



## International Institute of Modern Letters

Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o Te Ao

### CREW 353: WRITING FOR THEATRE He Tuhinga Whakaari (20 points)

This course provides grounding in the art and craft of writing scripts for live performance. Students will develop an understanding of structure, theatricality, story, character, action, dialogue and scene construction. The course will consist of craft-based writing exercises, the reading of students' work, and discussion. The tone of the course will encourage students to feel relaxed about giving and taking critiques from the convener and fellow students.

The course convener is **Gary Henderson**. He is a playwright, theatre director and highly-regarded teacher of writing for theatre, based in Oratia, West Auckland.

Gary's plays have won numerous awards and been professionally produced around New Zealand, in South Africa, Australia, the UK, the Republic of Ireland, Canada and the United States. He has also directed the work of other New Zealand playwrights and mentored many emerging writers in the development of their scripts, working with theatre companies such as The Court Theatre, Auckland Theatre Company, Taki Rua, Red Leap Theatre, Te Pou Theatre, Massive Company and Proudly Asian Theatre.

While last year's course was running his play *Skin Tight* had a season at Circa Theatre, and during this year's course his most recent work, *Things That Matter*, commissioned by the Auckland Theatre Company, will have a season at the ASB Waterfront Theatre in Auckland.

In 2016 a French translation by Xavier Mailleux of *Skin Tight (Te Tenir Contre Moi)* was produced by Théâtre L'Instant in Montreal, and in 2017 a largely te reo Māori version of *Mo & Jess Kill Susie (E Kore A Muri E Hokia)* was created and toured by Ruia Taitea Creative.

Gary's other plays include *Home Land*, *Peninsula*, and *Lines of Fire - a site-specific work performed in the Dunedin Railway Station* - and for radio *The Moehau* and *News Bomb*. He also collaborated with percussionist Chris O'Connor, NZTrio and Auckland's Massive Company to create *My Bed My Universe*, and worked as a librettist with musician Tim Finn and composer Tom McLeod developing the opera *Star Navigator*. He is still working intermittently on *The Breath of Silence* – a commission by the Court Theatre, Christchurch.

#### International Institute of Modern Letters

Victoria University of Wellington, P O Box 600, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

ENQUIRIES: Tel: (04) 463 6854 Email: [modernletters@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:modernletters@vuw.ac.nz)

Website: [www.wgtn.ac.nz/modernletters](http://www.wgtn.ac.nz/modernletters)

Gary has been writer in residence at the Robert Lord Cottage in Dunedin, and has held the Auckland University writer-in-residence at the Michael King Centre in Auckland.

In 2013 Gary received the Playmarket Award in recognition of his significant artistic contribution to New Zealand theatre.

**Gary writes:** A good bit of theatre can't be beaten. It's a place where performers and audience meet and travel together. The theatre writer gets to chart that journey, to think and work in three dimensions, to design the architecture and landscape of the story.

A good writer will learn and use the entire vocabulary of live theatre, beyond the spoken word, and will write so the artists who collaborate in the work - director, actors, choreographers, designers, technicians, operators - are fully integrated as storytellers.

It's a constant adventure, accessible to anyone with a bit of imagination and the will to make it happen.

### **How to Enrol**

Enrolment in CREW 353 is limited to 12 students. The formal prerequisite is 40 points at 200 level and the approval of the Programme Director. Because of demand for places, however, the quality of the work which accompanies applications is critical in deciding admissions.

**Application and enrolment:** must be lodged online by going to university home page and follow the links: [www.wgtn.ac.nz/](http://www.wgtn.ac.nz/)  
Prospective applicants are recommended to visit the How to Apply page of our website ([www.wgtn.ac.nz/modernletters](http://www.wgtn.ac.nz/modernletters)) for more details.

### **Workshops**

Where: at the IIML, 16 Waiteata Road, Kelburn Campus  
When: Fridays 10am-1pm, Trimester 2

### **Assessment**

This course is assessed by the submission of a script folio immediately after the final workshop. This folio will include a minimum requirement of a 30-page play script in standard format. Folios are examined on a pass/fail basis by the workshop convenor.

### **Reading and viewing**

The course convenor will distribute texts in class and make reading suggestions based on your individual project.

Please note that our workshops are not a classroom version of a writing manual: We do not teach a specific set of predetermined skills. Our aim is to develop the imaginative capacity and individual literacy skills of emerging writers in a stimulating workshop environment.