

Like mother, like daughter

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Shannon (left) and Kimberley Phelps are a local mother-and-daughter acting team that has performed on stage together and, as is the situation now, in two different productions. Shannon is in Mountain Pointe High School's *Odd Couple* and Kimberley is performing in the play *"Puss in Boots and other Cat Tails"* at the Mesa Arts Center.

Like the familiar phrase “like mother, like daughter,” Kimberley and Shannon Phelps truly are two of a kind.

The mother-daughter duo are local actresses, who have been keeping busy starring in various performances around the Valley. Both have been involved in the performing arts since a young age. Kimberley has been modeling and acting since graduating high school at Tempe High School, and her daughter, Shannon, a 15-year-old sophomore at Mountain Pointe High School, has been modeling and acting since age seven.

They recently accomplished their longtime dream of working together on stage. Last February, the two performed in Stagework’s production of *Gooney Bird Greene and her Amazingly True Stories*. With performances at the Herberger Theater Center and the Mesa Arts Center, the two women were not only able to showcase their individual talents, but were able to experience the joy of working closely together as fellow cast members.

“When we got on stage, we both became professional. Then after the performance, I had my little “mom” moment ... Shannon made me so proud,” Kimberley said of her daughter.

Shannon, although still young and just beginning her career in the acting world, draws her inspiration from her mother.

“When I see my mom on stage, it’s a sweet moment. We bonded,” she said.

In September, Kimberley participated in the Almost Famous Film Festival (A3F) Actor/Actress Challenge. The challenge called for actors to prepare a short monologue or scene from a script and perform it in the MyStudio Recording Studio located in Scottsdale Fashion Square mall. The state-of-the-art studio uses green screen technology and professional audio capturing tools to make the actors actually look as if they are performing on a Hollywood set. Kimberley delivered a heartfelt scene from *The Nanny Diaries* and won the spot of audience favorite and fourth place overall. To her, participating in the competition was just another way for her to get some good experience.

“The studio is a great tool for an actor to use because you can get instant results of yourself. I want one of those in my house!” she said. Her winning video is available to watch at www.mystudio.net.

Although she loves the theater, Kimberley says her goal is to push into the film and voice-over aspect of work.

“It’s a little bit more of a challenge for me. I like to give life to characters off of the stage,” she said.

Kimberley is presently on tour with another Stagework’s show, *Puss in Boots and other Cat Tales*. The troupe went to various schools around the Valley to perform in front of children and is currently playing at the Mesa Arts Center until Nov. 8.

The relationship between Kimberley and Shannon is a rare thing. Besides the obvious mother-daughter relationship, being actresses, going through the same challenges and working together on stage has brought them closer than they could have ever imagined. Kimberley recalls how excited she was to discover that her daughter wanted to pursue an acting career also.

“When she was young I didn’t tell her I was an actress because I wanted her to choose for herself. But when she told me that’s what she wanted I said, ‘Are you sure?’ She was, and I was so thrilled,” Kimberley said.

Like her mother, Shannon discovered her passion for performing at a young age; 6 years old to be exact.

“I saw *Cats* at Gammage and I completely fell in love with it,” she said.

Since then, Shannon has been performing in plays, modeling in catalogs and magazines, and expanding her resume as much as any busy 15-year-old can. Performing with her mom was one of her most memorable acting experiences, but Shannon admits she had her trepidations at first.

“I was worried that she was going to try and tell me what to do, but she treated me very professionally, like another cast member, which I liked,” she said.

Shannon is currently starring as Mickey the Cop in Mountain Pointe’s female production of *The Odd Couple* tonight, Nov. 6, at 7 p.m. The male version was last night. The drama department decided to make a competition out of it, so whichever version of the play garners the best results and most tickets will perform the Saturday, Nov. 7 slot as well.

After high school, Shannon said she hopes to attend Yale, Julliard or New York University to pursue a degree in fine arts and take her acting experience further.

“I would love to do film when I’m older. I like both theater and film, it’s kind of hard for me to decide right now,” she said.

For Kimberley, simply watching her young daughter follow in her footsteps is reason enough to be proud.

“She really is a seasoned professional,” she said.

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