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BLACK LOVER

BY STANLEY MAKUWE



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- Please make sure all cell phones are turned off.
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Venue: Q Theatre, Loft
350 Queen Street, Auckland

School Matinee: Thursday 19 & 26 March and Thursday 2 April at 11am

Running Time: 75 minutes, without an interval

Post-Show Forum: In the theatre immediately after the performance
(15 – 20mins)

Suitability: This production is suitable for Year Levels 12 & 13

Advisory: Contains sexual references and descriptions of violence



BLACK LOVER

BY STANLEY MAKUWE

CAST

Garfield Todd — **Cameron Rhodes**
Steady — **Simbarashe Matshe**

CREATIVE

Playwright — **Stanley Makuwe**
Director — **Roy Ward**
Set and Costume Designer — **Rachael Walker**
Lighting Designer — **Rachel Marlow**
Sound Designer — **Sean Lynch**

PRODUCTION

Production Manager — **Andrew Malmo**
Company Manager (Maternity Cover) — **Nicole Sarah**
Technical Manager — **Sean Lynch**
Stage Manager — **Catherine Grealish**
Technical Operator — **Spencer Earwaker**
Props Master — **Ruby Read**
Set Construction — **2Construct**

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AUCKLAND March 2022
ARTS FESTIVAL
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Education Pack Editor — **Lynne Cardy**
Contributions by **Stanley Makuwe**
Production designs courtesy of **Rachael Walker**
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“... the story remains relevant today as the world fights to eliminate racial discrimination, human rights abuse and slavery in favour of equality, freedom and justice.”

STANLEY MAKUWE

INTRODUCTION

In his Introduction to the play, Stanley Makuwe writes:

In 1934, New Zealander Garfield Todd arrived in Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) from New Zealand as a church missionary. He ran the Dadaya New Zealand Churches of

Christ Mission school and a clinic where he and his wife, Grace, delivered hundreds of black babies without any formal medical training. Todd then got caught up in the political wave that gripped the small African nation, winning an election to the colonial parliament in 1948, and then rising to become its prime minister in 1953. At the time, the country was under white minority rule. Black Africans were not allowed to vote, and education opportunities were limited.

Todd introduced modest reforms aimed at improving the education of the black majority, directing tax-money from white property owners and British colonial authorities towards black schools. He also increased the number of blacks eligible to vote from a mere 2 percent to 16 percent of the electorate.

He believed that blacks were as equally capable as whites. This did not go down well with fellow whites who labelled him a “traitor” and a “black lover,” resulting in him being abandoned by his whites-only cabinet.

In the ‘60s, a new government led by Ian Smith arrested him and threw him in a prison for blacks. He was later placed under house arrest.

This two-character play focuses on the period when Garfield Todd was under house arrest, the war raging, his family away in Rome for his daughter’s wedding, while he was confined to his house with his black helper/servant. The play is a historical piece which focuses on race relations in a war-torn African nation while it looks at one man’s fight for freedom and equality in Africa. Though based on true events, the play is not meant to rewrite historical facts as they happened, but it is the writer’s own imagination of what could have been happening in Todd’s confined and outside surroundings, as well as the mental turmoil of being in such an environment.

SYNOPSIS

Note: Contains spoilers. This synopsis is intended for use after you have seen the show, to recall key events.

Garfield Todd is alone in his living room on his ranch (Hokonui) in former Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). His cook, Steady, arrives. He's escaped a roadblock on the journey from his village, and out of breath he recounts that he witnessed the brutal assassination of a village man by government soldiers. He says he got away from the soldiers and their dogs by 'letting his air out' in his underwear.

Todd calms Steady and then tries to get him to leave, but he is set on cooking for Mr Todd, Madam Grace and 'little pikinini' Judy – their daughter. He has brought gifts for the family, handmade by his mother. Todd accepts them graciously but insists that he should go, until Steady reveals that the man killed at the roadblock was the son of Tamuka, the headman of his village – who was also killed recently.

Todd says he is worried for Steady's safety, and insists he

should go back to his village, before admitting that he is alone in the house and his family are in Rome for Judy's birthday. Steady comes up with a plan to reunite the family – they should all go to Rome to surprise Judy and he will bring the birthday cake!

Todd finally admits that he is under house arrest and cannot leave the ranch, or even make phone calls. He can only receive them. The sound of gunfire is heard. Todd insists that Steady joins him for cake and tea, despite Steady's protest that he can't have tea with his boss, they talk about the racial inequality around them and their different beliefs; Todd's in God and Steady's in his ancestors.

The phone rings and Steady listens as Todd talks to Judy. Steady is shocked to learn that his boss – the ex-prime minister – cannot leave the ranch to join his family in Europe. More gunshots are heard, and Steady discovers

the electricity has been cut. As the tension builds outside, Steady talks more about his outrage over the murder of Tamuka and his son but Todd doesn't want to discuss it. He feels unwell. Steady wants to get the local doctor, but Todd tells him he's not allowed any contact with blacks. The phone rings again, this time it's Todd's wife Grace. We learn that Todd was to make a speech to the Queen about what the crown must do in the face of the inequalities in Rhodesia. and that in his absence Judy will deliver it. As gunfire rages outside Steady reassures Todd that the black man will win the war and he sings a hymn to Zion in celebration. Todd joins in.

Steady then takes on the role of the Queen and insists that Todd present his speech. Todd reluctantly does so, and at the end Steady – as the Queen – declares "I Free Africa!" Todd is slightly disappointed with this reaction.

Steady suggests Todd should return home – to New Zealand. Tension rises between them as Todd insists that Hokonui Ranch is his home. Another phone call, this time from an official in the Smith government. Todd is furious with the man and when he puts the phone down Steady insists that they should now leave the ranch. Steady tells Todd that Ian Smith's soldiers killed his brother's best friend, and then his brother fled to Mozambique to become a freedom fighter. As the gunfire increases and night draws in, the two men drink together.

A freedom fighter arrives at the door demanding blankets and food which Todd supplies. Steady disappears and talks to the man, returning fired-up. Steady and Todd's conversation grows more heated. Steady leaves in a fury, and then returns – shot in the stomach. Todd tries to save Steady's life.





ABOUT THE SETTING

The action takes place at Hokonui Ranch, Garfield Todd's home in the Shabani province of Southern Rhodesia/Zimbabwe.

BACKGROUND TO THE CONFLICT

In 1888, Cecil Rhodes obtained a concession from local chiefs for the mineral rights over the land that became Southern and Northern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe and Zambia). In 1889 the area was placed under the protection of the British South African Company. Southern Rhodesia was formally annexed by the United Kingdom in 1923, and as a self-governing colony was ruled by a white minority government until independence in 1980.

In the 1960s the Government of Ian Smith was unwilling to move towards black majority rule and instead issued a Unilateral Declaration of Independence from the United Kingdom on the 11th November 1965. In the 1960s there were more than 200,000 whites living in Zimbabwe and about seven million blacks.

THE RHODESIAN BUSH WAR

The Rhodesian Bush war also called the Zimbabwe War of

Liberation—was a civil conflict from July 1964 to December 1979. The conflict pitted three forces against one another: the Rhodesian white minority-led government of Ian Smith; the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army – the military wing of Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union; and the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army of Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe African People's Union

INDEPENDENCE

In 1976, after years of sanctions and guerrilla activity, the Smith government finally agreed in principle to majority rule. Zimbabwe received independence on the 18th April 1980, with Robert Mugabe as Prime Minister. Twenty out of the 100 seats in the Parliament were reserved for the white minority.

The current population of Zimbabwe is estimated to be 14.86 million of which an estimated 28,732 are white (2012 census).



ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Stanley Makuwe was born in 1972 in Masvingo, Zimbabwe. He grew up in rural Shurugwi and has lived in New Zealand since 2002. He won Zimbabwe's 2016 National Art Merits Award for his play, *Chimbwido, Girl of War*. He was Shortlisted for the 2012 Adam New Zealand Play Award for *Footprints on Ika's Heart*, and the 2011 BBC International Playwriting Competition for *The Coup*. His plays have been staged in New Zealand and Zimbabwe, featuring at the Harare International Festival of the Arts (HIFA) in 2012 and 2017. He juggles family life with theatre and his full-time job in psychiatry.

We asked Stanley Makuwe about the inspiration behind the play, writing about real events and celebrating unsung heroes. What inspired you to write

Black Lover?

I have always known Garfield Todd and his work in Africa for almost all my life. But I realized that not many people in New Zealand knew about him. I also saw that his fight for racial equality would be a story that would connect with race issues today.

The relationship between Garfield Todd and Steady involves power play, is that a deliberate comment on the power shifts in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe at the time?

Yes, this was a deliberate move. When I thought of Steady's character, I didn't want to have a character who was passive and looking up to the "white saviour." I wanted a character who had something to give, hence I deliberately played with power shifts. I also thought of Garfield's

ideas that he wanted power balance, so having a character like Steady represented what I visualized about Todd's fight for equality.

The action takes place in real-time and is set in one room. What dramatic techniques did you use to show what was going on, outside the room to heighten the tension or build the atmosphere?

Sound is the main factor. There are sounds of gunshots interrupting them time and again. Then we have sounds of footsteps. Then we hear voices outside. There are also sounds of birds to represent the bush around the house. Gunshots were a regular occasion at that time even in Todd's ranch. His home was in the middle of a thick bush, so all that is felt through sound.

In your introduction you say, "the play is not meant to rewrite historical facts as they happened...", but can you clarify, is it a true story?

Todd's story is a true story. His house arrest is a true story. His fight for race equality in Zimbabwe and Africa is a true story. His love for Africa and the people is a true story. He lived and walked among us and participated in our African practices.

Is Steady real or imagined?

Todd had servants at his ranch and in his house. But none of them was named Steady and none of them behaved or acted like Steady. Steady the character is imagined and is meant to push Todd out of his comfort zone. By comfort zone, I mean, Todd was a giant of a man, well-spoken, never used swear words, never used any bad language, but now here he is with a character who pushes him to talk about sex and women and bull balls. All this was deliberate to enhance the action on stage.

Tell us about your process as a writer. How long did it take to write Black Lover?

Writing the first draft was easy. I didn't spend much time on it. I would say it took me about two weeks. But the re-writes have taken about two years. We had workshops and readings, resulting in so many re-writes and changes. The process is still ongoing during the rehearsals.

What do you want the audience to come away with after seeing the show?

My main goal was awareness. I wanted Kiwis to be aware of one of their own heroes. All they talk about is Sir Edmund Hillary, but New Zealand is more than just the works of Sir Edmund Hillary. Sir Edmund Hillary conquered

a mountain. How about a man named Todd who conquered race inequalities? The second goal was to open discussion on race issues. Race and gender issues have been on top of discussions for years in the past and will always be in years to come. So, for me I would want my audience to come out reflecting on themselves in terms of race relations in New Zealand. This country is very multicultural, and we really need to reflect on ourselves in terms of how we relate to each other. I want my audience to feel inspired by Todd's fight for racial equality. I also want

our younger generation to be educated about this great man. Another thing that Kiwis take for granted is how much they contributed to the freedom of others, especially Africans. I would love to see Kiwis feeling proud of what they have given to other parts of the world despite being such a small country with a small population. I remember a headline in a newspaper that said, 'AFRICA LOOKS UP TO NEW ZEALAND FOR FREEDOM.' How many Kiwis know about this and feel proud about it?

TALKING POINTS

1. Makuwe describes *Black Lover* as "a historical piece which doesn't rewrite historical facts as they happened but is the writer's own imagination of what could have been happening." **What does he mean by this? Were there elements in the play that seemed more imagined than 'real' and why? What connections do you make with this play and other plays/films/TV you have seen?**
2. Makuwe has three aims for the play: promoting Todd to New Zealanders, opening discussion of race issues and encouraging kiwis to be proud of their contribution to freedom internationally. **Can you recall any specific moments in *Black Lover* where these ideas were explored? What was happening on stage in those moments? How did the moments affect you as an audience member?**



THEMES - RELIGION & BELIEFS

In *Black Lover*, the characters' contrasting beliefs are the cause of misunderstandings, tension and comic confusion.

Garfield Todd originally came to Zimbabwe (then southern Rhodesia), as a Christian missionary. As witnessed in colonial societies all over the world, missionaries failed to connect with traditional beliefs, and undermined and alienated indigenous people from their spirituality. Although Todd was a champion of black rights, we continually see this lack of spiritual understanding between him and Steady in the play.

When Steady praises Todd's achievements by comparing him to God, calls him a prophet and claims that he raises people from the dead (after he saved a man from a fire), Todd is at first amused then increasingly offended by the comparison.

Of the various tribal groups that make up most of Zimbabwe's population, the largest (over 70%) is the Shona people – a Bantu ethnic group native to Southern Africa. A prominent belief amongst Shona people is in a 'dual world existence' in which they can connect with the dead and their ancestors through mediums. The musical instrument the Mbira, for example, connects tribes to the ancestors who can change the weather, scare away harmful spirits and cure sickness. People also believed that the positive happenings in their lives were because of their ancestors, likewise they blamed them for their shortcomings.

We can see a connection between Shona people's spiritual beliefs and Steady's when he explains to Todd how he called to his ancestors for help to escape the roadblock; "*Ancestor send bad*

air from my stomach to chase soldier and dog away."

And later, in the scene, when Steady compares his ancestors to Todd's God:

STEADY:

No, Mr Todd.
You ask ancestor,
ancestor talk to God.

TODD:

Jesus died for our sins.

STEADY:

Jesus die,
ancestor die. Same.

TODD:

No. They are
not the same.
Jesus is alive.
In Heaven.

STEADY:

Ancestor up in
sky watch you.

As the play progresses Steady becomes more adamant about his views on Christianity, calling church a 'black man's death trap'. Tension between the two men rises when he argues that he doesn't need to go to church to absolve his sins, saying that if a white man shot him right now God would "...feel sorry for me and put me in Heaven, right next to His big chair. White man go to hell."

The dialogue illustrates the divides in their religious beliefs and makes an important comment on the dark mark Christianity has left on colonised lands. While their differing beliefs lead to misunderstandings, the spiritual connection between Todd and Steady also brings them closer together, for example when they sing the hymn to Zion.

Today in Zimbabwe Christianity is the prevailing religion and there are African Initiated Churches or Independent Churches – a hybrid of Christianity and traditional spirituality.



SIR GARFIELD TODD

Born in 1908 in Invercargill, Sir Garfield Todd arrived in Zimbabwe (then Southern Rhodesia) in 1934 with his wife Grace. Together, they ran the New Zealand Churches of Christ mission school in Dadaya, alongside a clinic where they delivered hundreds of babies and treated minor injuries.

Todd was caught up in the political wave that gripped the small African nation in the 1940's, winning an election to the colonial parliament in 1948, and rising to become Prime Minister in 1953. At the time, the country was under white minority rule, black Africans were not allowed to vote, and educational opportunities were

limited. Todd introduced modest education reforms, redirecting tax from white property owners and British colonial authorities towards improving the education of the black African majority. His government put in place a plan to provide elementary education to every African of school age, doubled the number of primary schools and gave grants to mission schools to introduce secondary and pre-university courses for black African students.

But it was his move to increase the suffrage of the black African majority from 2% to 16% of the electorate that inflamed his fellow whites. He was labelled a 'traitor'

and 'black lover' and abandoned by his whites-only cabinet.

Out of parliament, Todd became increasingly alienated from the white minority government and joined forces with black African nationalists critical of Prime Minister Ian Smith. When he applied for a visa to lead a teach-in at the University of Edinburgh to educate the British public about the inequities of white rule, the Rhodesian government placed him under house arrest.

One of the teachers at the Dadaya mission soon after the Todd's arrived in Zimbabwe was a young Robert Mugabe. When Mugabe came to power in

1980 and the nation became the independent state of Zimbabwe, Todd was appointed to the new Senate for his collaborating role. But after many years of supporting Mugabe, Todd became disillusioned with the new regime's violence against its political opponents and in 2002 he was stripped of Zimbabwean nationality.

In 1986, Todd was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II at the instigation of the NZ government. During his retirement Todd donated 3000 acres of his ranch to former guerillas who has been maimed in the Bush War. He died in Bulawayo, aged 94, on 13 October 2002.





DIRECTOR'S PROCESS

Director Roy Ward talks about the process of directing *Black Lover*, how he got involved with the play, and what he has discovered from early script development through to rehearsal.

I was attracted to this script because I knew the writer, Stanley, a little. He brought an early draft to me because he liked the work I'd done on another production (a new play by another writer). I was intrigued straight away because I grew up in Southland and Garfield Todd was born in Invercargill. I knew of him without really knowing his story or his importance. But really it was the dynamic between the two characters that hooked me and the mix of humour and drama.

All new plays are both exciting

and challenging because they're untested – you never quite know what you've got. For me, what's most exciting is seeing the characters come alive in the hands of our talented cast. A challenge is to make sure that all the subtle shifts or status and power between those two characters are played out as fully as possible and that we get the right build-up of tension (and release). It's just two characters in a small space – every move, every gesture is important.

There have been lots of changes to the script during the development process and in rehearsals. This is common for any new play. Before Auckland Theatre Company committed to producing it, I directed a workshop and rehearsed reading of the play and

Stanley made re-writes along the way and the script has continued to evolve during the rehearsal period (as we knew it would). We had Stanley with us in the rehearsal room for the first week and our focus was on editing and honing the script. Beginnings and endings are often where the most work is needed but there have been lots of little dialogue cuts and changes.

In preparation to direct *Black Lover* I did lots of research, mostly during the development stage, when I read about Garfield Todd and the political situation in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. And then in pre-production the design team brought their own research to the project, which has helped fill out the world of the play (What does the landscape look like? How hot

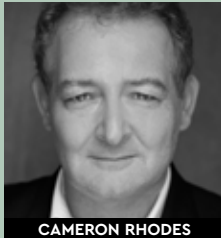
is it? How does that affect what clothes the characters would wear? etc).

A lot of big decisions about the look and feel of a production take place in design meetings which can start several months before rehearsals so in a sense that's the most important preparation a director does. But we're still researching now – usually because a rehearsal moment will throw up an unexpected question (e.g. what kind of garden flowers would the Todds' have in their home? What is the time difference between Rhodesia and Edinburgh?). Apart from that, the best preparation is familiarity with the script.

Now I'm looking forward to watching *Black Lover* with an audience.

CAST INTERVIEWS

During rehearsals Billie Staples talked to Cameron Rhodes (Todd) and Simbarashe Matshe (Steady) about making connections with their characters, the challenges of their roles and the lessons we can learn from *Black Lover*.



CAMERON RHODES

Cameron Rhodes is a graduate of Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School. He has appeared in more than 90 productions, many with Auckland Theatre Company, including in the role of Harold Wilson in *The Audience*, and roles in *Mrs Warren's Profession*, *Lysistrata*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *Mary Stuart*. Screen roles include the magistrate in the much anticipated *The Luminaries* for BBC Two, the lawyer Jonathan Krebs in *In Dark Places* and Farmer Maggot in *The Lord of the Rings*; also, he has appeared in *Rake*, *Blue Murder* and *Home and Away* in Australia. Cameron is a founding artistic board member of The Actors' Program drama school where he teaches regularly. He also directs theatre, and coaches voice and presentation skills in the corporate world. He divides his time between New Zealand, Australia and Los Angeles. Cameron has been an active and proud member of Equity New Zealand since 1988.



SIMBARASHE MATSHE

Born in Zimbabwe, Simbarashe Matshe found his love of theatre and the arts at a young age. After emigrating to New Zealand, he spent most of his formative years in Wellington before eventually moving to Auckland to pursue acting. *Black Lover* is Simbarashe's second production with Auckland Theatre Company, having previously played the role of Walter in *Filthy Business* (2018). He has also featured in screen projects including *Frontiersman*, *Ash Vs Evil Dead*, *Mortal Engines* and *AFK* season 2.

"There is an African philosophy called 'Ubuntu' and it roughly translates to "We are who we are because of other people."

Simbarashe Matshe

What excites you about this play?

Simba- The thing that excites me most about this play is that it is set in Zimbabwe, or Rhodesia as it was called then. Being from Zimbabwe myself, it's exciting to see a story being told of my people and place of birth.

Cameron- It's fantastic to work on a new play, that has never been seen before in a full production. I love the fact that it is both a NZ and an African story and is based on real events. It has a lot to say about race relations, colonialism and beliefs now, in 2020, even though it is set in the mid-1960s.

How do you prepare?

Simba- I've been researching the life of Sir Garfield Todd as well as the Rhodesian Bush Wars which went on from 1964 through to 1979. I've also studied the Zimbabwean accent which of course came easily thanks to family and friends who have still retained their accents since leaving Zim.

Cameron- I read the play a lot before rehearsals start and do research on the play's setting, in this case Southern Rhodesia in the 1960's. As I'm playing a character based on a real person, I also find out as much as I can about him through books, newspaper articles and documentaries.

What are you discovering about the world of the play or your character in rehearsal?

Simba- I've been discovering the complex effects war and constant bloodshed can have on a person. It didn't immediately cross my mind. However, it became more and more evident as the play moves forward.

Cameron- I knew nothing of Garfield Todd, or Rhodesian history before working on *Black Lover*. I learnt an enormous amount researching the background of the play before rehearsals started. This education has continued through rehearsals, especially with Stanley there some of the time. To hear stories of the country where Todd had his ranch and fought for black rights has been very enlightening. It was a complex situation and Todd was in the thick of it!

What piece of advice would you give your character?

Simba- This is a difficult question, because we are talking about a character who has been thrust into a situation that isn't of his making. He is not able to escape the civil war that is raging around him, but if I could give him a single piece

of advice, it would be to take his family and move far, far away. Now since that isn't possible for him, it would be to stay with his family and try to wait out the civil war.

Cameron- Stick to your guns! Todd was an unusual, headstrong man who had a very strong belief system. Kia Kaha, Mr Todd!

What is the biggest challenge taking on your role of Steady? Or the biggest challenge of telling this story?

Simba- Finding the delicate balance of making Steady feel real, without making him feel like a caricature of a pre-colonial servant. He is a man who can be quite expressive and in your face. However, he has layers to him which thankfully we get to see throughout the play.

Cameron- Playing a real person is always interesting! I'm not trying to imitate him but capture his essence. There is video footage of Todd, but I need to inhabit who Todd is in this play and be truthful within the play's framework. This is an intense "slice of life" glimpse into 75 minutes of Todd's life. It is a fictional scenario, based on real circumstances. We want to

keep the audience engaged and be true to the world of the play's setting. It is very much about the relationship between Todd and Steady, as well as an outside world in conflict.

Why is this play important and what can it teach us?

Simba- It teaches us that we are all human, No matter our race, colour or creed. We are all people who ultimately want the same things. It teaches us that we need one another, that we can't survive in this world alone. There is an African philosophy called 'Ubuntu' and it roughly translates to "We are who we are because of other people".

Cameron- This is a play about human relationships, beliefs, race and fighting for equality. It is incredible to think that only a few years ago a small group of white immigrants were ruling over a black majority population in many African countries. This play explores a moment in time, a time of change. Todd was a brave man, who stood up for the rights of others. It is complicated though, as Rhodesia wasn't his original country of birth, he was a white man in a predominantly black nation. The play explores

this complexity through the relationship of Todd the white boss and Steady his black servant, who is a native of the country. Many of the issues raised in the play still exist now and will provoke discussion and reflection about our own race relations in NZ in the here and now.

What piece of advice would you give yourself as a young actor?

Simba- Learn the craft; join an acting class or go to an acting school. Don't be afraid to fail. The more you fail the more you learn. Take risks. Try something different and play, don't worry what other people think. Find a mentor. Try and associate yourself with an older actor who you can ask questions about the business and what it really entails. Find out quickly if the acting life is what you really want to be doing. If it is - trust yourself. Go for it.

Cameron- Make sure you manage work-life balance! It is important to start the day with centering and focus, meditation helps this. Stay grounded, as acting as a career has no clear structure, so flexibility and being open to change is vital. Don't take the job or yourself too seriously.



SET AND COSTUME

On the first day of rehearsal set designer Rachael Walker introduces the set model to the assembled company and talks about how she and the team developed the design in order to bring the outside in.

As director Roy Ward notes, the play is in some ways very conventional, it is set in one room and must have furniture. However, from the beginning the design team wanted to incorporate the world outside, the African landscape and the civil war.

Rachael sees the landscape as a 'vital third character' and says the challenge was to integrate "something quite stylized into a naturalistic setting and script".

As Todd is under house arrest, Rachael wanted to ensure the set was confined and almost claustrophobic, hence the contained floorplan set in a black void.

She also wanted to bring the outside in, without resorting to windows. She found a photograph from a wildlife reserve in Zimbabwe to use as the image for the landscape outside Hokonui Ranch. Whilst the image is from an area 400 kilometers north of the actual location, it contains many of the same features of the landscape; including the red parched earth and the cattle,

which Rachael says informs the colour palette of the room.

The image will be printed on the timber walls to give it an organic, tactile surface, rather than a glossy effect. The red earth tones also reference the bloodshed going on outside, and also the sunset, as most of the action of the play takes place in the evening and into the night.

Rachael likes the juxtaposition of the African landscape and the colonial elements in the room, the gabled angles and traditional skirting board on the walls, and the heavy wooden furniture. The floor is also printed in earthy tones.

The walls are broken up in three sections throughout the space to give entrances and exits to the other rooms mentioned in the play. When the characters exit they do so into blackness. The masking has been perfected so that they seem to disappear when they leave the living room. This is used to both comic and chilling effect throughout the play.

COSTUME

Roy notes that the costumes in this two-hander play are uncomplicated and naturalistic and that there are no costume changes involved.

Rachael says she is playing with the same red earth colour palette in the costumes, as well as using documentary images of Garfield Todd and black Zimbabwean workers of the time to inform costume choices.



LIGHTING

Designer Rachel Marlow says that as the story plays out the lighting will reflect the changing states of time. It will start in a strong bright state to help the audience connect to the characters, then, as time progresses and moves into dusk, with more danger present outside, the lighting will become increasingly ominous and shadowy. Roy says this will be quite a strong shift in the play, and Rachel describes the change in lighting as 'turning the dial up' on the sense of danger – amplifying the realism of the setting.



SOUND

Sound designer Sean Lynch will provide recorded sound effects of gunfire, explosions and helicopters to bring the war raging outside into Todd's living room. These sounds will intensify moving out of naturalism into a heightened state as the play progresses towards its bloody conclusion.





TALKING POINTS

- How effective is the set design in conveying the world outside?
- What challenges do the actors face on this set? And what challenges does the director need to consider? How have they overcome those challenges?
- Consider your own set design for this play. Describe how would you resolve the challenge of bringing the outside in?
- How did the lighting change as the play progressed? What did you notice about how the actors performed in this light?
- What was the effect of having the freedom fighter represented by a recorded voice offstage? What was the playwright's intention?

POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

THINK ABOUT the performance you have seen and recall what stood out for you. It could be something you enjoyed, or something that confused you. What was it about it that you remember most?

- Make a list of the characters, images or specific moments that stood out for you.
- Recall how you responded to these moments. How were other people around you reacting? Did that reaction change after you had seen the play?
- How would you describe the play to a friend?

CHOOSE THE DRAMATIC CONVENTIONS such as direct address, dance, movement, puppetry, split stage or dream sequence used in the play.

- Make a list of the conventions that were used by the writer or the director in this play.
- Explain how the conventions were used and what purpose they had in supporting the narrative.
- If you were to use any other conventions in this play, what might you choose and how would you use it?

CHOOSE ONE CHARACTER who went through a significant change in the play.

- Describe the character.
- Make a list of how the actor used the Techniques of Drama (Voice, Body, Movement, Space).
- Choose one technique from your list and explain how the actor used that technique to illustrate the significant change for the character.

RESOURCES AND ADDITIONAL READING

WATCH

Here's a trailer for the show:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=182669506493291>

And a peek behind the scenes:

<https://www.facebook.com/TheATC/videos/127282905325797/>

Hokonui Todd is a documentary about Sir Garfield Todd:

<https://www.nzonscreen.com/title/hokonui-todd-1991>

READ

Read reviews of the play here: <https://www.nzartsreview.com/>

https://www.nzherald.co.nz/entertainment/news/article.cfm?c_id=1501119&objectid=12313922

FURTHER REFERENCES

<https://www.victoriafalls-guide.net/zimbabwe-traditions.html>

<https://minorityrights.org/country/zimbabwe/>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Garfield-Todd>

<http://weaverpresszimbabwe.com/reviews/151-garfield-todd>

<https://www.guruve.com/african-art-culture/shona-sculpture/spirit-world/>

http://www.zambuko.com/mbirapage/resource_guide/pages/music/mbira_shona_spirit.html

Shona culture of Zimbabwe's views of giftedness, by Constantine Ngara* and Marion Porath, University of British Columbia

ATC CREATIVE LEARNING

ENCOURAGING ACTS OF IMAGINATION

ATC Creative Learning promotes and encourages teaching and participation in theatre and acts as a resource for secondary and tertiary educators. It is a comprehensive and innovative arts education programme designed to nurture young theatre practitioners and audiences.

Whether we are unpacking a play, creating a new work, or learning new skills we are encouraging habits of thinking that foster acts of imagination to take place.

ATC Creative Learning has direct contact with secondary school students throughout the greater Auckland region with a focus on delivering an exciting and popular programme that supports the Arts education of Auckland students and which focuses on curriculum development, literacy, and the Arts.

CURRICULUM LINKS

ATC Education activities relate directly to the PK, UC and CI strands of the NZ Curriculum from levels 5 to 8. They also have direct relevance to many of the NCEA achievement standards at all three levels.

All secondary school Drama students (Years 9 to 13) should be experiencing live theatre as a part of their course work, Understanding the Arts in Context. Curriculum levels 6, 7 and 8 (equivalent to years 11, 12 and 13) require the inclusion of New Zealand drama in their course of work.

The NCEA external examinations at each level (Level 1 – AS90011, Level 2 – AS91219, Level 3 – AS91518) require students to write about live theatre they have seen.

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