



Synopsis

Adapted by David Mence from Marcus Clarke's classic Australian novel *For the Term of His Natural Life* this new work focuses on themes of incarceration, justice and the fraught relationship between the insecurities of societies in turmoil and the rights of the detained felon. *Convict 002* traces the tragic narrative of Rufus Dawes (or 'Convict 002'), a man of ambiguous culpability, who finds himself ensnared in the ruinous wheel of the penal system. This dark rewriting of Dawes' tale contains both historical and current political references, reminding the audience of the challenges that continue to face liberal societies in times of crisis, discrimination and political tension. It is also a story of compassion - the element which ultimately provides support and resolution in times of strife and despair.

Convict 002 is influenced by: Marcus Clarke's *For the Term of His Natural Life*; Robert Hughes' *The Fatal Shore*; Kafka's *The Trial* and *In the Penal Colony*; Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*.

White Whale Theatre Background

White Whale Theatre was formed in 2004 at the University of Melbourne and became a professional company in 2006 when it boldly took a major new Australian production - *Macbeth Re-Arised* - to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2006. Written by emerging playwright David Mence, this sequel to Shakespeare's Scottish Play had a fabulous premiere Edinburgh Fringe season with 4 and 5 Star reviews in major British press outlets, an industry award, rapt audiences and a cult following. Armed with experience, exuberance and ideas, White Whale incorporated as a not-for-profit association in 2007 and is soon to launch an exciting Spring Season of Theatre. White Whale will make its Melbourne Fringe debut with *Convict 002* at the Northcote Town Hall in September before opening with its star-studded new work

Melburnalia at fortyfivedownstairs in November. In the coming years White Whale will seek to enrich and challenge Melbourne's theatrical scene by producing intelligent, enthralling and subversive works while it continues to build its international standing with a return to the Edinburgh Fringe planned for 2008 or 2009.