

MEDIA RELEASE

THE
COURT
THEATRE

11th July 2019

For immediate release

[The Father](#)

Written by Florian Zeller

Translated by Christopher Hampton

Directed by Simon Bennett

Dates: 3 – 24 August

Location: The Court Theatre's mainstage

Short show description:

There is a woman in Andre's flat claiming to be his daughter. But Anne lives in London now... Doesn't she?

An international sensation, *The Father* is the most acclaimed new play of the decade, challenging our misconceptions of time, memory and dementia in this profoundly moving and darkly comic masterpiece.

STAGING THE REALITIES OF DEMENTIA

IN-BRIEF:

After wowing audiences around the world, award-winning drama *The Father* is opening at The Court Theatre, giving Cantabrians a powerful insight into the reality of dementia.

Directed by Simon Bennett, whose career spans over 30 years across both stage and screen, *The Father* is a profoundly moving and darkly comic masterpiece starring Mark Hadlow (*The Hobbit*); Luanne Gordon (*Elling*); Tom Trevella; Ailis Oliver-Kerby; Owen Black and Kim Garrett.

Written by 'the most exciting playwright of our time', Florian Zeller, *The Father* has won numerous awards, including France's most prestigious theatrical honour, the 2014 Molière Award for Best Play.

With a ground-breaking script full of twists and turns, this riveting drama combines a hot-button topic with top-shelf theatricality. The story unfolds from the point of view of our protagonist, Andre, as he struggles to piece together his reality in this dark drama that, at times, plays like a thrilling mystery.

"The writing is extraordinary. The cast are superb. The content is topical. It's impossible to experience this play and not be moved," says Bennett.

The Father provides not only a story that resonates with our community, but also offers up an extraordinary experience at the theatre.

"Audiences can expect a play rich with ideas and theatrical surprises. The story combines black comedy, farce and tragedy to conjure an experience that is surprising, funny and moving."

***The Father* runs at The Court Theatre from 3 – 24 August.**

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The Court Theatre

PO Box 268

Christchurch 8140

New Zealand

Email: admin@courtheatre.org.nz

www.courtheatre.org.nz

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"The writing is extraordinary. The cast are superb. The content is topical. It's impossible to experience this play and not be moved," says Bennett.

The director has an intimate connection to the script as his own father died from dementia two years ago.

"When I first read the script, I recognised its truth and wanted to work on it. I have first-hand experience of the indignity the disease brings, and the challenges faced by the family of the sufferer."

Those challenges are a central focus of the play as Luanne Gordon's character, Anne, struggles to cope with her father's care when it begins to impact more and more heavily on her own life.

"It's about loss," she says. "Both sides are losing in this instance. One side is losing their loved one while the other side is losing themselves - and is aware of it. It's very sad. And very hard. That being said, there are some very touching and funny moments within this play, as in life. It's incredible the human ability to laugh and find joy in the bleakest of times."

Almost 70,000 Kiwis are living with dementia today, with Alzheimers New Zealand anticipating that the number will rise to over 170,000 by 2050.

"Dementia is touching more and more families," says Bennett. "The challenges faced by Anne as she tries to do the right thing for her father, and by Andre, who fiercely fights to keep his independence, will be recognised by many people."

Hadlow has been preparing for several months so that he can accurately portray his character struggling with the debilitating symptoms of dementia. "What appealed to me about *The Father* is, here is a man who has been very successful at who he was, suddenly cast into the world of not knowing what is going on, who he is or who other people are - and that's very scary. The play envelops a question and a subject matter that is a very hot topic at the moment: dementia."

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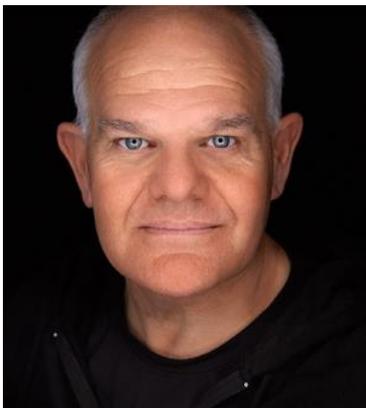
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Cast



André
[Mark Hadlow](#)



Anne
[Luanne Gordon](#)



Pierre
[Tom Trevella](#)



Laura
[Ailis Oliver-Kerby](#)



Man
[Owen Black](#)



Woman
[Kim Garrett](#)

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Creatives

Director	Simon Bennett
Set Designer	Nigel Kerr
Costume Designer	Deborah Moor
Lighting Designer	Giles Tanner
Sound Designer & Composer	Hamish Oliver
Stage Manager	Ben Freeth

Ticket Prices

Adult	\$56 - \$64
Senior (65+)	\$49 - \$57
Child (under 18)	\$27 - \$30
Group (6+)	\$49 - \$57
Supporter	\$47 - \$54
30 Below	\$30

Show Times

- Monday & Thursday 6:30pm
- Tue/Wed/Fri/Sat 7:30pm
- Forum 6:30pm Monday 5 August
- Matinee 2:00pm Saturday 17 August

Bookings: phone 03 963 0870 or visit www.courttheatre.org.nz

Images can be found at The Court Theatre's [Media Centre](#)

For more information or to arrange an interview please contact:

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