

BLACK SWAN'S SOCIAL PAGE

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The Dark Room Opening Night @ PICA



Annette & David Zacher



Adam Mitchell & The Hon. John Day MLA



Alistair Kowcroft & Fiona Stretch



Fiona & Owen Andrews

God of Carnage Opening Night @ the Playhouse Theatre



Craig Whitehead & Libby Anstis



Peter & Virginia Eggleston



David Hawks & Susan Grace



Fiona Symonds & Andy Umney

For more social pics visit the shows' *Behind the Scenes* pages at www.bsstc.com.au.

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Memory of Water

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The Year of Magical Thinking

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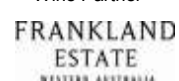


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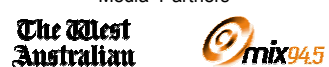
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on cue

Black Swan State Theatre Company Newsletter

2009 Winter Edition

A NOTE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



As always, we seem to be busy at Black Swan State Theatre Company. We have two shows playing back to back, first *God of Carnage* and then *The Memory of Water*. We are preparing to send Kate Mulvany's play *The Web* to Albury Wodonga to begin rehearsals there and we are auditioning for *Much Ado About Nothing*. Since closing *The Glass Menagerie* and finishing the tour of *The Year of Magical Thinking*, Black Swan has opened a very successful production of *The Dark Room* featuring the RAC sponsored Hot-Bed Ensemble and directed by Adam Mitchell.

Co-productions with interstate companies enable Black Swan State Theatre Company to employ more actors over the whole season because we share the costs of developing the production. It enables us to share resources, exchange ideas and talent between cities, expose our WA artists to artists and audiences in different cities, and expose Perth audiences to artists with different practices and ideas. I really believe that carefully established co-productions between like-minded companies are a good way to achieve best practice in a globalised economy. They also provide longer term work opportunities. Normally, an actor in a Black Swan show is employed for two months at most between rehearsals and productions, but with a co-production the actor will have nearly four months' work by the time they bump the show into another city and perform it for the usual six week season that Queensland Theatre Company and Melbourne Theatre Company have.

In the past month alone, we have conducted over one hundred auditions at Black Swan as we invited all agents to submit actors for general auditions as well as auditioning for particular upcoming projects. Shane, Adam and I attended a National Theatre Forum in Melbourne for three days, which enabled us to network and consolidate several co-productions, and we have conducted various workshops and Q&A sessions for schools.

We are interested in co-producing with companies who share similar values and aspirations. For example, we seek alignment with Queensland Theatre Company because during Michael Gow's tenure at Queensland Theatre Company he has expanded the employment opportunities for Queensland theatre artists, grown audiences and subsidies and built a substantial education programme.

We are honoured that the Hon. John Day, Minister for Planning and the Arts has attended all of our shows so far this year and that the Governor and Mrs Michael entertained Helen Morse, Paul English and myself at Government House following the extensive regional tour of *The Year of Magical Thinking*.

I hope you will all get the chance to come along and see the *The Memory of Water*. Directed by Roger Hodgman, a former Artistic Director of Melbourne Theatre Company, who has spent the last several months in Western Australia shooting the Lockie Leonard TV series, *The Memory of Water* is a delightful comedy with a twist in its tale, a warm hearted look at a fractured family that invites both our laughter and tears and features a wonderfully witty cast.

Our Rio Tinto Black Swan Commissions programme is coming on apace. We look forward to programming at least one play in next year's season and the following season, and we are proud that Black Swan is once again in the position to contribute to the national canon of Australian playwriting. We currently have seven writers under commission, and we anticipate that three of those commissions will receive main stage productions within the next two years, with the others expected to take longer to nurture and develop.

See you all in the foyer soon!

Kate Cherry

Given that *God of Carnage*, *The Web* and *The Sapphires* are all co-productions, I thought it might be timely for me to explain why co-productions are important to Black Swan's future.

Kate Cherry
Artistic Director

BLACK SWAN SNIPPETS

CONGRATULATIONS SHANE!

Congratulations to Black Swan General Manager, Shane Colquhoun for his nomination for an Australian Dance Award for Services to Dance.

CONGRATULATIONS KATE!

The Coronation of Poppea, directed by Black Swan's Artistic Director was nominated for eight Green Room Awards. Kate was awarded Best Opera Production.

DID YOU KNOW?

Michael Gow, Director of *God of Carnage*, won 7 Sydney Theatre Critics Awards and 4 Helpmann Awards, including Best New Australian Work, for his play *Toy Symphony* last year.

WELCOME SACHA MAHBOUB

A big warm welcome to Sacha Mahboub, who joins Black Swan as Wardrobe Manager. Catch Sacha's first creations on stage in *The Memory of Water*.



JOHN HOLLAND DELIVERING STATE THEATRE CENTRE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



As a driving force in the construction market in Western Australia and with 60 years experience in delivering key infrastructure works around Australia and the world, John Holland will soon deliver Perth's first State Government constructed, purpose-built facility for professional theatre.

The Centre represents a world-class addition to the arts venues of the City of Perth and, when complete, will be home to Black Swan State Theatre Company and Perth Theatre Company. Providing a functional and inspiring performance venue featuring state-of-the-art technology, the Centre will ensure that Perth audiences are able to experience world-class performances.

The design, by award-winning Kerry Hill Architects, was unanimously judged the winner of the CentreStage design competition by an international judging panel in 2005. John Holland was awarded the construction contract for the project in 2007. Construction works are expected to be complete in the first half of 2010, with the Centre to be open to the public in the second half of 2010.

The theatre is a complex construction project and a significant building challenge is effectively managing the stringent requirements for acoustic isolation. This not only means regulating acoustics inside the building in terms of performances, but also controlling noise and vibration between the performance spaces and keeping external

noise and vibration out.

A unique element of the building that further compounds the complexity of the construction process is its subterranean aspect. The building is 6.5m deep from ground level and amazingly, 82 tensioned bell piles have been used to anchor it into the ground, addressing buoyancy issues and effectively preventing it from floating up.

"We are proud to be delivering this significant Western Australian landmark that will bring new life to the Perth Cultural Centre entertainment precinct and we look forward to delivering the State Theatre Centre of Western Australia to the people of this State," said Adam Harry, General Manager, John Holland Western Region.



INTERVIEW WITH ADAM HARRY, GENERAL MANAGER, JOHN HOLLAND WESTERN REGION



John Holland is known for its long term commitment to community engagement, which of these initiatives are you most proud of? We are very proud to continue the tradition of our Chairman, Janet Holmes à Court, in supporting the arts in Western Australia. Janet's enduring commitment to the arts over many years in WA and across Australia is a great inspiration to us and was certainly a catalyst for us to form our own arts partnerships.

Our support of Black Swan State Theatre Company and the West Australian Symphony Orchestra both represent a long-term investment in the arts in WA for John Holland. Corporate sector support of the arts is essential and we believe our arts sponsorships are an excellent fit with our business, providing an opportunity for exposure to two of Perth's eminent arts organisations for both our clients and our employees.

In what ways do you see the new State Theatre Centre of WA contributing to the community? When complete, the State Theatre Centre of Western Australia will represent a defining architectural landmark for Perth, providing an inspiring, world-class venue for contemporary performers in theatre and dance.

The construction of this iconic facility represents an important investment by the State Government in public infrastructure to be enjoyed by future generations of West Australians. For John Holland, this project represents an opportunity to leave a legacy as the builder of this unique, world-class facility that will be of great significance to the community and to the arts in Western Australia for many years to come.

The State Theatre Centre of Western Australia will bring new life to the Northbridge cultural and entertainment precinct and will

eventually form the centre piece of the Northbridge Link project that will see the Perth CBD reunited with Northbridge through the undergrounding of the intervening railway line.

Whom would you award a medal, and why? In all honesty, I would have to say, Janet Holmes à Court. One of the greatest aspects of joining John Holland for me has been the opportunity to work alongside Janet. It would be difficult for anyone not to see her as a great inspiration and certainly someone to look up to and learn from.

Janet is one of Australia's most admired and respected citizens, recognised both for her accomplishments in business and her extensive commitments to charitable, community and cultural endeavours. It might surprise West Australians to know that Janet is just as well known for her community work and commitment to the arts in other states like Victoria and New South Wales as she is here in WA. For us, it is a privilege to have her working with us here, whilst being such a strong national ambassador.

She is an amazing woman and her genuine interest in improving the lives of those around her is truly commendable. Her business leadership and sense of community is something we at John Holland can all aspire to and be proud of.

Which of your achievements are you particularly proud of?

Aside from family, of course ... I believe one of my strengths as a leader is the ability to encourage and guide the people around me to achieve something that they didn't necessarily think was possible. It is extremely satisfying for me to see someone push their personal boundaries and grow from that experience.

I firmly believe that you are only as good as the people around you and I am fortunate to have a great team to work with at John Holland.

THE SUCCESS OF THE HOTBED ENSEMBLE: WHERE OUR ARTISTS ARE NOW

The HotBed Ensemble has proven to be a successful launching pad for young and emerging artists and we are trying to keep tabs on what the past and present members of the HotBed Ensemble are up to. This is where some of our HotBed Ensemble Alumni are appearing in theatre, film and TV in Perth and beyond...

2006 HotBed artist, Bryn Coldrick appeared in the short film **Conscience** which was screened this year at the Short Film Corner at the Cannes Film Festival. Thomas Papathanassiou's (2008) solo show **Looming the Memory** had a successful season at La Mama and is now headed to the Darwin International Arts Festival and the Singapore and New York Fringe Festivals. He also appeared in the world premiere of **Cafe Rebetika** in Melbourne last month.

Brian Liu (2007) will appear soon in **The Ships Pass Quietly** and Ben Russell (2008) had a hugely successful Melbourne Comedy Festival Show **Manface**. Fellow 2008 HotBed artist, Amanda Woodhams is making her mainstage debut at Black Swan in **The Web** in September and Jo Morris (2008) is working in Canada. Brendan Ewing (also 2008) appeared in **Antigone** for the Perth International Arts Festival and his band **The Devil Rides Out** recently won a WAMI award. Brad Reid (2008) is designing **Les Miserables** at the Regal Theatre later in the year.

Matt Lutton, HotBed Ensemble director until 2006, is developing his company Thinlce with great success and is currently present-

ing **The Duel** with Sydney Theatre Company in Sydney and at PICA later this month.

Wyatt Nixon-Lloyd (2006) and Luke Ryan (2007) are working in Melbourne on their comedy piece, Zoe Pepper (2006) has been working in London and is back in Perth developing the new musical **Heart of Gold** which will hit the stage later in the year. Michelle Robin-Anderson (2007) has been working with Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, Jeffrey Jay Fowler (2007) recently appeared in **Alaska** at the Blue Room Theatre, Sarah Reuben (2007) is also overseas pursuing further studies in the USA and Talei Howell-Price (2006) is producing a new work with Longwood Productions and deckchair theatre.

The 2009 HotBed artists have also found some very exciting ways to keep themselves busy until they begin rehearsals for **pool (no water)** in August. Kazimir Sas (2009) is on location shooting the TV series **Lockie Leonard 2**, Arielle Gray is in America pursuing physical theatre training, Will O'Mahony is trekking in Nepal, Jacinta John is shooting the feature film **Something of Vengeance** in Sydney and Natalie Holmwood is off to Barcelona to participate in workshops at the Actors Centre.

"Bryn Coldrick appeared in the short film 'Conscience' which was screened this year at the Short Film Corner in Cannes Film Festival."



From left: *The Visit* (2005), *Falling Petals* (2006), *The Laramie Project* (2007), *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (2008) and *The Dark Room* (2009).

ARE YOU READY FOR BOOT CAMP?

Actors Boot Camp

Date: **Thursday 23 Jul - Thursday 24 Sep**

When: **Every Thursday 7 - 9pm**

Where: **Old Masonic Hall, 6 Broadway, Nedlands**

Tutors: **Adam Mitchell, Thomas Papathanassiou, Polly Low, Andy Fraser and Kenneth Ransom**

Cost: **\$275 incl. GST for 10 weeks**

Actors Boot Camp is bringing together some of Perth's finest actors, directors and theatre practitioners to 'shape up' the course participants, boot camp style. Participants will have two workshops with each specialised practitioner, learning skills in the areas of voice, movement, the Stanislavski system and script analysis, audition techniques and self-devised theatre.

Adam Mitchell, Black Swan's Associate Director and Director of The HotBed Ensemble, will kick start the workshops with two weeks of **Audition Techniques**, followed by two weeks of intensive lessons on **Self-Devised Theatre** with Thomas Papathanassiou, 2008 HotBed Ensemble Artist and Best Actor (2006 WA Guild Equity Awards). Polly Low, professional actor of nearly thirty years, will lead the troops for two weeks of **Voice Care and Skills**. Then Andy Fraser, the only certified fight director and

stage combat instructor in WA, will tackle **Stage Combat**. To conclude the course, participants will join Kenneth Ransom for an introduction to **Stanislavski System of Script Analysis**.

If you take acting seriously, then this is the course for you. Take control of your passion of theatre and perform at your peak with the best advice from Perth's theatre experts.

To secure your place in **Actors Boot Camp** visit www.bsstc.com.au to download an enrolment form or contact Alena Tompkins on (08) 6389 0311 or alena@bsstc.com.au.

Enrolments close 5pm Tuesday 21 July 2009.

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH DEAN NALDER, AUSTRALIA POST COMMERCIAL MANAGER WA



Australia Post are a long standing supporter of Black Swan State Theatre Company, having been involved with the Company for over 15 years. Commercial Manager WA - Australia Post, Dean Nalder's granted On Cue an exclusive interview.

contribute to our wellbeing as a family.

As a child, you wanted to be like ...? My father and grandfather - both well respected for how they conducted themselves on a personal level, and also for what they accomplished in life - they were very successful men professionally.

Whom would you award a medal, and why? This is a timely question because in late June, as part of Australia Post's Bicentenary program, I am presenting Bicentenary Medals to some of our people in acknowledgement of their outstanding commitment to their respective roles, ability to go above and beyond what is required and contribution to the community.

What do you find most rewarding about sponsoring the WA arts community? I think the arts provide an essential layer of colour and vibrancy to the community and in WA this is particularly evident in the local talent we are fortunate to enjoy.

Which of your achievements are you particularly proud of? My children are my greatest achievement and they make me proud everyday. I am very fortunate that I have a healthy, happy family. I feel proud of all of our individual achievements that when combined,

How do you relax? My family is my priority and my greatest joy, so in order to truly relax I spend time with them on holiday; whether that is camping in tents down south or embarking on an adventure further afield.

KEN RANSOM TALKS TO ON CUE IN LEAD UP TO MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING



Ken Ransom, talented actor and husband of Artistic Director, Kate Cherry spoke to *On Cue* about his passion for Shakespeare. Kate and Ken will work together on *Much Ado About Nothing* in August and Sep-

tember with Ken cast to play Benedick under Kate's direction.

You have gained a wealth of experience acting for theatre, film and television. What has been one of the most memorable moments of your career? Meeting Debbie Allen and getting that first professional role in the television version of *FAME* would be high on my list. I knew that I had to deal with the fact that I was auditioning for someone that I regarded so highly so I marched right in and shook her hand and said, "It's such a pleasure to meet you, I admire your work so much." I knew that if I didn't deal with the fact that she was in the room, I would have spent the entire audition thinking: "It's Debbie Allen, it's Debbie Allen." I dealt with it and I got the role.

Working on *Equal Justice* with another actor I admire, Joe Morton, was a highlight and the role allowed me to do some of the best work I've ever done for the camera. I also loved being in the first season of *The Secret Life of Us*, playing Bradley. That came about through Roger Hodgman, who's here in Perth at the moment directing *The Memory of Water* for Black Swan. I'd worked with him on stage and he thought I might be good for the role.

On stage, my memorable moments would all be in Australia: doing *Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train* for Red Stitch in Melbourne was remarkable as my role, Lucius, is such a tour de

force; playing Darren Lemming in *Take Me Out* for Melbourne Theatre Company, as it was the role that best encompasses all that I am and all that I value and I got to do it with my life partner, Kate Cherry; and then, last year, in *McRee* at the Ensemble in Sydney, I played the title character in a political piece that's was very timely and my performance got a lot of positive attention.

You have had a lot of experience with Shakespeare. Set to play Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing*, what is your favorite Shakespearean play and why? I really don't have a favorite, as I love the entire canon, with the possible exception of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* all play large roles in my Shakespeare appreciation, as they do for many people. But I also like some of his less popular plays like *The Winter's Tale*, *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*. Our son is named after a character in *As You Like It*, which is the first Shakespeare play I performed in professionally. People are often surprised that I don't favour *Othello*, presumably because of my racial background. I do admire the play, but am most interested in its exploration of a celebrated outsider, the fact that he's black is just another point of intersection. If pressed I'd probably have to say *Romeo and Juliet*, as it's about the transformative power of love.

If you could play any character in any production, what would it be and why? This brings us back to *Othello*. It's the role I'm destined to do at some point. I do think I'm a bit young at the moment. But I'm sure I'll do it when the time is right. I've always wanted to do *Hamlet*, as I think it's the role I'm best suited for, but, sadly, I think my moment may have passed.

WHAT'S COMING UP FROM YOUR SUBSCRIBER INCENTIVE PARTNERS

WA Ballet

Romeo and Juliet
3 - 18 July

Black Swan Subscribers receive 10% off full price adult tickets to **Romeo and Juliet**.

WA Opera

The Pearlfishers
8, 11, 13, 15, 18, 20, 22 Aug

Mention you are a Black Swan subscriber and save between 5% and 15% on 2009 WA Opera productions.

WASO

Stravinsky's Petrushka
7.30pm, Fri 11 & Sat 12 Sept

Black Swan Subscribers receive 10% off full price adult tickets to **Stravinsky's Petrushka**.

LUNA PALACE CINEMA

Winged Creatures
Starts Thursday 9th July

Black Swan subscribers can purchase \$13 tickets to see any in-season screening of **Winged Creatures** at Cinema Paradiso.

MUSICA VIVA

Steven Isserlis and Dénes Varjon
21 July

Musica Viva Australia offers Black Swan subscribers 10% discount on tickets to **Steven Isserlis and Dénes Varjon**

PICA

Putting on an Act
28 July - 1 August

Black Swan Subscribers receive members' prices for all 2009 PICA ticketed performances and events at PICA.

To redeem your discount mention you are a Black Swan Subscriber at the time of purchase. *Musica Viva*, *WA Ballet* and *WA Opera* bookings through *BOCS Ticketing* on 9484 1133. *WASO* bookings on 9326 0000, *PICA* tickets are available on 9228 6300 and *Luna Palace Cinema* tickets are available at the door.



ROGER HODGMAN DIRECTS ONE OF HIS FAVOURITE PLAYS, *THE MEMORY OF WATER*

Black Swan is delighted to welcome acclaimed theatre and television director Roger Hodgman to Perth to direct Shelagh Stephenson's hilarious comedy, *The Memory of Water*.



We last saw your work at Black Swan in Copenhagen in 2002, what do you find most exciting about being back at Black Swan and directing *The Memory of Water*? I've loved working at Black Swan in my previous visits - for *Closer*, *Art* and *Copenhagen*. A large part of the attraction is working with new actors and designers and for a great company. Part of it is spending some weeks in Perth in winter! I've known and respected Kate Cherry for quite a while and

was delighted when she asked me to be part of her first season. Even better, she suggested a play I'd wanted to direct for several years!

What attracted you to this particular play? The rigorous balance between comedy and seriousness, the beautifully accurate portrayal of a family at a key moment of its life, the great characters and the subversive humour. It's a very clever play, while also being a truthful and heartfelt one.

While you were Artistic Director of the Vancouver Playhouse you had the opportunity to work closely with Tennessee Williams. What did you take away from this experience? The joy of working with one of the theatre's true geniuses. The second time was on an adaptation of Chekhov's *Seagull*, which I had commissioned (with the Vancouver Playhouse) and he sent me the

key scenes on hotel notepaper from around the world. Rehearsals were approaching and he hadn't finished the other scenes, so he came up to Vancouver and I spent every morning with him for a few weeks as he worked on the rest. Watching his process, hearing him trying out the lines until he was happy with the cadence and discussing the nuances of the text was a wonderful experience. He was a warm, and generous collaborator, a keen watcher at rehearsals, an inveterate fiddler with his own text, an hilarious dinner companion. Thoroughly memorable.

"I've known and respected Kate Cherry for quite a while and was delighted when she asked me to be part of her first season. Even better, she suggested a play I'd wanted to direct for several years!"

What are some of the other most memorable moments of your career? Directing five Sondheim musicals - two of them twice. Directing *Wonderful Town* and *She Loves Me* with large budgets for the prestigious Shaw Festival recently. The twenty four hours where I saw three of my productions in three cities - *Sweeney Todd* at the Brisbane Expo (for one night in front of several thousand Sondheim fans), a dress rehearsal of Michael Gow's *Europe* (on tour in Sydney) and the last half of a performance of *As You Like it* in Melbourne!

THE MEMORY OF WATER OPENS SOON AT THE PLAYHOUSE THEATRE



The Memory of Water tells the story of three sisters coming together under traumatic circumstances. As each of them struggles to come to grips with the loss of their mother in her own way, their reunion takes more than one unexpected turn.

Sisters Mary, Teresa and Catherine gather together at their childhood home on the eve of their mother's funeral, each haunted by their own demons. As this fiery reunion of three very different women unfolds, childhood battle lines are unearthed and redrawn, memories are disputed and reinvented, life choices are analysed, and grief gives way to cathartic giggling fits. In the best tradition of British black humour, this award winning comedy by Shelagh Stephenson offers equal measures of heart, tears and laughter.

Showing at the Playhouse Theatre from 4 to 19 July, **The Memory of Water** is sure to entertain mothers, daughters, sister, girlfriends and the men who love them.

The Memory of Water rehearsal images by Gary Marsh.

BLACK SWAN SNIPPETS

AUDIO DESCRIPTION SERVICE AVAILABLE AT THE PLAYHOUSE

AEG Ogden have introduced a new audio descriptor service for the vision impaired. For full information visit www.bsstc.com.au/venue-information-accessibility.

RUSSELL GOLDSMITH NOMINATED FOR TONY AWARD

Russell Goldsmith, sound designer for *The Web* was nominated for the 2009 Tony Sound Design Award for his sound design on *Exit the King*.

CONGRATULATIONS, IT'S A BOY!

All at Black Swan congratulate *God of Carnage* actor, Benj D'Addario and actor Ali van Reeken on the birth of their first child. Ali gave birth to a beautiful baby boy on 16 June.