

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY

41 St Andrews Place East Melbourne Victoria 3002 Australia
TELEPHONE +61 3 9651 4300 FACSIMILE +61 3 9651 4324
EMAIL vcaa@edumail.vic.gov.au WEB www.vcaa.vic.edu.au
ABN 82 628 957 617



Drama and Theatre Studies

2005 Playlists

The following plays have been selected for study in 2005. The plays are grouped into three lists: Drama Unit 3 Playlist, Theatre Studies Unit 3 Playlist and Theatre Studies Unit 4 Playlist. The lists should be considered in conjunction with the relevant requirements set out in the Drama and Theatre Studies Study Designs and referred to in the introduction to each list.

Teachers should note that the performance of the plays should be attended in the unit specified.

Drama Unit 3 Playlist

The following plays have been selected for study in 2005. This list should be considered in conjunction with the requirements set out in Unit 3 Outcome 3 in the Drama Study Design. Students will undertake an assessment task based on the performance of a play on the playlist. Question/s will also be set on the performances of the plays in the end-of-year Drama written examination.

1. *Children of the Black Skirt* by Angela Betzien

arts2go – Regional Arts Victoria schools' touring program

Tour: inschools tour to metropolitan, regional and remote areas

Season: 20 April – 20 May

Venue: St Martin's Youth Arts, South Yarra

Season: 22 April (2 performances)

All enquiries: (03) 9644 1800 or email to enquiry@rav.net.au

Children of the Black Skirt is a non-naturalistic gothic fairytale set in a mythical, timeless, Australian orphanage. Two of the orphans, Min and Maude, are always wary of 'the black skirt' – the Governess who floats through the orphanage wielding her enormous scissors. To escape the reality of their own lives, the girls tell stories about other lost children. The play explores ways that Australian society's treatment of its young people reflects our fears and anxieties as a nation and views Australian history through the eyes of children from convict times to the Stolen Generation. Each of the three actors creates a range of different characters representing children from Australia's past.

2. *The Ham Funeral* by Patrick White

Malthouse Theatre

Venue: Merlyn Theatre, CUB Malthouse

Season: 11 April to 2 May

Enquiries: (03) 9685 5165 Malthouse Education

The Ham Funeral explores a young man's journey as he abandons adolescence and moves into adulthood and the unknown. The Young Man is invited to attend the funeral of his landlord who has suddenly died. Alma, the landlord's wife has decided that the wake will be a memorable affair as she intends to feed the mourners ham. The performance features an ensemble of actors and incorporates aspects of the absurd and expressionism with use of soundscape in a non-naturalistic setting.

3. *Journal of the Plague Year* by Tom Wright (after Daniel Defoe)

Malthouse Theatre

Venue: Merlyn Theatre, CUB Malthouse

Season: 11 April to 2 May

Enquiries: (03) 9685 5165 Malthouse Education

The Journal of the Plague Year is a non-naturalistic ensemble work that incorporates elements of absurdism and expressionism with aspects of the theatrical styles of Brecht, the Grotesque and Grotowski's Poor Theatre. The performances will be dynamic with an almost comic book approach as the effects of the plague on the human body and spirit are explored.

4. *Only the End* by Robbie Bishop

Commonground Productions / La Mama

Venue: Carlton Courthouse

Season: 20 April – 7 May

Enquiries: (03) 9347 6142

Only the End takes place in 2002 in a hospital ward where Rowey is dying of cancer. The character of Rowey is portrayed by two actors, Rowey One, the sick Rowey and Rowey Two, the well Rowey who narrates the play as she sits on her stool, observing and commenting on the action. As the play progresses and Rowey One's death becomes imminent, their separate realities merge and interact. The performance features transformation of time and place, disjointed time sequences, actors playing multiple characters and caricature through a series of short scenes in an epic structure.

5. *Shakespeare and the Dark Lady of the Sonnets* by Enzo Condello

La Mama

Season: 1 June – 18 June

Venue: Carlton Courthouse Theatre

Enquiries (03) 9347 6948

Shakespeare and the Dark Lady of the Sonnets is told through the eyes of Shakespeare's wife Anne Hathaway who recounts the story Shakespeare's tempestuous relationship with the Dark Lady so often referred to in his sonnets. The play is informed by the research of A L Rowse which was published in 1975 and explores a range of universal themes including romantic versus sexual love, guilt, illusion versus fact, redemption and hope. The play draws on Shakespearian allusions and vocabulary and uses non-naturalistic dramatic poetry and poetic prose.

Theatre Studies Unit 3 Playlist

The following plays have been selected for study in 2005. This list should be considered in conjunction with the requirements set out in Unit 3 Outcome 3 of the Theatre Studies Study Design. Students will undertake an assessment task based on the performance of a play on the playlist. Question/s will also be set on the performances of the plays in the end-of-year Theatre Studies written examination.

1. *Frankenstein* by Anne Thompson, Colin Sneesby and Jessica Wilson

The Arts Centre in conjunction with Terrapin Puppet Theatre

Venue: Fairfax Studio, The Arts Centre
Season: 26–29 April
Enquiries: (03) 9281 8582

Based on Mary Shelley's tale of a man who summons the dead to life, *Frankenstein* is a work of visual theatre that uses marionettes, Bunraku puppetry, projected imagery and original composition to tell a story about a love triangle between an obsessive man, the woman who wants him and the monster who keeps them apart. The production features non-naturalism with heightened language, pathos, symbol and mood, disjointed time sequences, conflict and transformation of place.

2. *Two Brothers* by Hannie Rayson

Melbourne Theatre Company

Venue: The Arts Centre Playhouse
Season: 9 April – 14 May
Enquiries: (03) 9684 4513

Two Brothers is a contemporary Australian play that explores a range of political and social issues through the contrasting lives of brothers 'Eggs' and Tom Benedict and their families. The production features a heightened theatrical style that is true to life and naturalistic with disjointed time and location sequences. The play opens at the family weekend where Eggs is confronted by Mehmet Al Ayad, an asylum seeker. A struggle ensues and Eggs kills Mehmet. At the end of Act One, this scene is continued to reveal that Tom had invited Mehmet to the weekend, not expecting Eggs to be there.

3. *Cyrano de Bergerac* by Edmond Rostand, adapted by Andrew Upton, translated by Andrew Upton & Marion Potts (French, 1897; Australian adaptation & translation, 1999)

Melbourne Theatre Company

Venue: The Arts Centre Playhouse
Season: 19 February – 2 April
Enquiries: (03) 9684 4513

Cyrano de Bergerac is a larger than life heroic comedy. The performance features physical action, humour and romance with a design that uses high production values to present a distorted reality. Cyrano is a brave soldier and gifted poet, with a large and ugly nose. He is in love with his rich and beautiful cousin Roxane. Roxane is in love with the handsome but inarticulate Christian, a new soldier in Cyrano's company. Christian successfully courts Roxane using romantic poetry provided to him by Cyrano. Christian is killed in battle. Roxanne joins a convent ...

4. *My Brilliant Divorce* by Geraldine Aron

HIT Productions

Venues: touring regional and metropolitan venues
Season: 30 April – 26 June
Enquiries: (03) 9521 6899

My Brilliant Divorce is essentially a monologue that uses both naturalistic and non naturalistic performance styles as Angela, a middle aged mother of one and former pretty young window dresser with a Vespa scooter, recounts the story of her divorce from Max. Set over a three year time period with comedy and pathos Angela celebrates her husband's departure, gets angry about being abandoned and finally discovers herself and the love of her life. The performance features character transformation and voices heard on tape.

Theatre Studies Unit 4 Playlist

The following plays have been selected for study in 2005. This list should be considered in conjunction with the requirements set out in Unit 4 Outcome 3 in the Theatre Studies Study Design. Studies will undertake an assessment task based on the performance of a play on the playlist. Question/s will also be set on the performances of the plays in the end-of-year Theatre Studies written examination.

1. *President Wilson in Paris* by Ron Blair

HIT Productions

Venues: touring regional and metropolitan venues
Season: 1–28 August
Enquiries: (03) 9521 6899

President Wilson in Paris is an absurdist comedy thriller about President Woodrow Wilson and his second wife Edith who are in Paris for the Peace Conference at which the President introduces his idea for a League of Nations. But are Wilson and his wife who they seem to be?

2. *Two Gentlemen of Verona* by William Shakespeare

Bell Shakespeare

Venues: touring regional and metropolitan venues
Season: 6 July – 2 August
Enquiries: 1300 305 730

The *Two Gentleman of Verona* is short comedy featuring the flawed yet passionate characters of Valentine and Proteus, their lovers Julia and Sylvia and their servants Speed and Launce in a story about mateship, love and disloyalty. The story involves a number of themes and plot twists with eventual reconciliation and forgiveness.

3. *Measure for Measure* by William Shakespeare

Bell Shakespeare

Venue: The Arts Centre Playhouse
Season: 5–20 August
Enquiries: 1300 305 730

Measure for Measure is most properly called a tragi-comedy and uses a sardonic and blunt tone to portray a corrupt, unhealthy society where virtue has to be militant and aggressive to survive. The shape of the play is that of a fable or morality tale but the characters are fully developed psychological studies. The introspection and anguish portrayed by the major characters is

contrasted with a range of Shakespeare's 'low-life' characters: Mistress Overdone, Pompey Bum, Lucio and Constable Elbow. This contemporary production will present *Measure for Measure* with some small cuts and alterations to Shakespeare's original script.

4. *The Black Swan of Trespass* by Lally Katz and Chris Kohn

Stuck Pigs Squealing Theatre with Malthouse

Venue: CUB Malthouse

Season: Tuesday 12 July – Saturday 7 August

Enquiries: (03) 9685 5165 Malthouse Education

Black Swan of Trespass is a theatricalisation of the character of Ern Malley, the poet who never lived yet was the subject of an infamous Australian literary hoax. The play is in an abstract style with aspects of absurdity and tragedy and takes the audience on a journey into the existential, drawing heavily on the created letters of Ethel Malley and the created poetry of Ern Malley.

The characters in the play are metaphors of where Australia and Australians were going in 1940s wartime. From Ethel's letters we are introduced to her now dead brother and the discovery of his poetry. With the entrance of Ern the story takes on a more surreal quality. The production features physicality, pathos, humour, soundscape, original live music, songs from the era, poetry, puppetry and uses junkyard-like props to establish time and place.

Schools should note that in the following plays – *The Ham Funeral*, *Journal of the Plague Year*, *Frankenstein* and *Two Brothers* – a variety of suggestive and potentially offensive words and phrases are used. They occur with intermittent frequency and are generally consistent with much current contemporary theatrical language usage. However, this language may invite adverse comment from some areas of the community.

If you have any enquiries contact Helen Champion at the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority on (03) 9651 4668.



Published by

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY

41 St Andrews Place East Melbourne Victoria 3002 Australia

TELEPHONE +61 3 9651 4300 FACSIMILE +61 3 9651 4324

EMAIL vcaa@edumail.vic.gov.au

WEB www.vcaa.vic.edu.au

