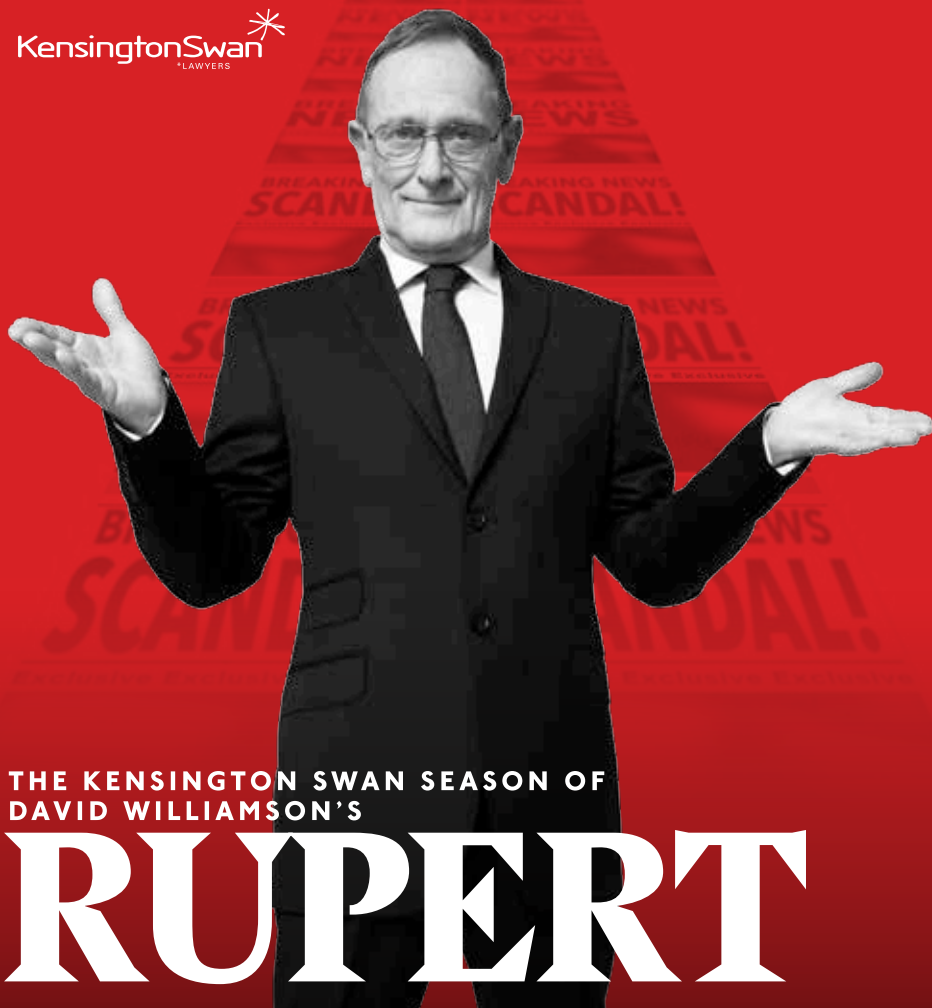


# ON— STAGE

AUCKLAND  
THEATRE  
COMPANY

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Jun 2015

KensingtonSwan  
\*LAWYERS



THE KENSINGTON SWAN SEASON OF  
DAVID WILLIAMSON'S

# RUPERT

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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Colin McColl

When I first picked up the script to David Williamson's *Rupert*, I have to admit I was woefully ignorant of Rupert Murdoch's life and works, apart from the fact that he was a media mogul and at the centre of the phone hacking scandal. But I couldn't put it down. It was funny, audacious and intriguing - not unlike Richard III. One of the perks of making theatre is that you get to explore a play's subject and themes in great detail. And there was plenty to explore with this material.

David Williamson, Australia's best known playwright, has offered us up a delicious conceit with *Rupert*: a cabaret masterminded and cast by the man himself, giving us an entertaining version of his life. It's certainly been entertaining and informative for myself and the actors to immerse ourselves in Murdoch's world, with his family and the characters he's chosen to tell his life story.

Huge thanks to everyone involved in the project: to our stellar cast who play a myriad of characters (sometimes with a mere two or three lines to establish who they are) for their bold and very funny choices; to Stuart and Damien in particular for their individual "takes" on Mr Murdoch; to my fabulous design and production teams.

Welcome to tabloid theatre!

Enjoy.

Colin

Colin McColl  
Artistic Director, Auckland Theatre Company

THE KENSINGTON SWAN SEASON OF  
DAVID WILLIAMSON'S

# RUPERT

## CAST

Rupert Murdoch – **STUART DEVENIE**

Young Rupert Murdoch – **DAMIEN AVERY**

Anna Murdoch/Pat Murdoch/Rebekah Brooks/Ensemble – **JENNIFER WARD-LEALAND**

Ted Pickering/Banker 2/Rupert Henderson/Sir William Carr/Cudlipp/Sir John Kerr(v.o.)/  
Clay Felker/Harry Evans/Barry Diller/Roger Ailes/Nick Clegg/Ensemble – **SIMON PRAST**

Prudence Murdoch/Elizabeth Murdoch/Dame Elizabeth Murdoch/Dolly Schiff/  
Margaret Thatcher/Loan Officer/Ensemble – **HERA DUNLEAVY**

Lachlan Murdoch/Rohan Rivett/Kerry Packer/David Frost/Sommerfield/  
Steve Dunleavy/ Kelvin McKenzie/Gough Whitlam/ Ensemble – **ADAM GARDINER**

Sir Frank Packer/Larry Lamb/Ronald Reagan/Marvin Davis/  
Tony Blair/Ensemble – **STEPHEN LOVATT**

James Murdoch/Clyde Packer/Lord Catto/Sarazen/  
Asa Briggs/ Sir Thomas Playford(v.o.)/Ensemble – **ARLO MacDIARMID**

Wendi Deng/Banker 1/Douglas Brass/Staffer/J Addey/Ann Lane/Ensemble – **JJ FONG**

## CREATIVE

Director – **COLIN McCOLL** | Choreographer – **JEREMY BIRCHALL**

Set Designer – **JOHN VERRYT** | Costume Designer – **ELIZABETH WHITING**

Lighting Designer – **PHILLIP DEXTER MSc** | Soundscape Designer – **THOMAS PRESS**

Audio Visual Designer – **TOM BOGDANOWICZ** | Cartoonist – **JEFF BELL**

## PRODUCTION

Production Manager – **ANDREW MALMO** | Company Manager – **ELAINE WALSH**

Stage Manager – **NATALIE BRAID** | Assistant Stage Manager – **KATIE EDWARDS**

Technical Manager – **BONNIE BURRILL** | Technical Operator – **ABBY CLEARWATER**

Props Master – **BECKY EHLERS** | Set Construction – **2CONSTRUCT**

Stage Management Cover – **ELIZA JOSEPHSON-RUTTER**

AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR HELP WITH THIS PRODUCTION: Simon Barker, Lotech Media, Jamie Blackburn, CP Solutions, Peter Elliott, the Melbourne Theatre Company, the original director Lee Lewis and the original cast (Marg Downey, Guy Edmonds, Daniela Farinacci, Simon Glesson, Bert La Bonte, HaiHa Le, Sean O'Shea, and Scott Sheridan) for producing the premiere production in any programme or publications.

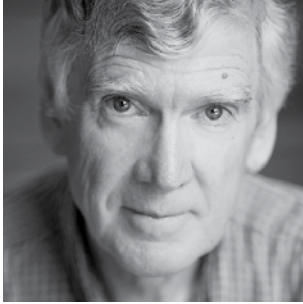
*The Kensington Swan season of **Rupert** is the fourth Auckland Theatre Company mainbill production for 2015 and opened on June 27th at Q Theatre. The production is approximately 1 hour 58 minutes with 20 minutes interval. Please remember to switch off all mobile phones, pagers and watch alarms.*

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## DAVID WILLIAMSON

*Playwright*

David Williamson has been Australia's best known and most widely performed playwright for the last forty years. His more than forty five produced plays include *The Removalists*, *Don's Party*, *The Club*, *Travelling North*, *The Perfectionist*, *Sons of Cain*, *Emerald City*, *Money and Friends*, *Brilliant Lies*, *Dead White Males*, *After the Ball*, *The Jack Manning Trilogy*, *The Great Man*, *Up For Grabs*, *Soulmates*, *Scarlett O'Hara At the Crimson Parrot*, *Nothing Personal*, *When Dad Married Fury*, *Managing Carmen*, *Cruise Control* and *Rupert*.

His plays have been translated into many languages and performed internationally, including major productions in London, Los Angeles, New York and Washington (*The Club* in 1979 and *Rupert* in 2014 at the Kennedy

Center as well as a season at the Theatre Royal, Sydney). *Up For Grabs* went on to a West End production starring Madonna in the lead role.

David's screen adaptations of his own plays include *The Removalists*, *Don's Party*, *The Club*, *Travelling North*, and *Emerald City*, along with his original screenplays for feature films including *Libido*, *Petersen*, *Gallipoli*, *Phar Lap*, *The Year of Living Dangerously*, and *Balibo* (as co-writer). For television he adapted *On The Beach*.

David's many awards include 12 Australian Writers' Guild Awards, 5 Australian Film Institutes' Award for Best Screenplay and, in 1996, the United Nations Association of Australia Media Peace Award. David has been named one of Australia's Living National Treasures.



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## CAST

### STUART DEVENIE

(Rupert)

During the past four decades Stuart has worked as a radio drama producer for the NZBC; a television director for TV ONE; Associate Director for the Court Theatre, Artistic Director for the Court Theatre and Artistic Director for Centrepoint Theatre; an equity committee member; an NZQA drama expert panellist and an assessor for Creative New Zealand. He has workshopped many new scripts for Playmarket both as an actor and a director, acted and directed at both Downstage and the Fortune theatres, and was a founding councillor for Circa Theatre. He is a licentiate of Trinity College and has a Diploma in Adult Teaching. Stuart has tutored acting, vocal technique, and directing for Toi Whakaari: NZ Drama School, Northland Polytechnic, and universities and high schools throughout the country. He is an ambassador for Shakespeare in Schools and regularly

adjudicates local, regional and national festivals in Shakespeare. He has also had an extensive career in radio and television acting.

Stuart's work for Auckland Theatre Company over the past 19 years has included workshopping, tutoring and directing. Acting appearances include: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Mary Stuart*, *August: Osage County*, *Romeo And Juliet*, *Four Flat Whites In Italy*, *The Pohutukawa Tree*, *Disgrace*, *Take A Chance On Me*, *Copenhagen*, *Middle Aged Spread*, *Ladies' Night*, *Caligula*, *Serial Killers*, *All My Sons*, *Twelve Angry Men*, *Molly Sweeney*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Market Forces*, *Hatch: or The Plight Of The Penguins*, *Death of A Salesman*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *A Daylight Atheist*, *The Talented Mr Ripley*, *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof*, and *A Shortcut to Happiness*.

In 2007 Stuart was awarded an MNZM for services to the theatre and in 2010 he was made an Arts Laureate by the New Zealand Arts Foundation.



### DAMIEN AVERY

(Young Rupert)

Young Rupert is Damien's third appearance for Auckland Theatre Company's main bill. His first was the hapless victim Leo Irving in *In The Next Room (or The Vibrator Play)* in 2012; his most recent was Theo Helmer in Emily Perkin's version of *A Doll's House*.

Outside of ATC productions Damien has been traversing the country for theatre and screen work in Auckland and for The Court Theatre in Christchurch, with a tour to China

thrown in for good measure. His recent theatre credits include *One Man Two Guvnors*, *Wild Bees*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Slapdash Assassin*, *The Mikado*, *Postal* and *Snap!* as well as some screen work on *Field Punishment No.1* and *Hillary*.

Damien is thrilled to be working on this fascinating journey through Rupert Murdoch's life with such a wonderfully talented cast and crew.

Damien is a proud member of New Zealand Actors Equity.

### JENNIFER WARD-LEALAND

(Anna Murdoch/Pat Murdoch/Rebekah Brooks/Ensemble)

Since training at Auckland's influential Theatre Corporate, Jennifer has worked extensively in theatre, film, television, musical and radio for over 33 years.

On stage her work includes *The Goat*, *That Face*, *Berlin*, *Brel* (Metro Magazine's #1 Cultural Experience 2012) and *The Book Of Everything* for Silo Theatre, *Rita And Douglas* for Armstrong Creative and *Twelfth Night*, *Le Sud*, *August: Osage County* and *The Heretic* for Auckland Theatre Company. Most recently,

Jennifer directed *Fallout: The Sinking Of The Rainbow Warrior* at The Basement.

Jennifer was a founding board member of the Watershed Theatre and a co-founder of The Large Group and The Actors' Program. She is currently President of Equity New Zealand, Patron of Q Theatre, and serves as a trust board member of Arts Regional Trust, Silo Theatre, Clarence St Theatre Trust, and Actors Benevolent Fund. In the 2007 New Years Honours List, she was named an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to theatre and the community.

[www.jenniferwardlealand.com](http://www.jenniferwardlealand.com)





## SIMON PRAST

(*Ted Pickering/Banker 2/  
Rupert Henderson/Sir William Carr/  
Cudlipp/Sir John Kerr(Vo)/  
Clay Felker/Harry Evans/  
Barry Diller/Roger Ailes/  
Nick Clegg/Ensemble*)

For over 30 years, Simon has worked in this industry as an actor, director, producer and agent. He was the founding director of Auckland Theatre Company and the Auckland Festival (AK03). His favourite directing credits include *Twelve Angry Men*, *Death*

*of a Salesman*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *The Graduate* and *The Pillowman*. He recently appeared on stage as an Unemployed Man and a God for ATC in *The Good Soul of Szechuan* and as Thomas Cromwell in *Anne Boleyn*. On television, he is about to play a man with more money than morals in *Filthy Rich*. Simon is delighted to be a part of The Kensington Swan season of *Rupert* and has relished the opportunity to channel some of the most creative, destructive, corrupt, ambitious and unscrupulous people in modern history. His one minor brush with Rupert's world occurred when Fox News doyen Bill O'Reilly actually responded on air to an email he sent in. Bill completely avoided the topic and dismissed him out of hand, saying no one was interested in in Simon's extremist, left-wing liberal views. To this day, Simon wears Bill's fair and balanced condemnation as a badge of honour and dedicates the Fox News sequence you are about to see to him and all he stands for.

## HERA DUNLEAVY

(*Prudence Murdoch/Elizabeth Murdoch/Dame Elizabeth Murdoch/  
Dolly Schiff/Margaret Thatcher/  
Loans Officer/Ensemble*)

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*, *Midnight In Moscow*, and more recently *Paniora!* and *Other Desert Cities*.



## STEPHEN LOVATT

(*Sir Frank Packer/Larry Lamb/  
Ronald Reagan/Marvin Davis/  
Tony Blair/Ensemble*)

Stephen has performed in theatre, radio, television and cinema throughout New Zealand and Australia over the last 27 years. Television appearances include *Top Of The Lake*, *Hope And Wire*, *Harry*, *Spartacus*, and 5 years as Max on *Neighbours*. Stephen has recently finished playing Sir John Hunt in Great Southern Television's soon to be released *Hillary*, a six part TV series about Sir Ed.

Previous work for Auckland Theatre Company includes *Fallen Angels* and *The Motor Camp*. Particular highlights including playing King James in *Anne Boleyn*, and Colonel Malone in *Once On Chumuk Bair*. Other theatre highlights include *When The Rain Stops Falling*, Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing*, *Angels In America* and *The Only Child* produced by Silo Theatre. Stephen was awarded 'Excellence In Performance' at the 2014 Auckland Theatre Awards for his work throughout that year, and is a proud member of his union.

## ADAM GARDINER

(*Lachlan Murdoch/Rohan Rivett/  
Kerry Packer/David Frost/  
Sommerfeld/Steve Dunleavy/  
Kelvin McKenzie/Gough Whitlam/  
Ensemble*)

Originally from Wellington, Adam has produced and performed with various theatre and dance companies both here and overseas. 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 in *Other Desert Cities*, *Midnight In Moscow*, *Black Confetti*, and *In The Next Room (Or The Vibrator Play)*. Other recent stage credits include *360 - A Theatre Of Recollections* and *Sunday Roast*. Screen credits include *Brown Eye*, *Agent Anna*, *Spartacus*, the upcoming series *Hillary*, and soon to be released feature films *Born to Dance* and *The Patriarch*. As well as voicing various monsters on *Power Rangers*, Adam recently narrated Owen Marshall's *Carnival Sky* for National Radio.





## ARLO MacDIARMID

(James Murdoch/Clyde Packer/  
Lord Catto/Sarazen/  
Thomas Playford(v.o.)/Asa Briggs/  
Ensemble)

Since graduating in 2009 with a Bachelor of Performing and Screen Arts, Arlo has performed with a multitude of theatre and production companies. His more notable appearances include roles in *Ooh Baby Baby!* (Co. Theatre Physical), *A View from the Bridge* (Peach Theatre Co.), and in the film, *The Most Fun you can have Dying* (Ten Cent Pictures)

He has featured in *Power Rangers*, the Outfit Theatre Company's *Sin*, the Cannes selected short film *Mad Pearse*,

and the yet to be released television feature *Venus and Mars*.

Arlo is thrilled to be making his first appearance with Auckland Theatre Company in The Kensington Swan season of *Rupert*, and has thoroughly relished the opportunity to explore a plethora of characters, work alongside a cast of overwhelming talent, and delve into a script as daring as it is technically challenging. Arlo is a proud member of Actors Equity.

## JJ FONG

(Wendi Deng/Banker 1/  
Douglas Brass/Staffer/J Addey/  
Ann Lane/Ensemble)

JJ was core cast in South Pacific Pictures' *Go Girls* (series 5) as Alice Lee, and is currently core cast on *Step Dave*, as Betty. She also co-stars in and co-produces webseries *Flat3* directed by Roseanne Liang.

She also has performed for the Court Theatre in *Man in a Suitcase*, and The Basement in *Girl in Tan Boots*, directed by Janice Finn.

Born and raised in New Zealand, JJ is a talented singer, dancer, choreographer and MC.



### Move in the right circles.

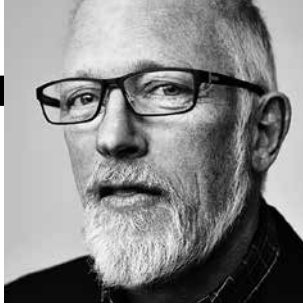
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# CREATIVE TEAM

## COLIN McCOLL

Director

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 and was also presented at the Ibsen Festival in Oslo, the Covent Garden Festival in London, and the 1991 Sydney Festival. Colin has also won Best Director at the Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards several times, including for his production of *Who's Afraid Of Virginia Woolf?*

His many productions for Auckland Theatre Company include: *The Ladykillers, A Doll's House, Paniora!, Other Desert Cities, The Good Soul of Szechuan, 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.



## JEREMY BIRCHALL

Choreographer

Since graduating from the Unitec School of Performing and Screen Arts Acting Major in 1994 Jeremy has been involved in the film and theatre industries as an actor, dancer, director, choreographer and voice over artist.

Jeremy danced with the Candy Lane dancers for over 16 years and holds regional and national titles in Aerobics and Hip Hop dance and while based in the UK during 2007 and 2008 performed in the show *Hot In Havana* and taught dance in the West End dance school, Creation Dance.

Theatre highlights include the Co Theatre Physical production of *Ohh Baby Baby*, the productions of *Cabaret and Oliver* with Auckland Theatre Company, *La Traviata* and *Carmen* at the North Harbor Stadium. Most recently Jeremy has choreographed and toured in the New Zealand productions of *The Pirates Of Penzance, Oklahoma* and *The Great Gatsby*. Later this year Jeremy will choreograph the Auckland Theatre Company production of *Gyps And Dolls*. Jeremy is a proud member of New Zealand Actors Equity/MEAA.

## JOHN VERRYT

Set Designer

John began designing for performance in 1979, training at Theatre Corporate and Mercury Theatre. John is freelance and works regularly for many of New Zealand's foremost performing arts companies including Auckland Theatre Company, Silo Theatre, Indian Ink, Red Leap, The Large Group,

Nightsong, Opera NZ, Douglas Wright Dance, Michael Parmenter, Malia Johnston, Atimira Dance, Okareka Dance, and Black Grace Dance companies. John is Production Designer for The World Of Wearable Art show and designs for various corporate functions, trade shows and music events.







## ELIZABETH WHITING

*Costume Designer*

Elizabeth has designed costumes for New Zealand Opera, Auckland Theatre Company, Silo Theatre, Court Theatre, Red Leap, Okareka Dance, Black Grace, Douglas Wright Dance, Michael Parmenter, Atamira, Shona McCullagh and the Royal New Zealand Ballet. She designed costumes for Pop-Up Theatre in London, which was performed at the Edinburgh Festival.

Opera design credits include *Faust*, *Carmen*, *La Bohème*, *Falstaff*, *Barber of Seville*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Così fan Tutte* (New Zealand Opera). She designed *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* for the Opera 2011 winter season, *Acis and Galatea* in 2012, and *Don Giovanni* in 2013.

Theatre design credits include *In the Next Room (Or The Vibrator Play)*, *Mary Stuart*, *Well Hung*, *Equus*, *Cabaret*, *Into the Woods*, *Sweet Charity*, *Hair*, *The Rocky*

*Horror Picture Show*, *The Duchess of Malfi*, *Pillow Man*, *My Name Is Gary Cooper*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Glass Menagerie* and *Anne Boleyn* (Auckland Theatre Company); *The Country Wife*, *La Cage aux Folles*, *The Great Gatsby* and *Cabaret* (Court Theatre); *Tartuffe*, *Top Girls*, *Three Days of Rain*, *Irma Vep*, *The Scene*, *Holding the Man*, *When the Rain Stops Falling*, and *Assassins* (Silo Theatre).

Elizabeth designed the World of Wearable Art core show for Wellington 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014. In 2010 Elizabeth won the Chapman Tripp Costume Design Award for *The Arrival* (Red Leap). She represented New Zealand at the Prague Design Quadrennial in 2003 with her costumes for *Falstaff*, and again in 2007 with a team of designers who created the exhibition *Blow*.



## PHILLIP DEXTER MSc

*Lighting Designer*

Phillip's previous lighting designs for Auckland Theatre Company include: *The Good Soul of Szechuan*, *Other Desert Cities*, *Lord Of The Flies*, *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*.

He works regularly for all the major theatre companies in New Zealand. Recent productions include: *God Of Carnage*, *Four Flat Whites In Italy*, *Death and The Maiden* (Newmarket Stage), *Rock 'N' Roll* (Circa Theatre), *Don Juan In Soho*, *Lucky Numbers* (Fortune Theatre), *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *Oliver!* (The Court), *The Graduate*, *Dracula*, *The Goat* (Downstage), *At The Wake*

(Centrepoint Theatre), *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, Opera Conservatory - Royal College of Music.

Phillip is director of Limeburner Design Ltd ([www.limeburner.co.nz](http://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*.



## THOMAS PRESS

*Soundscape Designer*

Thomas is a graduate of the New Zealand School of Music - with a Bachelor of Music in Composition (2009) - and Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School - with a Diploma in Entertainment Technology (2005).

Since 2004 he has worked on over 50 professional theatre and dance productions, as well as numerous art installations. He is a five time nominee of the Chapman Tripp theatre award for

Sound Designer of the Year, and 2014 winner of the Auckland Theatre Awards Best Music award.

In March Thomas composed an original sound design for Silo Theatre's critically and popularly acclaimed *The Book of Everything* as part of the Auckland Arts Festival. Most recently he created an original score for Red Leap's new production *Dust Pilgrim*.

## TOM BOGDANOWICZ

*Audio Visual Designer*

Tom has provided visuals and projections for many local and international DJs and bands,



and at events like NZ Fashion Weekend, Tiger Translate, adidas Block Party, Red Bull Thre3Style, Sound Select, Converse Get Loud, Orcon Great Blend, Southside Arts Festival, and the British Council's People In Your Neighbourhood.

Video design credits include *Objects, Vaka* and *Xmas Verses* for Black Grace, *The Good Soul Of Szechuan* and *Enlightenment* for Auckland Theatre Company, *Espiritu Tasi* for Ojeya Cruz Banks, and Pacific Dance NZ Choreographic Labs.

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# HOW RUPERT MURDOCH'S FATHER CHANGED THE COURSE OF THE GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN

*By Jonathan Pearlman, Sydney*

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**In his remarkable 8,000-word "Gallipoli letter", young Australian journalist Keith Murdoch, father of media tycoon Rupert Murdoch, helped to expose the futility of the campaign.**

At the end of a hazardous trip to Gallipoli in late 1915, a young Australian journalist named Keith Murdoch - father of Rupert - decided he would ignore the military censors and bluntly expose the horrific fate of the campaign and the "ghastly bungling" of the British top brass.

Risking his career in journalism, the 30-year-old proceeded to write a remarkably frank 8,000 word letter that is now credited with changing the course of the disastrous campaign.

It was this 25-page dispatch, now known as The Gallipoli Letter, which is believed to have expedited the evacuation from the peninsula

and led to the dismissal of General Sir Ian Hamilton, the British commander-in-chief.

After spending four days from September 3 to September 6 witnessing the terrible aftermath of the August offensive, he sent the missive to his friend Andrew Fisher, the Australian prime minister.

Adopting a conversational tone, he famously told the prime minister that the Gallipoli campaign was "undoubtedly one of the most terrible chapters in our history".

"Your fears have been justified," Murdoch wrote. "This unfortunate expedition has never been given a chance."



© Getty Images  
Australian infantrymen sit on a transport as they head towards the beach at Gallipoli, Turkey, 1915.

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Having met with the Gallipoli correspondent Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett of The Daily Telegraph, Murdoch agreed that the only way to reveal the truth about the campaign was to flout the military censors. Initially, he tried to smuggle an uncensored letter by Ashmead-Bartlett to Herbert Henry Asquith, the British Prime Minister, but the document was intercepted in Marseilles.

Instead, Murdoch proceeded to London and decided to write his own account, penning his letter to the Australian prime minister from the offices of The Times. The letter was subsequently read by Asquith, who had it printed as a cabinet document; Hamilton was dismissed weeks later and the evacuation proceeded shortly afterwards. In his letter, Murdoch

gave high praise to the gallantry of the Australian troops and made it clear that he believed the disastrous effort to attack the peninsula was due to the "ghastly bungling" of the British commanders.

"Undoubtedly the essential and first step to restore the morale of the shaken forces is to recall [Hamilton] and his Chief of Staff [Lieutenant General Sir W. P. Braithwaite], a man more cordially detested in our forces than Enver Pasha [the Turkish war minister]," he wrote.

"It is not for me to judge Hamilton, but it is plain that when an Army has completely lost faith in its General, and he has on numerous occasions proved his weaknesses, only one thing can be done.... Our men have found it impossible to form a high opinion of the British

K[itchener] men and territorials. They are merely a lot of child-like youths.”

After the war, Murdoch went on to buy an Adelaide newspaper and proceeded to build an Australian news stable which his son Rupert has transformed into a global media empire.

In 1970, Rupert Murdoch donated his father’s letter to the National Library of Australia and it was placed on a UNESCO heritage register earlier this year.

Historians believe Murdoch’s letter was unashamedly partisan but played a significant part in hastening the Gallipoli evacuation. The campaign led to the deaths of more than 44,000 allied soldiers and almost 87,000 Ottoman troops before the allies evacuated in December 1915 and January 1916.

Carl Bridge, an Australian history expert at King’s College London, said the letter was highly coloured and gratuitously omitted the achievements of the regular British soldiers at Gallipoli but “contained irrefutable evidence about the plummeting morale of the Australians”.

“Murdoch, perhaps the most distinguished journalist of his generation, was sent there as Fisher’s ‘eyes and ears’ and his incendiary report found its mark in the governing seat of empire,” Professor Bridge wrote in the *The Australian*, which is owned by Rupert Murdoch’s News Corp Australia.

“Murdoch’s letter, along with a report from the South Australia-born Maurice Hankey, the British cabinet secretary, who visited Gallipoli at the

same time, and other evidence, was instrumental in the British cabinet’s decision [to evacuate].”

Michael McKernan, an Australian historian and writer, said Murdoch took considerable risks during his visit, including going as far as Quinn’s Post, the most advanced Anzac post.

“He was a brave man,” Dr McKernan told *The Telegraph*.

“He was shocked and appalled by the sickness he saw and by the conditions the men were living in. He came away deeply pessimistic and aware that there were no prospect of success. The letter was the first time there was an honest representation of the way the Gallipoli campaign was being conducted.”

Perhaps not surprisingly, The Gallipoli Letter has been an enduring source of pride for the Murdoch family.

Murdoch’s grandson Lachlan, co-chairman of News Corp, delivered a speech last year in which he drew on the letter to protest proposed national security laws which tighten controls over journalists.

“Officially, my grandfather was to report on problems with postal services to Australian troops but Fisher wanted all the facts about the campaign, honestly and unfiltered,” he said.

“Keith Murdoch’s Gallipoli letter was Australia’s boldest declaration that our nation had a right to know the truth... And like Keith Murdoch, we must have the courage to act when those freedoms are threatened.”

# BRAVO!



BDO is proud to Partner with Auckland Theatre Company. We’ve made sure their numbers add up for over ten years now and we know they’re fair dinkum professional theatre blokes and blokesses. We hope you enjoy tonight’s exclusive exposé of one of Aussie’s true blue media moguls.

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# ASB WATERFRONT THEATRE – HOME OF AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY



## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

The ASB Waterfront Theatre has progressed in leaps and bounds over the past few months. The first two sections of steel have now been erected to the fly tower and the third section is currently being erected to the north and south sides of the atrium. Similarly, the first of the concrete flooring has been laid around the stage area.

The foundations for the structure went from 60 percent to full completion recently so the construction team are turning their focus to landing the first precast panels to the western elevation. They are also being kept busy casting the concrete walls and building the blockwork walls to the ground floor.

The build is still on track for a late 2016 opening date and as we start to think about

next year's programme and the opportunities the new theatre will allow for, we could not be more excited. However we still have to raise \$1 million for fitout costs between now and then, to finish this monumental project to its full potential. We need your help to get us there by *Taking a Seat*.

## TAKE A SEAT WITH ATC

*Taking a Seat* is your chance to quite literally stamp your name on the performing arts industry in Auckland. For a donation of \$1,000 your name and message will be placed on a seat plaque in the new theatre's auditorium and you will be invited to an exclusive seat unveiling event upon its completion. Furthermore, *Take a Seat* donations can be paid in instalments and are eligible for tax rebate.

*Taking a Seat* is an investment in the next generation of arts and culture in Auckland and a truly special way to help us secure this legacy for Auckland Theatre Company. We have limited time left to raise the remaining funds so if you want to become a part of this incredible development we urge you to do so now.

You can *Take a Seat* in the ASB Waterfront Theatre simply by visiting the website [www.asbwaterfronttheatre.co.nz](http://www.asbwaterfronttheatre.co.nz) or by calling the ATC Development Team on 09 309 0390.



*Left page:* May 2015. The view of the proscenium arch, stage area, wings, sub-stage trap room and dressing rooms as they begin to take shape. *Photo: Andrew Malmo*

*Right page:* Celebrity Seat Ambassadors: Sia Trokenheim, star of TV's *Step Dave*, and comedian Te Radar have both taken seats in the ASB Waterfront Theatre. In May, they took part in an on-site photo shoot with the Sunday Star Times promoting the campaign.

## THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS OF THE ASB WATERFRONT THEATRE



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To find out more or for information on how to donate visit [www.asbwaterfronttheatre.co.nz](http://www.asbwaterfronttheatre.co.nz) or call **09 309 0390**

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# WHAT'S ON IN THEATRES AROUND THE COUNTRY?



## LYSISTRATA

by Aristophanes,  
adapted by Michael Hurst

Q Theatre

**30 July - 23 August**

To convince their men folk to end the Peloponnesian War, Lysistrata encourages the women of Athens and Sparta to abstain from sex with their husbands and partners. This strategy leads to an all-out war between the sexes and some hard bargaining from the boys. But first the women have to overcome some challenges too, not least the call of their own desires. Provocative, risqué and as relevant as ever, *Lysistrata* is guaranteed to spice up your winter nights. Sizzling!

Auckland Theatre Company



## EIGHT GIGABYTES OF HARDCORE PORNOGRAPHY

by Declan Greene

Q Theatre - Loft

**18 June - 11 July**

He's addicted to porn. She's addicted to spending. She's self-conscious about her breasts. And so is he. A tale of desperation and the lengths we'll go to find satisfaction, Australian theatre-maker Declan Greene uses his signature wit to create a wincingly hilarious and awkwardly recognisable portrait of contemporary life crisis.

Silo Theatre | Auckland



## MIDSUMMER

by David Grieg &  
Gordon McIntyre

Centrepoint Theatre

**13 June - 11 July**

A legendary lost weekend in Edinburgh.

She's a lawyer. He's a petty crim. She's totally out of his league; he's not her type at all. They absolutely should not sleep together. Which is, of course, why they do.

Centrepoint Theatre | Palmerston North



## THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

by Arthur Conan Doyle, adapted for the stage by Clive Francis

Circa

**25 July - 29 August**

Sherlock Holmes vs the Powers of Evil

A bloodcurdling howl is heard across a cold, moonlit moor; the horrifying, spectral hound has claimed another victim ...

When Sir Charles Baskerville is found dead on his remote estate, in eerie, seemingly supernatural circumstances, Sherlock Holmes, the legendary, world-famous detective, and his assistant, the ever-reliable Dr Watson, are called upon to unravel the extraordinary mystery of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

Circa Theatre | Wellington



## THE LADYKILLERS

by Graham Linehan

Tonkin & Taylor Main Stage

**25 July - 25 August**

*The Ladykillers* is a black comedy adapted by Graham Linehan (co-creator and writer of *Father Ted* and *Black Books*) from the classic 1955 Ealing Studios film of the same name.

The Court Theatre | Christchurch

For the leading news, reviews and coverage of Auckland Arts and Entertainment, see



metromag.co.nz



## PUNK ROCK

by Simon Stephens

Fortune Theatre

**27 June - 18 July**

Ferociously funny and unnerving, *Punk Rock* explores underlying jittery tensions, hormonal headiness and potential violence in a group of affluent seventeen-year-old students as they begin to plan for university and the rest of their lives. But, when a new classmate arrives, suddenly friendships are tested and allegiances shift amidst the pressures of everyday adolescence. They are faced with a very real danger that could swallow them whole.

Fortune Theatre | Dunedin

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STARRING

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**JENNIFER WARD-LEALAND**  
**SIA TROKENHEIM**

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**MICHAEL HURST**

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