



MEDIA RELEASE

August 20, 2013

SEX, GOD & THE WARDROBE - A PANEL DISCUSSION OF *FREUD'S LAST SESSION*

"Things are only simple when you choose not to examine them" – Freud's Last Session

Following the performance of the hit play *Freud's Last Session* on Sunday September 1 at 3pm, the audience is invited to stay and hear Dr Rachael Kohn, Peter FitzSimons, Dr Tanveer Ahmed and Roy Williams discuss God, sex and the other simple things of life.

Freud's Last Session centres on legendary psychoanalyst Dr Sigmund Freud (played by Henri Szeps), who invites a young, little-known professor, C.S. Lewis (Douglas Hansell), to his home in London. Lewis, expecting to be hauled over the carpet for satirizing Freud in a recent book, soon realizes Freud has a much more significant agenda. On the day England enters World War II (3 September 1939), Freud and Lewis clash on the existence of God, love, sex and the meaning of life – only a few weeks before Freud chooses to take his own.

The Panel Discussion will be moderated by Dr Rachael Kohn, producer and presenter of ABC Radio National's *The Spirit of Things*, and the panelists will be:

- Peter FitzSimons – journalist, author and atheist
- Dr Tanveer Ahmed – psychiatrist and author
- Roy Williams – lawyer and author of books including *In God They Trust?*, a study of the religious beliefs of Australia's Prime Ministers since 1901.

Inspired by Dr Armand S. Nicholi Jr's 2003 book *The Question of God*, playwright Mark St. Germain has expertly crafted a thought provoking play, which ran Off-Broadway for two years and now Sydney audiences and critics alike are acclaiming the play.

"Fascinating! An engrossing encounter" – Sydney Morning Herald

"Engaging play... A cosy meeting of minds" - thetelegraph.com.au

"It is an excellent production of a totally engrossing play" - Australian Stage Online

"A great night out... Fantastic play... Quality Theatre... A highly recommended theatre experience" - Weekend Notes

"a well-crafted piece" - johnshand.com.au

FREUDSLASTSESSION.COM.AU

FREUD'S LAST SESSION

Venue: Theatre Royal, King Street, Sydney
Season: To September 1
Performance times: Tues 7.30pm, Wed – Sat evening 8pm, matinees Wed 1pm, Sat 2pm, Sun 3pm
Price: From \$59.90 (transaction fees apply)
Bookings: ticketmaster.com.au or 1300 723 038
Groups 10+ Save! Call 1300 889 278 or email groups@ticketmaster.com.au
Premium Tickets & Packages showbiz.com.au

For further details, please contact Ian Phipps, IP Publicity, on 0419 977 649 or ian@ippublicity.com.au

BIOGRAPHIES

Henri Szeps OAM (Doctor Sigmund Freud)

Henri first came to public attention playing Harold, the birthday boy, in the sensational play (for its time), *The Boys In The Band*, which played for 21 months in all major cities in Australia (1968 - 1970). Since then he has performed in notable theatrical productions such as: *Levine in Glengarry Glen Ross* (Sydney Opera House), The Narrator (Anton Chekhov) in *The Good Doctor* (Ensemble Theatre), Dr Saul Morgenstein in *Travelling North* (World Première, Nimrod); and Herr Schultz in *Cabaret* (Sam Mendes production).

Henri and his actress wife, Mary Ann Severne, worked in England in the early 1970s. Henri appeared in Tony Richardson's production of *I, Claudius* on the West End (with David Warner and Warren Clarke), and later toured with The Prospect Theatre Company under Toby Robertson (starring Derek Jacobi), performing in the Herodes Atticus in Greece and in front of the Sphinx Temple in Cairo.

Henri was born in a refugee camp in Switzerland during WWII, was fostered out to a Swiss family as a baby, and raised at various times by this family, his mother in Paris, and two orphanages. He came to Australia at the age of eight with his mother and sister. Here, he graduated in science and electrical engineering at the University of Sydney while studying acting with Hayes Gordon on weekends. Soon after graduation he started appearing in musicals, as a guest in virtually every television drama going in Australia, and he cut his teeth with a stand-up comedy act around the Sydney clubs.

In 1986 Henri repeated his performance of Dr Saul in the film version of *Travelling North*, and he eventually played Robert Beare in the iconic ABC television series *Mother and Son* with Ruth Cracknell and Garry McDonald.

He has written a book on acting, *All In Good Timing*, and performed in five one-man shows at the Ensemble Theatre, three of which he wrote himself and which had extensive tours. One of them, *I'm Not A Dentist*, earned Henri the Norman Kessell Award (Outstanding Performance 1997). He also received a Penguin Award, Best Actor in a Mini Series, for his performance in the ABC TV drama series *Palace of Dreams*, as well as a Helpmann Award, Best Supporting Actor in a Musical, for his Herr Schultz in *Cabaret* (2003).

Henri was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for Services to the Arts and the Community in 2001. He and Mary Ann have two adult sons.

Douglas Hansell (Professor C.S Lewis)

Douglas is a graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (Acting 2003) with an extensive list of theatre and television credits.

Recently he played the role of Detective Glenn Morfoot in *Underbelly: Badness* for Channel 9, appeared in *Emily Eyefinger* with Monkey Baa Theatre Company, and *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* with Ensemble Theatre. He is also a Teaching Artist with Sydney Theatre Company's School Drama program.

Other credits include *Actors at Work* (Bell Shakespeare), *Oedipus Rex* (directed by Peter Sellars for Sydney Festival), *Das Kaltë Kind: The Cold Child* (Griffin Theatre Company), *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Macbeth*, *Lady Windamere's Fan* (Darlinghurst Theatre Company), *Fatboy*, *What A Shock'n Shame*, *The Temperamentals* (New Theatre), *Twelfth Night* (Night Sky Productions), *Shakespeare on Trial* (Young Australia Workshop), *Small Hard Things* (Bondi Feast) and *The Wind in the Willows* (Australian Shakespeare Company) among others.

Douglas's other film and television credits include *All Saints*, *Home and Away* (Channel 7), *36 Squad* (Breakaway TV), *Sheyeville* (AFTRS), *Mabo*, *The Chocolate Cake* (Project Greenlight) as well as several commercials and corporate videos.

As a musician his credits include *Symphony of Psalms*, *Harmonium*, *Queen of Spades* (Sydney Symphony), *Open For Inspection: The Real Estate Musical* for Darlinghurst Theatre (Musical Director), *Emotional Baggage: A Cabaret* (Bar Me) and he is also a member of Roland Peelman's Song Company. Following *Freud's Last Session*, Douglas will be performing in *Neighborhood Watch* with Ensemble Theatre.

Mark St. Germain (Playwright)

Freud's Last Session ran two years Off-Broadway closing July 24, 2012. It has also had successful seasons in other US cities including Chicago and Los Angeles. It has been playing in Argentina since January 2012 and in repertory in Sweden and Denmark, with other international productions scheduled to open in 2013.

Mark has adapted *The Gronholm Method* by Jordi Galceran for American audiences. The play is being produced by Mike Nichols and is scheduled for Broadway in 2013. His play *Dr Ruth, All The Way*, premiered in July, 2012 at the Barrington Stage Company in the Berkshires and will come into NYC this Spring. His play *The Best of Enemies*, produced last season by the Barrington Stage will be presented at the Florida Studio Theater this season and is optioned for NYC. *The Fabulous Lipitones*, a musical comedy co-written with John Markus, will premiere at the Theatrical Outfit in Atlanta in summer, 2013. His play *Scott and Hem in the Garden of Allah* will premiere at the Contemporary American Theater Festival in the summer of 2013.

Mark's plays include *Camping with Henry and Tom* (Lucille Lortel and Outer Critics Circle Awards), *Ears on a Beatle*, *The God Committee* and *Out of Gas On Lover's Leap*. He wrote the Tammy Wynette musical *Stand by Your Man*, which began at the Ryman Theater in Nashville and toured again in 2012. With composer Charles Strouse he co-wrote the book for his adaption of Dreiser's *American Tragedy*. With composer Randy Courts, Mark has written the perennial musical *The Gifts of The Magi* as well as *Johnny Pie and The Foolkiller* (AT&T Award Grant), and *Jack's Holiday* at playwrights horizons.

Television work includes writer/creative consultant for *The Cosby Show* and Dick Wolf's *Crime and Punishment*. He co-wrote director Carroll Ballard's film *Duma* and produced and directed the documentary *My Dog, An Unconditional Love Story*, with Richard Gere, Glenn Close, Edward Albee and others. Mark wrote the award winning children's book *Three Cups*.

Mark is an Associate Artist of the Barrington Stage Company, recipient of the William Inge Festival's New Voices Award and a member of the Dramatists Guild and the Writer's Guild East. He is an alumnus of New Dramatists.

Adam Cook (Director)

Adam was Artistic Director of the State Theatre Company of South Australia from 2005-2012. His directing credits for the Company include *The Ham Funeral*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Three Sisters*, *November*, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*, *Entertaining Mr Sloane*, *The Price*, *King Lear*, *Mnemonic*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *Architektin*, *Blue/Orange*, *LyreBird: Tales of Helpmann*, *Hamlet*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Life x 3*, *Noises Off*, *The Government Inspector*, *Crow*, *The Shifting Heart* and *The Daylight Atheist*.

Graduating from the NIDA Directors Course in 1988, Adam has since directed close to 100 productions across Australia, London, Canada and the United States, for the Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne and Brisbane Festivals, Melbourne Theatre Company, Company B Belvoir, Sydney Theatre Company, Ensemble, Sydney Opera House Trust, NIDA, Queensland Performing Arts Centre, La Boite, Q Theatre, Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, Opera Australia, Griffin, Bell Shakespeare, OzOpera, Playbox, Festival of the Dreaming, Windmill Performing Arts, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, City of London Festival and the Barbican International Theatre Event (BITE).