

# THE ARCHITECT

BY AIDAN FENNESSY



## Education Mini-Pack

30 AUGUST – 29 SEPTEMBER

Southbank Theatre, The Lawler

### About the Play

Hiring a temporary carer requires some serious vetting, and when Helen's partner John heads off on a brief overseas trip she concedes to the arrangement by appointing the least likely candidate: a dubious young drifter and jack-of-all-trades. With an incorrigible zest for life, he could be just the medicine she needs – if it wasn't for the monumental secret he's hiding. As their disparate worlds collide and an unexpected bond forms, Helen turns to Lennie to help face her reality.

### About the Playwright

Aidan Fennessy is a writer and director. His work has been produced extensively both here and overseas. His writing credits include *What Rhymes With Cars and Girls* (Melbourne Theatre Company) *National Interest* (MTC and Black Swan State Theatre Company) *The Way Things Work* (Red Stitch Actor's Theatre and Tamarama Rock Surfers) *The House on The Lake* (Black Swan State Theatre Company, Griffin Theatre Company, and productions in Rome, Athens and Madrid) *The Trade* (Melbourne International Comedy Festival, Tasmanian Theatre Company) *Chilling and Killing My Annabel Lee* (Playbox/Chameleon, Queensland Theatre Company). He was nominated at the 2016 Helpmann Awards for Best New Work. He won the 2012 Victorian Premier People's Choice Award and the 2010 Griffin Award. Aidan was co-founder of Chameleon Theatre, a member of the HotHouse Theatre Directorate, Artistic Director of The Storeroom Theatre Workshop and Associate Director of Melbourne Theatre Company.

### Cast

**John Stafford** Nicholas Bell  
**Helen Pyefinch** Linda Cropper  
**Leonard Wadsley** Johnny Carr  
**Jeremy Pyefinch** Stephen Phillips

### Creative Team

**Director** Peter Houghton  
**Set & Costume Designer** Christina Smith  
**Lighting Designer** Matt Scott  
**Composer & Sound Designer** J David Franzke  
**Set & Costume Design Secondment** Jeremy Pryles  
**Fight Choreographer** Lyndall Grant  
**Stage Manager** Lisette Drew  
**Assistant Stage Manager** Pippa Wright  
**Rehearsal Photographer** Deryk McAlpin  
**Production Photographer** Jeff Busby

### Genre

Contemporary drama

### Running Time

Approx. 2hrs 20min including interval

### Attendance Information

Contains themes of euthanasia and coarse language.  
For detailed information, please visit  
[www.mtc.com.au/production-content-guide](http://www.mtc.com.au/production-content-guide)



Turn the page for activities,  
and discussions.

## Before the show



Read the About the Play section overleaf, and then watch the video with Linda Cropper at [youtube.com/melbtheatreco](https://www.youtube.com/melbtheatreco). Make a list of predictions about what you might see and hear on stage.

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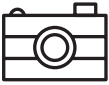


In 2017, Victoria became the first Australian state to pass legislation to introduce voluntary assisted dying. *The Architect* contains themes of euthanasia. Research this legislation to find out how it will work.

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While Oscar Wilde suggested that 'all art is quite useless', almost a century later the Russian auteur Andrei Tarkovsky countered that 'all art is a preparation for death'. Playwright Aidan Fennessy says both are probably correct and both are strangely compatible. Download the show programme at [mtc.com.au/backstage](https://mtc.com.au/backstage) to read more from Fennessy about this play.

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View the rehearsal gallery at [mtc.com.au/backstage](https://mtc.com.au/backstage) and make a list of props you can see. What clues does this give you about the set design?

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## Post-show Activities



A big question in *The Architect* is how, and if, we can prepare for something as monumental as 'non-existence'. After watching the play, what do you think about this concept?

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Download the show programme at [mtc.com.au/backstage](https://mtc.com.au/backstage) and read about playwright Aidan Fennessy's inspiration for writing *The Architect*. Reflect on the relationship between Helen and Leonard.

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Director Peter Houghton says 'We're told when we first start working in the theatre that a character needs to want something and needs to fight for it to the end of the line. And that there need to be obstacles to overcome and antagonists who want the opposite.' Discuss this in relation to *The Architect*. Download the show programme at [mtc.com.au/backstage](https://mtc.com.au/backstage) to read more from Houghton.

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Discuss the set design, particularly the upstage eucalyptus trees. Discuss what these may represent in a symbolic way.

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Melbourne Theatre Company acknowledges the Yalukit Willam Peoples of the Boon Wurrung, the First Peoples of Country on which Southbank Theatre and MTC HQ stand. We pay our respects to all of Melbourne's First Peoples, to their ancestors and Elders, and to our shared future.



@melbtheatreco #TheArchitect



MTC Education

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