

The Sally Show

A play written by Robert Jackson

Original concept by Robert Jackson and Gino Hipolito

This play is a totally over-the-top modernisation of Acts 17 – Paul’s missionary journey to Athens. We performed it at a North regional service in 2002, to coincide with a sermon by Miles Mason from Acts 17. Gino and Doug stole the show, and it was hilarious. The point of the play is to follow God’s truth, and not be swayed by the philosophies of the world. I scoured Acts 17 for ideas, especially in the Message translation. Stan is the modern-day Epicurean, and Lantra has some affinities with the self-denying Stoics. We had three rehearsals during the week leading up to the play.

Cast Notes

- ✚ **Sally:** A talk-show host.
- ✚ **Stan Stelverson:** An arrogant movie star and author of “I Followed My Heart”.
- ✚ **Lantra Lami:** A self made mystic, and author of “I Found Myself Again”.
- ✚ **Paul:** An Evangelist.
- ✚ **Stage hand:** The guy who keeps holding up the “applause” sign.

Original Cast

- ✚ **Sally:** Sarah Hartwig
- ✚ **Stan Stelverson:** Gino Hipolito
- ✚ **Lantra Lami:** Doug Elliott
- ✚ **Paul:** Robert Jackson
- ✚ **Stage hand:** Matt Nizeti

Scene: There is a one-person lounge and a 3-seater lounge, arranged like on a talk show. Also a table, water, ornaments, lamps, and stuff to make it look like a studio. Most importantly, mock-up copies of “I Followed My Heart” and “I Found Myself Again” should be made and displayed prominently on the table. Sally on the one-seater.

Crowd cheers as Sally enters.

Sally: Hi everyone. I’m Sally, and as you all know, this is my show – the Sally Show. Hi, hi. Today, we have a privilege – we have an amazing honour. All I can say about our line up of guests is that they are men who have been on a spiritual journey. Journeys that have taken them around the world – journeys that have given their lives whole new meaning. How can I introduce my first guest? You know what, there’s something on my heart. It’s embedded deep in my heart. There’s something I want to share with every one of you. Do you want to know what it is?

Crowd: Tell us Sally! Please!

Sally: OK, I think you just have to know: My life has been changed. Really, it really

has. My heart has been touched. I've just been, been, so moved, so touched. All I can say is that I've been transformed. Do you want to know why? I know you do. It's because last week I was just shopping, you know, and I was asking myself "Where's the inspiration in this life?, how can I be inspired?" And then, it was amazing, I just saw the most incredible book, and it changed my life. I read it and read it, it touched me; it moved me so much. It's called "I Followed My Heart", and we have its world renowned author joining us on the show today! Please welcome our first guest, *Stan Stelverson*!!

Stan enters, overdressed, in a suit, with jewellery, blowing kisses and urging on the applause. Stan and Sally air-kiss.

Sally: (smiling) Stan.

Stan: Sally.

Sally: Stan!

Stan: Sally!

Sally: I'm just so honoured. I'm so amazed. I can't believe it's you; thank you so much for coming.

Stan: No, honestly, it really is me. I know, I know, it is amazing that I'm here.

Sally: All I've been doing is telling people how much your book has changed my life. How did you do it, how did you find such inspiration?

Stan: Well, it's like the title says, I just followed my heart. Here, let me read the title for you: I-FOL-LOW-ED-MY-Y-HAR-ART.

Sally: Well, Stan, you've reached international fame, you're movie, "The Longings of the Heart" has broken records, your TV show has reached new heights, and just last week, you were the celebrity voice-over for the Simpsons.

Stan: That had always been one of my dreams. I've always admired Bart Simpson – he's such a courageous guy. You know, he's the kind of guy – he wants something, he goes and takes it! I like that. But can you believe it?, his voice is done by a girl! I mean, what's the deal with that?

Sally: (intrigued, then confused) So what is your secret to success?

Stan: Well, I've always known that if we want something with all our hearts, we should just go ahead it get it. It's like that Alpha Romeo I bought last week. I woke up in the morning, I looked in the mirror and I said "Stan Stelverson! You are as beautiful as ever, but you know what, you need that Alpha Romeo". You see, I realised how much I wanted one, so I went out with my gold card and I BOUGHT it. There are so many people who wouldn't have had that courage, who would have just gone without. And that's so sad... to not have something you want – it, it's just awful. We need to follow our heart wherever it leads us.

Sally: Wow – wow. You, see that's amazing. That's exactly the message which the people of today need.

Stan: I agree. I've come to learn that we have many needs – spiritual needs. It's not just the cars. It's the fame as well, you know? And it can't just be about you. I mean, last week I called my mum and dad and I said "Mum and dad, why don't come over and stay the weekend at my harbour-side mansion, and this time – you don't have to pay! It's on me!" See? It's by listening to our heart that we find the guidance for all our needs to be met.

Sally: You talk about spiritual needs, is that because we are spiritual beings?

Stan: Absolutely, we are all spiritual. It's not like we need to try, we just are – that's the way we're made. Take me, for instance, I'm a deeply spiritual person. I

listen to my heart – that’s the spirit within guiding me. So many people today feel lost and confused – if only they realised that they had a spirit within them to lead them!

Sally: You see, this is the kind of thing that just speaks to my heart. How is it that we follow the spirit within?

Stan: Well, you really need to read the book, it’s only \$29.95 at any bookstore, I even brought along 50 signed copies for the audience members today. But remember I prefer credit card payments – so here’s what you need to do – (he grabs the book and brandishes it toward the audience) you need to get your gold card, or your master card, or your American express card and slam it down and say “I need to start following my heart!”. Here, just to prove how powerful this book is, let me demonstrate.

Stan gets Sally to hold the book out martial arts style. He focuses and then does an outrageous karate chop at the book, but it doesn’t break!

Stan: You see, this book is powerful! But basically, what we need to remember is that our spirit is happy when we’re happy. Whenever we desire something, that’s our spirit talking.

Sally: Well, I could just go on and on about this, but I’m afraid we just don’t have time. I’d now like to introduce my second guest today, author of another amazing book. All I can say is that I read this book, and I was never the same again. It’s called “I Found Myself Again”, by Lantra Lami.

Lantra walks in humbly, in a cloak, with a staff. He sits closest to Sally.

Sally: Lantra, I’m so moved, I’m so touched that you were able to make it here. Why don’t you tell the audience why you’re here today.

Lantra: (Profoundly) Men and women of the... upper world. I have come among you today to share my eternal wisdom. I have journeyed through the forests and hills, across mountains and valleys, and have found the wisdom of the ancients. I will not be among you for long, I must return soon to my contemplation.

Sally: Hmm, hmm. Yes. And this really is what you’re new book’s all about, isn’t it?

Lantra: Yes, it describes one man’s journey, *my* journey, to finding himself again.

Sally: I’m just dying to know – how do we find ourself?

Lantra: Well, that’s just it. We must... die. Die to the world. We must... shun – we must... turn our backs to this world – we must escape it, we must flee to a land that is all our own, only there will we find our true selves.

Sally: So, does this take days of meditation?

Lantra: No! That is barely enough. We must walk, we must flee, we must lose ourselves to find ourselves. Once we escape this world, we are left only with ourself, and then we find ourself. And only then. In the jungle. (He is constantly gesturing and acting this out) In the desert plains. In the deepest seas. We must go and dwell with the tiger, with the rattle snake, with the emu. We must escape this world (He acts out walking through a portal, but then pats back the world as it follows him through) to free ourselves.

Sally: Hmm, yes, your book spoke to me so powerfully. I remember just last month when I took to trip to London, and that’s exactly what happened. So this journey that you speak of, it too is a spiritual journey, right?

Lantra: (Breathes deeply. Then, gesturing:) The spirit is far, far away... perhaps one

day, after generations, you could possibly glimpse it, only then could you call your journey a spiritual one. Until then, all we can seek to do, is *be*.

Sally: Hmm, wow, and that's exactly what I've been doing since I read your book. And now we have a preacher who has been travelling the world, spreading some unusual new ideas. By all accounts, his message has been very controversial, and I'm just so looking forward to hearing him more on this matter. His name is... Paul, Paul of Tarsus.

Paul enters and sits closest to Sally.

Sally: So, what is this new teaching you are presenting?

Paul: Well, firstly I wanted to thank you for having me on your show – it's an honour to be here.

Sally: You ought to be grateful.

Paul: (Moves right along) I must say that I've been fascinated by the things that you've been discussing today. I can see how much all of you are focused on spiritual things, rather than just what is seen, and that's great, really.

Stan: It is, isn't it.

Sally: Don't mention it.

Paul: (Continuing) In fact, as I was reading "I Followed My Heart", I found that it said "People of the world, the spirit is within you", and that's so true, because God is not far from any of us. (Stan gives a huge smile) The God who made the world and everything in it doesn't live in custom-made shrines – it's not like he needs us to run errands for Him, as if He couldn't take care of Himself! Far from it, He made the entire human race from scratch, and made the earth hospitable for us to live in. It's God who gives us life – every breathe we take is a gift from Him.

Stan: Yes, it's us who are in need.

Paul: Exactly! But later on your book, Stan, you say here on page 93, (Reading) "Of course, we can never know this spirit within us, we can only hear its voice, the voice of is-ness." Well, what you write of as something unknown, I'm here to tell you about, so that you can know who you're dealing with.

Lantra: No!

Paul: I'm sorry?

Lantra: We must never presume to speak of such things.

Paul: But Lantra, look at the inscription on the title page of your book: "From spirit we emitted, to spirit we shall return." We should not think of God as someone who is distant and unknown. He made this incredible universe so that we would yearn for Him – and not just by groping around in the dark. He doesn't play hide-and-seek with us, we live and move in Him, He wants us to find Him! His message is before all of us, the saving message that we need a radical life-change – we need to embrace God's truth. (To Lantra) It doesn't mean running off to the desert, (To Stan) and might not make you rich. All I can promise is that the reward will be eternal. God has set a day when this whole world will pass away, the entire human race will be judged, and everything set right. A man is truly wise if he gives up what he can't keep in order to gain what he can't lose.

Sally: Well, that's amazing. I know what every person's feeling right now. Energized, amazed, empowered – all this and more. Honestly guys, all of our spirits have been touched by your words today. I think that every single one of us has had a glimpse of how incredible life can be if we walk by the spirit within.