

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 1st July 2008

THE RIVERINA THEATRE COMPANY presents

David Williamson's "THE REMOVALISTS"

"Unquestionably the most popular dramatist in Australia".

Directed by John B Saunders

It's Constables Ross's first day in the police force and from the beginning he's under pressure from his new boss, the dominating sergeant Dan Simmonds. Two women arrive at the station to make a complaint and immediately provoke a chain of events that lead to a startling and surprising conclusion. All this in one day !

A little about the play:

The Removalists is a play written by Australian playwright David Williamson and was Williamson's first commercial success as a playwright which in 1972 won him an Australian Awgie Award and co-won the British theatres George Devine Award. The main issues the play addresses are violence, specifically domestic violence, and the abuse of power and authority. The story is supposed to be a microcosm of 1970's Australian society, capturing audiences first in 1971 with its passionate recognition of bottled up aggression inside Australian society. The basic authoritarianism, the confrontation between the sexes which so often passes for human relationships, these were the discoveries that audiences applauded in the young playwright when the play was first performed.

Williamson has gone on to write major plays and films " The Club", "Don's Party", "The Department" and "Travelling North" which have since established David Williamson as one of Australia's most important writers. *"Unquestionably the most popular dramatist in Australia".*

There will be 7 performances:

WEEK ONE

Friday 4th July 8pm Opening Night

Saturday 5th July 8pm

Sun 6th July 3pm Matinee

WEEK TWO

Thursday 10th 8pm

Friday 11th 8pm

Saturday 12th 3pm Matinee

Saturday 8pm Final Performance

Prices are \$25.00 concession \$20.00 Group Booking are available for \$20.00 for 10 people or more. Student Rush \$10.00 is available every performance 15 minutes prior to the doors opening.

Tickets on sale at the Riverina Playhouse before each performance or by booking at Civic Theatre Booking Office by calling 69 26 9688.

Biography - JOHN SAUNDERS

John is a theatre director, actor and writer and has worked in professional stage, film and television industries for over twenty years. He began his career as a Company Actor with the **State Theatre Company of South Australia** and then later the **Q Theatre** in Sydney and has acted in numerous classical and contemporary plays. He performed in the musicals **Barnum** (National Tour) and the **Little Shop of Horrors**.

While Artistic Director of the RTC John acted in productions of **Diving For Pearls**, **Hamlet**, **Wallflowering** and **Not So DOA**. He also performed two one-man shows: **The Christian Brothers** and **Such Is Life**. Since January 2008 John has based himself in Wagga and has directed **The Role Model** for the **Riverina Theatre Company** which was a debut play and a success for the RTC. He is currently fulfilling a desire by taking on the dual role of acting as well as directing the upcoming play of David Williamson's **The Removalists** for the RTC. Audiences in Wagga can experience what is now a rare occurrence, John strutting the boards after 10 years of absence from the stage and in the directors chair.

John Saunders has been the **Artistic Director** of three theatre companies **Acting Out** (now **Barking Gecko W.A.**), the **Western Australian Theatre Company** and the **Riverina Theatre Company**. John Saunders is director of **The Complete Works of William Shakespeare Abridged**, which tours frequently throughout Australia and Asia (Most recently, in 2007 for a Brisbane season starring Frank Woodley and is currently in preparation for Korea). He directed **Jive Junkys** (Civic Theatre 2001), which toured Australia and featured at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and **The Complete Millennium Musical Abridged** (Civic Theatre 2000). An experienced director for young peoples' theatre and families John has directed for Monkey Baa: **The Fairy's Wings** (Gillian Rubenstein), **The Bugalugs Bum Thief** (Tim Winton) and **Pearlie in the Park** (Wendy Harmer). All these shows toured nationally and were featured at the Civic Theatre in Wagga Wagga. He will be directing **Milli, Jack and**

the Dancing Cat in May 2008 for Monkey Baa, which will then tour to over 50 venues across Australia including Wagga Wagga (July).

In 2001 John was briefly the Director of the **Riverina Conservatorium of Music**, before being appointed **Senior Lecturer and Course Coordinator** (BA Acting for Screen and Stage) at **Charles Sturt University**, and the **Artistic Director** of **UTE** (the University Theatre Ensemble).

Until recently John Saunders was the inaugural **Head of Performance Studies** at **N.I.C.A.** (the National Institute of Circus Arts) where he directed **My Secret Circus**, **Inferno**, and the graduating students' **2006** and **2007 Showcases**.

From 1991 to 1996 while John was the Artistic Director of the Riverina Theatre Company he directed the following productions for the RTC: **Cabaret**, **Boss Of The Pool**, **Teechers**, **Summer of the Seventeenth Doll**, **Twelfth Night**, **The Headbutt**, **The One Day of the Year**, **Goodbye Sunshine**, **Moorli and the Leprechaun**, **Hamlet**, **Cargo**, **Happy Families**, **Lights Out Nellie Martin**, **Macbeth**, **Ned** and **A Midsummer Nights Dream**.

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