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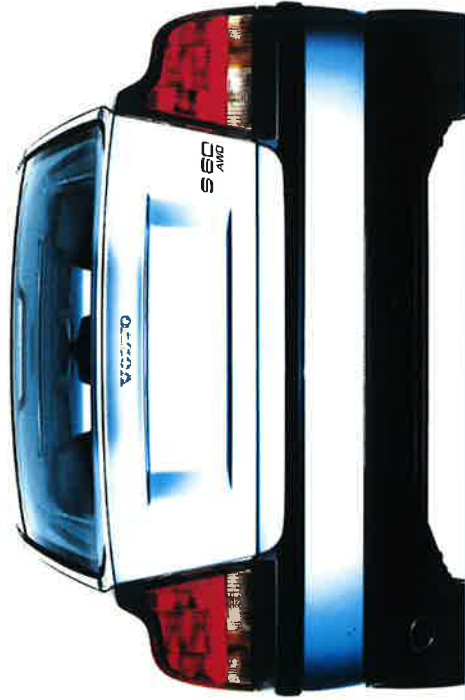
waiting for godot

Samuel Beckett





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Welcome to the Auckland Theatre Company's production of *Waiting for Godot*, considered by many to be the most important play of the twentieth century.

Any performance starring Michael Hurst or Raymond Hawthorne individually is a "must see", let alone to have these two great actors on stage together.

Yet what makes the Auckland Theatre Company such a success is the depth of its behind-the-scenes talent as well. It is this collective commitment to excellence by all involved in each production that makes

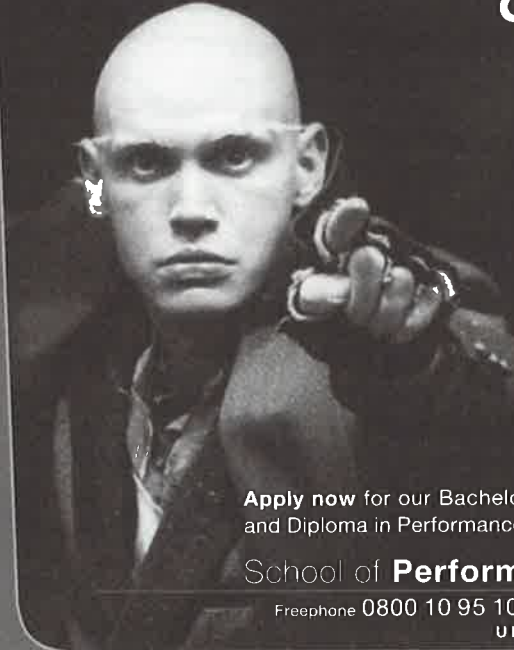
the Company such a powerful force in Australasian theatre.

So take a bow too the other Godot stars - Director Colin McColl, Designer John Parker, Lighting Designer Bryan Caldwell and Costume Designer Elizabeth Whiting.

And now on with a performance that will undoubtedly prove well worth the waiting.

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FROM THE PRODUCER

ATC and Volvo welcome you to the ninth and penultimate production of the 2002 Decadence Season: Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.

In a millennial poll conducted by London's Royal National Theatre, Beckett's masterwork was voted Most Significant Play of the 20th Century. First performed in 1953, it redefined dramatic boundaries for the artform and its audience, changing them both forever. From the great plays of Pinter, Albee and Stoppard to most contemporary playwrights, Godot's inspiration and influence can be clearly discerned. Indeed, in form and content, Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* is a total Godot homage. Today, Beckett's contemplation on the nature and point of human existence seems startlingly modern and richly comedic. Many meeting the play for the first time will be surprised by its humour: boisterous, wicked and absent of 'holiness'. Because he writes for actors with a profound understanding of their processes and a love for their theatrical milieu, Beckett provides a solid literary foundation while allowing space for interpretation. This is the hallmark of a classic that affirms Godot's place in theatre's history and assures its place in theatre's future.

We are privileged to present Godot through the combined talents of a world class creative team: onstage, Michael Hurst, Raymond Hawthorne, Paul Barrett, Jon Brazier and, making his ATC debut, Jake Howie. Backstage: Director Colin McColl, Designer John Parker, Lighting Designer Bryan Caldwell and Costume Designer Elizabeth Whiting.

We pay special tribute to actor Willy Plumb, who died on 11 September 2002. Willy appeared in ATC's *The Wind in the Willows*, *Amy's View*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan* and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*. *Waiting for Godot* is dedicated to the memory of a talented, loving and much-loved young man: an old soul, forever young.

We thank you for your company throughout ATC's tenth anniversary season and look forward to seeing you at the finale: Richard's O'Brien's *The Rocky Horror Show*. It will be quite a night!

Yours in anticipation

Simon Prast

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REPUBLIK 107

PLAYWRIGHT

SAMUEL BECKETT



Samuel Beckett was born near Dublin, Ireland, on April 13, 1906 (although his birth certificate says May 13th) into a Protestant, middle class home. His father was a quantity surveyor and his mother worked as a nurse. At the age of 14 he was sent to Portora Royal School, in Northern Ireland, the same school that Oscar Wilde attended. He went on to enter Trinity College, Dublin, in 1923. Here he studied Modern Languages, and developed a taste for the theatre of Pirandello and O'Casey, and the cinema of Charlie Chaplin, Laurel and Hardy, and the Marx Brothers.

Graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Modern Language in 1927, Beckett moved to Paris, where he taught. It was in Paris that he met James Joyce, who is said to have profoundly influenced him. As well as aiding Joyce in various ways, Beckett wrote

an essay, his first short story, began studying Descartes, translating Italian poetry, and writing his own poetry. In 1930, one of his poems *Whoroscope* was published, and he wrote the critical volume *Proust*.

Beckett went on to travel throughout Ireland, France, England and Germany, writing poetry and stories along the way. Eventually, around 1937, Beckett settled down in Paris, where he met Suzanne Dechevaux-Dumesnil, who would become his wife. During World War II Beckett joined the underground movement in Paris to resist the Germans. He remained in the resistance until 1942 when several members of his group were arrested. Beckett was forced to flee with his wife to the unoccupied zone. He only returned in 1945 after Paris was liberated from the Germans. In the 5 years that followed, Beckett reached the pinnacle of his writing career, producing *Eleutheria*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Endgame*, the novels *Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, *The Unnamable* and *Mercier et Camier*, two books of short stories, and a book of criticism.

In 1953 *Waiting for Godot* premiered in Paris at the Theatre de Babylone. It went on to open in London and in Miami, where it met



WAITING FOR GODOT

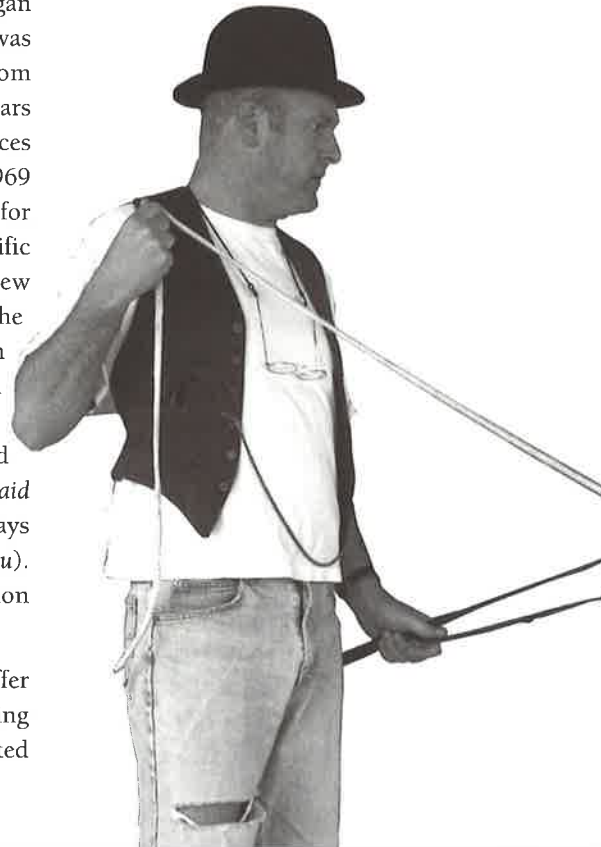


with a hostile audience. However, it was reopened successfully in New York.

In 1957 *Endgame* premiered (in French) at the Royal Court Theatre in London to negative reviews. The following year an English version of the play reopened at the Royal Court. In 1958 Beckett also began *Krapp's Last Tape*. In 1959 Beckett was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Trinity College. Over the next 10 years Beckett went on to write many more pieces of work, including *Happy Days*. In 1969 Beckett was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. The 1970s were a less prolific period, though he managed some new projects, including television plays for the BBC, and continued to interest himself in productions of his theatrical works. In 1977 he began the autobiographical *Company* and in the early 1980s crafted more prose pieces (including *Ill Seen Ill Said* and *Worstward Ho*) as well as more plays (including *Rockaby* and *Ohio Impromptu*). His last major work, the prose fiction *Stirrings Still*, was written in 1986.

In the same year, Beckett began to suffer from emphysema. Moved into a nursing home, his deteriorating health prevented

him from writing, and his efforts were given instead to translation of his works. Suzanne died on 17 July 1989, and Beckett followed her on 22 December. He is buried in Montparnasse Cemetery in Paris.



THE PLAY WHERE NOTHING HAPPENS. TWICE.

Vladimir (Didi) and Estragon (Gogo), two tramps, are discovered on a lonely road, awaiting the arrival of someone named Godot. While they wait they banter, argue, engage in comic business reminiscent of vaudeville or silent comic films, and try to establish whether this is the spot and time at which they have been directed to wait. Two more men arrive: tyrannical Pozzo, who at first Didi and Gogo mistake for Godot, and his slave, Lucky, who is made to dance and to 'think' for their entertainment. After Pozzo and Lucky depart, a boy appears to announce that Godot cannot make it after all, but that he will surely come 'tomorrow'. The curtain falls as the two tramps contemplate suicide.

Act Two opens on the same scene, but the bare tree of Act One has sprouted a few leaves. Didi and Gogo still wait, again distracted by Lucky, who is now dumb, and Pozzo, who is now blind. They leave and the boy arrives again, with a message from Godot. The tramps say they will leave but go on waiting with a mixture of hope and fear.

ESTRAGON: LET'S GO.

VLADIMIR: WE CAN'T.

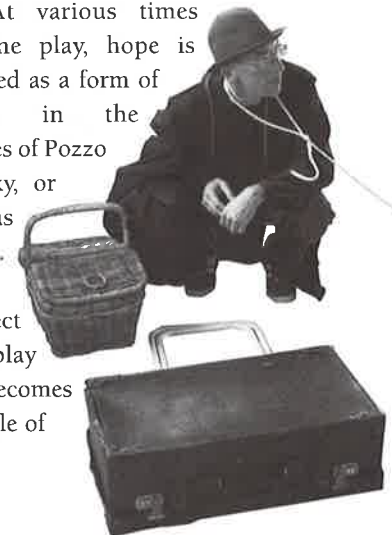
E: WHY NOT?

V: WE'RE WAITING FOR GODOT.

Waiting for Godot was originally written in French in 1949 and entitled *En Attendant Godot*. The translation of the title is actually While Waiting for Godot, which is more appropriate, as the play concerns what happens while waiting, rather than the actual identity or emergence of Godot.

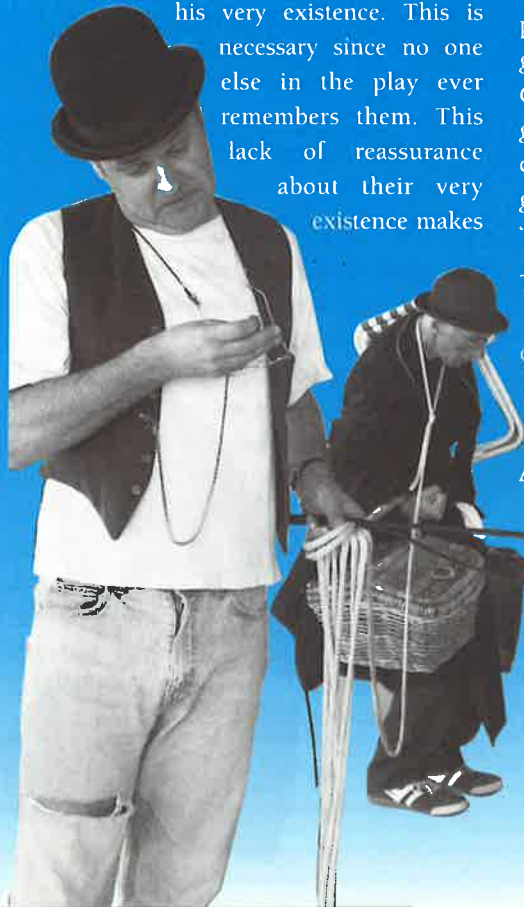
The play revolves around Vladimir and Estragon and their pitiful wait for hope to arrive. At various times during the play, hope is constructed as a form of salvation, in the personages of Pozzo and Lucky, or even as death.

The subject of the play quickly becomes an example of



how to pass the time in a situation which offers no hope. Vladimir and Estragon's mutual desire to pass the time also addresses the question of why they stay together. Both admit to being happier when apart but they continue their relationship, as they need one another to pass the time.

Another reason that the two tramps stay together arises from the existentialism of their forgetfulness. Since Estragon cannot remember anything, he needs Vladimir to tell him his history. It is as if Vladimir is establishing Estragon's identity by remembering for him. Estragon also serves as a reminder for Vladimir of all the things they have done together. Thus both men serve to remind the other man of his very existence. This is necessary since no one else in the play ever remembers them. This lack of reassurance about their very existence makes



it all the more necessary that they remember each other.

POZZO: WHO IS GODOT?

Who, or what, is Godot? Despite its obvious similarity to the word God, Beckett stated that if he had meant Godot to mean God, he would have said so.

While the identity and meaning of Godot is never revealed, many words in French that begin with g-o-d have associations and connections with the play.

For example, *Godillot* is French for 'hobnailed boot' or 'shapeless old shoe', and *godasses* are military boots. The references in the play to the Englishman getting drunk on the way to a brothel are connected to the play as *godaille* is to go pub-crawling and *goddam* is French slang for an 'Englishman'. *Goder* is slang for having an erection, and *godiller* (a scull, or small racing boat) has the connotation, 'to fornicate'. In addition, a *godenot* is 'a misshapen little man', 'a joker' or 'a juggler's puppet'.

The word *godet* is the name of a popular French cognac and means 'a wooden bowl' or 'mug', which could be referenced to the bowl of a pipe (as smoked by Pozzo) or a small glass of wine (which Pozzo drinks).

Another point of note is that in French, adding the suffix 'ot' to a name turns

it into the diminutive, which has endearing connotations (for example, in France Charlie Chaplin is referred to by the affectionate nickname of 'Charlot'). In the case of Godot, to add 'ot' to the word 'God' gives the idea of a figure who is 'a minor god', rather than an Almighty being.

ESTRAGON: WHAT AM I TO SAY?

V: I AM HAPPY.

E: I AM HAPPY.

V: SO AM I.

E: SO AM I.

V: WE ARE HAPPY.

E: WE ARE HAPPY. [SILENCE] WHAT DO WE DO NOW, NOW THAT WE ARE HAPPY?

Waiting for Godot is sometimes considered a part of the Theatre of the Absurd. Absurdist drama shares in the rejection of realism that began at the end of the nineteenth century and directed the experiments of symbolism, expressionism, and surrealism. These movements claimed that realism represented merely the surface of experience, ignoring the presence of profound realities that could be evoked in freer, more subjectively organised forms. The major plays of the Theatre of the Absurd question the integrity of both objective and subjective visions of experience. Absurd theatre discards the

concepts of drama, chronological plot, logical language, themes and recognisable settings. In turn, the characters are nothing more than the superficial roles they assume. In *Waiting for Godot*, Vladimir and Estragon are no more psychologically complex than they appear to be. They sustain their identities within the forms of behaviour that habit has imposed on them. They have no other experience and perceive no other reality.



ATC PRESENTS

Waiting for godot

SAMUEL BECKETT

Vladimir	Raymond Hawthorne
Estragon	Michael Hurst
Pozzo	Paul Barrett
Lucky	Jon Brazier
Boy	Jake Howie

Director	Colin McColl
Designer	John Parker
Lighting Design	Bryan Caldwell
Costume Design	Elizabeth Whiting
Stage Manager	Teresa Sokolich
Operator	Nick Burlace
Props Master	Stafford Allpress
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This is the ninth production of the Volvo
10th Anniversary Season of Decadence.
Waiting for Godot previewed on Thursday
3rd October 2002.

Waiting for Godot lasts approximately 2
hours and 30 minutes, including a 15
minute interval.

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ESTRAGON

MICHAEL HURST



Michael has been described as a theatre animal. After an eight year hiatus, during which he gained world wide recognition as 'Iolaus' in the American television series *Hercules – The Legendary Journeys*, he returned to the stage in 2001 as 'The Player' in ATC's production of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, and found himself once again "at home". Michael's previous acting credits include the title roles in *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, Arnold Bechoff in *Torch Song Trilogy*, Mozart in *Amadeus*, the Emcee (twice) in *Cabaret*, Koko in *The Mikado*, Barry in *Ladies' Night* (twice), Macbeth in *The Threepenny Opera* and the Gregorus in the ground-breaking Inside Out Theatre Production of *The Holy Sinner*. Michael's most recent role with ATC was as James Joyce in *Travesties* in July.

Directing credits include *Ladies' Night*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Tempest*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Cabaret*. Michael also directed many episodes of both *Hercules* and *Xena*, the feature film *Jubilee* and the one hour television comedy drama *Love Mussel*, starring the late, great Kevin Smith.

VLADIMIR

RAYMOND HAWTHORNE



Raymond is one of New Zealand's most senior and prolific theatre practitioners in most areas of the discipline. In 1955 he became an actor with the New Zealand Players, under the direction of Richard Campion, acting with the company for two and a half years. Granted a New Zealand Government Bursary in 1957, Raymond studied acting at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (R.A.D.A.), London. After graduating, he remained in the United Kingdom for a further thirteen years working as an actor/singer and director/teacher, returning to teach acting and to direct at R.A.D.A. In 1971 Raymond returned to New Zealand and worked for two years at the Mercury Theatre under the directorship of Anthony Richardson, and in 1974 instigated the formation of Theatre Corporate of which he was Director for

eight years. An appointment as Director for the National Opera of New Zealand followed in 1982, and in 1985 he commenced his seven-year tenure as Director of the Mercury Theatre. 1992 saw him establish his own acting studio "The Actors Space" of which he was Director for Five Years. During this period, and since, he has worked as a freelance director and actor, and in November 1997 was appointed Head of Directing for Screen and Live Performance and Screen Arts, UNITEC, a position he still holds.

Raymond has acted in Auckland Theatre Company's productions of *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*, *Oleanna*, *Travels with My Aunt*, and *The Judas Kiss* (Best Actor 2000). Raymond's most recent involvement with ATC was as director of the July 2002 production of *Travesties*. Raymond's other ATC directing credits are *Lovelock's Dream Run*, *Angels in America*, *Three Tall Women*, *The Herbal Bed*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Wind in the Willows*, *Cabaret* and *Into the Woods* (Best Production 2000).

In the 2000 Queen's Birthday Honours, Raymond was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) for Services to the Theatre.

POZZO

PAUL BARRETT



Having worked in theatre for over 20 years, Paul has many stage credits to his name. Paul's most recent work includes appearing in Auckland Theatre Company's production of *Noises Off* earlier this year. Previous appearances for ATC include *Art*, *Foreskin's Lament* and *Masterclass*. Paul was also seen recently as Oswald in *Leah* for the New Zealand Actors Company at the Wellington Festival.

As a musical director, Paul has recently worked as an associate director for a tour of *Chicago*. His past work in musical directing includes *Sweeney Todd*, *She Loves Me*, *Gypsy*, *The Boys From Syracuse*, *Big River* and *Little Shop of Horrors*.

His film and television work includes the acclaimed short feature *Signing Off*, *Cleopatra 2525*, *A Crack in Time (Cloud 9)* and two series of *McPhail and Gadsby* (TVNZ). His most recent television work was in Series 2 of *Being Eve* and *Shortland Street* for South Pacific Pictures.

Paul has taught musical theatre and voice at a number of performing institutions and has recorded over 400 voice-overs for television commercials, corporate work and documentaries.

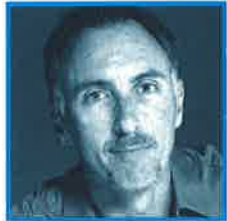


LUCKY

THE BOY

DIRECTOR

JON BRAZIER



A graduate of the NZ Drama School, class of 1982, this is Jon's second appearance with Auckland Theatre Company having previously appeared in 2001's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*.

Other theatre work includes roles in *Richard III*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Tempest*, *Middle Age Spread* and *Black Comedy*. On film Jon has appeared in *A Death in the Family*, *Heaven*, *Crush*, *Ready to Run* (Disney), *Eye of the Storm* (USA) and *Scarflies* (Best Supporting Actor 2000). He also has numerous television and radio credits.

THOUGHTS ON THE PLAY

This 'Lucky' is for Willy Plumb who's life, spirit and death taught me much. Arohanui.

JAKE HOWIE

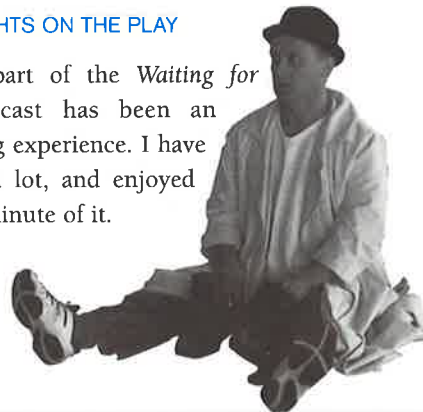


Jake's passion for theatre and film began in 1998 when he joined a professional drama school, *Aspiring Young Actors*, directed by the inspirational Jan Saussey.

Since then he has appeared in many productions, including *A Midsummers Night's Dream*, *Our Country's Good* and *Oklahoma*, plus many other plays for his school, Avondale College. he has also appeared in several television commercials.

THOUGHTS ON THE PLAY

Being part of the *Waiting for Godot* cast has been an amazing experience. I have learnt a lot, and enjoyed every minute of it.



COLIN McCOLL



Leading New Zealand theatre director, Colin co-founded Taki Rua Theatre in 1983. He was Artistic Director of Downstage Theatre in Wellington, 1984 – 1992 and has directed many premiere productions of New Zealand plays, the most recent of which was Victor Rodger's *Ranterstantrum* for the NZ Arts Festival. Colin has considerable reputation for his innovative treatment of classic plays – particularly the works of Chekhov and Ibsen – and has directed for many leading New Zealand and Australian theatre companies, the Norwegian National Theatre and the Dutch National Theatre. His Wellington production of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* won him Director of the Year accolade in the 2000 Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards. Colin also received the Best Director award at the recent ATC Audience Awards for ATC's 2001 production of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*.

For ATC Colin has also directed *Daughters of Heaven*, *The Seagull*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Serial Killers*, *Skylight* and *Honour*. Television directing credits include *Shortland Street*, *The Tribe* and *Atlantis High*. Most recently Colin directed NBR NZ Opera's *The Marriage of Figaro*.

DESIGNER

JOHN PARKER



John gained an M A degree in Ceramics from the Royal College of Art in London in 1975, was Head of Design Theatre Corporate from 1983-86 and was Resident Designer Mercury Theatre from 1986-89.

A freelancer since 1989, John's theatre work includes *The Holy Sinner*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Chess*, *Pack Of Girls*, *Lovelock's Dream Run*, *Romeo And Juliet*, *The Contest*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Good Works*, *Chess* (For The Australian Tour 1997), *Twelfth Night*, *F.I.L.T.H.*, *Assassins*, *Eugenia*, *Tusitala*, *Waiora*, *Amy's View*, *Cavaleria Rusticana / I Pagliacci*, *The Book Club*, *Cabaret*, *Art*, *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof*, *Serial Killers*, *Into The Woods*, *Decadence*, *On the Razzle*, and *Chicago*.

Most recently John designed the set for ATC's *Noises Off* and for NBR New Zealand Opera's *The Marriage of Figaro*.

John has also designed for The Louis Vuitton Ball and The America's Cup Ball. He was also Installation Designer for Bendon's *Next To Nothing*, *Bellsouth Pharaohs* and *Precious Legacy* for the Auckland Museum.

John has been awarded a Waitakere City Millennium Medal for services to the Community.



LIGHTING DESIGNER BRYAN CALDWELL

Bryan's first design was for Inside Out Theatre's *The Lover and Beloved* at the Mercury Theatre in 1987. Since then Bryan worked on numerous productions for the Mercury Theatre and Inside Out Theatre. After 1992 Bryan lit over 40 productions for independent companies, dance, and commercial events, and for the Watershed Theatre.

Since 1988, Bryan has collaborated with designer Tracey Collins on *Alice In Wonderland*, the installations *I Had a Thought* and *Our Name is Object* at Artspace, Auckland, and co-conceived and designed *Viva Verdi!* for NBR NZ Opera in 2001.

Bryan's numerous designs for ATC include *Hair* (Best Lighting Design 2001), *The Blue Room*, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (Best Production 2001), *Wit* (Best Lighting Design 2000), *Art*, *Cabaret*, and *Twelve Angry Men* (Best Production of the Decade). Bryan has lit *La Boheme*, *Cavaliere Rusticana*, *I Pagliacci* and *Aida* for Opera NZ, *A Way of Life* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for NZ Actors Company as well as work for Inside Out Productions, *This Is It!* Auckland Millennial Celebrations, The Louis Vuitton Cup Ball, *So Far* in Aotea Square, and the arrival of the America's Cup at Cowes, Isle of Wight.



COSTUME DESIGNER ELIZABETH WHITING

Elizabeth has worked with NBR New Zealand Opera, Auckland Theatre Company, Royal NZ Ballet, Human Garden, Douglas Wright, Auckland Ballet and Black Grace.

Most recently Elizabeth designed the costumes for Auckland Theatre Company's productions of *Stones in his Pockets* and *The Bellbird*, and NBR New Zealand Opera's *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Falstaff*. Elizabeth has also been costume designer for ATC's productions of *Hair*, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, *The Blue Room*, *Into the Woods* and *Cabaret*.

THOUGHTS ON THE PLAY

Waiting for Godot is an intriguing play. Each creative involved with the piece tends to see a different facet of the playwright's original vision, which they bring to the production.

I see the costume designer's role as facilitating this ambiguity. Nothing must be overstated but the characters need the depth of a past history to make the dilemma of each personality non-verbal.

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS | J D SALINGER | JACK KEROUAC

BRUCE HOPKINS
MICHELLE LANGSTONE
STAN WOLFGRAMM

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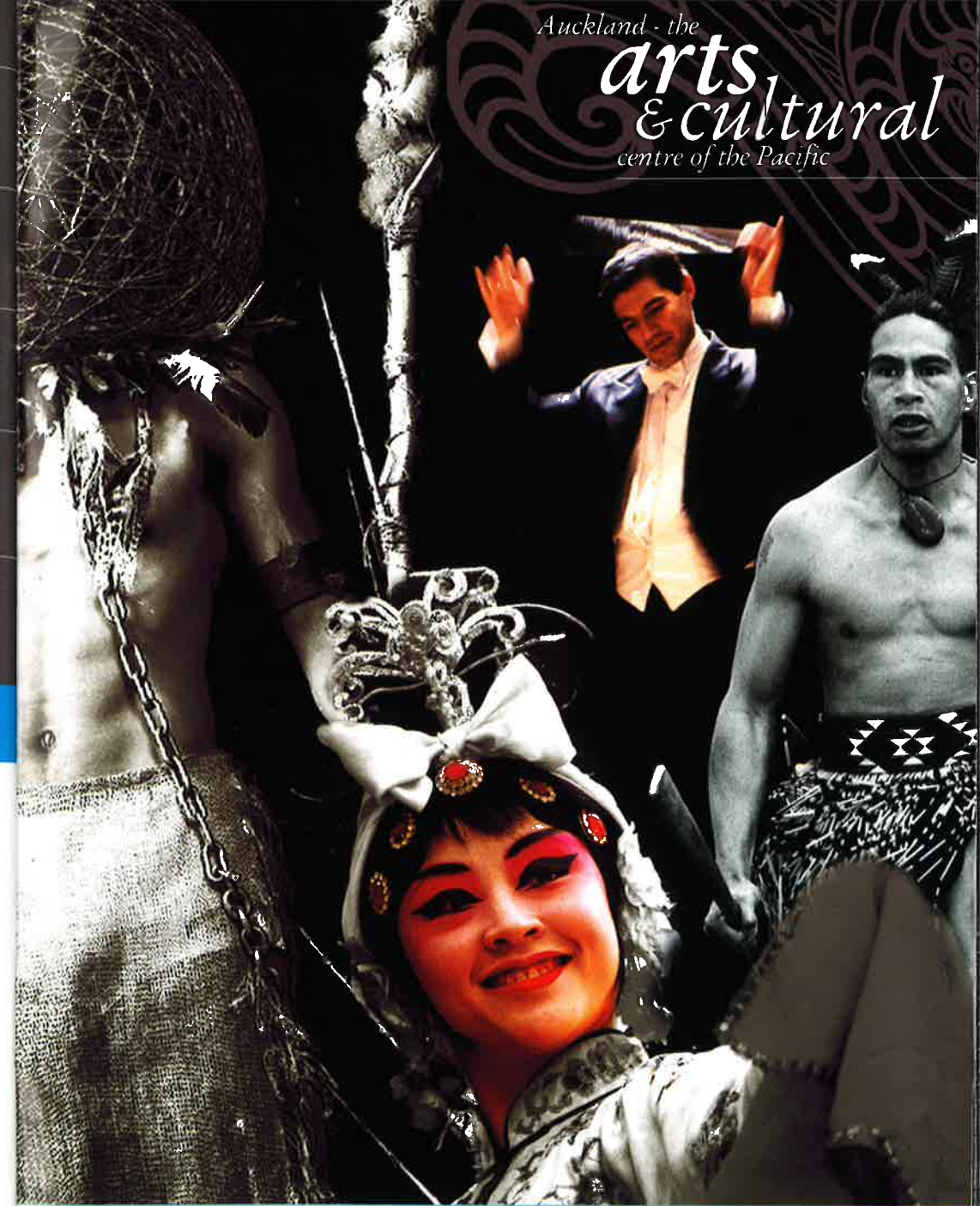
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