



*The Road
To Mecca*

by Athol Fugard





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A Centaur Theatre Company and
Citadel Theatre (Edmonton)
Co-production of

The Road To Mecca

by Athol Fugard

February 2–March 20, 1988

CAST

Miss Helen Joan Orenstein
Elsa Barlow Nicola Lipman
Marius Byleveld Peter Boretski

director: Linda Moore

set & costumes designer: Pat Flood

lighting designer: Alexander Gazale

assistant set & costumes designer: William Reznicek

stage manager: Nicolette Theroux

apprentice stage manager: E. Jane Mawby

The time: Autumn 1974

The place: A house in the small Karoo village of New Bethesda, South Africa

THE ROAD TO MECCA was suggested by the life of Helen Niemand of New Bethesda, South Africa. It was originally produced by Yale Repertory Theatre, Lloyd Richards, Artistic Director.

Canadian première

There will be one intermission, time enough to enjoy a drink, sandwich or coffee at the bar.

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The soul selects her own society—
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Emily Dickinson

Excerpts from the notebooks of Athol Fugard
April, 1977

For the second time a dream of remarkable detail and precision involving a clock...a diagnosis of self by self. And again it involved the making of a clock; but "clock" almost belittles the scope of what was really involved. Time as such was only the centre-piece of a very complex structure — the writer's dream of a perfect piece of furniture: it had drawers, folding tables, everything. The significant element in this dream is that the "clock" didn't involve simply the assembly of a set of pieces...but screws by the hundreds, nuts, bolts, shelving, pendulum. One dominant thought or realization: 'It is going to take years'. Now that I think back on it, another thought: my "making" of the clock was second best, it would only be a mechanical model of the organic reality...a reality not "made" in the sense that mine would be. "Real time" as opposed to "made time".

All through the dream there were objects of great beauty — mostly of glass — beauty and hope were the dominant modes of experience.

May, 1977

These past months I have been trying to live through one of the most intensely experienced crises of my life. As I write this, I still see no light. But maybe tomorrow...who knows. The "crisis" is quite simply, the total extinction of my creativity. Without it I find living a pain I can only describe as intolerable.

Le goût à venir...



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ATHOL FUGARD (Author), South Africa's leading dramatist, is also the author of the "The Blood Knot", "Boesman and Lena", "Hello and Goodbye", "The Island", "A Lesson From Aloes", "Master Harold...and the Boys", "People Are Living There", "Sizwe Bansi is Dead" and "Statements After An Arrest Under the Immorality Act". Centaur productions of his work include "The Blood Knot" (1972), "People Are Living There" (starring Joan Orenstein in 1975), "Sizwe Bansi is Dead" (1976 at Centaur and a national tour), "The Island" (1978 at Centaur and a national tour), "A Lesson From Aloes" (1980, world première outside South Africa and directed by Fugard) and "Master Harold...and the Boys" (1985). His notoriety in North America took root when "A Lesson From Aloes" appeared on Broadway receiving a Tony Award nomination and a Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Play. Two years later, "Master Harold...and the Boys" was given its première at Yale Repertory Theatre followed by a long Broadway run and numerous awards including a Tony for Best Performance to Zakes Mokae. Mr. Fugard has appeared in several of his own plays including the recent Broadway revival of "The Blood Knot" and "A Place with the Pigs", currently on stage at Britain's National Theatre. He appeared as Marius in the original production of *THE ROAD TO MECCA* and will repeat the role on Broadway later this year. His film credits include featured roles in "The Guest" and "Marigolds in August", both written by Mr. Fugard, as well as appearances in "Meetings With Remarkable Men", "The Killing Fields" and "Gandhi".

PETER BORETSKI (Marius) one of Canada's finest character actors, is making his first Centaur appearance. Recently he completed a Canadian tour of the one-man show, "Einstein", which he performed over 200 times to packed houses and critical acclaim. He began his career with the Stratford Festival in "Henry V" with Jean Gascon and "Merry Wives of Windsor" with Gratién Gélinas. As a member of the Stratford Festival he appeared at the Edinburgh Festival in "Oedipus Rex" and on Broadway in "Tamburlaine the Great". He toured Europe with Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh in "Titus Andronicus" directed by Peter Brook and appeared in London's West End in "A View from the Bridge" and "The Kidders". On returning to Canada, he produced and directed "Quentin Durgens, M.P.", "Mary of Scotland", "Juno and the Paycock", etc. for CBC television drama. Resuming his acting career he was a regular on CBC's sitcom "King of Kensington" and was nominated for an Actra Award for his brilliant performance as Trefius, the diamond merchant in CBC's "Charlie Grant's War". Soon to be released is his portrayal of Sam Eckleberg in "Chasing Rainbows", CBC television's 14-hour mini-series set in Montreal during World War I and the Roaring Twenties.

PAT FLOOD (Set and Costumes Designer), is originally from Calgary where she worked as Resident Designer for Theatre Calgary as well as designed for Alberta Theatre Projects and The Citadel in Edmonton. Now based in Montreal, she teaches theatre design at Concordia University. Her work was seen most recently at Theatre New Brunswick where she has designed for the last three seasons including their touring production of "Lucien". She spent several years as an assistant set designer at the CBC in Toronto, working on such productions as

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"Homefires", "Fraggle Rock" and "Chasing Rainbows". She has also designed for Television Ontario, Young People's Theatre, Tarragon Theatre and Blyth Festival in Ontario. Pat is the Vice-President of the Associated Designers of Canada.

ALEXANDER GAZALE (Lighting Designer) is Centaur's Technical Director and Resident Lighting Designer. Audiences have seen his designs for LA SAGOINE, K2, MOVING, GONE THE BURNING SUN, ALBERTINE IN FIVE TIMES, FIRE and many more. A Montrealer, Alex has been involved in theatre since his high school days at Loyola. While attending John Abbott College, he worked with many of Montreal's amateur and semi-professional companies: Thé-Arts, Phoenix Theatre, Group of Four and others. He has also spent a summer at La Poudrière. He will design OBSERVE THE SONS OF ULSTER MARCHING TOWARDS THE SOMME later this season as well as THE ROAD TO MECCA at the Citadel. Alex is Quebec representative and a board member of The Associated Designers of Canada.

NICOLA LIPMAN (Elsa Barlow) comes to Centaur having just closed in Anne Chislett's "Another Season's Promise", a Citadel Theatre/Blyth Festival co-production directed by Linda Moore. She has previously worked with Linda in "night, Mother" co-starring Joan Orenstein for the Manitoba Theatre Centre and in Sam Shepard's "Buried Child" for Tryworks, Halifax. Centaur audiences saw her in Alan Hibbert's PLAYING THE FOOL in 1983. Nicola's stage work has taken her to theatres from coast to coast including roles such as Rita in "Educating Rita" for Vancouver's Arts Club Theatre, Belinda Blair in "Noises Off" and Jessie in "night, Mother" (this time with Florence Paterson) for Halifax's Neptune Theatre, Kate in "Brighton Beach Memoirs" for The Grand Theatre in London, Ontario, and Barbara in "War Babies" a Nightwood Theatre production at Toronto Free Theatre. Other experience includes numerous film, television and radio performances. Most recently, she appeared in and was Casting Director for the film "Life Classes", which has been chosen as Canada's official entry to the Berlin Film Festival.

E. JANE MAWBY (Apprentice Stage Manager) first started at Centaur six years ago working as an usher. Last season saw her move to the position of Properties Assistant, which she also held for GUYS AND DOLLS. Jane studied theatre at Concordia University, and began her stage management apprenticeship at The Piggery Theatre in North Hatley, which she followed with Centaur's production of LA SAGOINE. She also spent one year as a Canadian representative working in the Canadian Pavilion of Walt Disney World's EPCOT Centre.

LINDA MOORE (Director) will be well-known to Centaur audiences for her productions of LA SAGOINE with Joan Orenstein and last season's highly acclaimed FAITH HEALER. She recently directed the graduating class of the National Theatre School in Michael Hasting's "Tom and Viv". She has worked as Artistic Associate at Manitoba Theatre Centre in Winnipeg and as Assistant Director at the Stratford Festival. Among her past productions throughout Canada are "Another Season's Promise" for the Blyth Festival; "Salt Water Moon" for Arbor Theatre; "Filthy Rich", "Fool for Love", "Sea Marks" and "night, Mother" for Manitoba Theatre Centre; and "Buried Child" in Halifax. This spring, she will direct "The Idler" for Theatre Plus in Toronto.



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JOAN ORENSTEIN (Miss Helen) one of Canada's most impressive actresses, was last seen as "LA SAGOINE" at Centaur in November. Other recent credits include a highly successful run as Emily Carr in "Song of This Place", Joy Coghill's play based on the painter's life, for Vancouver East Cultural Centre. Well-known to Centaur audiences, Joan appeared in the roles of Milly in Athol Fugard's PEOPLE ARE LIVING THERE, Mrs. Bailey in Mavis Gallant's WHAT IS TO BE DONE? and as Albertine at 70 in Michel Tremblay's ALBERTINE IN FIVE TIMES. An original member of the National Arts Centre Theatre Company (1977-83), her roles there have included Margaret in "Waiting for the Parade" (including the 1980 Northern and National tours), Mrs. Pampinelli in "The Torch Bearer", Mrs. Alving in "Ghosts", Mrs. Borden in "Blood Relations", Courage in "Mother Courage", Queen Margaret in "Richard III", and Madame Arcati in "Blithe Spirit". A veteran of the Neptune Theatre, roles include Juno in "Juno and the Paycock", Harriet in "Back to Beulah", Grand Duchess Olga in "You Can't Take It With You" and Marie-Lou in "Forever Yours, Marie-Lou" — to name a few. Recent stage appearances include Aunt Meme in "Saturday, Sunday, Monday" at Centre Stage in Toronto; Baba in "Tzimbaly" and the Mother in "night, Mother" both for Manitoba Theatre Centre; and Marina in "Uncle Vanya" at Toronto's Tarragon Theatre. Credits also include numerous radio, television and film appearances. She created Emily Carr for CBC-Radio's "Booktime/Hundreds & Thousands". Television audiences will recognize her as Judge Ballantyne from the CBC series "Judge" and for her roles of Mrs. Monaghan in "Evergreen" and Elizabeth in the critically-acclaimed "Charlie Grant's War". Her recent CBC television films include "Island Love Song" and "Murder Sees The Light".

WILLIAM REZNICEK (Assistant Designer) has designed scenery, lights and costumes for numerous shows for university, professional and community theatres in the U.S. and Canada. His recent productions have included "Tartuffe" and "Much Ado About Nothing" at Concordia University where he teaches design, and "Oh What A Lovely War" at the Pendragon Theatre in Saranac Lake, New York. THE ROAD TO MECCA is his first engagement with Centaur.

NICOLETTE THEROUX (Stage Manager) joined Centaur last season, stage managing SOMEBODY SOMEBODY'S RETURNING and FAITH HEALER. She recently completed work on LA SAGOINE. Prior to her return for the 1987-88 season, she stage managed her fourth summer season with Sunshine Theatre in Kelowna, B.C., and successfully completed a cross-Canada Canasta tourney. A native of Edmonton, Nicolette completed her Stage Management apprenticeship at the Citadel Theatre and has since worked for various theatres across the country including the 85/86 season at Magnus Theatre in Thunder Bay; Manitoba Theatre Centre; and Workshop West and Catalyst Theatre in Edmonton.

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