

OTHER

BY JON
ROBIN BAITZ

DESERT CITIES



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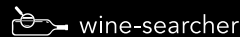


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From the ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Dysfunctional families have been at the heart of American drama since Eugene O'Neill's *LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT* exploded onto the New York stage in the late 1950s. There's a direct line from O'Neill through Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams, Edward Albee to Tracey Letts' *AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY*.

With *OTHER DESERT CITIES*, playwright Jon Robin Baitz adds a new twist to American family drama by including politics with the personal. The play is bookended by the Vietnam War and George W Bush's (Operation: Shock and Awe) Iraq invasion. The Wyeth family are estranged as much by politics as deeply buried family secrets, creating a story where political divides and emotional chasms make for intriguing and richly themed drama. Even the play's title (which refers to a highway sign outside of Palm Springs) also alludes to events in the Middle East (in other desert cities around the world), and the fear that permeates the home of Polly and Lyman Wyeth parallels the mood of America post 9/11.

It has been a great pleasure discovering *OTHER DESERT CITIES* with a cast of this calibre. My love and thanks to them for their sense of inquiry and great talent. Big thanks as well to my design team, Rachael Walker, Phillip Dexter, Lucy Jane Senior and Adrian Hollay, and to our sterling ATC production team.

Enjoy.

Colin

Colin McColl
Artistic Director, Auckland Theatre Company

OTHER DESERT CITIES

BY JON ROBIN BAITZ

CAST

Polly Wyeth — Sarah Peirse

Lyman Wyeth — Peter Hayden

Brooke Wyeth — Hera Dunleavy

Trip Wyeth — Adam Gardiner

Silda Grauman — Elizabeth Hawthorne

CREATIVE

Direction — Colin McColl

Set Design — Rachael Walker

Costume Design — Lucy Jane Senior

Lighting Design — Phillip Dexter MSc

Sound Design — Adrian Hollay

PRODUCTION

Technical & Production Manager — Paul Nicoll

Company Manager — Fern Christie-Birchall

Stage Manager — Natalie Braid

Technical Operator — Thomas Press

Lighting Programmer — Rachel Marlow

Toi Whakaari Intern, Directing — Jane Yonge

Dialect Coach — Susan Ronn

Props Master — Natasha Pearl

Set Construction — 2Construct

OTHER DESERT CITIES is the third Auckland Theatre Company production for 2014 and opened on May 8 at Maidment Theatre. *OTHER DESERT CITIES* is approximately 120 minutes including a 20 minute interval. Please remember to switch off all mobile phones, pagers and watch alarms.



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Iraq Timeline

A timeline preceding the Christmas holiday in which the action of the play takes place, reveals controversy over the war in Iraq, including questionable intelligence sources, staged events, vast amounts of American dollars poured into the effort, and thousands of U.S. soldiers dying for a cause disputed on both sides of the aisle.

These conditions could be argued to have been much like those of the Vietnam War some thirty years before, and set the stage for tension and strife within the politically divergent Wyeth family.

March 19, 2003: Bush launches invasion of Iraq with "Operation: Shock and Awe."

April 1, 2003: Private First Class Jessica Lynch recovered by U.S. forces. What the Pentagon framed as a heroic rescue was later revealed to have been staged.

May 1, 2003: WMD rationale agreed on for bureaucratic reasons, "*The truth is that, for reasons that have a lot to do with the U.S. government bureaucracy, we settled on the one issue that everyone could agree on which was weapons of mass destruction as the core reason [to go to war].*" [Paul Wolfowitz, May, 2003]

May 29, 2003: Bush: "*We found weapons of mass destruction.*"

July 11, 2003: Condoleezza Rice: Admits doubts about Iraq intelligence were not communicated to Bush "*All that I can tell you is that if there were doubts about the underlying intelligence in the NIE [National Intelligence Estimate], those doubts were not communicated to the President.*"

April 28, 2004: Images of horrendous abuse and torture of Iraqi prisoners by Americans at Abu Ghraib are revealed.

May 11, 2004: Video released showing Nicholas Berg, an American contractor, being beheaded by Iraqi militants.

August 27, 2004: Bush acknowledged for the first time that he made a "*miscalculation of what the conditions would be*" in postwar Iraq [Reuters, 27 August, 2004]

September 7, 2004: Death toll of U.S. soldiers in Iraq reaches 1,000.

September 16, 2004: U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan declares Iraq war illegal.

October 7, 2004: Iraq did not have WMD. Saddam Hussein did not possess stockpiles of illicit weapons at the time of the U.S. invasion in March 2003 and had not begun any programme to produce them, a CIA report concludes.

**"I was sittin' in a crummy movie with my hands on my chin
Oh the violence that occurs seems like we never win
Love and mercy, that's what you need tonight
So, love and mercy to you and your friends tonight."**

- Brian Wilson

CAST

Sarah Peirse (*Polly Wyeth*)

Sarah is one of New Zealand's most respected and awarded actors and directors. Theatre work includes: TRIBES, POOR BOY, ENLIGHTENMENT, MOLLY SWEENEY and THE HEIDI CHRONICLES (Melbourne Theatre Company); THE BUSINESS and GETHSEMANE (Belvoir); FURY, POOR BOY and DEAD FUNNY (Sydney Theatre Company); THE ROSE TATTOO, THE SECRET RAPTURE, SOUTH PACIFIC, A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE and HAY FEVER (Mercury Theatre); MOTHER COURAGE, HAMLET, MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL, PIAF, JACQUES BREL, TOTAL ECLIPSE, CABARET, THREE SISTERS, GULLS, ROOTED, FANSHEN and AS YOU LIKE IT (Theatre Corporate).

Sarah's feature films include the Australian films THE ILLUSTRATED FAMILY DOCTOR and THE ART OF DROWNING, the New Zealand films HOTEL HITLER, ARRIVING TUESDAY, THE HOBBIT TRILOGY, HOPES & DREAMS OF GAZZA SNELL, RAIN, HEAVENLY CREATURES and THE NAVIGATOR, and the English film UNCONDITIONAL LOVE.

Her television credits include Australian shows OLD SCHOOL, SPIRITE, CITY HOMICIDE, G.P., WATER RATS, FABLE,



MURDER CALL and FLYING DOCTORS, New Zealand programmes AFTERSHOCK, THE CHAMPION, COUNTRY G.P., INSIDE STRAIGHT, A WOMAN OF GOOD CHARACTER and BLISS: A STORY OF KATHERINE MANSFIELD, and the English show MURDER ROOMS.

As director, Sarah has brought productions to Auckland Theatre Company, Mercury Theatre and Theatre Corporate stages in New Zealand, and the State Theatre Company of South Australia.

Peter Hayden (*Lyman Wyeth*)

Peter Hayden has recently returned to the North Island, having spent many years in Dunedin working between his 'twin' passions of drama and documentary film making.

Peter has produced, directed, written or presented many science and nature documentaries for New Zealand and international audiences.

Screen drama roles include THE GOVERNOR, CLOSE TO HOME, BEYOND REASONABLE DOUBT and THE FIRE-RAISER by Maurice Gee. He was awarded Best Supporting Actor in the goldmining tale ILLUSTRIOUS ENERGY, and starred in road movies ARRIVING TUESDAY and SHAKER RUN. In FOOTROT FLATS, he voiced villain Irish Murphy and Cooch, the 'greenie'.

In theatre, Peter appeared recently at The Basement in MOTEL, by April Phillips. In Wellington he starred in Roger Hall's A SHORTCUT TO HAPPINESS, David Hare's THE VERTICAL HOUR at Circa and THE RAFT by Carl Nixon at Downstage.

His recent appearances at the Fortune theatre Dunedin include: the war veteran comedy HEROES, CALENDAR GIRLS and Roger Hall's BOOK ENDS and A SHORTCUT TO HAPPINESS, as well as THE TRUTH GAME by Simon Cunliffe, and Tom Scott's, THE DAYLIGHT ATHEIST.

Peter is greatly looking forward to working with The Auckland Theatre Company team for the very first time.





Hera Dunleavy (*Brooke Wyeth*)

A graduate of Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School, Hera has worked for all of New Zealand's professional theatre companies.

Highlights include THE MASTER BUILDER, WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?, PROOF, TOP GIRLS, THE BLUE ROOM, and for Auckland Theatre Company UNCLE VANYA, GOD OF CARNAGE, THE CRUCIBLE, AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY, CALENDAR GIRLS and more recently MIDNIGHT IN MOSCOW and PANIORA!

Elizabeth Hawthorne
(*Silda Grauman*)

Elizabeth Hawthorne is one of New Zealand's most talented and respected actors. Her Auckland Theatre Company credits include; THE GLASS MENAGERIE, MARY STUART, THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST, THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES, DOUBT, UP FOR GRABS, SERIAL KILLERS, VITA AND VIRGINIA, THE PLAY ABOUT THE BABY, THE BELLBIRD, A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE, MASTERCLASS and THE GRADUATE. Other theatre highlights include AS YOU LIKE IT and THREE SISTERS.

Amongst Elizabeth's many film credits are 30 DAYS OF NIGHT, UNDERWORLD 3, JUBILEE, THE FRIGHTENERS, SAVAGE HONEYMOON, THE LAST TATTOO, ALEX and THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE.

Television experience includes SHORTLAND STREET and SPIN DOCTORS. Elizabeth's film and television accolades include a Nokia Film Best Supporting Actress Award for her role in SAVAGE HONEYMOON (2000) and an AFTA Award for Best Comedy Performance for SPIN DOCTORS (2003).

In 2001, Elizabeth received an ONZM for Services to The Theatre in the Queen's Birthday List.





Adam Gardiner (*Trip Wyeth*)

Originally from Wellington, Adam has produced and performed with various theatre and dance companies. His first production with Auckland Theatre Company was in 2003 with performances in PLAY 2.03, NEW GOLD DREAM, and LADIES NIGHT. He has worked for the company on numerous productions and in various capacities since then, his most recent appearances being MIDNIGHT IN MOSCOW, BLACK CONFETTI, and IN THE NEXT ROOM (OR THE VIBRATOR PLAY).

This year Adam has performed in 360 - A THEATRE OF RECOLLECTIONS, completed filming a new series of AGENT ANNA, and will next be appearing in SUNDAY ROAST for Silo.

"It has been a real treat to be working on such a good script, with a great cast, director and design team. Any time Colin says there is an opportunity to work with the likes of Elizabeth Hawthorne and Sarah Peirse, I'm in. Just try and stop me."

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CREATIVE TEAM

Jon Robin Baitz – *Playwright*

Jon Robin Baitz is the author of a number of plays, including *THE SUBSTANCE OF FIRE*, *A FAIR COUNTRY*, *TEN UNKNOWN*S, *MIZLANSKY/ZILINSKY*, *THREE HOTELS*, and *THE PARIS LETTER*. He is a Pulitzer Prize finalist, Drama Desk winner, Humanitas winner, a Guggenheim and an NEA Fellow.

Mr. Baitz created the ABC drama *BROTHERS & SISTERS*, and has written for *WEST WING*. He also adapted his play *THE SUBSTANCE OF FIRE* for the screen, as well as the screenplay for the Al Pacino movie, *PEOPLE I KNOW*.

Currently Mr. Baitz is writing and producing a mini-series for HBO, entitled *CHENEY'S WAR*, about the selling of the Iraq Invasion by the Bush administration. He is a founding member of Naked Angels theatre company, and on the faculty of the New School's graduate drama division.



Colin McColl – Direction

Colin has directed for the Norwegian National Theatre and the Dutch National Theatre, as well as leading New Zealand and Australian theatre companies, and is the only New Zealand director to be invited to present his work at the official Edinburgh Festival. His production of HEDDA GABLER, played there to great acclaim in 1990 and was also presented at the Ibsen Festival, Oslo, the Covent Garden Festival, London and the 1991 Sydney Festival.

Colin has also won Best Director at the Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards several times - including for his 2002 production of WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?

His many productions for Auckland Theatre Company include: ANNE BOLEYN, MIDNIGHT IN MOSCOW, LORD OF THE FLIES, AWATEA, A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM, IN THE NEXT ROOM (OR THE VIBRATOR PLAY), CALENDAR GIRLS, ON THE UPSIDE DOWN OF THE WORLD, MARY STUART, AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY, THE POHUTUKAWA TREE, CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF, THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES, WHERE WE ONCE BELONGED, END OF THE RAINBOW, THE CRUCIBLE, HATCH OR THE PLIGHT OF THE PENGUINS, DOUBT, DISGRACE, THE DUCHESS OF MALFI, EQUUS, GOLDIE, WAITING FOR GODOT, SERIAL KILLERS, THE SEAGULL, ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD and UNCLE VANYA.

Opera directing credits include QUARTET (New Zealand International Arts Festival 2004),



LA BOHEME (Wellington City Opera), THE ITALIAN GIRL IN ALGIERS, THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO and THE PRODIGAL CHILD for the NBR New Zealand Opera. In 2009 he remounted his production of THE ITALIAN GIRL IN ALGIERS for the Scottish Opera.

In November 2007, Colin was honoured for his artistic achievements and excellence at the eighth annual Arts Foundation of New Zealand Laureate Awards and was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in June 2010.

Rachael Walker – Set Design

With a passion for both set and costume design, Rachael has spent the past 13 years specialising in Theatre Design.

For Auckland Theatre Company, her works include POLLY HOOD IN MUMULAND, ANNE BOLEYN, KINGS OF THE GYM, THE GIFT, IN THE NEXT ROOM (OR THE VIBRATOR PLAY), CALENDAR GIRLS, GOD OF CARNAGE, WHO NEEDS SLEEP ANYWAY?, END OF THE RAINBOW, THE TUTOR, THE BACH, THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES, PLAY 2 and PLAY 2.03.

Theatre highlights for Silo are ANGELS IN AMERICA, MIDSUMMER, PRIVATE LIVES, THE BROTHERS SIZE, LOOT, HOLDING THE MAN, BETRAYAL, THE CUT, LOBBY HERO, SOME GIRL(S), THE CASE OF KATHERINE MANSFIELD, UNDER MILK WOOD and GLIDE TIME.

Rachael's designs were also seen in A NUMBER, THE RETURN and PROOF (A Lethal Set), BALM IN GILEAD, THE DINING ROOM, JACQUES BREIL IS ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN PARIS, THE THREE SISTERS, TOP GIRLS, CLOUD NINE, MACBETH, SCENES FROM THE BIG PICTURE, MEASURE FOR MEASURE, SONS and THE CRUCIBLE (Unitec) and ALADDIN (Auckland Festival 03). She also had fun designing the set for Tim Bray's Royal Jubilee Performance of HAIRY MACLARY in 2012.

Rachael was the 2008 URBIS Best Stage Designer.





Lucy Jane Senior

– Costume Design

"Nothing's wrong with your shirt tail out if you are gardening. Showing an appreciation for time and place are reflected first in your appearance, it's often what leaves a lasting impression as well. Personal grooming and style are your calling card wherever you go." A quote easily attributed to Polly Wyeth and on replay in Brook Wyeth's sub conscience as she packs her bags for Palm Springs!

Lucy had fun designing costumes for this privileged family who reside in stylish Palm Springs and fashionable New York. Two cities that Lucy holds dear and where she worked as a respected stylist for 12 years. She now lives and works in Auckland as a stylist for advertising and has worked for many years styling Auckland Theatre Company advertising shoots.

Although it is Lucy's debut as a costume designer, it seemed a straight forward brief to hold up the proud standards of Polly and Lyman Wyeth, while their own flesh and blood torture them with all things modern.

Phillip Dexter MSc

– Lighting Design

Phillip's previous lighting designs for Auckland Theatre Company include: ANNE BOLEYN, LORD OF THE FLIES, MIDNIGHT IN MOSCOW, THE GIFT, A SHORTCUT TO HAPPINESS, IN THE NEXT ROOM (OR THE VIBRATOR PLAY), CALENDAR GIRLS, MARY STUART, POOR BOY, LE SUD, EQUUS, THE BLONDE THE BRUNETTE AND THE VENGEFUL REDHEAD, DOUBT and UP FOR GRABS.

Phillip works regularly for all the major theatre companies in New Zealand. Recent productions include: GOD OF CARNAGE, FOUR FLAT WHITES IN ITALY and ROCK 'N' ROLL (Circa Theatre, Wellington); DON JUAN IN SOHO and LUCKY NUMBERS (Fortune Theatre, Dunedin); LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT and OLIVER! (The Court, Christchurch); THE GRADUATE, DRACULA and THE GOAT (Downstage, Wellington); AT THE WAKE, THE MOTORCAMP and STOCKCARS (Centerpoint Theatre, Palmerston North); LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR and TURANDOT (NZ Opera).

While based in London, Phillip's international work included designs at Donmar Warehouse, The Globe, Hampstead Theatre, The Royal Opera House - Covent Garden, and Opera Conservatory - Royal College of Music.



Phillip is director of Limeburner Design Ltd (www.limeburner.co.nz), which specialises in theatre and architectural lighting design. Training includes a Master of Science in light and lighting UCL, London. Product design includes lighting instruments for film recently used on the studio components of AVATAR and THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE

Adrian Hollay

– Sound Design

Adrian has been working as a musician and sound designer since 1999. He has composed and recorded numerous soundtracks for theatre, dramas, animation films and documentaries, in New Zealand and in his native Germany. He has made the music and sound design for Auckland Theatre Company's productions of ANNE BOLEYN, THE GLASS MENAGERIE, THE GIFT and BADJELLY THE WITCH.

Since 2006 Adrian has been employed by Radio New Zealand as a Music Producer and Recording Engineer. His area of expertise is in recording and engineering predominantly classical music. In New Zealand he has extensively recorded the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra and the NZ Opera.

In 2012 Adrian was awarded the New Zealand Radio Award for 'Best Technical Production of a Studio or Outside Broadcast Recording' for his recording of the APO's performance of Gustav Mahler's Symphony No.9.

Adrian's formal training includes a Master of Arts in Sound Design and Sound Recording from the University of Auckland.



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Waterfront Theatre Project

With the recent exciting announcement of the \$1.5 million contribution from New Zealand Lottery's Significant Projects Fund, a home for Auckland Theatre Company is set to become a reality. Consequently, this month we undertook the important task of selecting a contractor to lead the construction of the Waterfront Theatre Project.

The Process

Four contractors were asked to submit tenders by 1 April with the guidelines that each bid would be assessed on

factors such as approach, understanding, methodology, and company track record and reputation. These were handed to the Contractor Evaluation Panel, made up of nine of the project's stakeholders, designers and architects, for assessment.

We are happy to announce, following an extensive selection process, Hawkins Construction has been engaged as the preferred contractor to lead the build of the Waterfront Theatre Project. Hawkins has over six and half decades experience and has worked on projects such as

the Auckland Museum Grand Atrium, Auckland Art Gallery and the Viaduct Events Centre and will be lead by Gary Walker, Hawkins Construction's Auckland Regional Manager.

Hawkins is now working closely with the project team to finalise the construction cost and other aspects of the project before the contract is let. Once it is determined there is sufficient funds secured to commence construction, a request will be submitted to Auckland Council to release their confirmed grant. This will lead to an official start date which is expected to be in the middle of the year.

Donate Now

While the project continues to gain momentum we are still very much looking for additional funding to support the costs of the building and as such urge you to become an active supporter of this innovative project. Join the new theatre's Founders Club (more information over the page), 'Take a Seat' in the state-of-the-art auditorium or simply go to waterfronttheatre.co.nz to donate or find out more. All support is gratefully received.



Artists Impression Credit: Gordon Moller

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The Founders Club is a group of highly committed people who are passionate about securing this new theatre for Auckland. In recognition of their investment in this visionary project, they are afforded a number of benefits, including:

- Name recognition in the new theatre in perpetuity
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Joining the Founders Club offers you a unique opportunity to be involved with creating this world-class performing arts venue as a legacy for Auckland. The levels of investment for this exclusive membership are as follows:

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We would be delighted to welcome you into this select group of supporters playing a vital role in ensuring the success of this project. If you are interested, please contact Linden Tierney on 09 309 0390 ext. 272, linden@atc.co.nz.

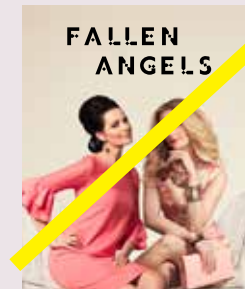
The Waterfront Theatre Trust is a registered charity and donations are eligible for a tax rebate. Donations can be paid in installments over a period of time to assist financial management or to maximise tax effectiveness.

For more information on the project, or to make a donation, please visit www.waterfronttheatre.co.nz

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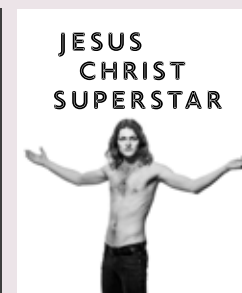
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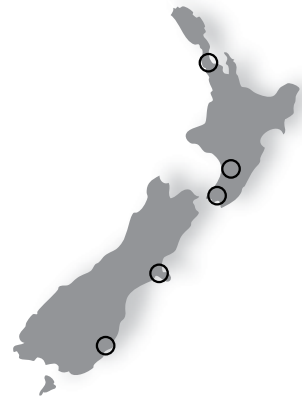
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WHAT'S ON IN THEATRES AROUND THE COUNTRY?



AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY

Once on Chunuk Bair

by Maurice Shadbolt
Maidment Theatre

12 June – 5 July

Vivid and visceral, profound and uplifting, *Once on Chunuk Bair* is a searing tribute to the sacrifice a generation made. It is a tale of tragedy, heroism and heartbreak and, a century after the outbreak of World War One, stands as a masterpiece of remembrance.

SILO THEATRE

Auckland

Sunday Roast

by Thomas Sainsbury
Q Theatre Loft

6 – 26 June

Love, sibling rivalry and very sharp knives. Riffing on the seven deadly sins, playwright Thomas Sainsbury has created a wicked and wild satire which totally skewers traditional Kiwi family values.



CENTREPOINT THEATRE

Palmerston North

Kings of the Gym

by Dave Armstrong

3 May – 14 June

Washed up rugby flanker Laurie still dreams about the good old days when feminism was a dirty word. Thankfully, his job as a PE teacher at the low decile Hautapu High means never having to step into the politically correct world of the 21st century!



CIRCA THEATRE

Wellington

Equivocation

by Bill Cain
Circa One

24 May – 21 June

London 1605. Shakespeare (Shag) is ordered to rewrite the 'true' story of Guy Fawkes and the treasonous Gunpowder Plot - as a crowd-pleasing play. While the plotters wait in prison, he must decide if he would rather write a lie and lose his soul, or write the truth and lose his head.



THE COURT THEATRE

Christchurch

A Midsummer Night's Dream

by William Shakespeare
Court One

31 May – 21 June

Step inside the magical mythical world of fairies, Athenians and amateur actors, where the course of true love runs anything but smoothly.

A Midsummer Night's Dream is one of Shakespeare's most accessible masterpieces and arguably his greatest comedy.

FORTUNE THEATRE

Dunedin

Souvenir

By Stephen Temperley

17 May – 7 June

A heartfelt, wickedly funny, true story about the limits of self-perception, *Souvenir* flashes back to the musical career of Florence Foster Jenkins, a New York socialite and tone-deaf diva.



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