

BLACK CONFETTI

BY ELI KENT



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WELCOME

In the theatre business, news of exciting new talent gets around like wild fire. A few years ago everyone was raving about Eli Kent, and his play *THE INTRICATE ART OF ACTUALLY CARING* that he performed in his own bedroom, with his mate, Jack Shadbolt. It became the hit of the Wellington Fringe Festival and toured the country. When it played at Auckland's Basement Theatre I had an opportunity to experience first hand what all the fuss was about...

Here was a Generation Y playwright whose writing was street-smart yet highly literate, very funny yet profoundly moving. Eli's next play, *THINNING*, featured in our Young and Hungry Festival in 2010. Again I was blown away by Eli's ability to capture the essence of his generation's angst and to draw characters and relationships that were intelligent, searching, desolate, tender and funny all at the same time.

The power of these works convinced Literary Manager, Philippa Campbell, and myself that we must commission Eli to write something for Auckland Theatre Company. Here is the result – *BLACK CONFETTI*.

Here Eli intrepidly moves into new territories, a sort of *ALICE IN WONDERLAND* meets *HAMLET* meets *BREAKING BAD* world. It's fabulously realised for you by the fine creative talents of Andrew Foster (director), John Parker (set and costumes), Eden Mulholland (composition) and Robert Larsen (lighting and projection design). My huge thanks to them and to the great cast we have assembled Kip, Nic, Julia, Virginia, Keith, Adam and Edwin. I'd like to thank them



and the actors who worked on the development of *BLACK CONFETTI* through its workshop and Next Stage performances over the last eighteen months. Your contributions have been invaluable to the process of bringing *BLACK CONFETTI* to the stage tonight. Bless you all.

Finally, this premiere performance is a celebration of the talent and imagination of Eli Kent – an extraordinary new voice in New Zealand theatre.

Enjoy.

Colin McColl
Artistic Director,
Auckland Theatre Company

BLACK CONFETTI

BY ELI KENT

CAST

Kip Chapman — *Siggy*
Adam Gardiner —
The Dean/Louis/Coroner/Dr. Bolt
Edwin Wright — *Ray*
Nic Sampson — *Elvis*
Virginia Frankovich — *Katie*
Julia Croft — *Flo*
Keith Adams — *Baron Saturday*

CREATIVE

Direction — **Andrew Foster**
Playwright — **Eli Kent**
Set & Costume Design —
John Parker
Lighting & Projection Design —
Robert Larsen
Sound Design — **Eden Mulholland**

PRODUCTION

Production Manager — **Paul Towson** | *Technical Manager* — **Paul Nicoll**
Senior Stage Manager — **Fern Christie** | *Stage Manager* — **Jade Turrall**
Lighting Operator — **Josh Bond** | *Props Master* — **Diana Kovacs**
Wardrobe Technician — **Sophie Ham** | *Technical Assistant* — **Kyle Pharo**

AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY WOULD LIKE TO THANK *FIRST SCENE* FOR THEIR HELP WITH THIS PRODUCTION.

By arrangement with: 

BLACK CONFETTI by Eli Kent was developed with the assistance of Auckland Theatre Company, Auckland, New Zealand.

BLACK CONFETTI is the fifth Auckland Theatre Company production for 2012 and opened on June 30. *BLACK CONFETTI* is approximately 130 minutes with an interval. Please remember to switch off all mobile phones, pagers and watch alarms.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES



It really excites me to be working on a new text. I hate saying that it's great returning to my roots but that's what I feel I'm doing. I started out making devised work, and to be working on a new script, from a new New Zealand voice, makes me really excited about coming to work every day.

BLACK CONFETTI is a challenging work, a complex brain teaser. With a new script you have nothing to fall back on. It's not like HAMLET, you can't rely on other productions or knowledge of the play – you have to discover what the play is about from scratch.

This is a great play not only because Eli writes crisp, sparkling dialogue that's engaging and witty, with a plot that really hooks you in. But he's also really experimental. He feels like a fresh voice.

The thematic explorations of the play are really quite complex. It makes me think of The Beatles. I've been re-listening to them in my car lately and I remember being a kid and thinking "gosh those are great pop songs". But now I think that they are actually incredibly articulate poems on some of the big questions of life, and that's the skill Eli has as a writer. The power of his writing is that it's exciting as it unfolds; it's like listening to a pop song but also it engages you with depth in terms of its themes. It's a coming of age story; it's about the cycle of life. It's about death literally and metaphorically. It's about death as a new beginning, which marries so beautifully to the idea of coming of age.

It has been an amazing journey; everyone has given so much of themselves in order to find the character of this play, and to bring to life the voice of a generation.

Andrew Foster – Director

SYNOPSIS

Siggy is *that* guy. The genuine screw up. He's spent seven years at University and has nothing to show for it. He's a petty drug dealer who's recently dealt to a young boy, Billy, who subsequently died. Now Siggy's dad has gone missing, presumed dead. Oh, and his epilepsy is getting worse too. With no adhesive in his life, Siggy's life slowly begins unravelling.

Things take a downward plunge into a depthless void when Siggy and his childhood friend Elvis crash a dress-up party in town. A chance encounter with Billy's sister, Flo, triggers a violent fit in Siggy, which conjures up Baron Saturday, a dark mythical figure from Haitian voodoo folklore. The Baron is looking for Siggy's dad. He didn't show up at the dark party on the other side. The books need to balance and the Baron needs the carcass or else...

And so Siggy's reluctant quest begins. Diving through a haze of black confetti, to the bottom of his dad's mysterious disappearance, Siggy unexpectedly arrives at a place where there's nowhere to hide and all bets are off.

Once a party is over someone always has to clean up the mess.

BECAUSE WE LOVE THIS CITY, WE WANT IT TO BE BETTER. BECAUSE THE BEST SCHOOLS AREN'T GOOD ENOUGH AND THE WORST ONES NEED A REVOLUTION. BECAUSE THE POLITICIANS GET IT WRONG AND SO DO THE ACADEMICS AND THE LAWYERS AND THE COPS AND THE ARTISTS AND THE BANKS. NOT ALWAYS, BUT TOO OFTEN, SO THINGS NEED TO BE SAID. EXPOSED. ARGUED. LAUGHED AT. BECAUSE THERE ARE SO MANY GOOD THINGS TO EAT, AND WEAR, AND SEE AND HEAR AND BE A PART OF (AND SOMETIMES THEY'RE NOT AS GOOD AS THEY SHOULD BE EITHER, WHICH ALSO NEEDS TO BE SAID). BECAUSE WE CHERISH SO MANY OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY, AND WE WANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT THEM AND SHOW THEM TO YOU. BECAUSE OF ALL THIS: Metro MAGAZINE

PLAYWRIGHT Q&A



Eli Kent is one of New Zealand's most exciting playwrights, already winning the Bruce Mason Award and Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards in his short career for *THE INTRICATE ART OF ACTUALLY CARING*.

BLACK CONFETTI was commissioned especially for this season by Auckland Theatre Company. We asked Eli what it's like being a playwright...

You've been writing plays since you were a teenager – where did it start?

I'd been writing short stories and bad poems and things ever since I was little. But I think there was a one act play assignment in Drama class in sixth form where I decided I would write my own and my friend and I would act in it together. From what I remember it was pretty melodramatic.

“... suddenly I was looking back over a couple of years of work, going 'I guess I'm a writer now'. Weird.”

*I definitely didn't think of myself as a writer then. I wrote a lot of rough beat poetry my first year out of high school. Then my friends and I devised a comedy show based on Lewis Carroll's *The Hunting of The Snark* which I ended up writing a lot of. And then from there I just didn't really stop. *RUBBER TURKEY* happened. And then *THE INTRICATE ART OF ACTUALLY CARING* just sort*

of came together from all these poems I had (that's what it feels like now at least) and suddenly I was looking back over a couple of years of work, going "I guess I'm a writer now". Weird.

Who are some of the playwrights / authors that inspire you?

*Vince Gilligan for *BREAKING BAD*. Alan Ball for *SIX FEET UNDER* among other things (*TRUE BLOOD* excluded). Gabriel Garcia Marquez for *100 Years Of Solitude*. Martin McDonagh. Dave Eggers. Lewis Carroll. John Steinbeck. Terry Pratchett.*

What else inspires you?

I watch a lot of TV. Probably more than is good for me. I don't see enough films these days. There's

*too much TV to watch. Music of course! Music is one of the big ones. It helps me visualise the bigger moments in stories and how they might come together. And as a way to kind of meditate around the questions that I'm working with. With *BLACK CONFETTI* I listened to Noah And The Whale and a lot of Okkervil River. Also I've found it surprising lately how much I've ended up using video games as inspiration when working through story points for shows.*

BLACK CONFETTI is a brand new commission for Auckland Theatre Company – what can you tell us about the play?

It's about Siggy. A newly orphaned, university drop out and petty drug dealer, who begins dabbling in black magic in order to find out why his father died. It should be funny and dark and pretty frickin' outrageous really. But in the end it's a pretty simple human story about loss and growing up and I hope that's what really connects.

“It should be funny and dark and pretty frickin' outrageous really”

How much of the story do you know before you actually start writing the script?

That depends. I'd say probably on the whole very little. I might have an ending or an initial premise, or just some monologues that all feel like they belong to one character. In any case, whatever I think it is always changes during the process. It's hard to say because... I've actually just realised this... I don't think that I've ever sat down to write something from scratch. It's always just little bits of ideas slowly connecting over time, snowballing, until eventually I've got the beginnings of a play. Or it starts with a devising process in a group and then I go away and compile thoughts and things start to click. I find it quite hard to sit down and just write from a single idea. I'm too self conscious that way.

Second guessing every move I make. I can't surprise myself like that.

Are there people you collaborate with on your projects?

Always. If it's not coming from devising, if it's a "play play" then I'm still discussing it every step of the way with my friends, trying ideas out on them all the time, probably driving them mad. I never feel like I'm the sole creator of a play I've written. I'd say the dialogue comes... 95% from me, but the themes, story structure, character details, the real bones of it, come from a back and forth. A constant back and forth, without which I find it very hard to keep generating.

Who should come to BLACK CONFETTI?

*Anyone who's lost someone.
Anyone who's losing someone.
Anyone who's lost.*

There we go. A succinct one.

**This Q&A was originally published as a Hit Pick for *LIVE* magazine.*

THE CAST



Kip Chapman (Siggy)

Trained at Unitec's School of Performing and Screen Arts, Kip's theatre work includes: THE TWITS, ROMEO & JULIET, PLAY 2.03, THE TALENTED MR RIPLEY and EQUUS (Auckland Theatre Company), HAMLET (The Large Group), A CLOCKWORK ORANGE, THE GOAT OR WHO IS SYLVIA?, LOBBY HERO (Silo Theatre), THE LITTLE DOG LAUGHED and FLAGONS AND FOXTROTS (Downstage Theatre), THE AMERICAN PILOT (Circa Theatre) and THE GLASS MENAGERIE (Almost A Bird).

Kip is the co-creator of the award-winning APOLLO 13: MISSION CONTROL which has toured throughout New Zealand and Australia, including the Sydney Opera House. He co-wrote ADVANCE IN ORDER: THE AUCKLAND CITY COUNCIL FROM CENTENARY TO REORGANISATION 1971 - 1989 (which was workshopped by Auckland Theatre Company in 2007).

Confessions with Kip

What makes you smile?

Baby boomers supporting a capital gains tax.

This weekend I'm planning:

To do some woodwork.

Who makes the best coffee in Auckland?

Monteray.

The TV show I'd cancel a date for is:

THE WEST WING.

Who would play you in the film version of your life?

Ashley Hawks. Spoiler alert: I die at the end.

My momentary style obsession is:

Fluro.

Books I can't put down are:

Awesome.

Who has soul?

Catherine Wilkin.

What are you currently thrashing on your ipod?

John Mayer: Born And Raised.

What is Siggy currently thrashing on his ipod?

The Horrors.



Nic Sampson (Elvis)

Nic Sampson is an actor and writer living in Auckland. Upon leaving school he was cast as the Yellow Ranger in Disney's POWER RANGER'S MYSTIC FORCE and spent a year fighting rubber monsters. Since then he has worked consistently in theatre, television and film with roles in GO GIRLS, SPIES AND LIES and the feature film THE WARRIOR'S WAY. This year he was cast in the US/Japan war epic EMPEROR alongside Matthew Fox and Tommy Lee Jones.

As a writer, Nic has worked for TV3's THE JONO PROJECT, and has written and performed in many of his own plays and collaborations, including TIM AND ANDY: AN ADVENTURE, The IDIOTS series, SPACE RACE, and most recently BOMBS AWAY: A MUSICAL, which was a musical about bombs. He last worked for Auckland Theatre Company on Bruce Mason's THE END OF THE GOLDEN WEATHER.

Confessions with Nic

What makes you smile?

I like things to do with bees. Bee-news. Bees are just funny. I'm also allergic to them (fun fact).

This weekend I'm planning:

Finish THE WIRE. That's really as far as I can plan. By the time you read this I will have finished it probably. I'll be an aimless man. Might get the HOME IMPROVEMENT box set. P.S. Is there a HOME IMPROVEMENT box set?

Who makes the best coffee in Auckland?

I like Occam but mainly for the chats with the staff. Coffee is a'ight.

The TV show I'd cancel a date for is:

BREAKING BAD. Why? Who wants to go on a date with me? What have you heard? And the answer is yes..

Who would play you in the film version of your life?

Eric Stoltz. It would be a NZ Film Commission funded TV movie. It would receive poor critical reception.

My momentary style obsession is:

I have a winter coat now, so...that? I don't know!

When's the last time you thought I shouldn't be doing this:

I'm planning to build a bar in my garage this winter. Ask me in a few months how it's going and I will show you the stump where my hand used to be.

Books I can't put down are:

The audio book of *Feast For Crows* from the *Game Of Thrones* series. It's actually rubbish this one, but I need to get through it because I've heard that the next one is 'dope'.

Who has soul?

The guy from the Killers. Although if you HAVE soul maybe you don't go boasting about it in your songs. So not him.

What are you currently thrashing on your ipod?

That Killers song about souls. Or sole. The fish.

What is Elvis currently thrashing on his ipod?

Elvis has an old-school discman with Channel Z's Greatest Hits Volume 1 on it.

Edwin Wright (Ray)

Since graduating from Otago University's Allen Hall Theatre in 1999, Edwin has been fortunate enough to work with some of New Zealand's leading practitioners of theatre, film and television.

He has worked extensively with Silo Theatre; his credits include UNIDENTIFIED HUMAN REMAINS AND THE TRUE NATURE OF LOVE, THE BOYS IN THE BAND, TAKE ME OUT, DYING CITY, RABBIT, THE SCENE and, most recently, TARTUFFE. Other notable theatre credits include THE DUMB WAITER, ARCADIA, ONE FLESH, RICHARD III, CLOSER, CHERISH and the critically acclaimed solo piece BRUISED.

Film and television highlights include UNDERBELLY, KING KONG, UNDERWORLD III: RISE OF THE LYCANS, POWER RANGERS, RUDE AWAKENINGS and OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE, and most recently Jane Campion's new mini-series TOP OF THE LAKE. Edwin worked on the telefeatures BLISS, SPIES AND LIES, the television drama/thriller series THIS IS NOT MY LIFE. Edwin was a finalist for best supporting actor at the 2011 AFTAs for his work in MATARIKI.

BLACK CONFETTI is his fifth production with Auckland Theatre Company previous productions being THE POHUTUKAWA TREE, THE CRUCIBLE, END OF THE RAINBOW and PLAY 2.03.

Confessions with Edwin

What makes you smile?

Riding my motorcycle and the crazy stuff my nephews say.

This weekend I'm planning:

Fixing my motorcycle.

Who makes the best coffee in Auckland?

I only go to Shed 5 or York St Mechanics (they have motorcycles).

The TV show I'd cancel a date for is:

I could never do that to a lady... I watch everything online.

Who would play you in the film version of your life?

Christian Bale – more THE FIGHTER than BATMAN BEGINS.

My momentary style obsession is:

Matching socks.

When's the last time you thought I shouldn't be doing this:

Answering these questions.

Books I can't put down are:

Anything by Iain M. Banks.

Who has soul?

Mark Lanegan.

What are you currently thrashing on your ipod?

Mark Lanegan.



Julia Croft (Flo)

Julia graduated from Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School in 2008, and also holds a Bachelor of Arts (English and Theatre) from Canterbury University.

Julia has appeared on stage in various productions including EMMA (Fortune Theatre), AUTOBAHN (The Emergency Room), SKINTIGHT (Musgrove Studio) and her own devised work THE KEEPERS AND LITTLE HISTORIES OF THE LIFE ORDINARY at the Basement Theatre.

Julia is a member of the physical theatre company Red Leap and was part of the devising cast for their newest work PAPER SKY which she performed in the Auckland Festival 2011 and will be performing at Downstage Theatre in November.

On screen Julia had appeared in Disney's LEGEND OF THE SEEKER, and played Ida Baker in the Fiona Samuel telefeature BLISS about the early life of Katherine Mansfield.

Julia travelled to Thailand in 2009, with theatre director John Bolton, where she assistant directed a production of THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE inside Mae La refugee camp.

In 2011, Julia spent six months in Paris studying theatre at L'Ecole Philippe Gaulier.

Confessions with Julia

What makes you smile?

Food mostly. And wine too.

This weekend I'm planning:

Rehearsals and plenty of sleeping. I become a hermit in winter. Maybe some whiskey and a game of Risk by the heater.

Who makes the best coffee in Auckland?

Good one on Douglas Street.

The TV show I'd cancel a date for is:

I wish I could say GAME OF THRONES or THE WIRE, but having seen neither I would have to admit to loving HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER.

Who would play you in the film version of your life?

Chelsie Preston Crayford or Josephine Stewart-Tewhiu.

My momentary style obsession is:

Thermals.

When's the last time you thought I shouldn't be doing this:

Last night going back for 5th helping of Chinese food at Canton. Too good to stop.

Books I can't put down are:

Anything by Haruki Murakami or Salman Rushdie. And I re-read *The Unbearable Lightness Of Being* about once a year.

Who has soul?

Prince - just saw him live a couple of weeks ago. Amazing.

What are you currently thrashing on your ipod?

One Direction.

What is Flo currently thrashing on her ipod?

Patti Smith.





Virginia Frankovich (Katie)

Virginia Frankovich is a graduate of John Bolton's Theatre School. In 2011 she also earned her Bachelor of Arts, majoring in theatre/film studies and psychology from the University of Auckland.

In 2012 Virginia was nominated for the Outstanding Performer award at the New Zealand Fringe Festival, for her performance in two different, critically acclaimed productions: HONEY (Joseph Harper) and CONFESSIONS (Benjamin Henson), the former of which won Virginia and company the Best Newcomer award. She's a regular fixture of Auckland Theatre Company's Young & Hungry Festival; having performed in COW (Jo Randerson) and FITZ BUNNY: LUST FOR GLORY (Grant Buist).

Other notable productions Virginia has performed in include THE TURN OF THE SCREW, and THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES as well as a number of Tom Sainsbury's productions.

Confessions with Virginia

What makes you smile?

Little kids on tricycles; my grandma; eating raw cookie dough; morbidly obese cats.

This weekend I'm planning:

On doing absolutely nothing. That would be my ideal weekend.

Who makes the best coffee in Auckland?

I live next door to a cafe that has quite nice coffee. Flat whites are \$4.80 though which is a bit of a rip off and the staff look like they are constantly stoned. Shaky Isles in Kingsland is quite nice, they have cool teaspoons.

The TV show I'd cancel a date for is:

TWIN PEAKS, SEINFELD, THE OFFICE, CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM, DOWNTON ABBEY, SIX FEET UNDER, FRIENDS, pretty much anything. I hate dates.

Who would play you in the film version of your life?

Me as a baby: that baby from THE LABYRINTH; Me now: Morgana O'Reilly; Me as a 40 year old: John Malkovich; Me as an old woman: Maggie Smith.

My momentary style obsession is:

Stripes on stripes. I stopped when people told me I looked like a prison inmate.

When's the last time you thought I shouldn't be doing this:

When I used one of my flatmate's cans of Pams creamed corn without asking them.

Books I can't put down are:

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone; Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets; Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban; Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire; Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix; Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows.

What are you currently thrashing on your ipod?

Brunettes – Holding Hands Feeding Ducks; Jenny Lewis – Rise Up With Fists; B*Witched - C'est La Vie.

What is Katie currently thrashing on her ipod?

From 2.29 to 2.59 of the song Like It Or Not by Architecture in Helsinki; Ariel Pink – Beverly Kills and Round And Round; Caribou – Odessa; Pavement; Blur.



Keith Adams (Baron Saturday)

After a false start training as a chef for a few years, Keith undertook a Bachelor of Performing Arts, and has worked extensively in theatre both here and in Australia since graduating from Unitec, in 1999. Most recently he worked for PIPA and Auckland Theatre Company as 'Bok Choy' in SINARELLA.

Theatre highlights include OLIVER!, CABARET, WIT and INTO THE WOODS for Auckland Theatre Company. For the Court Theatre in Christchurch GLORIOUS! KISS OF THE SPIDERWOMAN, THE PRODUCERS, LA CAGE AUX FOLLES, THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW and GUYS AND DOLLS.

Michael Hurst's MACBETH. THE CREDITORS for Ford Transit Productions. For Centrepoint Theatre, PENALTIES, PINTS and PIROUETTES. For the Silo Theatre, THE COUNTRY WIFE, UNDER MILK WOOD and THREEPENNY OPERA; and the global tour of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (ABRIDGED) for Spirit Entertainment Australia.

Confessions with Keith

What makes you smile?

I recently found an old programme for ATC's CABARET in 1999. I had filled in one of these Q & As reading it made me smile.

This weekend I'm planning:

To tidy my room, it's so gonna happen! That room is gonna be soooo clean!! You wait! ... meh.

The TV show I'd cancel a date for is:

Nothing. I've only been on six dates in my whole life. Dates are rare (nb. Excludes the time frame Oct 2000 – June 2011, my man-whore phase).

Who would play you in the film version of your life?

Sacha Baron-Cohen.

My momentary style obsession is:

Homemade hand-knits.

When's the last time you thought I shouldn't be doing this:

Checked my facebook at 3am last night. What could I possibly need to know about anyone's life at that time of the morning?

Who has soul?

When I was growing up I always wanted to be Gladys Knight, after seeing her on THE MUPPETS.

What are you currently thrashing on your ipod?

Nick Drake, Marina And The Diamonds, Hurts

What is Baron Saturday currently thrashing on his ipod?

Rhianna – The Baron was her manager for five years.



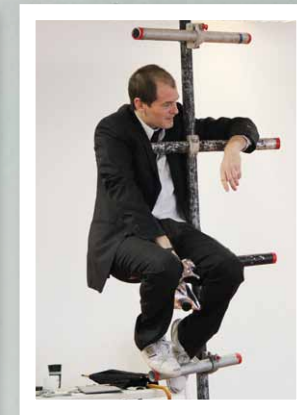
IN REHEARSAL



Adam Gardiner
*(The Dean / Louis /
Coroner / Dr. Bolt)*

Adam's recent credits include Auckland Theatre Company's *IN THE NEXT ROOM (OR THE VIBRATOR PLAY)*, and for television; *SIEGE*, *GOLDEN*, *THE WILDE BUNCH*, and *SPARTACUS*.

"It has been a pleasure and a privilege to have been involved in the development of this fantastic new play by such a talented and exciting New Zealand playwright, Eli Kent. It is also particularly pleasing to be working with Andrew Foster again with whom I have previously collaborated on adaptations of *BLACK MONK*, *ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST*, and *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE*. As well as a number of site specific devised works with *Trouble* and radio plays with *Damned Ventures*."



THE CREATIVES

Eli Kent – Playwright

Eli Kent is a playwright and actor. His first full length play RUBBER TURKEY was written when he was just 19 and earned him the Peter Harcourt Award for Outstanding New Playwright of the Year at the 2008 Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards. His third play THE INTRICATE ART OF ACTUALLY CARING won Best Theatre in the NZ Fringe Festival 2009, the Montana Award for Most Original Production at the 2009 Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards and was nominated for Outstanding New, New Zealand play and Production of the Year. It has since had two return seasons in Wellington (with another scheduled for 2012), has been performed in Auckland in the Stamp Festival as well as the Christchurch, Nelson and Hamilton Arts Festivals.

In 2010 Eli completed a Master of Arts in Scriptwriting with the Creative Writing programme at Victoria University, Wellington. His play THINNING premiered as part of the Young and Hungry Festival in Auckland and Wellington. Later the same year he was awarded The Bruce Mason Award, New Zealand's most significant national theatre award, which recognises the work of an outstanding emerging New Zealand playwright.

Eli's play BLACK CONFETTI was workshopped in 2011 as part of Auckland Theatre Company's The Next Stage.

Aside from writing for theatre, Eli has recently completed his first short film project. He has also participated in the inaugural South Pacific Pictures Emerging Writers Programme, performed as an actor in numerous theatre and film projects, and has had poetry published in *Landfall* and *The Lumiere Reader*.

In 2011, Eli was recipient of an Arts Foundation New Generation Award. New Generation artists are acknowledged for having an X-factor that sets them apart from their peers. They have assured potential and their work is exciting.

Eli currently lives in Wellington and is developing new works with his company The PlayGround Collective.



Andrew Foster – Director

Director/Designer Andrew Foster was a co-founder of the award-winning Wellington theatre company Trouble. He has become known for his contribution to the development of new works. Collaborations with playwrights Jo Randerson, Gary Henderson, and Duncan Sarkies have become contemporary landmarks.

Andrew was Head of Radio Drama at Radio New Zealand in 2004-05 and during this time was instrumental in bringing many of the new voices of NZ theatre to radio, including *The Flight of the Conchords*, *Te Radar* and *The SEEyD Trilogy*, which won Best Radio Drama at the 2005 NZ Radio Awards.

Recent projects include directing and designing the revival of the Jo Randerson and Trouble classic *THE LEAD WAIT*, and UK cult hit *AN OAK TREE* at Circa in Wellington. He was dramaturg for *DEATH AND THE DREAMLIFE OF ELEPHANTS* in its successive seasons at BATS and Downstage Theatres. Recent designs include Auckland Theatre Company's *ROMEO AND JULIET* and *WELL HUNG*.

Andrew is married to Choreographer Sarah Foster-Sproull. They have a very cool daughter called Ivy.



John Parker – Costume & Set Design

John Parker is an award-winning set designer and is as well respected in the world of ceramics as he is in set design. He is a member of the International Academy of Ceramics (Geneva). He has a long history of designing for Auckland Theatre Company. His set designs include *RED*, *MARY STUART*, *STEPPING OUT*, *THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST*, *THE WIFE WHO SPOKE JAPANESE IN HER SLEEP*, *THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE*, *END OF THE RAINBOW*, *SWEET CHARITY*, *DOUBT*, *MUM'S CHOIR*, *TAKING OFF*, *EQUUS*, *CALIGULA*, *THE BACH*, *MIDDLE AGE SPREAD*, *THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW*, *NOISES OFF*, *WAITING FOR GODOT*, *ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTINE ARE DEAD* and *INTO THE WOODS*.

Other works include *FAUST*, *CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA*, *I PAGLIACCI*, *THE BIRTHDAY PARTY*, *PUNK ROCK*, *CRIMINAL CHRISTMAS*, *THE SCENE*, *CREDITORS*, *IL TROVATORE*, *TRUE WEST*, *THE THREEPENNY OPERA*, *CHES*, *ROMEO AND JULIET*, *TITUS ANDRONICUS*, *TWELFTH NIGHT*, *F.I.L.T.H.*, *ASSASSINS*, *WAIORA*, *CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF*, *DECADENCE*, *ON THE RAZZLE*, *CHICAGO*, *THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO*, *BARBER OF SEVILLE*, *COSI FAN TUTTE*, *EVITA* and *TRASH TO FASHION*.

John has also designed for The Louis Vuitton Ball and The America's Cup Ball, Bendon's *Next To Nothing*, Bellsouth *Pharaohs*, *Precious Legacy* and *Peru: Gold and Sacrifice* for the Auckland Museum. He was awarded a Waitakere City Millennium Medal for services to the Community. In 2010 John was awarded an Arts Laureate by the New Zealand Arts Foundation.



Robert Larsen – Lighting & Projection Designer

Robert Larsen is a designer and inventor across the full spectrum of live performance and technical interactivity.

His recent theatre projects include the projection, set and lighting designs for I, GEORGE NEPIA (awarded Production of the Year at the 2011 Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards) and the technical and interactivity design for APOLLO 13: MISSION CONTROL (design team awarded Purple Pin for Spatial Design at the Designers Institute of New Zealand Best Design Awards, 2010).

As a designer for live music, Robert has worked with artists such as Lawrence Arabia, The Wellington International Ukulele Orchestra and Little Bushman with the NZSO.

He has also recently contributed to the lighting/technical design of the Telecom Christmas Tree (public installation for OpticShock) and projection development for The Drawing Project (a festival workshop by Fleur Elise Noble).



Eden Mulholland – Sound Designer

Motocade front man, solo artist and theatre composer Eden Mulholland has had a less conventional path in music - as a former contemporary dancer, he has a unique and experimental approach to composition - the results of which are often challenging, satisfying and dramatically charged. A vocal chameleon and serial collaborator, Eden is obsessed by strange voices, ripped apart rhythms and momentary flashes from ethereal orchestras.

Eden's music is critically acclaimed and hugely diverse. He was recently nominated for a Qantas Media Award for Best Music in a Television series and twice-winner of Tempo Dance Festival Best Music Award.

His recent credits include AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY, STEPPING OUT, THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST, SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER, THE THIRTY-NINE STEPS, THE PILLOWMAN and WHERE WE ONCE BELONGED (Auckland Theatre Company), BODY FIGHT TIME (Malia Johnston), HUMAN HUMAN GOD (Sarah Foster).



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Post your own reviews and comments, check out photos of all our productions, watch exclusive interviews with actors and directors, read about what inspires the playwrights we work with and download the programme and education packs.

Places to find out more about ATC and engage with us:

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YOUR GUIDE TO | new theatre project on Auckland's waterfront

Everything you need to know to become a 'champion'.

Project at a glance:

Auckland Theatre Company is the sponsor of a project to build a new 600-seat theatre complex in the Wynyard Quarter on Auckland's waterfront.

To date, \$21.7 million has been pledged against the fundraising target of \$35.1 million. This includes contributions from Auckland Council, The ASB Community Trust, and The Lion Foundation.

Project summary:

ASB Bank Limited's decision to shift its head office to the Wynyard Quarter has created an opportunity to develop a high-profile, world-class home for theatre and dance on the adjoining site.

The complex will house a 600-seat theatre, built specifically to showcase theatre and dance, along with a 200-seat flexible studio space in the adjacent ASB Head Office development, an 80-seat meeting room and gallery, courtyard, bar and café.

Over 130,000 people per annum are conservatively estimated to attend the new theatre for performances and education programmes run by Auckland Theatre Company, as well as other performing arts and community based organisations.

For Auckland Theatre Company, the present venue shortage is critical to its operation, as this problem won't go away until a mid-sized theatre is built. If this opportunity is not taken now the solution for Auckland in the future will be substantially more expensive.

The new theatre will deliver \$8.59m per annum of additional spend, \$3.72m per annum to Auckland waterfront GDP, and create 75 additional jobs.

The three most important aspects of the project:

1. A venue for Auckland:

To compete with the world's leading cities, Auckland needs a vibrant, diverse, stimulating cultural soul, and the infrastructure to house it.

2. A venue for dance and theatre:

A 600-seat theatre has been identified as the single greatest priority for Auckland's performing arts sector. Auckland Theatre Company will be the anchor tenant, with the new theatre available for use by national and international theatre, dance and opera companies.

3. A venue for our community:

The new theatre is aligned with the strategic vision of Auckland Council and is consistent with council's long-term plans to make Auckland the world's most liveable city by 2040.

Quick Quiz

The three most important aspects of the project:

- Where is the new theatre project located?
- How many people are estimated to attend the new theatre per annum?
- Where can you find out more information on the project?
- What is the fundraising target for the project?
- How much could I donate to the project?

Answers:

- Wynyard Quarter, located on Auckland's waterfront
- 130,000
- www.waterfronttheatre.co.nz
- \$35.1 million
- Every donation counts!

SUPPORTERS OF THE NEW THEATRE PROJECT



FUNDING BENEFACTORS, PATRONS AND DONORS



If you would like to become involved, or make a donation to the project, please visit www.waterfronttheatre.co.nz

A NEW STAGE

University and theatre partnership will provide distinct future for the NZ arts.

Auckland Theatre Company and AUT University recently announced New Zealand's first comprehensive theatre and university partnership. The partnership will be focussed on supporting the business of theatre through education.

The three year partnership will connect ATC and AUT University both artistically and administratively at all levels throughout both organisations to develop sustainable business practices for the arts.

"We aim to deliver a broad range of cultural and business benefits that build capability at ATC, and for the creative sector in New Zealand", said Auckland Theatre Company General Manager, Lester McGrath.

"This collaboration will provide our academics with a broad range of research opportunities and support multiple career pathways for our graduates", said AUT University Vice-Chancellor, Derek McCormack.

"The production of theatre interfaces with a number of AUT disciplines; Arts Management, Business and Economics, Law, Education, Hospitality and Tourism, Languages and Cultures, Art and Design, Creative Technologies and Communication, Journalism and Media Studies."

The performing arts contribute significantly to New Zealand's cultural, economic and social wellbeing. Auckland is already New Zealand's leading location for the creative industries, with over 55,000 people working in the sector. And Auckland theatre has the reputation for being the centre for performing arts excellence and innovation.

As Auckland's diverse population grows creative industries will play an even more important role in the development of the region by contributing directly to businesses which specialise in innovation and IP, leading-edge technology, education, film and television, art and design.

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HOWARD ASHMAN

music by
ALAN MENKEN

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INTRODUCING ANDERS



Anders Falstie-Jensen is the dramaturg for Auckland Theatre Company. He took a break from reading scripts to tell us what being a dramaturg is all about...

Tell us about the Auckland Theatre Company Literary Department.

I was fortunate enough last year to land a job in the creative heart of Auckland Theatre Company (covering for the Literary Manager Philippa Campbell who has been on leave producing Jane Campion's latest opus TOP OF THE LAKE in Queenstown since December). I read the majority of scripts, solicited as well as unsolicited, that are sent to the company; I'm the point of contact for local and international playwrights who would like Auckland Theatre Company to consider their work and I organise the monthly play readings, as well as our mini festival of new New Zealand work, The Next Stage. Keep an eye out for that in November. I also edit scripts prior to rehearsals, most recently I helped Colin and Ben with cutting down A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

What does a dramaturg actually do?

It can vary a lot from country to country. At Auckland Theatre Company I help find possible plays for next year's play-bill and I keep an eye on what's going on in the international world of theatre as well as on our home turf. I read a lot and surf the internet quite a bit. When we engage with playwrights, either through our commissions or our monthly play readings, I work with the writers on how they can develop their plays further.

How long have you been a dramaturg? What got you into that field?

I studied dramaturgy in Denmark back in 1999 before I came to New Zealand so that's where it all started. There are very few full time dramaturg jobs in New Zealand so I feel reluctant to say that I've been one since then. However, I have been involved with developing and presenting new plays since 2006 either as a producer, writer or a director. On those productions I was often in one way or another involved with the dramaturgical work as well.

I love working on new plays, primarily because of the exciting unknown factor. You can never completely predict how people will respond to the work and you always hope (well I do anyway) to suddenly be involved with the next NZ classic. Imagine, unknowingly finding yourself working on the next WAITING FOR GODOT, the next BARE, the next AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY. How cool would that be!?!

What is your typical day like?

I work three days a week and they often go like this: I come into the office; make myself a cup of coffee in the kitchen; check my emails; make myself another cup of coffee, which I drink while I read a script. Then I answer my emails and make myself another cup of coffee before I read another script. I often end up eating my lunch while surfing the internet, reading reviews of plays on around the country and abroad. Then I go back to making myself a last cup of coffee to kick me off into my afternoon script session. If I'm struggling I sometimes fuel myself with a bit of chocolate at this point as it goes hand in hand with the coffee.

What is the biggest misconception you've encountered surrounding your profession?

That there is a correct way to write a play.

What do you look for in a play?

I look for a good story, good dialogue and good ideas. I look for potential, heart, humour and big ideas.

“BLACK CONFETTI is ... In two words – impressive stuff.”

Tell us about the process of working on BLACK CONFETTI.

This one was incredibly exciting to work on because Eli is not afraid of going head-to-head with some really complex ideas and heavy themes, all the while still managing to have a lightness of touch.

One of the big challenges for me was to get my head around the core drama of the story. Initially I felt like Siggie was too passive (just like Hamlet... that lazy sod) and I started thinking about all these ways Siggie actively could be more involved with driving the story, but the more I got my head around Eli's writing, the more I realised it actually made perfect sense that Siggie, in a way (like on the cover) is falling through his own story. And as he falls he is slowly stripped of everything he can hold onto until he hits the end of the play. Learning to get my head around a passive

protagonist, and the play structure that it requires in order to work, gave me a couple of headaches. But in a good way. And the ending of course... but I'm sure that will offer plenty of food for thought for all of you coming along to see the play.

A lot of my work was on making sure the story was clear and that it all thematically stuck together. As Eli worked his way through draft two, three and four, I would give feedback on what worked really well and what might potentially become confusing for the audience. I try to switch between two very different points of view all the time when I work on a script: one is the audience who encounters this play for the very first time and the other is the writer, who understands the delicate mechanics of it all; the set ups and pay offs, the dramatic arc, the tipping points, underlying themes etc. I also try to keep in mind the drafts that have gone before the one I read to make sure that ideas or dialogue either don't get left behind or are edited accordingly as things around them change.

BLACK CONFETTI is the equivalent of a prototype of a brand new Swiss clock. A huge amount of work has been put into it. It is very complex and thoroughly thought through but still manages to look so effortlessly cool and simple. In two words – impressive stuff.

WHAT'S ON IN THEATRES AROUND THE COUNTRY?



AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY (Maidment)
AWATEA By Bruce Mason
 19 July – 11 August

What is more honourable: the truth that hurts, or the lie that heals? Awatea is a landmark production of Bruce Mason's profoundly human masterpiece. Everyone in the remote township of Omoana is proud of Matt Paku, who left the East Coast to train as a doctor and now has a successful practice in Auckland. Proudest of all is his old, blind father Werihe, who basks in this success via his son's letters which are read to him by Emma Gilhooly, the no-nonsense local postmistress. Every New Year's Eve, Matt comes home and the whole community celebrates. But things are different this year: Gilhooly has devastating news; news that she must keep from old Werihe at all costs if he's to hold onto his belief in his son.

CENTREPOINT THEATRE

Palmerston North
ENLIGHTENMENT
 By Shelagh Stephenson
 09 June – 14 July



When Lia and Nick's son disappears at the time of the Bali bombings in 1992, all they have is an email that he was thinking of going to Jakarta, leaving them with their own grief and uncertainty. And just when they think they have exhausted all channels in trying to discover his whereabouts – the phone rings and it seems Adam has been found. Or has he?

NEXT BIG THING

Auckland
TUSK, TUSK
 By Alexi Kaye Campbell
 06 July – 21 July



Maggie, 14, Eliot, 15, and Finn, 7, are home alone in an unfurnished flat awaiting a call on a cell phone that never rings. What are they waiting for and where the hell is Mum? Dancing a fine line between hilarity and heartache, TUSK, TUSK is the new offering from 26-year-old English sensation, Polly Stenham (THAT FACE).

NEXT BIG THING

Auckland
CHECKOUT CHICKS – THE MUSICAL
 Book and lyrics by Rachel Callinan, music and lyrics by Julia Truscott
 06 July – 21 July



Glee meets Legally Blonde at a Four Square store! Cut-price characters. Songs on special. Bulk beats!

It's only a matter of time before you'll be dancing down the aisles at the annual Checkout Operator of the Year competition in this gloriously irreverent kiwi musical with a great big heart.

CIRCA THEATRE

Wellington
SPECTOR- WITH THE BEATGIRLS
 By Andrea Sanders
 14 July – 28 July

SPECTOR showcases the best work from Phil's career and recounts the stories around the music as told by the artists with whom he worked: The Ronettes, The Chiffons, The Crystals, The Righteous Brothers, John Lennon, The Beatles, Tina Turner and more!



COURT THEATRE

Christchurch
THE MOTOR CAMP
 By Dave Armstrong
 23 June – 04 August

The problem with holidaying at a motor camp is anyone can park their caravan next to you. When the hard-case Hislops pull up next to the liberal Redmonds, what was supposed to be a relaxing getaway turns into the holiday from hell.



BATS THEATRE

Wellington
FLASH
 By Kate Morris
 06 July – 21 July

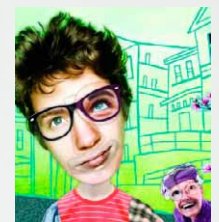


Part of the Young and Hungry Festival of New Theatre.

A motley crew of girls find themselves in the confines of the principal's office about to be given the third degree by the Media Studies teacher. His Dead Poets Society dreams and off-the-curriculum assignment has gone pear shaped resulting in the abrupt departure of a student from roll call...

DOWNSTAGE THEATRE

Wellington
THE DOMINION POST SEASON OF MAGNOLIA STREET
 By Dave Armstrong
 21 July – 28 July



On this street you'll discover that magnolia trees have hearts, unexpected friendships are the best kind, and 1944 can be just around the corner.

FORTUNE THEATRE

Dunedin
HEROES
 By Gerald Sibleyras,
 Translated by Tom Stoppard
 25 August – 15 September



"HEROES is a sparkling gentle comedy about "human mortality and the universal desire to escape the confines of one's life." - Tom Stoppard

Set in France in 1959, World War I veterans Henri, Phillippe and Gustave pass their time on the terrace of their nursing home, musing over their peculiar circumstances. The 'heroes' hatch a daring plan to leave, embarking on a whimsical and touching journey.

To find out what else is going on in Auckland be sure to read the latest copy of



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TUSK, TUSK

BY POLLY STENHAM

DIRECTED BY
HERA DUNLEAVY



WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE NOW



AUCKLAND
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Auckland Council
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ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND - TOI AOTEAROA

NEXT BIG THING
FESTIVAL

06 – 21 JULY THE BASEMENT
BOOK 09 309 3395 www.atc.co.nz



CHECKOUT CHICKS THE MUSICAL

Book and lyrics by Rachel Callinan, music and lyrics by Julia Truscott