

Galleon Theatre Group presents

ESCHER'S HANDS

Written by Dawson Nichols

Directed by Kym Clayton



presents

ESCHER'S HANDS

By

DAWSON NICHOLS

The title Escher's Hands refers to artist M. C. ESCHER's famous sketch "Drawing Hands" in which two hands, each holding a pencil, draw the other. Which hand is drawing and which is being drawn? Where is the beginning and where is the end? Where are the connections? Who is in control? Who's making the rules? Playwright DAWSON NICHOLS takes an unforgiving look at the writing process and how the writer and the writing fit together. It is about the dilemma of control and free will.

Galleon Theatre Group Inc. Committee of Management

Kym Clayton (President), Brittany Daw (Vice-President)
Andrew Clark (Treasurer), Ken Calliss (Secretary)
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Stan Fairfield, John Fitzpatrick*, Kevin Hodgson* OAM
Gene Prigent*, Sean Smith, Joy Whellum

*deceased

Please turn off all mobile phones for the duration of the performance. The use of cameras or other recording devices is strictly prohibited.



CAST

GARY	<i>Andrew Clark</i>
SANDY	<i>Brittany Daw</i>
GABRIELLA	<i>Rose Harvey</i>
STEVE	<i>Thomas Filsell</i>

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



WELCOME TO THE DOMAIN THEATRE! It seems such a long time since we have been able to say that, and we are elated to be performing for you once again in this intimate space.

It goes without saying that the pandemic has put many plans to the sword—we have all experienced unwanted change and disruption. Live theatre, like many other pursuits, is feverishly seeking out ‘the new normal’ as we make numerous adjustments to the way we need to stage productions. Galleon Theatre Group is well known for its cabaret-style presentations, but we need to temporarily suspend this until the pandemic subsides.

Galleon is delighted to present *Escher's Hands* written by Dawson Nichols. In bringing this ingenious play to the stage it has been our pleasure to have been able to directly correspond with Dawson during the rehearsal process, and we have enjoyed taking on his invaluable insights.

When we asked him to speak to you, the audience, he wisely said: “Enjoy the play. I wish I had something more profound to say, but I’m not sure I do. Programme notes that give people instructions about how they should do their watching seem silly to me. People know how to watch a play. Notes that try to identify themes or deeper meanings seem redundant. Shouldn’t the play itself call those things to mind?”

“So I’ll just take this moment to say thanks. Thanks for supporting live theatre, and thanks for coming to this play in particular. I really do hope you’ll enjoy it. And if you do, tell a friend or two.”

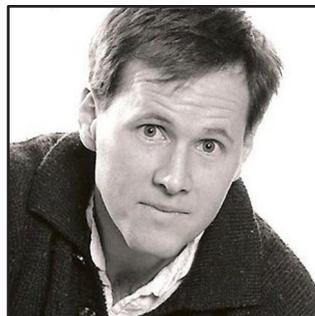
Kym Clayton

KYM CLAYTON—DIRECTOR

KYM has been involved in theatre for many years. He has directed for the Whyalla Players, Blackwood Players, Noarlunga Theatre Company, Burnside Players, Axis Theatre Group, St Jude's Players and Galleon Theatre Group. He played lead roles in musicals, including "Higgins" in *My Fair Lady*; the "King" in *The King and I*; and "Jesus" in *Godspell*. He appeared in *Table Manners*, *Haywire*, *Night on the Tiles*, and *Let the Sunshine* for Galleon; *The Public Eye* for Blackwood; and *Charley's Aunt* for the Adelaide Rep. For Galleon he directed *Run for Your Wife*, *Biting the Bullet*, *Daylight Saving*, *Natural Causes*, *Party Piece*, *Perfect Wedding*, *Time of My Life*, *Up and Coming*, *Love Forty*, *Bedroom Farce*, *Chapter Two*, *The Weekend*, *One Slight Hitch*, *Rumours*, *Season's Greetings*, and *The Prisoner of Second Avenue*. His production of *Rumours* won Best Comedy in the Adelaide Theatre Guide's Curtain Call Awards, and both *Bedroom Farce* and *Chapter Two* were nominated. Kym is President of Galleon; a Life Member of Galleon, the Whyalla Players and the Theatre Association of SA; a regular reviewer for *The Barefoot Review*; a member of the prestigious Adelaide Critics Circle; and is Vice-President of Recitals Australia.

DAWSON NICHOLS—PLAYWRIGHT

As a playwright, Dawson's plays have been published and widely performed internationally. The American Theatre Critics Association nominated him for their Emerging Playwright Award and their Best New Play Award for *Escher's Hands*. Some of his other plays include *Virtual Solitaire*, *I Might Be Edgar Allan Poe*, *Stop Start*, and *The Fetch*. As an actor he has performed at dozens of international venues and won Best Actor awards at the largest theatre festivals in the world, including those at Edmonton, Vancouver, and in Adelaide where he won the first Fringe Award in 1998. Several of his original audio dramas, including *The Fourth Ambit*, can be found online. As a tenured professor with a PhD qualification, he taught at colleges and universities around the United States for more than 10 years. In 2008 he received the Governor Dan Evans Award for Outstanding Teaching. Dawson is now a science communication specialist at the University of Washington where he works at the Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences, explaining the science behind human learning. His novel *Terminal Dispatch* will be published later this year.



PRODUCTION CREDITS

Director & Producer	KYM CLAYTON
Stage Management	JOY WHELLUM
Backstage	MARY CUMMINGS, ELAINE LATCHAM
Business Management	ANDREW CLARK
Costume Coordination	SUE MCKENZIE
Drama Coaching	SALLY PUTNAM
Front of House Management	ALLAN WHELLUM
Hairdressing	KATHRYN STEVENS
Lighting Operation	JAMES ALLENBY
Master of Ceremonies	KEN CALLISS
Photography	NATHANIEL SCHILLING
Poster Design	BRITTANY DAW
Programme	JACQUELINE JEREMY
Properties	MARY CUMMINS, ELAINE LATCHAM
Publicity	ANDREW CLARK, BRITTANY DAW, LEANNE ROBINSON
Set Construction	JAMES ALLENBY, MAX BOWDEN, KEN CALLISS KYM CLAYTON, DAVID CUPPLEDITCH
Set Design	BRITTANY DAW
Sound Design	WARREN MCKENZIE
Sound Operation	NICK ENDENBERG
Stage Management Assistance	ELAINE LATCHAM
Technical Management	WARREN MCKENZIE
Ticketing Coordinator	JOY WHELLUM
Video Animations	BRITTANY DAW, MADELEINE DEANE, WARREN MCKENZIE
Front of House	MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF GALLEON THEATRE GROUP

ANDREW CLARK—“GARY”



ANDREW has appeared on stage over many years for St. Jude’s, Stirling Players, Mixed Salad Productions, Daw Park Players, Independent Theatre, Therry, the Rep, Axis and Halifax Theatre company. He has also been heavily involved with Galleon Theatre Group, appearing in around half of their productions in the Domain Theatre since they started producing there in 2002. Andrew was in two of the ATG Best Comedy Award winners for Galleon—*Rumours* in 2016 and *Incorruptible* in 2018. He also appeared in three Galleon productions which were nominated for the ATG Best Comedy Award—*Chapter Two*, *Jake’s Women* and *Don’t Dress for Dinner*. Andrew was awarded the Best Male Performance Award in 2017 from TASA for his portrayal of “Lady Bracknell” in St Jude’s production of *The Importance of being Earnest*. Andrew first saw *Escher’s Hands* at the 1998 Adelaide Fringe, loved the show and has held a strong desire to see it performed again—2021 presented such an opportunity! Andrew says that the show is complex, clever and a delight to perform in—“Gary is a delightful ‘bastard’ to play!”

BRITTANY DAW—“SANDY”

BRITTANY first found a passion for theatre and design at a young age. She has worked in the theatre, film and graphic design industries undertaking roles such as set designer, actor, stage manager, producer and production coordinator. Brittany relishes every opportunity to combine her passion for both acting and creating. Her theatre credits include “Hannah” in *If You Really Knew Me* (Adelaide Fringe); “Michelle” in *Cheaters* (Galleon); “Painter” in *Timon of Athens* (Symposium Productions); “Cecily” in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (St Jude’s Players); and “Mary” in *How the Other Half Loves* (Galleon). Her set design credits include *Incorruptible* (Galleon); *Myth, Propaganda and Disaster* (Adelaide University Theatre Guild); *Look Back in Anger* (Adelaide Rep); *How the Other Half Loves* (Galleon); and *Moving Mountains* (Galleon), for which she received an ATG award nomination. Brittany is delighted to be working with Galleon to bring *Escher’s Hands*, a unique theatrical experience, to life.



ROSE HARVEY — “GABRIELLA”

THIS is Rose’s first play with Galleon and she is very excited to be a part of the *Escher’s Hands* cast. Previously she has worked with Stirling Players, the Adelaide University Theatre Guild, international amateur companies while on exchange in France, and most recently, Therry Dramatic Society. Some of her favourite roles have included the French mistress “Louise” in *Nell Gwynn*, “Christine” in *Celebration* in 2019 with Stirling Players, and “Anita” in Therry’s production of *20th Century* earlier this year. Rose says that “Gabriella” is a fascinating character to play, as she is a spunky force of nature, who raises a lot of points about gender roles, consent and power in modern times. Her next theatrical venture will be with St Jude’s in Brighton, where she will be playing “Elsie” in *The Ghost Train* in July.



THOMAS FILSELL — “STEVE”

TOM is a Kickboxer and Filmmaker who completed his Master’s degree in Screen and Media at Flinders University in 2020. When he is not getting beaten up at training or in competition, he loves to work his creativity as an actor and writer. Recently, He has worked with The Adelaide Repertory Theatre, Red Phoenix Theatre Company, The Stirling Players, and Therry Theatre. He was lucky enough to put his filmmaking degree to good use in 2020 and play a part in filming The Adelaide Rep’s season of *Virtual Plays*, despite the dreaded COVID. Most recently, Tom was honoured to work with Red Phoenix in their return to live performance with *Loyalties*, as part of a Promenade of Shorts. He is working on film projects at the moment, and is excited to be working with Galleon for the first time in 2021!



DRAWING HANDS

THE title of Dawson Nichols's play *Escher's Hands*, and the inspiration for Galleon Theatre Group's production poster, derive from the iconic 20th century artwork "Drawing Hands" by the Dutch artist M. C. Escher (1898-1972). Escher's work features mathematical objects and operations including impossible objects, explorations of infinity, symmetry, and tessellations. "Drawing Hands" shows a sheet of paper out of which two hands rise in the paradoxical act of drawing each other into existence. Despite having created some of the most memorable images of the 20th century, and



which have wide popular interest, Escher was neglected in the art world for a long time. He was 70 years old before a retrospective exhibition of his work was first held. He has since been celebrated in exhibitions across the world, including in Melbourne at the National Gallery of Victoria in 2018–2019.

Stephen Poole wrote in *The Guardian* newspaper that "Drawing Hands" is "a neat depiction of one of Escher's enduring fascinations: the contrast between the two-dimensional flatness of a sheet of paper and the illusion of three-dimensional volume that can be created with certain marks. In "Drawing Hands", space and the flat plane coexist, each born from and returning to the other, the black magic of the artistic illusion made creepily manifest. The following, from a later Escher essay, could easily serve as a gloss on this image: "The artist still has the feeling that moving his pencil over the paper is a kind of magic art. It is not he who determines his shapes; it seems rather that the stupid flat shape at which he painstakingly toils has its own will (or lack of will), that it is this shape which decides or hinders the movement of the drawing hand, as though the artist were a spiritualist medium."

This would also seem to be an apt description of the relationship between the characters in Dawson Nichols's play. Writers "Gary" and "Sandy" toil away creating a story, but as they write and flesh out the personalities of "Gab" and "Steve", the two central characters of their story, they gradually lose control as "Steve" and "Gab" develop a life of their own and paradoxically influence the writers themselves. "Steve" and "Gab" eventually talk back to their creators and take control of them. As Sandy remarks: "Author voice and character voice merge all the time."

In Escher's image, which hand is drawing and which is being drawn? Where is the beginning and where is the end? Where are the connections? In Dawson Nichol's play, who is real? Who is really in control? How do the writing and the writer fit together? Who is making the rules?

Kym Clayton

Sources:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M._C._Escher. Accessed 20/4/2021.
- <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/jun/20/the-impossible-world-of-mc-escher>. Accessed 20/4/2021.

GALLEON'S AWARDS AND NOMINATIONS

► Theatre Association of South Australia “Cal” Awards

- 2011 **DRAMATI** *Cal* Award nomination for *Chapter Two*
- 2017 **COMI** *Cal* Award nomination for *Season's Greetings*
- 2018 **COMI** *Cal* Award nomination for *Incorruptible*

► Adelaide Theatre Guide “Curtain Call” Awards

- 2007–08 *Time of My Life* Best Female Performance
Nomination, Jo St Clair
- 2008–09 *Roots and Wings* Best Comedy Nomination
- 2009–10 *Bedroom Farce* Best Comedy Nomination
- 2010–11 *Chapter Two* Best Comedy Nomination
- 2012–13 *Don't Dress for Dinner* Best Comedy Nomination
- 2013–14 *Loves and Hours* Best Comedy Nomination
- 2014–15 *Jake's Women* Best Comedy Nomination
- 2015–16 *Sex Cells* Best Ensemble Nomination
- 2015–16 *Rumours* Best Comedy Winner
Best Female Performance
Nomination, Anita Canala
- 2016–17 *Cheaters* Best Comedy Nomination
- 2017–18 *Incorruptible* Best Comedy Winner

Acknowledgement of Country

Galleon Theatre Group acknowledges that we perform on the traditional land of the Kurna people and that we respect their spiritual relationship with their country. We acknowledge the Kurna people as the custodians of the Adelaide region and that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still as important to the living Kurna people today. We pay our respects to their elders, past and present and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are present today.

PREVIOUS GALLEON PRODUCTIONS—A SNAPSHOT

2019

- *Moving Mountains*
- *The Prisoner of Second Avenue*

2018

- *Incorruptible*
- *How the Other Half Loves*

2016

- *Sex Cells*
- *Cheaters*

2015

- *Rumours*
- *Jake's Women*

2014

- *Loves & Hours*
- *One Slight Hitch*

2013

- *Accommodations*
- *The Club*

2012

- *The Gingerbread Lady*
- *Don't Dress for Dinner*

2011

- *Chapter Two*
- *The Weekend*

2010

- *Bedroom Farce*
- *Shady Business*

2009

- *Roots & Wings*
- *Cactus Flower*

2008

- *Up and Coming*
- *Love Forty*

2007

- *Perfect Wedding*
- *Time of My Life*

2006

- *A Night on the Tiles*
- *Play it Again, Sam*

2005

- *Party Piece*
- *Absurd Person Singular*

2004

- *Haywire*
- *Natural Causes*

2003

- *Fool's Paradise*
- *Daylight Saving*

2002

- *Bums on Seats*
- *Cody versus Cody*
- *Biting the Bullet*

2001

- *Wild Goose Chase*
- *We Found Love and an Exquisite Set of Porcelain Figurines Aboard the SS Farndale Avenue*

2000

- *Table Manners*
- *My Fat Friend*
- *Run for Your Wife*

Galleon Theatre Group proudly announces our next production—a South Australian premiere!



EMILY

BY
STEPHEN METCALFE

- ▶ Preview, Wednesday 20 October 8pm
- ▶ Thursday 28 to Saturday 30 October 8pm
- ▶ Thursday 29 to Friday 30 October 8pm
- ▶ Saturday 30 October 2pm and 8pm

DIRECTOR: WARREN MCKENZIE

Emily is a stockbroker who mixes it up with the boys and always comes out on top. She is as cynical and ruthless as any man in her position until she meets a caring, sensitive actor who doesn't fall for her manipulative ruses. A glorious and sparkling comedy with bite!

Contact us to discuss special deals for fundraising groups.

Community theatre needs you!

Galleon Theatre Group Inc is a welcoming and inclusive not-for-profit organisation which is always looking for volunteers who want to be involved in the wonderful business of bringing a play to the stage.

You don't need to be experienced, just enthusiastic!

For further information please contact us:

GTG, PO Box 198, PARK HOLME SA 5043

info@galleon.org.au

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