

THE FATHER

by Florian Zeller,
translated by Christopher Hampton



Education Mini-Pack

2 NOVEMBER – 16 DECEMBER

Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio

About the Play

You can't fool André. But there's definitely something fishy going on. And while he may be eighty years old and apt to forget things, they are only ever small things. Like where he's put his watch. It doesn't explain why people are messing around with things in his flat. Or why his daughter allows strangers to come in and threaten him. No, something's going on and he'll get to the bottom of it.

About the Playwright

Florian Zeller is a French novelist and playwright. He is, according to The Independent newspaper, 'one of the hottest literary talents in France'. He won the Prix Interallié in 2004 for his novel *Fascination of Evil*, and several Molière Awards (the highest theatrical honour in France) for *La Mère* and *Le Père*. *Le Père (The Father)* in the English translation by Christopher Hampton has been nominated for Best Play at the Olivier Awards and the Tony Awards. Many actors performing the play have been nominated and won awards in their country as Best Actor, including Frank Langella on Broadway and Kenneth Cranham in London.

Cast

Laura Faustina Agolley

André John Bell

Pierre Marco Chiappi

Man Glenn Hazeldine

Anne Anita Hegh

Woman Natasha Herbert

Production

Director Damien Ryan

Set & Costume Designer Alicia Clements

Lighting Designer Rachel Burke

Composer & Sound Designer Steve Francis

Assistant Director Priscilla Jackman

Voice & Text Coach Charmian Gradwell

Production Manager Kate Chapman

Stage Manager Natalie Moir

Assistant Stage Manager Katie Hankin

Assistant Stage Manager Christine Bennett

Rehearsal Photographer Christine Messinesi

Production Photographer Philip Erbacher

Genre

Contemporary comedy drama

Running Time

Approximately 1hr 35min. No interval.



Turn the page for activities,
and discussions.

Before the show



Florian Zeller has proven himself one of France's finest contemporary writers, winning prizes and acclaim for both novels and plays. Read about his writing process and the inspirations for *The Father* at mtc.com.au/backstage



The Father has been described as a 'savagely honest study of dementia' (Lyn Gardner, *The Guardian*). Dementia is a condition that causes a gradual decrease in the ability to think and remember. Research dementia and discuss what the experience of living with this condition might be like.



Theatre luminary John Bell plays André in *The Father*. Listen to his perspective on this deeply moving play on the MTC Talks podcast at mtc.com.au/backstage

Post-show Activities



- Have a class discussion based on this moment from the play (Act Three):

LAURA: What about you, what did you do for a living?

ANDRÉ: I was a dancer.

LAURA: Were you?

ANNE: Dad...

ANDRÉ: What?

ANNE: You were an engineer.

ANDRÉ: What do you know about it? (To LAURA.) Tap dancing was my speciality.

Who is correct, and how do you know? Have you ever been convinced of something that somebody else had a completely different memory of?



- Think about how the set changed during the course of the play, and discuss whether one setting depicted reality more than the others. See the full gallery of production images at mtc.com.au/backstage
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- Actor Faustina Agolley says her favourite part of preparing for *The Father* was dancing to French hip-hop with John Bell before rehearsing scenes. Read the full interview with Faustina at mtc.com.au/backstage
 - Compare and contrast *The Father* with other plays about patriarchs, such as *King Lear* by William Shakespeare or *Uncle Vanya* by Anton Chekhov. Examine the structure, characters, and style.
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- Designer Alicia Clements has created the set and costumes for *The Father*. Read about her approach to designing the Parisian apartment in which the play begins at mtc.com.au/backstage
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MTC Education

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