



AUCKLAND ARTS FESTIVAL

FREE PROGRAMME

POST-SHOW TALK & AUDIO

DESCRIBED PERFORMANCE

THURSDAY 10 MARCH

SIGNED PERFORMANCE

MONDAY 14 MARCH



PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN McDERMOTT PHOTOGRAPHY. MODEL MAKER: CARL BLAND

TE PŌ WRITTEN BY CARL BLAND

CO-PRODUCED BY AUCKLAND ARTS FESTIVAL, NEW ZEALAND FESTIVAL, THEATRE STAMPEDE AND NIGHTSONG PRODUCTIONS

SPONSORED BY



WITH SUPPORT FROM



Sir John Logan Campbell Residuary Estate



Four Winds
FOUNDATION

TE PŌ

THEATRE STAMPEDE AND NIGHTSONG PRODUCTIONS

Q THEATRE, RANGATIRA

WEDNESDAY 9 MARCH – SATURDAY 12 MARCH, 8.00PM
SUNDAY 13 MARCH, 1.30PM & 7.30PM
MONDAY 14 MARCH, 6.30PM

1 HOUR 25 MINUTES NO INTERVAL

Nau mai haere mai ki Te Ahurei Toi O Tāmaki Makaurau. Welcome to AAF 2016. We are delighted you have come.

The Festival moves through moments in history and reflects on the impact they have on our world. It moves across cultures and into places where there are no borders. It shows us human beings coming together through music, performance and art.

We are delighted to present this major new theatre work and offer our thanks to the artists whose vision, hard work and passion made it happen. Special thanks to our commissioning partner, New Zealand Festival. Congratulations Carl, Ben, and the team from Theatre Stampede and Nightsong Productions.

Have a fabulous Festival.

FROM THE WRITER – CARL BLAND

Te Pō is essentially a play about grief. Not only for the person who has gone but also for your own identity, which has been based on someone's constant presence in your life. One of the only positive sides to grief is it forces you to search for the truth about yourself and your own life. *Te Pō* asks the audience to share in this search for truth in the form of a detective story. The three characters in the play, Detective Inspector Brett, Reverend Athol Sedgwick and Werihe, find themselves in the study of the missing playwright Bruce Mason. In the course of the investigation as to where Bruce might have gone the truth about everything they know begins to be questioned; their childhood, the objects that surround them, the stories they have read, even the nature of time itself. Until eventually they find the real truth of their own fragile existence. This play is dedicated to the missing person in my life Peta Rutter.

FROM THE DIRECTOR – BEN CROWDER

Love and death appear to be opposites; this notion of opposites is present throughout *Te Pō*. It is a play about grief and yet it presents itself as a comedy. The three central characters are rich in opposites. Detective Inspector Brett is a man who is constantly searching for the truth, but cannot see the truth about himself. Reverend Sedgwick is a man of belief who doesn't know what to believe. Werihe is blind and he sees more than anyone else.

I have sat with this work for an extended period of time. It has been over two years since we workshopped it with ATC's Next Stage programme. In the interim I have regularly returned to read it, contributed to the design process, helped guide its path to presentation – and now as I write – we are on the cusp of starting back into the rehearsal room with six weeks before its premiere seasons in Wellington and Auckland. Over all this time the play has been swirling around in my head and like the characters in the work I find myself at times struggling to grasp the reality of the situation, as it finally begins to take physical form.

The play is an outstanding piece of New Zealand writing. It challenges theatre – whilst respecting its traditions. It explores a re-imagined world, which is a tribute to one of our pioneering playwrights. *Te Pō* is very layered, it is a little like interpreting a blue print and discovering the rich nuances and connections embedded by the playwright. I have been working with Carl for many years and his writing is always a pleasure to be around, in part due to his arch knowledge of the theatre form, but also his commitment to a visual realm. At heart it is always a work that stems from a place of truth.

I am looking forward to the collaboration with such fine actors and also to be working again with a stellar group of designers and wider company. This production has required wide ranging support from many people and organisations to be here today. I know they are more specifically acknowledged elsewhere in this programme – but I would like to recognise them in championing *Te Pō*. In particular I would like to thank Carla and Shelagh and their respective festivals.

COMPANY

Writer/Actor

Director

Producer

Set Designer

Costume Designer

Lighting Designer

Music and Sound Designer

Animal Design and Construction

Set construction

Carl Bland

Ben Crowder

Owen Hughes

Andrew Foster

Elizabeth Whiting

Nik Janiurek

John Gibson

Main Reactor

New Zealand Festival

Scenic Artists

Lead Artist

Assistant

Taya Polkinghorne

Estevez Gillespie

Musicians backing Werihe's songs

Bass

Drums

Guitar

Keyboards

Recorded by

George Moeka'ai

Hayden Wharewake

Jon Lindsay

John Gibson

Vivek Gabriel at Black

Orange Studio

Production Manager

Stage Manager

Assistant Stage Manager

Lighting Operator

Sound Operator

Chaperone

Partnership Manager

Te Reo Translator

Carol Harding

Eliza Josephson-Rutter

Milo Cawthorne

Rachel Marlow

Brad Gledhill

Meg Cumberpatch

Frances Turner

Rhonda Tibble

Peta Rutter wrote the Reverend Sedgwick's final sermon

Extracts from Bruce Mason's *The End of the Golden Weather*, included in the play, are read by Bruce Mason

CAST

Reverend Sedgwick

Boy

Detective Inspector Brett

Werihe

Animal Operator

Carl Bland

Max Cumberpatch

Andrew Grainger

George Henare

Ella Becroft

COMPANY BIOGRAPHIES



WRITER – CARL BLAND

Carl Bland is a writer, actor and painter. He wrote and created his own shows with Peta Rutter under the name Nightsong Productions. Their shows included *The Bed Show*, *The House of Doors and Camels*, *Peta and Carl at the Last Supper* and *Sofa Stories*.

Collaborating with Theatre Stampede they also made *Head* (winner of Chapman Tripp Most Original Production) and *360 - a theatre of recollections* for The New Zealand International Arts Festival 2010. The show also won an inaugural excellence award and also The Hackman Cup, the people's choice award for most original production at the 2014 Auckland Theatre Awards.



DIRECTOR – BEN CROWDER

Ben is a theatre director and creator; he is a co-founder of Theatre Stampede. He has directed all of their productions since 1999. Past productions include: *360 – a theatre of recollections*, *Head* (both in collaboration with Nightsong Productions), *The Young Baron*, *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the national tour of *Blossom*.

Ben also works extensively as a freelance director and creator. He's worked with Auckland Theatre Company, Silo Theatre, Red Leap, Dust Palace and Auckland Live amongst others. He is often engaged on the development of new works. Recent productions include *Nui Sila*, *The Man Whose Mother was a Pirate* and *Famous Flora*.



PRODUCER – OWEN HUGHES

Owen is a film and theatre producer. He was production manager at Downstage Theatre in the 1970s working with directors Ian Mune, Mervyn Thompson, Phil Mann, George Webby, Grant Tilly, Nola Miller and Sunny Amey.

In 1990 he production managed Richard Campion and Don Selwyn's reenactment of the signing of the *Treaty of Waitangi* for its sesquicentenary. He has produced over 50 documentaries, 7 one-hour television dramas and two feature films. His most recent documentary was *Anzac: Tides of Blood* with Sam Neill.



DESIGNER – ANDREW FOSTER

Andrew was a co-founder of the award winning Wellington theatre company Trouble, and Head of Radio Drama at Radio New Zealand in 2004-05.

Recent projects include: directing Eli Kent's 'slacker comedy/supernatural whodunit' *Black Confetti* for ATC in Auckland; designs for Gary Henderson's *Peninsula*, and Stuart Hoar's *Pasefika* at the New Zealand Festival; direction/design of the Jo Randerson/Trouble classic *The Lead Wait*, and the Tony Award winning *Red* at Circa Theatre. In 2013 he directed and designed *Apocalypse Z*, an immersive theatre work about a zombie apocalypse in Auckland's Aotea Square.



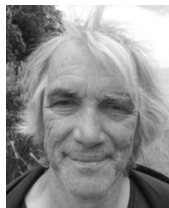
COSTUME DESIGNER – ELIZABETH WHITING

Elizabeth has designed costumes for New Zealand Opera, Auckland Theatre Company, Silo, Court Theatre, Red Leap and Okareka Dance, Black Grace, Douglas Wright Dance, Michael Parmenter, Atamira Dance Company and Shona McCullagh, the Royal New Zealand Ballet and many productions for the Auckland Arts Festival. In 2010 she won the Chapman Tripp Costume Design Award for *The Arrival* (Red Leap). She represented New Zealand at the Prague Design Quadrennial in 2003 with her costumes for *Falstaff*, and again in 2007 with the exhibition *Blow*.



LIGHTING DESIGNER – NIK JANIUREK

Nik is a theatre practitioner, specialising in freelance production and technical management, and lighting design. Originally trained at the Bristol Old Vic in the UK, he has worked for premier companies both in the UK and New Zealand. He has toured extensively with shows in New Zealand and internationally to festivals throughout Europe, Australasia, Asia and North America. Recent work includes *Evita*, *Mamma Mia* and *Rent* (Amici), *Between the Waves* (Passion Productions), *360 – a theatre of recollections* and *Famous Flora* (Theatre Stampede), *Len Lye - The Opera* (NICAI) and The Chinese Lantern Festival.



MUSIC AND SOUND DESIGNER – JOHN GIBSON

John Gibson has been composing original scores for theatre, film, dance and television since 1980. He has clocked up close to a hundred original scores and sound designs for theatre since then. In 2009 he received a Qantas award for his score with Jack Body for Vincent Ward's *Rain of the Children*. He has worked on all of Nightsong Productions' shows – including the Theatre Stampede collaborations *Head, 360 – a theatre of recollections* and the forthcoming *Te Pō*.



ANIMAL DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION – MAIN REACTOR

Founded by Roger Murray and Felicity Letcher, Main Reactor is one of our best equipped and largest props and prosthetic workshops. Based in Henderson, Auckland, their work has contributed to many film and TV productions, including *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Spartacus*, *What We Do In The Shadows* and more recently *Ash Versus Evil Dead* and *The Shannara Chronicles*. They relished the chance to collaborate again with Ben and Carl after the success of creating the seal in *360 – a theatre of recollections*. The company saw it as another great opportunity to be part of the storytelling process that is a central part of their ethos. Key prop makers Mike Day and Karl Jones were hands on in the creation and design of the animals and are the key to their success.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



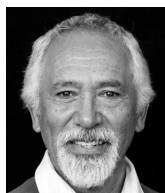
CARL BLAND

With over 25 years' experience on stage and screen, Carl's credits include films *I'll Make You Happy* (for which he was nominated for Best Actor), *The Warrior's Way* and *The Whole of the Moon*. For TV he has been in the core cast of *Street Legal* and *Rude Awakenings*. His numerous stage appearances include *Savage Hearts* and *King Lear* (Theatre at Large), *Mondo Nuevo* (Shona McCullagh), *The Pickle King* and *The Dentist's Chair* (Indian Ink), *Well Hung*, *Awatea*, *Midnight in Moscow* and *The Ladykillers* (Auckland Theatre Company).



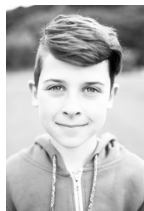
ANDREW GRAINGER

Andrew's career as an actor began in the 1980s in England, performing on London's West End. Television and film highlights from the UK included working alongside Robert Redford in *Spy Game*. In New Zealand, Andrew has rapidly built up an impressive collection of credits, appearing in *When We Go To War*, a six part television series for TVNZ, *Shortland Street*, *Outrageous Fortune*, *The Million Dollar Con Man*, *Life's A Riot*, *The Cult*, *Spartacus*, *Super City* and most recently *Ash Versus Evil Dead*. Andrew was also proud to be a part of *360 - a theatre of recollections* created by Carl Bland, Peta Rutter and Ben Crowder.



GEORGE HENARE

George's long acting career began in 1965 with the NZ Opera Company's production of *Porgy and Bess*, then subsequent operas graduating from chorus member to character principal then into Legit Theatre, working with the NZ Māori Theatre Trust, Downstage, Mercury, Court, Circa, Taki Rua, Stetson Productions, ATC, Newmarket Theatre Company. Across the ditch he worked with Melbourne Theatre Company, Sydney Ensemble and Company Belvoir - all these interspersed with radio drama, television, talking books, films, documentary narrations and hosting award ceremonies. George played the role of Werihe in ATC's 2012 production of *Awatea*.



MAX CUMBERPATCH

Max Cumberpatch is very excited to be performing on stage in *Te Pō*, his first professional role. Involved in his school comedy club, choir and Kapa Haka, he is a voracious reader and loves fantasy books. He would like to be an elephant keeper when he grows up... or a librarian.



ANIMAL OPERATOR – ELLA BECROFT

Ella works as an actor, director and producer. Ella has been a Red Leap Theatre company member since 2007, when she first collaborated with Kate Parker and Julie Nolan on the production *Beyond the Blue*. She went on to devise and perform in their multi-awarding winning production of *The Arrival*, for which she was awarded a Chapman Tripp Theatre Award for Most Promising Newcomer. Ella was also a cast member in Red Leap's *Sea* and *Dust Pilgrim*. As well as working in theatre Ella recently featured in the television series *Coverband* and puppeteered Kune from children's series *Kune's Kitchen*.



FIRST DAY OF REHEARSALS, JANUARY 2016



Bruce Mason was born in Wellington in 1921 and educated at Takapuna Grammar School, Wellington Boys College and Victoria University - graduating with a BA in 1945.

From 1941-45 he was on active service, gaining a commission in the Royal New Zealand Naval Volunteer Reserve in 1944. During this period he served on the Murmansk convoys and was also involved with the invasion of Europe. In 1945 he married Diana Manby Shaw.

He was research assistant for the War History Branch 1946-48 and assistant curator of manuscripts at the Alexander Turnbull Library 1948-49. Following travel to Europe, he became Public Relations Officer for the New Zealand Forest Service, 1951-57. He served as radio, record and music critic for the NZ Listener and was drama critic for the Dominion 1958-60 and again in 1973-80. From 1980 he transferred to the *Evening Post*.

In 1960-61 Bruce was Editor of *Te Ao Hou* for the Department of Māori Affairs and from 1967-70 edited the theatre magazine *Act*. Actively involved in all aspects of New Zealand literature Bruce was a founder and president of the NZ branch of PEN and from 1948-60 was variously president, secretary and committee member of Wellington's Unity Theatre. In 1963 he toured Eastern Europe, was New Zealand Delegate to the International Drama Conference in Edinburgh and performed *The End of the Golden Weather* at that year's Edinburgh Festival. His play *The Pohutukawa Tree* was produced by BBC Television in 1959.

A full time writer, actor and director, Bruce gave over 1,000 solo performances of *The End of the Golden Weather*. In 1977 he was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Literature by Victoria University, a QE II Arts Council Fellowship and, in 1980, the CBE.

He died at the end of 1982 shortly after completing three plays for television, which were broadcast by TVNZ in 1983.

Article courtesy of Playmarket NZ – playmarket.org.nz

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Te Pō has enjoyed enormous support from many. Felicity Letcher and Roger Murray and their team at Main Reactor. Julie Nolan, Amie Moffat, Johnny Givins, Beth Kayes, Bridget Donovan, Barefoot Casting and Matt Dwyer. Frances Turner, Michael Watney, the Bruce Mason Estate and Belinda Robinson. Helaina Keeley, Anders Falstie-Jensen, Gabrielle Vincent, Barbara Procter, Catherine George, Catherine Nola, Simon Vincent, Rawiri Paratene, Cameron Rhodes, Scotty Morrison, Colin McColl, Lester McGrath, Lynne Cardy, Philippa Campbell and her unwavering support through ATC's Literary Unit. The cast and company, the Corban Estate Arts Centre and Martin Sutcliffe, Q Theatre and its staff, Soundings Theatre and its staff. Amy Saunders, Michelle Lafferty, Melanie Esplin, Mick Sinclair, Maria Waterhouse, Elisabeth Vaneveld, Jess Smith, Takahide Nakazawa, Katrina Todd, Mark Burlace. Our funding partners including Creative New Zealand, Foundation North and Auckland Council. The Audience Connection and Vicki Allpress Hill and Katharine Witten-Hanna. Grae Burton, Craig Cooper, Lydia Zanetti, Thomas Braid, Heather Lee, Lisa Homes and Alice Hayes for wardrobe, Bruce Stewart for militaria supplies and Coleta Carbonell for wigs and make up consultancy. Jason Books. CP Solutions. Theatre Stampede and Nightsong Productions would like to acknowledge the dedicated and supportive teams of both festivals – of particular involvement with this production were Carla van Zon, Shelagh Magadza, Anna Cameron, Dolina Wehipeihana, David Inns and Angela Green. Finally Carl would like to thank his father, Peter Bland for listening to his daily progress and giving good advice.

In addition we realise there will have been many that have assisted since the print deadline for this programme. Thank you.

Te Pō by Carl Bland was developed with the assistance of Auckland Theatre Company.

Production animals designed, created and sponsored by Main Reactor, mainreactor.co.nz

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