

CONVICT 002

“A society should be judged not by how it treats its outstanding citizens,
but by how it treats its **CRIMINALS**”

Dates:

September 26-30th 9pm
October 2-7th 9pm.

Saturday Matinee Performances:
September 29th and October 6th

Venue: Northcote Town Hall, Northcote

Running Time: 90 mins

PRESS RELEASE

Adapted from Marcus Clarke's classic Australian novel *For the Term of His Natural Life* by Melbourne playwright David Mence, **Convict 002** focuses on incarceration, justice and the fraught relationship between the insecurities of threatened societies and the rights of the detained felon.

Having long outgrown its convict beginnings, Australia has recently seen the issue of incarceration return to the forefront of public debate. From the detention of asylum seekers and illegal fishermen in remote centres to the political internment of Dr Haneef to the controversial imprisonment of David Hicks at Guantanamo Bay – the ethics of incarceration, discipline and punishment continue to challenge the nation.

Convict 002 traces the tragic narrative of Rufus Dawes, a man of ambiguous culpability who finds himself ensnared in the ruinous wheel of the colonial penal system. Mence's dark rewriting of the convict narrative is historically and politically resonant, and like Clarke's 1870s novel, reminds us of the challenges that societies face in times of crisis.

White Whale Theatre is an exciting new presence in the Melbourne theatre scene, having returned from an acclaimed international début at the 2006 Edinburgh Fringe Festival with David Mence's schlock-horror sequel, *Macbeth Re-Arisen*. Garnering 4 &



5 Star reviews in the UK press, an industry award, capacity audiences and a cult following, White Whale is a company to watch (see www.whitewhaletheatre.com).

BIOGRAPHIES

David Mence - Director

David Mence is a playwright/director and is Artistic Director of Melbourne company **White Whale Theatre**. In 2007 he spent six weeks in Sydney working as Assistant Director to Marion Potts on Bell Shakespeare's *Othello* and was a participant in the *24-Hour Play Generator* in the Emerging Writers' Festival. David has also been awarded a Creative Fellowship at the State Library of Victoria where he is currently writing a new play about whalers and early settlements in colonial Victoria. In 2006, David edited and re-directed his play *Macbeth Re-Arised* for the Edinburgh Fringe where it received 4 & 5 star reviews and became one of the cult-hits of the festival. David has also worked with Fancy Fish Theatre, Platform Youth Theatre and Union House Theatre.

Brett Adam – Dramaturg

Brett Adam is a freelance theatre director, dramaturg and acting teacher. He graduated from the VCA Directors' Course in 1992 and worked in a variety of capacities for such companies and organisations as the Melbourne International Arts Festival, ACMI, La Mama, the Bell Shakespeare Company, Chamber Made Opera, Melbourne Theatre Company, Playbox, the Midsumma Festival, the Victorian College of the Arts (Drama School and Opera Studio), VUT, Interplay, Melbourne Fringe Festival, the National Theatre Drama School. He has a deep passion for new writing, especially when it investigates the boundaries of theatre and has ongoing relationships with a number of Australian writers, the foremost being Ross Muller with whom he has worked for over ten years. His 2005 production of Muller's play *Construction of the Human Heart* garnered four Greenroom Award nominations. The play is also about to start a national tour which includes two weeks at Belvoir Street in Sydney as part of their B# season.

FURTHER INFORMATION

www.whitewhaletheatre.com
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