

ST JOAN OF THE STOCK —YARDS

BY BERTOLT BRECHT
IN A VERSION BY MARK ROGERS

PRESENTED BY LA BOITE
& QUT CREATIVE INDUSTRIES



LA BOITE
THEATRE COMPANY



V1.0

ABOUT THE SHOW

SYNOPSIS

“You are stealing our future.”
— Greta Thunberg.

A If the system's rigged against you, what can you believe in?

St Joan of the Stockyards is a searing critique of capitalism and a rallying battle cry for modern day activists and anarchists.

The Joan of Arc myth is reimagined by influential German playwright Bertolt Brecht and set against the backdrop of a crumbling city in the grip of a snowstorm.

Charity worker and doomed martyr Joan Dark battles wealthy business owner Pierpont Mauler; her innocent ideals tested by the cold, hard reality of economics.

This incendiary work is translated by the powerhouse team of award-winning playwright Mark Rogers (Winner: 2019 Patrick White Award, 2019 Griffin Award) and director Sanja Simić (*Lysa & The Freeborn Dames*) and makes its Australian premiere at La Boite.

St Joan of the Stockyards delivers a gripping tale of dodgy contractors, huge corporate buyouts, a city in riot, and a woman willing to die to change everything.

CAST & CREATIVES

ADAPTED BY Mark Rogers

DIRECTOR Sanja Simić

COMPOSITION & SOUND DESIGN Anna Whitaker

LIGHTING DESIGN Christine Felmingham

SET & COSTUME DESIGN Chloe Greaves

CAST INCLUDES Bryan Probets & Loani Arman

RECOMMENDED FOR

Suitable for grades 10 to 12

WARNINGS

- Some Course Language.
- Strobe and Haze.

CURRICULUM LINKS

FORM, STYLE & CONVENTIONS

- Epic Theatre
- Contemporary Political Theatre
- Linear and Non-Linear Theatre Forms
- Contemporary Performance

SENIOR SYLLABUS UNITS

Grade 11 Unit ONE: Share

Grade 12 Unit THREE: Challenge

SUBJECT MATTER

- Socialism versus Capitalism
- Gender
- The wealthy versus the poor
- Religion
- Industrialisation and the workforce
- Global Economics
- Unionism

PURPOSE

- Challenge or provoke
- Educate or inform
- Empower

CONTEXT

- Dramatic
- Philosophical
- Sociological
- Historical
- Political
- Cultural
- Technological

ARTIST Q&A

MARK ROGERS

Adaptor

Why St Joan in 2019?

The simple answer is that it's a cracking play. The more complicated answer is that we live in a time where there is an increasing disparity between the haves and the have nots. Politics is becoming more and more partisan, and more extreme. We wanted to ask, in this climate, what does it take to change the world? Brecht's play might be from 1929, but it articulates this precise problem. Brecht and his collaborators knew how to set up diametrically opposed ideas and let the battle play out. In *St Joan*, they take two ideas: faith in God and faith in economics and smash them against each other until they produce something new. The idea of protest, revolution and rebellion. For us, that's an exciting thing to be looking at in 2019.

What themes and ideas will this adaptation unpack?

I have an aversion to the word themes. I'd much rather think about what a play DOES to the audience. Does it challenge? Does it comfort? Does it accuse, reject, demand? Brecht's works always had a political point to them, he asks us to step outside what the play is 'about' and see the conditions that produce actions like these. He wants to DO something to us. I hope that our adaptation does the same thing.

What elements/conventions of Epic Theatre will we see?

The whole shebang! You'll get episodic plots, titles, songs, gestus. You'll be more defamiliarised and alienated and you'll be critically thinking for days. Heiner Muller said (I'm paraphrasing) to use Brecht without criticising him is treason. We don't want to present some Brecht museum piece. 80 years on we're throwing Brecht against the wall and seeing what sticks.



ADAPTOR Mark Rogers
& DIRECTOR Sanja Simić

CHECK IT OUT

Once you've booked your tickets, closer to the show date, we'll email you the full pre and post show activities. But for now, here's some research and discussion points you and your students can check out!

ST JOAN OF ARC

St. Joan of Arc is one of European history's earliest recorded examples of a young woman protesting. Joan was impressive, smart and determined. Below is a brief timeline of her life.

- St. Joan of Arc is the patroness of soldiers and of France
- Born: January 6, 1412 in Domremy, France
- St. Joan was a peasant
- At a very early age, she was said to have heard the voices of saints
- When she was thirteen St. Michael, St. Catherine, and St. Margaret told her to drive the English from French territory
- When she was sixteen she asked a relative to take her to Vaucouleurs, where she petitioned the garrison commander for permission to visit the French Royal Court. Despite the commanders sarcastic response to her request, Joan returned the following January and left with the support of two of his soldiers
- She left, disguised as a man as women weren't allowed to fight. She led the French to victory, freeing them from England. She fought in four more battles, before she helped to get Charles VII crowned in Rheims after taking the city from the English
- A few months later, St. Joan of Arc gets wounded in an attack. She then gets captured and sold to the English
- St. Joan of Arc is trialled by a pro-English church run by English commanders
- While imprisoned, St. Joan of Arc heard voices from saints, but was tortured and finally found guilty of heresy
- On the 30th of May 1431, St. Joan of Arc is burned at the stake in Rouen, France at the age of 19

JOAN IN POPULAR CULTURE

Brecht is not the only artist to have drawn from St. Joan for inspiration. She has featured in countless songs, tv shows, films and video games, from *The Simpsons*, to *Horrible Histories*, to *Age of Empires*. Prompt your students to do some research and see what versions of Joan they can find.

YOUTH PROTEST IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The ways in which we protest and what we protest about have changed over the years (although reoccurring themes arise again and again). In the last few years, there have been waves of young people protesting around the world. Here's a list of some key protests held by young people and some of the key figures on the frontlines.

MARCH FOR OUR LIVES & EMMA GONZALES

On February the 14th 2018, a gunman killed seventeen students and injured seventeen others at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida, USA. Following the massacre, students disappointed by the lack of gun reform, organised a record breaking march, held around the country. Young people from the community, including Emma Gonzales, were invited to a town hall meeting, where in which they debated against Republican politicians and Gun Lobbyists, fighting for stricter gun laws in the United States.

Town Hall Debate: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4AtOU0dDXv8>

March for our Lives: <https://marchforourlives.com/>

MALALA YOUSAFZAI

In 2012, after having been denied education in Taliban controlled Pakistan, Malala Yousafzai spoke publically about the right of women and girls to learn. This made her a target, leading a gunman to shoot her in the head. She was rehabilitated in the United Kingdom and received treatment for her wounds. She continued speaking publically and by 2014 established a charity and received the Nobel Peace Prize.

Malala Fund: <https://www.malala.org/>

EGG BOY

On the 16th of March 2019, Fraser Anning was delivering a press conference after making controversial comments regarding the recent Christchurch Mosque Shootings. In retaliation to the comments, seventeen year old William Connolly struck Anning on the back of the head with an egg. Connolly was subdued by a group of Anning's supporters, in what was seen by many as an extreme reaction to the protest. Connolly was dubbed 'Egg Boy' on social and news media and a crowdfunding campaign was raised on his behalf, totalling to \$99,922. Egg Boy donated all of the funds to the victims of the Christchurch Shootings.

ABC News: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-25/egg-boy-teenager-who-egged-fraser-anning-defends-incident/10937982>

CLIMATE STRIKE & GRETA THUNBERG

In August 2018, Swedish fifteen year old Greta Thunberg began protesting inaction on climate change. She began spending school time protesting outside of Swedish Parliament by holding a sign stating 'School Strike for Climate'. She started alone but over time other students joined her. This evolved into a worldwide movement, leading to protests around the globe, including 300,000 Australians on the 20th of September 2019.

School Strike 4 Climate Australia: <https://www.schoolstrike4climate.com>

DUJUAN HOOSAN

In August 2019, Indigenous twelve year old Dujan Hoosan addressed the United Nations. "I want adults to stop putting 10-year-old kids in jail," he said before the council. Dujan is fighting for Indigenous-led education and retaining Indigenous languages, in order to keep Indigenous youth out of jail. "I come here to speak with you because the Australian government is not listening. Adults never listen to kids like me, but we have important things to say."

SBS News: <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/stop-jailing-10-year-olds-indigenous-boy-addresses-un-on-australia-s-youth-detention-laws?fbclid=IwAR1csCcyXg9pSonteNGvB4PmpHaNKuQaNbpH1xkpEvZdYB-OCnw4Hwhbt8Zs&cid=news%3Asocialshare%3Afacebook>

TICKET PRICES

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Each school booking includes one complimentary teacher ticket with every 10 students.

STUDENT TICKETS \$27.50
ADDITIONAL TEACHER TICKET..... \$35.00

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