

THE GENESIAN THEATRE  
420 KENT ST.



# THE MERCHANT OF VENICE



by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

directed by CONSTANTINE COSTI

18th FEB - 31st MAR

FRIDAY & SATURDAY at 8pm SUNDAY at 4:30pm

[www.genesiantheatre.com.au](http://www.genesiantheatre.com.au) (02) 8019 0276



Act I

There will be an interval of 15 mins

Act II

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Venice is a glitzy, technicoloured and delirious city. Its wild glitz is both unreal and familiar. Lovers clamber through windows and suitors flaunt their ridiculous talents. The city sings and scats to the pace of frenetic jazz solo.

This jubilant city is slowly rotting.

The Merchant of Venice is an undeniably controversial play. The vile racism of the Venetians and their hatred of Shylock has historically been a difficult aspect of the play to reconcile.

The beauty of Shakespeare comes from his complex treatment of his characters. There are no clear heroes or villains in our sinking Venice. To say otherwise would be to ignore the carefully crafted ambiguities that make The Merchant of Venice resonating and timeless.

At times we can laugh and be swept away by the charismatic lovers and touched by the warmth of the young Venetians and, in the same breath, be dismayed at their prejudice and cruelty. The only constant is the wealth and decadence that provides a distraction to the crumbling society.

We'd like to thank our incredibly committed and enthusiastic cast, crew, friends and family whose support has been invaluable.

# Cast

## GEOFF SIRMAI

Former consumer advocate and journalist, Geoff now pursues his theatre passion full time, both performer and publicist. Stage credits include *Every Single Saturday*, *In Duty Bound*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Beggar's Opera*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Mame* as well as readings with The Renaissance Players and corporate musical comedy with Comic Roasts. Recent screen appearances include *Underbelly*, *Deadly Women*, *Gangs of Oz*, *A Model Daughter* and *Packed to the Rafters*.



## ANDREW FRASER

Veteran of the Sydney University Dramatic Society (SUDS), Andrew has performed in numerous productions including *Fannie and Zooey* and *Something Just Happened*. More recently he took part in the Sydney Fringe Festival playing the lead role in *All But Won*. During his time at Sydney University he was also an editor for the magazine *Honi Soit*.



## TIFFANY STOECKER

A 2010 graduate of the Professional Actor Program at the Actors College of Theatre and Television, Tiffany's strong love for classical pieces led her to the Genesian Theatre where she played Isabella Thorpe in Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* and then onto the Hunters Hill Theatre where she played Charlotte (Lotty) Wilton in Elizabeth von Armin's *Enchanted April*.



## STEPHEN LLOYD COOMBS

Stephen has been acting since the age of 5. To better or worsen society... who knows. He has performed at the Seymour, NIDA, Zenith, Riverside, Hunters Hill and various other locations with a variety of Theatre Production companies. This is his first full production with the Genesian Theatre. Match made in heaven? Only you will know in 2 hours...



## RAY MAINSBRIDGE

Ray made his debut at the Genesian Theatre last year playing the charming and charismatic Henry Tilney in *Northanger Abbey*. Other past productions have also included Moliere's *Tartuffe* where he played the ill-mannered Valiere and Short and Sweet festival. He is currently completing his Bachelor of Arts at the University of Sydney, majoring in English Literature.



## EMILY SHEEHAN

Originally from Canberra, Emily studied acting in Los Angeles at the Eric Morris Actors Workshop and graduated from the Actors College of Theatre & Television in 2011. Recent theatre credits include *Stage Fright!* (New Theatre) and *Dark of The Moon* (ACTT). Emily is also a proud member of MEAA.



## BRENDAN CAIN

Hailing from Kempsey, Brendan began his acting obsession at age 10 as "lil' Jake" in *Annie Get Your Gun*. His keen interest continues as recent productions have included *What the Butler Saw* and *Shout!* Brendan has relished the opportunity to work within an ensemble and would like to thank his family for unwaveringly supporting all of his crazy schemes.



## HARRIET GORDON ANDERSON

Harriet's mother once had her bottom pinched by David Bowie, and as a result of this event, Harriet likes to think of herself as the spawn of stardust. Soon to complete her degree at Sydney University, she has performed in a variety of shows with the Sydney University Dramatic Society (SUDS).



## SERENA WEATHERALL

Serena's theatre credits include *Dark of the Moon* at Sidetrack Theatre, *Evolution* at Cleveland St Theatre and *Man of Mode* by George Etherege. Recently Serena made her Feature film debut in *Dead Moon Circus* and has appeared in MTV's *Pangea Day* as well as many short films including *The Exception* by Byron Bay Film Co.



## JASPER GARNER GORE

A relatively recent arrival in Sydney, Jasper has been working as an actor in theatre and television for the best part of ten years. *The Merchant of Venice*, however, represents Jasper's first role in a Shakespeare. Recent credits include *Rescue*, *Special Ops* (2011) and the Sydney Fringe Festival Show, *Cycles* (2011).



## DIMITRI ARAMTAS

Currently studying at the Actors College for Theatre and Television (ACCT), Dimitri has performed in such productions as the *Recruiting Officer*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Terry on the Waterfront*. He is also a keen musician and passionate playwright.



## ***Production***

Director	<b>Constantine Costi</b>
Assistant Director	<b>Michael Costi</b>
Set Design	<b>John Harrison</b>
Costume Design	<b>Alice Joel</b>
Lighting Design	<b>Michael Schell</b>
Costume Team	<b>Susan Carveth</b>
	<b>Ashley Bell</b>
Set Construction	<b>Henry Shahinian</b>
	<b>Anthony Scognamiglio</b>
Choreography	<b>Lisa Toyer</b>
Photography	<b>Xia Fu Wang</b>
	<b>Mark Banks</b>
Poster Design	<b>Benjamin Retter</b>
Subscription graphics	<b>Tom Massey</b>
Programme Design	<b>Ross Oblea</b>
Special thanks	<b>Tom De Angelis, Tom O'Brien, Watchdog Communications, Steve and Connie Costi, Rosemarie Costi, Nicholas Jordan, Haley Shahinian, Emily Sarks, and Owen Gimblett</b>

## ***Crew***

Stage Manager	<b>Adriane White/ Caroline Gage</b>
Lighting & Sound Operator	<b>Amy Roberts/ J Trone</b>

## ***Cast***

Shylock	<b>Geoff Sirmai</b>
Antonio	<b>Andrew Fraser</b>
Portia	<b>Tiffany Stoecker</b>
Nerissa	<b>Emily Sheehan</b>
Jessica/Tubal	<b>Harriet Gordon Anderson</b>
Bassanio	<b>Stephen Lloyd Coombs</b>
Arragon	<b>Ray Mainsbridge</b>
Gratiano	<b>Ray Mainsbridge</b>
Lorenzo	<b>Brendan Cain</b>
Morocco	<b>Brendan Cain</b>
Launcelot Gobbo	<b>Jasper Garner Gore</b>
Solanio	<b>Jasper Garner Gore</b>
Salerio	<b>Serena Weatheral</b>
Duke	<b>Dimitri Armatas</b>



## About the Genesian Theatre

The Genesian Theatre Company is a non-professional group operating from an historic church in Kent Street in the heart of the Sydney CBD. We boast among our alumni numerous household names in Australian theatre and film such as Bryan Brown, Baz Luhrmann, Judi Farr, and John Bell. We are, however, just as proud of the hundreds of talented amateur actors, directors, designers, lighting and sound specialists who have contributed to Sydney's unique little theatre over the years.

Over the years the company has developed into a 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 or seven main stage productions each year we run classes, workshops and many other activities.

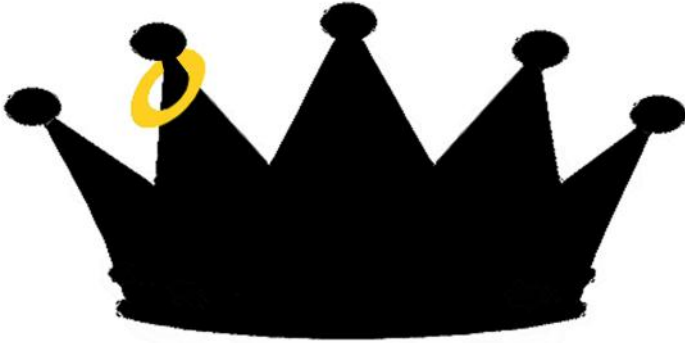
Membership of the company is open to all people over the age of eighteen.

The building that houses The Genesian Theatre Company was originally St John the Evangelist Church and dates from 1868. It has served as both a church and a poor school until 1932 when it became the Kursaal Theatre, housing the Sydney Repertory Company. In 1938 it became the first Matthew Talbot Hostel. Since 1954 it has been the home of The Genesian Theatre Company, which was formed in 1944.

## 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 Genesian Theatre...



# CROWN MATRIMONIAL

by Royce Ryton

Directed by Nanette Frew

14th Apr - 12th May 2012

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