

# HAMLET

# Plot Synopsis

## Part One

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, has been summoned home from university by news of his father's death and his mother's swift remarriage to his father's brother Claudius, who has taken the throne. Denmark is on alert because of a threat from the Norwegian prince Fortinbras to invade.

Hamlet has paid court to Ophelia, but both her father Polonius and brother Laertes are skeptical about Hamlet's sincerity. Then Hamlet's friend Horatio breaks the news that his father's ghost is abroad. When Hamlet confronts the spectre, he is told that his uncle killed his father and that he must avenge the murder. Hamlet conceals his agitation by pretending to be mad.

Uneasy, Claudius sends for Hamlet's old school fellows Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to spy on the prince. Hamlet has a company of actors present a play with a plot imitating that of his father's murder. During the performance Claudius leaps agitated from his seat, thus confirming his guilt to Hamlet.

*There will be an interval of 15 mins*

## Part Two

Claudius plots to send Hamlet to England to be executed. Hamlet confronts his mother in her rooms. Polonius is spying behind the curtain and Hamlet, assuming the spy is Claudius, stabs and kills Polonius.

Hamlet is now hurriedly sent to England but escapes when his ship is taken by pirates. Ophelia, grieved by the loss of her father and of Hamlet, is driven mad and drowns. Laertes returns from Paris to avenge his father and his sister. Claudius directs Laertes' rage against Hamlet, and the two plot to kill the Prince with a poisoned fencing foil.

Hamlet accepts the challenge from Laertes. In the fencing match that follows Laertes wounds Hamlet, but in the scuffle they exchange weapons, and Hamlet strikes Laertes with the poisoned blade. Gertrude swallows the poisoned wine Claudius had prepared for Hamlet in case Laertes failed to kill him. Dying, Gertrude and Laertes reveal Claudius's villainy, and Hamlet kills Claudius.

As Hamlet dies we learn that Fortinbras has come to claim Denmark and restore order.

## About the Play

"The world could go on changing unimaginably and Hamlet would still have everything to say to us. Whenever we hear of some new atrocity and wonder impotently what life is for, we always find that he got there ahead of us. Hamlet poses the eternal question of whether life is worth living. The answer that he appears to arrive at is that it isn't, but the way he says so makes us realise that it is. Hamlet has been given the creative vitality of Shakespeare himself. Even though robbed of will, he's still the embodiment of individuality. Hamlet is what it means to be alive."

*Clive James, 1980*

## About the Text

To reduce the running time of the play the text has been cut. Students will particularly note Act 2, Scene 1, Act 4, Scene 2, Act 4, Scene 4 and the start of Act 5, Scene 1, have been reduced or omitted.

The minor characters of Reynaldo, Valtemand, Cornelius, and the English Ambassadors have been omitted. Fortinbras, Prince of Norway, appears by repute rather than in person.

**Acknowledgement:** the Director acknowledges the contribution of Nick Gordon, Greg Walsh, Patrick Magee, Dan Jackson, George and Bek Wright, Kerrie Rowe, India Lathey Patten, Frank Bradley, Sean Skuthorp, Michael O'Connell, Andrew Finnigan, the late Brian Donovan, and Myles Ward-Thornton.



**LEON RICHARDSON - Hamlet** Leon was given the opportunity to play Valentine Xavier in Tennessee Williams' *Orpheus Descending*, AADA graduating play, directed by Kate Gaul. He has been involved in *Short and Sweet*, earning a best actor nomination in *Dreaming in Castellano*, directed by Angela Kennedy, and in the Phoenix production of *The Woman with Dogs Eyes*, directed by Jennie Bazell.

**DANIELLE COOPER - Ophelia** Danielle's first performance on stage was at age 3, in a dance Eisteddfod. She has continued to study dance. Danielle has also performed in *Joseph, Cinderella*, and *Footloose* with Engadine Musical Society. She attends drama workshops with NIDA and ATYP, where she performed in *InExile* in 2005. *Hamlet* marks her first production with the Genesian Theatre Company.



**ROBERT DREW - Polonius** Robert was enticed onto the stage in a black comedy by N.F. Simpson. He has been acting for over twenty years and has wanted to play the role of Polonius for a long time. His theatre credits include *Valentine's Day* and *Shadowlands* for Genesian Theatre, *Amadeus* and *The Imaginary Invalid* for Cronulla Arts Theatre, and *The Taming of the Shrew* for Cauldron Theatre.

**STEWART STUBBS - Claudius** Stewart is a new member of the Genesian Theatre and this is his first full length production with the company. Previously for The Genesians: *Oedipus*. Other theatre: *The Christian Brothers, I'm Shadowing You, The Perfectionist, 84 Charing Cross Road, Galileo, Much Ado About Nothing, Tibetan Inroads, Salonika, Cheapside, Room to Move, The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.



**NADYA VAN EWYK - Gertrude** Nadya began performing with The Elenora Youth Theatre. She subsequently trained at The Actors Centre in Sydney. Previous theatre includes *Geoffrey the Great* and *Mysterious* (Glen St Theatre) and *The Library* (The Actors Centre).

**MATT McALOON - Laertes** Matt first discovered performing arts at school appearing in all his school drama productions. As a teenager, he was cast in several television productions and a feature film in his home town of Perth. At 27, he undertook a performance degree at UWS. In a second year production of *Henry VI* (parts 1, 2 and 3), Matt appeared as Warwick.





**ANDREW O'CONNELL - Horatio** Andrew's first involvement in acting came in 2005 when he played Jesus in a Passion play in Perth. He recently played train crash survivor Stu in Linden Wilkenson's new play *A Day in December* (NIDA) a play that dealt with the Glenbrook rail disaster of 1999 and its effect on survivors.

Andrew enjoys writing and is currently having some of his plays workshopped.

**JULIAN LOVICK - Guildenstern** Julian has been involved in theatre for many years. Roles include Lear's Fool, Vladimir in *Waiting for Godot*, Quentin Crisp in *The Naked Civil Servant*, and Guildenstern in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. Sydney productions include *Oedipus* at The Genesian, *A Clockwork Orange*, *Stolen* and *The Devil has a Townhouse in Tamworth* at The New.



**DYLAN BONNAR - Rosencrantz** Dylan began acting at the age of 8 and has since appeared onstage in Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He has also acted with the Australian Theatre for Young People and most recently in the Figtree Theatre's *The Black Dog* and *Roberto Zucco*.

**MITCHELL JOHNS - Marcellus** Mitchell has had a keen interest in the dramatic arts from a young age and has sought to utilise such talents when the opportunities arose. This is his first production with the Genesian Theatre as a cast member, having only this year become a member. He sees each role in the production as an opportunity for growth and enrichment - whether on-stage or off.



**MICHAEL STERBAL - Barnardo** Michael joined the Genesian Theatre 3 years ago as a bio-box operator but soon found himself on stage and more recently stage management. Michael's acting debut at the Genesian Theatre was *Cards On The Table* and from there led onto *Shadowlands*, *The Hollow*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and a most rewarding part in *The Real Inspector Hound* as Magnus.

**TIM HUNTER - Hamlet's Father / Player King / Grave-Digger** Tim is delighted to return to the Genesian stage. In 1993 he played a removalist in *Busman's Honeymoon*, a huge role with 23 whole words. During his absence he has performed in some 40 productions all over Sydney. He can be seen in *Darwin's Brave New World* on the small screen later this year.



## **PRODUCTION**

Director  
Set Design  
Costume Design  
Lighting & Sound Design  
Set Construction

Costume Makers  
Fight Direction  
Assistant to the Director  
Production Manager  
Text Edit  
Text Control  
Vocal Coach  
Photography  
Graphic Design

## **CREW**

Stage Manager  
Lighting Operation  
Sound Operation

## **CAST**

Ghost of Old Hamlet  
Claudius, His Brother  
Gertrude, Widow of Old Hamlet, Wife to Claudius  
Hamlet, Son of Old Hamlet & Gertrude  
Polonius, A Lord  
Laertes, Son of Polonius  
Ophelia, Daughter of Polonius  
Horatio, Friend of Hamlet  
Rosencrantz, Friend of Hamlet  
Guildenstern, Friend of Hamlet  
Marcellus, A Soldier  
Barnardo, A Soldier  
Player-King / Gravedigger  
Player Queen  
Priest  
Osric, A Courtier

**Roger Gimblett**  
**Owen Gimblett**  
**Lissa Knight**  
**Michael J. Schell**  
**Owen & Wendy Gimblett,**  
**Grant Fraser, Paul Gilbert,**  
**Timothy M. Carter,**  
**Members of the Company**  
**Susan Carveth, Nicola Griggs**  
**Kyle Rowling**  
**Melissa Jones**  
**Tom Massey**  
**Roger Gimblett, Sandra Bass**  
**Joyce Birch**  
**Del Dines**  
**Craig O'Regan**  
**Tom Massey**

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**Alan Hayter, Karen Dryden**  
**Amy Roberts**

**Tim Hunter**  
**Stewart Stubbs**  
**Nadya van Ewyk**  
**Leon Richardson**  
**Robert Drew**  
**Matt McAloon**  
**Danielle Cooper**  
**Andrew O'Connell**  
**Dylan Bonnar**  
**Julian Lovick**  
**Mitchell Johns**  
**Michael Sterbal**  
**Tim Hunter**  
**Michael Sterbal**  
**Mitchell Johns**  
**Julian Lovick**

# About the Genesian Theatre

Born in 1944 and named for St Genesius, Patron Saint of Actors, The Genesian Theatre Company has developed into a strong community-based organisation that boasts among its alumni numerous household names in Australian theatre.

The Company is a non-professional group operating from an historic church in Kent Street. While still retaining links with our origins, the Catholic Church, we do not shy away from meeting the challenges of plays that comment on the human condition.

The building which houses the Company was originally St John's Church, and dates from 1868. It has served as a church, a poor school, and was the first Matthew Talbot Hostel. Since 1954 it has been the home of The Genesian Theatre Company.

Over the years The Genesian Theatre Company has become a community theatre group providing a training ground for young actors and a place where those who love the theatre can meet, share, and extend their knowledge of the performing arts. The Genesian Theatre is one of Sydney's most active theatre companies. In addition to six main stage productions each year we run classes, workshops and many other activities.

## Membership

If your interest is in acting, directing, stage management, sound, lights, publicity, admin, etc, or if you just want to experience being a member of the group, we would welcome you as a member. You don't need to be experienced, we can provide training and can cater to different levels of involvement. Please see our web site for further information.

Coming next to the Genesis Theatre...

# HAY FEVER

By Noel Coward



**14th July - 8th August 2009**

Subscriptions are available  
[www.genesiantheatre.com.au](http://www.genesiantheatre.com.au)