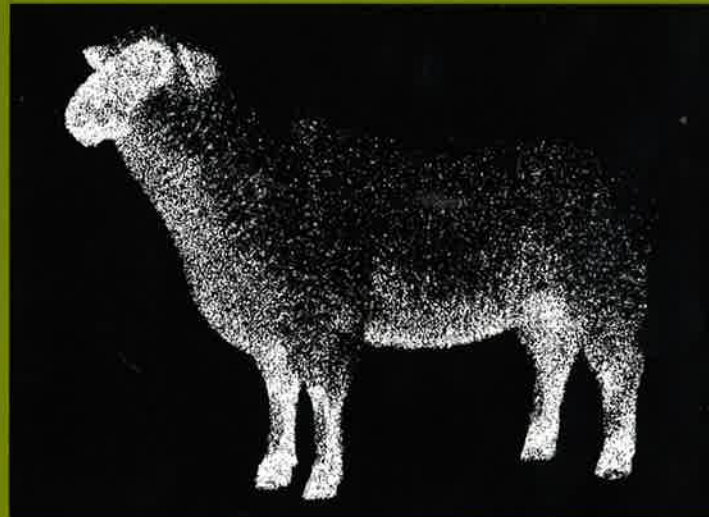


the Learner's STAND

BY DAVID GEARY



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International
season 95

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THE ATC
International
season 95

On behalf of all of us at the Auckland Theatre Company, it is my pleasure to welcome you to David Geary's award-winning THE LEARNER'S STAND. This marks our ninth production, and fourth New Zealand play. Coincidentally, David penned our inaugural production, LOVERLOCK'S DREAM RUN, and we are thrilled to embark with him on another journey into the heartland.

In this shearing saga, he expertly captures the paradoxes that underscore our national identity: a curious and unique blend of sexual, familial, political and geographical tensions, which are barely masked by the staunch, self-effacing "she'll be right, mate" facade for which we have (recently) become world renown. Combine this with the Golden Shears and a sheepy subplot of Leninist proportions and you have a play as surreal as life in this country can be.

Judith Gibson, more familiar for her memorable turns on-stage in BY DEGREES and DEAD FUNNY moves behind the scenes as director. Her fellow DEAD FUNNY co-stars Timothy Bartlett and Geoffrey Dolan return in a very different roles, as does Carmel McGlone, last seen with ATC as Polena in THE SEAGULL. It is always exciting for us to welcome actors new to the Company, in this case Kevin J. Wilson, Danielle Cormack and William Wallace. We especially welcome Georgina Beyer, who takes time out from the turmoil of Carterton local body politics for perhaps a more leisurely outing as Dawn, "Queen of the Woolshed". John Verryt (Design), Robin Pentecost (Lighting) and Elizabeth Whiting (Costumes) complete a first-class team.

We are indebted to our sponsors Mercury Energy and Hewlett Packard for their generous support and gratefully acknowledge the continuing assistance of The Arts Council of New Zealand. As well, we thank Andrew MacKenzie and his team at Albany Toyota for the provision of a company vehicle, affording us a much-needed mobility. Finally, we applaud Auckland City's Arts Alive initiative. Our city is often labelled as a cultural desert. Nothing could be further from the truth, (as we hope tonight's proceedings will testify). Local Body support can only enhance what is already a burgeoning cultural scene.

As we move towards the end of our third season, we thank you for your patronage, and look forward to seeing you at DANCING AT LUGHNASA, which opens at the Herald on 21 July. Sarah Peirse, who directed Someone Who'll Watch Over Me, returns to New Zealand to help another outstanding work from Ireland. Book at BASS, or complete one of the Subscriber Cards in the foyer and we will be in touch.



In any event, we wish you all the best for winter, and hope you enjoy The Learner's Stand.

*Simon Prast
Producer*

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DAVID GEARY

David left Palmerston North Boys High with two A Bursarys, a few games for the First XV and thinking that Shakespeare was as much fun as an autopsy. He started a Law Degree and finished an English Degree at Victoria University. During that time he wrote B2 - sub Blakean poems about maggots and tree stumps for Bill Manhire's writing course. Later he wrote one act plays for the Victoria University Drama Club, which invariably had someone rushing in and screaming that the world was ending in twenty minutes. He went to the NZ Drama School, and went on to act professionally and most recently commercially.

Geary co-wrote the cult classics, **Gothic But Staunch; Dry, White and Friendly** — chartered accountants and exhibition basketball, and **Backstage with the Quigleys**.

He achieved mainstream success with **Pack of Girls**, a Play about a women's rugby team. Which, incidentally, was scheduled to open at the Mercury Theatre the week it closed.

In 1991, Geary won the **Bruce Mason Award** for most promising playwright. Geary received critical acclaim for **Lovelock's Dream Run** (1993 Auckland Theatre Company production at The Watershed Theatre). In 1994 David Geary won the **Adams Foundation Playwrights Award**.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES

An old cocky once told me "There's never money in horses, sometimes money in cows and always money in sheep". Well, I guess he was right with this play managing to be quite successful and wool currently in record highs, (we won't talk about mutton).

I'd like to thank the Auckland Theatre Company for being a champion of my plays, especially in bringing a slice of the Manawatu to Auckland. I'd also like to thank Ian and Flora McKean for risking their prize Drysdale's being shorn by the Wellington cast, Phillip McKinnon and Ross Geary for their expert tuition. Wools of New Zealand for taking me on a shearing course about 12 years ago, (apologies to all the farmers who had my gang). To all the shearers, rousies and farmers I've come into contact with over the years, thanks for providing all the background information. And don't worry, the play's not based on anyone in specific.

Finally I'd like to thank my father, Bill Geary, for choosing to be a shearer and introducing me to shearing. Some of my first and best memories are of woolsheds where he shored, and I hope this brings back some happy memories to some of you watching. As for those of you who had never smelt a shed full of old ewes in the morning, or tried to go up the neck of a Southdown ram, welcome to the wonderful world of shearing! And, it's not too late, there's always a spare handpiece waiting for you somewhere.

JUDITH GIBSON - DIRECTOR



Judith has had over 20 years experience as a professional actor and director. Judith has played many lead roles from the classics to modern plays and musicals. Originally a leading Theatre Corporate actor and founding member, Judith has gone on to film and television work.

Films include **User Friendly** and **Trial Run**, and television work includes, **Hanlon**, **Shark in the Park**, and **Plain Clothes**. The plays in which Judith has performed are too numerous to list. In 1994 Judith performed in Auckland Theatre Company's production of Roger Hall's **By Degrees**

and in April 1995 as Eleanor in **Dead Funny**. Earlier in the year Judith performed in **Fanny Business** at the Watershed Theatre.

JOHN VERRYT - DESIGNER



Auckland theatregoers will be familiar with John's work as a designer because of the many memorable productions with which he was associated with at Theatre Corporate and later at The Mercury. In 1986 John became a freelance designer. In 1987 a Fullbright Scholarship provided him with the opportunity of studying in New York. From 1990-92 John was Head of Design at The Mercury. His designs included **Carousel**, **The Barber of Seville**, **The Sex Fiend**, **Amadeus** and **Porgy and Bess**, Auckland Opera's production of **Carmen** and Auckland Theatre

Company's acclaimed **Someone Who'll Watch Over Me**. John has designed Sets and Costumes for the current Theatre at Large production of **Cyrano de Bergerac**.

TIMOTHY BARTLETT - ARIES THE RAM



Timothy began his professional career in 1975 Theatre Corporate's Story Theatre Company. Since then he has worked in most New Zealand theatres. After a long period in Dunedin where he appeared in a number of plays for the Fortune Theatre and as a presenter for TVNZ's Playschool. Timothy moved to Wellington and worked as a freelance actor appearing at Downstage in **Arsenic & Old Lace**, at Circa in **Love Knots** and in numerous television and film roles including: **Soldier, Soldier; Bread & Roses, Angel at My Table** and **Tommyknockers**.

Timothy most recently played the role of Richard in Auckland Theatre Company's production of **Dead Funny**. Timothy is currently playing Bernie Leach in **Shortland Street**.

Georgina Beyer - Dawn



It was while at school in Auckland and Wellington Georgina discovered she had a talent for acting. She was a hit on stage and gained her respect from her peers. Her career blossomed and in 1987 she was a finalist in the GOFTA awards for the best female in a dramatic role for television as Jewel in **Jewel's Darl**. Her career has been varied with numerous appearances in shows such as **Shortland Street, Shark in the Park, Close to Home, The Lyn of Tawa Show** and **The Billy T James Show** - theatre/cabaret and radio.

Georgina made New Zealand political and social history in June 1994 when she became the first transexual to be elected to a district council. In a by-election in Carterton, a town of nearly 7000 people in the conservative Wairarapa farming region, Georgina polled 834 votes of the 1924 recorded.

Geoffrey Dolan - Dino



After being part of the original committee that helped establish the Auckland Theatre Company, Geoffrey has recently played Nick in **Dead Funny**, for the Company.

Geoffrey has worked at most of the professional theatres in New Zealand in productions such as **The 3 Musketeers, Burn This, Our Country's Good, Ladies Night** and in recent Watershed productions of **Hamlet** and **Into The Woods**.

Television appearances include: **Shark in the Park, Gloss, Shortland Street** and Roger Hall's **Neighbourhood Watch** (not Network).

Danielle Cormack - Jo



Danielle trained through classes at Theatre Corporate, Performing Arts School, Auckland Youth Theatre, University and Theatresports.

She has appeared in theatrical productions in Auckland and more recently in **East** which was also performed at Wellington Arts Festival (1994) and Zurich in the International Arts Festival (1994).

Danielle has held core cast roles in **Gloss** (all 3 series) and **Shortland Street** for its first 15 months. She played a guest lead in one episode of the American T.V. series **High Tide**. Danielle also has cred-

its in a number of smaller television programmes. Danielle has a supporting role in the feature **Taking Liberties**, and short-films **Snap** and **Game With No Rules** - which was taken to Cannes Film Festival 1994. Danielle has also been involved in **Love Wins** a joint venture production with America.

CARMEL MCGLONE - EUNICE THE EWE



Carmel returned to New Zealand recently after spending four years in Australia as a member of Simon Philips ensemble at the State Theatre Company of South Australia and a season at the Melbourne Theatre Company in Louis Nowra's **Capricornia**. A wide and varied range of stage work included, **A Comedy of Errors, Julius Ceasar, A Delicate Balance, Tis Pity She's a Whore** and **Cabaret**. Recent work in New Zealand: Gaylene Prestons' feature **Bread and Roses**, the award winning short film **Lemming Aid** (director - Grant La Hood), **Plain Clothes** for South Pacific Pictures. Recent theatre work: **Ophelia Thinks Harder** (Circa), her own piece **Digger & Nudger**, for **Hensteeth** with Lorae Parry (Watershed) and the role of Polena for Auckland Theatre Company's acclaimed production of **The Seagull** (1994).

WILLIAM WALLACE - TERRY



In 1992 William did one year full time film and television course at the Performing Arts School. In that year he performed in **The Changeling** directed by Michael Hurst for Performing Arts School. Theatre credits prior to 1992 included the role of Johann Killan Von Strack in **Amadeus** for Globe Theatre, Wal Footrot in **Footrot Flats** for Fountain Theatre and a role in **Wednesday to Come** also for Fountain.

Television work has included **High Tide, Soldier Soldier**, Scott in **Shortland Street** and Mike in **True Life Stories** for Communicado.

KEVIN J. WILSON - PETE



Kevin has been a professional actor since 1964. Apart from working out of Sydney for two years in the late sixties and two more recent visits to Australia, Kevin has spent his entire career working in New Zealand.

Roles include Janet Frame's father in **An Angel At My Table**, and the feature film **Chunuk Bair** where he was co lead with English actor Robert Powell, playing a Colonel of New Zealand troops at Gallipoli. His most recent Australian work includes 13 episodes of the **Royal Flying Doctors**

as Ted the pilot and guest leads in **G.P.** and **Chances**. He has recently completed filming a guest lead in 2 episodes of the Canadian co-production of **Mysterious Island** playing the pirate captain.

Kevin is also an accomplished horseman, and has bred and trained horses on his 50 acre property.

AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY Presents A Great New Kiwi Comedy

the **Learner's**
STAND

BY DAVID GEARY

Winner of the Adams Foundation Playwright's Award

World Premiere - Circa Theatre, Wellington, April 22, 1995 Centrepont Theatre production, Palmerston North, May 20, 1995

Auckland Premiere - Auckland Theatre Company, June 8, 1995

CAST

(In alphabetical order)

TIMOTHY BARTLETT	<i>ARIES - The Ram</i>
GEORGINA BEYER	<i>DAWN - the Rousie</i>
DANIELLE CORMACK	<i>JO</i>
GEOFFREY DOLAN	<i>DINO</i>
CARMEL McGLONE	<i>EUNICE - The Ewe</i>
WILLIAM WALLACE	<i>TERRY</i>
KEVIN J. WILSON	<i>PETE</i>

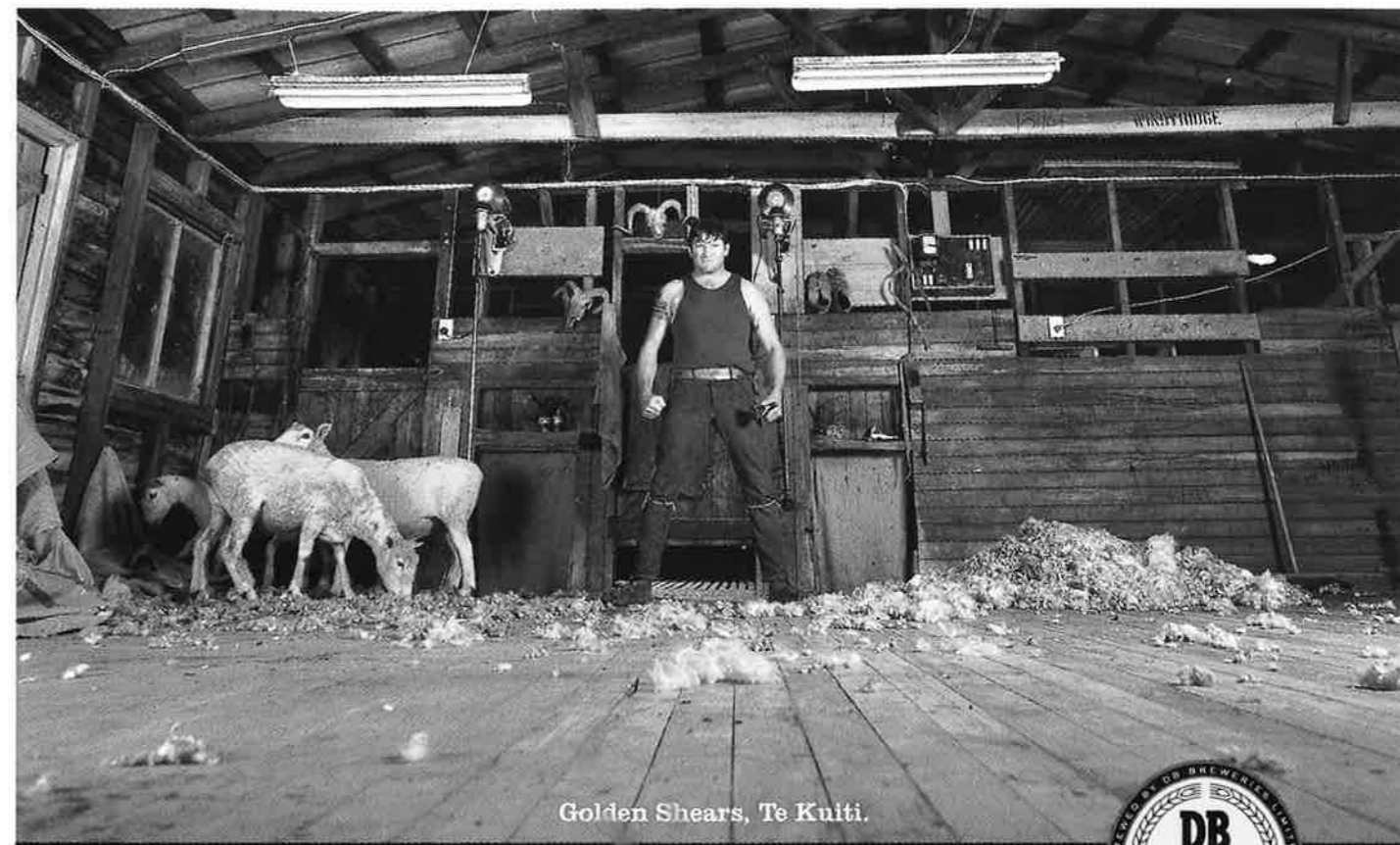
DIRECTOR	JUDITH GIBSON
DESIGNER	JOHN VERRYT
PRODUCER	SIMON PRAST
PRODUCTION MANAGER	TERESA SOKOLICH
LIGHTING DESIGN	ROBIN PENTECOST
STAGE MANAGER	BOLKE WATER
WARDROBE	ELIZABETH WHITING
SCENIC PAINTER	JOHN VERRYT
SET BUILDERS	THIRD STAGE
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER	FRITHA WALKER
SOUND	KERRY GRIFFITH
MARKETING/PUBLICITY	DIANA GOULDING PROMOTIONS
PROPS	TERESA SOKOLICH

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Timothy MacAvoy LLB
David Stubbs
Hinemoa Holmes
Judith Tizard (MP)
Simon Prast (LLB)

AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY

Simon Prast	Producer
Amy Whiting	Business Manager
Teresa Sokolich	Production Manager
Wes Lee	Administration Assistant



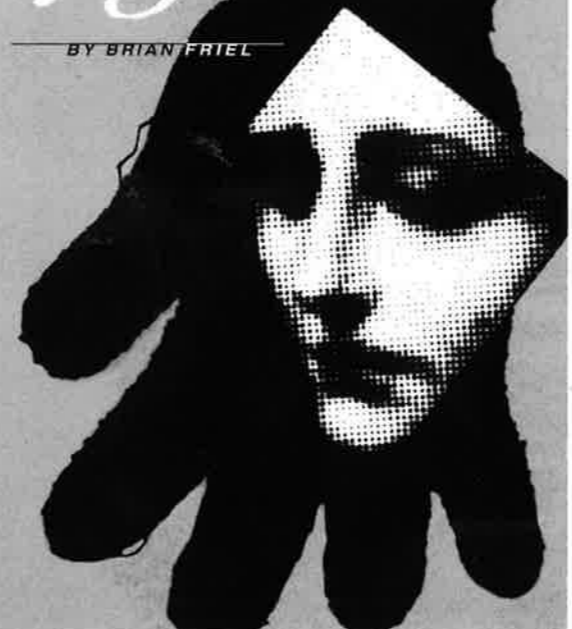
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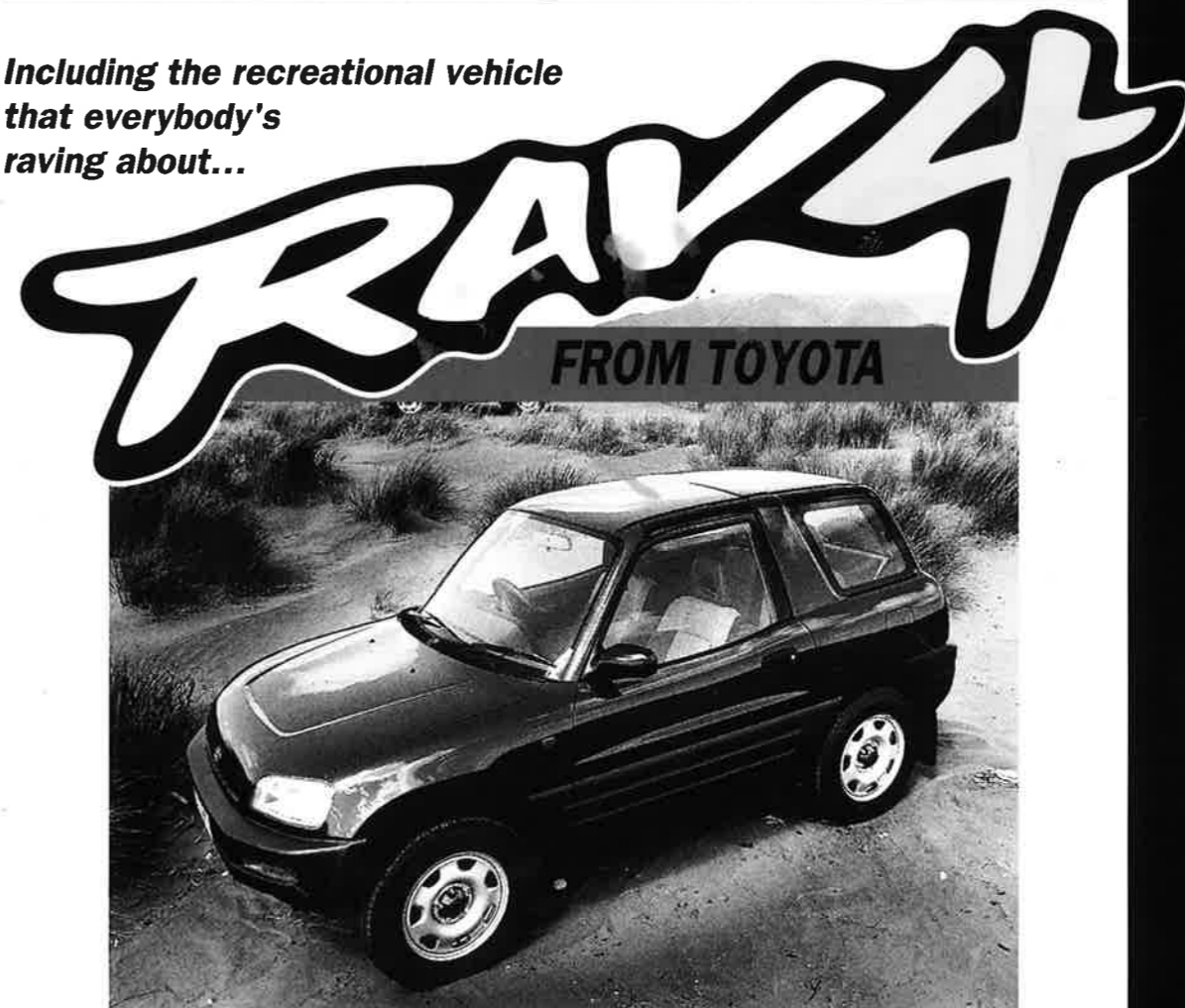
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