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KensingtonSwan SEASON OF

Rosencrantz
& Guildenstern
Are Dead ^{x x} _☹

BY TOM STOPPARD

EDUCATION PACK

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- Photography or recording of any kind is strictly prohibited.
- Eating and drinking in the auditorium is strongly discouraged.
- Please make sure all cell phones are turned off.
- Please don't bring school bags to the theatre.

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Venue:	ASB Waterfront Theatre, 138 Halsey Street, Wynyard Quarter, Auckland
School Matinee:	Wednesday 18 and 25 September at 11am
Running Time:	2 hours and 30 minutes, plus a 20-minute interval
Post-Show Forum:	In the theatre immediately after the performance (15 – 20mins)
Suitability:	This production is suitable for Year Levels 11 – 13
Advisory:	Contains sexual references and threats of violence



KensingtonSwan SEASON OF
*Rosencrantz
& Guildenstern
Are Dead*
BY TOM STOPPARD



CAST

Rosencrantz — **Tom Clarke** | Guildenstern — **Freya Finch**
The Player — **Rima Te Wiata** | Gertrude — **Lisa Chappell**
Polonius — **Bruce Phillips** | Claudius — **Simon Prast**
Hamlet — **Joe Witkowski** | Ophelia — **Brynley Stent**
Alfred — **Andrew Eddey** | Players — **Matthew Moore,**
Grace Bentley-Tsibuah and **Robin Kelly**

CREATIVE

Playwright — **Tom Stoppard** | Director — **Benjamin Henson**
Set Designer — **Rachael Walker** | Lighting Designer — **Rachel Marlow**
Sound Designer — **Robin Kelly** | Costume Designer — **Nic Smillie**
Movement Director — **Matthew Moore**

PRODUCTION

Production Manager — **Andrew Malmo**
Company Manager (Maternity Cover) — **Nicole Arrow**
Technical Manager — **Abby Clearwater** | Stage Manager — **Kate Sibley**
Assistant Stage Manager — **Jack Powell** | Flyman — **Chris Wardle**
Technical Operators — **Zach Howells** and **Ruby van Dorp**
Costume Construction and Wardrobe Supervisor — **Sheridan Miller**
Props Master — **Kathryn Aucamp** | Set Construction — **2Construct**
Vocal Coach — **Kirstie O'Sullivan**

CREATIVE LEARNING

Associate Director — **Lynne Cardy** | Youth Arts Coordinator — **Mile Fane**
Teaching Artists — **Meg Sydenham, Nathalie Morris** and **Anthony Crum**
Education Pack Writer — **Lynne Cardy**
Production designs courtesy of **Rachael Walker** and **Nic Smillie**
Graphic Design — **Wanda Tambrin** | Production Images — **Andi Crown**

"...the play *Hamlet* and the characters Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are the only play and the only characters on which you could write my kind of play"

Tom Stoppard



About The Play

Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* was first produced at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 1966. It was revived by the National Theatre at The Old Vic, London in 1967, and later successfully transferred to Broadway winning the Tony Award for Best Play (1968), New York Drama Critics Circle Best Play (1968) and Outer Critics Circle Outstanding Production (1969). The play launched Stoppard's long-running career as a playwright and screen writer.

Brief Synopsis

The play opens 'on the road to Elsinore' with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern tossing a coin that lands on heads each time, an improbability that baffles them. They realise they cannot remember a past before coin tossing and only vaguely recall being summoned to the king. They meet a group of actors (the Tragedians), led by the Player. As the actors put on a play, the scene shifts to the royal castle of Denmark.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern meet the unbalanced Hamlet. Claudius and Gertrude greet them, but mix up their names, and explain that since

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Hamlet's childhood friends, the King and Queen want them to uncover the cause of his recent transformation.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern then try to determine Hamlet's sanity. The Tragedians return and put on a show that mirrors the plot of *Hamlet*. Claudius interrupts rehearsal to announce that Hamlet has murdered Polonius and to charge Rosencrantz and Guildenstern with arresting Hamlet. They eventually find the prince and travel by boat to escort him to England and deliver a letter to the king.





Shakespeare's Hamlet

Before you see *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* it would be useful to read *Hamlet*. Alternatively, a brief outline is provided here:

Old Hamlet, King of Denmark, has been murdered by his brother Claudius, who has seduced Gertrude, the King's wife. Claudius has supplanted on the throne the dead man's son – also named Hamlet – and married the widow with indecent haste. Young Hamlet meets the ghost of his dead father, who relates the circumstances of his murder and demands vengeance. Hamlet vows obedience, and counterfeits madness to escape the suspicion that he is threatening danger to the King.

His behaviour is attributed to love for Ophelia (daughter of Polonius, the Court Chamberlain) whom, he has previously courted but now treats rudely. University friends of Hamlet, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, are summoned by Claudius to glean what afflicts the young Prince. He tests the ghost's story by having a play acted before the King, reproducing the

circumstances of the murder, and the King betrays himself. A scene follows in which Hamlet violently upbraids the Queen. Thinking he hears the King listening behind the arras, he draws his sword and kills instead Polonius.

The King now determines to destroy Hamlet. He sends him with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern on a mission to England, with intent to have him killed there. But when pirates attack the ship Hamlet escapes and arrives back in Denmark to find that Ophelia, crazed by grief, has perished by drowning. Her brother, Laertes, has hurried home from Paris to take vengeance for the death of his father. The King contrives a fencing match between Hamlet and Laertes, in which the latter uses a poisoned sword and kills Hamlet; but not before Hamlet has mortally wounded Laertes and stabbed the King; while Gertrude has drunk a cup of poison intended for her son. In his dying words Hamlet chooses Fortinbras, a militant young Norwegian, as his successor.



Theatre Forms

Like the two tramps Estragon and Vladimir in *Waiting for Godot*, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern exist in a world utterly beyond their comprehension. They too are passive observers to the action around them. They often misunderstand each other and engage in nonsensical dialogue.

Stoppard acknowledged Beckett's play as one influence, saying "it really redefined the minima of theatrical experience." But there were other influences too such as T.S Eliot's *Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock* and of course Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Stoppard saw his title characters as "a couple of bewildered innocents rather than a couple of henchmen, which is the usual way they are depicted in *Hamlet*"

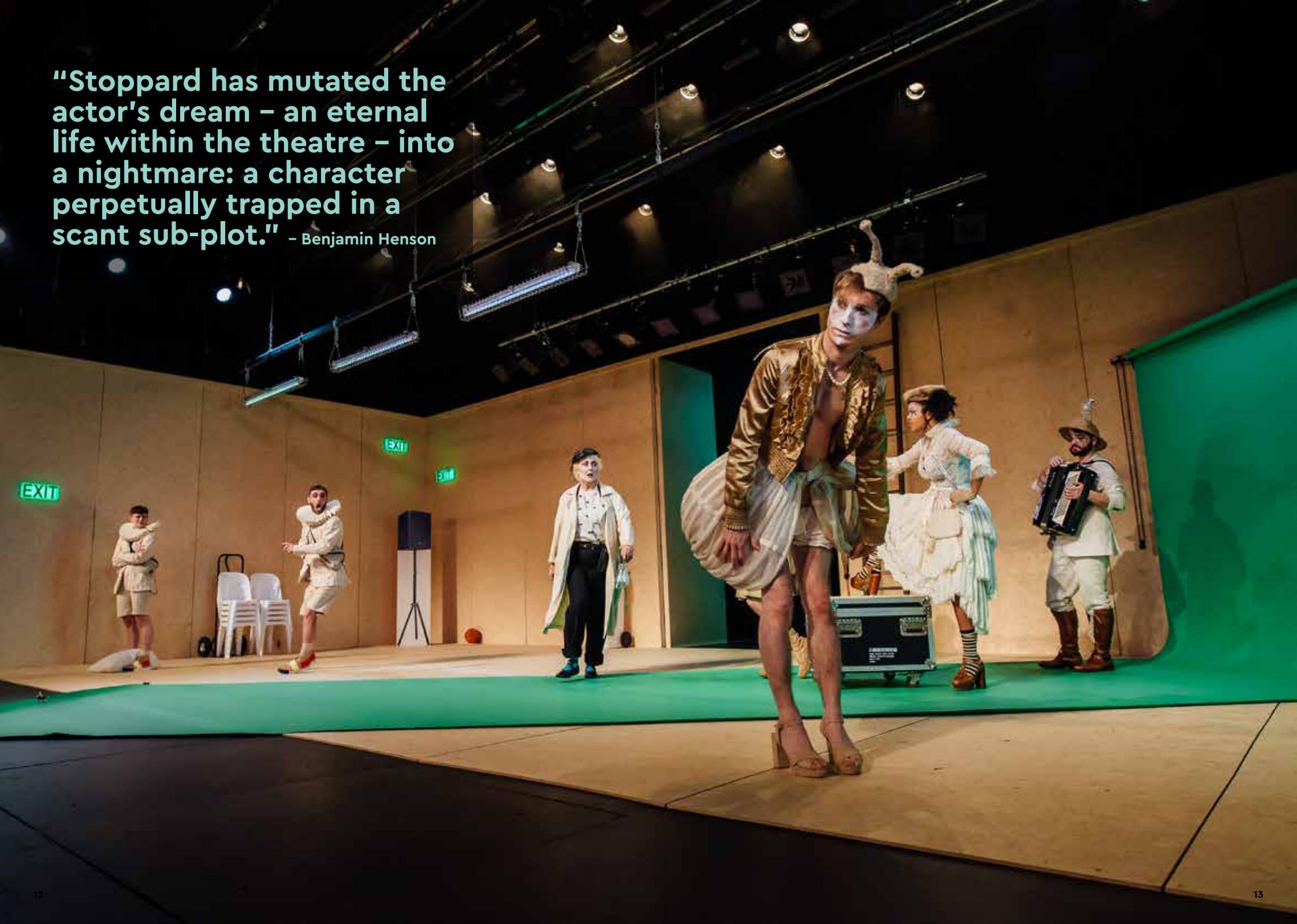
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead is a meta-theatrical tragicomedy that includes many of the hallmarks of the Theatre of the Absurd.

A metatheatrical play comments on itself and draws attention to the fact that the actors are actors, and the story is not 'real', by breaking down the fourth wall between the performers and the audience. In *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* we are asked never to forget that we are watching a play in a theatre, and the comic potential of this is used throughout.

In contrast with conventional plays where characters have clearly defined roles, motives and desires, the Theatre of the Absurd emphasises the randomness of human nature by using often disjointed, meaningless and repetitious dialogue. The plots often lack realistic development and the characters engage in confusing situations.

Elements of both theatre forms are underlined in this production by the director's vision and the production design.

"Stoppard has mutated the actor's dream – an eternal life within the theatre – into a nightmare: a character perpetually trapped in a scant sub-plot." – Benjamin Henson





From The Director

VISION

Benjamin Henson sees *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* as a play about theatre that is a spin-off on Shakespeare's most famous play on acting and theatre. In his production *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern* are in the ultimate actor's nightmare – waking up in a play they are not prepared for.

Benjamin sets the action in a rehearsal room, saying; "...there's a theory out there that our dreams are a rehearsal for our lives. Actors innately know this; life's a gift and they get to practice, not only their own dreams, but an inexhaustible canon of other people's. In fact, for theatre folk, the daily grind consists of toying around with imagined realities and make-believe; constantly

grappling with the paradox of making made-up stuff seem very real. For a time at least. And that time in the rehearsal room becomes a unique journey, much like life. We search for meaning; choose to believe what's in front of us – or not. We re-examine, and adapt, and forge ahead with the hope that it all means something; a single assumption that makes our existence viable, that someone is watching.

Benjamin enjoys the meta-theatricality of the production design too, recreating, "...a practice space, within a stage, within a theatre, for a play that explores a play-within-a-play based on Shakespeare's dossier on acting and theatre."

PROCESS

So, what goes into directing a production of the scale of *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*? Benjamin shares some of his process.

1. Preparation

Prepping the script is the most important part of getting ready for rehearsals. I call it "moving in" to my script; which involves a close reading

"Plays are a music score and they have a distinct rhythm. This is especially true for comedy, where the rhythm is key..."

of every scene; a short description of what happens in that scene and who is in it (scene population) and I even make drawings of ideas.

My notes are prompts for me; reminders of what I want to express to the actors; buzzwords I could give to

them to inspire a tone or atmosphere; and in the case with Shakespeare, definitions of certain words or imagery.

I also break down each scene into smaller chunks. I call them "Events". Other directors might call them "Beats" or "Units". I mark them in a pencil line on my script. Plays are a music score and they have a distinct rhythm. This is especially true for comedy, where the rhythm is key to whether it's funny or not: say it one way, the actor will get a laugh; fail to embody the 'ta dum!' and they won't.

Breaking down scenes in this way is not a science but comes from instinct. In plays like *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* the characters are battling the language back and forth until someone scores a point (ie: a laugh from the audience). If the actors aren't clear when these sparring matches are fought and won, they won't know the punchline they're building toward.

2. In Rehearsal

In the first week of rehearsals, I sit with the actors around the table and we'll mark out these "Events" all together. To encourage their appreciation of the

play as a score, I'll ring a bell each time I've placed a pencil line across my page. The crispness of the sound is mimicking the cartoon "ping!" of a lightbulb above the characters heads. This keeps the thoughts of the characters fresh and the delivery of the text clean. The actors in the scene know the steppingstones they're working together to deliver, and it makes the physical action of the scene so much clearer.

Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead is a unique beast because of its mash-up of worlds; the bewildered innocents of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*; the flagrant Tragedians and the high-octane action of *Hamlet*. Taming this wayward play has been a lesson in creative scheduling. I've had to be extremely clear about what point of focus is the priority in which rehearsal. I spent a week with Freya and Tom (*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*) and Rima (*The Player*) only; with the language as the focus, before the rest of the cast joined us.

3. Production week

Moving into the theatre, the aim is to have your creative team (designers) as inspired and prepared as far in advance

as possible. With the set and costume designer this process has begun well before rehearsals start, because they are generating the world the other designers (sound, lighting and AV) are 'colouring-in'. Before rehearsals begin, I make each member of the team a table of their cues and suggestions for what each cue (moment) should make the audience feel. The next stage of the process is for the designers to test out their ideas in the final runs inside the rehearsal room. When we get into the theatre, the designers are in a creative space where they feel the freedom to hone and refine their input to the show.

And for the actors? Well, it's the most heartbreaking part of directing; your aim should be for the actors not to need you anymore. Like a parent dropping your child off to the first term of school, the hope is you've filled them with the grounding and confidence to run through the gate and not look back.

See the Scene Population chart on the next couple of pages as an example of how Benjamin broke down the play before rehearsals started.

Scene Population Act One						
Scene	Characters				Pages	Total
1.1	Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have forgotten who, what, where and why they are; but pass the time tossing coins. Remarkably the coins all land heads causing Guildenstern to panic that something is cosmically amiss. Eventually the pair twig they were sent for – this nowhere space must be the road to Elsinore – that's right, they were sent for and Elsinore must be their destination. They almost grasp their purpose – to move forward at least, when a troupe of performers arrive.					
	Rosencrantz Guildenstern				7–16 (9)	2
1.2	The 'Tragedians', led by The Player, are a ramshackle bunch of performers also on their way to Elsinore. Though they forget momentarily who is who, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern introduce themselves. The Player sees an opportunity to capture a paying audience. Times being what they are, the troupe supplement their income by performing tawdry romps that trickle into obscene recreations, bubbling into participatory orgies. Outraged to have met pornographers and prostitutes, Ros + Guil try to move on. When The Player becomes insistent, they trick her by proposing a fraudulent bet. Falling for it, The Player and her troupe must perform for free. As they prepare, Ros + Guil toss a coin that finally lands tails. Immediately they are whisked away to –					
	Rosencrantz. Guildenstern.	Player. Alfred.	Tragedian 1 Tragedian 2.	Tragedian 3	16 – 25 (9)	7
1.3.A	The Court. While sewing in her bedroom, Ophelia is surprised by a manic Hamlet. He takes her by the arm before crying out and leaving cryptically. Running from the room, she is met by her father Polonius. She frantically explains what happened as Polonius leads her away. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have witnessed all of this.					
	Rosencrantz. Guildenstern.	Ophelia. Hamlet	Polonius		26 – 26 (1/2)	5
1.3.B	Claudius and Gertrude sweep in and welcome R+G. They've called them here to find out why Hamlet is behaving so strangely. Claudius promises them they'll be paid handsomely for their efforts. Polonius interrupts them, claiming he knows why Hamlet is behaving the way he is – he's in love with Ophelia.					
	Rosencrantz. Guildenstern.	Claudius Gertrude.	Polonius	Attendant 1 (SM) Attendant 2 (Dresser)	26 – 29 (3)	7
1.3.C	Left alone again, R+G panic at being given their task – to glean what afflicts their old friend Hamlet. To prepare themselves, they practise at 'Questions' in a rapid-fire competition.					
	Rosencrantz Guildenstern				29–34 (5)	2

Scene Population Act One – continued						
Scene	Characters				Pages	Total
1.3.D	Hamlet passes by with his book of words, words, words. Instead of taking their chance at quizzing him, R+G instead become distracted by having gotten each other's names right. This achievement doesn't last long, however. They continue to practise by engaging in a role play as Hamlet.					
	Rosencrantz. Guildenstern	Hamlet (runs by)			34 – 40 (6)	3
1.4	Hamlet enters, tormenting Polonius with a showy act of madness. As Polonius leaves, Hamlet spots R+G. He welcomes them to Elsinore, taking them by the shoulders. The stage transitions through time as Hamlet talks to them.					
	Rosencrantz. Guildenstern.	Hamlet Polonius		40 – 42 (2)	4	
2.1.A	The time lapse has skipped over Hamlet 2.2 where Hamlet has run rings around his friends and quickly gleaned from them they've been sent for by Claudius and Gertrude to spy on him. They from him, however, get nothing. He leaves them dumbfounded and none the wiser.					
	Rosencrantz. Guildenstern.	Hamlet			42 – 43 (1)	3
2.1.B	Rosencrantz despairs at having been "murdered" at questions by Hamlet. The pair quickly become distracted trying to ascertain the direction of the sun to work out where they are and what the time is. They fail. They have nothing left to do but to wait.... Ros plays a game with a coin to cheer Guil up. The coin disappears.					
	Rosencrantz Guildenstern				43 – 48 (5)	2
2.1.C	Polonius welcomes The Tragedians to the Court. Hamlet takes The Player aside to request an inserted speech into "The Murder of Gonzago", which he intends to goad Claudius: "The play's the thing, wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king!"					
	Rosencrantz Guildenstern.	Polonius Hamlet.	(Walks by with The Players) The Player		48 – 48 (1/2)	9
2.2.A	Left alone, R+G can't escape The Player, who is furious at having been left performing to no one. The Player describes the pain and embarrassment in great detail and length. R+G reveal they've been tasked with finding what's up with Hamlet. The Player had already clocked that Polonius thinks Hamlet's in love with Ophelia. The Player goes off to learn her new lines.					
	Rosencrantz. Guildenstern	The Player			48 – 54 (6)	3

Themes

UNCERTAINTY AND CONFUSION

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern often lose track of themselves or mix up their own names. They don't know where they are, or what they are supposed to be doing. Their memories are unreliable. They have a sense of being called on by a messenger, but they can't be sure. They don't know who to trust (even themselves). Every time they seem to be about to make a decision that could bring certainty, a scene from *Hamlet* sweeps onto the stage disrupting them. They don't understand that they are in *Hamlet*, even though we, the audience, do.

ISOLATION VERSUS COMMUNITY

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are isolated. While they interact with several other characters, in what seems (to them) to be random interjections, they constantly feel like outsiders. Sometimes characters in *Hamlet* don't even notice they are there, or they get them mixed up. They have difficulty understanding one another, which

adds to their sense of isolation. The Tragedians, and the *Hamlet* characters, on the other hand, exist in communities with leaders, relationships, roles and motives. They seem to know their purpose. They give instructions, make decisions, take action, and in the case of *The Player*, seem to know more than they are letting on.

FATE AND CHANCE

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are constantly anxious, their anxiety growing as they strive to understand their fate. They play games to distract themselves from their plight, like the coin toss at the beginning, the coin hiding game and word games like the question game, to which they return. Playing these games, giving themselves over to chance, underlines the sense that these characters are passive spectators to the events going on around them, whilst also emphasising the meta theatricality of the play – these are all players, playing games.



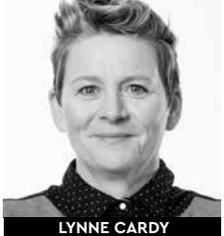
Playing Rosencrantz

Interview with Tom Clarke

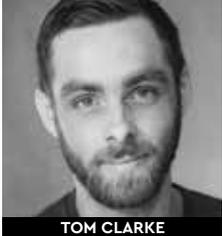
During rehearsals, ATC Associate Director, Lynne Cardy asked Tom Clarke to talk about getting inside the character of Rosencrantz.

Tom Clarke is an actor and theatre-maker who graduated from Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School in 2016. Tom has appeared in Wellington Paranormal and the Pop-Up Globe seasons of *Macbeth* and *The Comedy of Errors*. Tom won Best Actor in the Wellington 2015 Short+Sweet Festival. He also won Best Male Newcomer (2016) and Actor of the Year (2017) in the Wellington Theatre Awards. He made his Auckland Theatre Company debut last year in *Shortland Street – The Musical*.





LYNNE CARDY



TOM CLARKE

What is the best thing about playing Rosencrantz?

The words! My favourite bits are when Freya (Guildenstern) and I are bashing words out together one after the other. Stoppard writes so deliciously it's almost like beat poetry, but sillier. The way he plays on a single word like 'see' or 'know' and conjures up a conversation that relies solely on the idioms that can be generated from them is so much fun. I find it pleasurable to feel how athletic you can get as you build on those runs of phrases. Each actor's line leads to the next, each climbing a ladder of tension and stupidity and silliness until... BAM! we get the punchline and reset to zero. Freya is so adept at it; it makes it even better. We're building the music of the language together and when we hit it right it sings, and it's very funny.

What's the biggest challenge?

This play is loaded with epiphanies, big moments of silence, realisations, discoveries, and terrifying creeping anxieties. I am finding it tricky to play these with truth. I have a bit of work to do in getting my internal monologue up and going (that's basically what I'm saying to myself in my head, which is what Rosencrantz is thinking). It helps me physically follow his train of thought more clearly. So, the challenges are acting all these pauses and silences, and keeping the rhythm of them.

What are your top tips for a young actor preparing for a big role like Rosencrantz?

Learn the lines before you start. Learn them so you are word perfect and they are sitting in your brain as clearly as you know your name. If Freya and I hadn't spent the month before rehearsals started doing hours of work with each other to learn them, we would be so much further behind. Learning the lines has helped us go far, fast. And it was anxiety reducing. I felt free to try stuff out, and I discovered more because I wasn't focusing on trying to remember the words. The second tip is to take time to talk about what the play means. Have big conversations about the meaty bits in your play that might be the scariest to act because they're the most 'emotional'. Those sections that deal with big emotions for the character are sometimes so hard for me because I stop listening to the text and myself and my partner and start trying to work out if I'm emotional enough. Not good. That's why I think it's so important to talk through these sections and unpack why the character is feeling this way, and understand it, not just academically. Try remembering what that might feel like. I'm not advocating trying to recall something traumatic like your pet dying in order to get emotional, but to know what you're talking about, and understand how that moment might be for this character. Even if you feel the stakes in your body once, then you can help get that truth out.





Production Design



Set designer Rachael Walker brings the play-within-a-play setting to life in her meta theatrical design.

The show opens with the house curtain down and the sound of an orchestra tuning up. The curtain flies out to reveal a wooden (plywood) rehearsal room, pared back to the most basic elements. The road to Elsinore is represented by a roll of photopaper, a greenscreen (where you can 'be' anywhere you like).

Other rehearsal room elements include:

- Plastic chairs
- Several EXIT signs – Rosencrantz and Guildenstern never take them.
- The Tragedians travel with road cases – like a rock band – their stage is made of four cases tied together.
- The ship-board barrels are wheelie bins
- Scripts carried by the *Hamlet* cast
- A ladder
- A row of stage lights
- A speaker on a stand

Another key aspect of the design is colour blocking, which is used throughout. The set changes colour five times, as do the costumes of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, but they are always one colour behind – out of steps with the others – emphasising their confusion and adding to the sense that they are always in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The colour of each scene was selected inspired by quotes from the text – see the colour chart opposite that Benjamin and Rachael created before rehearsals started.

PROPS

Adding to the sense of dislocation and altered reality is the props. Whilst some are real 3D objects (the coins, bags and bottles), others are 2D cut outs, including the crowns of the King and Queen in the Tragedian's dumb show, the 'dead' Polonius that Hamlet drags across the stage, and even some of the musical instruments.

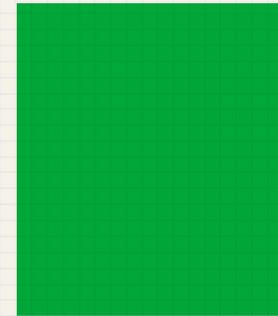
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead Colour Chart According to Pantone

GreenScreen:

The possibility to be anything, but is actually nothing ; the absence of something. A leap of imagination is all it needs.

For us? – The Road to Elsinore.

GUILDENSTERN: "It could've been... [anything]. It could have been a unicorn!"



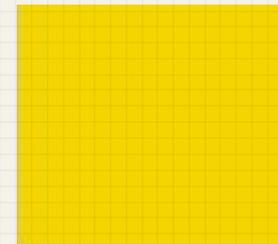
PANTONE®
354 C

Sunburst Yellow:

A kingdom play-acting at being cheerful; a sunny disposition to cover the political, social, domestic unrest.

For us? – The Danish Court

HAMLET: "Not so, my Lord, I am too much i'th'sun!"



PANTONE®
Yellow C

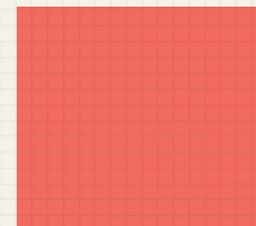
Coral:

(Colour of the year 2019)

Sunrise over Elsinore and a darkening of the sunny yellow veneer of the court. A sunset as R+G head towards their final 'sun down'.

For us? – Trapped within the Court.

GUILDENSTERN: "In the morning the sun would be easterly. I think we can assume that."



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Costume Design



NIC SMILLIE



We asked costume designer Nic Smillie to tell us about her design.

Nic Smillie has worked in theatre, film and television as a costume designer for twenty years. She has a bachelor's degree in Textile Design from Victoria University, Wellington. Projects for the Auckland Theatre Company include *Filthy Business*, *Peer Gynt [recycled]*, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *A Doll's House*, *Paniora!*, *Midnight In Moscow*, *Awatea* and *Where We Once Belonged*. Nic has also worked with Colin McColl on many theatre productions based in Wellington. Her operatic designs include *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, staged in Auckland and Glasgow.

What's the most exciting, interesting or fun thing about designing *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*?

Being able to explore all sorts of costume styles and ideas. Due to the abstract nature of the play, it allows us to be abstract with the way the costumes are presented.

It has also been great researching Elizabethan clothes – shapes, styles,

motifs and colours and the meanings behind all these things, especially to do with wealth/social status and royalty, along with some of the theatrical practices of that era... who wore what, who played whom and how that was all pieced together.

What's the biggest challenge?

Budget and time constraints – along with making the costumes fit within some very strict colour palettes and planning and sourcing multiples of some costumes.

What's your top tip for a young designer approaching a big play like *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*?

Have fun and make yourself very familiar with the script – so many answers to the costuming process come from the words and actions of the characters.

Watch director Benjamin Henson and the team talk about the production here: www.facebook.com/TheATC/videos/2404820169807594/



Post-Show Activities

RECALLING THE PLAY

THINK ABOUT the performance you have seen and recall what stood out for you. It could be something you enjoyed, or something that confused you. What was it about it that you remember most?

- Make a list of the characters, images or specific moments that stood out for you.
- Recall how you responded to these moments. How were other people around you reacting? Did that reaction change after you had seen the play?
- How would you describe the play to a friend?

CHOOSE THE DRAMATIC CONVENTIONS such as direct address, dance, movement, puppetry, split stage or dream sequence used in the play.

- Make a list of the conventions that were used by the writer or the director in this play.
- Explain how the conventions were used and what purpose they had in supporting the narrative.
- If you were to use any other conventions in this play, what might you choose and how would you use it?

CHOOSE ONE CHARACTER who went through a significant change in the play.

- Describe the character.
- Make a list of how the actor used the Techniques of Drama (Voice, Body, Movement, Space).
- Choose one technique from your list and explain how the actor used that technique to illustrate the significant change for the character.

PLAYING A SCENE

IN PAIRS, choose one of the take the excerpts below and cast yourselves as Rosencrantz (R) or Guildenstern (G).

- Read the scene aloud together..
- Read the scene aloud, this time up on your feet. Move around.
- Read the scene aloud as quickly (and clearly) as you can, trying to jump in on each other's cues.
- **Share with the rest of the class** – hear what the audience can tell about the characters (who you are, where you are, what you are doing)
- Now read the scene again, retaining the speed, but each actor adds one lengthy pause whenever they feel like it.
- Have another go, retaining speed, and pauses and now add the choice of either looking at each other during the pauses, or looking at the audience.
- Last go! One more time with everything, but this time you can add a synchronized movement (as big or as small as you like) that must happen during one or both pauses.
- **Share with the rest of the class** – hear what the audience can now tell you about the characters.

EXCERPT 1

G: What's your name when you're at home?

R: What's yours?

G: When I'm at home?

R: Is it different at home?

G: What home?

R: Haven't you got one?

G: What's your name?

R: WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

EXCERPT 2

R: What now?

G: What do you mean?

R: Well nothing is happening.

G: We're on a boat.

R: I'm aware of that.

G: Then what do you expect?



ATC Creative Learning – encouraging acts of imagination

ATC CREATIVE LEARNING promotes and encourages teaching and participation in theatre and acts as a resource for secondary and tertiary educators. It is a comprehensive and innovative arts education programme designed to nurture young theatre practitioners and audiences.

Whether we are unpacking a play, creating a new work, or learning new

skills we are encouraging acts of imagination to take place.

ATC Creative Learning has direct contact with secondary school students throughout the greater Auckland region with a focus on delivering an exciting and popular programme that supports the Arts education of Auckland students and which focuses on curriculum development, literacy, and the Arts.

Curriculum Links

ATC EDUCATION activities relate directly to the PK, UC and CI strands of the NZ Curriculum from levels 5 to 8. They also have direct relevance to many of the NCEA achievement standards at all three levels.

All secondary school Drama students (Years 9 to 13) should be experiencing live theatre as a part of their course work, Understanding the Arts in Context. Curriculum levels 6, 7 and 8 (equivalent to years 11, 12 and 13)

require the inclusion of New Zealand drama in their course of work.

The NCEA external examinations at each level (Level 1 – AS90011, Level 2 – AS91219, Level 3 – AS91518) require students to write about live theatre they have seen. Students who are able to experience fully produced, professional theatre are generally advantaged in answering these questions.





Auckland Theatre Company presents

mythmakers

Accessible and inventive theatre inspired by the legends of Aotearoa, the Pacific and the world. Touring Auckland schools in November.

TERM FOUR: *Icarus* by Benjamin Henson

For more information and to book a performance at your school: atc.co.nz/creative-learning/mythmakers

PRINCIPAL FUNDERS:

