

HOW TO KEEP AN ALIEN

ROUGH MAGIC

WRITER: SONYA KELLY
DIRECTOR: GINA MOXLEY

Photograph: Anthony Woods



FREE PROGRAMME



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ROUGH MAGIC

HOW TO KEEP AN ALIEN

ROUGH MAGIC

LOFT, Q THEATRE

WEDNESDAY 22 MARCH 7.30PM

THURSDAY 23 MARCH – FRIDAY 24 MARCH 6.30PM

SATURDAY 25 MARCH 1.30PM & 7.30PM

SUNDAY 26 MARCH 5.00PM

1 HOUR 15 MINUTES NO INTERVAL

NAU MAI, HAERE MAI KI TE AHUREI TOI O TAMAKI WELCOME TO AUCKLAND ARTS FESTIVAL 2017

Great artists cause controversy, start revolutions and little by little change the world. Festivals like ours are a catalyst for change creating opportunities for artists to communicate with audiences and audiences to respond to artists' work. Throughout the Festival you will find small threads that deal with our world today. We hope that the work in the Festival can make you think, laugh, scream a little and perhaps even cry.

In today's world Aliens are everywhere. In *How to Keep an Alien*, we meet Sonja and Kate. Kate is the alien – she's an Aussie – and they won't let her stay in Ireland. This is a wonderfully humorous work that looks at real life and the global nature of our world. Welcome to the Aliens.

The Festival's CEO David Inns (my partner and collaborator of many years), our Board and staff, hope you have a fabulous Festival. We hope that you enjoy the beauty and complexity of the art presented and value its importance in our society. Join the revolution.

Carla, David and the Auckland Arts Festival team

HOW TO KEEP AN ALIEN

Performers

Sonya Kelly & Paul Curley

Written by

Sonya Kelly

Directed by

Gina Moxley

Set and Lighting Designer

Sarah Jane Shiels

Sound Designer

Carl Kennedy

Script Development

Gina Moxley

Dramaturg

Maureen White

Production Manager

Nick Anton

ABOUT ROUGH MAGIC

www.roughmagic.ie

Since its foundation in 1984, Rough Magic has been has delivered over 50 Irish premieres, the debuts of many theatre-makers, and the pioneering *SEEDS* programme. With each project, the aim is firstly to make great theatre, but also to advance and contribute to the cultural life of Ireland. Rough Magic policy has three strands: commissioning new Irish work, presenting the best of contemporary international writing and innovative productions from the classical repertoire. Other productions for 2017 include *The Effect* by Lucy Prebble, directed by Ronan Phelan, at Project Arts Centre (March) and *The Train* by Arthur Riordan and Bill Whelan at The Abbey Theatre and The MAC, Belfast (April).

Rough Magic is supported by the Arts Council, Dublin City Council and Culture Ireland.

WRITER'S NOTE

In October 2013 playwright Colin Murphy invited me to try out any new material I was working on for 'a bit of a scratch night'. The venue was a hip to the groove artists' space in the Dublin's Stoneybatter. Perhaps you know the type of place: semi collapsed leather sofas, conceptual art installations, BYOB podcast nights where women in horn-rimmed glasses and guys in exploration age moustaches slug merlot and collectively listen to classic episodes of *This American Life*. My galloping, all consuming post-colonial low self esteem immediately said, 'Don't do it Sonya. You're not cool enough. They'll take one glance at you and know your favourite song is *Forever In Blue Jeans* by Neil Diamond. Reverse, decline!'

Still, I had this *thing* I was working on and I didn't quite know what it was yet, some half put together diary pieces about the de facto visa process I went through with my girlfriend, Kate. Maybe if I took it to the hipsters and read it and listened to it being heard, something might pop and hey, and that *thing* could become something instead of *nothing*.

So I went along with thirty-seven scrappy pages of brain spew about someone I fell in love with from a different hemisphere. There were ninety-seven sound cues I'd written into the text, which I didn't know how to perform without looking like a lunatic so I brought along a stage manager to read them. Little did I know, among those who turned up were theatre artist Gina Moxley, Lynne Parker, Artistic Director of Rough Magic, Kris Nelson of the Dublin Fringe:





Photograph: Ger Holland

all the vital human components who, in the following months, were to bring *How To Keep An Alien* to life. And my stage manager Justin Murphy ended up part being of the show.

From that scratch night, grew a show, produced by Rough Magic that toured to over thirty venues in Ireland, to Edinburgh, London, Brisbane, Paris, New York and now New Zealand. My heartfelt thanks to Carla van Zon and all at the Auckland Arts Festival for hosting us, and of course to Kate, without whom there would be no play.

Theatre is beautiful because the people are beautiful.

All best wishes,

Sonya Kelly
March 2017

COMPANY BIOGRAPHIES



Sonya Kelly Writer + Performer

Sonya Kelly is an award-winning Irish writer and actor. Her debut solo play, which she wrote and performed, *The Wheelchair on My Face: a look back at a myopic childhood*, was A Show In A Bag produced by Fishamble, the new play company and won a Scotsman Fringe First Award for new writing at the Edinburgh Fringe 2012. The show played 150 performances in over fifty venues and toured to New York

where it received a Critics' Pick in the New York Times. Sonya has performed with the Gate Theatre, Druid, The Corn Exchange, Pan Pan and WillFredd Theatre. She is a cast member of RTÉ's sketch show, *The Savage Eye* and is also a regular contributor to the arts show *Arena* on RTÉ Radio. She is currently under commission with Rough Magic to write a new play, *Future Simple*, for a planned production in 2018.



Paul Curley Performer + Stage Manager

As an actor and deviser, Paul has collaborated with a wide range of companies in Ireland and the UK. Some recent work includes: *CARE and FARM* (WillFredd Theatre); *Happily Ever After* (Action Transport Theatre UK); *An Ideal Husband* (The Gate Theatre); *Assassins* (Rough Magic SEEDS); *Plaza Suite* (Rough Magic); *The Bockety World of Henry & Bucket*, *The Song from the Sea*, *A Murder of Crows*, *Boy with a Suitcase*

(Barnstorm); *Snow Mouse* (Travelling Light/The Egg); *Mr Benn* (Tall Stories, London); *Bake!* (Paul Curley & Ger Clancy). Paul is an alumni member of Six in the Attic an Irish Theatre Institute resource-sharing initiative.



Gina Moxley Director + Script Development

Gina is an actor, writer and director. She directed and developed *How to Keep an Alien* for Dublin Fringe Festival in 2014, where it won the Best Production Award. Subsequently the show has toured throughout Ireland, and to Brisbane, Edinburgh, London and New York. She directed and developed Sonya Kelly's first show, *The Wheelchair on My Face*, which won an Edinburgh Fringe First Award; *Solpadeine is My Boyfriend*; *A Wine Goose Chase* and *Finding Sympathy*.

Gina's plays include *Danti-Dan* (Rough Magic); *Toupees and Snare Drums* (CoisCéim/Abbey Theatre); *Tea Set* (Fishamble) and *The Crumb Trail* (Pan Pan).

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