# Revealing the Taboo: A Theatrical Investigation

by

Geoffrey P. Dobson, BCA (Hons)

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Geoffrey Paul Dobson

March 2007

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Statement of Authority to Access

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# 'Ruled Lines'

# Script

Written and Directed by Geoffrey P. Dobson First Performed 7 March 2007 The Annexe Theatre - Inveresk Railyards

# **Ruled Lines**

## Written By Geoff Dobson

**Characters:** 

Adam: A teacher, in his early thirties.

Michelle: Adam's student and lover. Of age fifteen.

Frank: A Detective, in his early thirties.

Sonia: Adams wife.

The play is set in two locations, Adam's kitchen and a police station interview room. However, the two locations use the same performance space. The kitchen table acts as the table of the interview room. Lighting might be used to show a difference between the two situations. Adam has simultaneous conversations between the kitchen and the interview room. The conversation he has with Frank occurs in the morning of the day in question. The conversation with Michelle happens in the afternoon of the same day. A line is used to show the change in conversation.

Sonia enters the space from a bedroom and is dressed as a businesswoman. It is a few days before the day in question. She has with her an overnight bag and a briefcase.

SONIA: You're right then, you don't need anything?

Adam enters behind her, dressed casually.

ADAM: I'll be fine.

SONIA: I'll be back Friday night.

ADAM: Have a great time.

SONIA: Always do.

Sonia exits.

Franks enters behind Adam. He dressed in a suit. Carrying two cups of coffee.

FRANK: Pop in here mate.

Frank walks across the performance space to sit at the opposite end of the table to his entrance point.

Bit more private in here, than out there at me desk, in the middle of it all. Interview room three. It's a nice place. We thought about drapes, but you know...Hanging points. So what's up? Why the visit.

ADAM: Frank, I would like to tell you something.

FRANK: It's a bit early in the day for a confession! Couldn't wait 'til tomorrow?

ADAM: What's tomorrow?

Franks makes the action and noise of someone hitting a cricket ball.

No.

FRANK:

Important. Hang on, shouldn't you be at work? Funny thing, I wanted

to have a word with you too. I was just about to come over.

Silence

ADAM:

What about?

Adam's mobile phone beeps. He ignores it.

FRANK:

I was going to hire your services. You don't want to get that?

ADAM:

No.

Pause

FRANK:

What did you want to talk about?

ADAM:

You go.

FRANK:

Nah you're right. Must be important.

Silence

What is it?

Silence

ADAM:

This isn't easy. (Pause) I came here to tell you...that I am seeing

someone. No. I was seeing someone. Not anymore, not anymore. You

understand that?

Silence

FRANK:

Is that it? Jesus mate. Lucky we didn't put those drapes in. Bloody hell,

beat me by years. Seriously, it's not the end of the world.

ADAM:

You don't understand Frank.

FRANK:

Happens to everyone.

ADAM:

Frank...

Adam's mobile phone beeps again.

FRANK:

Is that her?

ADAM:

Probably.

FRANK: Text dirty?

ADAM: You don't understand.

FRANK: Give us a look.

ADAM: No.

FRANK: Come on, I'd show you. You know I would.

ADAM: It's not that simple.

FRANK: Simple, no, but fun.

ADAM: Just be quiet Frank. You...just... I need someone to talk to.

FRANK: Who is she? Do I know her?

Pause

ADAM: Not as well as I do.

FRANK: Cheeky bastard. Why didn't you tell me this before?

ADAM: I didn't tell you before because it wasn't right. And now it's over.

FRANK: God, how long was it going on?

Pause

ADAM: Little over three months.

FRANK: Three months. You bastard. How could you keep that to yourself?

ADAM: Sonia would find out.

FRANK: Who cares?

ADAM: I do!

FRANK: I don't. Go for it.

ADAM: No!

FRANK: Why not? Who says you have to stay with the one woman all your life.

Have a change. Get a divorce. Look at me. Divorced, single, with a kid

too. Think yourself lucky.

ADAM: What does that mean?

FRANK: It means you are only happy when Sonia is away working. And now I

know why. Don't panic. You'll be fine.

ADAM: Hang on.

FRANK: Would you stop complaining! You haven't got a problem. I wish I had

your problem. But I don't. Just be quiet and help me for a minute.

ADAM: You don't understand.

There is a knock at the door.

FRANK: I need you to help me with an investigation. Strictly off the record, you

don't get a badge...

ADAM: This is not how it's meant to go.

FRANK: Stop complaining, or I will take you out the back and shoot you. I need

your help, you being the teacher and all.

The knock at the door is repeated.

We got this report from the bloke who runs the motel down the highway. You know the one with that hedge out the front. He contacted

us about a couple using one of the rooms.

Adam stands and paces about the room.

FRANK: Said he had seen a man in his late twenties, could have been early

thirties enter one of the rooms with a girl. Thought the girl could have

been from St Mary's.

The knock at the door is repeated and continues.

FRANK: He must have looked pretty hard, because he said the only thing giving

her away was an St Mary's school bag, and she was wearing a daggy

pair of white sneakers.

Adam opens the door to reveal Michelle. She is wearing a school uniform and a pair of daggy white sneakers.

FRANK: The manager said she looked that young that the bloke could have been

her father.

Day rates. Double bed.

Pause

ADAM: What are you doing here?

FRANK: I need your help.

MICHELLE: I need you.

ADAM:

Why?

FRANK:

I thought you, being the cool teacher, might know something. Heard one of the students mouthing off. You know what I mean. Girls talk about these things, can't keep their mouths shut when they got something to brag about.

MICHELLE: I had to see you.

ADAM:

You can't come here.

MICHELLE: I needed to see you.

ADAM:

You can't come here anymore.

Pause

Why aren't you in class?

MICHELLE: Why weren't you in English? Relief said you were sick.

FRANK:

There is something wrong about it.

MICHELLE: Get my messages?

ADAM:

No.

MICHELLE: I sent you heaps.

ADAM:

I haven't checked. What are you doing here?

MICHELLE: I told you, I had to see you. And I've come to take care of you.

ADAM:

Why?

MICHELLE: You're meant to be sick remember.

FRANK:

You would have to be sick.

ADAM:

I am not sick.

MICHELLE: I know. You just didn't want to come to school today?

ADAM:

Michelle...

MICHELLE: That's exactly how I felt. I didn't want to do anything. But the thought

of seeing you today, made me go to school. But you weren't there.

FRANK: We can't just have people going round taking schoolgirls to motels.

We have to take reports like this very seriously. Fuck knows what's

going on. There could be bribes involved. Drugs and shit.

ADAM: No.

FRANK: Could be. You just don't know.

ADAM: No.

MICHELLE: Do you need more time? Am I crowding you? I know you didn't want

it to end. I feel it.

ADAM: It couldn't continue.

MICHELLE: Why not?

ADAM: I cannot keep doing this.

FRANK: Could be anything, cigarettes, alcohol, drugs!

MICHELLE: I can give you anything. We can go to our magical place. Anything.

We can go anywhere. I'll do anything. Don't shut me out. Please.

ADAM: It's not right. It is not appropriate. It just cannot happen. I would lose

my job forever. Do you understand that?

MICHELLE: You said you didn't even like your job. You said the best thing about

your job was me.

ADAM: I am married. (*Pause*) Please, what are you waiting for?

FRANK: A description.

ADAM: What?

FRANK: We are getting a full description of the man.

MICHELLE: You said you loved me.

FRANK: How could you do it?

MICHELLE: You said I was your princess.

ADAM: I shouldn't have done.

MICHELLE: Why are you saying that? You said you loved me. That should be all

that matters.

ADAM: Please. You can't change things. There's nothing you can do.

Pause

MICHELLE: You said I was all there was in this world.

ADAM:

Stop.

MICHELLE: You said I was everything to you.

ADAM:

Stop it.

MICHELLE: You said you and me were perfect together.

ADAM:

Stop.

MICHELLE: You said we fit together. Perfect, you said perfect.

FRANK:

I mean, I know. You know I know girls. How they can be.

Michelle stumbles through her bag for her phone.

ADAM:

What are you doing?

FRANK:

How grown up they look too. I'm not stupid. But there is a line isn't there. You know the line, you're a teacher. I don't have to tell you. I don't envy your job at all. Girls walking about, thinking they're movie stars.

Michelle produces a mobile phone from her bag and presses a few buttons.

ADAM:

What's going on?

FRANK:

They can make you do whatever they want.

Michelle plays a recording on her phone.

V/O:

Oh God. You are so beautiful, you know that. You're my princess. You are perfect. God! I love you. I love you with all my heart. You are so beautiful. I love you. I honestly do. Perfect. My God I love you, I love you...

She stops the recording.

FRANK:

If that ever happened to my girl...

Long Silence

ADAM:

You recorded us. (Pause) Why would you do that?

MICHELLE: I like to listen to it when you're not about.

ADAM:

Get rid of it.

MICHELLE: Why?

ADAM:

That alone could get me sent to prison.

MICHELLE: What for?

FRANK:

We're talking statutory rape. Sexual assault. A whole range of offences

relating to minors.

MICHELLE: You never forced me. We love each other. It was meant to be.

ADAM:

You need to give me your phone.

MICHELLE: No.

ADAM:

I have to have it.

MICHELLE: It's my phone.

ADAM:

I don't care. Give it to me.

MICHELLE: You want it? Come and get it.

Michelle places the phone in her underwear.

MICHELLE: What's the matter Sir? Don't you find me attractive anymore Sir? I

thought you liked these panties?

ADAM:

Why are you here? You can't come here anymore.

MICHELLE: Why do you keep saying that?

ADAM:

Because a student is not allowed in their teacher's house.

MICHELLE: Hasn't stopped you in the past.

ADAM:

Sonia gets home today.

MICHELLE: Is that meant to scare me? We can tell her the truth. Then we wont

have to put up with her any longer.

ADAM:

We can't.

MICHELLE: Why not? Tell her I have come over to study.

ADAM:

But you are not here to study.

Michelle starts to unpack her school bag. Placing her books on the table.

MICHELLE: I've been here heaps of times before. There's nothing wrong with studying. Is there Sir?

Silence

Michelle continues to get a few more things out of her bag.

FRANK: You've gone quiet. Any thoughts? Have you seen anyone hanging

round the school, dodgy like, picking up girls, that sort of thing?

MICHELLE: I need help with my essay on molecular structure.

ADAM: I am an English teacher.

MICHELLE: And the smartest person I know. That's one of the things I love about

you. Please, I am always distracted at school. It is much easier to study

with you. I am sure you don't want my education to suffer.

ADAM: Molecular Structure is not my forte.

MICHELLE: Your what?

ADAM: Never mind.

FRANK: How does this happen in our town? You would have to be brave.

Wouldn't yah!

ADAM: I'm afraid...

FRANK: Someone is bound to find out sooner or later.

ADAM: You are going to have to leave.

MICHELLE: Afraid?

ADAM: And your phone...

MICHELLE: What about it?

ADAM: Stays with me.

MICHELLE: Do you want to listen to it too?

ADAM: What was happening between us could not continue.

MICHELLE: Nobody ever has to find out. I like how you know my timetable. You

know everything about me. You were thinking of me, weren't you? We do everything right, we are careful. We'll never get caught. We only us

our private email, we don't do anything at school.

ADAM: You wink at me whenever I see you.

MICHELLE: You love it. It doesn't have to end. We can start a new life together.

We can move away together.

ADAM: Hold on.

MICHELLE: We can get married.

ADAM: I am married.

MICHELLE: You can get a divorce.

ADAM: You don't understand.

MICHELLE: You said you don't even like Sonia. You told me she suffocates you.

You said you only married her because she asked you to. You said she

treats you bad.

Long Silence

ADAM: What would you do if it was Michelle, Frank?

MICHELLE: I treat you perfect. You said.

FRANK: I haven't thought about it.

MICHELLE: I can treat you better than she ever could.

FRANK:

She's too young. Why do you say that?

Pause

Have you heard something?

ADAM:

No.

MICHELLE: I can look after you.

FRANK:

What have you heard?

ADAM:

No.

MICHELLE: When you get home, I'll take care of you.

ADAM:

No.

MICHELLE: Why don't you like me anymore!!!

FRANK:

You think it could be Michelle? Do you know something?

Pause

ADAM: You don't understand Frank. I came here to tell you...

Go home. I'm sorry.

MICHELLE: Just like that. But you said.

She removes the phone from her underwear.

FRANK: Fucking oath.

ADAM: Give it to me.

MICHELLE: No!

ADAM: Give it to me!

FRANK: I think I am going to be sick!

MICHELLE: I am going to tell the whole world that you love me. I am going to tell

everyone that you love me. I am going to tell Sonia and I am going to

tell my Dad.

FRANK: Do you know who he is?

MICHELLE: What? What? You will lose your job. Who cares, you'll still have me.

You said you don't even like your job, you said the best thing about your job was me. You said the only reason you got up to go to school

was to see me.

Pause

Why would you say those things if you didn't mean it?

FRANK: Adam, speak to me. How...

ADAM: The day you scratched your knee. You wanted me to look at it.

MICHELLE: So?

ADAM: I am not the first aid officer. You know that. What about the time you

just happened to miss your bus, I found you hanging around my car.

MICHELLE: I could have walked.

ADAM: It was pissing down.

MICHELLE: I waited so long for a rainy day.

FRANK: How did this happen?

ADAM: I have known you since you were a little girl. I've watched you grow.

MICHELLE: Well, now I'm all grown up.

FRANK: She's too young.

MICHELLE: Tell me you love me. I know you do.

ADAM: You don't understand.

FRANK: She doesn't even know...

ADAM: I can't.

MICHELLE: Why?

ADAM: Because it's not right.

MICHELLE: Not because it isn't true.

Silence

FRANK: She's only fifteen, for Christ's sake. She's only...

MICHELLE: You're a liar. Liar!

ADAM: You don't understand.

MICHELLE: Liar, liar!

ADAM: It's too complicated.

MICHELLE: Just say it. I know you can. I know you want to. Look at me. Look at

me. Touch me. Please. What are you afraid of? What? Losing

everything?

Indicating the phone.

ADAM: Give it to me.

MICHELLE: Why can't you just say it?

ADAM: Don't be silly.

MICHELLE: Don't call me silly.

FRANK: She has big dreams.

ADAM: Give it to me.

MICHELLE: Fuck you.

ADAM:

You're acting like a child.

MICHELLE: I hate you.

ADAM:

Don't say that.

MICHELLE: I hate you, I hate you, I hate you.

Frank takes out a cigarette, and lights it.

ADAM:

Don't.

MICHELLE: Fuck you.

ADAM:

Don't say that.

MICHELLE: Why can't you love me anymore?

ADAM:

It's not right.

MICHELLE: But you've already done it.

Pause

And the only people hurting are you and me.

Pause

Say you love me.

Pause

ADAM:

And what if I do?

Pause

Michelle takes Adam's face in her hands, and kisses him tenderly.

FRANK:

I can't let this happen. You understand. I can't let this happen.

Michelle hangs off Adam's body.

I'm her father.

The passion escalates. Adam kisses Michelle more passionately. Adam lifts Michelle onto the table.

MICHELLE: Is this what you want?

Pause

ADAM:

Yes. It is.

MICHELLE: Say you love me?

Silence

ADAM:

When I am with you, we are the only two people in the entire world. You are the only person to have ever made me feel alive. You are this amazing treasure, sparkling at the top of the tallest mountain. Every time I look up, all I see is how hard it is to climb. But every time I kiss you, every time I hold you, I get closer and closer to the top. To be with you is exhilarating, and breathtaking. When I have you in my arms you are... you are just the most beautiful, amazing creature, God ever put on this earth.

MICHELLE: Tell me.

ADAM:

I love you.

Adam and Michelle begin to kiss again. Michelle is sitting on the table. Adam starts to take Michelle's top off. Michelle takes Adam's shirt off to reveal severe bruising on his chest.

MICHELLE: What...

Adam puts his finger to her mouth and makes a 'shush' sound.

FRANK:

Why hasn't she said anything?

Silence

Michelle grabs for Adam's waist.

FRANK:

Has she said something to you?

Michelle pulls Adam towards the table.

Michelle opens the top of Adam's trousers.

He moves along side her, and lies on table.

The kissing continues. Michelle finds herself on top of Adam. Adam rises up, kissing Michelle on the neck.

Frank remains still during the following. He may smoke as much as he wishes.

FRANK:

Do you think...

As Michelle leans back slightly, Adam gently and tenderly removes her shirt/blouse.

Pause

FRANK:

She's only fifteen.

Michelle takes Adam's hand in hers.

Frank is perfectly still.

FRANK:

Adam.

Michelle softly directs Adam's hand over her body, slowly. She could still have her skirt on. She directs Adam's hand under her skirt.

Silence

FRANK:

Adam!

Silence

The lights over Adam and Michelle begin to fade.

Michelle reaches towards Adam's groin.

They come together and begin to make love, slowly.

Silence

The lights dim, until the two characters are silhouetted by back lights, leaving just an outline of their bodies. Michelle rises up, arching her back, she removes her bra. For a brief moment the silhouette of Adam and Michelle reveals an image of two mature bodied adults, making love. Michelle's bra should drop under the table.

FRANK:

How could anyone...

Silence

Adam stands, with Michelle's legs wrapped around his waist. He turns, placing her on the table.

FRANK:

He must have forced her.

Adam lowers himself on top of Michelle. She throws her head back. Adam's lips busily kiss her neck, in a loving fashion.

Silence

FRANK:

Adam?

There is whirlpool of silhouetted passion on top of the table.

FRANK:

What are we going to do?

Pause

FRANK:

Adam?

#### Long Silence

There is a final flourish of bodies, rolling together in climax. The lights over Adam and Michelle finally fade to black. Heavy breathing and sighs penetrate the silence.

FRANK:

She's only...

The lovemaking stops. Adam wraps Michelle in his arms.

Silence

Complete Blackout. Including the lighting for Frank

MICHELLE: I love you.

After a brief moment, the lights for the kitchen state return to normal.

Michelle is sitting on the table with her back towards the audience. Adam is in front of her. Michelle and Adam both remain topless.

MICHELLE You have to tell Sonia. If you don't, I will.

ADAM:

What will that achieve. I'll be dead and God knows what she'll do to

you.

MICHELLE: We can't go on like this.

ADAM:

I know.

MICHELLE: I will tell my Dad.

Pause

Do you want me, or...

ADAM:

I want you! Of course I want you. More than anything.

MICHELLE: Then we tell them.

There is the sound of a car. It is Sonia returning home.

ADAM:

Shit! She's not meant to be home yet.

Adam starts to get dressed quickly. Michelle looks less enthusiastic.

ADAM:

Please.

MICHELLE: What do you want?

Adam nods. Michelle puts her shirt/blouse back on. Hurriedly, the two dress as quickly as possible. Michelle should neglect to put her bra back on, which is still under the table. Her books are strewn across the table.

Sonia Enters

SONIA: I've been trying to call you. Let you know I was coming home early.

Oh, hello Michelle, what are you doing here?

MICHELLE: Had to give something to Adam. It was long overdue.

SONIA: Why aren't you at work?

ADAM: I wasn't feeling well.

SONIA: You're very conscientious, Michelle.

ADAM: Michelle is my best student.

MICHELLE: I would hope so.

SONIA:, I don't know how you ever learn anything. (Sarcastically, towards

Michelle) I find him a bit boring.

MICHELLE: Oh, really.

Pause

How so?

SONIA: Are they your books on the table?

MICHELLE: I was just getting some help.

SONIA: With what?

ADAM: A book review.

Lights up on Frank, as normal.

FRANK: What are we going to do?

ADAM: You don't understand Frank.

SONIA: Been here long? Would you like a drink? Not being a very good host

are you Adam. Glass of water, I think Adam would have drunk

everything else?

Sonia prepares herself a glass of water

MICHELLE: No thank you.

SONIA:

What's your review on?

MICHELLE: My what?

SONIA:

The review you were just writing. Told you he's boring. Forgotten

already?

Sonia sits at the table

You don't have class this afternoon?

MICHELLE: I finished.

Sonia reaches out to grab a book on the table. She accidentally knocks the glass of water off the table.

SONIA:

Damn it.

FRANK:

What are we going to do?

ADAM:

I'll clean it up.

SONIA:

I've got it.

Sonia gets up to get a dishcloth. Adam notices the bra under the table.

ADAM:

I'll get it.

SONIA:

Don't bother Adam.

ADAM:

I've got it.

Adam takes the dishcloth and kneels down to clean the mess.

FRANK:

How are we going to find him?

SONIA:

Book review.

MICHELLE: Yes.

SONIA:

(Holding up a book in her hand) Molecular structure?

MICHELLE: Science Book.

FRANK:

He'll make a mistake.

ADAM:

Frank! You don't understand.

Adam is busy trying to hide the bra from sight. He attempts to place it in Michelle's school bag.

SONIA:

What?

ADAM:

What?

Adam emerges from under the table.

SONIA:

What don't I understand?

ADAM:

Science.

SONIA:

Really.

FRANK:

I don't get it. What don't I understand?

ADAM:

You don't understand.

SONIA:

What are you trying to say?

Sonia advances on Adam.

ADAM:

Nothing. Honestly.

SONIA:

What's going on here?

ADAM:

You don't understand.

FRANK:

What?

ADAM:

It's not what it looks like.

SONIA:

What does it look like?

ADAM:

Why now.

SONIA:

Why what?

FRANK:

What don't I understand? Tell me.

ADAM:

You don't understand.

FRANK:

What?

ADAM:

You wont get it.

FRANK:

Get what Adam. You're not making sense.

SONIA:

Adam what's going on.

ADAM:

You don't understand.

FRANK:

What? For Christ's sake, what don't I understand?

Long Silence

ADAM:

I came here this morning to tell you. I came to tell you everything.

MICHELLE: Tell her Adam.

SONIA:

Tell me what?

FRANK:

Tell me what?

ADAM:

But you wont understand.

FRANK:

What Adam.

ADAM:

You wont... You don't... You already know.

FRANK:

What?

ADAM:

I wanted to tell you. I was going to tell you, all along. But I can't...

Adam takes his mobile phone out his pocket and throws it across the table to Frank.

ADAM:

The messages. Read them.

Silence. Frank reads the messages.

FRANK:

I don't get it.

ADAM:

Check the number.

Silence

SONIA:

Adam?

Silence

Adam? No.

ADAM:

I didn't ask for this Frank.

Pause

I didn't start it.

Pause

Frank, I'm sorry.

Silence

MICHELLE: Adam and I are in love.

Pause

SONIA: You're what?

ADAM: Sonia...

Pause

SONIA: What? Wait a minute. This...what's going...you're not...

ADAM: Sonia, please...

SONIA: You are...you are. You and her, are...No. No. No. Adam!

Pause

I'm wrong. Tell me I'm wrong. You are not...a student.

Pause

Frank's fucking Daughter!

ADAM: Sonia! Don't.

Franks throws the mobile phone across the room with incredible force.

FRANK: How could you? How could you do this to me?

ADAM: I couldn't help it.

FRANK: You couldn't help it! You pathetic little germ. You couldn't help it.

SONIA: How could you do this to me? We've known Michelle for... And

Frank!

Pause

How long? How long has this been going on Adam? Since she was five

years old? How long? ADAM!

ADAM: Three months.

SONIA: Three months!

Pause

How long have you wanted to? How many times have you looked at

her while she was growing up, in our home, under our care, and

thought, 'I want to...'

Pause

How many times have you... Oh, my God, have you? HAVE YOU?

ADAM: I didn't hurt her.

FRANK: Stop it.

SONIA: I went away, all those times. In the last three months I been away...

Oh, dear. Have you... Not here. You couldn't have... Not here. Adam,

not in our home. Adam?

Pause

MICHELLE: He doesn't like you.

SONIA: Don't you dare speak to me. Don't you say a word. What did you

think? You think because he knows you. You think that because he gave you a good mark, he's got the hots for you? You think because he

looked at you twice, he's keen for you?

ADAM: There was never any pressure. I never forced her. It just happened. I

didn't intend for it to happen, it just did.

SONIA: You think because he speaks to you outside of class he must want to

get into your pants?

MICHELLE: I treat him better than you ever could.

ADAM: I really care for her.

FRANK: Stop it.

ADAM: I have real feelings for her.

SONIA: Just because you got your first period last month, you think you've got

the whole world figured out.

MICHELLE: No. Just you.

Pause

I know I make him happy. You don't. I know you push him around. I

don't. I know you look down on him. I know he will never live up to

want you want him to be.

SONIA: You're wrong.

MICHELLE: He is perfect, and you treat him like shit.

FRANK: You're an animal.

ADAM: It's not like that. I really think she's... Oh God. I'm sorry Frank.

FRANK: You don't speak anymore.

ADAM: THIS IS REAL FRANK.

FRANK: SHUT UP!

ADAM: I REALLY...

FRANK: STOP IT.

ADAM: HONESTLY

FRANK: NO!

ADAM: I LOVE HER!

Frank picks up a chair.

SONIA: What does she have that I don't?

ADAM: Don't.

FRANK: DO NOT SAY THAT.

ADAM: I LOVE HER, FRANK.

FRANK: STOP SAYING THAT.

ADAM: I HONESTLY DO FRANK.

FRANK: YOU DON'T. YOU CAN'T.

Frank strikes Adam with the chair in the chest, knocking him to the ground. This is what caused the bruising on Adam's chest.

SONIA: What do you like about her?

Sonia picks up a kitchen knife. She holds it to Michelle.

What is it about her? What does she have, that I don't. Do you like her stockings? Do you like the bows in her hair? Do you like the way she rules the lines on her fucking assignments. Is it her eyes? Her face? Her tits, her cunt? What? WHAT? TELL ME.

Frank picks Adam up off the floor, holds him by the scruff of the neck.

ADAM: It's not like you think it is. It's not. It's got nothing to do with... I

promise. She makes me feel on top of the world. She is beautiful and amazing. She just treats me perfect. And I treat her the same. I have

never felt this way before.

FRANK: I don't want to hear it.

ADAM: It's real Frank. She loves me, and I love her. She is gentle and

beautiful. And she makes me happy, happier than I ever have been.

FRANK: She's only a girl.

ADAM: Why should that matter? I'll treat her like a princess Frank. I promise.

FRANK: You can't.

ADAM: Why not?

FRANK: You can't!

ADAM: WHY NOT? I love her. (Towards Sonia and Michelle) I love her.

Frank gives Adam an almighty shove, propelling him across the stage where he crashes into Sonia. The knife in Sonia's hand accidentally stabs him. Adam falls to the ground. Frank slumps. Sonia screams and Michelle rushes to Adam's aid.

MICHELLE: (With Adam in her arms) No, no, no, no, no. It's going to be okay.

You're going to be okay. You're not hurt. You're not hurt. No. It's all right. There is nothing wrong with you. You're perfect. I am going to fix you. I'll fix you. I am going to make you all better. I am going to help you. You wait and see. I'll make it all better. You're perfect.

You're perfect.

Pause

I am going to finish my exams. You wait and see. I am going to finish high school. And then we can move away together. You can get a job teaching. And I will get a job. And we will have a house together. And I will cook for you. I will care for you. I will take care of you. I will take care of everything. And we will share everything. And we will get married. Have a honeymoon. And then I will look after you. We will grow old together. We will always be together. I will take care of you. I will take care of you. I will take care of you. I will take care of you.

Pause

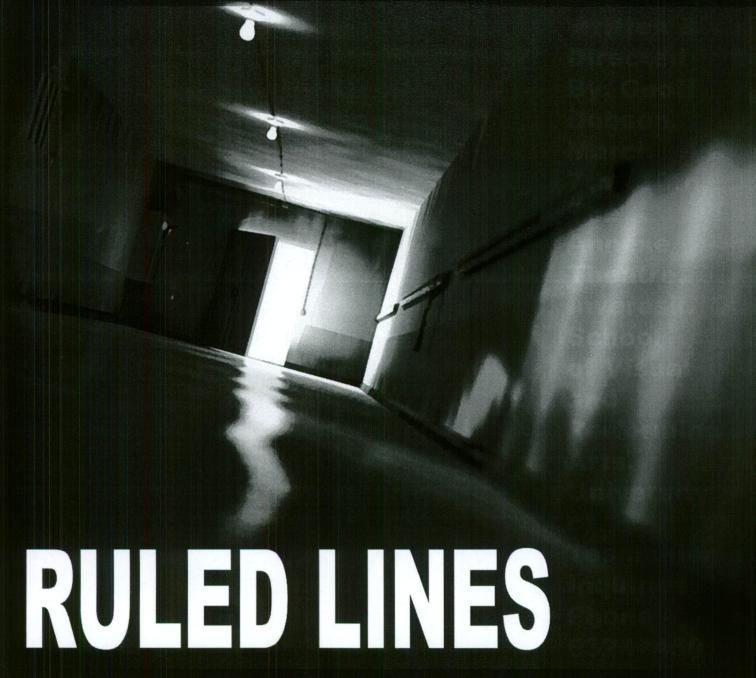
You're perfect.

Blackout.

# 'Ruled Lines'

# **Performance Poster**

Compiled by Geoffrey P. Dobson March 2007



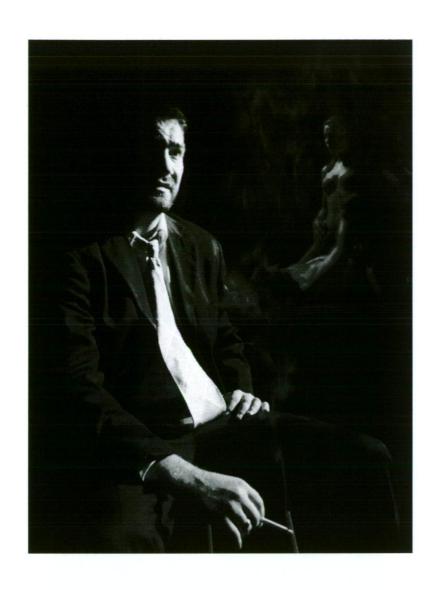
Written & Directed By: Geoff Dobson. March 7th - 10th, The Annexe Theatre, Inveresk. School of Visual and **Performing** Arts, University of Tasmania. **Inquiries** Phone -63244450

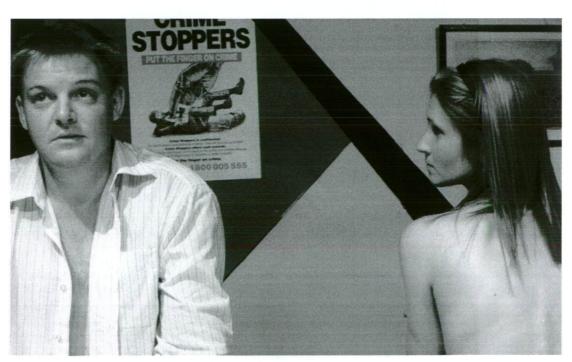
Warning: This show contains Adult Themes, Coarse Language and Nudity.

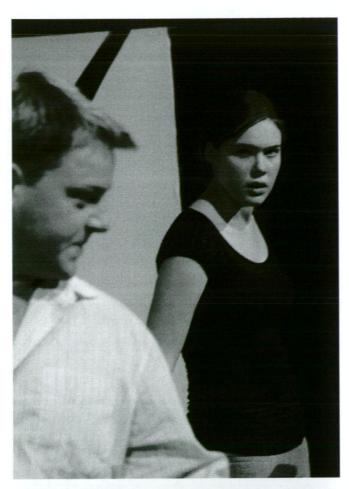
# 'Ruled Lines'

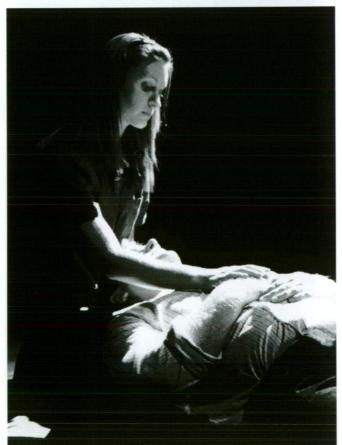
**Production Photography** 

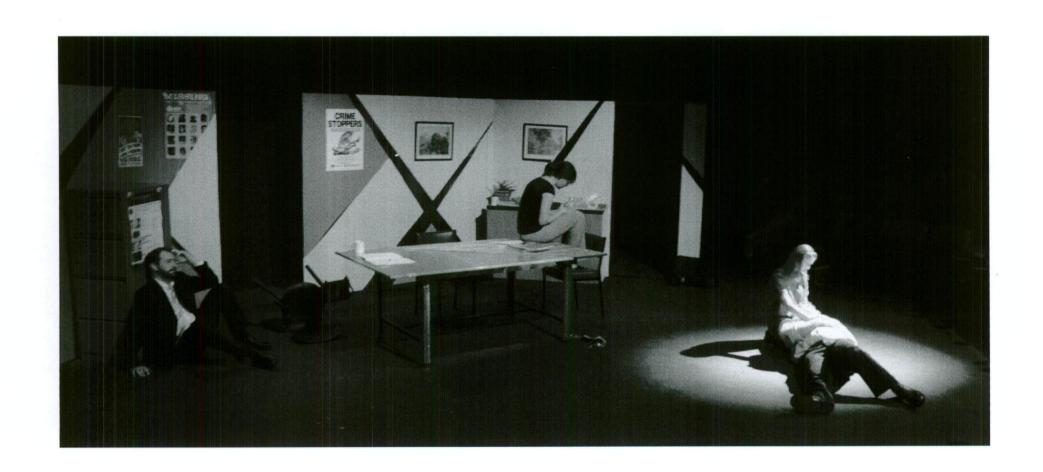
Photography of Production March 2007











# The Censor

# Script

Written by Anthony Neilson Directed by Geoffrey P. Dobson Performed 18-20 May 2006 The Annexe Theatre - Inveresk Railyards

# The Censor By Anthony Neilson.

The Censor was commissioned and originally produced by the Red Room. It premiered at the Finborough Theatre, London on 1 April 1997. It was subsequently co-produced with the Royal Court and transferred to the Royal Court Theatre Downstairs at the Duke of York's, London, on 4 June 1997.

#### Characters

The Censor Miss Fontaine The Wife

#### Setting

The play takes place in two locations: the censor's office and his home.

#### Censor

(Voice Over) It started with a pornographic film. And I swear to God, it was a porn film like any of the hundreds I'd seen.

No: There were differences – strange edits and inflections – but at the time I put it down to poor technique.

No: I'll be honest with you – I put it down to the fact it was made by a woman.

The film was hard-core and unpassable as it stood but she requested a meeting with me to challenge the ruling.

I could've refused. To this day, I still don't know if things would've turned out better if I had. But I didn't and she came to try and change my mind, the only way she knew how.

#### Scene One

The Censor's office.

Pause

Censor

Miss Fontaine -

Pause

Please put your shirt back on.

**Fontaine** 

Are you married?

Censor

No -

**Fontaine** 

Are you gay?

Censor

No – I would just like you to put your shirt back on.

Pause.

You're embarrassing me, Miss Fontaine. And you're making a fool

of yourself.

**Fontaine** 

In what way?

Censor

I don't care to get into a debate about it, all right? Just put your -

thing back on...

Pause. Her hands go to her bra clip.

**Fontaine** 

Maybe I should take something else off.

Censor

No -!

He stops her. His hands on her arms. Pause. She smiles. He disengages.

Why are you doing this?

**Fontaine** 

Come on, don't act so shocked: you spend all day staring at

women's breasts -

Censor

I'm not shocked -

**Fontaine** 

Liar. Tell me you haven't dreamt of this: a woman you hardly know

offering herself to you? Tell me.

Censor

It's none of your business what I've dreamt of, but whatever I've

dreamt of I certainly haven't dreamt of it with you.

Pause.

**Fontaine** 

You will.

Pause

Censor

Look – please – if somebody comes in –

Pause. She puts her shirt back on.

**Fontaine** 

Suit yourself.

Now she sits down. He is amazed by this.

Censor

I think you'd better go.

Pause. She rises, puts her coat on. Pause.

**Fontaine** 

Will you think about the things I said?

Pause

About the film.

The censor is lost for words.

**Fontaine** 

I'm not going to be ashamed. Waste of time being ashamed.

# Scene Two

The Kitchen.

The censor's Wife wears a dressing-gown. Reads the morning paper.

Pause.

Censor

What time did you come in?

Wife

Don't know. Four-ish.

Long Pause

Censor

Where did you sleep?

Wife

In the spare room. I didn't want to wake you.

Long pause.

Censor

Was David there?

Pause.

Wife

He was there for a while.

Censor

(Voice Over) Fifteen forty-seven: outer labia. Sixteen o two: inner

labia. Penetration by inorganic device.

Sixteen twenty-three: anal penetration by same. Digital insertion to

the vagina.

Addition oral stimulation of vagina – sixteen forty-two. Seventeen

ten: masturbation of erect penis.

Seventeen twenty-six: oral stimulation of erect penis. Seventeen fifty-one: repetition of anal insertion sequence.

Eighteen o three; repetition of oral sequence.

#### **Scene Three**

The Censor's office.

He makes her wait as he writes.

**Fontaine** 

You lied to me.

Pause

You said you weren't married.

Censor

I thought we agreed not to discuss the other night, Miss Fontaine.

**Fontaine** 

I just wondered why you said you weren't married?

Censor

I didn't. I don't know what I said. If I did I didn't mean to. I am wearing a wedding ring, look. Can we get back to the matter at hand please?

**Fontaine** 

All right.

Pause

Keep your shirt on.

She smiles. He doesn't. Pause.

So what's the bottom line, Mr Censor?

He makes her wait some more.

Censor

The bottom line is, if you want us to even consider this for release – you'll have to cut somewhere in the region of... thirty-five minutes.

Pause

**Fontaine** 

Which is as good as banning it.

Censor

No, with the cuts I could recommend that it pass as a Restricted 18.

It could be sold in licensed video stores.

**Fontaine** 

Sex shops.

Censor

Yes

Pause.

Look – with all due respect – what did you think was going to happen? Your film is just one sex scene after another. There's no plot, there's no character, there's no nothing. So what did you expect? A tie-in with Burger King?

No: You knew exactly what would happen – that it would cause a fuss, get you some attention. Well it's achieved all that. But whether your film is art, Miss Fontaine, or whether it's pornography, is academic: there are things you just *cannot legally* show here, and that isn't a matter of opinion, it's a matter of *law*.

Pause

**Fontaine** 

I like how you call me Miss Fontaine.

Censor

(Pause) Well, I –

**Fontaine** 

No, I like it. Really.

Pause

You could pass it without classification. It could be shown in

cinema clubs.

Censor

Not without cuts.

**Fontaine** 

But with less?

Censor

(Sighs) Theoretically. But that would require me making a very

strong case to the Director.

**Fontaine** 

And are you prepared to do that?

Censor

It'd be a waste of time

**Fontaine** 

That's not what I asked.

Censor

Miss Fon -

Pause.

Do you have any idea how long it takes to prepare a

recommendation? How many forms I'd have to fill out? How many panels it'd have to pass before it reached the top floor? Whole films

have been known to just disappear in this system.

Fontaine

I'll take my chances.

Censor

No, but you don't understand – that's films that come from upstairs.

Coming from down here...

Fontaine

Down here?

Censor

Has nobody explained this to you? (Pause) D'you know what they call this place, Miss Fontaine? (Pause) 'The shit hole.' All we get sent is the sickest, most extreme material. Ninety per cent of what we see is never legally released. Seven per cent of it results in criminal prosecution. About three per cent makes it back into the

stream.

The prospects for your film are... bleak.

Pause

**Fontaine** So how long have you been...'down here'?

**Censor** (*Pause*) Six years.

Pause

But everybody starts here.

**Fontaine** Six years is a long start.

Censor Yes, well I was due for a transfer last year but they asked me if

I'd...stay on a bit longer.

Pause.

Not just anyone can do this job. It requires a strong constitution. It's a compliment really. And it means when I do move on, it'll b a

much better position.

**Fontaine** So making a successful recommendation would do you good?

**Censor** A successful recommendation, yes. But for it to be successful, I'd

have to believe in the case I was putting. I'd have to believe that

your film had some purpose other than titillation.

Fontaine And you don't.

Pause.

Censor No. I am sorry but I don't.

Pause.

It's unusual. I'll admit. Using the same two actors throughout – not always ending in ejaculation, the order of the episodes...You might be subverting conventions – but at the end of the day, it's still just hard-core pornography. And I have no problem with that! In fact I'm quite liberal in my attitude towards it. But let's call a spade a spade, shall we? Let's not pretend it's groundbreaking art, as if I'm so green I won't know the difference. That is just a wee bit too

insulting.

Fontaine So why'd you call me back in? If you're just a 'wee bit too

insulted'?

Pause.

**Censor** Because I know what you think: that I'm a prude, a stuffed shirt –

some sort of repressed, anally retentive apparatchik -

**Fontaine** You like to tell people what they think, don't you?

**Censor** (Weary) No, because I know you walked out of here he other night

thinking you'd oh-so-cleverly shown me up for what I am -

**Fontaine** I wondered when we'd get back to that.

Censor Well yes because it's outrageous behaviour – I mean, what am I

supposed to do, this woman I've never met before just starts taking her *clothes* off – I mean *anyone* would be a bit... *taken aback* by that, but to you it just confirms this smug, simplistic notion that

anyone who does this job must be some...sort of...

**Fontaine** Anally repressed retentive apparatchik?

Censor Yes, that's right -

**Fontaine** You think that's why I did it?

Censor I don't *know* why you did it! I've no *idea* -!

**Fontaine** Maybe I just wanted to.

**Censor** Wanted to humiliate me maybe –

Fontaine Wanted to understand you.

Censor No, because I don't appreciate being made to feel like a fool, Miss

Fontaine! You can't just walk in here and make a fool out of me,

d'you understand?!

Pause.

She advances on him.

Fontaine So that's why you called me back? To tell me I couldn't make a fool

of you?

Censor Yes – well, no – to tell you the – the reasons for – my decision –

Fontaine I don't believe you.

**Censor** Miss Fontaine –

**Fontaine** You thought of me, didn't you?

Censor No I didn't – well yes obviously I did – but not in the way –

**Fontaine** The little seeds turned into a beanstalk like I knew they would.

She puts her hand on his crotch.

**Censor** Please don't do that –

Fontaine Stop me.

He makes a weak attempt to remove her hand. She starts to unzip his fly.

What's protecting you, Mr Censor? That's what I want to know.

She begins to masturbate him. This goes on for some time, to no avail.

You're not relaxed then.

Pause. She removes her hand. He does his fly up. She smells her hand.

Talcum powder. I'm impressed. A hint of urine but that can't be helped. Do you normally smell so sweet, or are you expecting a road accident?

Pause

**Censor** Why are you doing this? Really?

Pause

It won't make any difference to my decision, if that's what you're

thinking.

Pause

Do you have some sort of mental problem? No, I'm being serious:

are you on medication of some kind?

Fontaine You've got a very low opinion of yourself.

**Censor** This is nothing to do with *me*!

Fontaine Isn't it?

Censor You don't *know* me!

**Fontaine** I know you a lot better than if I'd kept my shirt on.

Pause

Censor This isn't right.

Fontaine Because you're married?

**Censor** That's one reason.

Fontaine What would your wife say if I called her up and told her I'd just had

my hand down her husband's trousers?

Pause

**Censor** Are you threatening me, Miss Fontaine?

**Fontaine** No, it's hypothetical. What would she say?

Pause

Censor

My wife and I have a very specific policy regarding infidelities in

our marriage.

**Fontaine** 

And what's that?

Pause

Censor

She tells me about them.

Pause

**Fontaine** 

Oh, I see.

Pause

That must be... humiliating.

Censor

(Pause) Not for me.

Pause

**Fontaine** 

Haven't you ever had an affair?

Pause

Censor

Why am I even thinking about answering that? That's none of your

business, is it?

Pause. She looks puzzled.

**Fontaine** 

But we're having one, aren't we?

Censor

(Pause) One what?

**Fontaine** 

An affair.

Censor

An affair??!!

**Fontaine** 

Well... after what we did...

Censor

After what we did?! You stuck your hand down my trousers!!

**Fontaine** 

Are we going to squabble over details or are we going to try and

work this out like adults?

Censor

(Flabbergasted) Miss Fontaine - we are not having an affair -!

**Fontaine** 

But I've touched your genitals!

Censor

I didn't ask you to touch them, did I?!

**Fontaine** 

Did though!

Censor

There's more to it than that, surely to God!!

**Fontaine** 

I don't believe so.

Censor

So I become an adulterer the minute you put your hand down my

trousers?!

**Fontaine** 

No – the minute you put talc down you boxers.

Pause. She can't keep up the joke any longer.

I know we're not having and affair. So stop acting like we are.

Pause

Censor Miss Fontaine – I can honestly say – that you are one of the most

bizarre people I've ever met -

Pause

**Fontaine** This film is important. Do you understand how important it is?

Censor

(Pause) I can see it means a lot to you.

**Fontaine** 

No. Not just to me. To the world.

Pause

Censor

That I don't see. I'm sorry, but I don't.

Pause

**Fontaine** 

You will.

**Scene Four** 

The Kitchen

Wife

He wants to talk to you.

Pause

Censor

What about?

Wife

You know...

Pause

The situation.

Pause

I said I didn't know.

Scene Five

**Censor** All right. Let's start with the last section.

**Fontaine** Why the last section?

**Censor** Because it's the most problematic.

**Fontaine** But it's the end of the story.

Pause

**Censor** And what story is this, Miss Fontaine?

**Fontaine** The story of the lovers.

**Censor** Lovers, is that what they are?

Fontaine What else would they be?

Pause

Censor (sighs) All right.

Pause

Scene one. (Reads) Man is masturbated by woman.

Pause

This is scene one, isn't it? It's not a prologue? Man is masturbated

by woman.

**Fontaine** Is that all you saw?

**Censor** There wasn't much else to see.

**Fontaine** Because your eye stops at the image.

**Censor** Most people's would.

**Fontaine** Because they've lost the ability to see.

Censor And what is there to see in a penis exactly?! A penis is a penis, is it

not?

**Fontaine** What about when it's your wife's lover's penis?

Pause

Censor

You're overstepping the mark, Miss Fontaine.

**Fontaine** 

You told me about it.

Censor

I shouldn't have. I don't know why I did.

**Fontaine** 

Because I touched your genitals.

Censor

Please!!

Pause

Now you asked me to help you! I don't have to after the way you've behaved but I'm giving you this chance to prove your point. So I don't want to hear any more about that incident. It should never have happened and that's that. Now can we discuss the man being masturbated by the woman please? What exactly is the 'story' of that?

**Fontaine** 

Well the man's penis hardens and softens repeatedly throughout the

scene.

Pause

Censor

It's not exactly *The Maltese Falcon*, is it?

**Fontaine** 

But why did it do that?

Censor

Why did it tumesce and detumesce repeatedly? (Pause) I don't

know, Miss Fontaine. Was the actor camera-shy?

**Fontaine** 

You're confusing that actor with the man, Mr censor. Why did it

happen to the man?

Pause

Why would he not be able to stay erect whilst she masturbated him?

Pause

Censor

Maybe she wasn't very good at it.

Fontaine

Maybe. But why not?

Censor

I don't know, is she a nun?

Pause

**Fontaine** 

Put your fingers inside me.

Pause

Censor

What?

**Fontaine** 

Put your fingers inside me.

Pause

Censor

Why?

**Fontaine** 

Just trust me.

Pause

Censor

I wont be able to hold my pen.

Pause. She guides him in.

Miss Fontaine - please - we can't do this -

**Fontaine** 

Just hold it there. That's nice.

Pause

All right: her strokes were erratic, random. She didn't know his

rhythm. So that means...?

Pause

So that means -?

Censor

Uh – that means - they haven't ... done it... before?

**Fontaine** 

(Nods) This is the early part of the relationship. They're still

learning about each other. Deeper.

He pushes his fingers deeper. She winces, laughing at his mistake.

Deeper into the story...

Censor

Sorry – the story – sorry…

**Fontaine** 

Did you notice that the man's penis only stiffened when he could

see her stroking it?

Pause. He shakes his head.

He's a visual rather than tactile.

Censor

So why didn't... why didn't he just keep looking at her?

**Fontaine** 

Probably he watches a lot of pornography and he thinks she might

see that in his eyes and feel like a whore.

Pause

You could move those fingers about a bit if you like.

He does

He likes her. He thinks they might have a future.

Pause

And that's why.

Censor

Why...?

**Fontaine** 

Because he needs distance. Engagement scares him.

Pause

Censor

What else?

**Fontaine** 

You want me to tell you?

He nods

Are you sure?

He nods

He's wary of people, solitary.

Parents were cerebral rather than physical and he's the same When he lived at home, his bedroom was next door to theirs.

One parent was very ill -

He withdraws his fingers. Pause

Censor

Are you playing some sort of trick on me, Miss Fontaine?

Pause

Has someone put you up to this?

Pause

You were describing the character in your film?

**Fontaine** 

Why? Does he sound familiar?

Pause

Censor

And you're expecting people to get all that, are you? Just from

watching that scene? That his bedroom was next door to theirs?

**Fontaine** 

A penis is not just a penis.

Censor

Well you might as well say a hatstand's not a bloody...hatstand!

Fontaine

The difference is we're allowed to see hatstands.

Pause

Censor

I don't know why you're wasting your time with this.

You're obviously – an intelligent woman.

You don't need to show genitalia to get your point across.

Fontaine

That's true. But what you're saying is you don't think I should.

Censor

I'm not saying anything -!

**Fontaine** 

Coward.

Censor

I'm just saying that... censorship isn't necessarily such... a bad thing. Without censorship, there'd be no allegory, no metaphor, no restraint – I mean – *Brief Encounter* is a story about two lovers, but you don't have to see Trevor Howard's penis thrusting in and out of Celia Johnson, do you?

Pause. She smiles.

But you'd like that wouldn't you? You'd like to see Trevor Howard's penis thrusting in and out of Celia Johnson! That's exactly what you'd like!

But her smile infects him and he finds himself laughing

A moment.

#### **Scene Six**

Wife

What's funny?

Pause

He doesn't want to be your enemy.

He's got nothing against you.

Pause

He just wants you to see there are feelings involved here.

Pause

Censor

What do you want?

Pause

Wife

Yes. I want that too.

#### Scene Seven

The Censor waits and waits. He places a bottle of wine and two glasses on the desk, considers them for a while and decides against it. Eventually she arrives.

Censor

You're almost an hour late, Miss Fontaine.

**Fontaine** 

I know, I couldn't help it.

Pause

**Censor** If you want to make this preliminary recommendation deadline then

you'll need all the time I can spare and that's not much. And now

it's an hour less.

Pause

**Fontaine** I bought you some flowers.

She hands them to him. He stares at them. Pause.

Censor

Thank you.

Pause

They look around, nowhere to put them. Delicately, he lays them down on the desk.

Actually, I have something too.

He produces a bottle of wine and some glasses.

Seeing as its after hours...

He starts to pour it.

Fontaine Not for me, thanks.

**Censor** (Pause) No?

He pours himself one.

She reads his notes.

**Fontaine** MILKY MAMAS -what's that?

**Censor** It's pregnant women having sex with each other.

Fontaine (Genuinely) That's nice...

Pause

**Censor** Yes, well – pornography's nothing if not diverse. Cheers.

Pause

You know it's a funny thing, Miss Fontaine, but I can't imagine you

travelling here. I can't imagine you sitting on a bus or going

shopping. Doing anything normal.

I suppose you've got friends you go out with, that sort of thing?

**Fontaine** (Shrugs) You're not the only person that finds me bizarre.

Censor Well, I wouldn't say bizarre exactly: you just take a bit of getting

used to.

Fontaine And are you? Used to me?

Censor I'm... getting there.

Pause

**Fontaine** So when are you going to hang up your scissors, Mr Censor? When

people just give up having sex altogether?

Will that be the job done?

Censor No. no, not at all. We'll move on to humour next. Eventually we'll

have eradicated all pleasure from the world. It's called Scottish

expansionism.

She shows no sign of amusement.

No, nobody's trying to eradicate sex, Miss Fontaine. There's just a few of us who still believe it should be about love. I know that's

terribly old-fashioned...

Fontaine It's not old-fashioned.

Censor (Pause) No, well I'm –

Fontaine It's just completely stupid. Love is an emotion, sex is a means of

expression. You can't restrict a language to one emotion.

Pause

Censor So in that case the – the things we've – done. What do they –

express – exactly?

Pause

Fontaine Trust.

Censor Trust. Good. Good.

Fontaine Curiosity...

Censor (Nods) Uh-huh...?

**Fontaine** Many things.

He nods. Pause

Scene two?

Censor Yes. Right. Scene two.

Consults clipboard

Intercourse.

**Fontaine** 

Is that it?

Censor

(Sighs) Eight o six: erect penis -

Eight eighteen: inner labia -

Eight thirty-one: vaginal penetration.

**Fontaine** 

Position?

Censor

(Pause) Missionary.

**Fontaine** 

That's right: not from behind, not standing up - the most traditional

position. And so?

Censor

(Sighs) All right – scene one, they're getting to know each other. So

now – they know each other better?

Pause

Look – we don't have time for this.

Why don't you just tell me?

**Fontaine** 

Because I want you to see! You time code every single detail of

genital interplay, but you don't see the looks that pass between

them, the breathing, the rhythms -!

Censor

Because they are not my *concerns*, Miss Fontaine! The looks, the breathing, the rhythms aren't the reason your film can't be passed!!!

You have to be practical about this! It doesn't matter how sincere

you are, we can't change the law!

Pause. She takes her knickers off, lies on the floor.

**Fontaine** 

Come on.

Censor

Miss Fontaine -

**Fontaine** 

I want you to have sex with me.

Pause

Censor

It's not going to make any difference.

**Fontaine** 

We'll see.

Pause

Censor

I can't.

**Fontaine** 

Why not?

Censor

Because it's not right.

**Fontaine** 

It's not right, it's not right. Your job isn't right, Mr Censor! Your marriage isn't right! And if we're talking about ethics, then buying that bottle of wine probably wasn't right, was it? For someone who's always talking about what's right, you seem to have an awful

lot wrong!

Censor

Oh, and you have such insight, don't you?! Well it's you that's got it wrong this time, Miss Fontaine, because I'm not talking about ethics!

Pause

That's not what I'm talking about.

Fontaine

What, then?

Pause

Censor

You were wrong about the talcum powder.

Pause

I have to use a...

Pause

I have to use a special shampoo.

Pause

I had a bit of a... problem...

**Fontaine** 

(Pause) An infection?

Censor

Not exactly.

Pause

I think they call it... an infestation.

**Fontaine** 

Did you get them from your wife?

Censor

You don't just get them from sex. You can get them from toilet

seats.

Pause

**Fontaine** 

And that's why you can't have sex with me?

Pause. She stands up.

Liar.

Censor

(Pause) You can think what you like.

Fontaine So you let me touch your genitals knowing you had an 'infestation'?

**Censor** I don't remember having much choice.

Fontaine Liar. You've never scratched yourself *once* 

Pause

Censor I said I had them –

**Fontaine** Ah – hah!

**Censor** But you have to complete the treatment before it's completely safe!

That's true.

Fontaine Well, I've never had an infestation before. It might be interesting.

Censor Oh grow up, for God's sake!

**Fontaine** Why don't you want to have sex with me?

**Censor** Does there have to be a reason?

Fontaine No, but there is one. And it's strong enough to use your 'infestation'

as a cover.

Pause

Censor Has it ever occurred to you, Miss Fontaine, that maybe I'm just not

attracted to you? Has that ever crossed your mind?!

Fontaine No.

Pause

**Censor** Well that's just... very... arrogant of you...

**Fontaine** Tell me the *truth*.

**Censor** I just don't *feel* like doing it, all right?

**Fontaine** You don't have to *feel* like doing it. You just have to do it.

Censor I don't want to do it!

**Fontaine** You mean you couldn't do it.

Pause

Censor Well yes, I could physically do it. I could just... do it.

**Fontaine** Come on then.

She lies down. Pause.

Censor

Is that what you want, for me to just...?

Fontaine

Do it. Yes.

Pause

Censor

(Shrugs) All right. If that's really what you want.

Reluctantly, he sets about undoing his trousers and so on.

But I'm telling you - you're taking a risk -

She nods. But he cannot go through with it. Pause.

**Fontaine** 

What's wrong?

Censor

Nothing it's just – not really a very conductive atmosphere, is it?

**Fontaine** 

You don't have to perform. I just want to show you something.

Censor

That's what I *mean*: it's all a bit clinical...

**Fontaine** 

D'you want me to help you?

Censor

No I'm fine.

**Fontaine** 

Look at my vagina if that helps.

Pause

Censor

Miss Fontaine – I'm just not that sort of... It's not easy for me to just... you know.

I'm not one of those men that can just do it at the drop of a hat.

Never have been.

**Fontaine** 

You're always connecting penises with hats, are you aware of that?

Pause

Do you have a problem with impotence?

Censor

No.

**Fontaine** 

You can tell me.

Censor

I don't.

Pause

I'm just... not that easily... you know... stimulated.

**Fontaine** 

Are you worried about the size of your penis?

Censor

No, not really. I'm fairly realistic about all that.

Pause

Why, should I be?

**Fontaine** 

(Shrugs) No.

Pause

Are you like this with your wife?

Censor

Well... we don't really... do it that much.

**Fontaine** 

Have her infidelities affected your libido?

Pause

Censor

Well, obviously it's not what you'd call a boost to the ego but...

Pause

It's probably the other way round.

**Fontaine** 

Explain?

Pause

Censor

It's like I said: I've never been that... physical a person

Pause

I know men are supposed to be obsessed with it, and ready to do it whenever, wherever, with *whoever*. But I think that's a bit of a myth.

Pause

I don't want you to think my wife's some kind of...

Pause

It's not like that.

She doesn't deceive me.

I always have the choice to leave. So far I've chosen to stay

Things just happen, don't they? You meet people. And she's a very physical person. Not just sex: she likes to dance and just... go mad

now and then. That's just her.

Someone comes along and they're new and exciting and... well,

you know...

Pause

What we have isn't based on sex.

Long pause

**Fontaine** 

You're impotent, aren't you.

Censor

You know, Miss Fontaine, you are about the most arrogant person I've ever met. What's this latest theory based on? Because I won't

just get on the floor and have sex with you?

And even if I was - which I'm not - what difference would it

make?

**Fontaine** 

There's no point in any of this if I can't make you see.

Censor

But I do see! I know I'm making out that I don't - but I just want to give you the - you know - the other angle. I mean it's an interesting idea but you know - it's not exactly beyond my grasp. And you have a point. You do.

I think we should try to get it through.

She looks at him. dubious.

Really. I think I can even draft something up for the next session.

I just need to watch it again. Just let me do that.

### **Scene Eight**

Wife

So?

Pause

Will you *meet* him?

Pause

Say something

Lights fade to black.

#### Scene Nine

The Censor is pleased with himself.

Censor

All right, listen to this. Are you listening?

She nods

(Reads) 'Miss Fontaine's intention is to depict the course of a relationship, from courtship to separation, by focusing exclusively on the couple's sexual activity.'

'Thus, masturbation and oral sex denote courtship, and intercourse in the missionary position symbolises a traditional vow of commencement. During this stage of infatuation, with the future uncertain, the sexual activities are essentially conservative.'

'But as trust deepens, and a sense of ownership develops, the activities become more various and individualised, the bodies more objectified.' – Yes?

#### She remains impassive.

All right, I don't know about this, listen to this:

'An aggressive note is introduced as the couple pass through their first betrayal. –

'This disillusionment opens a phase of experimentation now more animalistic, more overtly passionate and more stereotypically divided along crude gender lines.

'But – whilst this new element of distrust invigorates the sexuality, the spiritual basis of the relationship erodes until copulation becomes their only cement.

'As a result we enter the realms of depersonalisation: the sexuality intensifies, becoming more abusive, more fetishistic, a rehearsal for separation. And even after this separation, they still participate in sporadic erotic encounters until new partners are found.

'Finally' – and this bit took me ages to get – 'we see each partner participate in solitary acts of masturbation, their memories of each other now just the fuel of their fantasies.'

Now that sounds like art, doesn't it?

She looks unimpressed.

So? Do I pass with honours?

Pause

**Fontaine** Is that *all* you saw?

Pause

**Censor** That's a joke, isn't it?

**Fontaine** (*Pause*) I told you all this the first day we met! All you've done is state the obvious, albeit in that rather mechanistic way of yours.

state the obvious, after in that rather mechanistic way of yours

**Censor** The *obvious*?! –

**Fontaine** Where's the character, the subtext, the detail -?

Censor The character, the -?!! Are you being serious?! It's two people, on a

bed - wanking and shagging and sucking each other off!!! That's all

it is! There isn't even any dialogue!!

Pause

Fontaine You don't see it.

**Censor** But I do! I see the relationship! I see what you're trying to do!

I doubt if anyone else will! But that's it! There's nothing else to be

had from it! And if you think there is, then ... -!

Fontaine Then what?

Pause

**Censor** Then I don't know if I can help you anymore.

Pause

**Fontaine** You have to.

**Censor** Why do I have to?

**Fontaine** I told you: this film is important...

**Censor** To the world. Yes, I remember.

**Fontaine** I'm serious!

You think the world will stay this way?

You think this is the highest level we'll reach?

Read the newspapers, Mr censor: artificial insemination, cloning,

male contraception -

Very soon, sex will be completely divorced from reproduction.

You think it'll just disappear?

No, it'll be free to evolve into the most sophisticated level of interaction attainable: a completely universal non-verbal language.

Think about that! What that'll mean!

No more repression! No more witch hunts – A world absolutely without guilt or shame! And one by one all the institutions that've got fat on that shame – the church, the courts, the social services, even this rotten building we're in now – they'll fall, Mr Censor!

They'll come crashing down!

And the people we dare to call perverts and deviants – the victims of this war – the good humane people we've criminalized and traumatised, they'll be recognised for what they truly are:

Visionaries! (Pause) Visionaries.

And that's why you have to learn to *see*! Because you go on about *Brief Encounter* but this subtlety you cherish so much, it's just lies, that's all, lies dressed up as good taste and yes this film is every bit as rich, every bit as moving, and every bit as detailed.

This film is the first artefact of a truly liberated future. And the day it can be shown in every multiplex in the land to every man, woman and child is the day we'll know the human race has come of age.

Now, it's good that you see the relationship, but that's only the first level. Could you tell, for instance, that the man's previous girlfriend was Asian? That the woman had been brought up in care? Could you see any of that?

Long Pause

Censor

No. (Pause) I couldn't.

**Fontaine** 

It's there, right in front of your eyes. If you can see beyond the

image.

Pause

Censor

Why me, Miss Fontaine? Why's it so important that I should see

this? Because you think I can help you?

**Fontaine** 

You can.

Censor

I told you what they call this place.

We're virtually lepers down here.

I go to the canteen, people move to another table.

I don't even have access past the third floor.

Pause

D'you understand? I can't guarantee this recommendation will pass. I just don't have the power. So if it's *that* – if it's just *that* – then

you're wasting your time with me.

Pause

Is it just that?

Pause

Fontaine

I want you to see.

She kneels down in front of him, puts her hand on his crotch.

I was right, wasn't I? You are impotent.

Pause

Censor

You're just guessing. You don't know.

Pause

Fontaine

I was right about one of your parents being ill, wasn't I?

Censor

Someone told you. You found out some how. It doesn't prove anything.

**Fontaine** 

There were many infidelities because of that illness. You saw how sex can destroy lives. But they loved each other too, and that was the most confusing thing. Because for all your talk about sex meaning love, it's you that can't bring them together. If you could, you wouldn't still be with your wife. No, sex is as much a mystery to you as happiness is. Something you can only watch and envy. But all that's obvious. There's something more specific. Your impotence isn't medical. This is about shame.

You have a fantasy you're ashamed of.

You think of your wife as this deeply sexual being but you know even she wouldn't approve of it. Maybe you even asked her to do it once.

Yes and she was disgusted, wasn't she? And if this highly sexual woman could be so disgusted, who else would ever be different?

But you know there are girls that do it. You've seen it on the screen. Girls being forced to degrade themselves to feed to sordid fantasies of misfits like you. And you hate those misfits, don't you? You hate them because they're too weak to rise above their desires. And where are we if we can't rise above our desires? You've done it. But you've paid a price, haven't you?

So what could this fantasy be?

Censor

Miss Fontaine – this is all very – entertaining but –

**Fontaine** 

If it was sado-masochistic you could easily indulge it with prostitutes, and anyway you're visual not tactile. This is about watching. Watching something taboo. Somewhere in your childhood, you saw this thing and had your first strong sexual feeling. You haven't buried it. You know what it is because you think about it when you masturbate.

Pause

What did you see? Was it inside?

Pause. Her hand on his crotch.

No. Outside then? (*Pause*) Something taboo. Something violent? (*Pause*) No.

Pause. She smiles.

Oh, Mr Censor. How beautiful. How absolutely beautiful.

#### Scene Ten

Miss Fontaine lays newspaper down on the floor.

The Censor watches.

Fontaine encourages him to touch himself.

She raises her skirt and squats. The censor watches, touching himself more vigorously.

It takes her a while, but eventually she defecates.

She cleans herself, then moves away.

The Censor is in a state of extreme arousal.

She beckons him to come forward and make love to her. He does.

# Scene Eleven

Wife

All right. Have it your way.

We'll just pretend nothing's happened, shall we? I'll read my paper and you sit there staring into space and we'll just hope it goes away

like we've always done.

Pause

# **Scene Twelve**

Long Pause

Censor

Where are you going?

**Fontaine** 

New York.

Pause

Censor

Another film?

Fontaine

No. An installation. At a gallery.

Pause

Censor

When?

Fontaine

Tomorrow morning. Seven o'clock

Pause. The Censor exhales, winded by the news.

It's all happened very quickly.

Censor

Yes...

Pause

Well, you know – we can continue when you get back –

**Fontaine** 

Yes. All right.

Pause, She prepares to go.

Censor

So does this installation involve getting repressed, anally retentive

apparatchiks to look beyond the image?

**Fontaine** 

(Faint smile) No. They're all very avant-garde. Believe it or not,

there's a few people even I find bizarre.

Censor

Well - thank god for that.

Long Pause

Have I done something?

Fontaine

Like what?

Censor

I don't know.

Pause

Like you said: it's all happened very quickly.

Pause, she extends her hand.

**Fontaine** 

Thank you for your help, Mr Censor. I appreciate it.

Pause

Censor

Why are you being like this?

**Fontaine** 

Like what?

Censor

(Pause) Well what about the film?

My time is valuable, you know. I can't afford to go wasting it on whimsical little projects that you can just walk away from when it

suits you.

Pause

**Fontaine** 

It doesn't suit me.

Pause. He puts her hand on his crotch.

Gently, she removes it. He places it back again.

Censor

Please. Don't be like this.

He uses her hand to touch himself.

You know all these things about me, but I don't know anything

about you.

Pause

There's time for that, isn't there?

**Fontaine** 

Yes. I'm sure there is.

She removes her hand.

But not just now.

Pause

**Censor** You're not the only person who sees things, you know. I see a few

things too.

Fontaine (Pause) What do you see?

**Censor** Things maybe you don't.

Pause

Fontaine What?

Censor I see someone who's running away from herself. Someone who's

running away from the truth.

**Fontaine** The truth.

Pause

**Censor** Something happened to you.

**Fontaine** What?

**Censor** I don't know. Something.

**Fontaine** Oh I see. You need an explanation.

Pause

Censor

You like to think you're on some higher level but you're just as

fucked as everyone else. All that stuff about artefacts and

visionaries, I mean listen to yourself -!

**Fontaine** 

I have to go now

He intercepts her, physically stopping her.

Censor

Don't. Not yet.

Pause

I've just – I've been looking forward to – talking to you –

**Fontaine** 

I know, but I've got things to do –

Censor

They can wait ten minutes, can't they?!

**Fontaine** 

Let go of me.

Pause

Censor

Is this because of... what we did?

**Fontaine** 

No.

Censor

Because I wouldn't ask you to do it again -

**Fontaine** 

You didn't ask me the first time.

Censor

No, that's right I didn't. I didn't ask for any of this –

**Fontaine** 

(Pause) Let go of my wrists.

Censor

Don't talk to me like that, as if I'm just some stranger!

**Fontaine** 

I'm not. I just have to go.

Censor

All of a sudden you just have to go? And that's nothing to do with

the other night?

**Fontaine** 

No. Nothing.

Censor

Liar. I can see the disgust in your eyes.

**Fontaine** 

No-

Censor

No, it's all right. You dug down into me and now you're disgusted by what you found. But it's you that did it. I didn't ask you to. It's you that squatted there with everything showing and did it, so maybe you should save some of that disgust for yourself -!

He has shaken her too violently. He lets go of her, shocked by his lack of control.

Pause

I'm sorry. I didn't mean that. Really.

It's just – I've – never – I've never felt –

He embraces her. She does not resist. Her hands run up his back. They breathe together.

They Kiss.

Eventually they separate.

You'll call me when you get back, won't you?

Pause. She nods.

I'm going to sort it all out with my wife.

Pause

I'm just saying.

Fontaine

Good.

She walks away.

Censor

I'll do some more work on the recommendation.

She climbs the staircase.

But there's only so much I can do. I still can't see what you see.

She stops at the top of staircase.

**Fontaine** 

Don't worry.

Pause

You will.

#### **Scene Thirteen**

Wife sits, wearing dressing-gown and reading the morning paper.

Censor

What time did you come in?

Wife

Don't know. Four-ish.

Long Pause

Censor

Where did you sleep?

Wife In the spare room. I didn't want to wake you.

Pause

**Censor** Where were you?

Wife Catherine had a few people over for dinner.

Long pause

**Censor** Was David there?

Wife (Pause) He was there for a while.

Long Pause

He wants to talk to you.

Pause

**Censor** What about?

Wife You know...

Pause

The situation.

Pause

I said I didn't know.

Pause. He smiles.

What's funny?

Pause

He doesn't want to be your enemy.

He's got nothing against you.

Pause

He just wants you to see there are feelings involved here.

Pause

Censor What do *you* want?

Pause

Wife Yes. I want that too.

Pause

So?

Pause

(Exasperated) Will you meet him?

Long Pause

Say something!

Pause

All right. Have it your way

We'll just pretend nothing's happening, shall we?

I'll read my paper and you sit there staring into space and we'll just

hope it all goes away like we've always done.

Pause

Censor

No, I'll say something.

Wife

No, fuck it, Frank. Go and have your egg and you... toast fucking

soldiers.

Long Pause

Censor

There's no point in meeting him.

Wife

If you say so.

Censor

There is no point in meeting him because -

Wife

Don't you know this woman?

Censor

Listen to me –

Wife

Shirley Fontaine – Didn't she make that film you were working on?

Pause

Censor

She's in the paper?

Wife

She's been murdered – (Pause) Yes, look – She was working on an exhibition – 'controversial film which was recently banned by the

exhibition – controversial film which was recently ballied by the

Board of Classification' - must be the same person -

Long Pause

Censor

What uh...

Pause

What happened?

Pause

Wife

She was beaten to death in a hotel room. In New York. (Pause)

God, what a horrible way to go.

Pause

Did you actually meet her?

Pause

Censor

Um... no... not really... I ... um...

He tries to control himself, but the tears come

Pause. She sees he is upset.

Wife

Look – I'm sorry. I know this is hard for you, but it's hard for all of us. And you just don't say anything.

He is breaking down, shuddering, making those noises that grief causes.

She goes to him. Comforts him.

You don't have to meet him. I just don't know what else to do.

Pause

We'll work it out. We always do.

# Scene Fourteen

The Censor sits in his office, watching the film. And, after a while, he smiles.

# The End

# Appendix 5

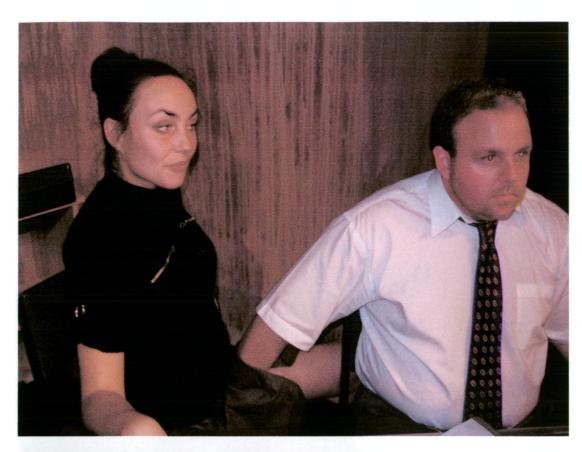
# The Censor

# **Production Photography**

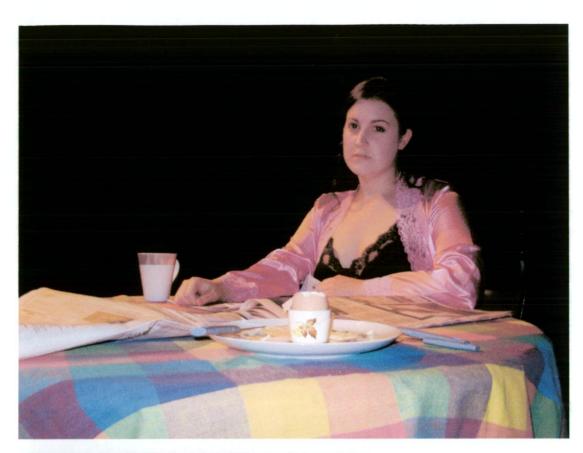
Photography of Production May 2006













## 'Heads in the Sand'

## Script

Written and Directed by Geoffrey P. Dobson First Performed 15 September 2004 The Studio - Inveresk Railyards

## Heads in the Sand

## ©2004

Character 1 (C.1)	Convicted Paedophile. (Second Sentence)
Character 2 (C.2)	Convicted of Accessory to Armed Robbery. (Short Term)
Character 3 (C.3)	Convicted Murderer. (Long Term)
Character 4 (C.4)	Convicted Paedophile. (First Sentence)

The play is set from inside a local prison. Giving the impression that this could occur in any community. C.1 and C.4 talk to the audience as if they were talking to a counsellor. C.2 and C.3 act oblivious to C.1 and C.4.

C.4	You want to know when it started?
C.1	You think being in here is really going to help us?
C.4	What do you mean when it started?
C.1	No one wants to help.
C.4	You don't understand at all.
C.1	Do you really think you're helping?
C.4	You're not helping.
C.1	How do you help people like us? You're asking me?  Has it occurred to you people that maybe we don't want any help. Maybe we don't need any help. Maybe I am perfectly happy just the way I am.  Yeah I believe you. I really do. But maybe people like us can't be helped.
C.4	And this is your answer? Incarceration. Nice.
C.1	It's not much fun, no. But you get use to it, like anything. Don't suppose they will let me out now, being a danger to society and all. You've got no idea have you?
C.2 E	nters space with linen and clothing.
C.2	G'day. I'll be your new live in maid. Where can I put me stuff?
Silenc	e.

Oh this room here looks nice, (indicating any appropriate set piece) I might have this one. If that is O.K. with you, I mean?

### Pause

I'm inmate G210, see it's printed right here on me shirt, right here with some shitty spray paint. Anyway what's your name? Me friends call me...

C.3 Turns away before C.2 can finish what he is about to say.

C.2 Yeah, no worries. I've just come up from the remand centre you see. Yeah, spent bout three weeks in that holiday house. You know what it's like. It takes time for the judge to work out which is the front door to the courthouse and which is the back. Not bad place to live though, the centre, bit draughty though, hay. You ever been there? Probably a bit more colourful than this joint.

### Pause

Tell you what, I am a bit hungry after that bus ride, how about I ring down to room service and get them to send us something up. No, no just joking mate. I think you and me are going get on great.

C.1 You've got no idea what it is like to be in here, have you? They didn't give you the guided tour or the complementary service booklet on the way in, did they? No, when you leave here you just go back to your regular Mickey Mouse lives. No problems for you.

Seeing you missed the tour let me fill you in on the basics.

Do you know that every inmate is entitled to three meals a day, and at least one should be hot.

### Pause

That's better than anything I got at home.

Every mainstream prisoner should be permitted eight hours a day outside their cell, at least one hour a day outdoors. Cells should be kept at minimum temperature of 16 degrees Celsius, and each prisoner should have one cubic metre of fresh or purified air every three minutes.

C.2 Yeah so you know, I was just minding the car. That was my part in the whole deal. I didn't even have a bloody gun. It was me mate in the bank that stuffed it up for the lot of us, you see. The stupid bloody judge called me an accessory to armed robbery. What a crock. Accessory makes me sound like a bloody necklace or something. I watch the Bill, never seen any one booked for accessory to armed robbery. Maybe they made it up? I mean, I didn't know that they were going to shoot at anyone. Came as a bit of a shock to me. I was just ready to drive, you know. Punch the gas and go. Do you know they got security cameras outside the banks now, they're there to catch dodgy looking bastards hanging around? Yeah I didn't know. You might though. Oh well enough about me what you, what you in for.

### Long Pause

Come on, you show me yours I'll show you mine, kind of deal.

- C3 You talk too much.
- C.1 Prisoners will be issued with two rolls of toilet paper per month. If you loose your toilet paper or if someone happens to steal it, you will be wiping your arse with your hand.
- C.2 You wouldn't have any spare bog roll mate?
- C.3 What?
- C.2 Bog roll, you know, for wiping your bum. I'll swap you some soap.
- C.3 I got soap.

C.2	How about some smokes? You want some smokes?
C.3	I got plenty of smokes.
C.2	Uh shit, um, (Looking about the space) I got some playing cards, you are quite welcome to them. No? Phone credits, do you want some phone credits? You could call someone. Call for a pizza, anything?
C.3	I don't need anything.
C.2	Well do think you think you could lend me some bog roll, O.K. out of the kindness of your heart.
C.3	What happened to yours?
C.2	What happened to mine! What happened to mine? Well you see I went for a stroll down to the local shop, bought a needle and thread, then sewed me self a lovely whizzing scarf, to wrap around my neck at night when it gets cold. What the bloody hell do you think I did with it? I wiped my arse.
C.3	(Handing C. 2 some toilet paper) You know you should really be more careful with your toilet paper.
C.2	Ta.
C.4	You are asking me how I did it? Are you serious?
Pause	
	Oh. You don't know. Well use your imagination.

C.3 is seen washing in a tub, placed in the corner of the space. C.2 is watching from his bunk.	
C.2	What's that scar from bud, you have heart problems?
C.3	No.
C.2	What? You had your appendix out or something? My mate had his appendix taken out and he was left with a whopping big scar, like that one. His nearly burst on him. Stupid bloody doctors gave him the wrong anaesthetic, nearly killed him. They said that
C.3	It's not from having my appendix taken out.
C.2	Then what is it mate?
C.3	It is nothing for you to worry your pretty little head about.
C.2	But I do worry mate. You and me, we're great buds, locked in here together. You known, I mean where are we gonna go. We can't get away from each other, can we? It's not like 'I am just going to pop down and watch the footy love', is it. So the way I see it, you and I ought to be friends. What do you reckon? This way I can watch your back and you can watch mine.
C.3	I don't need you to watch my back.
C.2	Sure you do, it's a pretty wild place in here mate.
Pause	
C.3	What's it been now, two weeks?

- C.2 This will be two months, this weekend. I mean with the remand and everything.
- C.3 They will name a block after you soon. The 'Two-month, know-it-all block'.
- C.2 See I knew it, you're a funny fella, aren't yah.

Long Silence

- C.3 It's called a death star.
- C.2 Death star, what? Star Wars? What the hell has... I didn't go much on Star Wars come to think of it.
- C.3 A death star is where you take two bits wire. Small gauge wire. They only need to be so long (indicating a couple of centimetres with his fingers). You have to use wire because it's sharp and smooth and won't deteriorate. The sort of wire you get from the coat hangers in the laundry room. You just keep bending and bending the coat hanger until the little bit breaks off. You get the two pieces of wire, put them in a star shape and tie a rubber band round the middle. Once you do that you twist it, so the two pieces of wire are in line with each other. Then you tie a piece of string around one end of the wires. That's a death star.
- C.2 You lost me, what the hell are you on about?
- C.3 Well you see, then you can swallow it.
- C.2 Why the hell would I want to...
- C.3 The acid in your stomach will dissolve the string much quicker than the rubber band. When the string has dissolved the wires spring out into it original star shape, piercing the inside of your stomach.

#### Pause

Each time it happens they just reopen the same cut. Saves leaving you with too many.

- C.2 Why?
- C.3 You're too fresh to understand. But you will.

### Pause

Because of this. This place. No one can live here. I can't live here, I can't sleep in here. A death star won't kill you. But it will buy you a few weeks in the infirmary. And that is a hell of lot better than being in here. A hell of a lot better!

C.1 Drinking water should be readily available. Special diets should always be available on medical grounds and where ever possible on religious and philosophical grounds.

C.2 and C.3 are seen walking in a circular motion around the given performance space.

- C.2 So why is it, that we get more time in the yard on Sunday?
- C.3 Sunday is the day of Christ, the day of rest.
- C.2 The what? Don't shit me. Really? Thank Christ for that.
- C.3 That's the way it works.
- C.2 Couldn't imagine too many people in here would want to go to church on Sunday.

- C.3 You would be surprised.
- C.4 You really don't know what to do with people like us do you? Hell, why not throw them in prison, stamp them 'S', send you in for a mind fuck once a week.
- C.1 Every prisoner should be able to bathe in hot water once a week after strenuous exercise or dirty work. Prisoners should have ready access to washable facilities, particularly before meals and after using the toilet. There should be one toilet and one wash basin for every ten prisoners. Each prisoner should be provided with adequate clothing.

Scene opens with C.2 being flung onto his bed. He has obviously been beaten. He is coughing blood and crying. A short scene is acted out between C.2 and C.3, where C.3 mothers C.2. He is seen gathering water and washing down C.2's face, mopping up his vomit and blood. The scene concludes with C.3 placing his own blanket on top of C.2. And lying beside him in a loving fashion.

### C.3 To Himself

C.3 I've been here a while. You see some things. I saw this one thing, it would make you sick. You see there was this one guy, a filthy prick, used to do it with the little ones. What do you call them, a preb, a pred, a Michael Jackson type of person. Anyway one day they caught him in the wash room by himself you see. They grabbed him, held him down. They had a piece of electrical conduit, about so round. (*Indicating a round cylinder about one inch in diameter*) The ones holding him down pulled his arse apart, the other one drove this piece of pipe deep inside. Then they ever so gently threaded a piece of razor wire up the conduit. After leaving him to contemplate that for

a few moments, and enjoy the sensation, they quickly removed the conduit, leaving the razor wire in his arse.

#### Pause

He's fucked now.

During the following scene C.1 and C.4 begin to communicate with each other.

- C.4 You have honestly never thought about it have you? But you've read about it. You've heard about it. If you really thought about it, you would know someone who did it. It's everywhere, don't fool yourself. Don't hide from it. Embrace it.
- C.1 And finally 'Special' prisoners have access to a counsellor, you. And that's what its like. It's better in here than on the outside. In here you get the creature comforts.

### Pause

You talk to the other ones don't you?

There is one who says it's all around you. And he is right you know. It's everywhere. I wouldn't go as far as saying embrace it, I don't know what to do. But this, this isn't the answer. You can't be helped in here. By labelling us 'S' for special, that doesn't help anyone.

- C.4 But this therapy, wow, its cleansing isn't it? It really helps me. It helps you too. You choose to ignore it. It's easier for you that way. You can't ignore it now. You have to face it, accept it.
- C.1 How do you know what's it like? You've never been on this side before. You haven't done what I've done.
- C.4 You want to know what it's like? You want me to tell you what it's like?

### Laughs

What do you want me to say? You want the details left in or out?

C.1	You don't want to know.
C.4	You want to know it all? Well
C.1	You don't want to know anything.
C.4	If you must know how it started, it found me! They wanted to be with me!
C.1	You had to ask.
C.4	It was beautiful really. Little things to begin with. Then it got bigger. We would start going to the movies or to the parks on the way home. I talked to them, made jokes, laughed, had fun. They trusted me.
C.1	Stop it.
C.4	We were friends. We played together. We had little parties together.
C.1	Stop it.
C.4	We touched. They touched me. I touched them. I stroked them. They stroked me.
C.1	Enough!
C.4	I loved them and they loved me.
C.1	Stop!
C.4	When you love someone, you'll do anything.

C.1	Sick.
C.4	What? Don't
C.1	You're sick
C.4	Don't
C.1	You make me
C.4	Don't talk to me.
C.1	You're a vicious parasite.
C.4	Don't you start.
C.1	You're a monster.
C.4	You are the one who hurts them.
C.1	This isn't about me.
C.4	You hurt them!
C.1	No!
C.4	You hurt them bad. All you were interested in was fucking them.
C.1	This isn't about me, it's about you.
C 4	You didn't care for them, you were only interested in

C.1 NO!

C.4 Fucking them, weren't you. You hurt them, you ripped them, then you discarded them. Torn apart, left to rot.

**Break** 

Easy prey that's all they are to you. You don't love them. I love them. You Fucked Them. YOU FUCKED THEM.

Long Pause, even sobbing.

C.1 When I hear about it, when I read about it. I want to know how it happened.

I want to know how they did it. I want to know how they got them to go
with them. How they got them to trust them. How they touched them, how
they felt, how they warmed them up.

Pause

I want to know how they fucked them? I want to know where, what? Did they fuck boys, did they fuck girls, in their little cunts or in the little arse? Did they suck, did they get sucked? Did they cum? Did they cum inside them, or on them, did they wear a franger? Did it break? Did they bleed?

Long Pause

C.4 Pig!

C.3 How do you feel?

C.2 All right.

C.3 The bruising is going down.

C.2 Yep. C.3 Want to let me know what happened? C.2 No! C.3 I could help. Remember you show me yours I'll show you mine. You watch my back, I'll watch yours. C.2 Look I got worked over, no big deal. It happens to everyone. C.3 It doesn't happen to everyone. You're just one of the lucky ones. It can't happen to you if you're not here. C.2 What are you on about? We're here aren't we? How can we not be here, you fucking wanker? C.3 Listen to me, you stupid bastard. When you got here you made such a noise you made sure every inmate knew you had arrived. Look, this is your first real stretch right? C.2. Yeah. C.3 Well there are some things you can put under your hat. May save you from being belted again. Your body has to be here but your mind doesn't. All you have to do in here is enough to stay alive. That doesn't include talking. Then your time is up. Before you know it you're out of here. It is that simple. C.2 I Don't need your help. C.3 Look, what are you used to, ha? You're used to going for a drive when you want, eat when you want, talk when you want, fuck when you want. Let me tell you what's happening to you. You're going from having everything. To

nothing! Let me tell you what you got here. You got two uniforms, a blanket, two sheets and your most valued possession is your bloody toothbrush. And that is a shit load more important than any car, any house, any girlfriend you ever had.

- C.2 Yeah right.
- C.3 What you think this is funny cockhead? Look, you shit off the wrong people in here mate, and they will come in here and piss on your toothbrush and shit in your mouth just for the fun of it. You think I'm a mean bastard? There are people in this place mate, living next to you that kill people, cut their bodies up, mince the shit and feed it to fucking their dogs. It doesn't bother them, unleashing worlds of pain on top of you. They get off on it. If they want to hold you down and ride your arse into the long hours of the morning they will. The only way to avoid this is to become invisible. For Christ's sake, just do your time, and do it with as little fuss as you can manage, and you'll be back to your scum arse life in no time.
- C.4 This is their answer for us, prison. It doesn't matter what sort you are, It doesn't help either. How can it? You can escape here through your mind. You can leave. You can't get hurt if you are not here to feel it.
- C.1 They can't help us. The system doesn't help us. They can't help us any better than stick us in here, class us as 'S' for special and forget about us. They stick us in solitary to protect us. Then after months of thinking about it, wanking to the thought of it, we go straight back to where we began.
- C.4 Us! We! I am not the same as you.
- C.1 Yes you are. You are exactly the same.They don't know what to do with us you see. The authorities say we have a mental illness and should be institutionalised, the doctors say that we have

committed a crime and should be sent to prison. No one wants to deal with it.

(Indicating Audience)

That is except you, of course.

- C.4 I'm not the same as you, I loved them.
- C.1 You raped them just like I did. And now you have to pay.
- C.4 I didn't hurt them. I loved them. I truly loved. It was natural. It is natural to love. To be with someone you love. If you have the feelings, you shouldn't have to fight it. It is instinct. It's human instinct. Before the world filled with crap, man was free to live by his desires, by his needs. Its been proven you know?

What I do wasn't always frowned upon. I was just born in the wrong generation that's all. People for centuries before us, were having relationships with children. In England you could once make love to a child of the age of ten. Marry a child. And not that long ago. What has happened, now you get locked up if you offer a sweet young girl a lollypop! It's not like I want to hurt them. I love them with all my heart. I fall in love with them naturally. And they too fall in love with me. There is nothing wrong with that, people shouldn't be castrated for it. It's an instinct, a desire and it's beautiful.

C.2 is seen packing up his belongings, preparing to leave the cell.

- C.2 Well this is it.
- C.3 Yeah.
- C.2 Hay, don't worry, I am sure you'll get parole soon too.

C.3	I wouldn't bet on that.
C.2	Well, thanks for everything.
C.3	No worries. You get your dole?
C.2	Yeah, three hundred and sixty bucks.
C.3	Oh, yeah. Three hundred and sixty. That'll go far.
C.2	Yeah, might buy me self a house.
Pause	
C.2	Well I had better go, they're calling me.
C.3	Yep.
C.2	Maybe I'll drop by some time. See how you're doing.
C.3	Yep
C.2	Right then.
C.3	Yep.
C.2	Yeah well
C.3	You had better go, you'll miss the free bus.
C.2	Yeah.

- C.3 Yeah.
- C.2 Well I'll be off then.
- C.3 Good.
- C.2 Turns, Pauses
- C.2 What the hell am I meant to do now!
- C.1 I've got a problem. I know I have. I don't deny it. There is something wrong with me, in my head, has to be, but what can I do? I can't go to the doctor, I can't go to the police I can't even go to my family. Every time it happens I tell myself it will be the last time. That I won't do it again, that I'm over it. Then something always has to happen. That just lures me back in. I see an advertisement with a young girl, all dolled up, you know with the make-up and everything. Or I see them walking home from school, with their skirts cut that short it's up round their ear holes. It's their mothers' fault really. Every time, I'll never do it again.

Do you know what it is like to go your house, your home, to where you live, and have a door slam in your face? I bet you, you go home and your wife has everything laid out for you when you get there. Your kids come up to you and tell what they have been doing during the day, they show you pictures of what they have drawn at school, pictures of the house, pictures of the family. Pictures of you. Your lovely wife has already cooked dinner for you, roast meat with baked potatoes, gravy and you sit around the table like one big happy family.

### Pause

Let me tell you what it is like when I go home. I go through my door, my kids don't run up to me, they don't show me what they've done at school, they run away from me, they hide from me, they are scared of me. Do you

know what it is like when your own kids are scared of you? They run away! They don't talk to you, no daddy this, or daddy that. My wife, she doesn't greet me. She doesn't cook for me. She doesn't set a table for me. She doesn't know me!

At night. You can not begin to imagine what it is like at night. You can't sleep. You just can't sleep. For some reason in your own bedroom there is too much space, too much. I have to get out of my bed and go to sleep in a car. Why, because for the past four years I have slept in a room no bigger than a ten by eight. And sleeping in my bedroom at my home scares the living shit out of me. It scares me so much that I have to cram myself into a small arse car that doesn't even fucking go. Just to sleep, just to sleep. You can't begin to imagine what it is like.

I go to the shops, the place where I used to shop and nobody will serve me, and nobody will come near me. I go to a checkout, the check out closes, go to another, it closes. I eventually go to the one remaining checkout that can't close because it stuffs up all the other customers. They have to serve me then. They have to. And you wonder why I repeat offend. Where's the help.

### Pause

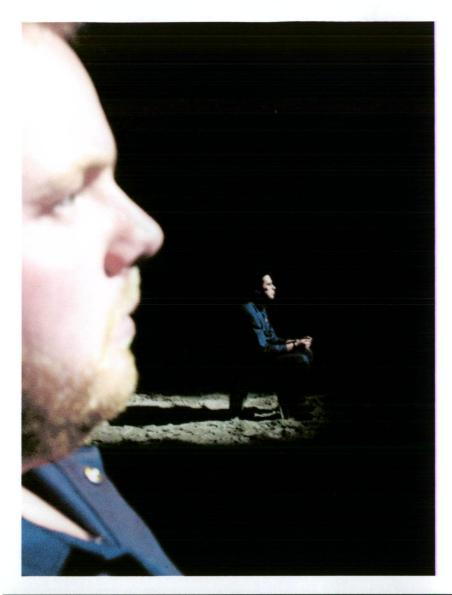
Its not like that when I am in here. If I go to the bench I get served, people don't run away from me. They don't help me, but at least they don't treat me like I don't exist!

## Appendix 7

'Heads in the Sand'

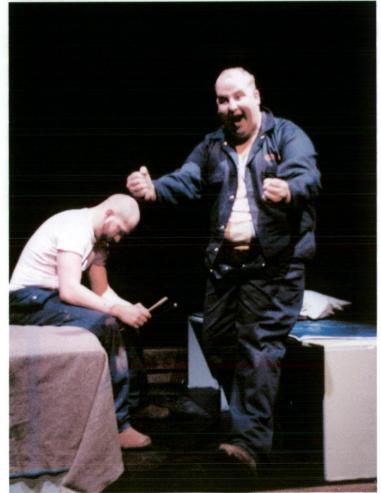
**Production Photography** 

Photography of Production 15 September 2004









## Appendix 8

### 'Ruled Lines'

### **Performance Program**

Compiled by Geoffrey P. Dobson March 2007

## Appendix 9

### The Censor

## **Performance Program**

Compiled by Geoffrey P. Dobson May 2006

## Appendix 10

### **Prologue for Potentials**

### Program

Theatre North's Script Reading Series Of which 'Ruled Lines' was read 20 August 2006

## Appendix 11

### Prologue for Potentials

### **Program**

Theatre North's Script Reading Series Of which 'Ruled Lines' was read 8 September 2006



# Theatre Morth

Theatre North's mission is to facilitate the provision and promotion of quality performing arts and entertainment to the community of Northern Tasmania, through the management of the Princess Theatre and Earl Arts Centre and the presentation of an annual programme.

Theatre North is an independent, non-profit organisation, established in 1995, and funded by the State Government and the City of Launceston.

Theatre North presents an annual season of professional performing arts from around Australia - productions which Launceston audiences would not otherwise have the opportunity to see. In addition, it supports the development of locally produced theatre and dance.

Theatre North also manages the Princess Theatre and Earl Arts Centre, under a lease agreement with the Launceston City Council.

For further details please contact. Theate North on 6323 3270 or at the Box Office on 6323 3666.



# Prologue for Potentials

Script Reading Series

Nuala O'Flaherty Auditorium, QVMAG Inveresk Sunday 8 September

a collaboration between Theatre North and the QVMAG



## About the Project

Theatre North in partnership with the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery welcome you to this, the last installment of *Prologue for Potentials* for 2006.

The project aims to assist emerging playwrights with the development of their work, by giving them the opportunity to hear feedback from the audience, actors and director in an informal setting.

The two plays we will read today, while although vastly different in content and theatrical form, share a number of themes including intense relationships, love, separation and conflict. It should be an interesting afternoon for the audience, the actors and the playwrights and we look forward to your responses.

Over the past 2 years we have been fortunate enough to hear the works of Pete McGrandle, Emily McMahon, Chris Rattray, David Orlando, Scott McAteer, Nigel McKinlay, Michelle Best, Liz Dobell, Stephanie Briarwood, Geoff Dobson and Jodie O'Donoghue. The playwrights have found the feedback from all involved invaluable in the further development of their plays.

Theatre North would like to thank the playwrights, director and actors who have contributed so generously to the series, as well as you, the audience, for your suggestions and opinions.

Thank you for supporting the development of new Tasmanian Theatre. We hope you enjoy the two works we present to you today.

## Remember!

The Esk Café is just across the way from the Nuala O'Flaherty Auditorium. A great place for coffee & cake!

## The Plays

Go

by Jodie O'Donoghue

... in a house...

A Note from the Playwright: I would like to dedicate this performance to Winnie, a beautiful little girl on loan to me for 16 years. The truest friend who loved me always, even when I didn't deserve it. I love and miss you terribly.

### Ruled Lines 3

by Geoff Dobson

... in a kitchen / interrogation room ...

The Cast

Stephanie Briarwood Andrew Charman Williams Annelies Crowe Stuart Loone

directed by Jane Johnson moderated by John Lohrey

-11/11

## Theatre North presents

# TAIKOZ

Thursday 24 August at 8pm Friday 25 August at 6.30pm Princess Theatre

This is the TaikOz credo: "to beat with every muscle, bone and sinew in our bodies, with an open and joyous spirit".

From the sonic boom of the 250kg grand drum (created by Tasmanian craftsmen) to the ethereal tone of the bamboo flute, this is an unforgettable event.

Taiko drumming demands extreme physical and mental discipline, endurance and strength.

TaikOz trains vigorously, aiming to beat not only with their bodies, but also with their collective hearts and souls. Radiating energy, their performance is a unique theatrical and musical experience showing great virtuosity, athleticism and ritual.

The seven members of TaikOz present a fusion of East and West, ancient and modern, Japanese and Australian. With a sound that is at once bone-shatteringly powerful and hauntingly delicate, TaikOz has received standing ovations and critical raves wherever they have performed.

### **DETAILS:**

Adults \$36, Concessions \$27

(Accepted concessions for this show are: Pension, Seniors, Healthcare & Full

Time Student Cards.)

Running Time: 1 Hour 30 minutes



# Prologue for Potentials

Script Reading Series

Nuala O'Flaherty Auditorium, QVMAG Inveresk Sunday 20 August

a collaboration between Theatre North and the QVMAG



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The two plays we will read today, while although vastly different in content and theatrical form, share a number of themes including intense relationships, love, death and conflict. It should be an interesting afternoon for the audience, the actors and the playwrights and we look forward to your responses.

In our 2005 season, we were fortunate enough to hear the works of Pete McGrandle, Emily McMahon, Chris Rattray, David Orlando, Scott McAteer, Nigel McKinlay, Michelle Best and Liz Dobell. The playwrights found the feedback from all involved invaluable in the further development of their plays.

Theatre North would like to thank the playwrights, director and actors who have contributed so generously to the series, as well as you, the audience, for your suggestions and opinions.

Thank you for supporting the development of new Tasmanian Theatre. We hope you enjoy the two works we present to you today.

## Remember!

The Esk Café is just across the way from the Nuala O'Flaherty Auditorium. A great place for coffee & cake!

# The Plays

Cross

(an excerpt from the script) by Stephanie Briarwood

... on the road ...

Ruled Lines

by Geoff Dobson

... in a kitchen / interrogation room ...

The Cast

Annelies Crowe Michael Edgar Stuart Loone Carrie McLean

directed by David Quinn moderated by Michael Edgar, John Lohrey & Jane Johnson

## **Special Thanks**

University of Tasmania
School of Visual and Performing Arts
Cameron Creswell Agency Pty Ltd.

Mr. Michael Edgar

Dr. Deborah Malor

Mr. Rob Lewis

Mr Peter Hammond

Mr. Rick McCullock

Mr. Leigh Oswin

Mr. Stuart Loone

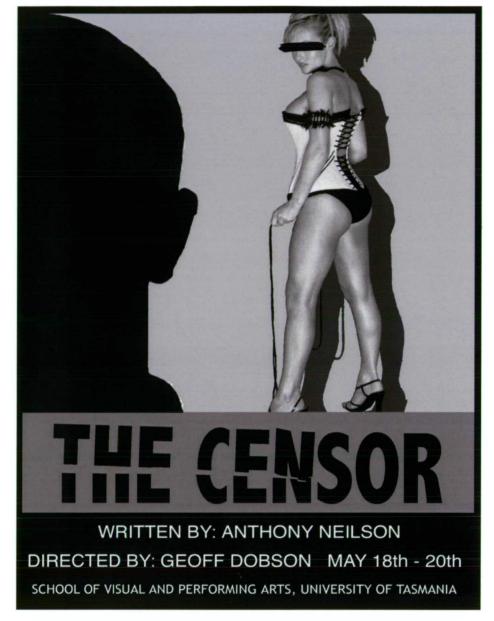
Ms. Sonia Brough

**BECKS Home Timber and Hardware** 

SM & SM Dobson



School of Visual & Performing Arts



WARNING
STRONG ADULT CONTENT & LANGUAGE

# THE CENSOR WRITTEN BY: ANTHONY NEILSON



**GEOFF DOBSON: Director** 

Geoff graduated from the SVPA with a BCA in 2003 and again with Honours in 2004. He last directed his own work in 2004, *Heads in the Sand*, which was recently performed at Wabash College, Indiana. He is currently working on achieving his Master of Fine Arts in Theatre at the SVPA. That will hopefully conclude in early

2007, where he will again write and direct his own work.

### **Director's Note:**

## **Indulging Censorship**

'Behind the Safety Curtain' was the name of the season in which Anthony Neilson's *The Censor* opened at the Royal Court, then at a West End theatre, the Duke of York. A six hundred-seat theatre was converted into a tight and unforgiving sixty-seat fishbowl, where audience members sat on pack-away chairs set on stage. The stage was set like – 'a dungeon in the cathedral of desire.'

That's been the feeling of *The Censor* from the outset. Its birth was at the Finborough Theatre, commissioned by the Red Room, in April of 1997; it took only two months to make it to the Duke of York.

The lurid story of a lonely man, trapped in his repetitive and numbing job as pornographic film censor, explores deep into sexual fantasies and the repression of such fantasies. The story follows the erotic meetings of the



ANNE GRAINGER: Wife

Anne is a 2004 graduate of the SVPA. Most recently she has appeared in Centr Stages' 2006 season of *Letf of Centr*. She was also involved in Stella Kents' *New Tasmanians* at the QVMAG. Currently completing a Bachelor of Teaching, Anne is looking forward to the challenges of this new career path. Although theatre and performance (however extreme) will always be her first love.

'Go and have your egg and your... toast fucking soldiers.'

## Stage Management



KATIE HILL: Stage Manager

Katie is currently studying her Bachelor of Contemporary Arts Honours Degree at the SVPA. Away from her Honours Katie has been busy working on *The Censor*, peeling bananas with her feet for Words Words Words (SDF 2006, Dozen), selling extremely large knifes in her part time job and getting hit by ridiculously hard hockey balls on Saturday afternoons. Upcoming projects include acting the role of Poppy in the Three River

Theatre Company's production of Noises Off, by Michael Frayn.

## **Technicians**

LAURA BISHOP: Sound Operator KATIE HILL: Lighting Operator

## **Production Crew**

CHRIS JACKSON: Production Manager ANNELIES CROWE: Publicity Officer

## The Cast



DAVID QUINN: The Censor

David Quinn has been acting in Tasmania for the last ten years. He is pretty sure that this won't last forever, but while it does, well, it's a bit of a lark. He has recently been on tour around Tassie's regional areas with the "One Day" tour series, produced by Tasmanian Regional Arts. David is also continuing to work on Tasmania's first movie review Podcast, listened to in over 40 countries by more than 2000 people each week;

(Cool) Shite on the Tube. His previous theatre roles have included multiple characters in *Telemachus Clay*, Jack in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (both by Three River Theatre) and Character one in Geoff Dobson's *Heads in the Sand*.

'I wont be able to hold my pen.'



**KERZLAKE:** Miss Fontaine

Kerzlake has both performed and worked technically in various theatre shows and short films across New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania. She is currently directing a self-written one-act play for this year Student Directed Festival (Dozen). Her play is titled *Elegant Maggots*.

'You could move those fingers about a bit if you like.'

Censor and Miss Fontaine, a pornographic filmmaker. They stem from the censor's refusal to pass Miss Fontaine's film. She tries to persuade the censor, using her womanly ways into giving her a licence for her film, but to no avail. The censor lives his work life the same way he does his home life, by the book and impervious to Miss Fontaine's efforts of persuasion. The Censor's self-proclaimed description as – 'some sort of repressed, anally retentive apparatchik' is symbolic of his unwillingness to co-operate with Miss Fontaine. He goes to work everyday with the knowledge that his wife is having, quite openly, an affair. She asks him - 'will you meet him there's feelings involved here'. The Censor's home life cuts in and out of the main story, as Miss Fontaine tries to explain to the Censor how her work is art and not hardcore pornography; how the two people on the screen in front of them are lovers and not just 'actors' in another adult film. She dares him to look past the actor – 'you're confusing the actor with the man, Mr Censor. Why did it happen to the man? Why would he not be able to stay erect whilst she masturbated him?'

The relationship between Miss Fontaine and the censor grows, and builds around the dangerous encounters they share. They discover more about each other. Miss Fontaine delves deep into the mind of the censor, to where the darkest fantasies lie. In her efforts to make the censor 'see', Miss Fontaine attempts to break the censor's impotence by performing his fantasy. The censor takes on a newfound strength in life, and love in Miss Fontaine. Abruptly his world comes crashing down, in his work life, home life and his relationship with Miss Fontaine. Through the sadness, the play reveals a man of tenderness, love and longing.

What is it that Neilson is attempting to do with *The Censor*? It is a bold look at sexual fantasies; it is also a question on censorship. Does it simply display a lifestyle, a relationship, man and wife, man and lover? The play has the ability to leave the audience searching for answers. As an audience member do you have to align yourself with an opinion? Neilson himself answers this question very well:

I'm always surprised at how the playwright is perceived as a kind of politician without allegiance...Tell a *story* and the themes will take care of themselves. (Neilson, 1998, ix)

What Neilson achieves through his story is not simply a 'shock-fest' play. Through Miss Fontaine's constant repetition of the words 'I want you to see', he achieves an honest look into the psyche of a person who freely

explores his desires and fantasies. The achievement in the play is that we don't judge or dwell on what has happened, but understand it and accept it.

When first received, reviews of *The Censor* were mixed. In support was the *Telegraph's* Charles Spencer who said:

Neilson confronts a taboo (on defecation) with an openness, and honesty that I would describe as Lawrentian if I didn't believe D. H. Lawerence to be a grotesquely overblown writer. (Sierz, 2001, 82)

### The Daily Mail called it:

A gripping brief encounter between a pornographic film actress and the man with the licensing scissors. A moving parable of the critic and artist as a healing, and finally tragic, love story.

Whether or not this is the best description of the play, it is the one *Methuen* chose as the quote to place on the back cover of the published play script! (Anthony Neilson *Plays: 1*, published in 1998, by Methuen)

It is hard to ignore the theme (questioning) of censorship of a fringe play titled *The Censor*, written in the mid 90's in Britain. Why? John Major had a 'back to basics campaign of moral rearmament' (Sierz, 2001, 82). A call for more censorship was England's answer to social problems. Neilson himself also had a strong interest in censorship. On one occasion the British Board of Censors sent him an inch thick document on how the board operated:

I would write to the British board of Censors and ask them why a film had been given a certain certificate – and they would write back.

(Sierz, 2001, 83)

But Neilson denies that *The Censor* is a comment on the state of censorship in Britain at the time, and more an investigation on 'self censorship':

I was fascinated by the idea of self censorship.' The figure of the censor is a good metaphor for 'all the things we hold down and cut out of our minds. (Sierz, 2001, 83)

Neilson sums up his thoughts on the play very bluntly:

I wanted people to come out of theatre not talking about the fact that they'd seen a woman take a shit onstage. (Sierz, 2001, 83)

The play examines the way in which prejudices are rooted in personal pain. 'If you're trapped in a sad, sexless marriage,' says Neilson, 'you're bound to react badly, resentfully, to any mention of sex.' Like other individuals, censors tend to 'react very strongly when it's something that touches their own weak spots.' People 'tend to shut out things that make them feel uncomfortable – this is natural, but it can have social consequences.' It's a question of power. (Sierz, 2001, 84)

I agree with the thoughts that *The Censor* is greater than simply 'shock' theatre. As director I wish to portray the 'story of the anally repressed apparatchik' without extravagant theatrics. The play is full of humour and outrageous situations at times, however my aim is to display a truthful and honest glimpse into the mind of an everyday and ordinary person.

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Director:

Geoff Dobson 2006 ISBN: 1 86295 315 5

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The Censor. By arrangement with:

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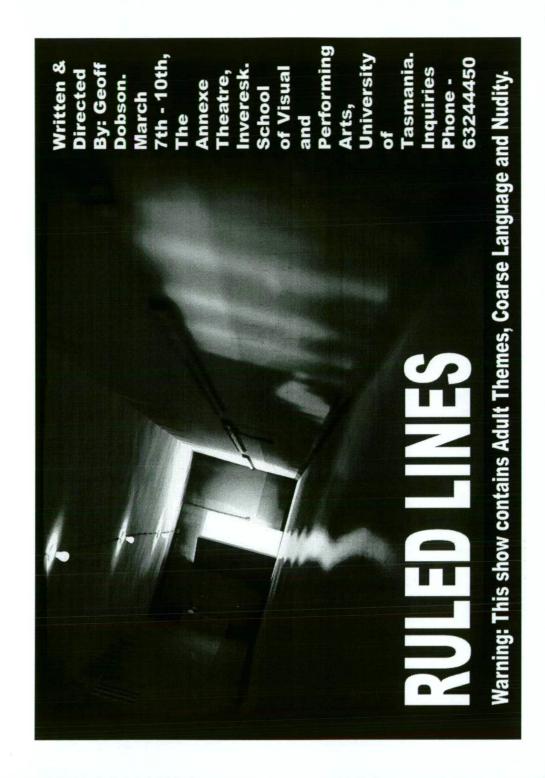
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**Second Office Furniture** 



## **Ruled Lines**

# Written and Directed by Geoff Dobson 7-10 March 2007

### TITS N' TABOOS.

I know it is an old saying, but if I had a dollar for every time in the last six weeks I've heard 'she's going to get her tits out', I would be a wealthy man. What great publicity, all these people with nothing better to talk about than a naked bust. But then again, breasts have often caused a stir, even back in 1952 when the Folies Bergère tour of Australia gave theatregoers their first sight of bare breasts which, according to law, had to remain static at all times.

I like to think *Ruled Lines* is more than a static boob tableau. It is a part of a greater, more complex sociological concept. This production is the result of two years of research into what I have defined as the Theatre of Taboos. The Theatre of Taboos is the theatrical recreation, simulation or discussion of taboo practice and behaviour. The theatre is a fascinating avenue for taboo behaviour because of its ability to recreate and simulate behaviour and activities in a realistic perspective, without the fear of the usual social sanctions. The theatre can enter the sub-cultural environments of taboos safely, presenting them to open society.

The word taboo is defined as strongly prohibited social practice. Taboo can refer to anything (food, place, activity, etc.) prohibited and/or forbidden. Taboo is socially derived, and categorised as a social norm; social norms being the shared rules for acceptable and unacceptable social behaviour. Sigmund Freud presents taboo as follows:

The meaning of 'taboo', as we see it, diverges in two contrary directions. To us it means, on the one hand, 'sacred', 'consecrated' and on the other 'uncanny', dangerous', 'forbidden', 'unclean'...

Thus 'taboo' has about it a sense of something unapproachable, and it is principally expressed in prohibitions and restrictions.

(Freud 2001, p.21)

Theatre of Taboos has the ability to reveal an insight into sub-cultural taboo environments. It can present an insight that can challenge the perceptions of

### **Production Crew**

**Production Manager:** Chris Jackson

**Publicity Manager:** Daniel Lizotte

Lighting Operator: Jess Brownrigg

Set Construction: Jack Pope

Elizabeth Jowett

Matt Hyde

Change Over Crew: Marcus McKenzie

**Dave Marshall** 

**Support Crew:** Rachael Stevens

Ken Nixon

Josh Lowe

**Tim Crack** 

Dave Marshall

Luke Vaessen

Marcus McKenzie



School of Visual & Performing Arts



## Cheyne Mitchell: Frank

Cheyne Mitchell's theatrical debut came in 1995 as *Mio* the line-dancing Cow, at a Launceston playgroup association's Teddy bears picnic. And though he may never reach those lofty heights again he has made a few appearances since, appearing in number of local shows. Most notably:

Jesus Christ Superstar, Launceston College (1999); Primed, Stompin Youth Dance Company (2002); Family running for Mr. Whippy, SVPA (2004); Heads in the Sand, SVPA (2004); Uncle Darryl's Chop Shop (2005); Unconscious but stable, TAFE Tasmania (2005); and T'was the night before Christmas, as a part of One day #4 (2006). Cheyne is currently studying for an Honours Degree at the SVPA. He will be performing in the up coming show Love, apart of the 2007 Centr Stage season, and in One day #5.



### Clare Leonard: Sonia

Clare graduated from the SVPA in 2006 and has since been trying to keep herself busy in whatever way possible. During her time at the SVPA she performed in a variety of shows, the most recent of which was *Terminal Murder* as part of the *It's About Us* celebrations. She was

ridiculously excited to be given the opportunity of performing in *Ruled Lines* and has thoroughly enjoyed the experience. It has been wonderful to work with such a talented group!

taboo behaviour held by society at large. The Theatre of Taboos presents the sacred, forbidden and unclean practices of society, bringing sub-cultural behaviour to a level where it can be viewed safely and allowing taboos to be discussed and social norms challenged.

Ruled Lines is designed to generate ambivalence, challenging inherent feelings of what is right and wrong, bringing into question moral and social value systems; offering an alternative view of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour according to society. The play presents a challenging perspective of the social norm, merging the taboo social aggregate with open society.

The use of partial nudity in the course of the production aims to reveal the taboo behaviour openly, honestly and without condemnation. The revealing process asks the questions of who is at fault, and what is taboo about the relationship being presented?

Essentially, the Theatre of Taboos is able to present taboo behaviour and question its capacity to be considered taboo in the first place. It's not all about the tits!

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# Ruled Lines Written and Directed by Geoffrey Dobson



Geoff graduated from the University of Tasmania with a BCA in 2003, and again with first class Honours in 2004. He has previously written: *Heads in the sand* (2004), which was recently performed at Wabash College, Indiana, (2006); *Hide and Seek* (2005), performed as part of the One Day 3 program; and *T'was the Night Before Christmas* (2006), performed as part of the

One day 4 program. Geoff has also recently acted in Centr Stage's *Hitchcock Blonde* (Nov' 2006), and Three River Theatre's *Telemachus Clay* (March 2006). Geoff's play *Ruled Lines* has previously been workshopped and read on two occasions for Theatre North's *Prologue for Potentials* script reading series, in August and October 2006. *Ruled Lines* is the culmination of two years of study in a Master of Fine Arts – specialising in Theatre, which Geoff hopes to receive on completion of this project.



## Laura Bishop: Stage Manager

Laura graduated from the SVPA in 2006, but is back for a year of honours. Over the last three years she has done everything from acting, directing, stage managing and even tour guiding, plus many other weird and wonderful things. As a tech her signatures have been wall construction and

staining and graining. Working with Geoff and the cast of *Ruled Lines* has been a great experience for Laura and she hopes to be doing lots or technical work in the future.

### The Cast



Stuart Loone: Adam

Stuart has worked in theatre for the last 10 years. As an actor, productions include A Number, Torrez, Hit & Run, Redemption, A Doll's House and Boz & Co. (Centr Stage); Telemachus Clay, Cosi, Dead White Males (Three River); Monkey Magic (Big Monkey); Our Path (Theatre North); as

well as *The Off Shows* and *BGN-7250* at the Oak. Theatre direction includes *Underneath the Lintel*, *Little Murders*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Three River); *Away* (make/shift theatre); *The Removalists*, *The Coming of Stork* (Second Storey); *Hair*, *Footloose* (Launceston College); and the Australian premiere of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*. He has also worked with TasDance, Streets Alive and Theatre North. Stuart is currently the artistic director of the One Day Projects and also looks forward to residencies with Newfoundland companies Artistic Fraud and Theatre Newfoundland Labrador later in the year.



### Elizabeth Jowett: Michelle

As a 2005 graduate of the SVPA, Elizabeth has been very busy. After graduating, Elizabeth headed to South Korea for six months to teach drama in schools. She now works full time in a promotions position. In her spare time, she sings in pubs around Launceston and keeps up regular theatre

performances. *Ruled Lines* has been a challenge for Elizabeth, but she is so grateful to have been apart of such a thought provoking play. Elizabeth hopes to present a confident character that you can't help falling in love with. Keeping in mind that as you read this there is one nervous girl out the back. She hopes she can portray a character that shows a completely different side of her!

## Appendix 12

### 'Ruled Lines'

### **DVD** Record

DVD record of the first performance 7 March 2007 The Annexe Theatre - Inveresk Railyards

## Appendix 13

### The Censor

### **DVD** Record

DVD record of the performance 18 May 2006 The Annexe Theatre - Inveresk Railyards