

PERTH INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL: Colin Moody

By [Patricia Johnson](#) Arts Hub | Tuesday, February 17, 2009



Can you tell me a little bit of the history of this project?

I was in a production of *Hamlet* for Bell Shakespeare at the opera house and Matthew, who is directing to this show, out of the blue he asked to meet me. He asked me if I was interested in playing the part of Creon and I said sure, because he said he was going to have a live band, and so straight away I was interested because it was going to be more expansive than the usual talking heads sort of thing.

Have ever appeared in an ancient Greek play before?

No, I've never worked in Greek play before. In this show, just one person (Rachel Dease) is playing the part of the chorus and in a way the audience also is part of the chorus. The songs have all been commissioned specifically for this show and we all got CDs of her singing before we came here. So I was listening to her songs while I was reading the play... they colour wonderfully the atmosphere on stage and help to lift into a scene.

What was your approach to the part of Creon?

I read and read and read. When I am preparing for a part, if I get the chance I will read the play at least 2 or 3 times a week in the lead up to the first days' rehearsal; in the last week of rehearsal I will read it every day. I try not to colour it in any way. Obviously I'm jotting down responses and ideas, but then I try to leave that clear because after that I'm in rehearsal and things can change quite dramatically.

What is it like working with Matt Lutton as director?

It's fantastic, I'm very seriously impressed; he's remarkably mature and creative. It's amazing and exciting for the future because it's very rare his ideas go far beyond the talking head type theatre.

So, is theatre your favourite avenue of acting?

Yeah, theatre is my favourite. I've done one long running TV show (*Something in the Air*) and the constriction of that is suffocating ultimately to me. ABC2 have got it on again at the moment. That was a wonderful show the first year, because they were trying to get their system up and running and that gave freedom to performers. The show had a uniqueness which it lost in its' second year which was a shame. Telly shows are really a 'schedule' that is being shot rather than a drama. It's just not as rewarding from a creative point of view.

What is your personal take on Antigone?

What fascinates me about the play is that you have sacrifice, for the greater good of the group as a choice, and then personal sacrifice overriding that. Somebody makes a decision to kill people for the greater good and then finds that he has to kill members of his own family. There's an element of stubbornness on both sides. I'm sure in Athens, Joe public must have had an acute appreciation of that dilemma and not a lot has changed since. That's what makes the stuff classic - its eternal questions and eternal characters. There are no black and white answers.

How did you first become interested in theatre?

I was fourteen and a half, I was in the school playground well on the way to becoming a juvenile delinquent when a prefect came across the playground and told me I had to be in a house production of an adaptation of A Clockwork Orange. And I loved it. It won the competition between the house plays it went down really well.

I didn't do anything about it for quite a while, but I did know that I could do that. I knew I could make it work, not just be saying it. But I didn't do anything about it until I came to Australia in 85. I was working on a building site, and I saw some acting classes advertised and I went. And then I went and auditioned for NIDA and got in. It was case of 'I've emigrated to Australia, I was 25, I was looking around thinking what am I going to do with my life? '

What would you say was the main attraction of theatre for you?

Live human interaction, being part of a focused energy, a cast, and a new cast member every night in the audience. I find that group focus really important. I like to think that something as enigmatic as possible is happening on stage and is letting many different responses and interpretations emerge from the audience. Also I really enjoy narrating books. Just before I came out here I did a version of Frankenstein, an adaptation by a Norwegian woman who lives in Australia now. It was mainly for children 12 – 16ish and it was fabulous fun.

I was doing my Frankenstein voice and the director had to keep calming me down; he kept saying, 'you are not Adolf Hitler' and I would say, 'no, but I want to be.'

If you were a spokesperson for the arts what message would you want to send out?

I would personally remove all funding from all professional (arts) bodies and I would channel that funding into schools and hospitals. I don't think the arts should be funded because what happens is people start to seek funding so they write scripts just to get funding and so on. I think it would be radical but I think it would be right. It would be like a bushfire through the arts, and we'd see what came up afterwards.

Colin Moody is appearing in the ThinIce production of *Antigone* for the Perth International Arts Festival

Subiaco Arts Centre

25 – 28 Feb,

3 – 7 Mar, 8pm

7 Mar 2pm

Previews 21, 24 Feb 8pm, 7 Mar 2pm