

Personal Details

Michael Griffin
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Michael has a B.A. from the University of Adelaide where he has a double major in Drama and Performance from Flinders University Drama Centre and Anthropology (Social Science) from the University of Adelaide. He has a First Class Honours degree in critical theory and cultural studies from the University of Adelaide.

Michael also has a Bachelor of Law with Honours from the University of Adelaide and a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice from the College of Law in NSW.

As an actor Michael has worked with many theatre companies throughout Australia and has made numerous appearances in Film and Television. Before acting, he worked as a musician/singer and more recently he has worked as an Academic - lecturing and tutoring Corporations and Partnership Law - as a research officer in Universities and as a lawyer. He has also enjoyed success as a writer, composer, event co-ordinator, and record producer.

NAME: Michael Griffin

NATIONALITY: Australian

Descendant of First Fleeter James Bryan Cullen arr 1788.

Descendant of Daniel James Griffin AIF mortally wounded Gallipoli. Panel 72 Roll of Honor. Australian National War Memorial.

EDUCATION:

Matriculation: 1976 (South Australia)

Tertiary : **B.A. (Honours - First Class)** University of Adelaide.

Anthropology, English, Media.

Drama and Performance Cognates at

Flinders University Drama Centre (trained actor).

Honours by Research Thesis & Coursework in Critical Theory & Cultural Studies at Adelaide University.

Bachelor of Law (with Honours). University of Adelaide 2005.

Curriculum: Torts, Crime, Contract, Property,

Criminology, Legal Skills 1, Equity, Constitutional,

Legal Research & Writing, Administrative, Family;

Intellectual Property, Environmental, Advocacy,

Litigation Practice, Civil & Criminal Procedure,

OC Health & Safety, Industrial Law, Medical Law,

Jurisprudence, Corporate, Evidence, Ethics, Honours by research essay.

Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice College of Law NSW 2006.

Grants, Awards, Scholarships, Achievements, Memberships.

Acting work shown in lead role at Adelaide Festival of the Arts 1984 *Tibetan Inroads*

Scriptwriting Development Grant received from ARTS SA for *Olympians* 1995.

A.R. Riddle Honours Scholarship Uni of Adelaide 2001.

Acting work shown at Canne Film Festival 2005.

Conferred title of Associate Professor at UniSA 2007

Research Paper presented at Oxford University UK 2008.

Assistant to Hon Jeff Shaw QC NSW Attorney General & Industrial Relations Minister NSW 2008

Admitted to legal practice NSW & Cth 2011.

Acting work shown in lead male role at Chicago Comedy Film Festival 2012.

APRA (Australian Performing Rights Association) Song Writer/Composer.

Proprietor & Principle Half Breed Records & Publishing Pty Ltd.

Composer/audio producer: Ten Tribes of Texas, 4 track EP Released 2015.

APRA (Australian Performing Rights Association) Song Writer/Composer.

Writer short screenplay *The Veil*. 14 Wins, Official Selections, Nominations as Best Short Screenplay at international short film festival screenplay contests in 2016 & 2017 including: WINNER BRAZIL INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2017; Second Place Winner LA International Short Film Festival Short Screenplay Comp 2016; Semi- Finalist Southern California Short Film Short Screenplay Fest 2016; Finalist & Certificate of Merit Canne Short Screenplay Festival 2016; LACineFest LA,USA; NewLife Film & Script Festival LA USA; OutlantaCom Short Film Festival Atlanta USA; Melbourne Phoenix Film Fest Aust; Austin Revolution Film Festival Tx USA;

ACTING. (Film & Television)

2011	<i>A Cinderella Boy</i>	Short Drama Independent Dir Markus Wills Role of Ray the father
2011	<i>Better Luck Next Time</i>	Short Comedy MetroScreen Dir Ash King. Role of Neil the husband
2010	<i>The Straylight Run</i>	Feature (<i>Sci-Fi Horror: in pre-production</i>). Role of Dr Barker. Sydney
2010	<i>Entwined.</i>	Short. AFTRS Sydney. Role of Immigration Officer
2010	<i>Black Valentine.</i>	Short. Role of Sam the Radio Announcer. Sydney
2010	<i>Lovebirds.</i>	Short. Metro Screen Sydney. Role of Andrew.
2004	2.37	Feature. Arclight. Role of Mike the Janitor. Official entry at Canne, Toronto, Tokyo & Melbourne Film Festivals.
1993	<i>Black Beauty</i>	Mini Series. Beyond Productions. Role of Marshal 2 Episodes

1991	<i>Chances</i>	Serial. Ep.57. Beyond Productions. & Channel Nine. Role of Rick
1990	<i>The Body of Frankenstein</i>	Art House. Deakin Uni Vic Split roles of Victor Frankenstein and the creature.
1990	<i>The Flying Doctors</i>	Serial. Crawford Prod. Role of Aircraft Mechanic
1990	<i>Lotteries Commission</i>	Training Film Video Communicators of SA.
1988	<i>Evil Angels</i>	Feature. Dir Fred Schwepsi. Role of Reporter (Uncredited)
1988	<i>Darwin 1942</i>	Docu/drama Role of the Ships Doctor. Beyond Productions
1988	<i>Darlings of the Gods</i>	Serial. A.B.C.TV. Featured role of cameraman
1988	<i>Gerry Connelly Show</i>	Comedy Series Ep.5 ABC TV. Various Roles
1987	<i>Extra Lift</i>	Short. Swinburne Student Film
1986	<i>Technical Drawing</i>	Training film for S.A. Education Dept.
1985	<i>Call Me Mr. Brown</i>	Feature. Dir. Scott Hicks. Role of DC Venables.
1983	<i>A Judgement</i>	Short 16mm by Kafka. Role of the Son.
1983	<i>Depression in General Practice</i>	Training film for Steiner

ACTING. (Commercial).

<i>Steve Waugh Dropped</i>	Johnny Walker Whiskey National
<i>Laughing All The Way to the Bank.</i>	Mitsubishi sale. International. 100%
<i>Physical Milk.</i>	John Smallman Prod. Vic only. 100%
<i>Kentucky Fried Monks.</i>	George Patterson International.
<i>No Taste.</i>	S.A. Lotteries Comm. S.A. only 100%
<i>The Cell.</i>	Stratco Skylights. S.A only

ACTING. (Theatre).

2010.	Anvil Creek Theatre Co. <i>The Exchange</i> by Phillip Aughey. Dir Philip Aughey. NSW tour.
2002	State Theatre of S.A. <i>Dealers Choice</i> by Patrick Marber. Dir. David Fields.
1995	State Theatre of S.A. <i>Medea</i> by Euripides. Dir. Constantine Kokias. Adelaide
1993	Red Shed Company <i>Sweetown</i> by Melissa Reeves. Dir. Kath MacKinnon. Adelaide.
1991	Melb. Workers Theatre <i>Black Cargo</i> by John Romeril. Dir. D. Carlin. Melb. Lead role

- 1991 Performers Independent Theatre *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare. Dir. Greg Carol. Melbourne.
- 1990 Red Shed Company *Carthaginians* by Frank Mac Guinness .Dir. Kath MacKinnon. Adelaide.
- 1990 Park Entertainment *The Wind In The Willows*. Dir. Elena Eremin. Melb. **Toad/Lead.**
- 1989 Backpack Theatre *The Recycling Show - A Trip To The Tip*. Group devised T.I.E. piece. Vic. & S.A
- 1988 La Mama *Travelling* by Peter Mathers. Dir. Denis Moore. Melbourne
- 1988 La Mama *Guff* by Jill Buckler. Dir.the Author. Melbourne. **Lead role**
- 1988 La Mama *Leap Year* Dir. Wendy Joseph. Melbourne. **Lead role**
- 1986 Patch Theatre *Cinderella Says No* by Henry Salter Dir. the Author. Adelaide.
- 1985 Stage Company *Too Young For Ghosts* by Yanis Balodis Dir. Henry Salter. Adelaide
- 1985 Salamanca T.I.E. *The Scatterlings* by Richard Davies Dir. the Author. Tas.
- 1985 Salamanca T.I.E. *Kaspajack* by Richard Tulloch Dir. David Young. Tas. **Lead role**
- 1984 Troupe Theatre *Salonica* by Louise Page. Dir. Jules Holledge. Adelaide
- 1984 Troupe Theatre *Atomic Au Go Go* Romeril & Troupe. Dir. Jules Holledge. Adelaide
- 1984 Troupe Theatre *Tibetan Inroads* by Stephen Lowe. Dir. Jules Holledge. Adelaide Festival. **Lead**
- 1983 Troupe Theatre *Going Under* by Debra Oswald Dir. Kerry Dwyer. Adelaide.
- 1983 All Out Ensemble *Situation Normal* by A.O.E Dir. Nicolas Tsoutas. Adelaide & Sydney.
- 1981 Adelaide Theatre Company *Doctor Faustus* by Christopher Marlowe,
- 1979 *The Victims of Duty* by Ionesco, Adelaide Uni Drama Society (AUDS)
Deathwatch by Jean Genet AUDS.

DIRECTING & PRODUCING

2017. *The Veil* (Short) by Michael Griffin. Half Breed Pictures. Writer, Director & Producer.
- 1993 *The Recycling Show* by M Griffin, Backpack Theatre and Monster Conjurers Theatre.
- 1992 *The Image Undressed* by Meryl McDougal, SA Writers Theatre
- 1992 *And I'll Give You All the Diamonds in my Teeth* by Jean Mazure, SA Writers Theatre
- 1983 *The Merchant of Venice* by Shakespeare, Adelaide Theatre Company
- 1982 *East* by Steven Berkoff, Adelaide Theatre Company.

FICTION WRITING.

- *The Veil* (Award Winning Dramatic Short Screenplay). Production Completed. Half Breed Pictures.
- *The Future Is In Bugs* (Comic Short Screenplay) co-writer. Pre-production. Half Breed Films.
- *Olympians or This Place Is Condemned* (A Play). Produced La Mama Melb & Red Shed Adelaide.
- *The Kitemaker* (A T.I.E. Play). Unproduced (For Salamanca Theatre Hobart TAS).
- *Atomic Au Go Go* (Group Devised Cabaret/Review) Troupe Theatre (Skits, Segments & Music).
- *The Recycling Show: A Trip to the Tip* (A T.I.E Play) Produced by Backpack Theatre VIC & Monster Conjurers Theatre SA.
- *Situation Normal* (Avant Garde Group Devised performance piece) by All Out Ensemble. Sydney & Adelaide.

LYRICS & MUSIC COMPOSITIONS.

As Ten Tribes of Texas EP released on iTunes, Amazon, CD Baby and more for Half Breed Records.

Soundtrack *The Veil* (Short Film)

See Reviews Over.

Dominant star in an epic parable

Theatre

Tibetan Inroads.
At Troupe Theatre.
To March 17.

TIBETAN Inroads is a tale of renewal. It provides an experience of Tibet during upheaval, and we are allowed — indeed, left alone — to draw a conclusion for ourselves.

To put it crudely, as we leave the theatre we are to contemplate the world in all its vigor, and understand that we should work to be able to accept change.

The play is a complex epic parable that should lead its audience on by sheer force of plot and character, and make its effect in an almost subliminal way.

Troupe have succeeded in part, but it is almost as though the life they wish to show us is a giant green apple and they have it part-stuck in their gob.

Tibetan Inroads cuts a rough piece from the history of Tibet at the time of the establishment of Chinese hegemony there, and uses it to show the changes in a village, as the old ways stultify and the new come harshly in.

It centres on the fortunes of Dorje, played by Michael Griffin who, with Deborah Little as Genyen, makes up the major acting force in the play.

Dorje is castrated for adultery with the landowner's wife, Genyen, under the old feudal powers of the Buddhist sect dominated by the Dalai Lama. His quest for revenge takes him to the Chinese, to play a part in their move into Tibet.

But the Chinese, once they have established themselves, become a threat to his own plans for revenge and dominance, and Dorje is forced to choose between the "demons" of the past — the monks — or the "demons" of the future — the Communist cadres.

Sterile but passionate, Dorje becomes an interface between China and Tibet, and undergoes remarkable and contradictory changes in his own plans and beliefs, and it is a great credit to Michael Griffin that he can handle the role so completely. He truly dominates the play, as writer Stephen Lowe has no doubt intended.

But overall, actors and writing have not come together properly.

With the exception of Griffin and Little, the cast is still weak. There are no slouches as actors, but plays of this nature require a deep and even measure of talent if the audience is to be absorbed into the action.

They are going to get a lot better; the direction of Jules Holledge has clearly laid down the ground work for that.

Stephen Lowe's script is a hard-working sophisticated affair, that uses film images to great effect, but does not always sustain them.

Tim Lloyd

Troupe points up a talent that impresses

THE SURFACING of *Going Under* marks another ascendant point in Troupe's upwardly mobile reputation.

It is a tightly-formed and satisfying play, the professional debut of author Debra Oswald. As such it marks the emergence of an impressive talent.

Equally satisfying is Troupe's performance. This is an engaging and engrossing production.

Going Under is set in a drop-in centre, populated by the likes of Bernie and Rhonda — he's retarded, she's schizophrenic — and Alber, the drunk who preaches against the evils of alcohol.

Add to them Michelle, the runaway 16-year-old, and Sam, the cynical, know-all, intelligent "Squadron Leader."

When you include the dotty Deirdre, who talks in inter-galactic riddles, and the earnest film-maker Ruth, the mix seems dangerously predictable.

But it is not so. There is a human force to the characterisations which makes them surprisingly unpredictable. That, combined with a powerful and disturbing narrative, makes the play a transparent and lucid image of despair.

There seem traces of Sam Shepard in Debra Oswald's lens on the world — an urbanised and Australianised Shepard, admittedly.

Theatre

Going Under
By Debra Oswald
Troupe

At the Troupe Theatre, Unley
Tues.-Sat. until October 15

Like him, she knows that when a character is forced to see he or she is a player in a tragedy, but refuses to submit to its elements, then a touchstone of humanity is reached.

Michele — the subject of a spunky and perceptive performance by Christina Andersson — finds this touchstone, and her refusal to buckle under provides an inspirational pivot amid the hopelessness of the situation.

Andersson's performance is not the only praiseworthy one — Michael Griffin is absolutely marvellous as Bernie, and Robin Boord, David Kirk, Noel Maloney and Owena Hesham all perform handsomely.

It needs to be said that there are some flaws — an inchoate uncertainty to a couple of the characters, particularly the rather glib Sam, and a shaky start to the performance.

Overall, though, this is a small triumph. Highly recommended.

Peter Farrell

Union politics in black and white

THEATRE

Black Cargo by John Romeril, directed by David Carlin, designed by Tim Maddock, music composed by Iria Vela (Anitid, until 15 June)

LEONARD RADIC

MAY should retrospectively be declared John Romeril month. For in the past two weeks three new works of his have seen the light. There was 'Working Out', a theatre-in-education play commissioned by the Victorian Arts Centre and now on the regional schools circuit. There was a new work created for Handspan, 'The Reading Boy', which is at the Alexander Theatre at Monash University this week, with a further season at the Arts Centre in July. And now there is 'Black Cargo', created for the Melbourne Workers Theatre.

'Black Cargo' is a musical adaptation of one of John Morrison's stories of the Melbourne waterfront. It is a real life story, set in 1949 which those of a certain age will remember as a year of widespread industrial turmoil. Only the names have been changed, for legal reasons.

The play, like the short story, takes its title from an incident involving a Canadian cargo ship which tied up in port of Melbourne with a hold full of Indian coal and a crew of "scab" sailors. The original crew, it transpires, had been jettisoned and then jailed in Cape Town for taking strike action, and a new non-union crew hired in their stead.

For Bill Manion, the local left-wing secretary of the Seaman's Union, it is clear where duty lies: the ship's crew and cargo must be declared black. But for Harold Ness, his opposite number in the Waterside Workers Federation, the issues are more complicated.

The scene is thus set for an all-too-familiar inter-union fight between the forces of right and left: a fight that eventually brings the whole port to a standstill. At issue is not just the cargo but the wider question of union solidarity. As so often happens, the unionists themselves have little or no say in the dispute. The crucial decisions are made for them.

Almost all of Romeril's plays are left-leaning. Here, however, the politics are naked and transparent. The power struggle between the two union bosses is worked out in crude simplistic terms. Manion is clearly the goodie in the white hat; Ness is the baddie in the black hat. When actor Phil Sumner switches from his role as Ness to preside over a rowdy meeting of the Trades Hall Council, it is clear from his body language and his prevaricating manner that he is a villain of the piece also.

You find this kind of simple propaganda theatre in China. Its function is an educative one — to instill into its audience the principles of Marxism and to

provide role models. The Melbourne Workers Theatre is committed to helping the cause of social and industrial change by example also. I have no quarrel with that, provided the plays that they present are also good stimulating theatre.

'Black Cargo' is almost that. The script may be short on subtlety and character depth, but the music, the performances and the staging are excellent. Michael Griffin as the doctrinaire Manion provides a forceful contrast in style with Phil Sumner as both Ness and the weak-willed THF president. They are given strong support by David Adamson and Ann Butera in a variety of roles.

No less important is Iria Vela in her double role as composer and as head of the four-piece band. The work is through-scored and at all times engaging, while the band is highly versatile. Between them they give the production a vitality and robustness which, experience suggests, are fast becoming the trademarks of this company's work.

Theatre

Bloody Ireland brought to life — and death

Carthaginians
The Red Shed Theatre
Until December 8

THE NORTHERN Irish have little to fear when their playwrights produce works like this. Carthaginians is a terrible testimony to the psychological damage years of civil strife can produce, and at the same time is an uplifting, entertaining lesson in human grace.

Frank McGuinness's play, written in 1988, is an outstanding work for the stage, whether in Northern Ireland or anywhere else, and the Red Shed Company has embraced it boldly.

The play is driven by dark, electric moods and styles, punctuated by great outbursts of fun and wit. Set in a Derry graveyard, it is about as ghostly as you can get without being corny.

The graveyard is made of undulating concrete, with the audience sitting all

around. The seven powerfully drawn characters give us tantalising glimpses of their own troubled stories, but all of them, like all the Northern Irish, are united by a single overarching tragedy, Bloody Sunday, 1972, when 13 Derry men were shot, starting a vicious struggle that still continues.

Director Cath McKinnon has made the action on stage fairly crackle with tension and juxtapositions. At one moment she has her players strewn like corpses, calling out their "corpsed" dialogue and at the next they're all together centre stage, simply delighting the audience with their antics and Irish folk songs.

The cast is the strongest I have seen from the Red Shed with the likes of Eileen Darley and Sally Hildyard being complemented by Peter Finlay and Michael Griffin.

Outback odyssey with a difference

LEONARD RADIC

Travelling by Peter Mathers. (La Mama, until 19 June).

ON 30 JULY La Mama will officially come of age. To mark the occasion, the Carlton playhouse will present a season of new plays by those of its writers who have had three or more productions there since the theatre's opening in 1967.

Peter Mathers, currently playwright-in-residence, is one of them. His first play, 'The Mountain King', was staged at La Mama in 1985. 'Travelling' is his fifth and, in my view, his best.

The early plays, while verbally dexterous and imaginative with touches of the surreal, were very much hit-and-miss affairs, succeeding in places, missing their target in others. 'Travelling' is more coherent and very much better structured. It is also served very well by its director, Denis Moore, and its cast of five.

Four of those five are tradesmen, who have banded together to work a workingman's cooperative. The time is 1938, and the play follows them as they roam from one dry outback town to another, harassed by dogs, dust and unfriendly policemen. However this is no naturalistic study of Australian working life. For the play begins with the characters arguing about aspects of the script which is about to be presented, and ends with them arguing about the ending which Mathers has devised for them. In between, they offer a critique of the play in progress, and playful comments on the action.

Jack, the Aboriginal member of the group, is the key figure in the play. A couple of times he falls victim to racial prejudice ("your kind aren't welcome here") and winds up behind bars on patently trumped-up charges. But Jack is a survivor, not a victim figure, who resists suggestions that he might like to add his name to the roll call of Aboriginal deaths in custody.

This is the great virtue of the play — that while it deals with familiar incidents and characters, it does so in a wholly original and unpredictable way. There is no Bicentenary breast-beating, no playing on white guilt. Mathers's tradesmen are warmly engaging figures, and their 90-minute odyssey through the desert has a wryly humorous edge to it. It may not be a profound piece, but it is both entertaining and involving.

Denis Moore's simple but robust production serves the play well. A police cell is suggested by five strands of hanging rope. A tray of red soil suggests the desert. The actors themselves double as dogs and crows.

Julian Noel gives a lively and sympathetic portrait of the hard-pressed but ever-resilient Jack. There are strong matching performances by the other two tradesmen, Tom Cosidine and Laurie Dobson, their boss, John Flaus, and by Michael Griffin who plays an assortment of policemen, all of them unlikable. The five work as a team, exploiting the confines of La Mama to good effect. The result is a production as interesting as it is satisfying.