

Interview

Photo: Andrew Darter / a100



From the Great Beyond Interview by LR Simon.



An Interview with Hamish Michael.

Hamish Michael has just returned from a three month stint in Melbourne where he performed in one production and was Assistant Director in a

Playbox production. He has returned to perform in the Scape production GRACE. Hamish will perform Red Birth, by Graham Henderson. It has never been performed before. Hamish is an extremely talented lad who is gaining the right outlets to share his gold.

LR Simon: You received a grant to observe the rehearsal process of a Playbox production. I understand that you've actually taken part in the production process. How did this come about and what role have you played?

Hamish Michael: Yes, that's right. I applied for the grant to take me to Playbox so I could witness the process of creating a

professional production from beginning to end. And that's what I expected to be doing, just observing. But somewhere it took a bit of an unexpected turn. One day I had lunch with Michael Kantor, the director, and we got on quite well. After much conversation and Vietnamese food he offered me the position of Assistant Director. Completely unexpected, but it was fantastic. This meant that I was now able to take a creative role in the production itself, and be involved with the performers and designers and everyone. And it developed from there.

LRS: Did he listen to your suggestions, take them on?

HM: He really listened to what I had to say, which was great, as this wasn't a position I had been in before. I'd never really look at a production with a directorial eye before so this was a really big thing for me. I'd take notes and offer suggestions and he'd take them on board, and we'd discuss what was and wasn't working, and why. He's now trying to get me to give up my wayward passion for acting and become a director. I'd love to work with Kantor again, and delve deeper into the process of directing with him.

LRS: Can you tell me about Red Birth, the monologue you'll perform?

HM: It's a very beautiful piece. Unlike anything I've performed before, quite challenging. It's nice to go against what you know and not get locked in to things so people don't just see "Hamish Acting". It's about the cycles we go through, where we come from and where we go, and how we don't really know much about any of it beyond our own experience. Or something like that, come and work it out for yourself. Bring a friend.

LRS: Have you talked with Graham about the piece, what has he said about it?

HM: Very briefly. We drank beer together at the Builders' Arms in Fitzroy. He's very happy that I'm performing it. He only specified that the first part MUST be shouted. Such a lovely man is Graham. Not many people can get away with a moustache these days but he wears it well. He also mentioned something about Egyptian paintings and hieroglyphics and how he wrote the piece in a matter of days, just wrote and wrote. But it was late and they were playing Madison Avenue really, really loud and at one point I could have sworn he said 'Don't call me Baby'... Did I mention we were drinking?

LRS: Future plans?

HM: How much time do you have? There's so much happening right now, so I can't really tell you. Enjoy summer in Hobart. Explain to my family why I can't buy them Christmas presents. Work with Scape. Right now I might go get me a banana smoothie. Extra nutmeg.

GRACE, at the Peacock Theatre, opens on the 23rd of November, closes on the 26th. Preview the 22nd. Inquiries and bookings call 6224 5267 or email scape@inorbit.com.

