

Mark Wright

Mark Wright is a graduate of Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School.

Already in 2024, Mark has completed filming for Jason Momoa's Minecraft movie, & wrapped up voicing for the upcoming Kiri & Lou movie. But, as always, Theatre is his first love.

He has appeared for every professional theatre company in New Zealand and toured extensively throughout Australasia. Notably: The Rocky Horror Show, Bouncers, A Way Of Life, A Midsummer Night's Dream & in 2023 Ladies Night. He has featured in some 40 different television series/programmes/specials and has won two New Zealand Film & Television awards - both for best performance.



, Mark's other recent stage productions include:

- The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time - Court Theatre
- 8 Gigabytes of Hardcore Pornography - Silo Theatre
- The Audience & 6 Degrees of Separation - Auckland Theatre Co.
- Ladies Night - Centrepont Theatre

Mark has performed 6 short seasons of his play *Voices From Gallipoli* under the working title 'The Gallipoli Monologues' (see attached reviews).

Peer Review

Peter Feeney, Actor, Writer, Director

I'm still reeling, even a week after seeing it, from the beauty and power of Mark Wright's tour de force, one person show, 'Voices from Gallipoli.'



Voices From Gallipoli

An actor at the height of his powers, Mark is one of the few actors I can think of who can convincingly jump from playing an 18-year-old conscript to an 80-year-old veteran, without missing a beat, and carry the audience with him. And what a ride!

At times joyful, at others profoundly moving, and always true. All nine of his characters were beautiful drawn: different enough and compelling enough to enlist us this theatrical journey all the back to the heart of our nationhood.

It's a one man show in more ways than one, being written and directed by Mark as well. And what writing! Exhaustively researched, stitched cohesively together, dialogue that sang and a story that avoided the pitfalls of sentimentality or heliography, but instead aimed for humanity – and hit the bullseye.

Altogether Mark's talent and heart wove together a tapestry of triumph, tragedy, wit, and humanity, that made sense of the phenomenon that was this awful campaign.

Sparsely but precisely staged, hilarious, and gut wrenchingly moving, if there's any ancestry in your past that spans back to this conflict, and anything in your DNA that relates to sacrifice, loss, suffering and heroism, this is the play for you.

90 minutes of sagesness and savagery that will get you thinking not just about our nation's past, but how much things really don't change.

Media Review

Gallipoli play earns emotional applause

By Kelley Tantau, August 18, 2022, in "the Valley Voice"



Mark Wright's deft touch and clever dialogue makes The Gallipoli Monologues a show not to miss. Photo: KELLEY TANTAU

Mark Wright is a war veteran, a lieutenant colonel, an army doctor, a beloved son. Each symbolised by a different piece of headwear, the characters are more than just a monologue on a stage. They are more than just stories and words, however poignant; they are people. The actor, who has starred in almost 40 different television series including *What Now* and *Shortland Street*, was performing his one-man play *The Gallipoli Monologues* on August 13. The venue for the intimate matinee, the Paeroa Little Theatre, transformed into a foxhole, barracks, and a hospital wing. In the centre of it all sat a hat rack, and on the rack were nine hats, representing a different character of Mark's monologues.

But "character" almost seems too weak of a word.

Inspired by real-life stories, the men who were revealed on-stage not only gave an insight into who they were and what they were doing, they also spoke of others like them, others who may not have been as lucky, others who may be missing them back home.

You mourn for them, you grieve with them, but in almost the same breath, you smile at them.

With a deft hand, Mark balances the sombre stories with humour. From the out-of-touch British Army general, the glass-half-full Aussie reciting poetry, and the recognisable Kiwi who brings light in dark times, the dialogue of each monologue is expertly crafted.

The actor's quivering lip, shaky-yet-clear speech, and tearful eyes are a showcase of how good theatre can provide more than just a 90-minute injection of entertainment. It can engage and educate, perhaps even more so than modern blockbusters that attract millions and earn just as much.

Mark has a passion for the self-driven project. The self-confessed "amateur historian" fronted a 2014 documentary series which saw him complete a "life-long dream" by travelling to Gallipoli and the Anzac Cove in Turkey.

His great-grandfather was the proprietor of the Rob Roy Hotel in Waihi, while two of his great uncle's served in Gallipoli, returning to New Zealand injured and dying shortly after World War I due to complications from their wounds.

It is perhaps this respect and awareness of his characters that makes *The Gallipoli Monologues* a show to watch.

It requires no prerequisites of knowledge, just a willingness to absorb.

The play was created after Mark, hosting an adults acting workshop in 2021, performed an off-the-cuff monologue inspired by World War I. The performance was well-received, with audience-members encouraging Mark to turn it into a play. It had its premiere in Waihi on June 11 this year.

Mark said he was planning to keep the show on the road, so if you see a man with nine hats, take a seat.

Historian's Review

online review on the New Zealanders At War Facebook Page



Tucked into an intimate small town theatre, in a late winter afternoon matinee. prove to be ideal to remember those who shall not grow old, as well as appreciate acting craftsmanship and visualstorytelling.

This poignant series of tales is written and narrated in the first person, by professional actor Mark Wright. He creates nine different personalities, spanning 50 years from the battles on shore and sea, though to veterans at the time of WW2 and on the commemoration of the 50th anniversary. Each is carefully crafted telling a different aspect and a very personal view of the Gallipoli campaign in it's historical context.

There are all the characters you would expect from pompous and heroic officers, though to a wise cacking cynical sergeant homesick l(iwi and a larrikin Aussie full of real pathos. These arebookended by some unexpected subjects including a sombre medic, melancholy ex-servicemen and a cameo by national leader each giving a deeper perspective.

Mark deftly navigates each individual with different tones, accents. suitable stance and emotional drama showcasing his acting prowess. These are further enhanced with a carefully chosen prop or two and the all important distinctive headdress.

Simple staging and lighting, together with an evocative soundtrack. allow Mark to create vignettes with his off stage companions, including a simple glance into the audience bringing you directly into the play as a witness or bit player from time to time.

Having had the chance to visit the Turkish Peninsula for the Centennial it helped remind me of the pointless carnage and loss sadly experienced there. ti also offers accessible, brief glimpses for those wanting a broader understanding of the invasion and campaign that helped create the ANZAC legacy.

Thanks Mark for bringing your creativity and passion for this history into our small towns. I recommend investing a little of your time one evening or afternoon to be transported back into another time to help us all understand these powerful messages still relevant today.

Shared in the New Zealanders At War Group also:

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