coming along behind me.

Funding the dream

Ruby needs to raise \$50,000 for the first year and the same for a second year. The American Academy of Dramatic Arts charges \$AU30,000 per year in course fees. Accommodation on campus is \$AU20,000

Ruby is working in retail by day and in a call centre at night in an endeavour to earn as much as possible by September when the American course begins. Ruby's mum, Amanda, is doing all she can to attract funds, saving through efficient budgeting and working in the medical research sector.

How can you help?

There are several ways you could help Ruby make it to New York to study. You could be a sponsor or patron, or perhaps you'd like to make a tax deductible donation? Either way, you can call **Ruby on 0422 027 557** to discuss your preference or, **email Ruby_vad@hotmail.com** You can make a pledge at **www.pozible.com** (crowd funding website)

References:

Ms Amanda Place, mother: 0411 204 526 | **Ms Lindy Mummé**, Melbourne Girls' College Head of Drama: 03 9428 8955 | **Ms Nia Holdensen**, Melbourne Girls' College Director of Leadership: 03 9428 8955 | **Ms Anne Corry**, Melbourne Girls' College Director of Performing Arts: 03 9428 8955.