

ERIC ABRAHAM PRESENTS A FUGARD THEATRE PRODUCTION

SANDRA PRINSLOO    MARIUS WEYERS    EMILY CHILD



# ATHOL FUGARD'S THE ROAD TO MECCA

DIRECTED BY GREG KARVELLAS | SET SAUL RADOMSKY | COSTUME BIRRIE LE ROUX  
SOUND CHARL-JOHAN LINGENFELDER | LIGHTING MANNIE MANIM

THE  
**FUGARD**  
THEATRE - CAPE TOWN

FROM 27 MARCH 2018 | **THE FUGARD THEATRE**  
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# HELEN MARTINS & THE OWL HOUSE

"When one enters the Owl House, one steps right into the metaphorical Holy Land," writes Anne Graaff in *The Owl House*, her latest book published in December 2017 to coincide with Helen Martin's birthday on 23 December 1897.

Eric Abraham's production in honour of iconic playwright Athol Fugard's 85<sup>th</sup> year is also perfectly timed to mark this being the 120<sup>th</sup> year since Helen Martins' birth. 2018 is also the year that The Owl House will have a plaque unveiled to signify that it has been declared a National Heritage site by SAHRA – the South African Heritage Resource Agency.

Miss Helen received little by way of praise or acknowledgement during her lifetime, although there were some who recognised her ability. Today, thousands of tourists visit Nieu-Bethesda to encounter and be amazed by this iconic 'Outsider Artwork' of national and international renown and significance.

Helen Martins' Owl House is a remarkable achievement. It is as unexpected as it is moving.

What started off as an ordinary house, her home, was slowly transformed over the years into a strange and intense art world. The work challenges definitions of art, just as Miss Helen herself challenges conventional notions of the artist.

She had no formal training in art. She employed others to build her statues. She used humble means – cement and other people's rubbish, such as discarded bottles, were her materials. With these she created a space which speaks movingly about the human predicament. She was able, through her art, to transcend her very limited circumstances.

If you have never been to The Owl House, or even if you have visited, but after seeing *The Road to Mecca* find that you are

now inspired by a deeper understanding of Miss Helen and her world, why not make that pilgrimage to The Owl House in Nieu-Bethesda in the Eastern Cape. The magical landscape, and the ancient traditions in this particular valley, might help to inform you of the source of Miss Helen's extraordinary imagination and creativity.

**Where:** The Owl House, New Street, Nieu-Bethesda 6286

**When:** 09h00 to 16h45, Monday to Sunday; December school holidays, 08h00 to 17h45; closed on December 25.

**Tickets:** purchased at the visitors' center entrance in Martin Street, and cost R60 for the Owl House only, and R90 for the Owl House and Kitching Fossil Centre.

**Info:** 049 841 1733

**E-mail:** [admin@theowlhouse.co.za](mailto:admin@theowlhouse.co.za)

**Online:** [www.theowlhouse.co.za](http://www.theowlhouse.co.za)

The photos by Samantha Reinders are from *The Owl House* by Anne Graaff published by Sneeuberg (first published in 1991)

## BECOME A MEMBER OF THE OWL HOUSE FOUNDATION

Your support and interest will help to preserve Miss Helen's visionary outsider art environment, which is unlike any other. Help to ensure that The Owl House remains a powerful testimony to the triumph of perseverance and imagination.

**Annual Subscription:** R100.00

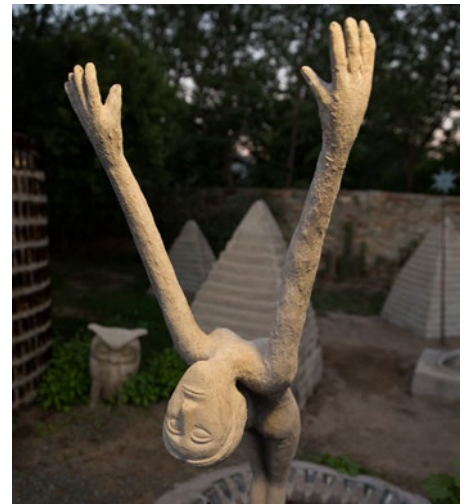
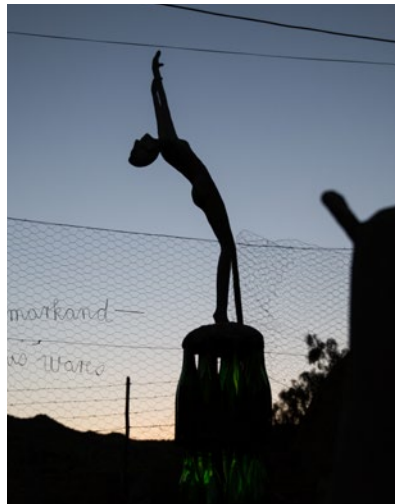
**E-mail:** [admin@theowlhouse.co.za](mailto:admin@theowlhouse.co.za)





Photos: Samantha Reinders





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ERIC ABRAHAM PRESENTS  
A FUGARD THEATRE PRODUCTION

# ATHOL FUGARD'S **THE ROAD TO MECCA**

## **CAST**

Miss Helen     **Sandra Prinsloo**  
Reverend Marius     **Marius Weyers**  
Elsa Barlow     **Emily Child**

## **PRODUCTION**

Producer     **Eric Abraham**  
Co-Producer     **Daniel Galloway**  
Associate Producer     **Lamees Albertus**  
Junior Associate Producer     **Georgia Lahusen**  
Writer     **Athol Fugard**  
Director     **Greg Karvellas**  
Set Design     **Saul Radomsky**  
Lighting Design     **Mannie Manim**  
Costume Design     **Birrie Le Roux**  
Sound Design,  
Original Composition     **Charl-Johan Lingenfelder**  
Sound Systems Design     **David Classen**  
Associate Set Design     **Chris Pienaar**  
Wardrobe Supervisor     **Widaad Albertus**  
Production Manager     **Roberto Grové**  
Technical Manager,  
Lighting Programmer     **Benjamin du Plessis**  
Assistant Production  
Manager     **Sean Whitehead**  
Stage Manager     **Ulibo Maake**  
Assistant Stage Manager     **Angelo Petersen**  
Sound Operator     **Justin Barends**  
Crew     **Clynt Hlubi**  
                         **Achmat Khroodien**  
                         **Dominique Adams**  
Set Construction     **Gerhard Morkel**  
                         **Carl Gersbach**  
                         For CHG Engineering  
Scenic Painting, Sculptures     **Adriaan van der**  
                         **Westhuizen**  
                         For Fabrication Station  
                         **Siyabulela Gocini**  
Sound Supplier     **Eastern Acoustics**  
Photography     **Daniel Rutland Manners**  
Publicity     **Christine Skinner**



## **DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

"Keep it simple"

These are the words that have rung in my ears throughout the process of directing *The Road to Mecca*. Over an informal glass of good red wine, I chatted to Athol about my approach to the piece and the three words he said in response were "keep it simple". Thankfully this was the direction I was headed in conceptually, but hearing those words from the writer himself was the nod I needed to jump in.

The process of rehearsing this play has been an absolute joy. To work on text as layered and nuanced as *The Road to Mecca* with a cast of skilled actors who have brought such love and care to the characters they are playing, is a director's dream. The last four weeks of our rehearsals (at the time of writing this) have been filled with laughter, generosity and a real feeling that we are working on something really special.

Collaborating with this creative team has been an education for me. Mannie, Saul, Birrie and Charl-Johan have been doing this theatre thing since before I was born, and both myself and the show have benefitted immensely from their collective experience and wealth of knowledge. I am so grateful for their time, talent and experience that they have brought to this process.

Lastly, I would like to thank Eric Abraham and Daniel Galloway for trusting me with this iconic piece.

Greg Karvellas









## GREG KARVELLAS

Director

Greg Karvellas has, for the past 13 years, worked as a director, producer and production manager in both theatre and television. He has co-produced with his longtime collaborator, writer Louis Viljoen, *The Abusers*, *The Bile Boys*, *The Frontiersmen*, and directed the hit play *CHAMP*, which enjoyed successful seasons at the Artscape Arena Theatre, the Fugard Studio Theatre, the Grahamstown National Arts Festival and the Edinburgh Festival in 2013. Other directing credits include having been the Associate Director on *A Human Being Died That Night* written by Nicholas Wright under Director Jonathan Munby which ran in Cape Town, Johannesburg as well as at The Hampstead Theatre in London and Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) in New York. Greg's most recent directing credits include *The Eulogists* and *Shakespeare in Love* in 2017, and in 2016, Joshua Harmon's *Bad Jews*, *Contractions* by Mike Bartlett, Bruce Norris's *Clybourne Park*, which enjoyed a critically acclaimed season in the Fugard Theatre and *The Father* by Florian Zeller which starred Marius Weyers.

Greg is the Resident Director and General Manager of the Fugard Theatre.



## SAUL RADOMSKY

Set Design

Saul Radomsky qualified as a Fine Art teacher in South Africa before going to the UK to study Scenography. After 38 years he returned to South Africa and received Fleur du Cap nominations for Best Set Design for *Songbook*, *Some Like it Vrot*, *Die Laaste Karretjiegraf* and *The Shadow of the Hummingbird*. He won the FNB Vita Award for Best Set Design for David Kramer's *Kat and the Kings*, and the Best Set Design Fleur du Cap Award for Athol Fugard's *The Bird Watchers*. Saul designed the Fugard Theatre's first Athol Fugard production, *The Train Driver*, which transferred to the Hampstead Theatre in London.

More recently, Saul designed the Fugard Theatre productions of Athol Fugard's *The Painted Rocks at Revolver Creek*, the highly acclaimed *Clybourne Park* for which he received a Fleur du Cap award for Best Set Design, David Kramer's *Orpheus in Africa*, Joshua Harmon's *Bad Jews* and the Fugard Theatre's production of *Funny Girl – The Musical*. Both *Orpheus in Africa* and *Bad Jews* received Fleur du Cap nominations for Best Set Design. Besides the numerous versions of *Kat and the Kings* (worldwide, since 1997, including the West End and Broadway), *District Six - Kanala* was Saul's sixth major collaboration with David Kramer.



## BIRRIE LE ROUX

Costume Design

Birrie le Roux designed *The Road to Mecca* in the late 1980s for Capab with Rob Amato directing and received an award for Best Set Design for this production. During the 1990s she worked mostly in the film industry as a production designer, working on some iconic local films like *Fiela se Kind* and *Paljas*. Although more recently she is concentrating her energy on the theatre, she was nominated for a SAFTA award in Production Design for the film *Johnny Is Nie Dood Nie* for which she won the Silwerskerm award in 2016. Birrie is well known as a theatre and film designer in South Africa. Her work as a costume designer has been seen in cities all over the world. She won the Fleur du Cap for best costume design for *Orpheus in Africa*, David Kramer's 2015 musical produced by the Fugard Theatre. This year she was nominated for costume design for *King Kong* and *Funny Girl – The Musical*. In 2017 Birrie designed costumes for Jaco Bouwer's *Marat/Sade*, a Baxter Theatre production. Also at the Baxter was the new production, *Die Dans van die Watermeid*, for which she designed the set and costumes. For the Fugard Theatre she designed costumes for Greg Karvellas' production of *The Father* and, for *The Mother*, directed by Janice Honeyman, she designed the set and costumes. In 2016 she designed costumes for Athol Fugard's new production of *The Painted Rocks at Revolver Creek* and Greg Karvellas' *Clybourne Park*, both also produced by the Fugard Theatre.

Birrie studied theatre design in Pretoria and lives in Cape Town.



## MANNIE MANIM

### Lighting Design

Co-founder of The Market Theatre, Mannie Manim has been involved in theatre since 1956. He served as MD of The Market Theatre Company from 1973 – 1991; Director of Performing Arts Administration at Wits University from 1991 – 2000; Director and CEO of the Baxter Theatre from 2000 – 2009, and Executive Director of the Fugard Theatre in 2010. He founded his own company, Mannie Manim Productions, in 1991 which he continues to run as MD. Mannie has lit every first production of an Athol Fugard play in South Africa since 1977 and has produced most of them.

Mannie was made Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres by the French Government (1990). His many other accolades include: the South African Institute of Technology Award for Outstanding Achievement as Technician, Administrator and Lighting Designer (1981), 10 Vita Awards for best Lighting Design, a Gold Medal for Theatre Development from the South African Academy of Arts and Science (1996), a Naledi Lifetime Achievement Award (2004), a Fleur du Cap Lifetime Achievement Award (2011), an Arts and Culture Trust Lifetime Achievement Award (2011), the National Order of Ikhamanga in Silver (2011) and a Fleur du Cap Award for Best Lighting Design (2012).

Mannie was made an International Fellow of the Association of Lighting Designers UK and the Laager Theatre at the Market Theatre was renamed the Mannie Manim (2016).



## CHARL-JOHAN LINGENFELDER

### Sound Design

Charl-Johan studied Musicology, Drama and Classical Culture at the University of Stellenbosch. He is currently the Resident Musical Director for the Fugard Theatre. Charl has worked in Paris, San Francisco, New York, Hong Kong, Athens, New Zealand, China, Taiwan and Indonesia as a composer, musical director, arranger, conductor, writer and performer. Charl-Johan has been nominated for 12 Naledi and 8 Fleur du Cap Awards. He won Best Soundtrack at the Silwerskerm Festival 2016 for the Afrikaans feature, *Johnny Is Nie Dood Nie*. He was Musical Director for the Fugard Theatre productions of *The Rocky Horror Show*, *West Side Story*, *Funny Girl – The Musical* and musical supervisor/performer on *Cabaret* (for which he received a Fleur du Cap nomination). Most recently he was Musical Director, Composer, and Arranger on *King Kong* for which he received a Fleur du Cap Award.

Some of his recent sound design work includes *Clybourne Park*, *The Father* and *The Painted Rocks at Revolver Creek* (receiving a Fleur du Cap nomination), Jemma Kahn's *In Bocca Al Lupo* and the KKNK production *Babbelagtig*.

A movie based on his military experience (*Kanarie*), which he co-wrote with director Christiaan Olwagen, will be released later this year.







## SANDRA PRINSLOO

Miss Helen

Sandra graduated from the University of Pretoria with a BA Drama (Hons) and then joined the Afrikaans theatre company Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal (PACT) where she remained for 9 years. In these years she did numerous productions starring opposite Marius Weyers. ***Orpheus and Euridice, Les Justes, Maria Stuart, Siener in die Suburbs*** and ***Macbeth*** to name but a few. Years later she performed ***Hamlet, The Taming of the Shrew*** and ***Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*** for PACT. Sandra performed at the Market Theatre in ***Marat/Sade*** for the opening of what is now the John Kani Theatre where she also performed in ***The Seagull, Trojan Women*** and ***Nag, Generaal***.

Sandra was part of the first Baxter Theatre rehearsal company and also did ***Miss Julie*** at the Baxter with John Kani in 1985. For TV she has appeared in dramas such as ***Hedda Gabbler, The Human Voice***, for which she won an Artes award, ***Three Sisters*** and several other series. Her film credits include, ***The Gods Must be Crazy*** and ***Tigers Don't Cry***, starring opposite Anthony Quinn. Recently Sandra performed in ***Wie's Bang vir Virginia Woolf, Die Seemeeu, Oskar en die Pienk Tannie, Die Naaimasjien, Moedertaal*** and ***So Ry Miss Daisy***. Sandra has received numerous Best Actress awards as well as 3 lifetime achievement awards, the National Order of Ikhamanga and recently an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Stellenbosch.



## MARIUS WEYERS

Reverend Marius

Marius Weyers joined the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal (PACT) as a 19 year old in 1964 where he initially worked as assistant stage manager and on educational programmes, which led to other acting roles. He was associated with PACT for twelve years, during which time his many theatre performances included: ***Siener in die Suburbs, Becket, Iago, Proctor*** and ***Stanley Kowalski***. He was Artistic Director at PACT for three years. Since then he has performed in plays such as ***Uncle Vanya, Twelfth Night, Dimetos, Sorrows and Rejoicing*** and ***The Father***. Films and television credits include: ***The Gods Must Be Crazy, Paljas, Red Dust, Bopha, Ghandi, Dis Ek, Anna, Twee Grade van Moord, Amalia*** and ***Seemeeu***. He received the Medal of Honour from the South African Academy for Arts and Sciences in 1981, and the Lifetime Achievement Award in Theatre and Film in 2015. He says: I've had the good fortune to have appeared in seven plays by Athol Fugard. It's a great honour to be part of ***The Road to Mecca*** in this, Athol's 85<sup>th</sup> year.



## EMILY CHILD

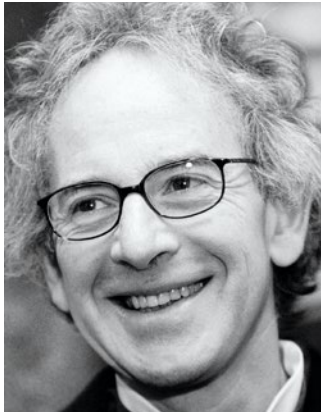
Elsa Barlow

Emily graduated from the University of Cape Town in 2007 with a degree in Theatre and Performance. She has since worked independently and as part of a theatre troupe – The Mechanicals, with whom she did a number of plays in repertory, including Steven Berkoff's ***Decadence***, directed by Christopher Weare. Her recent work includes Louis Viljoen's ***The Pervert Laura***, for which she won a Fleur Du Cap award for Best Actress, ***A Midsummer Night's Dream*** and ***LEAR*** both directed by Guy De Lancey as well as ***CHAMP***, written by Louis Viljoen and directed by Greg Karvellas for the Edinburgh Festival. Emily worked with LA based Jana Wimer and Zombie Joe's Underground Theatre Company on the horror ***Urban Death***. She toured with Barney Simon's ***Born in the RSA***, directed by Thoko Ntshinga and Mike Bartlett's ***Contractions*** directed by Greg Karvellas. She was also seen in Louis Viljoen's ***The Emissary*** which was performed at The Alexander Bar Upstairs Theatre. Emily last performed at the Fugard Theatre in Florian Zeller's ***The Father*** and Louis Viljoen's ***The Eulogists*** in 2017.









## ERIC ABRAHAM

Producer

Eric Abraham is a South African-born television and theatre producer. He is best known for producing two Oscar-winning films – *Kolya* (Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film 1996, directed by Jan Sverak) and *Ida* (Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film 2014, directed by Pawel Pawlikowski). Both films won multiple other awards including, for *Kolya*, the Golden Globe and, for *Ida*, a BAFTA and Best European Film award. *Kolya* and *Ida* are two of the most widely seen foreign language films in the last twenty years. Eric is also known for producing Roald Dahl's *Danny, the Champion of the World*, starring Jeremy Irons and a host of British stars. Aside from producing and commissioning new work for the Fugard Theatre, Eric's West End and London stage credits include: the 2008 Olivier Award-winning *The Magic Flute/Impempe Yomlingo* (Paris Crystal Globe for Best Opera) and Christopher Hampton's *Embers* featuring Jeremy Irons. He commissioned and underwrote the Fugard Theatre, becoming its Founding Producer.

## THE FUGARD THEATRE

Founding & Executive Producer  
**Eric Abraham**

Executive Director  
**Daniel Galloway**

Financial Director  
**Stephen Sacks**

Theatre Manager  
& Associate Producer  
**Lamees Albertus**

Resident Director  
& General Manager  
**Greg Karvellas**

Financial Manager  
**Ronel Botha**

Payroll and Accounts  
**Vanessa Sacks**

Front of House Manager  
**Iris Bolton**

Box Office Manager  
**Ingrid Stemmet**

Co-Box Office Manager  
**Shaakiera Israel**

Technical Manager  
**Benjamin du Plessis**

Production Manager  
**Roberto Grové**

Assistant Production Manager  
**Sean Whitehead**

Junior Associate Producer  
**Georgia Lahusen**

Graphic Design  
**James Cooke**

Media & AV  
**Daniel Rutland Manners**

Office & Events Assistant  
**Kyle Alexander**

Resident Musical Director  
**Charl-Johan Lingenfelder**

Resident Writer  
**Louis Viljoen**

Resident Costume Designer  
**Birrie le Roux**

Resident Stage Manager  
**Juanita van Wyk**

Resident Deputy Stage Manager  
**Shayna Gleave**

Resident Assistant Stage Manager  
**Ulibo Maake**

Wardrobe Supervisor  
& Production Assistant  
**Widaad Albertus**

Assistant Technical Stage Managers  
**Clynt Hlubi**  
**Achmat Khroodien**

Technical Assistant  
**Angelo Petersen**

Bar Manager  
**Olivier Lekada**

Bar Duty Manager  
**Dorsaint Katumpa**

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