Auckland Theatre Company presents

King Lear

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Michael Hurst & Benjamin Kilby-Henson

13 June – 9 July 2023

ASB Waterfront Theatre

This performance is audio described by Audio Described Aoteraoa

Auckland Theatre Company’s accessible programme is proudly presented by Dentons Kensington Swan

He pou atua, he pou whenua, he pou tangata.

Ko Waitematā te moana

Ko Waikōkota te whenua.

Ko Te Pou Whakamaharatanga mō Māui

Tikitiki a Taranga te tohu o te kaha,

o te kōrero, o te whakapapa o tēnei wāhi,

o tēnei whare.

Nau mai e te tī, e te tā ki te whare kōrero,

ki te whare whakaari o ASB ki te tahatika

o te moana.

Mauri tau, mauri ora!

The symbols of support, of strength and of

guardianship stand fast and proud.

The waters of Waitematā ebb and flow

against the shores here at Waikōkota,

the land upon which we stand.

The pou of remembrance to Māui Tikitiki a

Taranga stands tall as a beacon of courage,

of stories passed down and of the history that

connects us all to this place and to this space.

We welcome you all from near and

far to this house of stories, to the

ASB Waterfront Theatre.

Mauri tau, mauri ora!

## ABOUT THE PLAY

When power and privilege are put to the test. Having built an empire, the ageing King Lear is poised to abdicate his crown. When he challenges his three daughters to compete for his land, his favourite refuses to play the game. Civilisation is thrust into chaos and Lear, broken by his own vanity, will be forced to confront who he is for the very first time.

## CAST

Fasitua Amosa — Duke of Albany

Adam Burrell — Oswald

Uhyoung Choi 최우영 — Duke of Burgundy/Curan

Andi Crown — Goneril

Joe Dekkers-Reihana — Edgar

Michael Hurst — King Lear

Jessie Lawrence — Regan

Colin McColl — King of France/Old Man/Medic

Shadon Meredith — Duke of Cornwall

Cameron Rhodes — Earl of Gloucester

Beatriz Romilly — Edmund

Hanah Tayeb — Cordelia

Hester Ullyart — The Fool

Jennifer Ward-Lealand — Duchess of Kent

## UNDERSTUDIES

James Maeva

Munashe Tapfuya

Daniel Watterson

## ENSEMBLE

Kais Azimullah, Ella Blake Brislen, Jess Fajardo, Sahil Goyal, Connor Magatogia, Alex Myers, Abby Ozanne, Vikram Rajan, James Sexton, Sebastian Taylor, Te Ohorere Williams

## CREATIVE

Playwright — William Shakespeare

Directors — Michael Hurst & Benjamin Kilby-Henson

Set Designer — John Verryt

Lighting Designer — Vanda Karolczak

Costume Designer — Elizabeth Whiting

Composer & Sound Designer — John Gibson

Voice Coach — Kirstie O’Sullivan

## PRODUCTION

Production Managers — Khalid Parkar & Annah Jacobs, Pilot Productions

Stage Manager — Boo Pantoja-Frost

Deputy Stage Manager — Eliza Josephson-Rutter

Assistant Stage Manager — Sofia Miernik

Sound System Designer — Andrew Furness

Audio Mix Engineer — Brooke Paterson

Fly Technician & Mechanist — T.J. Haunui *Whakatōhea, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Rangitihi*

Technical Operators — Peter Davison & Aaron Mitchell

Props Manager — Nati Pereira

Set and Props Intern — Jasmine Wilde

Intimacy Coordinator — Megan Adams

Fight Choreographer — Dayna Grant, New Zealand Stunt School

Set Build Manager — Andrew Gibson

Set Construction — Tāwhiri Workshop

Workshop Manager: Paul O’Brien; Project Leads: Alasdair Watson & Allan Rockell; Senior Carpenters: Duncan Perratt, Geoff Goss & Alejandro Ariza Hernandez; Junior Carpenter: Giovanni Maule

Rain Effect — Grant Reynolds

Teaching Artists — Jonathan Price & Taylor Rogers *Te Aupōuri, Ngāi Takoto,*

*Ngāti Kuri, Ngāti Kahu, Te Rarawa*

Wardrobe Assistants — Amelia Carter, Zara Hawthorne, Roma Langkilde & Anna Thomson, Whitecliffe

Wardrobe Assistants Coordinator — Ann Horner

Video Editor — Owen McCarthy

Photographer — Jinki Cambronero

Publicity — Bridget de Launay, de Launay Enterprises

*King Lear*’s first known performance was on 26 December 1606. This is the first production of *King Lear* by Auckland Theatre Company and it’s the third production in the Company’s 2023 season. It began previews on 13 June and premiered on 15 June at ASB Waterfront Theatre, Auckland.

The production is 2 hours, 45 minutes including interval. Contains depictions of violence, stage blood and weapons, smoke/haze, strobe lighting, and themes of suicide.

Please remember to switch off all mobile phones and noise-emitting devices.

Principal funders: Creative New Zealand and Auckland Council

# Haere Mai. Welcome.

Michael Hurst is one of our great Shakespeareans. A career of highlights has included *Hamlet*, *Richard III* and three productions of *King Lear*: twice as The Fool, once as the Earl of Gloucester. It is said Lear comes to an actor when they are ready. Michael is indeed ready. How lucky are we to witness it?

The company of *King Lear* is stocked to the gunnels with our great theatrical talent. It is a dazzling display of acting brilliance. My deepest gratitude to Director Benjamin Kilby-Henson for his leadership and creative vision.

It is particularly special that the creative team includes three national treasures in John Gibson as Composer & Sound Designer, John Verryt as Set Designer and Elizabeth Whiting as Costume Designer. These artists were there when *Lovelock’s Dream Run* opened on 11 March 1993 and remain among our closest comrades to this day. In Elizabeth’s case, this is her 99th engagement with Auckland Theatre Company; she is our most capped creative. I am humble in the presence of such extraordinary creatives and pay tribute to their long and distinguished service to the theatre (with more to come!).

I am grateful to the people of Auckland who generously support their theatre company through Auckland Council. We never take this for granted. Creative New Zealand was with us on day one and its presence at our shoulder continues to be essential. In our anniversary year, we welcome a new sponsor in Sharp, whose technology opens up new possibilities for us.

Sitting in the audience tonight are subscribers who have signed up for every show in all 30 seasons. It is a fellowship of people who have uncommon loyalty. They have backed us through the shows they loved and the shows they didn’t. For three decades, they have given us their money and their time. It is a privilege to make theatre for such people. Thank you.

Such has been the excitement for this new King Lear, we extended the season before we opened. This follows an extraordinary audience response to *Witi’s Wāhine*.

On behalf of everyone who works with Auckland Theatre Company, thank you for coming to the theatre and in such wonderful numbers. At this anniversary moment, it is deeply moving to feel valued by our city.

**Jonathan Bielski**

Artistic Director & CEO

# **Note from Michael Hurst**

Russian author Leo Tolstoy famously rejected *King Lear*, calling it a very bad, carelessly composed production, far from being perfect and evoking among readers nothing but repulsion, weariness and bewilderment. I don’t think he can have ever seen it.

To my mind, the play is something of a miracle. It operates on a searingly domestic level yet possesses a truly epic scope. It reminds us that, finally, it all comes down to us, human beings, dealing with life, dealing with death and dealing with one another.

Shakespeare’s mirror, showing us “the very age and body of the time” is never so active as it is in this play, where the truth-speakers are side-lined, madmen lead the blind, people refuse to see what is right in front of them, and ruthless manipulators scheme and torture to achieve their desires. Sound familiar? Yet, despite the tragedy and the heartbreak, the human spirit soars and, miraculously, by the time we are wound into the final scene, we feel relieved, hopeful and at peace with the quiet truth that “we are all in this together”.

Directing and playing Lear is quite the task: impossible without my colleague and friend Benjamin Kilby-Henson as Co-Director, to whom I am deeply grateful. We have been amazed at how elastic the script is, how powerful and how relevant. We have a fabulous cast and creative team, and the process, though exacting at times, has been a real delight. We have the privilege to be exploring one of the greatest works of literature ever, and “you can’t say fairer than that”!

I leave you with a quote from Yeats. To me, these lines describe perfectly both the world of *King Lear* and the world we face now. Both the poem and the play are prescient, and, if we are to preserve our humanity and the better spirits of our nature, we should heed the warning, shouldn’t we? We should bear the weight and speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.

*Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;*

*Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,*

*The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere*

*The ceremony of innocence is drowned;*

*The best lack all conviction, while the worst*

*Are full of passionate intensity.*

– The Second Coming by W.B. Yeats, 1919

# **Playwright**

## William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare (1564–1616) was an English playwright and poet, widely regarded as one of the greatest writers in the English language. Born in Stratford-upon-Avon, he gained recognition for his plays during the late-16th and late-17th centuries.

Shakespeare’s works, consisting of approximately 39 plays, 154 sonnets and several narrative poems, span various genres, including tragedy, comedy and history, and have had a profound and enduring impact on literature, theatre and culture. Some of his most celebrated plays include *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello* and *King Lear*. His exploration of universal themes such as love, jealousy, ambition and human nature continue to resonate with audiences today and offer profound insights into the human experience.

Shakespeare's language, characterised by its poetic beauty, intricate wordplay and profound psychological depth, has inspired and influenced artists worldwide. His plays are performed and studied extensively, in both traditional productions and innovative adaptations, showcasing the enduring power of his storytelling.

This year is the 400th anniversary of the publication of the First Folio, *Mr. William Shakespeare’s Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies*. Of the 700-odd printed, only 235 are known to survive today. One is located in the Special Collections at Auckland Libraries; it was a gift to the people of Auckland by Sir George Grey in 1894. The First Folio contains 36 of Shakespeare’s plays, including King Lear, some being published for the first time.

# Directors

## MICHAEL HURST Director & King Lear

In a career spanning more than 40 years, Michael Hurst has worked in theatre, film and television as both actor and director. After two years as a trainee at Christchurch’s The Court Theatre, he spent a further three years with Auckland’s influential Theatre Corporate, where he received training and invaluable experience as a member of that company.

Michael has been celebrated widely as one of New Zealand’s leading theatre actors, with scores of roles to his credit ranging from Hamlet to The Widow Twankey. He is also known for his innovative and compelling productions of Shakespeare, and, more recently, for *The Life of Galileo* for Auckland Theatre Company and his solo work in plays such as *The Golden Ass*, *No Holds Bard*, *The Daylight Atheist* and *An Iliad*.

In 2010, he directed a wildly successful production of *Cabaret* for Auckland Theatre Company and followed this in 2013 with an equally outrageous production of *Chicago*, starring Lucy Lawless. His own adaptation of Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata* played to full houses in 2015 and was received rapturously by critics.

Highly regarded as a television director, he has pursued this aspect of his career for over 20 years, working on shows such as *Spartacus*, *Westside* and *The Dead Lands*. In 2003, he was made a New Zealand Arts Foundation Laureate and, in 2005, he was appointed as an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) for services to theatre.

Michael is a proud member of Equity New Zealand.

## BENJAMIN KILBY-HENSON Director

Benjamin Kilby-Henson is a theatre director with a diverse career spanning form, scale and medium. He worked for one of the UK’s largest youth arts organisations, leading participatory projects for primarily at-risk youth. He later trained in theatre direction at the Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts, London, while continuing to direct for the London Festival Fringe and cabaret circuit. Following projects in Germany and France, Benjamin was director in residence at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford.

Benjamin was one of two directors to engage in The Engine Room: a fast-track initiative between Auckland Theatre Company, New Zealand Opera and Fortune Theatre. As a result, he featured in *Peer Gynt [recycled]* for Auckland Theatre Company and directed *Twelfth Night* for Fortune Theatre, winning Production of the Year at the Dunedin Theatre Awards.

Under theatre collective Fractious Tash, Benjamin has received critical acclaim for: *Earnest*; *Not Psycho*; *Titus*, which was then remounted for a sell-out season at the PopUp Globe; and Lucy Prebble’s *The Effect*.

For Auckland Theatre Company, Benjamin directed *Red Speedo* in 2017, followed by *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead* in 2019, winning Best Production Design at the Auckland Theatre Awards. Last Tapes Theatre Company’s *Valerie* toured throughout New Zealand, following dates in Australia and Edinburgh, and won the coveted Fringe First Award at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. In 2021, he directed *Little Shop of Horrors* and, in 2023, musical comedy *Something Rotten!* for The Court Theatre.

Benjamin teaches in Auckland’s drama schools, is the Artistic Associate and Casting Director at Auckland Theatre Company, and Artistic Manager of The Actors’ Program. In 2019, he developed The Directors’ Program alongside a team of industry advisors.

# Cast

## FASITUA AMOSA Duke of Albany

Fasitua Amosa (Taga, Savai’i, and Elise Fou, Upolu) received acting training at Unitec’s School of Performing and Screen Arts and has since starred in a variety of films, television series and theatre roles.

Theatre highlights: Chekhov's *The Seagull*, *Rendered*, The Navigators’ season of *The Haka Party Incident*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Lysistrata* and *Niu Sila* for Auckland Theatre Company; and *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Revolt*. *She Said. Revolt Again* for Silo Theatre. In 2020, he directed *Still Life with Chickens* for Auckland Theatre Company.

Screen highlights: Feature films *Vermilion*, *The Legend of Baron To’a* and *Baby Done*. In 2011, Fasitua was a part of the creative team for web series *Auckland Daze*. He appeared in the second season of the comedy show Golden Boy, Netflix’s fantasy series *The New Legends of Monkey* and as Dwayne ‘The Rock’ Johnson’s uncle, Sika Anoa’I, in NBC’s *Young Rock*.

Fasitua is also Deputy Chair of the Whau Local Board.

## ADAM BURRELL Oswald

Adam Burrell is an actor, singer and live entertainer who is based in Auckland. He has worked professionally within the entertainment industry in New Zealand for over 20 years.

Adam has been involved in numerous successful theatre projects, most recently, playing the role of God in New Zealand's premiere of the Broadway hit *An Act of God* at Centrepoint Theatre in Palmerston North. Other highlights include the international performance of the New Zealand original work *K’Rd Strip*, which was chosen to perform at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2015.

“I am eternally grateful to live my passion every day, with my mahi in theatre; it gives me the ability to communicate through entertainment, experiencing and sharing life’s stories from a multitude of perspectives.”

## UHYOUNG CHOI 최우영 Duke of Burgundy/ Curan

Uhyoung Choi is a Korean New Zealander actor, playwright and lawyer. He graduated from the University of Auckland with majors in Law, Politics and Philosophy, and, now, pursues a career in acting.

Theatre highlights: Auckland Theatre Company’s production of *Scenes from a Yellow Peril*, *The First PrimeTime Asian Sitcom* for Silo Theatre and *The Potential for Rain* for Navi Collaborative.

Television highlights: *Ahikāroa*, *A Question of Justice* and *Shortland Street*.

In his spare time, Uhyoung travels internationally to compete in tournaments for card game Flesh and Blood, he plays Dungeons & Dragons and he paints Warhammer miniatures.

## ANDI CROWN Goneril

Andi Crown is an actor with over 25 years experience on stage and screen.

Theatre highlights: Auckland Theatre Company’s production of *August: Osage County*; Mike Leigh’s *Abigail’s Party*; Stephen Adly Guirgis’ *The Motherfucker with the Hat*; and Sam Brooks’ *Burn Her* at Q Theatre.

Television highlights: *The Brokenwood Mysteries*, *Wellington Paranormal*, *Head High*, *The Gulf* and, more recently, as Ms. Avery in the Peacock/Netflix series *One of Us is Lying*.

Andi also has an MA in Pacific Archaeology and worked in the contract field for seven years before becoming a freelance performing arts photographer.

## JOE DEKKERS-REIHANA Edgar

Joe Dekkers-Reihana (Ngāi Tū Te Auru, Ngāpuhi) is a Dutch-Māori film, television and theatre actor, who has worked professionally since he was 15.

Theatre highlights: *The Made*, *The Cherry Orchard* and *When Sun & Moon Collide* for Auckland Theatre Company; *All Our Sons* for Taki Rua Productions; and *Coriolanus* for The Bacchanals, for which he won Most Promising Male Newcomer at the 2013 Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards.

Screen highlights: Horror film *30 Days of Night*; Māori supernatural series *The Dead Lands*; and Taika Waititi’s *Wellington Paranormal*.

Joe was raised in an artistic family and his creative abilities come naturally to him. He proudly embraces his Māori and Dutch heritage, and his work reflects his deep passion for storytelling and acting.

## JESSIE LAWRENCE Regan

Since graduating from Unitec's Bachelor in Performing and Screen Arts (Majoring in Acting) at the end of 2013, Jessie Lawrence has been busy across a range of stage and screen productions in New Zealand and the UK.

Theatre highlights: Auckland Theatre Company’s *North by Northwest*, The New Zealand Tour of *Jersey Boys*, the England tour and Edinburgh Fringe season of *Re: Production*, *Venus in Fur* for The Court Theatre, Pop-up Globe’s production of *Julius Caesar*, *The Effect* at Q Theatre, *As You Like It* and *The Tempest* for Summer Shakespeare.

Screen highlights include: *Brokenwood Mysteries*, *My Life is Murder*, *Shortland Street*, *Westside*, *EastEnders*, *800 Words*, and *Why Does Love?.*

Jessie also attended Shanghai Theatre Academy's Summer School in China where she trained in Traditional Chinese Opera (Peking Opera) and London’s National Theatre where she studied playwriting.

## JAMES MAEVA Understudy

James Maeva (Ngāpuhi) is a versatile actor, proud of his Māori and Cook Islands heritage. He is no stranger to Auckland Theatre Company, nor to the works of William Shakespeare. He has come a long way since playing a ‘cheesy native’ in Peter Jackson’s *King Kong*.

Theatre highlights: *Romeo and Juliet* and *Much Ado About Nothing* for Pop-Up Globe, *Polo* and *To Kill a Mockingbird* for Auckland Theatre Company, *Upu Mai Whetu: Mea Fou* and, most recently, *Tropical Love Birds*.

Screen highlights: *Shortland Street*, pioneering web series, and a number of short films and music videos.

## COLIN McCOLL King of France/ Old Man/Medic

Colin is a director and actor. He has directed for the Norwegian National Theatre, the Dutch National Theatre and the Scottish Opera as well as leading New Zealand and Australian performance companies.

A co-founder of Taki Rua Productions, he had a long association with Downstage Theatre, Wellington, as a Publicist, Stage Manager, Actor and Artistic Director. He has directed 62 Auckland Theatre Company productions and was Artistic Director for 18 years.

In 2007, Colin was honoured as an Arts Foundation Laureate for his achievements and, in 2010, he was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM).

Colin is thrilled to be part of Auckland Theatre Company’s 30th birthday season and to be acting again on stage after 42 years!

## SHADON MEREDITH Duke of Cornwall

Shadon Meredith (Safune, Vaiala, Solosolo, Vailele) is a New Zealand-born Sāmoan from Wellington. He trained at Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School and graduated in 2009.

Shadon has extensive experience in theatre, having worked locally and internationally. He has worked with: Auckland Theatre Company in Chekhov's *The Seagull*; and Red Leap Theatre in *The Arrival*, *Sea*, *Paper Sky* and *Dakota of the White Flats*. He has performed for the UPU Collective and Silo Theatre and in the 2021 production of *Ladies Night* with The Court Theatre in Ōtautahi.

Shadon created his own solo show *Waiting* that has gone on to win awards at Nelson Fringe 2017, Whangārei Fringe 2020 and Auckland Fringe 2021.

Most recently, Shadon has graced our screens playing the role of Andy in Season 2 of Emmy award-winning show *Rūrangi* and is working on feature films *Shut Eye*, *Darkest Light* and *The Paragon*.

Shadon is now making waves as a writer and is writing for TVNZ kids’ show Toi Time and working on his screenplay, Peter Peter. He is one half of the leadership of SOS + SHA CREATIVE.

## CAMERON RHODES Earl of Gloucester

Cameron Rhodes (Ngāi Tahu) is is a graduate of Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School 1987. He has appeared in more than 100 productions, many with Auckland Theatre Company, including *North by Northwest*, *Black Lover*, *Mrs Warren’s Profession*, *Lysistrata* and *The Good Soul of Szechuan*. Cameron’s first professional acting job was in *The Threepenny Opera* at Downstage Theatre in 1988, directed by Colin McColl and starring Michael Hurst and Jennifer Ward-Lealand.

Screen highlights: *The Royal Treatment* feature film for Netflix, *The Brokenwood Mysteries*, *The Gone*, *Rake* and *Under the Vines*. Cameron is a founding artistic board member of The Actors’ Program.

He also directs theatre, and coaches voice and presentation skills in the corporate world. He divides his time between New Zealand, Los Angeles and Sydney.

Cameron is a proud member of Equity New Zealand.

## BEATRIZ ROMILLY Edmund

Beatriz Romilly is a bilingual actress of Spanish descent who trained at Drama Centre London under Reuven Adiv.

Beatriz recently closed over 100 shows on London’s West End as Lauren in *2:22 A Ghost Story*, directed by Matthew Dunster, starring alongside Tom Felton and Mandip Gill. Other theatre highlights include several productions at The Globe Theatre in London, including the role of Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*. *King Lear* is Beatriz’s second production with Auckland Theatre Company after playing Jess in the 2022 production of *Grand Horizons*.

Beatriz has most recently been seen on screen as the villainous psychotherapist, Julianne Kent on *Shortland Street*. She has also appeared in several BBC TV productions, *War of the Worlds* for Canal+ and Fox TV, and is an extensive motion-capture and voice-over artist. Beatriz has worked on games such as *Until Dawn* and *Harry Potter*, and voiced characters on computer game franchises such as *Final Fantasy*, *Assassin’s Creed* and *LEGO Star Wars*.

## MUNASHE TAPFUYA Understudy

Munashe Tapfuya is a theatre and screen actress with a Bachelor of Creative Arts, Major in Acting, from Manukau Institute of Technology.

Theatre highlights: *Celie*, the lead role in *The Colour Purple* for Bravi Theatre Company; *Respectable Wedding*; *The Great American Scream* by Albert Belz; and, more recently, Anesu in *The Heartbreak Choir* for Auckland Theatre Company.

Screen highlights: Feature role in Netflix series *The New Legends of Monkey* and documentary *Bittersweet*.

Munashe also uses her creativity working in youth development – focusing on refugee and migrant-background youth across Aotearoa. She enjoys dancing, singing and keeping her competitive spirit alive in social tennis and basketball games when she can.

## HANAH TAYEB Cordelia

Hanah Tayeb is an actress of North African/Middle Eastern descent, raised in Algeria; she emigrated to New Zealand with her family at age seven. Her passion for acting landed her a place at The Actors’ Program, where she completed her training last year. For her graduation performance, Hanah took on the role of Christine in Stef Smith’s adaptation of Henrik Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*.

On screen, Hanah has just wrapped supporting roles in two local comedy-drama series: *Miles from Nowhere* and *Raised by Refugees* (season 2). Other recent credits include *Shortland Street* and award-winning Kiwi drama *The* *Pact*. Alongside acting, Hanah is a skilled singer and musician.

## HESTER ULLYART The Fool

Aotearoa based, UK-born Hester Ullyart is an actor, writer and multidisciplinary artist, working in theatre, film and music. She trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, London.

Written and performed independent work includes: *The Ballad of Paragon Station* (winner of New Zealand Fringe 2020 Stellar Content Award), *Paragon Dreams*, *Notes on a Migration*, and award-winning film I am all the rooms of the house. A debut album, *The All Clear*, is on the horizon for 2023.

Theatre highlights: *The Mousetrap*, *Othello*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, *Macbeth* (Orange Tree Theatre, London) and David Harrower’s *Blackbird*. She has appeared in *A Streetcar Named Desire* (The Court Theatre) and *Sweet Bird of Youth* (Chichester Festival Theatre).

Screen highlights: *One Lane Bridge*, *Emmerdale*, *Cracker*, *Doctors*, *Heartbeat* and *One of Us is Lying*.

## JENNIFER WARD-LEALAND Duchess of Kent

Jennifer Ward-Lealand has worked extensively in theatre, film and television for over 40 years. She is: an accredited intimacy coordinator for stage and screen; President of Equity New Zealand; and patron of Q Theatre, and Theatre New Zealand. She serves as a trust board member of the New Zealand Actors Benevolent Fund.

Theatre highlights: Directing *Grand Horizons* and featuring in *Twelfth Night*, *August: Osage County*, *Six Degrees of Separation* and *Two Ladies* for Auckland Theatre Company; and *The Goat*, *That Face*, *Brel* and *The Book of Everything* for Silo Theatre.

Screen highlights: Feature films: *The Footstep Man*, *Desperate Remedies*, *The Ugly*, *Fracture*, *Vermilion* and *Dead*. Television series: *Full Frontal*, *Xena: Warrior Princess*, *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*, *Dirty Laundry* and *The Brokenwood Mysteries.*

In the 2019 New Year’s Honours list, Jennifer was named a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (CNZM) for services to theatre and film, and, in 2020, she was honoured as Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year.

## DANIEL WATTERSON Understudy

Daniel Watterson graduated from The Actor’s Program in 2014. Daniel first gained notoriety in the inaugural sell-out seasons of *Twelfth Night* and *Romeo & Juliet* at the Pop-Up Globe.

Other theatre highlights: *North by Northwest* (Auckland Theatre Company), *Things I Know to be True* (Circa Theatre); *Venus in Fur* and *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (The Court Theatre); *The Effect* (Q Theatre); *Close City* (The Basement); *Lucrece* (ASC); and *Ain’t That a Bitch* (Garnet Station Tiny Theatre).

Screen highlights: Television series: *Sweet Tooth* and *The New Legends of Monkey* (Netflix), *Aitu*, *Westside*, *American Playboy* and *Dirty Laundry*. Feature films: *A Mistake*, *Whina*, *Ablaze*, *Falling Inn Love* (Netflix), *Why Does Love?*, and *Abandoned*.

Daniel lives in Auckland with his wife and baby daughter.

# Ensemble & Wardrobe Assistants

Auckland Theatre Company is committed to providing opportunities for artists and creatives in training to grow through participation in professional work, both on stage and off stage.

In King Lear we are working in partnership with ākonga (students) from Unitec Institute of Technology – part of Te Pūkenga; The University of Auckland; Whitecliffe; and the Auckland Theatre Company’s Youth Company.

Ngā mihi to all the ākonga who have participated in King Lear, and ngā mihi to the kaiako for their support and collaboration across this project.

## ENSEMBLE Kais Azimullah Ella Blake Brislen *Ngāi Tahu* Jess Fajardo Sahil Goyal Connor Magatogia Alex Myers Abby Ozanne *Ngāi Tahu* Vikram Rajan James Sexton Sebastian Taylor Te Ohorere Williams *Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Heretaunga, Tapuika (Te Arawa), Waitaha (Te Arawa), Ngāti Pūkenga, Ngāi Te Rangi*

## WARDROBE ASSISTANTS Amelia Carter Zara Hawthorne Roma Langkilde Anna Thomson Wardrobe Assistants Coordinator – Ann Horner

Whitecliffe School of Fashion & Sustainability Lecturer – Christina Doherty Unitec Acting Programme Discipline Leader & Lecturer – Alexandra Whitham The University of Auckland Senior Lecturer in Drama – Dr Rina Kim

# Creative

## JOHN VERRYT Set Designer

John Verryt began designing for performance in 1979, training at Theatre Corporate and Mercury Theatre. John works regularly as a freelancer for many of New Zealand’s foremost performing arts companies, including Auckland Theatre Company, Silo Theatre, Indian Ink, Red Leap Theatre, The Large Group, Nightsong, New Zealand Opera, Douglas Wright Dance Company, Michael Parmenter and Malia Johnston, and Atamira, Ōkāreka and Black Grace Dance Companies.

Recent Auckland Theatre Company shows designed by John include: *Long Day’s Journey into Night*, *Once on Chunuk Bair*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Rupert*, *The Navigators*, *Rendered*, *Astroman* and *The Haka Party Incident*.

## VANDA KAROLCZAK Lighting Designer

Originally from Montreal, Vanda Karolczak’s design work over her 40-year career covers theatre, dance, television, fashion and music in North America and the UK. She has been living and working in Aotearoa since 1999 and has been involved in the Indigenous contemporary practice space for the past 23 years working with and designing for established companies such as Atamira Dance Company: *Ngai Tahu 32*, *Taonga*, *Onepū*, *Memoirs of Active Service*, *Te Houhi* and, most recently, *Te Wheke*; freshly back from a North American tour. Her ongoing work with Ōkāreka Dance Company includes *Mana Wahine* and *Hōkioi me te Vwōhali*. This is her first opportunity to work with the Auckland Theatre Company. Vanda is also an avid Dragon-boater and a member of the Piha Surf Life Saving Club.

## ELIZABETH WHITING Costume Designer

Elizabeth Whiting has designed costumes for Auckland Theatre Company, Silo Theatre, Nightsong, New Zealand Opera, Indian Ink, The Court Theatre, Red Leap Theatre, The New Zealand Dance Company, Ōkāreka Dance Company, Douglas Wright Dance Company and many others.

Elizabeth was responsible for the central performance design for the World of WearableArt for six years. Her work has been presented at Edinburgh Festival and the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space. She won the Chapman Tripp Theatre Award for Costume Design for *The Arrival* (Red Leap Theatre).

Her opera designs have been well reviewed in Australia and the United States.

Most recently, she has designed costumes for: *Long Day’s Journey into Night* and *The Life of Galileo* for Auckland Theatre Company; *A Stab in the Dark* for Nightsong; *The Most Naked* for projectMUSE, *The Hall for Bullet Heart Club*, *Paradise or the Impermanence of Ice Cream* for Indian Ink; and *Don Pasquale* for New Zealand Opera.

## JOHN GIBSON Composer & Sound Designer

John Gibson has been writing music for film, theatre, television and dance since 1980.

He has established many long-standing collaborations with many of New Zealand’s finest artists, including Vincent Ward, Colin McColl, Douglas Wright, Shona McCullagh and Michael Hurst.

John’s work for theatre numbers over 80 original scores, including over 150 original songs. His scores for Auckland Theatre Company include *The Life of Galileo*, *The Master Builder*, *The Good Soul of Szechuan*, *A Doll’s House*, *Awatea*, *On the Upside Down of the World* and many others.

In 2008, John was awarded a New Zealand Film and Television Award for Achievement in Original Music in Film for his work on Vincent Ward’s *Rain of the Children*. In 2021, he composed the score for feature *film Coming Home in the Dark*, which premiered at Sundance Film Festival. He is currently in the final stages of a solo album, *Blow for Humanity*.

## What is the sound of the sound of nothing?

Turns out there is a whole science of music devoted to this; the Japanese concept of MA, the sound between the notes.

To make these sounds, I turned to my friends at the Audio Foundation, home of extraordinary musicians and invented instruments.

Recorded at the Audio Foundation, the music you hear in King Lear was composed from improvisations by these musicians.

The Luckman Cello — constructed by Philip Dadson Bowed Piano — Hermione Johnston Shimsaw — Marcel Bear Loperbow Sink De Lux — Ivan Mršić Clarinet Flute Soprano, Baritone Saxophone & Bass Drum — Jeff Henderson

## KIRSTIE O’SULLIVAN Voice Coach

Kirstie O’Sullivan is a voice and performance coach based in Tāmaki Makaurau. A graduate of Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School (Acting) Kirstie was awarded a Creative New Zealand grant to undertake postgraduate study in Voice at The National Institute of Dramatic Art in Sydney. Kirstie led the voice programme at Unitec from 2007 to 2011 and was head of voice for The Actors’ Program from 2012 to 2019.

She has worked extensively with theatre, film and television production companies throughout Aotearoa and beyond. Her voice-coaching credits for Auckland Theatre Company include *The End of the Golden Weather*, *Amadeus*, *Red Speedo* and *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead*.

Internationally, Kirstie has taught at the Theatre Training & Research Programme (Singapore), Broadcast Voice at Charles Sturt University (NSW, Australia) and Voice of Influence at Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology (Japan).

Kirstie is director of The Voice Practice, which specialises in high-performance voice coaching across the business, arts and education sectors.

# Meet the Characters

## KING LEAR

The ageing king who divides his kingdom among his three daughters based on their professions of love for him. Lear is proud, impulsive and easily influenced. He undergoes a tragic journey of self-discovery and a descent into madness as he faces the consequences of his actions.

“Who is it who can tell me who I am?”

## GONERIL

Lear’s eldest daughter, married to the Duke of Albany. Initially, she professes her love for her father to gain her share of the kingdom but, later, reveals her true nature as cunning and manipulative. She soon turns against Lear, contributing to his downfall, alongside her trusted servant, Oswald.

“Sir, I love you more than words can wield the matter."

## REGAN

Lear’s middle daughter, married to the Duke of Cornwall. Like her sister Goneril, Regan initially flatters Lear to secure her inheritance but reveals her ruthless and cruel nature as the play progresses. She becomes Goneril’s ally in opposing Lear and contributes to his suffering.

“O, sir, you are old. You should be ruled and led by some discretion, that discerns your state better than you yourself.”

## CORDELIA

Lear’s youngest and favourite daughter. Unlike her sisters, Cordelia refuses to flatter her father with insincere declarations of love. This honesty leads to her disinheritance and banishment from the kingdom. Cordelia embodies loyalty, virtue and integrity.

“So young, my lord, and true.”

## THE FOOL

Lear’s court jester, who serves as a voice of reason and truth throughout the play. The Fool uses humour and wit to crititicise Lear’s actions and provide insights into the unfolding events. Despite her humorous demeanour, the Fool often speaks profound truths.

“Dost thou know the difference between a bitter fool and a sweet one?”

## EARL OF GLOUCESTER

A nobleman and a loyal supporter of Lear. Gloucester’s story runs parallel to Lear’s, as he too experiences a downfall caused by the machinations of his illegitimate daughter, Edmund.

“But I have a son, madam, by order of law.”

## EDMUND

Gloucester’s illegitimate daughter. Edmund resents her status as a bastard and schemes to gain power and legitimacy. She is cunning and manipulative and fuels the conflict between her father and her brother, Edgar. A formidable character, she succeeds in almost all of her schemes, wreaking destruction upon virtually all of the other characters.

“Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit.”

## EDGAR

Gloucester’s legitimate son and the play’s main source of moral integrity. Falsely accused by his sister, Edmund, Edgar goes into hiding and disguises himself as ‘Poor Tom’, a mad beggar, to survive. Edgar ultimately seeks to restore order and justice in the kingdom.

“Some villain hath done me wrong.”

## DUKE OF ALBANY

The Duke of Albany is married to Goneril, Lear’s eldest daughter. Initially, the Duke of Albany is obedient to his wife’s desires, aligning himself with her ruthless pursuit of power. However, as the play progresses, he begins to question her actions and becomes a voice of opposition against her cruelty.

“The weight of this sad time we must obey; Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.”

## DUKE OF CORNWALL

The Duke of Cornwall is the husband of Regan, Lear’s middle daughter. He aligns himself with his wife and supports her in her pursuit of power. Together, they conspire against Lear and contribute to his downfall. He is a ruthless and power-hungry character, driven by ambition and a desire for control.

“Shut up your doors, my lord; ’tis a wild night: My Regan counsels well; come out o’ the storm.”

## KING OF FRANCE

The King of France is a noble and honourable character who is engaged to Cordelia, the youngest daughter of Lear. When Cordelia is disowned and banished by Lear, the King of France stands by her side and maintains his commitment to marrying her, despite her diminished social status.

“Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor; Most choice, forsaken; and most loved, despised!”

## DUKE OF BURGUNDY

The Duke of Burgundy is a suitor of Cordelia, Lear’s youngest daughter. He initially expresses his desire to marry Cordelia and gain her dowry, which was part of Lear’s plan to divide his kingdom among his daughters. However, when Cordelia is disowned by Lear, the Duke of Burgundy withdraws his proposal.

“I crave no more than what your highness offered, Nor will you tender less.”

## DUCHESS OF KENT

A noblewoman and one of Lear’s most loyal followers. The Duchess of Kent remains faithful to Lear even after being banished for defending Cordelia. She disguises herself as ‘Caius’ to continue serving Lear and plays a crucial role in protecting the king.

“Royal Lear! Whom I have ever honoured as my king, As my master followed, As my great patron thought of in.”

## OSWALD

Oswald is a servant in the household of Goneril, Lear’s eldest daughter. He is conniving, opportunistic and aligns himself with Goneril and Regan to further his own interests. Throughout the play, Oswald clashes with the Duchess of Kent, who sees through his deceit and recognises his lack of integrity. Oswald represents the cunning and treacherous individuals who thrive in a morally chaotic world.

“Why dost thou use me thus? I know thee not.”

# Accessibility Presented by Dentons Kensington Swan

## Audio-Described Performance and Touch Tour King Lear Sunday 25 Jun 4:00pm

The audio-described performance is open to all and includes a live audio commentary relayed to blind and low-vision patrons in the audience via an

earpiece. Patrons with accessibility tickets can also attend a touch tour 90 minutes before the performance.

## NZSL-Interpreted Performance King Lear Saturday 24 Jun 8:00pm

The NZSL-interpreted performance is open to all and features an interpreter

on stage signing the show for Deaf and hard-of-hearing patrons in the audience.

## How to Book

Deaf/hard-of-hearing and blind/low-vision patrons can buy tickets for NZSL-interpreted and audio-described performances for $20. One companion ticket per theatre-goer is also available for $20. Please contact the box office to book accessible performance tickets or if you have any special requirements.

## Wheelchair Access

ASB Waterfront Theatre has eight seats and three wheelchair spaces in the auditorium, reserved for customers with special access requirements. There is step-free level access to all tiers of the building and to seating in the stalls. Wheelchair-accessible toilets are located on the ground floor; accessible parking is available on Madden Street.

## Assistance Dogs

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

## Hearing Assistance

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

NZSL Interpreting and Signing — Platform Interpreting NZ

Audio Description — Audio Described Aotearoa Ltd

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

**Acknowledgements**

**Auckland Theatre Company would like to thank the following for their help with this production:**

The Hotel Britomart, kingi, New Zealand Opera, HAMI and Mia van Oyen (Ngāpuhi, Rongowhakaata, Ngāti Porou).

Supported by: Pilot Productions

# In Focus: Youth Arts at Auckland Theatre Company

Rangatahi have always been central to the work of Auckland Theatre Company. From 2008’s iconic production of Shrew’d by MargaretMary Hollins, to the legendary Here & Now festival hosting works like BOYS, adapted from Greg McGee’s Foreskin’s Lament by Eleanor Bishop, the Company has answered the dual call from young people for rigorous training in theatre and for a bloody good time.

Last year, Auckland Theatre Company established its inaugural Youth Company, an in-house ensemble of young theatre artists and, this year, we announced two programmes for young people aged 16 to 25. Both part-time, free programmes are designed for rangatahi who love theatre and want to deepen their development and interaction with the professional performing arts sector.

## Youth Associates

The Youth Associates programme invites young theatre creatives, aged 16 and up, to learn, play and engage with the professional artists making works for Auckland Theatre Company. It is the first time we have run this programme, which offers 50 young people workshops sampling theatre skills, including acting, directing and design, and the chance to see the plays in our 2023 season.

## Youth Company

Auckland Theatre Company’s Youth Company returns in 2023 after a successful 2022 pilot, which resulted in 22 Company members presenting a sold-out new work by poet and playwright Dan Goodwin.

The Youth Company’s remit is to find, shape, inspire and champion the next generation of performers and theatre-makers. To let young people learn in a working theatre, feel comfortable in this space, and train in an environment that acknowledges that being an artist takes enormous strength and resilience.

This year, the Youth Company continues as an intensive part-time programme for Aotearoa’s next generation of theatre-makers, aged 18 to 25.

We have a wonderfully ambitious, hard-working and determined group of young performers in the 2023 Youth Company. These 17 young artists have hit the ground running, hungry to learn and grow within the Auckland Theatre Company family, and eager to share their learning and growth with the greater Auckland arts industry.

On the ASB Waterfront Theatre stage, Company members have shadowed backstage roles on Witi’s Wāhine and three of our Youth Company take to the stage tonight as part of King Lear’s Ensemble. The Company is preparing to present a contemporary adaptation of classic play Ubu Roi, adapted and directed by Esaú Mora, in July. Youth Company 2023 is culminating in November, with a double bill of new works at the Basement Theatre.

If you are a young person looking to be involved in the world of theatre, find out more at atc.co.nz/youth-arts

Youth company is proudly made possible by the generous Youth Company Supporters Group led by Peter Macky and Joan Vujcich.

Principal Funders: Creative New Zealand and Auckland Council

Core Funder: Foundation North

Supporter: The Lion Foundation

# 30th Anniversary Fund

**Make a gift to support the next 30 years**

**of Auckland Theatre Company**

**Created by a group of visionary founding donors in 1998 to support the growth and creativity of Auckland Theatre Company, The Theatre Foundation has underwritten the ambition of making theatre of scale for our city and carried us to the dawn of our fourth decade as we stage our 200th production.**

The Foundation is now renewing its capacity to support Auckland Theatre Company for the next 30 years by raising funds to mark the Company’s anniversary.

We invite you to be part of the next era of Auckland Theatre Company’s history by making a tax-deductible donation to The Theatre Foundation 30th Anniversary Fund. To make a donation, visit atc.co.nz/support or, for more information, contact our Artistic Director & CEO, Jonathan Bielski [development@atc.co.nz](mailto:development@atc.co.nz)

30 Year Visionary: $50,000+  
30 Year Star: $50,000

30 Year Lead: $25,000

30 Year Ensemble: $5,000

30 Year Understudy: All other gifts

Gifts can be spread over five years.

Visionary: Dame Jenny Gibbs DNZM, Jan & Trevor Farmer   
Lead: Prue Olde   
Ensemble: Barbie & Paul Cook

The Theatre Foundation is a charitable trust. The trustees are: Gordon Moller ONZM (Chair), Tim MacAvoy, Patricia Watson, Isaac Hikaka and Derek McCormack.

Donate at atc.co.nz/support

# Pre-order your book

To celebrate 30 years of theatre-making, we have invited author Frances Walsh to lift the lid on the decades of drama and tell the story of Auckland Theatre Company.

Delving into the archives and interviewing a starry ensemble of creatives, board members and staff, Frances has uncovered a tantalising treasure trove of tales.

Our anniversary book is set for release in October 2023.

Pre-order your copy online at atc.co.nz/support/book/

# Thank You

## Auckland Theatre Company Supporters

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YOUTH COMPANY SUPPORTERS 2023

**Co-Leaders** Peter Macky and Joan Vujcich   
**Saints** Peter Macky, Joan Vujcich   
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