

COMPANY THEATRE

PENINSULA

A nostalgic Kiwi coming of age tale

WRITTEN BY GARY HENDERSON
DIRECTED BY KRISTOF HAINES
14-28 NOVEMBER 2020

TICKET

BY ARRANGEMENT WITH
PLAYMARKET
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WELCOME
from Stephen Hood
 PRESIDENT OF COMPANY THEATRE

Company Theatre welcomes you to not just its first but also its only public show of 2020: An unprecedented year in which two lockdowns lead to two postponements. Following April 2019's *Stones in His Pockets*, we're glad to have Kristof Haines back as director of *Peninsula* – with each of its five actors playing both a child and adult character, except for the one who plays both a dog and a teacher. Featuring central character Michael – a ten year old whose surname is literally "Hope" – the dreams and challenges of a mid-Twentieth Century rural Kiwi childhood are energetically and poignantly brought to us through a minimal stage design built almost entirely from sound, lighting, and evocative performances. Planning for Company Theatre's 2021 season is in its final stages. We look forward to bringing you three shows next year, starting with *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* in May – directed by Sian Davis.

THOUGHTS ON THE PLAY
from Kristof Haines
 DIRECTOR OF PENINSULA



Peninsula is a story that has been sitting in my heart for some years now, waiting for the right time to emerge blinking into the light. At the core of this play is a deep sense of truthfulness, which I think is what attracted me to the script in the first place. Conversations flow effortlessly, rural New Zealand is evoked in vivid colour and every single character is genuinely flawed. Even if you never grew up in this country, or if the 1960's seem like ancient history, *Peninsula* presents a warmly human story, shot through with joy, quiet tragedy and the golden flecks of childhood discoveries. Those who can remember the New Zealand of some 60 years ago will find a familiar world coming to life, but for the rest of us, this is still a tale that gently and beautifully touches on what it means to be a kid, to be a Kiwi... to be alive.

THE CAST

Michael/Bruce

Jack/Alex

Valerie/Lynette

Ngaire/Sylvia

Gordon/Pug

Jono Capel-Baker

Kristof Haines

Rebekah Talsma

Sofie Gabriel

Duncan Preston

THE SETTING

Set in the 1960's, in the tiny town of Duvauchelle Bay on the South Island's Banks Peninsula, this story follows 10 year old Michael Hope as he becomes fascinated by mapping his community, his country, and the rest of the known universe.

When his teacher tells him how Banks Peninsula was joined on to the South Island millions of years ago by the Akaroa volcano, Michael begins to wonder about what could be happening deep underneath his idyllic community, only to discover that there are indeed rumblings beneath the surface of his world: unrest in the adult world which threatens to erupt into his life, changing everything.



KRISTOF HAINES

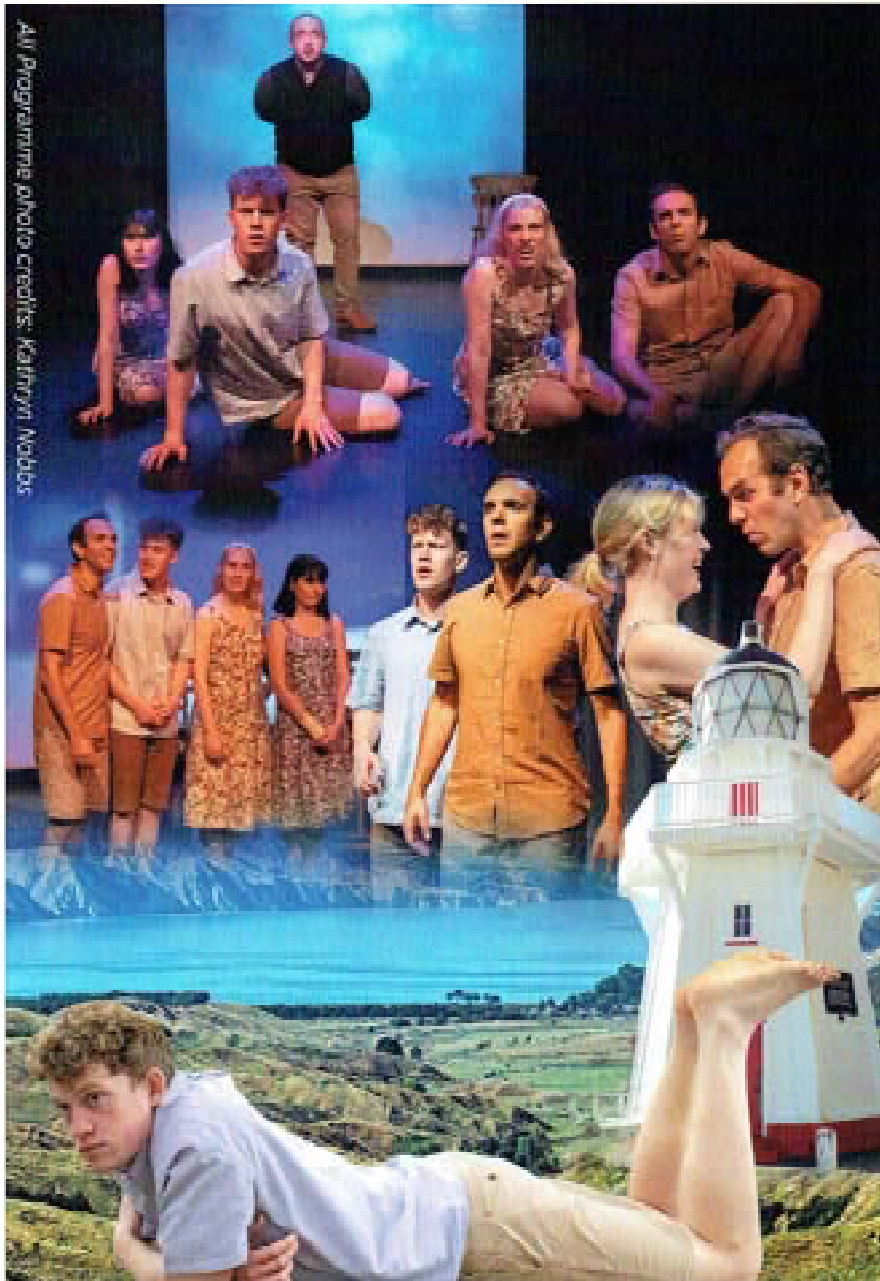
Director of Peninsula

Kristof has been compulsively signing himself up for Auckland theatre projects since 2012 but refuses to admit that he may have a problem. He had his first brush with Company Theatre eight years ago (nabbing a couple minor roles in *Fawlty Towers*) and has gone on to haunt the Rose Centre stage on a good number of occasions, most recently as horror-steeped writer Katurian K.

Katurian in *The Pillowman*. Last year he found himself directing the Irish tragicomedy *Stones in His Pockets* for Company Theatre, featuring two actors portraying a cast of fifteen characters. With *Peninsula* boasting five actors playing ten characters, Kristof hopes that one day he'll be sane enough to cast one actor per character, like a normal person.



Kristof Haines overseeing rehearsals for Peninsula



All Programme photo credits: Kathryn Nobles

MEET THE CAST



JONO CAPEL-BAKER
Michael/Bruce

Jono has been performing in the Auckland theatre community for a few years now and has loved every second of it. He has experience working with a variety of classical and contemporary texts, from *Shakespeare* to *Martin McDonagh*. He fell in love with the *Peninsula* script from the moment he first read it and instantly knew he had to be a part of this production.

KRISTOF HAINES
Jack/Alex

While Kristof originally intended to keep himself firmly in the "Director" box for Peninsula, after two ridiculously ill timed lockdowns he's now having to deal with the very directions he previously inflicted on his actors. This production has been a rollercoaster marathon for Kristof, but he couldn't have asked for better people to do it all with. He is immensely proud and relieved to have finally brought the world of Peninsula to life.





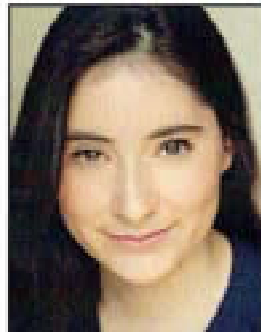
REBEKAH TALSMA
Valerie/Lynette

Since moving to Auckland five years ago, Rebekah has performed with companies all over the North Shore, playing roles such as Lady Windermere in *Lady Windermere's Fan*, Helen of Troy in *The Iliad* and Hermione the Poet in *Lovepuke* for the Auckland Fringe festival. *Peninsula* is Rebekah's third show with Company after playing Shelby in *Steel Magnolias* and Cecily in *The Importance of Being Earnest*. She has had fun rehearsing her two

characters and discovering the differences between them.

SOFIE GABRIEL
Ngaire/Sylvia

Sofie started acting in high school, and since leaving school 4 years ago has found the love of community theatre. From starting off doing shows such as *Dracula* with Mairangi Players, to more recently the *One Act Plays* and *Agatha Christie* with Shoreside Theatre and directing *The Secret Garden*, Sofie is very grateful to get the opportunity to work with Company Theatre. Having worked backstage last year with Company, she is excited to work with the brilliant director, crew and cast in telling this coming-of-age 1960's Kiwi story.



DUNCAN PRESTON
Gordon/Pug

Duncan moved to New Zealand in 2018 and has performed in a number of productions with Shoreside and at The Rose Centre. He played Malvolio in last year's *Twelfth Night*, Henry in *The Lion In Winter*, Michael Katurian in *The Pillowman* and also performed and co-directed a short piece in last year's *One Act Play Festival*. A school teacher by trade, he is looking forward to taking on his most challenging role yet... a school teacher.

The opportunity to play Pug the dog intrigued him most of all and he is looking forward to this being his most physically challenging role to date.

CREW FOR PENINSULA

Director	Kristof Haines
Production Manager	Kathy Gent
Stage Manager	Janet Lyons
Stage Crew	Annie McGrath, Victoria Silvey
Personal Assistant	Victoria Silvey
Set Advisor	Anne Rimmer
Wardrobe	Janet Lyons, Annie McGrath
Props	Annie McGrath
Sound Design	Conan Mornard-Stott
Visual Effects	Isaac Taylor
Lighting	Scott Thomas
Lighting and Sound Operator	Stephen Hood
Music	Matt Rust
Box Office	Kathy Gent, Sarah Dettwiler, Janice Andrews
Front of House Manager	Lesley Hawkey, Company Members
Bar Manager	Alastair Fletcher
Publicity/Social Media	Sherry Ede, Kathy Gent, Jono Capel-Baker, Victoria Silvey, Stephen Hood
Billboards	Sherry Ede, Alastair Fletcher
Poster Design	Ross Murray
Programme	Hayley Atkins, Linda Camplin, Sherry Ede
Photography	Kathryn Nobbs

THANKS TO

A special thank you to the volunteers who look after front of house. Thank you to our major sponsors **Harcourts Devonport**, **William Sanders** and **Rowley Funerals**. Thank you to **The Rose Centre**.

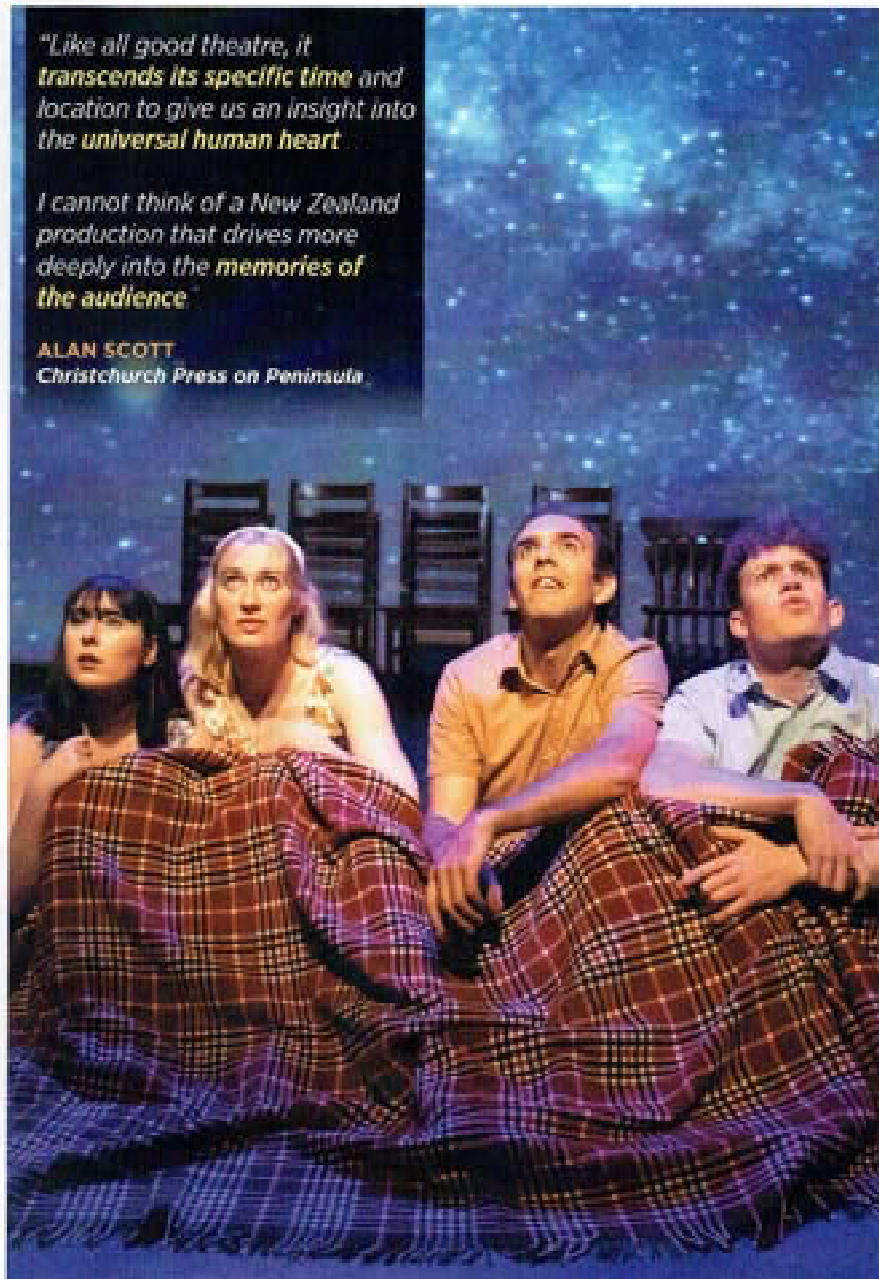
WE NEED YOU!

Company Theatre would love more volunteers to help with our Front Of House during our shows. If you are able to spare some time, please speak to our front of house manager Lesley Hawkey to find out more.



There will be
ONE INTERVAL
of 15 minutes
Refreshments,
Ice Creams, Chocolates and
a variety of drinks will
be available



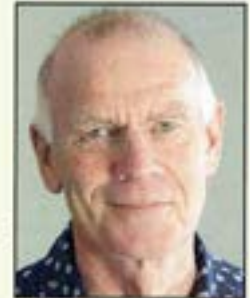


"Like all good theatre, it transcends its specific time and location to give us an insight into the universal human heart"

I cannot think of a New Zealand production that drives more deeply into the memories of the audience

ALAN SCOTT
Christchurch Press on Peninsula

GARY HENDERSON
Playwright of Peninsula



Gary Henderson was born in Geraldine in South Canterbury, and gradually spiralled his way north to Auckland where he has lived since.

Gary's plays have been professionally produced around New Zealand, in South Africa, Australia, Great Britain, Canada and the United States. His most well-travelled play is Skin Tight which won a coveted Fringe First Award at the Edinburgh Fringe in 1998 during a sell-out season at the Traverse Theatre. Productions have been produced in New York since 2006, UK since 2007 and Canada since 2008.

Gary received a Fringe Award for Excellence for The Big Blue Planet Earth Show at the Adelaide Fringe Festival in 1992, and a Chapman Tripp Theatre Award for the best new short play in 1996 for Mo & Jess Kill Susie. Home Land, commissioned and produced by Fortune Theatre in Dunedin (2004) and Peninsula, commissioned by the Christchurch Arts Festival and directed by Gary at The Court Theatre (2005), were written in Dunedin while Gary was resident in the Robert Lord Writers Cottage, and teaching at Allen Hall, the home of the Otago University Theatre Studies Programme.

From 2006 - 2012 Gary taught playwriting at Unitec's School of Performing and Screen Arts in Auckland and still teaches independently.

Gary was the 2013 recipient of the Playmarket Award, a \$20,000 prize recognising a playwright who has made a significant artistic contribution to theatre in New Zealand.

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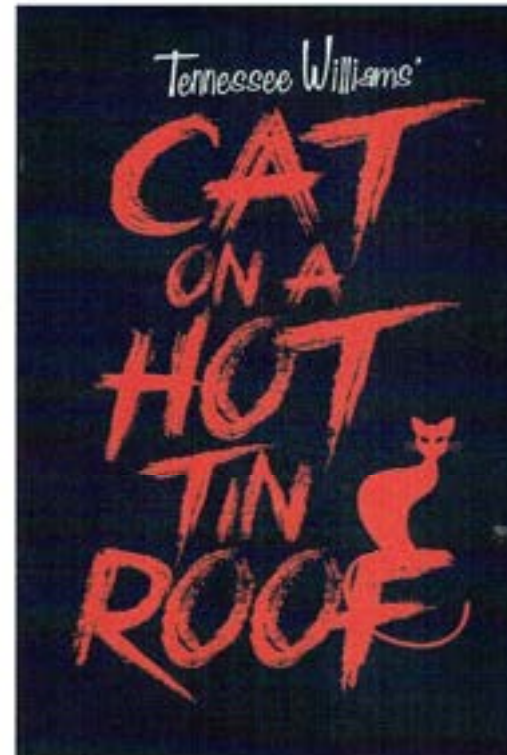
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NEXT WITH COMPANY THEATRE

Our upcoming show May 2021

See companytheatre.co.nz for details



Cat on a Hot Tin Roof by Tennessee Williams

One of the greatest theatre pieces of US literature, this play was also Tennessee Williams' personal favourite.

Set in the early 1950's in the Mississippi Delta it is the story of a family in crisis - damaged by lies. Powerful, spell binding theatre. Mark your calendars now!

Open Auditions will be Sunday December 13th. All welcome. See Company theatre website for details.

COMPANY THEATRE IS PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY

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