

# High Society

Music and Lyrics **Cole Porter**  
ADAPTED BY CAROLYN BURNS



AUCKLAND  
THEATRE  
COMPANY

2006 SEASON  
**THINGS WE  
DO FOR LOVE**  
AUCKLAND  
THEATRE  
COMPANY

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ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Colin McColl

Welcome to the final production of our 2005 season *High Society*, Cole Porter's classic satire on the courting rituals of American socialites. This adaptation of *High Society*, by New Zealander Carolyn Burns, successfully combines all the best elements of the movie and the original play, *The Philadelphia Story*. It was originally a big hit for Melbourne Theatre Company and has been successfully revived many times.

It's a great pleasure to have Raymond Hawthorne back at Auckland Theatre Company heading the creative team for this production. Raymond is a master of theatrical sophistication and a thorough theatre animal – determined that his performers should look fabulous and feel fabulous in this stylish work. Raymond and *High Society* designer Tracy Grant have gathered a superb creative team around them – choreographer Vicky Haughton, lighting designer Vera Thomas and musical directors Penny Dodd and Simon Walter, all of whom are hugely experienced in bringing you first class entertainment.

A big welcome to Auckland Theatre Company musical stalwarts - Helen Medlyn, Mark Hadlow, Roy Snow, Latham Gaines, Mike Edward and Claire Dougan plus Emmeline Hawthorne, David Aston and Scott Braid. And of course to Angela Shirley in the pivotal role of Tracy Lord.

Thank you all for your support of Auckland Theatre Company in 2005. Check out our 2006 subscription season brochure for another great year of entertaining and provocative theatre experiences.

On behalf of us all at Auckland Theatre Company may I wish you and your loved ones all best wishes for Christmas and the holiday season.

Colin

Kind regards,  
 Colin McColl

\* ..(Certain sentimental centipedes do it...) \*

COLE PORTER





**On behalf of Auckland Theatre Company and SKYCITY Auckland, welcome to tonight's performance of *High Society* - Auckland's Musical of the Year!**

Auckland Theatre Company and SKYCITY Theatre's partnership continues to be extremely successful. SKYCITY Theatre has played host to two Auckland Theatre Company productions in 2005 - the sell-out box office hit *Taking Off* and now the stunning *High Society*. Through the strength of the partnership between Auckland Theatre Company and the team at SKYCITY Theatre you enjoy the very best, professional, large scale theatre - all created and produced here in Auckland.

Enjoy this grand finale to the Auckland Theatre Company's 2005 season and may you continue to enjoy our SKYCITY Theatre offerings in 2006.

*On behalf of Auckland Theatre Company and SKYCITY we wish you a very merry Christmas and an enjoyable and prosperous new year.*

Kit Toogood Chair, Auckland Theatre Company    Evan Davies Managing Director, SKYCITY



DIRECTOR

# Raymond Hawthorne

**High Society is a great show!!**

I cannot think of a better Christmas gift to be given. The reasons for this are manifold. It has a carefully planned and cleverly developed storyline taken from Philip Barry's delightful romantic comedy *The Philadelphia Story* (assisted we are told by that inimitable actress Katharine Hepburn, who created the role of Tracy Lord on Broadway and on film.)

The film of *High Society* adapted from *The Philadelphia Story* further enhanced and advantaged its charm by the inclusion of the delightful, delicious and de-lovely music and lyrics of Cole Porter. Further Cole Porter numbers have been carefully interpolated into this precise and tasteful adaptation by our New Zealand playwright Carolyn Burns (now resident in Melbourne). It played to much acclaim through Australia.

We are the delighted inheritors of this cumulative expertise. It's a pretty flawless piece of work.

Add to this an exquisite design from the stylish Tracy Grant (who is incidentally and much to our enjoyment is married to Mr David Lord, and so who, in consequence bears the same name as our leading character), the charm and elegance of the clothes for the rich and famous of the late fifties, the discreet and subtle lighting design from Vera Thomas, Vicky Haughton's inventive creative choreography which magically appears to be the actors own; Nicola Blackman our loving, authoritative Stage Manager – all this and the cast to end all casts!! Could a director be more fortunate?

These actors are and have been a privilege to work with. Their collective spirit, commitment, sheer talent and wealth of experience have been the rich gifts brought daily to the rehearsal floor. Their over abundant sense of humour has been a great contribution to this evenings fun (in fact, their sense of humour often made it hell to get through a rehearsal).

Their sense of what's fun, understanding of who at any time is carrying the tale, their sweetness of disposition and their humaneness – all these qualities are indispensable to the Actor. This is their Christmas gift to you in *High Society*.

But wait there's more!! Penny Dodd's clever lyrical and apt musical arrangements and the skills of our young talented and dynamic musical director Simon Walter. Thanks guys for making *High Society* such a gift.

Thanks Auckland Theatre Company and Colin McColl for affording us this pleasure. Thanks dear audience for being here. Merry Christmas from us all.

Raymond Hawthorne Director.

**Biography**

Raymond is one of New Zealand's most senior and prolific theatre practitioners. In 1955 he became an actor with the New Zealand Players, under the direction of Richard Campion, acting with the company for two and a half years. Granted a New Zealand Government Bursary in 1957, Raymond studied acting at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (R.A.D.A.), London. After graduating, he remained in the United Kingdom for a further thirteen years working as an actor, singer, director and teacher. In 1971 Raymond returned to New Zealand and worked for two years at the Mercury Theatre under the directorship of Anthony Richardson, and in 1974 instigated the formation of Theatre Corporate of which he was Director for eight years. An appointment as Director for the National Opera of New Zealand followed in 1982, and in 1985 he commenced his seven-year tenure as Director of the Mercury Theatre. 1992 saw him establish his own acting studio 'The Actors Space' of which he was director for five years. In November 1997 was appointed Head of Directing for Screen and Live Performance and Screen Arts at UNITEC, during this period and since, he has worked as a freelance director and actor.

Raymond has acted in Auckland Theatre Company's productions of *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*, *Oleanna*, *Travels with My Aunt*, and *The Judas Kiss*. Raymond's most recent involvement with Auckland Theatre Company was as director of the July 2002 production of *Travesties*. Raymond's other Auckland Theatre Company directing credits are *Lovelock's Dream Run*, *Angels in America*, *Three Tall Women*, *The Herbal Bed*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Wind in the Willows*, *Cabaret* and *Into the Woods*.

In the 2000 Queen's Birthday Honours, Raymond was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) for Services to Theatre.



\*  
COMPOSER

# Get a Kick out of Cole Porter

BY PETER LARSEN - CITYMIX THEATRE EDITOR

His music has been swallowed up by our culture. Indeed, today it is more likely to be heard in one of a thousand jingles than a whole song. We speak his words without a second thought. Yip, "Anything Goes" with Cole Porter. "I've Got You Under My Skin" and "I Get A Kick Out Of You" are all his words.

For a man who's been dead near on 50 years that's an impressive afterlife. So how did his earthy, sophisticated and altogether un-Victorian and popular music maintain its allure?

Born to wealth and indulged by an adoring mother, Porter displayed early on a remarkable talent for musical composition, deft phrasemaking and high living. When he wrote in "I Get a Kick Out of You" the line "I get no kick from cocaine", it was lifted from personal experience rather than his flair for controversy. As a composer, Porter was as disciplined and hardworking as any Calvinist and, fortunately, he was blessed with a genius for songwriting that transcended his personal experiences. This is borne out through an often ignored, but admirable, feature of Cole Porter's life when, despite the ongoing agony from a near-fatal horseback-riding accident in 1937, he kept up the quantity and quality of his creative output and maintained the often droll and carefree mood characteristic of so many of his songs.

In the Twenties, Porter was one of the leading composers of a new music whose lyrics, melody and rhythm were influenced by black jazz and European impressionism. Although he is best known for the cleverness, double entendres, and sexual suggestiveness of his lyrics, Porter in fact created dazzlingly diverse poems and tunes, some classically romantic, others the delight of jazz musicians. Coupled with a playwright's sense for the dramatic, Porter not only coined the age in which he lived, but tapped into some of humanity's underlying, recurring myths.

*High Society* is a musical created posthumously, based on the play *The Philadelphia Story* by Phillip Barry and pays close attention to the film of the same name that was

infused with Porter's magic. Critics have made the error of making direct comparisons between the film and musical, as though the stage show you're about to see is a facsimile of the film. The musical is closer to the original stage play in its storyline and contains a number of Porter's hits, as well as previously unreleased numbers that are absent from the film.

Although not all of Porter's songs were popular hits (he once remarked about a flop of his that "polished, urbane, and adult playwriting in the musical field is strictly a creative luxury"), his successes were many and remarkable, appealing to mass audiences as well as seasoned show-goers on Broadway. Perhaps it's the coupling of his "urbane" observations with a commercial sensibility that has kept his work fresh and eminently stage ready.

Since his death in 1964, Porter's failures have receded while his perennially acclaimed work has ably endured. You'll be surprised by just how many of the numbers you're about to hear ring familiar. And though you may not count a Porter album among your collection, verses will dance to the tip of your tongue as though they were among your favourites.

Perhaps Porter biographer David Grafton best explains why in *Red, Hot & Rich* when he wrote, "Cole's treasury will live as long as anyone wants to listen to songs bearing a witty sophisticated touch. Or songs that have a raucous joy. Or a haunting and voluptuous surrender. Cole Porter is no doubt an acquired taste, but so then is caviar and Champagne."

Peter Larsen - theatre editor for *citymix*  
*Auckland's ultimate time out guide.*

**citymix**

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# Carolyn Burns

PLAY ADAPTATION

Carolyn Burns was born in Dunedin. She attended Auckland University before joining TVNZ in 1979, working as a film maker and journalist in both Christchurch and Wellington. During this time she also wrote a children's TV drama series, *The Retrievers*, and her first stage play for adults, *Objection Overruled*.

In 1984 she moved to Australia and was accepted as a student in screenwriting at the Australian Film, TV and Radio School in Sydney, graduating in 1986. She worked for SBS TV world news in Melbourne before moving to Adelaide in 1989. There she lectured at the University of South Australia in script writing, and also worked for the ABC's children's drama department, devising and writing a number works for them.

In 1992 she adapted *High Society* for the stage, initially for the South Australian Theatre Company. The musical, directed by Simon Phillips, was such a hit it was picked up by a commercial producer and the Melbourne Theatre Company, and toured Australia for much of the next two years.

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"10 months is quite a long time to be married.  
You can have a baby in 9 can't you?"





# \* The New Look \*

1950's 'New Look' inspired designs by Tracy Grant feature in *High Society*

"I wanted my dresses to be constructed, molded upon the curves of the feminine body, whose sweep they would stylise" Christian Dior.

In the spring of 1947, Christian Dior launched a new line of women's clothing that stunned and delighted the rest of the fashionable world. 'Corolle' Dior dubbed the line of post-war clothing (naming it after the botanical term for the frail petals at the center of a flower) though fashion magazines in Europe and the U.S. quickly and adeptly nicknamed the Dior collection 'The New Look.'

It was Dior's belief that women were fed-up with the uniforms and unadorned clothing of WWII. A new lady-like charm was being adopted by post war women, who were mimicking screen idols such as Grace Kelly.

The New Look took women back to the more simple, traditional days of their great-grandmothers. The impact of the new look was unprecedented. In the midst of the austerity and hardship that most people in Europe were still suffering, here was great extravagance. Americans considered it scandalous - how could a French designer be so unpatriotic as to lavish huge amounts of material when his country was virtually bankrupt? A Dior skirt took over 25 meters of fabric to make. However, this sudden riot of opulence served, joyously, to remind the people that the dire suffering and horror of World War II was now finally over. The world was now at peace and swell times were just around the corner...



## \* SET AND COSTUME DESIGN \*

### Tracy Grant

Tracy Grant is a leading New Zealand stage designer. Her range of work is extensive, designing theatre, opera and ballet productions in both New Zealand and Australia.

Tracy is a Winston Churchill Fellow (1987) and has a Bachelor of Spatial Design from Auckland University of Technology Te Whare Takiura o Tamaki Makau Rau (1996).

Her work has been chosen to represent performance design in New Zealand at the Prague Quadrennial in the Czech Republic in 1991, 1995, 1999 and 2003, and has received both the UNESCO Prize for Emerging Artists and a Jury Award. She was also selected to exhibit at the World Stage Design (WSD05) exhibition in Toronto in March of this year. Tracy was a finalist in 'Best Craft in Short Film Drama' at the NZ Film and Television Awards (1997) and won Best Production Design at the St Kilda Film Festival (1999) for her work on the short film *Possum*. Tracy's recent work on stage includes the acclaimed *Ihi FrENzy* for the Royal New Zealand Ballet (featuring the work of Te Matarae I Orehu and Split Enz) and also the Royal New Zealand Ballet's 50th Anniversary production of *Romeo and Juliet* choreographed by Christopher Hampson, which had it's UK premiere at Saddlers Wells, London April 2004 and recieved an Olivier Award Nomination for Best New Dance Production earlier this year.

Recent Australian work includes costume design for Melbourne Theatre Company's *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (2004) and Sydney Theatre Company's *The Miser* (2004), and also set and costume design for *Relic* (2005) for the Australian Ballet. Tracy is currently working on a new commission *The Wedding* for The Royal New Zealand Ballet, premiering early 2006.



## \* MUSIC DIRECTION AND ARRANGEMENTS \*

### Penny Dodd

Penny Dodd was born and educated in Wellington, graduating from Victoria University with a Bachelor of Music in piano performance. Her early career concentrated on musical direction for the theatre, with five years at the Mercury Theatre, working alongside director Simon Phillips in such shows as *Superstar*, *Sweet Charity* and *The Pirates of Penzance*. In 1987 she moved to London where she worked extensively in the West End and on the national touring circuit as a pianist and musical director. Highlights included working at the National Theatre, playing keyboards in the West End production of *Phantom of the Opera* and as musical director in *A Night of 1000 Stars* at the Adelphi Theatre.

On returning to New Zealand in the early nineties she diversified into recording, radio, television, opera and orchestration. Penny's first symphonic arrangements appeared in Auckland Philharmonia concerts in 1994, conducted by Brett Morris. Her work was also played by the NZSO, on tours with singers Rima te Wiata and Helen Medlyn, and in the Classical Spectacular concerts in the Wellington Stadium. Aucklanders will have heard many of Penny's orchestrations in the Starlight Symphony concerts, including *Kiwiana* in 2003, and last year's *Symphonic Rock*. Penny has arranged and conducted *Coca Cola Christmas in the Park*, on TV3, since 1997.

Recently she has returned to musicals, touring New Zealand as musical director with *Chicago* in 2001 and *Evita* in 2004. Helen Medlyn, who plays Margaret in *High Society*, and Penny have produced five cabaret shows in their *Hell* series - most recent being *Raising Hell* at the Herald Theatre in August. Writing the arrangements for *High Society* has been a career highlight for Penny - bringing together her arranging skills and musical theatre background in the fabulous melodies and harmonies of Cole Porter's classic songs.



CAST

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Emmeline Hawthorne as Caroline Lord Helen Medlyn as Margaret Lord
Angela Shirley as Tracy Lord Mark Hadlow as Uncle Willie
Latham Games as Dexter Roy Snow as Mike
Vicky Haughton as Liz Mike Edward as George
David Aston as Seth Lord Claire Dougan as Esther the Maid
Scott Braid as Edward the Manservant

THE BAND

Band Leader / Piano Simon Walter Alto, Saxophone, Flute and Clarinet John Williams
Trumpet and Flugelhorn Neville Grenfell, Peter Barwick Bass Neil Hannan
Drums and Percussion Barry Widerstrom Trombone Oliver Emmit, David Woodbridge

Director Raymond Hawthorne Set and Costume Design Tracy Grant
Musical Director and Arrangements Penny Dodd Assistant Musical Director Simon Walter
Choreographer Vicky Haughton Lighting Designer Vera Thomas

Production Manager Felix Davies with Andrew Malmo
Stage Manager Nicola Blackman Assistant Stage Manager Fern Christie
Stage Sound Paul Winstanley Sound Operator Ratu Gordon Lighting Operator Bonnie Burrell
Flyman Wayne Williams Followspot Operators Kane Jones, Toni Neve
Dresser Petra Verweij Properties Shelley Watson
Costume Construction Elizabeth Whiting Costumes Set Construction 2CONSTRUCT

Carolyn Burns' adaptation of Cole Porter's High Society is the eighth and final Auckland Theatre Company production for 2005.
This season will run from Thursday November 17 - Saturday December 17 at SKYCITY Theatre.
High Society is approximately two hours and 30 minutes long, including a 20 minute interval.

Please remember to switch off all cell phones, pagers and watch alarms.



Proud to be the selected wines of Auckland Theatre Company

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Songlist

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Act I

High Society Ensemble
Now you Has Jazz Dexter, Caroline, Esther, Edward
Samantha's Song Dexter, Caroline
I've Got You under My Skin Dexter
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire Mike, Liz
Let's Do It Ensemble
Little One Dexter
I Worship You George
You're Sensational Mike, Tracy

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Interval

Act II

Nobody's Chasing Me Margaret
It's Delovely Margeret, Seth, Uncle Willie,
Caroline, Mike, Liz
True Love Dexter, Tracy
What a Swell Party Mike, Dexter
The Still of the Night Liz and Ensemble
Mind If I Make Love To You Mike
Finale Ensemble

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## Helen Medlyn

As comfortable on the concert platform singing classical repertoire with symphony orchestras as she is sliding over a piano and steaming up a few spectacles, audiences love this Arts Foundation of New Zealand Laureate.

A few highlights from Helen's varied body of work include playing the travesty role of Prince Orlovsky in Strauss's opera, *Fledermaus* for Opera Australia; portraying the sex-pot Concepcion in Ravel's one act opera, *The Spanish Hour* for NBR NZ Opera; understudying Brangaene in Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* for the English National Opera; performing Gillian Whitehead's vocal cantata *Alice* with the Auckland Philharmonia (written especially for Helen); singing Elgar's *Sea Pictures* with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra in Osaka; singing Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody* with the London Philharmonic Choir and the Malaysian Philharmonic in Kuala Lumpur; performing Mahler's *Song of the Earth* both with the Auckland Philharmonia and the NZSO and taking the role of Joy Gresham in William Nicholson's play *Shadowlands* at the Mercury Theatre.

For Auckland Theatre Company Helen has appeared in *Daughters of Heaven* and *Cabaret*. She is also a frequent guest singer with the jazz combo, the *Andy Brown Trio*; has arrived leather-clad on a Harley Davidson into Government House Gardens for the Auckland Philharmonia *Summer Matinee* and last, but never least, is a creator and performer in her *Hell* cabaret shows with Penny Dodd.



## David Aston

David has had an impressive and varied career as an actor with films like *The Matrix* and *The Last Samurai*. David has a diploma in Drama from Auckland University and has also trained with the Theatre Corporate. David has previously appeared in *Equus*, *Caligula* and *Copenhagen* for Auckland Theatre Company.

David's recent stage credits include *Strange Children*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *Where Are You My Only One* and *Hamlet*. His extensive list of television experience includes roles in *Street Legal*, *Duggan*, *Marlin Bay*, *Hercules*, *Shortland Street* and *Gloss*.



## Angela Shirley

Angela graduated in 1992 from the Performing Arts School with a Diploma in Acting for Television, Film and Drama and has since enjoyed a wide-ranging career. *High Society* is Angela's second appearance for Auckland Theatre Company, having previously appeared in *Julius Caesar*. Other theatre credits include *Out in the Cold*, *Blood Wedding*, *The Mayfly* and *Gecko*.

Angela's experience includes voice over work for *Desperate Remedies* and the US produced children's series *Power Rangers*. Film appearances include *Ingmar the Fisherman*, *99c a Minute*, *Jubilee* and *Red Head* and the interactive telemovie *Killing Tomorrow*. Her extensive list of television experience includes roles in TV3's *Outrageous Fortune*, *Shortland Street*, *Hercules* and *Street Legal*. A keen reader, Angela has spent much time reading for New Zealand's Talking Book Library



## Emmeline Hawthorne

Recognised throughout New Zealand for her role as Nurse Anne Kahu on TVNZ's *Shortland Street*, Emmeline Hawthorne is one of the country's most talented and dynamic young actresses.

Emmeline has appeared in Auckland Theatre Company productions *The Herbal Bed*, *Arcadia* and in 2003 acted alongside her mother Elizabeth Hawthorne in *The Graduate*. Other stage highlights include *King Lear*, *The Underpants*, *Vincent in Brixton* and most recently *The Return*. In 2000 Emmeline also gained experience as an assistant director on *La Traviata* performed at the North Shore Stadium and as an assistant director on Auckland Theatre Company's *Into the Woods*.

Her early television experience includes roles in *Xena: Warrior Princess*, *Jackson's Wharf* and *Plainclothes*. Emmeline also earned a Best Performance nomination in the 2003 New Zealand Film Awards for her role in the feature film, *Orphans and Angels*.

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## Latham Gaines

Latham last graced the stage for Auckland Theatre Company in 2003's *The Graduate*. Prior to that he also appeared in Auckland Theatre Company productions *Cabaret*, *12 Angry Men* and *Julius Caesar*, as well as numerous other stage credits including *Love Off the Shelf*, *Grease*, *Man of La Mancha*, *South Pacific*, and *The Wizard of Oz*.

Latham's recent film experience has been largely based in New Zealand with supporting roles in both *The World's Fastest Indian* and Peter Jackson's *King Kong*. Latham also starred in the 1997 short film *Blunted* directed by Tim Adam.

Latham has appeared in US television movies *Murder in Greenwich* and *Superfire* and he has also played a core cast villain on the popular US television series *Power Rangers*. Other television work includes *Xena*, *Hercules*, *Spin Doctors*, *Matuku* and most recently, Latham acted in a major guest role on Prime television's new police drama *Interrogation*.



## Mark Hadlow

*High Society* is Mark's fifth Auckland Theatre Company production, having previously appeared in *Wind in the Willows*, *Noises Off*, *A Christmas Carol* and *The Seagull*. Mark has appeared in and/or directed over 100 professional theatre productions throughout New Zealand, most recently the popular *Golf the Musical* performed here at SKYCITY Theatre.

Mark's film credits include *Beyond Reasonable Doubt*, *Prisoners*, *Shadowlands*, *Scarecrow*, *Battletruck*, *Savage Islands*, *Just Me and Mario* and most recently *King Kong*.

Probably best known for his role on TV's *Willy Nilly*, Mark's other television credits include; *Children of Fire Mountain*, *You're Only Young Twice*, *The Billy T James Show*, *Close to Home*, *McPhail and Gadsby* and *Jack of all Trades*.



## Vicky Haughton

An accomplished actress of both stage and screen, her extensive list of credits includes a wide variety of dramas and musicals. She has also had television experience in *Mercy Peak* and *Mataku*. Stage roles include *The Sound of Music*, *Chicago*, *South Pacific* and *Sweet Charity*, lead roles in *Peter Pan*, *Judy*, *Gypsy* and *West Side Story* (Mercury Theatre).

Vicky also choreographed for Auckland Theatre Company productions *Wind in the Willows*, *Cabaret* and *Into the Woods*. New Zealand feature films include *King Kong*, *In My Father's Den*, *Jubilee*, *Her Majesty* and *Whale Rider* for which she received a New Zealand Film Award for Best Supporting Actress.

"The consolation for being old is the realisation that however you live, you will never die young"

UNCLE WILLIE

\* 11



## Roy Snow

Roy is an accomplished stage and screen actor, recognised by many for his role as Matt McAllister on TVNZ's *Shortland Street*. Roy has performed on stage in a number of Auckland Theatre Company productions including the smash-hit *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Middle Aged Spread*, *Hair*, *Ladies Night*, *Cabaret* and *Death of a Salesman*. Roy's other musical theatre credits include *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Miserables*, *Godspell*, *Blondel*, *Grease* and *The Mikado*. Roy's television experience includes appearances in *Xena: Warrior Princess*, *Orange Roughies*, *National Geographic's Journeys to the Edge* and has had lead roles in several short films, including *Splatter*, *The Incubus*, *Only Barmen Speak in Tongues*, *Gift Box*, *Taken Out* and *The Package*.



## Mike Edward

Mike has joined the High Society cast fresh from his role as Rocky in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* - in 2004 he played the same role for Court Theatre. This is Mike's second show for Auckland Theatre Company, having previously appeared in 2002's *Travesties*. Other theatre credits include *Macbeth*, *Unidentified Human Remains* and the New Zealand premiere of Stephen Sinclair's *Ladies Night*.

Mike's extensive television credits include roles in *The Strip*, *Through My Eyes*, *Shortland Street*, *Mercy Peak*, *Xena: Warrior Princess*, *City Life*, *Plain Clothes*, *True Life Stories* and *Riding High*. He has worked on the feature films *Hidden* and *A Soldier's Sweetheart*, the telefeature *Amazon High* and the short film *Nova*.



## Claire Dougan

Claire graduated from UNITEC Performing Arts School in 1997 and has appeared in Auckland Theatre Company productions *Into the Woods*, *Cabaret*, *Death of a Salesman* and *Four Cities*. Claire also appeared in Court Theatre's production of *Noises Off* and in the New Zealand feature film *Rain* in 2000.



## Scott Braid

Scott graduated with distinction from London's Royal Academy of Music, Musical Theatre College, in 2002. His stage appearances include *Les Miserables*, *City of Angels*, the New Zealand tours of *Blood Brothers* and *Evita*. Scott has also appeared in *Some Enchanted Evening* (London's West End) and *Phantom of the Opera* (Tokyo). Scott feels very privileged to be doing his first show with Auckland Theatre Company and to be working with such an amazing team - he would like to offer huge thanks for the support given to him by his family and Janice Webb.

# Subscribe To Auckland Theatre Company

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You can buy tickets for Opening Nights. Please note you may not receive the exact seating area you request as Opening Nights seats are reserved early.

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All our productions feature a 'Subscriber Forum Night' - an opportunity after the performance for you to hear the director, cast and designers discuss the play and to ask questions about what you've just experienced.

### 9 Subscriber Hotline

You can call the Auckland Theatre Company ticketing hotline for person to person service.

### 10 Monthly Play Readings

On the first Wednesday of the month - March to October 2006 - you will be invited to free monthly readings of new unproduced plays. The playwright will be joined by a professional cast and director who have workshoped the play over a two day period before its public reading.

Gift the experience of theatre - a ticket to the theatre is a gift of a great night out. Auckland Theatre Company tickets are the perfect gift for Christmas, birthdays or special occasions. If we receive your gift subscription booking form before 5pm on Friday 16 December, we will have your gift vouchers to you or the gift recipient before Christmas Day. You can purchase single gift tickets throughout the year. Call Auckland Theatre Company, 09 309 3395 or visit [www.atc.co.nz](http://www.atc.co.nz) for details.

"Even pekneses' at the Ritz do it"

Caroline Lord





Adam Gardiner, Johnny Brugh and Greg Johnson for *The Ocean Star*

## \* ATC Literary Unit – FINAL DRAFT \*

Auckland Theatre Company is the only theatre company in the country to encompass a dedicated Literary Unit, actively nurturing New Zealand playwrights and their work. Our regular play reading series - monthly from March to October - gives writers a unique opportunity to test the waters with new scripts at various stages of development. The commercial potential of James Griffin's romantic comedy *Then Comes Love* was obvious at our March reading this year. James used his two day workshop to fine tune the script and make judicious cuts. Within months the play was enjoying a successful big-venue national tour (produced by Volcanic Island Productions).

April's exciting find was novelist Damien Wilkins' first play, *Drinking Games*, a savagely funny exploration of male friendship. Its ATC Literary Unit reading attracted strong interest from other theatre professionals and was quickly followed by a second outing for the play as part of Wellington's Adam Playreading series. We bent our own rules in May to sample Gary Henderson's previously produced *Homeland*, a deeply felt family drama set in the South Island's rural heartland. We wanted to know if it would resonate with an Auckland audience. It did, of course. Christchurch playwright Stuart Hoar joined us in June for further work on *La Cumparsita*, his tango-inspired examination of a fraying marriage. Two days of intensive workshopping inspired, amongst other amendments, a change of title to *Backwards in High Heels*. July's offering was *Being Here*, Frances Edmond's gentle evocation of her mother Lauris Edmond's life and poetry. Her seamless interweaving of poems and fragments of autobiography proved captivating. In August we introduced Michael Galvin's *The Ocean Star*, a funny, sad, and utterly original take on family life and loss which quickly claimed a place in Auckland Theatre Company's 2006 mainbill season.

New playwright Margot McRae drew on personal experience as a television journalist for October's play, *Finding Murdoch*. Based on her 1990 mission to track down and interview elusive All Black legend, Keith Murdoch, the play questioned the media's seemingly insatiable interest in the Murdoch myth. Days after its ATC Literary Unit reading, the writing of the play itself was enough to generate a spate of Murdoch headlines around the country and Margot was called on to give a number of media interviews. The Auckland Art Gallery proved the perfect background for October's reading of *The Venetian Bride*, Maurice Shadbolt's bittersweet tale of love amongst the artists in an inventive adaptation by first-time playwright Robert Tripe.

We capped the year with FINAL DRAFT, our annual season of extended workshops culminating in a weekend of semi-staged readings at the Maidment Theatre's Musgrove Studio. The chosen plays, *Drinking Games*, *Being Here*, and *The Ocean Star*, all substantially enhanced since their initial readings, played twice to enthusiastic audiences – taking another step on their journey to full production. Auckland Theatre Company congratulates all eight of this year's playwrights. We would also like to acknowledge the numerous actors and directors who contributed their talents to the workshops and readings.

Plans are already underway for next year's reading series. Please see our 2006 season brochure for dates and venue details. We look forward to your company. And, playwrights, we look forward to receiving your scripts.

By Roy Ward  
Associate Director, Artistic and Literary



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

## Michael Adams

AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY'S  
MARKETING & SPONSORSHIP MANAGER

### 1 The first day on the job and you were co-ordinating a photo shoot for the 2006 subscription season brochure, how did that go?

It was a baptism of fire starting off with the subscription brochure. I had just finished working on the Christchurch Arts Festival so had a lot of momentum to hit the ground running. The 2006 season *Things We Do For Love* is going to be fantastic. It's a great line up of shows. It was also a great intro to Auckland Theatre Company - which is a company I've always aspired to work for.

### 2 You've come up from the Christchurch. Have you been involved in the Arts your whole life?

I did musicals and acted when I was young and I still sing but it was business side of show biz that really fascinated me. After I graduated from university I started working freelance as a producer and publicist which was great. Over the eight years I was doing that I worked with a lot of people on a whole range of shows, musicals, theatre, dance and festivals, from small one centre studio theatre to tours of big shows. I really love Auckland so when I was offered the position at Auckland Theatre Company I had no problem deciding to pack my bags. I'd already spent a lot of time in Auckland with touring shows so I felt I had a pretty good handle on the city. Sometimes it seems like half of Christchurch lives here anyway.

### 3 What drew you to the Arts when you were growing up and why is theatre particularly important to you?

There's no business like show business! The work, the people, the history. I'm highly motivated if I believe in the value of what I'm a part of and I believe the creative sector is a really important to New Zealand. It's the industry I want to give all my energy to.

### 4 If you could play any character from any play who would you be and why?

Oliver in *Oliver!* It's the first show I ever saw and it hooked me on live performance.

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