



RHODES UNIVERSITY

*Where leaders learn*

# Story

directed by Nicola Elliott



Photographer | Sophie Marcus

Rehearsal Room | Settlers Monument | Duration 50 minutes

Thursday 2 July 21:30 | Saturday 4 July 10:00 | Sunday 5 July 18:00

Age Restriction | 14





# **Created by**

**Nicola Elliott**

in collaboration with the Cast

**Mia Arderne**

**Khaya Mthembu**

**Byron Davis**

**Tshego Khutsoane**

**Lucy Kruger**

**Joni Barnard**

# *Director's Note*

If you are reading this after the production (which is most likely seeing as the “preset” probably kept you occupied before we started) with the desire to answer the question “what did it mean?” then I should tell you that the work and this note are intended to be only partially satisfactory in providing answers to that question. If the production has not started (if, in other words, Joni is still taking off all those shoes and Byron is still tidying), then allow this note to tell you where we started this process, and not to restrict your interpretation of what is about to occur.

I've found it far more interesting in this work to point to meaning-making through the use of self-conscious theatrical devices than to fulfil or represent meaning in the way that satisfies my “whathappensnext” drive (that part of me which craves a story in which to be immersed). Indeed, the idea for this work started with my intellectual interest in my desire, as a theatre audience member, to search constantly for meaning, whether or not meaning was intended.

Having said that, many of the stories that take place in Story are not from intellectual investigation. They come instead from the feelings and predicaments related to the act of performance, which is an area that has interested me throughout my training and creative endeavours. Our intention – in spite of the pleas of whathappensnextism – is not always to explain, show, demonstrate or tell a story (although there is lots of that going on), but, overall, to experience (us and you) the subtext of storytelling, of

performance - the sometimes awkward, sometimes sublime space between the performer and the character; between the real and the representation.

To lay it out plainly: Like many of the works entitled "Story" which have come before this one (notably Merce Cunningham's in 1963), this Story eschews traditional narrative. The stories are to be found in structural elements of, for example, time, duration and pause; light and illumination; space and proximity; overlap of opposing theatrical styles; the story of all the body parts and the story of just one of them. For, whether we like it or not, we seem to be always telling a story in the most general sense. We seem to be always involved in meaning making even, as performers, during the most abstract creations, and, as people, in our everyday life. Consider how we imbue the world around us with significance. How magical that the ordinary, via our meaning-making processes, can transcend to valuable, important, significant, beloved.

We hope that you enjoy this direct and indirect experience. I hope that it makes you think an awful lot as well as not at all.

# *Words*

**Francois Jurgens**

"This Poem is not by Wallace Stevens" and  
"The 80's Me Generation Song"

**Joni Barnard**

"It's a scarf"

**Mia Arderne**

"Waistcoat"

and **Nicola Elliott**

# Music

From *Uncommon Ritual* produced by Edgar Meyer and Béla Fleck in association with Mike Marshall. Sony Classical, 1997:

"Uncommon Ritual" (composer Edgar Meyer)  
"Chromium Picolinate" (Meyer, Fleck)  
"Contrammonkey" (Meyer)  
"Change Meeting" (Meyer)  
Third movement from *Amalgamations for solo bass* (Meyer)

From *The Cole Porter songbook* by Ella Fitzgerald. Polygram, 1984:

"Begin the Beguine"  
"I get a kick out of you"  
(cover extract performed live)

# *P*roduction *C*redits

Director	<b>Nicola Elliott</b>
Poster & Programme Design	<b>Kate Bold</b> <b>Bronwyn McLean</b>
Production Management	<b>Royden Paynter</b>
Stage Manager	<b>Alex Farmer</b>
Theatre Administrator	<b>Kate Bold</b>
Designer	<b>Nicola Elliott</b> <b>Karin Reum</b>
Resident Photographer '09	<b>Sophie Marcus</b>
Special Thanks	The Staff of Rhodes Drama, especially <b>Gary Gordon</b> , <b>Heike Gehring</b> , <b>Royden</b> <b>Paynter</b> and <b>Kate Bold</b> .

Special thanks to the cast  
and collaborators, as well as  
Brink, Twiggy and Francois.

# Theatre Management Committee

Chair	<b>Mr Tim Huisamen</b>
HOD Drama	<b>Professor Gary Gordon</b>
HOD English	<b>Professor Paul Walters</b>
HOD Music	<b>Professor Marc Duby</b>
School of Languages	<b>Professor Russell Kaschula</b>
Theatre Director	<b>Ms Alex Sutherland</b>
Theatre Administrator	<b>Ms Kate Bold</b>
Production Manager	<b>Mr Royden Paynter</b>
Senate	<b>Professor George Euvrard</b>
Senate	<b>Dr Anton Krueger</b>
Senate	<b>Dr Tim Radloff</b>
Finance	<b>Mr Mike Olivier</b>
Estates	<b>Mr Cromwell Dyala</b>

# Drama Dept & Theatre Complex

Chief Technical Officer	<b>Oliver Cartwright</b>
Head of Wardrobe	<b>Rita Westbrook</b>
Design & Technical Supervisor	<b>Roux Engelbrecht</b>
Secretary	<b>Vusiwe Mnyobe</b>
Messenger & Clerk	<b>Vuyelwa Nonie Hoza</b>
Stage Hand	<b>Welcome Mgqwanci</b>

Produced by the Rhodes University Drama Department  
Corner Somerset & Prince Alfred Streets | Grahamstown | South Africa  
PO Box 94 | Grahamstown | 6140 | Tel: 046 603 8538  
[www.ru.ac.za/drama](http://www.ru.ac.za/drama)

# *Drama Department Events 2009*

## **August - September Young Directors' Season '09**

### **Honours**

Natasha Lech  
Revolutionary Road

Roshnee Guptar  
For the Love of the  
Nightingale

Byron Davis  
Withnail and I

Saint-Francis Tohlang  
Closer

### **Masters**

Robert Haxton  
Bent

## **October    Theatre in Motion '09 Physical Imagination Takes Flight**

Postgraduate choreography,  
physical theatre and dance.

