

festivals

PERTH INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL IN ASSOCIATION WITH WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTS

DON'T LOOK BACK

BY DREAMTHINKSPEAK

UK



IMAGE: GIDEON MENDEL

WHERE

Old Treasury Building

WHEN

Saturday 9 – Sunday 24 February

The performance lasts for approximately 1 hour with no interval

Conceived and created by

Composer

Production Manager

Associate Director/Stage Manager

Project Coordinator

Set Dresser

Original Designs

Tristan Sharps

Max Richter

Mike Nanning

Zoe Pepper

Trixi Oldfield

Alissa Classen

Naomi Wilkinson

Designed for the Old Treasury Building by **Tristan Sharps**

Producer (UK)

Emma Haughton

CAST

This event is presented with an all Western Australian cast. The collaboration includes students from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, Edith Cowan University, local musicians and Perth-based actors. The performance is the result of workshops with WAAPA/ECU students to explore performance techniques specially relating to this performance. See next page for full cast list.

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PERTH
INTERNATIONAL
ARTS FESTIVAL



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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CAST

Actors **James Hagan**
George Shevtsov

Violins **Dan Russell**
Paul Wright

EMSEMBLE

Victoria Anne Acton	Cassandra Kotchie
Gita Bezard	David Lamb
Elizabeth Blackmore	Grace Laneaux
Charles Boman	Izobel Ledger
Stevie-Lee Bounader	Amanda Lines-Baran
Lenna Bradley	Melody Anne Lynn
Caitlin Cassidy	Fran Middleton
Serena Chalker	Michelle Andree Nickols
William Clarke	Travis Nippard
Jackie Davis	Chad O'Brien
Kathleen Douglas	Alicia Osyka
Alexandra Fisher	Fiona Pepper
Sam Froud	Shannon Rae
Georgina Haig	Ebony Ruggero
Brent Hill	Elizabeth Schebesta
Megan Holloway	Scott Sheridan
Liz Houwen	Ian Sinclair
Ben Hudson	Thomas Stokes
Chantelle Jamieson	Courtney Thorne
Conan Lucas Kavanagh	Aaron Tsindos
Samantha Keating	Rachel Urquhart
Thomas Kelly	Sarah Young

CREW

Grace Mander

Jess Tran

Cale Watts

DON'T LOOK BACK

Don't Look Back is a promenade performance inspired by the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. Eurydice dies on her wedding day and is taken to The Underworld. Orpheus descends after her to try and reclaim her. He appeases the Gods who, moved by the beauty of his music, permit her to return behind him – provided he doesn't look back at her before they reach the land of the living. Unable to contain himself, he looks, she slips back down to death and he is condemned to spend the rest of his life in utter desolation.

Don't Look Back is not a literal retelling of this story. We have taken a magnifying glass to incidents, images and atmospheres that have caught our attention and fired our own imagination. Some of the myth's characters have found their way indirectly into our piece, like Charon the boatman of the Underworld's river Styx, or the daughters of Danaus, forever drawing water through leaking sieves – but it is the underlying power of imagery and atmosphere that has most inspired our work. The trees that crowd around the desolate Orpheus and shed their leaves, the cold snows of the North through which he wanders, his concert before the Gods, the eternal repetition suffered by the inhabitants of The Underworld and, above all, the sheer sense of absence and loss.

Equally important, we are inspired by the buildings in which the piece takes place. *Don't Look Back* is redesigned for different sites that have their own stories, echoes and architectural features, affecting the form and content of the work. The piece cannot be shoehorned readymade into every new venue, but needs to be re-lit, re-structured and re-created according to the demands of each individual space.

At the Old Treasury Building, we have explored the piece through the vast variety of unexplored spaces that make up this majestic building, from the grandeur of the main hall to the intimacy of the interconnecting ante-rooms that wind their way down to the hauntingly atmospheric basement.

DREAMTHINKSPEAK BACKGROUND

Founded in 1999 by artistic director Tristan Sharps, dreamthinkspeak create site-responsive productions in a range of settings, exploring how the use of different environments can radically alter the relationship of the audience to the work. Each production is recreated afresh at different sites through collaboration with local partner organisations. Previous works have taken place in a wide range of physical and architectural contexts from Somerset House in London, to a vast disused paper factory in Moscow, to the old Majestic Hotel in Kuala Lumpur.

The highly visual, dreamlike nature of the company's work takes shape through a variety of media including film, sound and modelled landscapes. These interweaving forms are closely connected both thematically and visually to all live performance elements. This allows us to explore the rich seam of metaphor, dream and subconscious that exists beneath the narrative surface and gives greater freedom in how we communicate the content of our work.

dreamthinkspeak has enjoyed sell-out success in the UK, with *Underground* in London as part of the Barbican, London, BITE:05 season, and with *Don't Look Back* in numerous locations. International work has included projects in Slovenia, Russia, Malaysia, Syria and Romania.

One Step Forward, One Step Back, a major new site-specific work inspired by Dante's *Divine Comedy*, will premier in Liverpool, UK, in April 2008. Commissioned by the Liverpool Culture Company and designed for landmark buildings at the centre of cities around the world, this work will tour internationally from Autumn 2008.

dreamthinkspeak is managed and co-produced by ArtsAgenda (UK), a creative producer of artists whose work demonstrates awareness to space and aesthetics and is dedicated to creating compelling immediacy with its audience.

Special thanks to Catherine Reiser and Robyn Archer

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



TRISTAN SHARPS (*Artistic Director*)

Tristan Sharps has been successfully creating large-scale site-specific work for the past 12 years creating a range of projects for over 20 different sites. In 1995 he co-created *2000*, specifically designed for the Union Chapel in London, inspired by Dostoyevsky's *The Gambler*. He formed dreamthinkspeak in Brighton in 1999 creating their first piece, *Who Goes There?*, inspired by *Hamlet*.

In 2003 he created *Don't Look Back*, inspired by the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. The production has met with national and international success, with recent performances in Scotland, Slovenia, Russia, Malaysia and Romania with further performances planned for Chile and Lithuania.

In 2005 he created *Underground*, inspired by Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, for the Brighton International Festival. The piece was recreated for a vast underground former abattoir in Clerkenwell, London, as part of the Barbican BITE:05 Season.

He recently collaborated with Koons Theatre Company in Damascus on a new piece: *A Corpse on the Pavement*. The play was produced in a public subway and was the first site-specific production to be performed in Syria. He is currently preparing a major new commission for Liverpool Capital of Culture in April 2008 – *One Step Forward, One Step Back*, inspired by Dante's *Divine Comedy*.



MAX RICHTER (*Composer*)

Following studies in Edinburgh and Florence, Max Richter spent ten years with the contemporary classical ensemble Piano Circus (which he co-founded). Since then he has concentrated on his own composition, releasing three albums with a fourth – *24 Postcards in Full Colour* – to follow later this year.

As a composer of film music, Max has scored Ari Folman's animated documentary *Waltz With Bashir*, Henry May Long for writer/director Randal Sharp and *Hope* by Stanislaw Mucha. His music can be heard in *In God's Name*, the new documentary by Jules and Gedeon Naudet (makers of the landmark 9/11 documentary).

Max is also a regular collaborator with other artists such as Vashti Bunyan, Roni Size and Future Sound of London. He is currently collaborating with Darren Almond on a music and film installation. *One Step Forward One Step Back* is his third project with dreamthinkspeak, having previously worked with Tristan Sharps on *Don't Look Back* and *Underground*.



JAMES HAGAN (*Actor*)

James Hagan has been performing for over 30 years and has played the leads in many stage productions in Sydney and Perth working for Bell Shakespeare, Sydney Opera House, Western Australian Theatre Company and Black Swan Theatre among many others. James toured Asia in *Phantom of the Opera* and has performed in many television series and radio plays. James was awarded THE GLUGS for best actor NSW 2004.



GEORGE SHEVTSOV (*Actor*)

George is probably best known for his role as Ken Sherry in the film *Love Serenade* which won the Camera D'or award at the Cannes Film Festival in 1996. His depth of experience and versatility is reflected in the range of work he has undertaken all over Australia in film, theatre, radio and television. He has worked with Steven Berkoff in his production of *Metamorphosis*; played opposite Tom Selleck in the telemovie *Ike: Countdown To D-Day* filmed in New Zealand; performed the title role in the ballet *Don Quixote*, a book reading of *Stormy Weather* for the ABC, and *Sitting Bull* in *Annie Get Your Gun*.



DAN RUSSELL (*Violin*)

Dan has won several awards including the Faith Court Violin Scholarship, First Prize North of Perth Music Festival, First Prize WA Music Teachers' Association Concert Awards and two-time winner of the Faith Court Chamber Music prize. Receiving high distinctions for both 3rd and 4th year recitals in a Bachelor of Music at The University of Western Australia he has also completed a Diploma of Performing Arts (Music) at WAAPA.



PAUL WRIGHT (*Violin*)

At the age of 10 Paul Wright was one of five children worldwide to be accepted to study with Yehudi Menuhin in England. He went on to study at the Guildhall School in London and then the Juilliard School in New York.

Paul has given concerts throughout the world including at Queen Elizabeth Hall and Wigmore Hall, London, and at the invitation of Yehudi Menuhin at Carnegie Hall, New York.

He has been Director of String Studies at The University of Western Australia since 1990.



MIKE NANNING (*Production Manager*)

Mike has more than 20 years' experience in the entertainment industry. His many roles have included venue manager, production manager, tour manager, lighting designer and director for a local contemporary dance company. Mike currently heads up his own production and design company and has just finished

touring *The Drover's Wives* to Shanghai and Beijing.



ZOE PEPPER (*Associate Director/Stage Manager*)

Zoe has previously directed the original schlock horror, *The Manic Pony* for the 2006 Artrage Festival. Also in 2006 she directed Don Nigro's *Scarecrow* in the Blue Room Studio and toured the original production *Motor City Blues* to the Adelaide Fringe Festival. Zoe directed *Turbosapien* at Crossfire for the opening of the 2004 Artrage Festival.



TRIXI OLDFIELD (*Project Coordinator*)

Trixi Oldfield has been a multi-national award-winning journalist for the last 10 years, but the pull of theatre was too great and she recently completed a Bachelor of Contemporary Performance. While casually producing ABC radio programs, she works as a freelance artist and performer, makes giant puppets and soon hopes to stage her first play about rural drought and suicide.



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS (WAAPA) & EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY

WAAPA is one of the world's leading performing arts academies, offering courses in Aboriginal theatre, acting, arts management, broadcasting, costume, dance, design, lighting, music, music theatre, opera, props and scenery, sound and stage management. WAAPA courses are practically oriented, with over 200 performances being staged annually, providing students with invaluable production experience. Its graduates, including luminaries such as Hugh Jackman, Frances O' Connor, William McInnes, Rachel Durkin and Emma Matthews among many others, are to be found in all areas of the arts locally, nationally and internationally.

WAAPA is situated at Edith Cowan University, which itself offers an exciting range of courses in the fields of Education, Communications and Contemporary Arts, including a highly regarded contemporary performance program. This course explores original, self-devised and collaborative approaches to writing, performing, directing and staging theatre and performance. For this production of *Don't Look Back*, students from a range of the performance courses at WAAPA are working creatively alongside students from contemporary performance and also drama education.



ARTS PROJECTS AUSTRALIA

Arts Projects Australia is an independent producer and event management organisation which works collaboratively with a range of festivals, producers and organisations on a diverse range of arts projects and tours.

These include the Australia Council's Australian Performing Arts Market, WOMAdelaide, the Cultural program of the 2006 Commonwealth Games, the Adelaide Film Festival and the Australian International Documentary Conference.

Past tours include Les Arts Sauts, Random Dance, *Amajuba – Like Doves We Rise* and Kronos Quartet, and in 2008 dreathinkspeak's *Don't Look Back*, Tim Supple's Indian production of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, TPO's *Children's Cheering Carpet* and Cesaria Evora.

Ian Scobie	Director
Lee-Anne Donnelly	General Manager
Paul Champion	Associate Producer
Di Farrell	Administrator
Annette Tripodi	Operations & Program Manager
Nicola Prime	Advertising & Promotions Manager
Nick Zuppar	Marketing Manager
Paige Goodwin	Production Manager

www.artsprojectsaustralia.com.au

