



Winton's turn at festival

A WEST Australian story, *The Turning*, is alongside an international line-up of theatre at the Perth International Arts Festival.

The story, by Fremantle's Tim Winton, has been taken out of the confines of paper and ink in a play developed by Bill McCluskey.

Set in the fictional town of Angelus from the 1970s to the present, *The Turning* spans three generations of the Lang family's lives.

Actor Michelle Fornasier said the themes discussed in the play were universal, but the characters were typical Australians.

"Most people would have met someone like my character and the Langs if they lived in Australia in the 1970s," she said.

Fornasier plays the central character, Vic's aunty Cleo, who she describes as "the type of person who would have been a beautician if she had her chance".

"She is loud and has no inhibition... when I first read the script I didn't think I had any of Cleo in me, but I obviously have a little bit of that broad Australian in me," she said.



Actors Reg Cribb and Michelle Fornasier, with playwright Bill McCluskey, in rehearsal for *The Turning*. Picture: Bruce Hunt d2

Fornasier said part of her research involved watching people like the Langs.

"Three or four of us who play the family went on a pub crawl on the outskirts of Perth and found people and mannerisms which resembled those of the characters, which was really good to draw on," she said.

While the Langs are central in the

novel, other stories from *The Turning*, which is essentially a series of short stories, are not included in the stage production.

"Bill (McCluskey) took the one storyline from the book, which has the focus on the interconnected characters who go through some sort of turning," she said. *The Turning* is at the Playhouse Theatre until March 8.