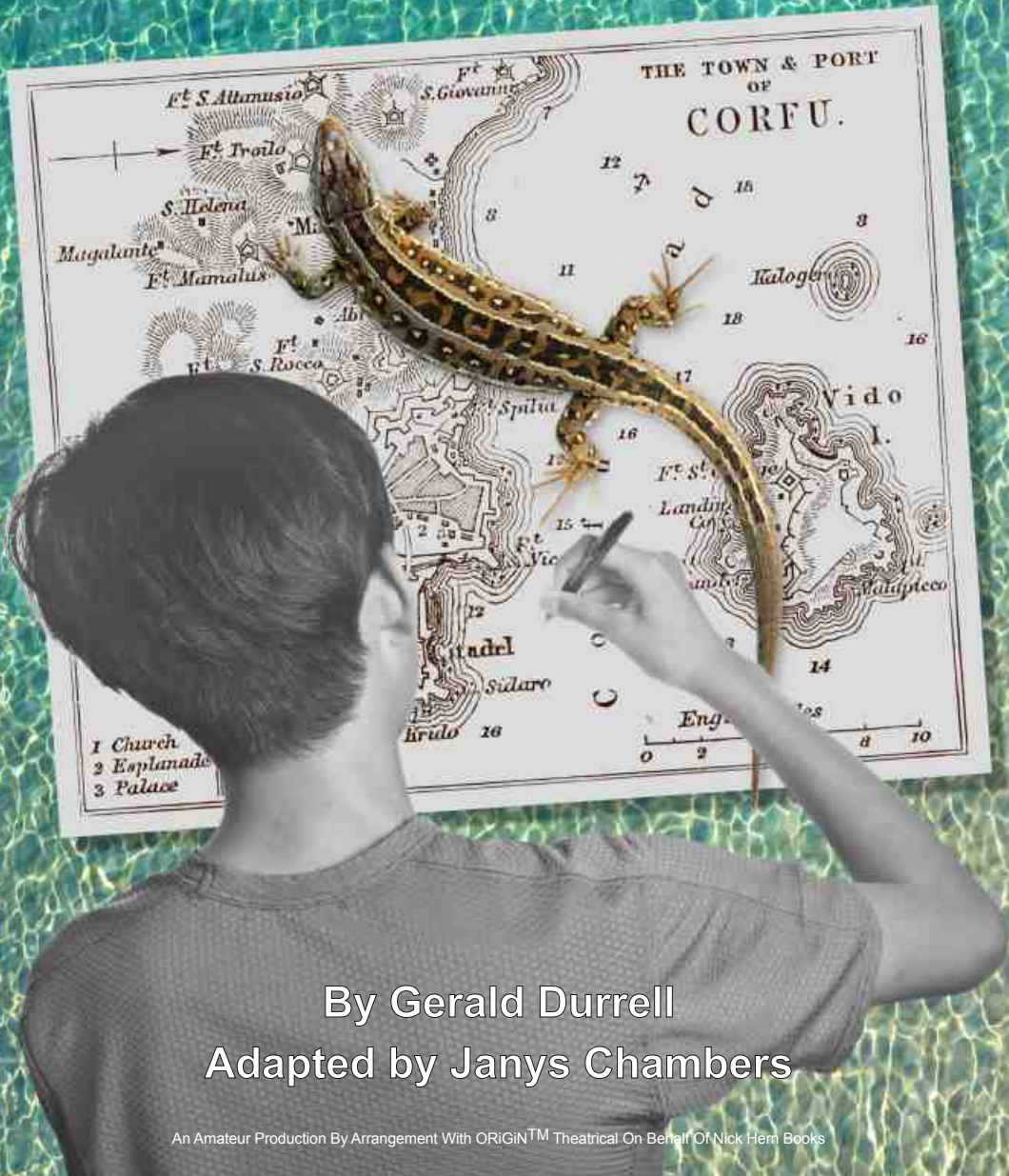


My Family and Other Animals



By Gerald Durrell

Adapted by Jany's Chambers

Directors' Note

Unlike conventional stories, each scene in the play is a story in itself - a series of 25 richly conveyed postcards. The challenge for a director is balancing the magic of Gerry's memory with the comedy within the family dynamic and their interaction with the locals.

Representing the natural world to an audience is a significant logistical task, one needing a level of authenticity. Avoiding a fall into pantomime, we have enjoyed melding design and performance.

We hope that we have captured the essence and joy of Gerald Durrell's memoir and have transported you to the wonderous world of 1930s Corfu.

Directors

Elizabeth Munro and Mark G Nagle

The Durrell Family

The Durrells were all born in India under the British Raj. Lawrence and Louisa married in 1910 and had three sons and two daughters - Larry, Margery, Leslie, Margaret (Margo), and Gerald (Gerry). Their second child, Margery, died in infancy.

In 1928 Lawrence died suddenly so grief-stricken Louisa migrated her family to England under trying financial circumstances. In 1935 she then moved the family again to Greece in pursuit of a more comfortable lifestyle. Living on Corfu had a profound impact on the lives of the Durrells. Elder son Larry was the celebrated author Lawrence Durrell.

Gerald Durrell OBE (1925 - 95) Naturalist, conservationist, author and TV presenter. Gerald founded the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and Jersey Zoo in 1959, a place that exhibits his passion for saving endangered species. He also wrote over 40 books, including the Corfu trilogy. The Corfu Butterfly Sanctuary was created in his memory.

Janys Chambers (1953 -) Chambers trained as an actor at Webber Douglas, and is currently a theatre director and playwright. She shares a Welsh BAFTA (*Belonging*, co-writer, BBC TV), and co-runs TWO WOMEN Productions. Playwriting credits: *Pat and Margaret* (with Victoria Wood), *Shakespeare's Kitchen* and adaptations - *The Secret Garden*, and *Peter Pan & Wendy*.

ELIZABETH MUNRO - Co-Director / Co-Production Manager (Green Sea Turtle)

Elizabeth Munro has been a member of the Genesian Theatre community for 7 years working on many shows as stage manager and production manager. She has studied Directing Actors for the Stage at NIDA in 2019 and 2020. She assisted to write and create *Sherlock Holmes and the Death on Thor Bridge* (2020-21) as dramaturg. Directing credits include Assistant Directing *A Room with A View* (2019) and *Ladies in Black* (2019). She successfully directed *Murdered to Death* (2022) and is excited to be co-directing this magical, complex and rewarding project bringing to life the inner world of the child Gerald Durrell and his memories of 1930s Corfu.

MARK G NAGLE - Co-Director / Co-Production Manager (Gazelle)

After studies in drama Mark lived overseas - Barcelona, London and Mexico City. His early ventures were as an actor, mostly in fringe theatre in the UK. Mark's interests lie in the arts, history and music, which are reflected in some of the historically based projects he has directed - eg: *Richard III*, *Simpson, J. 202*, *Young Pretender*. Mark is particularly drawn to directing plays that explore race, class and societal differences via the use of irony - *A Room With a View*, *The Balcony*, *Angry Fags*, *Glycerine Tears*, *Our Country's Good*, *A Passage to India*, *The Visit*, and *The Bacchae*.

MITCHELL LATHAM - Set Design (Beaver)

Mitchell started acting and directing in high school, and notably performed and MC'd at the State ONSTAGE Drama showcase in 2018. They are a painter and architectural designer and are currently studying Bachelor of Design in Architecture and a Bachelor of Creative Intelligence and Innovation at the UTS, in their third year. Mitchell works as an exhibition and set builder, with *My Family* being their Set Design debut.

MICHAEL SCHELL - Lighting and Sound Design (Dolphin)

Michael has designed sound and lighting for well over 300 productions ranging from children's plays - *Robin Hood Clemben* [Australian Tour] to Opera - *Tales of Hoffmann* [Chatswood Musical Society] and nearly every form of theatre in between. He has worked with many major companies in Australia including Nimrod (*Upside Down At The Bottom Of The World*), Sydney Theatre Company (*Revenger's Tragedy*) and the Q Theatre (*You Can't Take it With You*). Recent productions include *Peer Gynt* (Endangered Productions) and *Chimerica* (New Theatre). Michael has been a member of the Genesian Theatre since 1973 and has designed the lighting and sound for over 160 of our productions including *Richard III*, *A Room With a View*, *Deathtrap*, *A Passage to India* and *Lady Windermere's Fan*.



DOMINIQUE NESBITT - Gerry (Gerald) Durrell (Deer) Dominique returns to the Genesian stage to explore the "looking-glass world of Greece" through the eyes of Gerald/Gerry Durrell. She has previously played Irina in Chekhov's *Three Sisters*.

GORDON CARROLL - Larry (Lawrence) Durrell (Peregrine Falcon) Gordon is a psychology student with a passion for both stage and screen acting. After appearing on many stages around the North Shore, this is his first production at GTC.



JOASH STUIVENBERG - Leslie Durrell (Orca) Joash has been doing theatre since the age of 5. His career highlight was Short+Sweet in 2021 with director Elizabeth Munro. He is thrilled to play Leslie at GTC.

DEANNA RUSESKA - Margo (Margaret) Durrell (Dugong) Deanna is a multimedia raconteur who has a Bachelor in Media and acting certifications from The HubStudio and Screenwise. She is classic Leo who loves lifting weights and Corfu dates.



CINDY DE WET - Louisa Durrell (Songbird) Performing Artist and TV Producer with an MA in Communication Management, Cindy has produced, directed, written and/or performed in over 400 local and international video productions. This is her Australian theatre debut.

JORDAN MCCABE - Roger, the Dog (Crow) School and community theatre has motivated Jordan's love for the craft, but ultimately she gives all credit to her parents. Jordan aims to further her experience before attending Excelsia College.



CYNTHIA NING - Customs Officer / Durant (Cheetah) Cynthia's love of performance inspires her to write and share children's picture books on *Babytales* (YouTube). She plays bass guitar and enjoys all aspects of tea. This is her GTC debut.

BRIGITTE CLAIRE EVERETT - Hotel Manager / Sophia (Butterfly) Brigitte is new to theatre. After acting in a Script in Hand read-through, she is excited to pair critical thinking skills developed in her philosophy studies with more creative endeavours.



THEO HATZISTERGOS - Spiro Hakiaopoulos (Wolf) Theo returns to the stage after playing Happy Loman in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* in 2020 (Campbelltown Theatre Group). He is a proud Greek and excited to play Spiro.

EMILIA KRIKETOS - Agathi / Jonquil / Mrs Kravevsky (Lion) Emilia is a Bachelor of Arts (Music Theatre) graduate from Federation University. Her recent performance credits include: *Hercule Poirot's First Case* (Genesian Theatre), *Undetermined Title* (KXT), and *Pygmalion* (New Theatre).





PETER GIZARIOTIS - Yani / Dr Androuchelli / Dimitri (Unicorn) Peter is an actor and emerging director (2022 Independent film, Short+Sweet). His Greek heritage afforded him many fond "Durrell-like" memories which have compelled his travels to experience other world perspectives.

LIAM O'CARROLL - Local Youth / Michael / Peter / Waiter (Capuchin Monkey) Trading the footy field for the stage, Liam is excited to make his acting debut and hopes this is the first of many performances in a long and illustrious career.



PRATAP C THAKURI - Rose Beetle Man / Alecko / Waiter (Lizard) Moving from Nepal in 2018 Pratap aspires to be an actor - musician. A tenor, he has studied with Charlotte Maccines, plays guitar, piano, and has interests in photography and painting.

ANDREW COUGLE - George / Krlevsky / Kosti / Local Youth (Cougar) Andrew has a Bachelor's Degree majoring in Theatre, and is qualified Speech and Drama Teacher through AMEB. His most notable role thus far has been *Hamlet*.



JAVAD ZIAOLHAGH - Tarkan (Egret) Javad is an Iranian / Australian visual artist and fashion designer www.javad.com.au. This is his GTC stage debut, having performed in a Swedish dance group and studying acting in Sydney.

CRIS BOCCHI - Lugaretzia / Magpie 1 (Wild Horse) Actress, clown, director, playwright, producer, and puppeteer, Cris has appeared in *A Room with a View*, *Hamlet*, and *Waiting for Godot*. She co-founded Sydney Foreign Actors Association (SFAA) and runs her own puppetry business.



SUSAN DUCHATEAU - Magpie 2 / Ensemble / ASM (Bee) Sue recently trained at NIDA Open (2022) and this is her GTC debut. Sue's artistic pursuits include sculpture, acrylic painting, textiles, and flamenco dancing. She loves travelling and the French language.

GUAPA TE - Ensemble / Understudy (Rainbow Lorikeet) A long-time theatre nerd, Guapa is carving their way through the Sydney scene, winning drag competitions (Lipsync Heroes, That's Entertainment) and freestyling in street dance battles (@mqdance, SXP's Cherry Jam). This is their debut at GTC.



MARY ABRAHAM - Ensemble / ASM (Cat) Mary has loved theatre since being in the Hungarian folk operetta *Háry János*. This is her stage debut with the Genesians, having recently operated lights and sound for *Hercule Poirot's First Case*.

MARICA FUMANTI - Stage Manager / Ensemble (Cat) An Italian, Marica came to Sydney in 2015. She works in events management. Previously Marica appeared in *A Passage to India* as well as stage managing four other GTC shows.



Production

Co-Directors & Production Managers
Set Design
Lighting and Sound Design
Puppetry & Prop Creations
Costume Co-Ordination
Set Construction

Rehearsals Assistant
Costume Assistants

Puppetry & Props Assistants
Greek Dance Choreography
Photography
Graphic Design
Ticketing
Transport
Audition Assistants

Elizabeth Munro, Mark G Nagle
Mitchell Latham
Michael Schell
Nicola Fox, Ella Monti
Elizabeth Munro, Mark G Nagle
Tom Fahy, Andrea Tan, Chris Alera,
Olivia James, Shamay Canon,
Members of the Company
Ruth Smoother
Deanna Ruseska, Joash Stuivenberg,
Helen Kohlhagen
Elizabeth Munro, Mark G Nagle
Maree Kriketos
Vicki Skarratt Photography
Tom Massey
Tom Massey
Barry Nielsen
Ken Coleman, Amy Roberts, Sandra Bass,
Helen Kohlhagen, Alice Bendall

Crew

Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager
Lighting and Sound Operation

Marica Fumanti
Susan Duchâteau, Mary Abraham
Cian Byrne, Grace Bondoc,
Mark Berriman, Emmanuel Said

Cast

Gerry (Gerald) Durrell
Larry (Lawrence) Durrell
Leslie Durrell
Margo (Margaret) Durrell
Louisa Durrell
Roger (the Dog)
Customs Officer / Durant
Hotel Manager / Sophia
Spiro Hakiopoulos
Agathi / Jonquil / Mrs Kravetsky
Yani / Dr Androuchelli / Dimitri
Michael / Peter / Waiter / Local Youth
Rose Beetle Man / Alecko / Waiter
George / Kravetsky / Kostis / Local Youth
Tarkan
Lugaretzia / Magpie 1
Magpie 2 / Ensemble
Understudy / Ensemble
Ensemble

Dominique Nesbitt
Gordon Carroll
Joash Stuivenberg
Deanna Ruseska
Cindy de Wet
Jordan McCabe
Cynthia Ning
Brigitte Claire Everett
Theo Hatzistergos
Emilia Kriketos
Peter Gizariotis
Liam O'Carroll
Pratap C Thakuri
Andrew Cougle
Javad Ziaolhagh
Cris Bocchi
Susan Duchâteau
Guapa Te
Mary Abraham, Marica Fumanti

About the Genesian Theatre

The Genesian Theatre Company celebrates our 78th year as a company in 2022! For 68 years we have been operating from our home at 420 Kent St in the Sydney CBD. We boast among our alumni numerous household names in Australian theatre and film such as Angela Punch, Bryan Brown, Baz Luhrmann, Coral Lansbury, Judi Farr, John Bell, Peter Carroll, and Nick Enright. We are also just as proud of the hundreds of other talented actors, directors, stage managers, set and costume designers, lighting and sound specialists, stage and production staff who have contributed to Sydney's unique little theatre. We are particularly proud of all our members who volunteer their time to work Front of House to help you enjoy your visit to the Genesian Theatre.

Over the years the company has developed into a theatre providing a training ground for young theatre professionals and a place where those who love the theatre can meet, share, and extend their knowledge of the performing arts. The Genesian Theatre Company 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.

The building which houses the Genesian Theatre Company was originally St John's Church, and dates from 1868. It 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.

The Genesian Theatre Company acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation as the traditional custodians of the land our theatre stands on.

Membership

If you're interested 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...

