2025 Season

**MARY: The Birth of Frankenstein**

Presented by Auckland Theatre Company

He pou atua, he pou whenua, he pou tangata. Ko Waitematā te moana. Ko Waikōkota te whenua. Ko Te Pou Whakamaharatanga mō Māui Tikitiki a Tāranga te tohu o te kaha, o te kōrero, o te whakapapa o tēnei wāhi, o tēnei whare. Nau mai e te tī, e te tā ki te whare kōrero, ki te whare whakaari o ASB ki te tahatika o te moana. Mauri tau, mauri ora!

Pouwhakamaumāharatanga mō Māui-Tikitiki-a-Tāranga

The Memorial Post of Māui the Topknot of Tāranga

Robert Jahnke ONZM (Ngāi Taharoa, Te Whānau a Iritekura,

Te Whānau a Rākairo o Ngāti Porou) 2016

Laminated tōtara and Corten steel

Proudly commissioned by Auckland Theatre Company

for ASB Waterfront Theatre

The symbols of support, of strength and of

guardianship stand fast and proud.

The waters of Waitematā ebb and flow

against the shores here at Waikōkota,

the land upon which we stand.

The pou of remembrance to Māui Tikitiki a

Tāranga stands tall as a beacon of courage,

of stories passed down and of the history that

connects us all to this place and to this space.

We welcome you all from near and far

to this house of stories, to the ASB Waterfront Theatre.

Mauri tau, mauri ora!

AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY PRESENT

MARY: The Birth of Frankenstein by Jess Sayer developed in collaboration with Oliver Driver

21 Aug - 7 Sep 2025 ASB Waterfront Theatre

MARY: The Birth of Frankenstein, written by Jess Sayer and developed in collaboration with Oliver Driver, is the fifth production in Auckland Theatre Company’s 2025 season.

This production began previews on Thursday 21 August and premiered on Saturday 23 August at the ASB Waterfront Theatre, Auckland.

The production is two hours long, including an interval. It contains offensive language, depictions of drug use, sexual content, violence, flashing lights, haze and scent effects. Please ensure all mobile phones and noise-emitting devices are switched off.

Principle Funders: Creative New Zealand and Auckland Council

## **CAST**

**Emily Adams –Marta**

**Timmie Cameron — Claire Clairmont**

**Tom Clarke — Lord George Byron**

**Arlo Green — John Polidori**

**Dominic Ona-Ariki — Percy Shelley**

**Olivia Tennet — Mary Godwin**

**CREATIVE**

**Playwright — Jess Sayer**

**Direction – Oliver Driver**

**Set Design — John Verryt**

**Lighting Design — Jo Kilgour**

**Costume Design — Sarah Voon**

**Composer & Sound Design — Leon Radojkovic**

**Choreographer & Movement Director — Ross mcCormack**

**The Engine Room Assistant Director — Katrina George**

**Dramaturg — Shane Bosher**

**Intimacy Coordinator — Lara Fischel-Chisholm**

**Vocal Coach — Cameron Rhodes**

## **PRODUCTION**

Stage Manager —  
**Teresa Sokolich**

Deputy Stage Manager —  
**Chiara Niccolini**

Assistant Stage Manager —  
**Sofia Miernik**

Staging Coordinator —   
**Molloy**

Technical Coordinator —  
**Tim Jansen**

Technical Operator —  
**Tayla Brittliff**

Sound Coordinator —  
**Luke Finlay**

Sound Operator —  
**Joel Orme**

Microphone Technician —   
**Louis McKendry**

Fly Technician —  
**T.J. Haunui**

Wardrobe Maintenance —  
**Petra Verweij**  
  
Set Construction —Grant Reynolds —  
**Zorp Creative**

Props Manager —   
**Jane Hakaraia**

Laser Design — Angus Muir Design —  
**Angus Muir & Cat Ellis**

Vision Design — First Rodeo –   
**Jack O’Neill & Jacon Bramwell**

Olfactory Designer —   
**Nate Taare**

Wardrobe Manager —  
**Amber Rhodes**

Costume Makers —   
**Amber Rhodes, Amethyst Parker & Laura Schneemann**

Costume and Hat Maker —   
**Amy Craven**

Costume Assistant —   
**Erin Lally**

Wardrobe Buyer **—**   
**Joan James**

Production Photography —   
**Andi Crown**

Publicity —   
**Michelle Lafferty – Elephant Publicity**

Production Filming —  
**Daryl Wong**

Teaching Artist —   
**Emily Hurley**

*MARY: The Birth of Frankenstein*, written by Jess Sayer and developed in collaboration with Oliver Driver, is the fifth production in Auckland Theatre Company’s 2025 season.

This production began previews on Thursday 21 August and premiered on Saturday 23 August at the ASB Waterfront Theatre, Auckland.

The production is two hours long, including an interval. It contains offensive language, depictions of drug use, sexual content, violence, flashing lights, haze and scent effects. Please ensure all mobile phones and noise-emitting devices are switched off.

**Haere Mai**

It would be impossible to overstate the cultural consequences of the

European summer of 1816 at the Villa Diodati. Mary Shelley and the other

literary figures present created stories that have been adapted and retold

for more than two centuries since. Vampires. Monsters. The undead. Horror,

gothic literature and science fiction, as we know them, all passed through

that moment.

Playwright Jess Sayer has both recreated this literary linchpin and envisioned

an alternative version of what happened that is deliciously deadly. Jess’s

writing is clever, witty and original. A world premiere is always cause for

special celebration and so it is with this new play.

Returning to Auckland Theatre Company for the first time since the success

of Amadeus in 2017, director Oliver Driver has created a startling new

show, filled with theatrical flourish and unbridled artistic daring. Oliver is

an influential figure in the development of our Company and theatre in

Auckland, so it is thrilling to have his brilliant artistic force back.

Oliver’s cast has dared to go big. They are fearless and I adore them for it.

The members of the creative team, who surround the cast, are equal to the

moment as they have dreamed on a monumental scale.

Strap in. This one’s a wild ride.

**Jonathan Bielski Sophie Roberts**

Artistic Director & CEO

**Playwright |Jess Sayer**

Jess Sayer is a multi-award-winning screenwriter, playwright and actor, based in Tāmaki Makaurau.

As a writer, Jess has amassed an impressive collection of accolades. She is a three-time winner of Playmarket’s Playwrights b4 25 competition, won the Adam NZ Play Award in 2020 and, in 2015, received the prestigious Bruce Mason Playwriting Award. In recognition of her early impact on the stage, she was named Best Newcomer at the Auckland Theatre Awards in 2014. Her theatrical works — including Elevator, Wings, Crunchy Silk, and Fix — have enjoyed sell-out seasons at Auckland’s Basement Theatre.

Jess has written and storylined for a number of major productions, including The Ridge (BBC and Great Southern), Dirty Laundry, Filthy Rich (Filthy Productions), Shortland Street, Go Girls, Step Dave, The Bad Seed 2 and 800 Words (South Pacific Pictures), as well as for FluroBlack, Hi Mama Productions, Warner Brothers and Cinco Cine. She was Head Writer of the hit web series Auckward Love, which became one of TVNZ OnDemand’s top-performing shows in 2016.

As a screen actor, Jess has played lead role Kara Hurring in the feature film Runaway Millionaires. She is known to many as Maeve Mullens, a core cast member on Shortland Street, since 2019. Other recent credits include the acclaimed comedy Mean Mums, the cult film DEAD and a number of stage productions, including Mr Red Light, Wings, Always My Sister and *Famous Flora*.

*MARY: The Birth of Frankenstein* is Jess’ Auckland Theatre Company debut.

**Note from the Playwright**

I adore these characters and have had the time of my life bringing out the worst in them.

MARY: The Birth of Frankenstein is the biggest thing I’ve ever written and is taking the stage tonight only because I had a lot of help along the way. If you see these guys, give them a hug:

My love Amanda Tito, Stuart Hoar, Andi Crown, Stephen Lovatt, Shane Bosher, Pip Hall, Sara Wiseman, Claire Chitham, Leon Wadham, Serena Cotton, Clementine Mills, Morgana O’Reilly, Sam Snedden, Jared Turner, Edwin Wright, Colin Moy, Allison Horsley, Auckland Theatre Company, Unitec School of Creative Industries, Playmarket and the incomparable Tim Finn, who reintroduced me to Mary Shelley.

MARY would not exist without my partner in depravity, the brilliant Oliver Driver. Thanks for pushing me in all the right ways and never letting me give up on this monster of a play.

And thank you, for coming to support a new work. I hope you get something out of this wild play. The cast and team are electric and I am in awe of them.

A note:

This play is not historically accurate, nor was it ever intended to be. It’s a weird love letter to Mary Shelley, who, in 1816 at 18 years old, wrote a wild story that we’re all still obsessed with today.

It’s a love letter to anyone with wild, dark, twisty stories inside of them – I hope you write them down.

Enjoy. It’s a perfect night for mystery and horror. The air itself is filled with monsters.

Jx

**Director | Oliver Driver**

I always find these bios a bit odd – what do you really want to know? Have I made lots of plays? Yes. Great – now that’s out of the way, can we talk about everyone else?

These days, I get to make theatre only once every few years so I make the most of it. Part of that is working with a creative team that excites, collaborates, challenges and laughs together – the kind of team you find only in theatre. Long-time partners Jo, John, Ross, Leon, Lara and Teresa are back in the room, joined this time by Jacob, Jack, Angus, Cat, Sarah and Nate. Every one of these play-makers has given their all: obsessed, argued, tried ideas and tossed them aside when better ones could be hunted down. Together, we’ve sculpted a show that only a few thousand of you will see before it disappears – ah, theatre.

Then there’s the cast. Simon Prast once told me that 90 per cent of any production is the casting. I’m not sure the percentage is quite right but I’ve lived by that motto ever since. Are they right for the part? Will they lift the team? Are they brilliant, funny, wise – really, really, really, good? They are. Strap in.

And Jess Sayer. How to describe Jess – her work, her trust, her brilliance, her care for the words and for every person who reads, speaks or hears them. Jess is rare; you don’t meet many like her in this industry. She could be the voice of a generation; a playwright to stand beside Herzog, Stoppard, LaBute. God, I hope this business keeps finding ways to nurture her.

Finally, thanks to Jonathan for believing in MARY and then letting us do this crazy play the way we wanted to. He, his team at Auckland Theatre Company and the team at ASB Waterfront Theatre have made making this work an absolute joy.

Right – put the programme down and loose yourself for a while in the world Jess wrote and we built just for you, before it disappears forever.

**Note from the Director**

We begin at Villa Diodati on a single, storm-lashed night in 1816 – the

infamous ’Year Without a Summer’ when darkness lingered and the world

tilted towards the Gothic. In Jess Sayer’s exhilarating script, that night

becomes a crucible; poets, lovers and rivals assemble, wine and laudanum flow, and one dare – let’s write our own horror stories – sets off a chain reaction that will up-end their lives and, ultimately, give birth to *Frankenstein*.

Sayer gleefully hijacks the footnotes of history and recasts them in her own, razor-sharp light. If you’re after strict biography, pick up a textbook; here, theplaywright is in charge and she bends time, tone and truth to her will. The dialogue crackles – witty, unabashedly literary – then, without warning, heartbreakingly raw. Every

beat is driven by characters desperate to create something that will outlast

them, even as they threaten to consume one another in the process.

Threaded through the verbal fireworks is a fierce debate about feminism, authorship and ownership: Who gets to speak? Whose stories survive? Sayer gives Mary the fight – sometimes gentle, more often ferocious – to claim the right to tell any story at all, and to be heard as an equal among the socalled great men.

For a director, the script is a gift; its rhythms demand muscular movement

while its emotional undertow calls for knife-sharp intimacy. The ensemble must pivot from champagne fizz to existential dread in a heartbeat. Above all, it celebrates storytelling as rebellion – the power of language to conjure monsters, confront loss and lay claim to immortality.

Accordingly, our production leans hard into the theatrical. Lights are exposed, the set is unapologetically, a set; the space between stage and seat is alive and volatile. Theatre should never leave you comfortable. It should prod, provoke and draw you to the edge of your chair while the actors expand to fill the space – until we meet in that electric middle ground and dance.

I’m thrilled to share this fearless, funny, beautifully ferocious play with you. May it remind us – just as it reminded Mary Shelley – that, even in the darkest

rooms and wildest storms, imagination can still bring new life roaring off the slab.

**Cast**

**EMILY ADAMS**

**Marta**

TRAINING:

New Zealand School of Dance,

Contemporary Dance (2004).

FOR ATC:

*MARY: The Birth of Frankenstein* is Emily’s debut at Auckland Theatre Company.

DANCE:

The New Zealand Dance Company:

*Time European tour (2018); The Absurdity of Humanity New Zealand tour (2017); Kiss the Sky.*

Muscle Mouth Company: *As it Stands (2019); Triumphs and Other Alternatives international tour (2014 – 2019).*

Footnote Dance Company:

International tours (2011 – 2014).

Tempo Dance Festival:

*Duet Insolent River (2016); Mana Wahine (2016); Kiss the Sky premiere season; The Absurdity of Humanity season*. Okareka Dance Company (2016). World of WearableArt (2015, 2010 – 2013, 2004).

SCREEN INCLUDES:

Darkroom motion graphics.

OTHER:

Freelance work with Timothy Gordon, Mary-Jane O’Reilly, Inside Out Productions, Carol Brown, London Urban Soul Orchestra, *Vospertron* (2007 – 2010); pilates instructor and mentor/educator for Polestar Pilates New Zealand; contemporary dance teacher.

**TIMMIE CAMERON**

**Claire Clairmont**

TRAINING:

The Actors’ Program (2015).

FOR ATC:

*MARY: The Birth of Frankenstein* is Timmie’s debut at Auckland Theatre Company.

OTHER THEATRE INCLUDES:

*The Hall; I Ain’t Mad At Cha; Tennessee Retro; This Property is Condemned.*

SCREEN INCLUDES:

*Head Girl* (upcoming); *The Pact; The Gulf; SIS; Shortland Street; The Basement; Straight Forward; Roman Empire 2; Murder is Forever*.

**TOM CLARKE**

**Lord George Byron**

TRAINING:  
Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School (2016).

FOR ATC:

*Shortland Street the Musical; Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead* (2019).

OTHER THEATRE INCLUDES:

*Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde; Trojan War; Gay Death Stock Take; Break Bread; Cook Thinks Again; Snort; Perry; Second Unit: What We Do in the Shadows; Macbeth; The Comedy of Errors; Camping; Hand to God; Whales; Hotel Europa; Spring Awakening; The Devil’s Half Acre; The Mysterious Secrets of Uncle Bertie’s Botanarium;Twelfth Night; Wine Lips; Mother Courage; A Midsummer Night’s Dream; Tom Keeper Passes; Wheeler’s Luck.*

SCREEN INCLUDES:

TV: *Miles from Nowhere; The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F\*ck; The Luminaries; Wellington Paranormal.*

FILM: *Punch; Calliope Bay; The Biggest Wētā in the World; School Night.*

**ARLO GREEN**

**John Polidori**

FOR ATC:

*Scenes from the Climate Era; BOYS; Chekhov’s The Seagull.*

OTHER THEATRE INCLUDES:

*A Streetcar Named Desire; HIR; The Blind Date Project.*

SCREEN INCLUDES:

*Nautilus; Miles from Nowhere; Workmates; Bump; Rūrangi; Went Up the Hill; The Brokenwood Mysteries; One Lane Bridge; M3GAN; The Gulf; Cowboy Bebop; In Passing; Straight Forward; Shortland Street.*

**DOMINIC ONA-ARIKI**

*Cook Islands – Rarotonga & Atiu*

**PERCY SHELLEY**

TRAINING:  
Massive Theatre Company.

FOR ATC:

*MARY: The Birth of Frankenstein* is Dominic’s debut at Auckland Theatre Company.

OTHER THEATRE INCLUDES:

Massive Company:

*Up Close Out Loud; The Brave; My Bed My Universe; I LOVE YOU G.*

Neke Productions: *Neke*.

SCREEN INCLUDES:

*One Lane Bridge; Double Parked; Shortland Street.*

**OLIVIA TENNET**

**Mary Godwin**

FOR ATC:

*Stepping Out; The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate; Guys and Dolls.*

AS A CHOREOGRAPHER:

*Shortland Street the Musical; That Bloody Woman.*

OTHER THEATRE INCLUDES:

Basement Theatre:

*For You to Know and Me to Find Out.*

Nightsong:

*360 – a theatre of recollections.*

Peach Theatre Company:

*The Wizard of Oz.*

Silo Theatre:

*The Book of Everything; Mr. Burns, a postelectric play; The Blind Date Project.*

Dynamotion: *Mia Blonde in Ice Dagger.*

SCREEN INCLUDES:

*Kiri and Lou; Workmates; Happiness* (choreographer); *Vince; Creamerie; Double Parked; Baby Done; The Brokenwood Mysteries; My Life is Murder; Educators; Talkback; 800 Words; Power Rangers.*

OTHER:

*For You to Know and Me to Find Out* (creator/performer – Best in Fringe 2025); *Tralala* (acting coach); *I’m Already Gone and How it Ends* (singer-songwriter); Tami Neilson/Bret McKenzie/San Holo/L.A.B./ratbag (movement coach/choreographer)

**Creatives**

JOHN VERRYT

Set Design

TRAINING: Theatre Corporate; Mercury Theatre.

DESIGN FOR FOR ATC INCLUDES:

*Murder on the Orient Express; Peter Pan; King Lear; Long Day’s Journey into Night; The Haka Party Incident; Jesus Christ Superstar; Once on Chunuk Bair; Twelfth Night; Hair; Death of a Salesman; Rendered; The Pillowman; The Cripple of Inishmaan.*

OTHER THEATRE INCLUDES:

Nightsong: *Peter Pan; 360 – a theatre of recollections; Spirit House; Head.*

Theatre Corporate: *Mother Courage; Foreskin’s Lament; The Threepenny Opera; King Lear.*

Mercury Theatre: *Porgy and Bess; Tosca;The Rose Tattoo; The Barber of Seville.*

Theatre at Large: *Cyrano de Bergerac.*

Indian Ink Theatre: *Krishnan’s Dairy; The Pickle King; The Candlestickmaker; Guru of Chai; Dirty Work; Paradise.*

Silo Theatre: *Badjelly the Witch; The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?; Take Me Out; A Streetcar Named Desire; The Mystery of Irma Vep; When the Rain Stops Falling; The Book of Everything; Three Days of Rain; Berlin; Tartuffe.*

Red Leap Theatre: *The Arrival; Dakota of the White Flats.*

OTHER:

World of WearableArt (2009 – 2015).

New Zealand Opera: *Gianni Schicchi; The Spanish Hour; Don Pasquale; Aida; Lucia di Lammermoor; Xerxes; Falstaff;The Magic Flute.*

Dance: Black Grace; Atamira; Ōkāreka; Douglas Wright; Malia Johnston; Michael Parmenter

JO KILGOUR

Lighting Design

FOR ATC:

*Dawn Raids; The Life of Galileo; The Haka Party Incident; Six Degrees of Separation; Filthy Business; Under the Mountain; Nell Gwynn; Amadeus; The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time.*

OTHER THEATRE INCLUDES:

Piksies Melody Ltd: *Whakapaupākihi.*

*Taki Rua: Hatupatu | Kurungaituku: A Forbidden Love.*

Eddie Elliott: *Waiwhakaata: Reflections in the Water.*

The New Zealand Dance Company: *Sigan; The Fibonacci; Matter; Brouhaha; The Geography of an Archipelago; In Transit; What They Said; UKU – Behind the Canvas.*

Peach Theatre: *Once.*

Aloalii Tapu & Friends: *Leeches.*

Indian Ink: *Dirty Work.*

OTHER:

Wellington Opera: *Don Giovanni*.   
Festival Opera: *La Traviata; Cav+Pag.*   
New Zealand Opera: *Semele.*

SARAH VOON

*Chinese, Pākehā*  
Costume Design

FOR ATC:

*MARY: The Birth of Frankenstein* is Sarah’s debut at Auckland Theatre Company.

SCREEN INCLUDES:

*Wolf Man; Mārama; Evil Dead Rise; Evil Dead; Daffodils; My Wedding and Other Secrets; Give Kate A Voice; A Woman’s Right to Shoes; Chasing Great; My Life is Murder; Black Hands; Step Dave; Power Rangers; Go Girls; Mercy Peak; Being Eve; Hercules; Xena; Cleopatra 2525; Street Legal; Broken English.*

OTHER:

Sarah has an extensive background designing costumes for TV commercials, music videos and short films.

LEON RADOJKOVIC

*Dalmatian, Ngāpuhi, Pākehā*  
Composition & Sound Design

FOR ATC:

*Scenes from the Climate Era; Amadeus; Jesus Christ Superstar*

OTHER THEATRE INCLUDES:

*Taniwha, Live Live Cinema: Night of the Living Dead; Every Brilliant Thing; My Heart Goes Thadak Thadak; Mr Burns; Peter and the Wolf; Boys Will Be Boys; Medea; Angels in America; Hui; Brel; The Only Child; Live Live Cinema: Little Shop of Horrors; Live Live Cinema: Dementia 13; Live Live Cinema: Carnival of Souls; Essays in Love; The Deliberate Disappearance of My Friend, Jack Hartnett.*

SCREEN INCLUDES:

*Shortland Street; Baby Done; Filthy Rich; Jelly Tip Jimmy; Reservations; The Mordavian Truth.*

OTHER:

*Fortress Europe; Dr Colossus.*

ROSS MCCORMACK

Choreographer & Movement Director

TRAINING:

New Zealand School of Dance (2001).

FOR ATC:

*Amadeus.*

OTHER THEATRE INCLUDES:  
Australian Dance Theatre (ADT); Chunky Move; Dancenorth Australia; les ballets C de la B (Belgium); Douglas Wright Dance Company; New Zealand Dance Company; Red Leap Theatre Company.

Choreographed works: Power of the Dog with Jane Campion. With Muscle Mouth: AGE (New Zealand Festival of the Arts); *Triumphs and Other Alternatives; System; As It Stands* (Auckland Arts Festival).

Hong Kong Arts Festival: *The Weight of Force*

Singapore Arts Festival: *Together, Yes?*

KATRINA GEORGE

*Malie Sāmoa, Pākehā*

The Engine Room Assistant Director

TRAINING:

Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School (2017).

FOR ATC:

Assistant Direction:

*William Shakespeare’s Romeo & Juliet*.

Movement Direction:

*William Shakespeare’s Romeo & Juliet*; *The Effect*.

OTHER THEATRE INCLUDES:

Direction: *Moe Miti*.

Movement Direction: *Emilia*.

Katrina is one of two Assistant Directors working at Auckland Theatre Company across 2025 as part of The Engine Room Programme, supported by the Friedlander Foundation.

***About MARY: The Birth of***

***Frankenstein* by Jess Sayer**

*MARY: The Birth of Frankenstein*’s roots stretch back to 2017, when Tim Finn began exploring the idea of a musical inspired by the Novel Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus by Mary Shelley. He had composed a selection of songs and soon began working with playwright Jess Sayer who evolved the concept into Frankenstein’s Mother, the story now about Mary Shelley.

In January 2018, Oliver Driver joined the team to help bring the work to life. Together, Tim, Jess, and Oliver developed the piece, with Jess crafting a script to accompany the songs. The project attracted development and investment from Auckland Live, Canberra Theatre Centre, and Queensland Performing Arts Centre.

However – much like the Monster itself – the songs and script proved to be two very different creatures stitched together. In March 2021, Tim and Jess amicably decided to part ways, each continuing with their own elements. Jess and Oliver pressed on, focusing solely on the play.

With support from Auckland Theatre Company, two workshops allowed Jess to reimagine the piece as a stand-alone work, Mary. Since then, Jess and Oliver have seized every opportunity to refine, test, and experiment with the script –including sessions with students from Unitec’s School of Creative Industries and the cast of this production.

**Accessibility**  
Our mission is to make great theatre easy for all to enjoy. We welcome anyone with access needs, along with their friends and whānau, to our venue and we are on hand to help.

**Audio-Described Performance and Touch Tour**

**Sun 31 August – Touch Tour 2:30pm, Audio Described Performance: 4:00PM**

Audio described performances feature live commentary from Audio Described Aotearoa. They provide detailed visual descriptions between dialogue, relayed via complimentary earpieces to blind and low-vision patrons. Touch tours, held 90 minutes

before the performances, allow patrons to explore the sets, touch props and costumes, and meet actors. These free tours are designed for blind and low-vision patrons and their companion.

Supported by: The Trusts Community Foundation

**Assistance Dogs**  
Assistance dogs are welcome at the theatre. We can find a seat that’s comfortable for you and your dog or arrange for staff to look after your dog during the show

**Hearing Assistance**  
The theatre has a T-Loop radio frequency system to amplify the sound of the performance. If you don’t use a hearing aid or your hearing aid does not have a T setting, there is a listener unit available on request from the box office.

**Relaxed Performance**  
**Tue 2 September 7:00pm**  
Relaxed performances are inclusive, welcoming environments for neurodivergent individuals and anyone seeking a less formal theatre experience. They offer a flexible approach without changing the show. Audiences can expect pre-show resources, brighter lighting, an open attitude to movement and noise, and a dedicated breakout space. An optional pre-show demonstration invites patrons to enjoy theatre on their own terms. Everyone is welcome.

**NZSL Interpreted Performance**  
**Sat 6 September 8:00pm**  
NZSL interpreted performances feature trained interpreters from Platform Interpreting New Zealand. These professionals work closely with Auckland Theatre Company to translate the play into NZSL. The interpreter performs on stage, providing real-time interpretation for d/Deaf patrons. We reserve great seats for interpreter viewing.

**Wheelchair Access**  
ASB Waterfront Theatre has three wheelchair spaces and eight companion seats in the auditorium. There is step-free, level access to all levels of the building and to seating in the stalls. Wheelchair-accessible toilets are located on the ground floor; accessible parking is available on Madden Street.

**How to book accessible tickets**  
Access tickets are available for $20 for Deaf or disabled audience members attending an

accessible performance. One companion ticket per theatre-goer is also available for $20.

Access tickets for the relaxed performance can be purchased online, via email or over the

phone. For tickets to all other accessible performances, to reserve wheelchair seating or for assistance with your booking, email [boxoffice@atc.co.nz](mailto:boxoffice@atc.co.nz) or call 09 309 3395.

Audio-Described Performances – Audio Described Aotearoa Ltd

NZSL-Interpreted Performances – Platform Interpreting New Zealand

Deaf Community Engagement Advisor – Rachel Walker

Relaxed Performance Consultants – Stacey Francis, Gabby Hogg, Christopher Michael

Thanks to Katie Querin and Arts Access Aotearoa for your support and guidance.

Sign up to receive news about the accessibility programme: atc.co.nz/access

**Mary Shelley**

**A Life Leading to Villa Diodati**

Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin was born into brilliance and scandal in 1797. Her mother, Mary Wollstonecraft, was one of Britain’s most notorious intellectuals – a fierce advocate for women’s rights whose A Vindication of the Rights of Woman established her as a founder of feminist philosophy. Her father, William Godwin, was an equally radical political philosopher and writer.

Their legacy of revolutionary thinking would shape Mary’s entire life.

Tragedy struck immediately. Wollstonecraft died eleven days after Mary’s birth, likely from infection caused by improper medical practices. Godwin, devastated, published intimate memoirs of his wife that scandalised society with their frank discussions of her relationships.

Godwin raised Mary, teaching her to spell by tracing letters on her mother’s tombstone. She claimed to have been "nursed and fed with glory," but this privilege came with crushing expectations and the burden of believing her birth had caused her mother’s death.

Despite Wollstonecraft’s advocacy for women’s education, Mary received no formal schooling—only her father’s intensive philosophical instruction.

Mary’s adolescence brought severe mood swings and deteriorating health, including a wasting arm condition and persistent skin infections. Tensions with her stepmother became unbearable. At fourteen, she was sent away to Dundee, enduring a lonely sea voyage that may have later inspired scenes in Frankenstein. In 1814, seventeen-year-old Mary met Percy Shelley, an unhappily married poet who idolised her parents. Their courtship unfolded in the cemetery where her mother lay buried. When Godwin refused Percy’s permission to court his daughter, the lovers eloped to France with Mary’s stepsister Claire, causing a family rupture that lasted years. During their European travels, Mary became pregnant but lost the baby after just eleven days—another echo of her mother’s fate. She wrote of dreaming the child returned to life, warmed by fire. By 1816, bearing the weight of her radical inheritance, personal losses, and the guilt of survival, Mary arrived at Villa Diodati as Europe shivered through its darkest, coldest summer in memory. It is here where *MARY: The Birth of Frankenstein* begins.

**Written by Emily Hurley, Teaching Artist on *MARY: The Birth of Frankenstein*. Teaching Artists are professional theatre practitioners who bridge the gap between professional theatre and classroom learning, part of Auckland Theatre Company’s Creative Learning Programme.**

**BOX OFFICE —**   
**Email**

[boxoffice@atc.co.nz](mailto:boxoffice@atc.co.nz)

**Phone**

09 309 3395

**Visit**

Asbwaterfronttheatre.co.nz

**INSTAGRAM AND FACEBOOK**

@asbwaterfronttheatre

138 Halsey St

Wynyard Quarter

Auckland

## **Contact ATC**

487 Dominion Road, Mt Eden   
PO Box 96002  
Balmoral, Auckland 1342

P: 09 309 0390  
[atc@atc.co.nz](mailto:atc@atc.co.nz)

atc.co.nz

## **Contact Box Office**

ASB Waterfront Theatre  
138 Halsey Street  
Wynyard Quarter, Auckland  
General Box Office: 09 309 3395  
[boxoffice@atc.co.nz](mailto:boxoffice@atc.co.nz)

## **Follow us on Social!**

Facebook: @TheATC

Instagram: @aucklandtheatreco

#aucklandtheatrecompany  
#asbwaterfronttheatre