

STATE THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

Animal Farm

ORIGINAL STORY BY GEORGE ORWELL

STAGE ADAPTATION BY GEORDIE BROOKMAN



Study with State

**STATE
THEATRE
COMPANY**
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

*All animals are equal,
but some are more equal than others.*

- Animal Farm

RUNNING TIME

Approximately 80 minutes (no interval).

Suitable for Years 8-12.

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SYNOPSIS

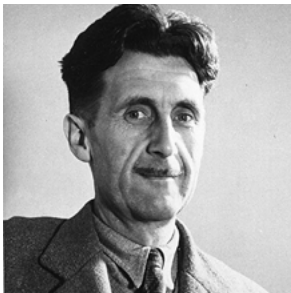
Animal Farm tells the story of a group of farm animals who rebel against the ruling farmer and the farming system. Developing their own system and rules, the animals aim to create a farm where animals are equal and free, and humans are not welcome.

However, this sense of equality does not last long, with the pigs quickly taking advantage of other animals using their own intelligence. One of the stronger pigs, Napoleon, soon takes power and starts to make changes that benefit his own supporters at the expense of the other animals.

Eventually, the pigs become indistinguishable from the humans they were originally fighting against.

*For more, watch the trailer for the show online:
statetheatrecompany.com.au/shows/animal-farm*

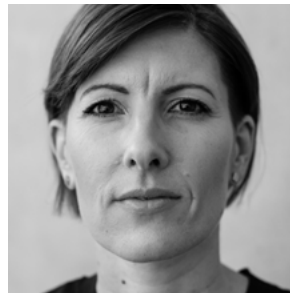
Cast & Creatives



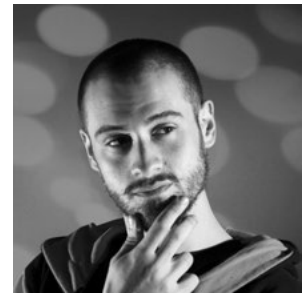
George Orwell
WRITER



Geordie Brookman
DIRECTOR



Bianka Kennedy
DESIGNER



Alexander Ramsay
LIGHTING DESIGNER



Andrew Howard
SOUND DESIGNER
& COMPOSER



Clara Solly-Slade
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR



Renato Musolino
ACTOR



Mark Heuer
STAGE MANAGER

Costumes made by State Theatre Company Wardrobe. Set made by State Theatre Company Workshop.

A man with dark hair, wearing a light blue V-neck t-shirt and dark pants, is sitting on a black stool. He is positioned in front of a wall made of corrugated metal with a horizontal wooden beam. He has his hands clasped in his lap and is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression.

A word from the director

George Orwell's *Animal Farm* was adapted for the stage by State Theatre Company Artistic Director Geordie Brookman, who is also the director of this production. Here he speaks about the themes and thoughts behind the play.

The great American academic Timothy Snyder wrote that "history does not repeat, but it does instruct".

Over the last century we've seen the failure of a series of ideological narratives. First fascism, then communism, and finally, western liberalism have fallen short and left the modern world struggling to find a unifying story to stitch our lives around. George Orwell saw more in the world around him than just dangerous political movements. He saw, with perception that feels almost like x-ray vision, how deeply rooted the toxic cocktail of blind belief, cowardice and selfishness was in all human beings. Through a seemingly gentle parable, Orwell provides a warning about the sad repetition of human nature, shows us how we experience power and what its limits are, and teaches that we are all ultimately culpable when a tyrant is allowed to rise.

Theatre, to me, has always been first and foremost a place to share stories with one another. It's an exchange or a gift that is intrinsically linked to our childhood and understanding of the world around us. Yet to be simple and direct is often the hardest thing to achieve on stage. Luckily I've been blessed with a wonderful team of collaborators, in particular one of our most special storytellers Renato Musolino, in creating what I hope is a contained, quiet theatre moment.

THIS IS AN EDITED VERSION OF GEORDIE BROOKMAN'S SHOW NOTES FOR ANIMAL FARM. THE FULL VERSION IS AVAILABLE IN THE SHOW PROGRAM. PHOTO: TASH MCCAMMON.

How does Orwell's story resonate with contemporary issues and audiences?

I think a great deal of George Orwell's writing is still relevant, which is a slightly scary thing.

Orwell was writing largely in reaction to the massive political shift that happened around the first half of the 20th Century – around the Second World War, the rise of both Western liberalism and communism, which, of course, became Stalinism. I think the reason that it's still relevant is that none of those systems have worked. It's very easy for us to say fascism hasn't worked; it's easy for us to say that communism and Stalinism didn't work. I think the scary thing is to admit that western liberalism hasn't worked. In a large way, many of us are richer than we have ever been – and yet, the world is more unequal than it has ever been.

Orwell is absolutely ruthless and unforgiving about human nature. He kind of peers into our soul exactly the same way that he used to, and I guess he does it because we haven't changed.

I think human beings really like not having to think. We love to give over permission to charismatic leaders or to systems of power so that we don't have to take responsibility for our own actions and all the difficult parts of human existence. I think our relationship to power is largely born out of us being scared and lazy. It can seem easier to give over to power than to fight back.

What is the experience of seeing *Animal Farm*?

I hope it will be an intense, connected piece of storytelling and a piece of very pure theatre. I'm starting to agree with the idea that contemporary television does realism so well that theatre's job isn't really to deliver realism anymore. You need to look for alternate views of the world and ways of experiencing things. I hope *Animal Farm* provides the audience with provocations to think and feel, but also to think about storytelling and theatre in a slightly different way.



REHEARSALS OF ANIMAL FARM. L-R: CLARA SOLLY-SLADE, GEORDIE BROOKMAN, BIANKA KENNEDY, MARK HEUER & RENATO MUSOLINO. PHOTO: ROBIN MATHER.

What next?

Our “What next?” sections include questions and activities based on previous pages. These can be used for individual reflection or as class exercises.

On page 6, Director Geordie Brookman includes a quote from US academic Timothy Snyder: “history does not repeat itself, but it does instruct”.

What do you think Timothy means with this statement? Do you agree?

How might it relate to *Animal Farm*?

Supporting materials

An interview with Geordie Brookman

The Illustrated Guide to *Animal Farm* (incl. interview with Geordie Brookman)

Links to these resources are under the *Animal Farm* drop-down menu at: statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program



A brief introduction to George Orwell

Eric Arthur Blair (George Orwell) was born in 1903 in India, where his father worked for the Civil Service. The family moved to England in 1907 and, in 1917, Orwell entered Eton, where he contributed regularly to the various college magazines.

From 1922 to 1927, he served with the Indian Imperial Police in Burma, an experience that inspired his first novel, *Burmese Days* (1934). Several years of poverty followed.

He lived in Paris for two years before returning to England, where he worked successfully as a private tutor, schoolteacher and bookshop assistant, and contributed reviews and articles to a number of periodicals. *Down and Out in Paris and London* was published in 1933.

In 1936, he was commissioned by Victor Gollancz to visit areas of mass unemployment in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937) is a powerful description of the poverty he saw there.

At the end of 1936, Orwell went to Spain to fight for the Republicans and was wounded. *Homage to Catalonia* is his account of the civil war. He was admitted to a sanatorium in 1938 and from then on was never fully fit. He spent six months in Morocco and there wrote *Coming Up for Air*.

During the Second World War he served in the Home Guard and worked for the BBC Eastern Service from 1941 to 1943. As literary editor of the *Tribune* he contributed a regular page of political and literary commentary, and he also wrote for the *Observer* and later for the *Manchester Evening News*.

Animal Farm was published in 1945, and it was this novel, together with *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), which brought him worldwide fame.

Orwell died in London in January 1950.



Characterisation

AN INTERVIEW WITH RENATO MUSOLINO, ACTOR

What does the term 'character' mean to you?

I think 'character' is all the psychological, emotional, physical qualities that make up a person. It's the features that delineate us from another person, the distinctive qualities that make us who we are and make us unique.

As an actor, you try and grasp at what makes each character unique – physically, emotionally and in terms of temperament. You look at a script and you take out the significant features and what makes someone different from someone else. You have to grasp onto who your character is as a person and align that with similar qualities within yourself.

Do you think it's important to make a personal connection with the characters you play?

I think it's vital to make a connection with whatever character you're playing – that's the most important thing that an actor has to do, to make it personal in some way, shape or form. I think if it's not personalised it simply becomes a form of mimicry.

It's essential to make it personal – not only in terms of making it personal as a character, but personalising the themes and the stories of the play within yourself. By doing this, you not only have something to say through a character but you have something to say to an audience. The more personal that you make it as an actor, the more personal it will be for an audience who is watching it.

What is the difference between playing animal and human characters?

All of these animals have an emotional thing that they're fighting against or fighting for – you have to grasp onto the core of what they represent. Boxer, for example, represents the working class. He's suffering. So I've tried to latch onto something I can identify with in his struggles. You can do that with each of the animals in the story. In all of them there's a feature that is broader than simply being a characteristic of an animal.



How do you bring a character to life? How does this process differ when you're playing multiple characters?

It's great working with Geordie [Brookman, the Director] because we both love to work physically. In designing these animals, we've been thinking about their tempo and rhythms. I think the biggest challenge has been discerning the characters of the pigs. There are four pigs that have quite dominant roles within the play. In playing these characters, you've got to have a characteristic that clearly defines them as a pig, as well as finding qualities that make them different from one another.

Orwell's given us some lovely clues about each character. For example, he says Squealer is rapid with twinkling eyes, and that Boxer is slower in speech. From those very broad baselines, you start to experiment and play with that sketch. Does one gesture more with his hands? Is it more about the mouth? Or the nose? We try to define what part of the body is key to each particular animal – the horse's head, the pig's trotter, the sound of the chickens. We've spent a lot of time looking at tempos and rhythms, drawing out one distinctive feature of each animal.

What can people expect from *Animal Farm*?

We want to make the book of *Animal Farm* feel immediate – to make it very visceral, very flesh and blood. We're really attempting to bring the book to life and to make an audience feel the book rather than just think about it in an intellectual way.

I think most people know the basic story of *Animal Farm*, even if they haven't read it. Our challenge is to change their expectations or to make them look at the book in a new way.

Rehearsal diary: day #1

WRITTEN BY RENATO MUSOLINO

First day on the floor. Always, for me anyway, the scariest part of the process. Talking at the table is easy. This getting on the floor business is tough. All the historical and political analysis surrounding the book/play is wonderful, and incredibly important, but now we need to bring it to life. Flesh and blood.

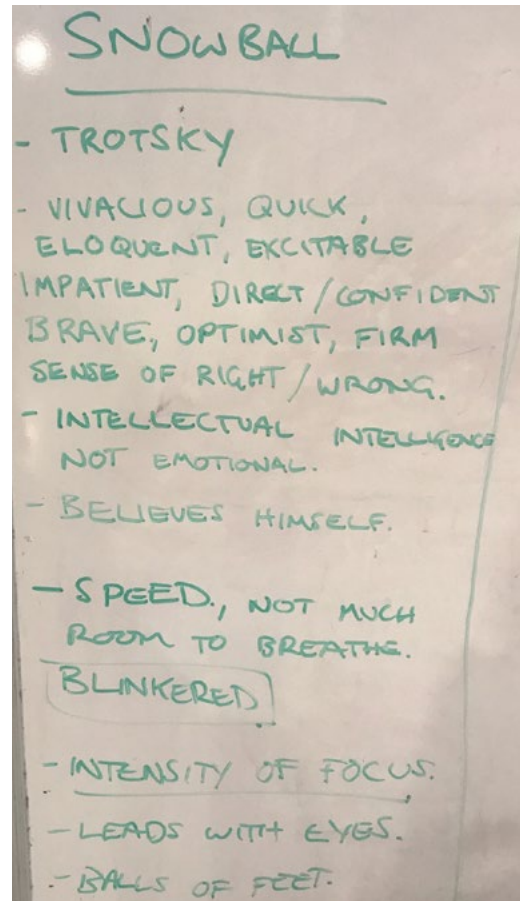
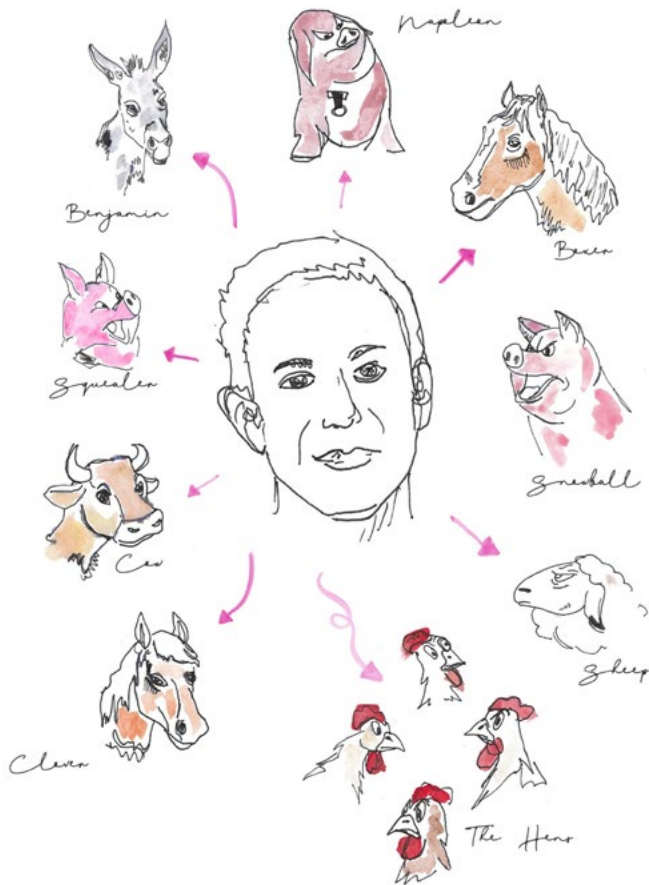
Geordie directs in a very physical way. Thank goodness. It's my favourite way of working, and imperative for this production.

Bringing all of the animals to life is quite the challenge, especially, for example, the pigs. There are four of them. Well, four key pigs and some other pigs who make a (possible) cameo. The challenge: how to make each pig distinctly different from the other, and yet infuse each of them with a signature characteristic of a pig?

Orwell has given us a great foundation: Napoleon has a brooding quality; Snowball is quick; Squealer is nimble, shrill and rapid. Each of these pigs has been inspired by a real person, giving us a great reference point. Old Major/Karl Marx/Lenin; Napoleon/Stalin; Squealer/Molotov; and Snowball/Trotsky. We speak of modern day types that fit the same moulds. Sadly, there are many of them. We discuss Australian political figures. Best I don't mention them here...

Old Major is the first pig to speak in the play, and we spend a bit of time with him today. We listen to a recording of Winston Churchill. Very powerful, and rhythmically it gives us a great entry point. Sustained, controlled. I explore the use of my lips and nose. Create a snout. Major may lead with his chin. We play from this starting point. It does something to my voice. We keep going, push it further and further. It's fun. Getting on the floor is heaven. One pig down, three more to go.

Next, the horses...



LEFT: AN EXCERPT FROM THE ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO ANIMAL FARM.
 RIGHT: A LIST OF SNOWBALL'S CHARACTER TRAITS AND QUALITIES.

What next?

Pick one or two characters from *Animal Farm*. What are the key differences between the chosen character(s) and the other characters in the story? How might they be similar to other characters?

List their physical features, their emotions and what they are aiming for in the story. Think about how they might talk and what body parts they might use most.

Choose a particular event in the story. For example, overthrowing Mr Jones or the Battle of the Cowshed. Write a diary entry from the point of view of your chosen character(s) as they reflect on this event.

Perform the diary entry as a monologue. Remember to keep the list of their physical features, emotions and other characteristics in mind in your performance.

Supporting materials

An interview with Renato Musolino: youtu.be/JAvzN_iFOMM

Exploring the characters

While *Animal Farm* contains broad themes about leadership, power and corruption that can be applied to many political circumstances and historical events, there are direct parallels to the Russian Revolution. To better understand the links between *Animal Farm* and the Russian Revolution, we have included a brief description of the historical figure or concept each major character represents, along with a general description of the characters.

The pigs

OLD MAJOR

A wise, well-respected old pig who inspires the animals to rebel against the farmer and other humans. He passes away before the animal's revolt against Mr Jones.

Old Major represents Karl Marx, who inspired a communist uprising against the ruling class in 1848 through his book *The Communist Manifesto*. He also represents Vladimir Lenin, a key leader in the Russian Revolution in October 1917 who followed Marxist principles.

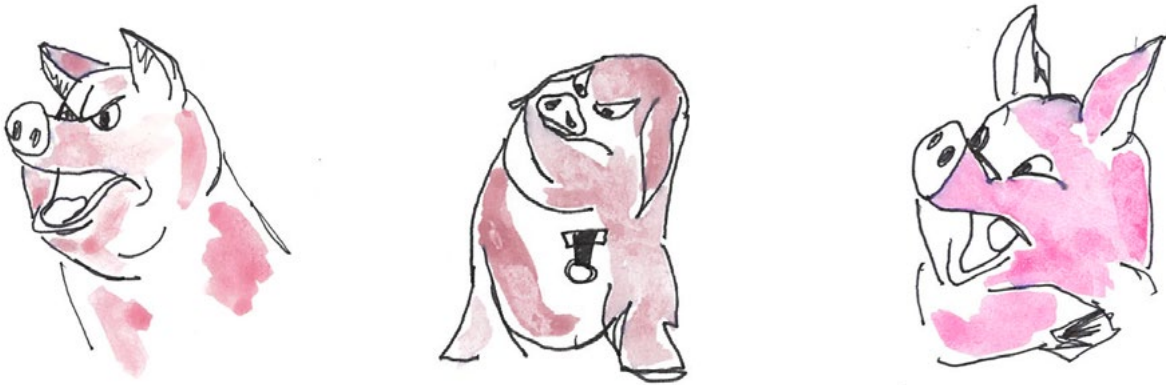
SNOWBALL

Snowball is one of the leaders of the revolt and is popular among the animals. He is idealistic, intelligent, and likes strategy and organisation. Snowball is later driven off the farm by Napoleon and nasty rumours are spread about him.

Snowball seeks to carry on the dream and ideal of Old Major and to continue making improvements to Animal Farm. He is eventually driven off the farm by Napoleon and the dogs. This is similar to the role of Leon Trotsky, an associate of Lenin's who was driven out of the Soviet Union by Joseph Stalin.

What is the Soviet Union?

The Soviet Union, or the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), formed after the February and October Revolutions in 1917, which saw The Communist Party take power in Russia. It was a socialist state that existed from December 1922 to December 1991. It was the largest country in the world, covering Northern Asia, parts of eastern Europe and even extending into the Middle East.



LEFT TO RIGHT: SNOWBALL, NAPOLEON AND SQUEALER.
DRAWINGS BY ANTHONY NOCERA FOR STATE THEATRE COMPANY.

NAPOLEON

A large boar who leads the revolt along with Snowball. Napoleon and Snowball are enemies who think very differently about how things should run after the revolution. Napoleon eventually grabs power for himself.

Napoleon represents Joseph Stalin who came to power through force after the revolt. He used his power to improve conditions for his supporters. His policies led to the deaths of millions, many as a result of famine or public executions.

SQUEALER

A very persuasive pig, Squealer communicates new developments on the farm to the other animals. He frequently lies, twists the truth and deflects questions in order to win the support of the other animals for Napoleon and his message.

Rather than representing a specific historical figure, Squealer represents government tactics, particularly propaganda. Propaganda is information or media used to promote a particular political message or point of view, often in misleading or biased ways. Propaganda was used by Stalin during the Russian Revolution to keep control of the masses. Squealer is sometimes viewed as a stand-in for Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov, a loyal follower of Joseph Stalin.

THE OTHER PIGS

The narrator of *Animal Farm* refers to other pigs throughout the book and the play. While they are not given names or specific characteristics, the reader/audience hears about how they begin to take privileges over the other animals.

The pigs on the whole represent members of the ruling Communist Party of the Soviet Union, particularly followers of Joseph Stalin.



LEFT TO RIGHT: BOXER, CLOVER AND BENJAMIN.
DRAWINGS BY ANTHONY NOCERA FOR STATE THEATRE COMPANY.

The other animals

BOXER

A loyal, hard-working cart-horse, Boxer is the strongest of the farm animals. He is easily convinced by Squealer's lies and wishes to believe that Napoleon is always right. He is eventually betrayed by Napoleon.

CLOVER

A cart-horse and good friend of Boxer's. Clover sometimes doubts what the pigs are saying, but assumes she is not correctly remembering things and so dismisses her doubts.

Boxer and Clover represent the working class during the Russian Revolution – their belief in the cause, their susceptibility to propaganda, their hard work, the struggles they face with getting enough to eat under Stalin's rule, etc.

BENJAMIN

A bad-tempered old donkey, Benjamin is doubtful of the other animals' idealism. Although he is intelligent and often notices when the pigs are misleading the other animals, he avoids taking action to stop them or make change.

Benjamin is thought to represent the older generation, who recognise when Stalin and his supporters begin manipulating others but do not take any action against them.

THE DOGS

Napoleon raises a group of puppies in isolation from the other animals. These dogs become his own personal guard. They threaten and even kill those who are perceived to be working against Napoleon.

The dogs represent Stalin's secret police and bodyguards.

THE SHEEP

The sheep are thought to be the stupidest of the animals, unable to comprehend more than basic ideas and instructions. They are blindly loyal to Napoleon and chant slogans to serve his cause.

THE HENS

The hens are some of the first animals to openly rebel against Napoleon when he demands they give up all of their eggs.

The sheep and the hens also represent aspects of the working class – those who rebelled against Stalin's rule and those who blindly followed it.

The humans

MR JONES

Mr Jones is the farmer of Manor Farm (later renamed Animal Farm). The animals revolt against him because he whips them and doesn't feed them enough food. Mr Jones is known to have a drinking problem.

Mr Jones represents Tsar Nicholas II who was driven from power in Russia during the February 1917 Revolution.

MR FREDERICK

The farmer of Pinchfield, a smaller neighbouring farm. Mr Frederick briefly enters into an alliance with Napoleon and the animals, but cheats them and attempts to invade the farm.

Mr Frederick represents Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany. The relationship between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany was strong for a number of years, but their agreements were abruptly terminated when Germany invaded the Soviet Union in 1941.

MR PILKINGTON

The farmer of Foxwood, a large neighbouring farm. He is shown to be arguing with Napoleon at the end of the story.

Mr Pilkington and his farm represent the United States of America.



Design elements

AN INTERVIEW WITH BIANKA KENNEDY, DESIGNER

What is the role of a designer?

A designer has artistic control over the look and feel of the stage and what happens on it. You work with a director to figure out what the intention and meaning of the play is and what needs to be included. Essentially, you're responsible for making sure any set and scenery elements, any costume elements, any prop elements, meet those intentions and look right when they're up on the stage. You then communicate with the lighting teams and other design teams to make sure everything is cohesive.

What can you tell us about the set design for *Animal Farm*?

The set we've got for *Animal Farm* is essentially two black platforms joined together – one of them is 4.5 metres and the other is 3.8 metres. These heights have been dictated by the different venues sizes that we need to be able to fit the set into when it tours. The surface is a gloss black and it has self-contained lighting set within the back scenery platform. We've also created a hidden door so the actor does not need to cross the floor to enter and exit.

This set is all about creating an environment where the audience is completely, 100% focussed on the actor. As a one-man show, with one actor playing 20+ characters, we need the audience to be absolutely focussed on the minute changes that are going to happen in voice and in speech that will occur throughout the show.

The design is really about stripping away anything extra, having a really nondescript set and costume. It means that we're not referencing a barnyard, we're not referencing anything political from the text, and we're not trying to overlay that with any modern references either. We're actually trying to strip it away, back to the basic, universal story that is *Animal Farm*.



How does the set for *Animal Farm* connect with or enhance the themes of the play?

Although we're trying to strip everything away with this set, it was really important to me that there was still a connection to the story – that's where the two platforms come into play.

The platforms were designed so that the dimensions, and the lighting bars across them, have a nod to the old stone windmill that's referenced in the story. I looked at pictures of the stone windmills that would have been the sort of windmills mentioned the story. Looking at these photos and drawings, you'll see that they have that kind of triangle shape with crosses and really thin panels on them. I used those shapes and that concept to create the two platforms. These are then painted a glossy black using two pack paint, which needs a three day application process and is often used in the automotive industry or for kitchen cabinets.

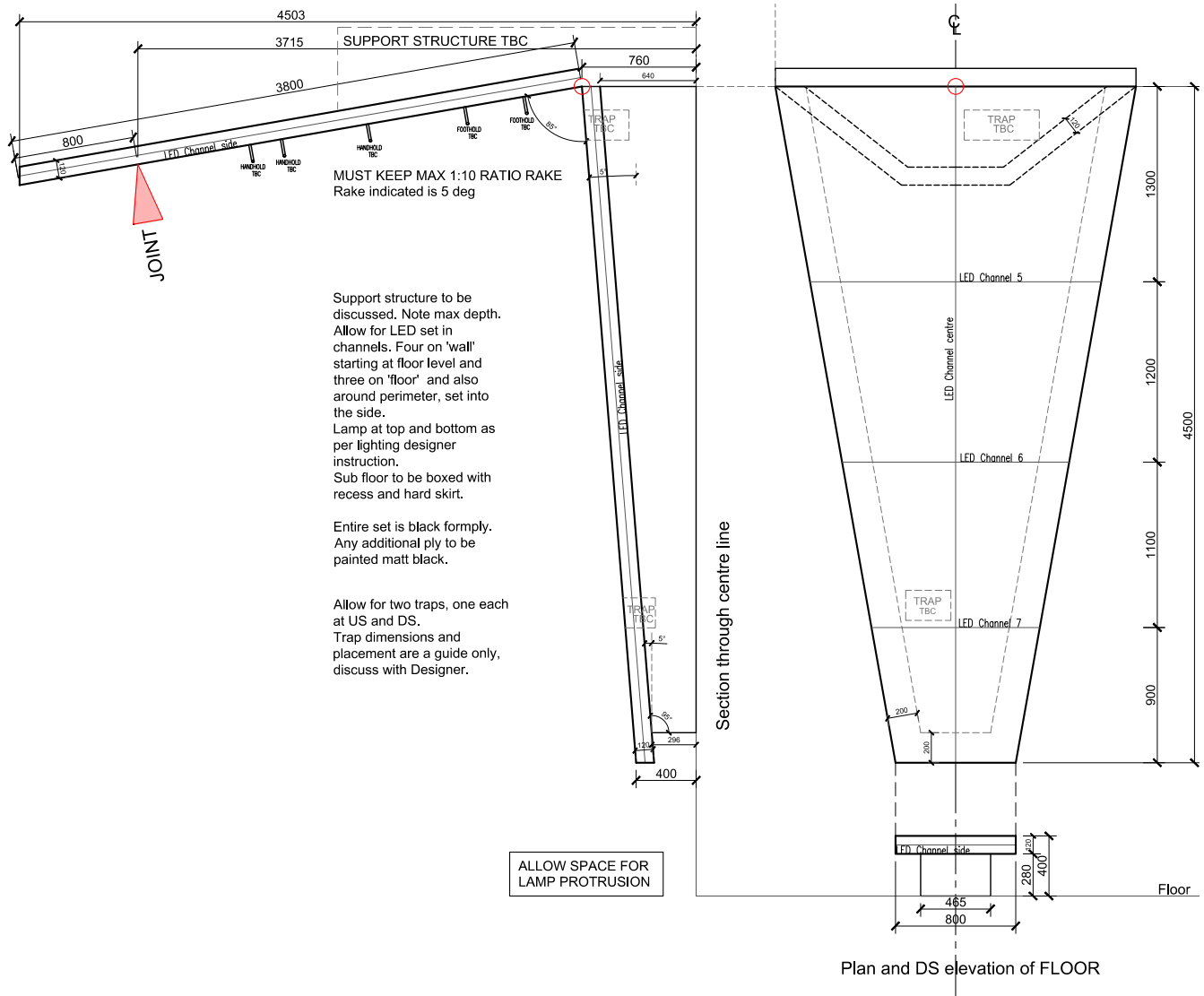
Geordie [Brookman, the director] had this idea of using a gloss black somewhere in the set as a nod to the concept of the 'black mirror' of our device screens, so I've used this as the surface of the platforms. Geordie shared his thoughts on how we consume news and media through our phones and other devices, reading or watching short snippets and not always getting the full story. There is a sense that people are not asking for the facts, that we are not making informed decisions and are not taking action – just like the animals in the story. I also think the idea of the old windmill is nicely counterbalanced by the glossy black, almost a reference to modern wind turbines, which creates a kind of duality of time.

We've got this reference to the old story, but we've also got a reference to our modern era, reminding us of how the story of *Animal Farm* is universal and still applies.

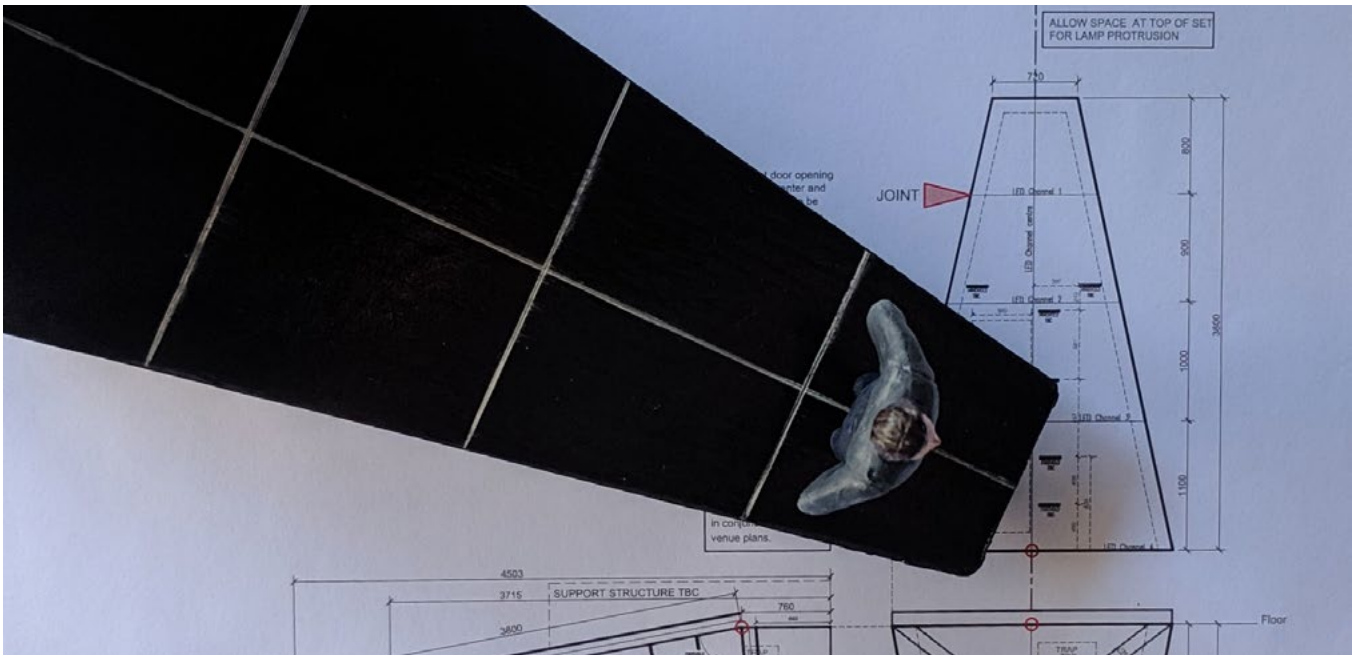
PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT (BOTH PAGES): GEORDIE BROOKMAN AND BIANKA KENNEDY LOOK AT A COSTUME; BIANKA KENNEDY; A MODEL OF THE ANIMAL FARM SEAT, INCLUDING FIGURE. PHOTOS: TASH MCCAMMON, ROBIN MATHER & BIANKA KENNEDY.

Abstract set design

The setting of *Animal Farm* is no different between George Orwell's book and State Theatre Company's play - it is a farm in both. But the set design for this theatre production of *Animal Farm* does not reflect its setting. Instead, the set is abstract - it is more about the concept of the play than the actual location where it is set.



A DRAFT OF THE SET FOR ANIMAL FARM, DESIGNED IN AUTOCAD.
COURTESY OF BIANKA KENNEDY.



Designing a touring show

Animal Farm tours to multiple regional and metropolitan venues in South Australia and several interstate venues, in addition to its run in the Space Theatre in Adelaide.

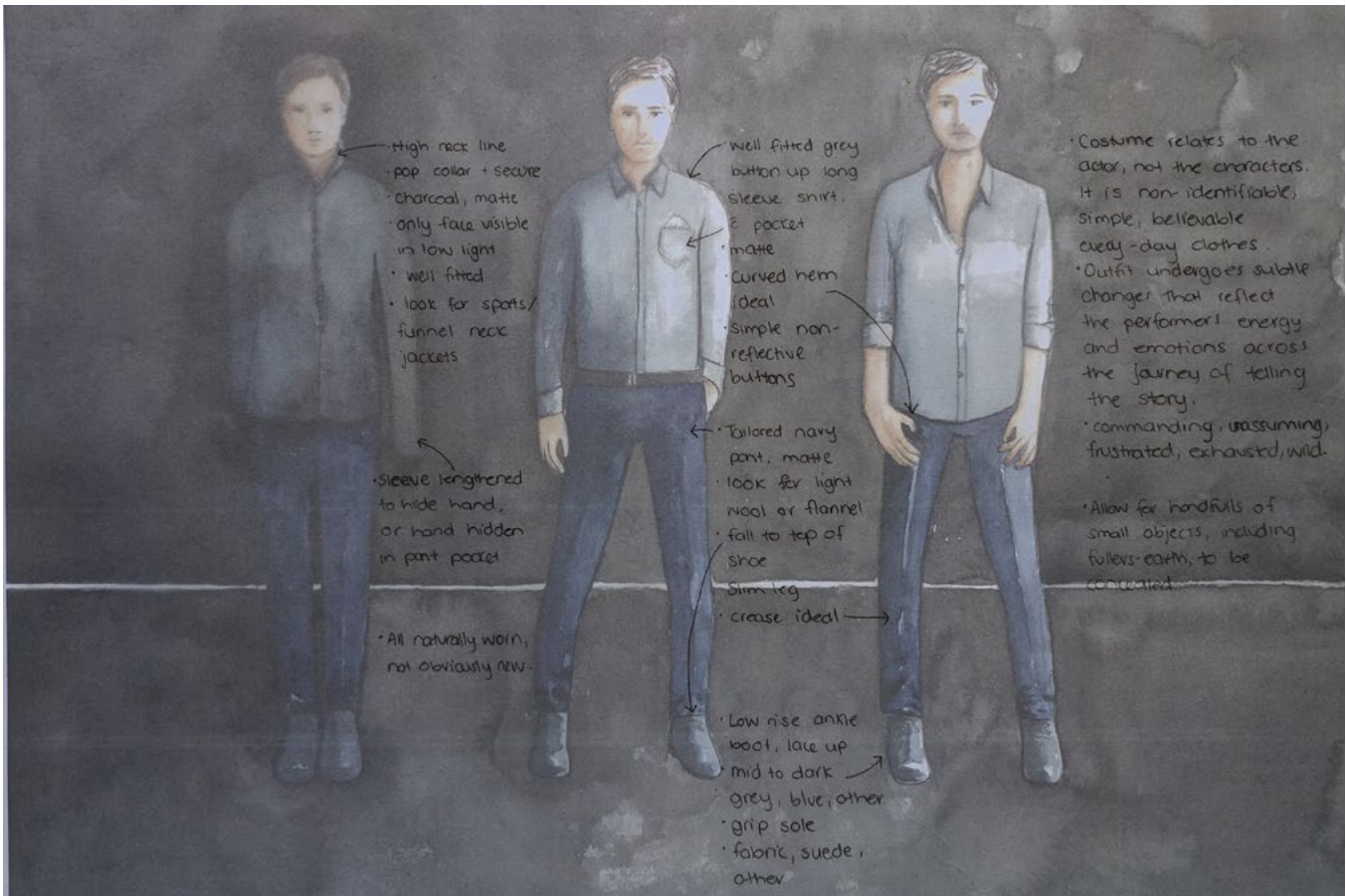
Designer **Bianka Kennedy** has shared the considerations and challenges of designing and building a set for a touring show - including venue size, building materials, transport, lighting and speed of assembly.

“You want to keep the experience of viewing the show as consistent as possible [across venues]... In terms of physical resources, it needed to fit in a variety of venues – some of which have an issue with ceiling height. To address this, I’ve created a piece at the top of the set that breaks off. This means that in most venues we can take the full set, and when we’re in the two with the lowest ceilings we can take off the top pieces. This piece at the top doesn’t affect where we have the inbuilt lighting bars so we haven’t lost that effect either.”

For more insights from **Bianka**, read “How to design for touring” available online at statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program

The design process

Designer **Bianka Kennedy** talks about the process of designing for a professional theatre production - from the first drafts to seeing the set on stage. Read “From page to stage” available online at statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program



A SKETCH OF THE COSTUMES IN ANIMAL FARM, COURTESY OF BIANKA KENNEDY.

Costume design

While the actor in *Animal Farm* is playing multiple characters, he will be wearing just one costume. The costume will not represent any of the characters in particular or include any animal elements. Instead, the actor will wear 'normal' men's clothes in dark colours.

Designer Bianca Kennedy explains that the aim was for the costume to be neutral, as the aim is for the audience to pay attention to the actor rather than what he is wearing.

Elements of the costume may be slightly changed - a jacket removed, shirt sleeves rolled up - to assist in shifts between characters or scenes.



Lighting design

AN INTERVIEW WITH ALEXANDER RAMSAY, LIGHTING DESIGNER

What do you see as the role of a lighting designer?

At its core, the job of a lighting designer is to illuminate the actors and the set and make sure everyone can see what's going on. Beyond that, you have to work on the trickier bits of manipulating people's emotions and experience of a show, so that means using subtler things like colour, shadows and the timing of your cues.

What will the lighting be like for *Animal Farm*?

The set design for *Animal Farm* is trying to steer clear of realistically portraying a farm, but one of the fun things about light is you can use it to put people in places and not have it be ham-fisted... I'm actually using light in this show to bring a bit of naturalism back into the set. The aim is to make it feel a little more closed-off and homey, a little warmer in the big shiny black set.

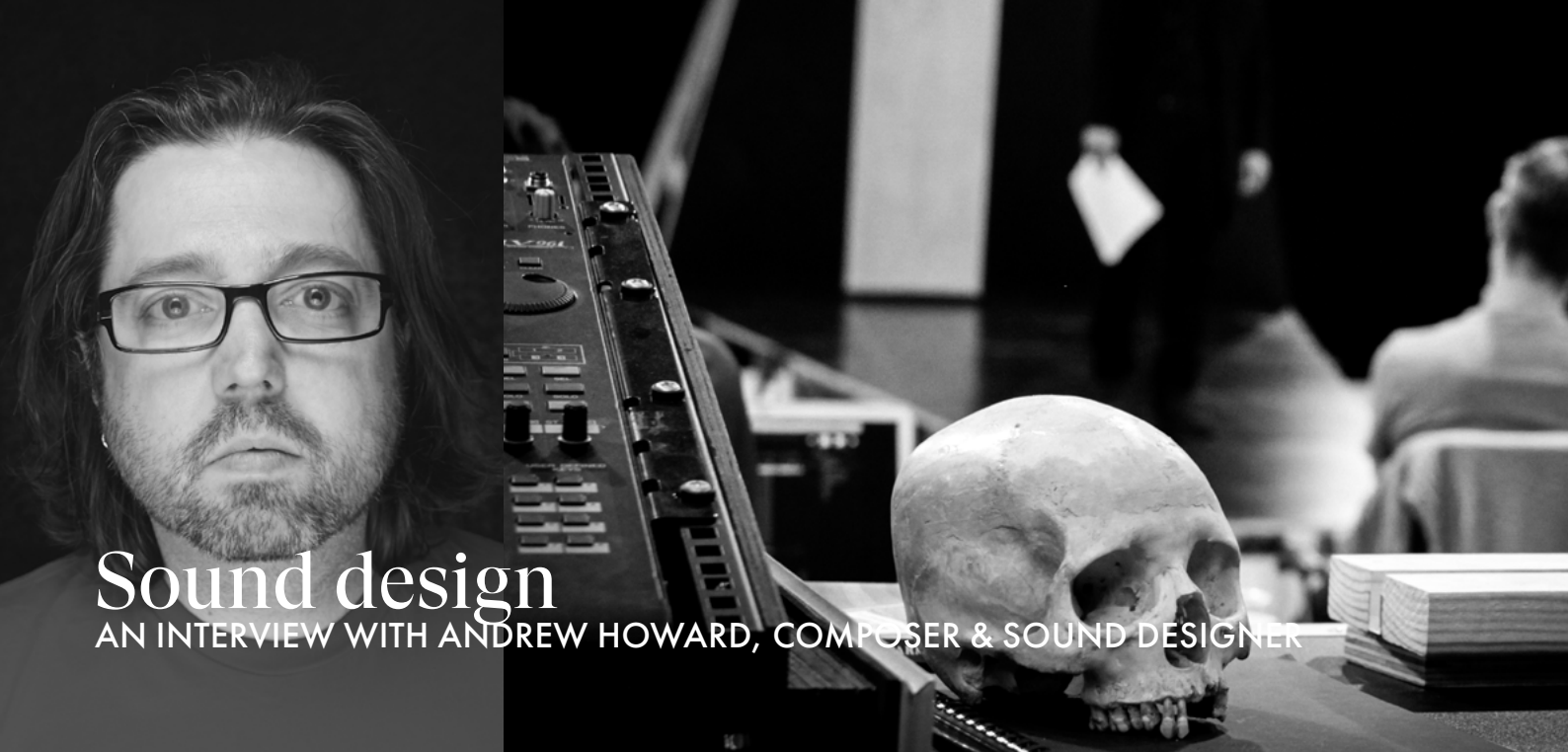
The set is really reflective, which is fun – it lets you create some beautiful looks – but when you don't want light to be bouncing everywhere, it's tricky. You have to think about your angles.

What are some of the processes and techniques you use in the creative process?

I generally start with the script, which I prefer to have read by the actors, but it is good to read it myself first. I use the images in my head and then discuss them with the other creatives - the director, the designers – to find out what they're going for and what they're trying to achieve. You work in collaboration.

Creativity is weird. It just comes from somewhere secret. It's all about working out where you're going to have to put light, the technical aspects of it, and then drawing it on a plan and making a lot of paperwork – there's a lot of paperwork involved! But also you get to make pretty things and talk to people.

ALEXANDER RAMSAY (RIGHT) WITH STAGE MANAGER MARK HEUR. LEFT PHOTO: ROBIN MATHER.



Sound design

AN INTERVIEW WITH ANDREW HOWARD, COMPOSER & SOUND DESIGNER

What is the role of a sound designer or composer in theatre?

The composer one is simple – they write all of the music for the show.

The sound designer, on the other hand, has to design the PA system and sound effects. They also have to do all of the sound programming and run the install of all the sound systems at the venues.

What sort of feel are you going for with the composition and sound design of *Animal Farm*? How will it connect with the story?

I'm creating a dark, ambient soundtrack for the show, using synths as well as real instruments. I'd compare the feel to the soundtrack Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross created for *The Social Network*, David Fincher's 2010 film. It's fairly low key and understated.

I think sound design and music can really help drive the emotional content of a play without it being something that is at the forefront. It just sits underneath and you're not really meant to notice it.

What is vocal manipulation? How will it be used in *Animal Farm*?

Vocal manipulation is adding some effects onto the microphone, which Renato [Musolino, the actor in *Animal Farm*] will have buried in his hairline. It will probably be a bit of pitch shifting, just to lower his voice for certain animals in the story and help the audience to differentiate between characters.

Hear some of Andrew Howard's music for *Animal Farm* at statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program

Non-diegetic sound

The sound design for *Animal Farm* is largely non-diegetic. Non-diegetic sound is added in and is not drawn from the action on stage - this is the case for the atmospheric music and sound effects used throughout *Animal Farm*.

Diegetic sound is noise whose source is found on the stage or in the action of the play. This may happen with sound effects correlating with some of the events being described on the stage. However, the audience will rarely see the action that accompanies the sound effect, as it is most often simply being described.

What next?

The design for State Theatre Company's production of *Animal Farm* is mostly abstract, rather than drawing on the setting of the original book.

Choose a type of design to focus on - set, costume, lighting or sound. Think about what sort of design you might choose.

Would it reflect design elements that could be found on a farm? Would you give it a different real life setting, like a cafe, a school or a business? Would you choose something abstract, and what would this be like?

Create a mood board for your design - focus on a particular scene if that is helpful. For set, costume and lighting design, find or draw images and diagrams related to your vision. For sound design, find sounds or songs to create the feel you are looking for.

Explain why you have made these choices and how your design connects with the story of *Animal Farm*.

Supporting materials

An interview with Bianka Kennedy

From page to stage

How to design for touring

Music by Andrew Howard

Links to these resources are under the *Animal Farm* drop-down menu at:
statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program

ALL ANIMALS
ARE EQUAL
BUT SOME ARE
MORE EQUAL
THAN OTHERS

Key concepts

Beasts of England

“Beasts of England” is a song Old Major shares with the other animals and it becomes their anthem, inspiring them in their revolt and their work towards equality. It becomes a kind of anthem for the animals. The song is later banned by Napoleon.

Animalism

Animalism is the system of beliefs the animals create and enforce after they overturn Mr Jones. Animalism enforces the idea that humans are bad and that animals should continue to act like animals rather than adopting human behaviour.

The Seven Commandments

In accordance with the ideal of Animalism, the pigs create seven commandments that all animals on the farm are called to follow. They are:

1. Whatever goes on two legs is an enemy.
2. Whatever goes on four legs, or has wings, is a friend.
3. No animal shall wear clothes.
4. No animals shall sleep in a bed.
5. No animal shall drink alcohol.
6. No animal shall kill any other animal.
7. All animals are equal.

These commandments are simplified for the less intelligent animals, like the sheep, to say: “Four legs good, two legs bad”. The commandments are later altered according to the changing agenda of the pigs. By the end of the story, all of the seven commandments have been erased except for the last, which has been changed to “All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others”.

Literary & theatrical styles

Allegory

An allegory is a metaphor in which a character or event is used to convey a message or unveil a hidden meaning, usually related to real events, politics or issues of morality. This literary device can be used in one particular incident or character in a story or work of art, or throughout the entire work, as in the case of *Animal Farm*.

Animal Farm uses its narrative as allegorical commentary on the downfall of Tsar Nicholas II of Russia, the creation of the Soviet Union and the rise of communism and Stalinism. See the character descriptions on pages 16-19 for more information.

Satire

Satire is a genre of literature in which people's shortcomings, vices and abuses are presented to readers to criticise, laugh at and examine. While it is meant to be funny, the aim of satire is usually to interrogate and shame poor behaviour by individuals, groups of people, political parties and/or organisations. Allegory, sarcasm and irony are often features of satirical work.

Satire is present in works beyond literature – it's found in the theatre, on television, in films, and on the internet (particularly in memes).

Fairy story, or fable

George Orwell calls *Animal Farm* a 'fairy story', and it does share some elements commonly found in fairy stories or fables - evil villains, noble characters and a strong moral or message at its conclusion.

The story also has elements of a classic beast fable with its anthropomorphic animals, meaning the animals have human characteristics.

Physical theatre

State Theatre Company's production of *Animal Farm* uses elements of physical theatre. The actor, Renato Musolino, will utilise physicality to differentiate between the multiple characters he is playing and to bring in the animal elements of each character. Read more about his characterisation process on pages 12-14.

Physical theatre uses the human body as a focus in storytelling, and is often abstract in style.



Themes

Equality, power & corruption

George Orwell's investigation of our relationship to power and its ability to corrupt people is at the core of *Animal Farm*. The saying "power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely" is very much at work in Orwell's text.

At the beginning of the story, Mr Jones is in power and depicted as a figure of utmost evil. He is cruel toward the animals because he believes them to be beneath him. He treats them as second-class citizens.

The animals disapprove of the inequality between humans and animals that is evident in Mr Jones' behaviour towards them. When they decide to overthrow Mr Jones, their desire for equality is outlined in their final commandment: "All animals are equal."

When the animals take power of the farm, they begin as heroes, seeking equality for all animals and shunning the ways of humans. But as the pigs take on leadership positions, they slowly begin to morph into fat pink versions of Mr Jones. They begin to drink whiskey like he did; they begin campaigns of violence comparable to the whippings Mr Jones used to inflict upon them; they begin to underfeed the working animals like Mr Jones. At the end of the novel, the pigs even walk on two legs and the other animals are unable to tell the difference between human and pig. The pigs have become corrupt, infected by their power. Conditions for the working animals are worse under the pigs than at the farms where humans are still in charge.

Language & lies

Throughout *Animal Farm*, we see the pigs manipulate language to confuse the animals of Manor Farm, usually with the purpose of persuading them to consider things a certain way or conform to the pigs' agenda. For example, Squealer often says Napoleon's lies are "Tactics! Comrades! Tactics!"

The other animals are not as intelligent as the pigs, so they don't always have the tools to understand what that the pigs are saying. (Benjamin the donkey is a notable exception.) By confusing and persuading the other animals, the pigs are able to exert their power in a way that negatively impacts their lives.

The pigs simplify the concepts of Animalism (outlined on page 26) into key ideas at first, and later manipulate the commandments as they see fit. "Four legs good, two legs bad" becomes "Four legs good, two legs better" towards the end of the story.

Because the other animals don't have the language to comprehend or respond to the pigs' abuses of power, they're unable to fight back or read the writing on the wall (literally or metaphorically).

In *Animal Farm*, Orwell tells us to pay attention to the language of the people in power, to hold them to account, be critical of what they say and take action to combat corruption.

Supporting materials

George Orwell: Fortune Teller

The Illustrated Guide to *Animal Farm*

What Orwell Warned Us About: Author Dennis Glover on the Enduring Power of *Animal Farm*

Links to these resources are under the *Animal Farm* drop-down menu at:
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