

# THE 39 STEPS - CAST BIOGRAPHIES

## HELEN CHRISTINSON (PAMELA, ANNABELLA & MARGARET)



Helen graduated from QUT's Acting program in 2004. While at QUT she was fortunate enough to work with such directors as Michael Gow, Jennifer Flowers, Karen Crone and Sean Mee on shows such as *Live Acts on Stage*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Roberto Zucco* and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

After graduating from QUT Helen played the dual role of Ellen and Sarmitte in LaBoite's *The Drowning Bride*, directed by Michael Futchter. Helen has also worked at QTC, again under the direction of Michael Gow, playing Amanda in *Private Lives*, a co-production with STCSA, and the seductive widow-next-door, Fanny Wilton, in Ibsen's *John Gabriel Borkman*. She has also delved into her darker side playing Lena in the Stablemates' production of Marius von Mayenberg's *The Cold Child* directed by Anthony Skuse.

Helen's film credits include *Rapid Fear*, *Endurance Island*, *The Underdog's Tale* and *Harrisville*.

Helen's dream of working with MTC was realised this year when she was cast in *The 39 Steps* under the direction of Maria Aitken. She has loved every minute of working on this show and thrilled to be a part of the Australia, New Zealand and Asian Tour of *The 39 Steps*.

## RUSSELL FLETCHER (MAN 2)



Russell Fletcher is a comedy all-rounder, from *Shakespeare in the Park* to being the only Australian to have appeared on *Whose Line Is It Anyway?* (UK 1993). A legendary Theatresports all-star, in 2001 Fletcher was the coach of the victorious Australian Team at the World Improvisation Championship in Montreal. Fletcher is also the Host of the incomparable *Spontaneous Broadway*, Director and performer with *Troupe Du Jour* – one of the hottest corporate acts in Australia, and in 2007 he toured nationally with his award winning *A Tribute To Danny Kaye*.

Fletcher has directed for the internationally renowned Arena Theatre Company, and has directed two Barry Award nominated shows for the Melbourne International Comedy Festival: *Scotty & Son* - starring Denise Scott & Jordy Lane, (M.I.C.F. 2004), and *Interrogation* written and performed by Alan Brough and Greg Fleet (M.I.C.F. 2000).

Fletcher's favourite role on TV was organising a Rock Mass as Father Ricky on *Lano & Woodley*. 2008 has been a busy year starting with the arrival of baby Alice in January; directing *Primrose Hill* by A.F.I. award winner Adam Zwar for the M.I.C.F.; and associate producer and performer for a new improvisation show for The Comedy Channel entitled *Comedy Slapdown*, hosted by H.G. Nelson.

For the Melbourne Fringe, Fletcher has previously won Best Original Work (*King Of Fools* 1996) and Best Comedy (*A Tribute To Danny Kaye* 2005).

Other theatre highlights: *Twelve Angry Men*, *Cyrano De Bergerac* (MTC 2005), *Noises Off*, *Certified Male*, *The Complete Works Of Shakespeare* and he's very chuffed to be in this great production.

## MARK PEGLER (RICHARD HANNAY)



Mark began his acting career at high school in Adelaide, taught by his then drama teacher, now internationally acclaimed theatre director, Gale Edwards. He was a founding member of Gale's company Energy Connection. Mark then trained at NIDA, graduating 1984 and since then has worked extensively in theatre, film and television in both Sydney and Melbourne. Film credits include *One Such Night*, *Forty Five Dollars an Hour*, *Bullseye*, *Burke and Wills* and *Break and Enter*, which won the AFI in 1999 for Best Short Film.

Mark's television credits include *Blue Heelers*, *Stingers*, *Round the Twist IV*, *Dogwoman 2*, *The Last of the Ryans*, *State Coroner*, *Law of the Land*, *Phoenix II*, *A Country Practice*, *Flying Doctors*, *The Last Resort*, *Perhaps Love*, *Vietnam*, *Home and Away*, *Neighbours*, *MDA* and *All Saints*.

Theatre credits for Sydney Theatre Company include: *Embers*, *Festen*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Private Lives*, *All My Sons*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Dance of Death* and *The White Devil* which toured to New York. For Melbourne Theatre Company: *Blithe Spirit*, *The Duchess of Malfi*, *The Tempest*, *Private Lives*, *Julius Caesar* and *My Father's Father*.

Mark has also performed with many other companies including Playbox (touring Japan and Korea), Chambermade Opera, Hothouse, Castlemaine Festival, Hildegard, Chameleon Theatre Company, The State Theatre Company of South Australia, Company B, Bell Shakespeare Company, La Mama, Burning House, Melbourne Workers Theatre, O'Punksky's, Marian Street, Nimrod Theatre Company, at The Comedy Theatre in Melbourne (*Noises Off*) and danced with Meryl Tankard's Australian Dance Theatre (*Nuti and Kikimora*). Mark's most recent appearance on stage was in *The Kid* for Griffin Theatre Company.

## JO TURNER (MAN 1)



Jo is an actor, director and writer. A graduate of Melbourne University, Jo then trained at the Ecole Jacques Lecoq in Paris. Graduating from Lecoq, Jo performed in *Le Bus* (Le Théâtre des Deux Rives and National tour). He then created and performed in several new works including *Cabaret Monstre* (Théâtre de la Jacquerie, Paris); *Brainstorm* (InTransit Theater. Swiss national tour); *Dead on the Ground* (Hoipolloi Theatre, Edinburgh Festival, national and international tour). Jo also directed *Honestly* for Hoipolloi (Edinburgh Festival, national and international tour).

In Australia Jo has performed with The Sydney Theatre Company: *Thyestes*, *Fears and Miseries of the Third Reich* (staged reading), *New Russian Plays* (staged reading), *Howard Katz*, Belvoir Street: *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, The Ensemble Theatre: *The Imaginary Invalid*, The Australian Theatre of the Deaf: *The Language of One*, B Sharp: *Faustus*, The Q Theatre: *The Investigation* (staged reading), *Weather*, *Somewhere*, Black Swan Theatre Company (WA): *Plainsong*, La Boite Theatre (Qld): *Emma's Nose* and The Street Theatre (ACT): *Closer*. He was in the feature film *You Can't Stop the Murders* (Miramax) and short films *Fear* (AFTRS) and *The Making of the Darlings...* (Best Short - Aus. Cinematographers Guild). For television Jo has appeared in *Backburner*, *All Saints*, *White Collar Blue* and numerous commercials. Jo recently co-wrote and performed in the new multi-media/theatre show *The Window* which has toured to Brisbane, Japan and Adelaide.

Jo's directing credits include *Puntilla and His Man Matti* (ATYP), *Don't Stare too Much!* (Darlinghurst Theatre), *The No Chance in Hell Hotel* (IPAC, Seymour Centre), *Mademoiselle Fifi* (Darlinghurst Theatre), *Bookends Project* (ATYP and Sydney Writers Festival), Nepean Graduates showcase day, *Vanity Fair* by Declan Donellan (ACTT), *Death of a Stallion* (Short and Sweet 08) and *Crossfire* by Michel Azama (Ashfield Youth Theatre).

Jo recently directed his first short film *Eating Cake*.