

2008 VCE Drama and Theatre Studies Playlist

The 2008 playlist was published as Memorandum to Schools 2007/116 on 13 December 2007. This information has been updated with further details regarding booking for several productions. Note that all information regarding times, venues and dates is subject to change and must be confirmed when booking tickets.

Drama Unit 3, 2008 Playlist

The following plays have been selected for study in 2008. This list should be considered in conjunction with the requirements set out in Unit 3 Outcome 3 in the *VCE Drama Study Design (2007–2011)*. 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.

Notes

1. Schools should note that in the plays *Australian Marriage Act*, *Asylum* and *Frank Woodley – Possessed* a variety of suggestive and potentially offensive words and phrases are used. They occur with intermittent frequency. However, this language may invite adverse comment from some areas of the community.
2. While the VCAA considers all plays on this list suitable for study, teachers should be aware that in some instances sensitivity might be needed where particular issues or themes are explored. Before selecting plays for study teachers should make themselves aware of these issues and themes prior to students viewing the play and/or studying the playscript. Information provided in this notice about themes and/or language used in specific plays is intended as a guide only.

1. *39 Steps, English adaptation (2007) by Patrick Barlow from the novel by John Buchan (1915) and the film by Alfred Hitchcock (1935)*

Melbourne Theatre Company

Venue: The Arts Centre Playhouse

Season: 5 April – 10 May 2008

Booking enquiries: www.mtc.com.au or (03) 9684 4513

39 Steps is based on the original novel and Hitchcock film of the same name. This new version is a comic parody of the thriller/suspense/spy genre and both represents these original versions and transforms them. Four actors transform across a vast range of characters in a play structured around the main scenes of the film. Non-naturalistic techniques including transformation of

object and place are used with suspense, romance and irony in a pared back setting where stagecraft is used to enhance the parody.

2. *Kindertransport* by Diane Samuels

Machination Ensemble Theatre

Venue: Theatreworks

Season: 16–27 April 2008

Bookings: gm@theatreworks.org.au or (03) 9534 3388

Enquiries: machination_ensemble@hotmail.com

Kindertransport is a work of transformational, visual and expressionistic non-naturalistic theatre presented in a strongly abstract style. Based on the experiences of the many children who were sent from Germany to England before the outbreak of World War II, *Kindertransport* tells the story of Eva/Evelyn who left Hamburg for England in 1939. Adopted by the Miller family, Eva/Evelyn's repressed secrets are gradually revealed through use of disjointed time sequences and transformation of character. Against a strong naturalistic text, projection, sound and choreography are used to layer images and symbolise the inner struggles of Eva/Evelyn, her birth and adoptive mothers, her daughter Faith and various authority figures in Germany and England.

3. *Australian Marriage Act* by Marcia Ferguson

Arena Theatre Company

Venues: 'In schools' tour to regional and metropolitan schools throughout Victoria. Arena will broker joint performances for regional schools who have small class numbers.

Season: 14 April – 2 May 2008 with options to extend to 5–9 May 2008

Bookings: bookings@arenatheatre.com.au

Enquiries: www.arenatheatre.com.au or (03) 9329 6266

Inspired by the real-life story of a teenage Australian couple who sought permission to marry through the court system, *Australian Marriage Act* is a non-naturalistic work performed by three actors who each transform to a range of characters. Disjointed time-sequences are used to tell the story of the couple's relationship as they struggle to marry before the birth of their child. The production also features manipulation of objects and places with the action choreographed to a non-stop techno sound design.

Schools should note that this play uses a variety of suggestive and potentially offensive words and phrases. They occur with intermittent frequency. However, this language may invite adverse comment from some areas of the community.

4. *Asylum* by Kit Lazaroo

Here Theatre

Venues: La Mama Theatre and a regional tour to Hamilton, Horsham, Colac, Portland and Robinvale facilitated by Regional Arts Victoria

Season: 20 February – 8 March 2008, Wednesday and Sunday 6:30 pm, Thursday – Saturday 8 pm, matinees Wednesday 27 February and 5 March at 1 pm, Thursday 21 and 28 February and 6 March at 11 am

Regional tour, 17–21 June 2008

Metropolitan and regional bookings and enquires: (03) 9347 6948 or maureen@lamama.com.au

Asylum challenges an audience to think about the refugee issue in new ways. Lally Black is a psychiatrist who is struggling to maintain compassion for her clients. Yu Siyang, a Chinese woman who has caught HIV while in Australia as a student believes that Lally is the key to claim for asylum. Puppetry, dream sequences, physical theatre, sound, music and transformation of character and object are used to create this layered non-naturalistic work.

Schools should note that this play uses a variety of suggestive and potentially offensive words and phrases. They occur with intermittent frequency. However, this language may invite adverse comment from some areas of the community.

5. *Possessed* by Frank Woodley with director Kate Denborough, music by Paul Mac and design by Christina Smith

Produced by: Token Events

Venue: Comedy Theatre, 240 Exhibition Street Melbourne

Season: 19 March – 13 April 2008, Tuesdays to Sundays at 7 pm

Enquiries: (03) 9299 9030 or www.token.com.au

A physical theatre work for solo performer, *Possessed* is a comedy that also looks at serious issues such as loneliness, agoraphobia and senility in a sensitive light. In the absence of other cast mates, the solo performer uses non-naturalistic techniques of transformation of character and disjointed time-sequences as he interacts with the music, set and lighting to convey the story in inventive ways.

Schools should note that this play uses a variety of suggestive and potentially offensive words and phrases. They occur with intermittent frequency. However, this language may invite adverse comment from some areas of the community.

Theatre Studies Unit 3, 2008 Playlist

Schools should note that the following plays have been selected for study in 2008. This list should be considered in conjunction with the requirements set out in Unit 3 Outcome 3 of the *VCE Theatre Studies Study Design* (2007–2011). 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.

Schools should note that in the plays *Tartuffe* and *Shirley Valentine* a variety of suggestive and potentially offensive words and phrases are used. They occur with intermittent frequency. However, this language may invite adverse comment from some areas of the community.

Note

While the VCAA considers all plays on this list suitable for study, teachers should be aware that in some instances sensitivity may be needed where particular issues are raised. In selecting plays for study teachers should make themselves aware of these issues prior to students viewing the play and/or studying the playscript.

1. *As You Like It* by William Shakespeare

Bell Shakespeare

Season and venues: 4–5 March Shepparton* including 12 noon matinee on 5 March; 7 March Bendigo* at 1 pm and 8 pm; 11 March Mildura* at 8 pm; 18 March Warrnambool* at 8 pm; 19–20 March Ballarat*, 19 March at 8 pm and 20 March at 11 am; 25 March Dandenong at 8 pm; 26 March Warragul at 8 pm; 28 March Sale* at 8 pm; 10–12 April Geelong* 10–12 at 8 pm and 11 am on 11 April, 1 pm on 12 April; 15–16 April Moonee Ponds at 8 pm, 17–19 April Nunawading, 17–19 at 8 pm and 3 pm on 19 April

Enquiries: education@bellshakespeare.com.au or 1300 305 552 271

* Free Regional Access Student Workshop available, ask the venue when booking student tickets.

An intricate plot, comedy, romance, soundtrack, live music performance, disguise, cross-dressing, movement and dance all feature in this new production of *As You Like It*. Dad has made the big 'treechange' and the kids aren't really happy about him doing it by himself. Rosalind packs her bags and together with friends Celia and Orlando heads for the forest of Arden to find her father. Incognito, Rosalind, goes undercover to right wrongs and in the process develops a surprising insight into the nature of love.

2. *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare

Australian Shakespeare Company

Venues: Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne and regional tour to Sale, Wonthaggi, Bendigo and Shepparton

Season: 28 December 2007 – 16 March 2008

Regional tour, 11 April – 3 May 2008

Enquiries: (03) 8676 7509

Romeo and Juliet is a classic love story revolving around conflict between families. With a cast that includes indigenous actors, this very physical production will explore the play's themes in ways that connect to contemporary Australia, a country at war in two countries and in conflict with our own indigenous people to highlight that it is the next generation who suffer from the current conflicts.

3. *Tartuffe* adapted by Louise Fox from the original by Moliere

Malthouse Theatre

Venue: Merlyn Theatre

Season: 15 February – 8 March 2008

Enquiries: education@malthousetheatre.com.au or (03) 9685 5165 or (03) 9685 5164

Incorporating a large traverse stage that wraps around the audience something like a wave with an adjacent crucifix shaped swimming pool surround by mock grass this production of *Tartuffe* juxtaposes the bourgeois world of seventeenth-century France with the bourgeois world of twenty-first century Australia. Combining witty high brow and bawdy low comedy the structure and narrative of the work is faithful to much of Moliere's original play but will

be scattered with interruptions in the form of music, singing and other absurd physical moments. Costumes for some characters will retain elements of seventeenth century fashion while others will be dressed in very contemporary costumes.

Schools should note that this play uses a variety of suggestive and potentially offensive words and phrases. They occur with intermittent frequency. However, this language may invite adverse comment from some areas of the community.

4. *Shirley Valentine* by Willy Russell

HIT Productions

Venues: Athenaeum Theatre Melbourne, and regional tour

Season: 10 May – 15 June 2008

Regional tour: 16–17 May Dandenong, 18 May Pakenham, 20 May Altona, 22 May Horsham, 23 May Portland, 24 May Colac, 29–30 May Shepparton, 31 May Benalla, 2 June Traralgon, 3 June Sale, 4 June Yarram, 5–6 June Moonee Ponds, 7 June Ringwood, 12 June Moorabbin, 13 June South Morang

Enquiries: nava.c@hitproductions.com.au or (03) 9599 0899

Shirley Valentine is a 42-year-old mother and housewife who feels she has stagnated and is in a rut. After her best friend wins an all-expenses paid holiday to Greece for two Shirley packs her bags and heads for the sun. Performance choices made by the actress allow the audience to share in her journey of development.

Schools should note that this play uses a variety of suggestive and potentially offensive words and phrases. They occur with intermittent frequency. However, this language may invite adverse comment from some areas of the community.

5. *Through the Looking Glass* composed by Alan John, adapted by Andrew Upton from the novel by Lewis Carroll

Victorian Opera and The Malthouse

Venues: The Merlyn Theatre, CUB Malthouse

Season: 17–31 May 2008

Enquiries: education@malthousetheatre.com.au or (03) 9685 5165 or (03) 9685 5164

An ensemble of singers/actors each transform across a range of roles in a dream-filled landscape, where surreal fairytale characters, an author and his creations inhabit the looking-glass world. Grown-up Alice believes that she lost her childhood to Carroll through the act of placing her in a story. Alice has to journey through the story again in order to find who she is and finally be able to utter her name. Puppets and marionettes are also used with a design that features a large glass box, partially shattered into which a series of exaggerated images from the story are flown. The libretto draws directly on Carroll's verse and wit, quoting directly from Alice in Wonderland. The remaining language is contemporary and presents the larger story of Alice trying to reclaim her childhood.

Theatre Studies Unit 4, 2008 Playlist

The following plays have been selected for study in 2008. This list should be considered in conjunction with the requirements set out in Unit 4 Outcome 3 in the *VCE 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.

Schools should note that in the play *Chrysalis* 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.

While the VCAA considers all plays on this list suitable for study, teachers should be aware that in some instances sensitivity may be needed where particular issues are raised. In selecting plays for study teachers should make themselves aware of these issues prior to students viewing the play and/or studying the playscript.

1. *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* by Tennessee Williams

Melbourne Theatre Company

Venue: The Arts Centre Playhouse

Season: 9 August – 13 September 2008

Booking enquiries: www.mtc.com.au or (03) 9684 4513

Set on a large cotton plantation in the Mississippi Delta in the 1950s, *Cat on the Hot Tin Roof* explores the social status of each of the characters in this particular world. The play focuses on themes including mendacity, avarice, inheritance, ambition, race, social status and sexuality within a family setting. This production of a classic work from the canon of American Realist theatre will be presented in a manner faithful to the original script using the theatrical style of heightened reality.

2. *Chrysalis* by Dina Ross

Soul Theatre Incorporated

Venue: Carlton Courthouse

Season: 6–23 August 2008 Wednesday and Sunday 6:30 pm, Thursday–Saturday 8 pm, matinees Wednesday August 13 and 20 at 1 pm, Thursday August 7, 14 and 21 at 11 am

Enquiries: alicia@soultheatre.org.au or (03) 9481 2626

Bookings: (03) 9347 6948 or maureen@lamama.com.au

Chrysalis is a play for three actors. It deals with issues of actual and presumed guilt through the case of Annie, an Australian mother, accused of serial infanticide. Annie's lawyer is Steffie, a woman struggling with her own guilt over an abortion. An expert medical witness whose evidence is eventually discredited is the third character. Theatrical styles used in the performance incorporate monologue and dialogue, actual representation of factual events and a dream-like quality associate with each character's fears and nightmares as they recollect their past. The use of video-taped images and scenes heightens the complexity of the story-telling and adds to the multi-layered nature of this work.

Schools should note that this play uses a variety of suggestive and potentially offensive words and phrases. They occur with intermittent frequency. However, this language may invite adverse comment from some areas of the community.

3. *Three Short Absurd Plays: The Lesson* by Ionesco, *Picnic on a Battlefield* by Fernando Arrabal and *Le Professeur Taranne* by Arthur Adamov

Ignite Productions

Venue: Theatreworks

Season: 20–30 August 2008, 20–22 August at 1 pm, 23 and 30 August at 8 pm

Enquiries: igniteprods@yahoo.com.au

Bookings: www.theatreworks.org.au

An ensemble of actors will present these short plays allowing students to focus on acting within each play and/or how the actors tackle their different roles and the contexts of each play. *The Lesson* is concerned with language. It is a demonstration of the basic

impossibility of communication – words cannot convey meanings because they leave out of account the personal associations they carry for each individual. In *Picnic on a Battlefield*, Arrabal creates a Chaplinesque comedy without a redeeming happy end. The world of the play derives its absurdity from the fact that the characters see the human situation with uncomprehending eyes of childlike simplicity. Based on a dream the playwright once had, *Le Professeur Taranne* is the nightmare of a man trying to hold onto his identity though unable to establish conclusive proof of it.

4. *The Time is Not Yet Ripe* by Louis Esson

Here Theatre

Venues: Carlton Courthouse Theatre

Regional tour: Shepparton, Echuca and Hamilton

Metropolitan season: 27 August – 13 September 2008, Wednesday and Sunday 6:30 pm, Thursday–Saturday 8 pm, matinees 3 and 10 September at 1 pm, Thursday 28 August, 4 and 11 September at 11 am, other matinees available by request.

Regional tour: prior to 26 August and 14–18 September. Final dates to be advised

Metropolitan and regional bookings and enquires: (03) 9347 6948 or maureen@lamama.com.au

Set on the eve of a Federal election in Federation era Melbourne, Esson's political satire *The Time is Not Yet Ripe* raises issues that are still relevant today through the story of Doris Quiverton, daughter of the Prime Minister, and her fiancée, Sydney Barrett, socialist candidate for the seat of Wombat. When Doris and Sydney contest the same seat for opposing parties, they are forced to choose between love and political ideals, personal happiness or the greater good of Australian society. The production uses some abstraction in design and performance and is played within a large square of Edwardian furniture and pot plants which is gradually disrupted and overturned through the play. Eight of the actors play double roles.

5. *3 Oaks* by Monica Raszewski

Rah Rah Productions

Venues: La Mama, Carlton

Regional tour: Dandenong, Bendigo, Swan Hill. Tour dates to be confirmed. Contact kimberlyg@optusnet.com.au

Metropolitan season: 23 July – 10 August, Wednesday and Sunday 6:30 pm, Thursday – Saturday 8 pm, matinees Wednesday 30 July and 6 August at 1 pm and Thursday 24, 31 July and 7 August at 11 am.

Bookings: (03) 9347 6948 or maureen@lamama.com.au

3 Oaks uses physical non-naturalistic theatre, music and an interactive design that offers different perspectives to the viewer and creates a sense of place. Posing questions like 'what remains of a life once a person has died?' and 'what can those remains mean?' the work plays with memory and the imagination, moving quickly through fragments of the past and present and evoking a space between. Margaret is trying to reconstruct her dead father's life from memory and to retrieve relics as a way of making sense of their severed relationship and to piece together a fragmented cultural heritage. Her mother and sister contribute their perspectives in a story that moves between Australia and a forest in Poland.

6. *Wicked – The Untold Story of the Witches of Oz* by Winnie Holzman (book) and Stephen Schwartz (score)

Gordon/Frost Organisation

Venue: The Regent Theatre

Season: from July 2008

Enquiries: wicked@acmn.com.au (attention Jane Ross)

Bookings: Ticketek Groups (03) 9299 9030.

Note: All Theatre Studies classes qualify for group booking rates. Schools can buy *Wicked* tickets from February 2008. For Units 3 and 4 VCE Theatre Studies students, the group price will be considered on a case by case basis for groups less than 20 (evidence of enrolment in Units 3 and 4 Theatre Studies will be required). Waitlist now at Ticketek Groups.

Wicked is a contemporary Broadway style music theatre work that asks 'Is there an objective source that defines good and evil or are they matters of one's personal feelings and opinion?' Elphaba, born green and later to become the Wicked Witch of the West and Glinda, later Glinda the Good are amongst the central characters. Based on the prequel novel by Gregory Maguire, *Wicked* draws on historical, literary and theatrical traditions to issues of tolerance, propaganda and the suppression of minorities.

Enquiries

If you have any enquiries please contact Helen Champion, Curriculum Manager for the Performing Arts at the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority on (03) 9651 4668.

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