



In Search of Owen Roe
by Vanessa O'Neill
Teacher Resources

On The Road
30 May – 3 June 2016

Ideal for Years 9-12

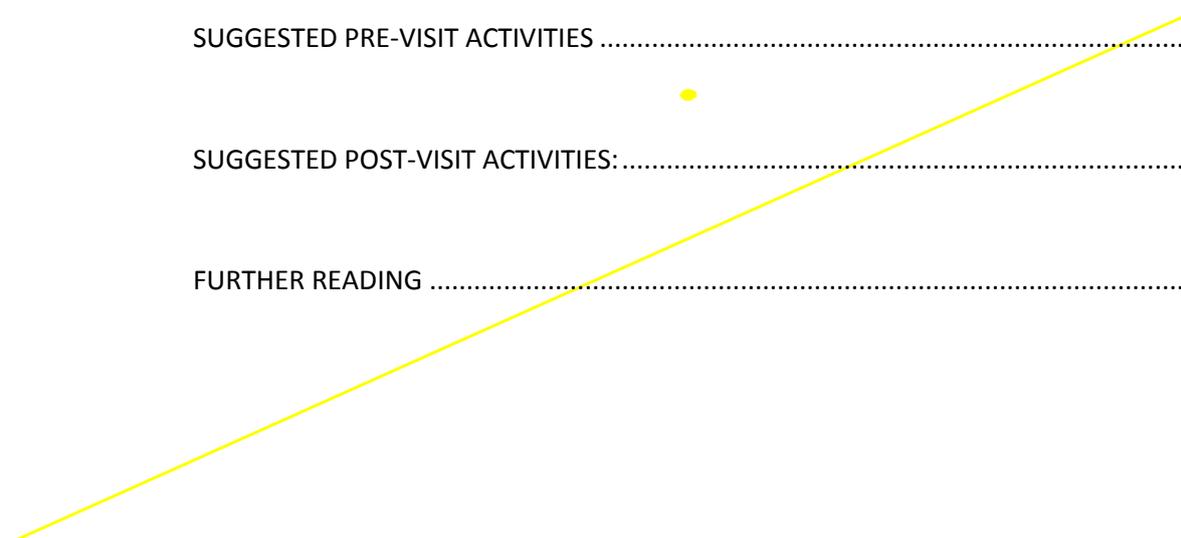
In Search of Owen Roe
Image credit: Ponch Hawkes

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

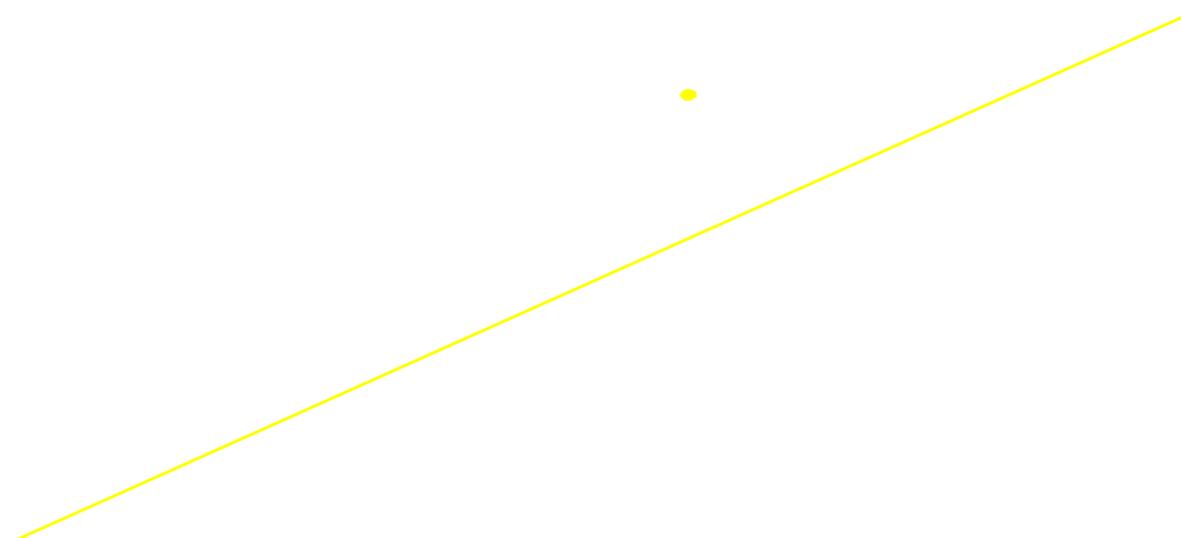
ABOUT THIS RESOURCE	3
ABOUT REGIONAL ARTS VICTORIA.....	4
EDUCATION & FAMILIES TEAM	5
CURRICULUM LINKS – Victorian Curriculum.....	6
INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM	8
BIOGRAPHIES	9
SUPPORT MATERIAL.....	11
SUGGESTED PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES	14
SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES:.....	17
FURTHER READING	20



ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource has been created to provide teachers with some preliminary ideas as to how to extend their experience of *In Search of Owen Roe* beyond the presentation and workshop. The activities are designed to be open-ended and multi-ability. They may need differentiation for your specific cohort.

The performances and workshops included in the Education & Families program are designed to offer students engaging arts experiences with strong links to the Victorian Curriculum and to VEYLDF, and VCE subjects where appropriate. Each Education & Families performance varies in its content and as a result the scope for integration across the curriculum varies. Please feel free to contact the Education and Families team on [\(03\) 9644 1808](tel:0396441808) or at education@rav.net.au if you have any questions about this resource, its content or its implementation within your classroom.



ABOUT REGIONAL ARTS VICTORIA

Regional Arts Victoria inspires art across the state. Through creative facilitation, touring, education, specialised resources, artistic projects and advocacy, we develop and sustain creative communities and artistic practice all over Victoria.

Regional Arts Victoria is an independent, not-for-profit, membership-based organisation working in long-term partnerships with every level of government, fostering contemporary and innovative regional cultural practice across five decades. We advise and impact on decision-making across multiple portfolios and levels of government.

Regional Arts Victoria is the peak body for regional artists and arts organisations, and the leading organisation for regional creative practice in Victoria.

Our artistic program

Regional Arts Victoria inspires creative communities, creative places and creative catalysts

CREATIVE COMMUNITIES

Regional Arts Victoria stimulates and connects our state's communities of practice.

CREATIVE PLACES

Regional Arts Victoria champions the places where art is made, experienced and discussed.

CREATIVE CATALYSTS

Regional Arts Victoria fosters current and next generation creative capacity and practice.

For more information about Regional Arts Victoria's programs please contact us:

T: 9644 1800

<http://www.rav.net.au/>



EDUCATION & FAMILIES TEAM

Regional Arts Victoria's Education & Families team pride ourselves on providing relevant and exciting activities for children and young people that are complementary to both Victorian and Australian curriculums. All of our tours come with a free set of education resources to further enrich your arts experience.

Our team is available to provide local contacts and links to research, and offer advice on how to make the most of the arts at your school or centre. Our office is a resource for Victorian teachers, so we encourage you to make use of us!

We also provide significant subsidy assistance (up to 50% of program costs) to eligible remote and disadvantaged schools. Your school may be eligible so please contact us to find out more!



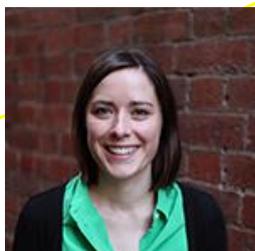
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CURRICULUM LINKS – Victorian Curriculum

In Search of Owen Roe links to Victorian Curriculum across a range of Learning Areas and Capabilities.

- The Arts, Drama – Levels 9-10, VCE
- Humanities -History and Geography
- Capabilities: Personal and Social Capability, Critical and Creative Thinking , Ethical Capability and Intercultural Understanding

Learning Areas	Capabilities
<p>The Arts</p> <p>In Victorian Curriculum: The Arts students learn by making and responding, as artists and as audience.</p> <p><i>In Search of Owen Roe</i> offers opportunities for teachers to structure activities that draw on each of the Arts strands – Explore and express ideas, Practice, Present and Perform and Respond and Interpret. Activities might focus on content such as the elements of drama, principles of narrative, viewpoints and development of aspects of practice such as using skills and techniques, forms and materials.</p> <p>Sample links to 9-10 content descriptions and achievement standard</p> <p>Content descriptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present and perform • Perform devised and scripted drama making deliberate artistic choices and shaping design elements to unify dramatic meaning for an audience • Respond and interpret <p>Evaluate how the elements of drama, forms and performance styles in devised and scripted drama to convey meaning and aesthetic effect.</p> <p>Achievement standards: Students analyse the elements of drama, forms and performance styles and evaluate meaning and aesthetic effect in drama they devise, interpret, perform and view. They use experiences of drama practices from different cultures, places and times to evaluate drama.</p>	<p>Personal & Social Capability</p> <p>Self Awareness and Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition and expression of emotions • Development of resilience <p>Social Awareness and Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships and Diversity
<p>English</p> <p>Sample links to the English curriculum include Content Descriptions from Level 9 such as: Reading and Viewing, Language: Expressing and developing ideas. Writing: Literacy, Creating texts Speaking and Listening, Literacy: Interacting with others</p>	<p>Critical and Creative Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions and Possibilities • Reasoning • Meta - Cognition

<p>The Humanities</p> <p>History</p> <p><i>In Search of Owen Roe</i> demonstrates how historical concepts and skills can be used to develop theatrical works, for example:</p> <p>Sequencing chronology, using historical sources as evidence, identifying continuity and change, analysing causes and effect.</p> <p>The narrative of the play portrays Australia in the 20th and early 21st centuries and presents perspectives of people and different historical interpretations and debates from the period.</p> <p>Geography</p> <p><i>In Search of Owen Roe</i> offers opportunities for students to consider geographical concepts such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interconnection • Human Wellbeing • Changing Nations (Levels 7-8) 	<p>Ethical Capability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding Concepts • Decision Making and Actions
	<p>Intercultural Capability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural practices • Cultural Diversity

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM



In Search of Owen Roe

A one-woman show by Vanessa O'Neill

Written and Performed by Vanessa O'Neill

Direction and Dramaturgy by Glynis Angell

Lighting Design by Richard Vabre

Sound Design by Darius Kedros

Set Design by Annie Edney

'An unmarked grave containing the bodies of my great-grandfather, Owen Roe O'Neill, and his young daughter. A little further away lie the graves of all the other family members. All have tombstones and gravesites. Only Owen Roe has nothing.'

Thus begins an exploration of ancestry – a weaving together of stories from the past and their resonances with the present. Tales of rebels and raconteurs, of memories and ghosts, of lovers and longings. The uncovering of mysteries surrounding a great-grandfather, and the fading memories of a father.

In Search of Owen Roe is a powerful and engaging piece of storytelling, featuring a myriad of characters, an evocative sound design and richly nuanced text.

'In Search of Owen Roe is a beautifully directed and executed one woman show.' - Lisa Romeo, Planet Arts Melbourne *****

'A funny, emotional and clever performance by a strong and confident performer.' - Margaret Wieringa, Theatre Press

The play weaves together stories, historical documents, music, song, poetry, and a range of characters' voices. Sound design, music and soundscapes help to capture key historical moments and create echoes between the past and present, evoking ghosts and memories. The performance incorporates rapid character transformations, engaging storytelling, heightened language and dynamic vocal use.

The work draws on many of the traditions of storytelling: multiple narratives and accents, poetic texts and song, with a nuanced use of physicality and expressive skills. The emphasis is on the actor's body in the space connecting with the audience and taking them on a journey through a range of narratives. The production draws on some of the conventions of poor theatre, verbatim theatre and storytelling.

BIOGRAPHIES

Vanessa O'Neill (Writer & Performer)

Vanessa trained as an actor at the Ecole Philippe Gaulier and at the Drama Centre in London. Vanessa has worked for a range of theatre companies including The Australian Shakespeare Company, La Mama, Shakespeare by The Sea, Harlos Theatre Company, Sydney Art Theatre, Bell Shakespeare, and The Arts Centre, Victoria.

From 2001 - 2004 she toured her one-woman-show *Happy With Half Your Life* across Australia, the UK and Europe, with the assistance of The Australia Council for the Arts. Vanessa has toured schools throughout Australia with a solo show of *Shakespeare's Women*. In 2013, Vanessa took part in the International Fellowship at Shakespeare's Globe. She is currently the Youth and Education Manager at Malthouse Theatre.



Glynis Angell (Direction & Dramaturgy)

Glynis Angell is a theatre maker, actor, director and teacher. Her directing and dramaturgical work includes projects with performing artists: Ilan Abrahams *Drago's Amazing Bona Fide Freak Show*, Kate Hunter and Emillie Collyer *Maybe We're Never Together* (Big West Festival), Kate Hunter *list(n)*, and Penny Baron *The Lab*.

Glynis has devised works with companies including The Business and Hunchback Theatre. Glynis co-wrote and performed in her show *Haul Away*, nominated for Best New Australian Play Green Room Awards 2006.

Richard Vabre (Lighting Design)

Richard Vabre is a freelance lighting designer who has lit productions for MTC, STC, Malthouse Theatre, Belvoir Street, Victorian Opera, Windmill Theatre, Arena Theatre Company, NICA, The Darwin Festival, Stuck Pig's Squealing, Chambermade, Rawcus, Red Stitch, Polyglot, Melbourne Worker's Theatre, Aphids and many many productions at La Mama

Awards: Richard has won 4 Green Room Awards including the Association's John Truscott Prize for Excellence in Design (2004). He has also been nominated for 7 other Green Room Awards.



BIOGRAPHIES

Darius Kedros (Sound Design)

Sound artist, sound designer, composer and music producer Darius Kedros works across art installation, radio & performance. Since relocating to Melbourne from the UK in 2013 he has created work for the ABC's Radio National, the Festival of Live Art, Scienceworks, Federation Square, Fortyfive Downstairs, Barking Spider Visual Theatre, Big West Festival & the State Library of Victoria. Collaborations with Australian artists include Susie Dee, Triage Live Art Collective, Matt Scholten, Kathy Holowko, Lina Limosani & Tim Minchin. His northern hemisphere collaborations & credits include The Rambert Dance Company, Momentum Pictures, BBC, V2 & Virgin Records, Nellee Hooper, Kathryn Williams, Jon Spencer and Craig Armstrong.



Annie Edney MCA (Set Design)

Annie Edney is a multi-disciplinary Melbourne based artist whose work offers excerpts from heart, memory, dreams and academic research.

In her studio practice Edney is currently exploring a new visual language for our human relationship with our planet via semi-abstract tondo-focussed video art and photography.

Edney has extensive experience creating site-specific celebratory events with themes of environment and social harmony.

She is represented in private and public collections including the Museum of the Riverina, Macquarie University, and the Abbotsford Convent.

Sarah McKenzie (Stage Manager/Production Manager)

Sarah McKenzie is a freelance Stage Manager and Production Manager who studied Live Production and Technical Theatre at Melbourne Polytechnic.

She has worked for companies including The Rabble, Red Stich, Antony Hamilton Projects, Stone/Castro, Here Theatre, Polyglot, Rawcus, Platform Youth Theater, Gasworks and La Mama. Credits include *Coranderrk: We will show the country*, (part of the ongoing *Minutes of Evidence Project*), *Little Black Bastard* (Noel Tovey) and *Nyx*, (Melbourne Festival.)



SUPPORT MATERIAL

Interview with Vanessa O'Neill – Playwright/Performer

1. What was the inspiration for the play?

Almost ten years ago, during a visit to Perth, I went searching for my great-grandfather's grave. I had recently had given birth to my first son and it felt significant to connect with my ancestry (especially as my son carries my family name, O'Neill). I spent a couple of hours in the main cemetery in Perth (Karrakatta Cemetery) trying to find his grave. I eventually called my cousin who looked him up on the cemetery's website and gave me the plot number for his grave. It was quite a shock to discover that he was buried in an unmarked grave. There was nothing but bare earth. This was in stark contrast to the beautifully adorned graves of other family members that were very close by. No one in the family could explain why he was in an unmarked grave. For me it was an unsolved mystery that stayed with me for many years. I had the phrase in my head: *'This is a story that begins with nothing'* for a very long time. I had a feeling that this discovery was going to be the start of something, but I didn't know what. It was six years later that I was offered a place on the Solo Residency at Victoria University, (during which I had a year to develop a new solo work) that I decided to investigate the story of my great-grandfather further.



In Search of Owen Roe
Image Credit: Ponch Hawkes

2. What is the 'world' of Owen Roe? Where will the audience be transported to? What countries, eras, times?

The audience will move between many worlds and periods of times!

Here are some of the countries / eras / worlds / events and times referred to throughout the play:

- A cemetery in Perth in 2006
- Ireland in the 1600's
- The Irish Rebellion of 1642
- Ireland in 1845
- The Victorian Goldfields in the 1860's
- Contemporary Ireland
- Contemporary Melbourne and Victoria
- Perth in the 1950's
- Melbourne - New Year's Eve 1894
- The world of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*
- Perth 1934

3. Whose story or stories are being told?

There are a myriad of stories being told throughout this play. Here is a summary of some of the people whose stories are told and their dates:

- **OWEN ROE 'RED OWEN'** (1585 – 1649): Leader of the Irish Rebellion of 1642
- **HUGH ONEILL 'THE GREAT O'NEILL'** (1540 – 1616): Earl of Tyrone
- **PHILIP O'NEILL** (1835 – 1902): Great-great-grandfather of Ness O'Neill
- **OWEN ROE O'NEILL** (1862 – 1934): Great-grandfather of Ness O'Neill
- **AGGIE CHARLOTTE O'NEILL** (1862 – 1891): Owen Roe's first wife
- **ELLEN MARIA O'NEILL 'LITTLE GRANDMA'** (1866 – 1966): Great-grandmother of Ness O'Neill and Owen Roe's second wife
- **JACK O'NEILL** (1908 – 1999): Grandfather of Ness O'Neill
- **MICHAEL O'NEILL** (1942 -): Father of Ness O'Neill
- **DANIEL O'NEILL** (2005 -): Son of Ness O'Neill
- **VANESSA 'NESS' O'NEILL**: Central narrator / storyteller

Their stories are all interwoven throughout the play. Some characters reappear many times and some only appear once, and there are echoes and reoccurring themes between the characters, between the different times and locations, between the past and present.

4. How are the stories being told? For example, are you using storytelling, verse, direct address, movement, music, sound, song?

The stories are told through direct address / narration, through song, through spoken verse, through storytelling, through characterisation, and through readings from inquest reports and newspaper articles, as well as other historical texts. There is also a detailed soundscape, voiceovers and music that are all featured throughout the play.

5. How many characters appear or are represented in the production? Would you say you 'transform' and how, as a solo performer, do you achieve that?

There are 10 key featured characters (including the storyteller) - as listed above. And then there are many other additional characters, including policemen, family members, charming Irishmen, medical staff, a surgeon, witnesses, journalists, and (briefly) two of the characters from the play *Macbeth*.

I do transform character and that is done very simply and quickly, primarily through a change in voice, physicality, and a change of rhythm. There are no costume changes, but occasionally I use small items to signify a new character - a bathrobe, an apron, a bottle of wine. Some of the characters that I play briefly are played as exaggerated caricatures and others are played with more subtlety. As many of the transformations of character are very quick, I am attempting to capture the essence of the character for the purposes of storytelling - rather than a complete and full 'naturalistic' characterisation.

6. Is the performance space important with this work? Is the show reliant on space to create an actor/audience relationship?

The show works very directly and closely with the audience. There is no fourth wall in this piece. I speak directly to an audience that I can clearly see, but at the same time I am inviting the audience to come on a journey with me - a kind of magical carpet ride - that includes the battlefields of 17th century Ireland, the Victorian goldfields, contemporary Irish pubs, a nursing home, a bedroom in the middle of the night, a cemetery, and New Year's Eve in Melbourne in 1894. None of these locations are indicated through the use of set. It is the soundscape and storytelling that help to conjure these locations. It will be very exciting to do this play in a range of theatres and schools during the Regional Arts Victoria tour. The soundscape helps me as a performer to enter all the different worlds of the play. The direct connection with the audience, throughout the play, is central to this work.

7. Would you talk about the use of stagecraft elements such as: costume, set, props, lighting, sound? What choices have you made here?

The key stagecraft elements within this piece are the music and soundscape. They help conjure the mood of the play - whether through the Irish music or the recurring voices of characters that help create the sense of ghosts and memories throughout the play. There are also sound effects, like sounds from the battlefield and nursing home, which help me as a performer to have a clear sense of time and place.

The lighting design helps to create mood throughout the piece, as well as location. For example, there is a very strong contrast in lighting between the sections that take place in the middle of the night and the section in the pubs of Ireland or the battlefields in the 1600's.

The set pieces are very simple but crucial to the play. There is a family tree on the stage left side that is added to throughout the show. This helps the audience keep track of which family member is being referred to, and helps remind the audience how various members are interrelated. On the opposite side is a map of Ireland. Ireland is at the heart of the play - and being able to directly refer to various parts of the country also helps locate the audience. Both of these set pieces are painted in very warm tones. They feature Celtic designs that also suggest they are slightly old - to reflect the fact that we change our period of time so frequently throughout this work.

The key props in the play are a range of papers and documents - newspaper articles, maps, photos, inquest reports, and books that are being scrutinised throughout the play as part of the search for Owen Roe.



In Search of Owen Roe Image Credit: Sarah Walker

8. How would you describe the structure of the production? Is it linear/non-linear? How does 'time' work?

This play is very distinctly non-linear. It begins in the middle of the night - with a soundscape of voices and music that will be featured throughout the play. The central character emerges in a dressing gown, sifting through papers as the soundscape plays. Then we snap to direct address, to the moment at the cemetery in Perth when the unmarked grave of Owen Roe is discovered. From there we move back in time to Ireland in the 1600's and then to Ireland in 1845, and then to the Victorian goldfields and then onto contemporary Ireland. And so the story keeps shifting in time, between the distant past, the recent past and the present - between Ireland and Australia. Both time and location are very fluid in this production. The sound and lighting help with these transformations, as do the family tree and the map of Ireland. Time moves constantly. So the structure of the play is deliberately quite disjointed - but as the play goes on, echoes between the characters, their locations and the eras of time start to become apparent. Ultimately there is a circular shape, as we return to the unmarked grave of Owen Roe by the end of the play.

9. What are the key themes and ideas that the production explores?

The play is about memory - a search for memories and the loss of memory. It is about family and ancestry, about immigration and the return to the land of one's ancestors. It is about a search for a connection with one's ancestors and a need to discover their stories. It explores the idea of being haunted - of the need to tell stories that can be difficult to tell, which might have been buried for a very long time. It is an exploration of acts of rebellion - of something within that will not settle, but is restless and seeks expression - even in the face of almost certain defeat. And the play is also about love in a whole range of forms: love of a country, love of a father, love of a son, love of a grandchild, as well as love affairs with some very charming Irishmen!



In Search of Owen Roe Image Credit: Sarah Walker

SUGGESTED PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

The following activities are designed for teachers and students to explore before seeing *In Search of Owen Roe* by Vanessa O'Neill. They aim to deepen your engagement with this work.

Here are some of the key themes that are explored throughout the play:

- The search for identity, ancestry and belonging
- Immigration, exile, the need to find a home in a new land
- Memory – the loss of memory, the search for memories
- The need for stories – that explore both dark and light aspects of what it is to be human
- Notions of 'sanity' and 'insanity'
- The idea of 'ghosts' – that which haunts us in our daily/nightly life
- Experiences of caring for loved ones with dementia

At the heart of this play are some universal questions: *Where do I come from? How does where I come from determine who I am? Who am I if I can't remember?* The piece contains a number of people's stories and weaves together voices from the past and present. It explores the realities of fading memories, and the need to understand who we are through knowing what has been before. The play explores the power of stories and the importance of stories in giving all of us within society a deeper understanding of one another.



In Search of Owen Roe Image Credit: Sarah Walker

Here are some resources that will help you to explore some of these themes in greater detail:

Family History

How much do you know about your own family history? Have you visited any of the countries of your ancestors? Take the time to ask older family members for their stories and memories of earlier times. Record their stories and ask to see photos and memorabilia. You can pass on these stories to your own children and grandchildren.

Some useful resources for conducting research into your family history include:

- State Library of Victoria (SLV). The SLV has a terrific Genealogy Library and Newspaper Room, which are excellent for beginning your search into your family history. Here is a link to some of their resources: <http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/search-discover/explore-collections-theme/family-history>
- Ancestry.com: This is a very useful website when looking into your family history <http://www.ancestry.com.au/>
- Trove: This is a terrific resource, put together by the National Library of Australia. It is a digitised version of all newspapers and magazines throughout Australia <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/>
- The Public Record Office of Victoria is an excellent place to look into inquest reports, court reports, shipping records and cemetery records <http://prov.vic.gov.au/research>

Dementia

In Search of Owen Roe examines the uncovering of memories, as well as the loss of memory. It explores the diagnosis of the central character's father with Alzheimer's.

Discuss in class what you might know already about Alzheimer's, dementia and memory loss, and whether any members of the class have personal experiences that they would like to share, in relation to family members and friends.

For further information about Alzheimer's, dementia and memory loss, here is a link to the Alzheimer's Australia website: <https://vic.fightdementia.org.au/>

Owen Roe O'Neill

There are two Owen Roe O'Neill's referred to in this play. The first is the Owen Roe 'Red Owen' O'Neill (1585 - 1649), leader of the Irish Rebellion of 1642. You can find out further information about him here:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Owen_Roe_O'Neill

<http://www.britannica.com/biography/Owen-Roe-O'Neill>

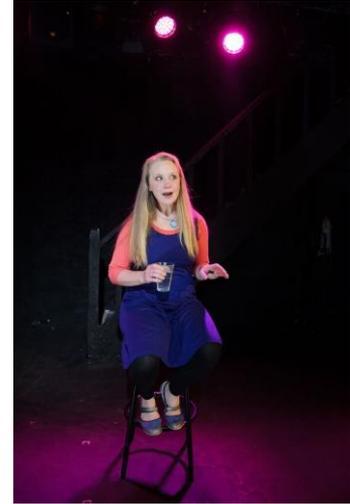
The second is the central character's great-grandfather, Owen Roe O'Neill (1862 – 1934). Here are links to two newspaper articles written about him in May 1934, soon after he died. They both feature at the end of the play. They were found using the Trove website. (*Spoiler alert – these articles reveal some of the discoveries made by the central character at the end of the play. You might like to save these articles until after you have seen the production!*)

1. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/83239503>
2. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/83233197>

SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Relevant to VCE Unit 3 Drama

Here is a summary of some of the Non-Naturalistic Conventions, Dramatic Elements, Expressive Skills, Performance Skills, and Performance Styles used throughout the production. Discuss how effectively you feel they were used to tell the stories within the play and to convey the range of characters and locations.



In Search of Owen Roe

Image Credits: Sarah Walker

Non-naturalistic Conventions:

- Transformation of character
 - Vanessa plays a wide range of characters. How did she use her expressive skills (voice, movement, gestures and facial expressions) to transform between the various characters?
- Transformation of place
 - Was it always clear where each scene was located?
 - There is no change of set during the play. How did the production convey transformation of place?
- Transformation of time
 - This production moves back and forth between the present, the recent past and the distant past. How did this production convey which time period was being covered? Was it clear which time period each of the scenes took place in?
- Use of central narrator
 - This production shifts between direct address / narration and characterisation. How seamless were the transitions between these states? How well did the central narrator guide you through the various stories throughout the play?
- Use of song and poetry
 - Vanessa recites a poem written in Ireland in 1845, and sings a traditional Irish song during the play. What did the use of poetry and song add to the production? Did they enhance your engagement with the production?
 - How did they help with your understanding of the stories that Vanessa was telling? How did they serve to define the context of a scene?
- Heightened use of language
 - The language of the play shifts between contemporary language, poetic language and the language of historical newspapers, inquest reports and books. It also includes two brief sections from the play *Macbeth*. How effective was the contrasting use of language in this production?

Dramatic Elements:

- Climax
 - Consider how well the second last scene of the play works as the climax of this piece. [This is the scene in which Vanessa cries out, 'Fly, my beauties, fly!']
 - How did the lighting, sound and use of the space serve to give the scene a sense of climax and a release of tension?
- Conflict
 - Consider the moments of both internal and external conflicts for the characters within the play. How were these moments of conflict conveyed? Consider the use of voice, gestures, facial expression and movement to convey both internal and external conflict.
 - Consider the conflict taking place within the father who has dementia. What sort of conflict is taking place within his own body and within the institution he is in?
 - Consider the battles and rebellions that take place throughout the play – both within characters and on the larger scale of conflicts between countries.
- Contrast
 - How was contrast used in this production? Consider the contrasting characters, as well as the contrasting locations and period settings for the scenes
 - Consider also the contrasting physicality and status between the characters.
 - Consider the contrasting mood created throughout the production.
- Mood
 - How was mood created in this production? What moods were evoked at different times throughout the play?
 - How were the key stagecraft elements (lighting and sound) used to create and enhance mood?
- Rhythm
 - How did the use of rhythm vary between the scenes?
 - How did the characters vary the pace of their line delivery and movement?
 - How did the use of music and soundscapes contribute to the varying rhythm of each scene?
- Space
 - How was the space used throughout this production? How were different levels used during the piece? How were certain areas of the space used to convey the different locations?
- Sound
 - There is a detailed use of soundscapes throughout the production. It features the voices of various characters from the play, traditional Irish music, sound effects and voice-overs of newspaper reports and additional characters. How did the soundscape help to create mood, and to transform location throughout the piece?
 - How effectively did sound convey the internal states of the key characters?
 - What were some of the moments when sound was used most effectively?
- Symbol
 - Consider the significance of the recurring image of characters going around and around in circles.
 - Consider how lighting was used to symbolise various emotional states
 - Consider the use of the Celtic designs for the Family Tree and Map of Ireland on either side of the space. What did their colour and design symbolise for you?
- Tension
 - What were some of the examples of tension during the production?
 - Consider key moments during the play where this tension is released – in particular during the 'Fly, my beauties, fly!' section towards to end of the play.

Expressive Skills:

- Voice
 - How did Vanessa vary her use of voice between the various characters?
 - What sort of differences were there in pace, pitch and rhythm in her vocal use between different characters?
 - How did Vanessa use her voice to convey the emotional states of her characters?
 - How did the use of accents help to enhance your understanding of each character?
- Movement
 - How did Vanessa vary her characters' use of movement?
 - Which characters would you consider to be a caricature and which ones were more conveyed with more subtlety?
- Gesture
 - How did Vanessa vary her use of characters' gestures?
 - Did some characters have particular gestures that were repeated throughout the show?
- Facial expression
 - How did Vanessa vary her use of facial expressions between the characters?
 - Did her use of facial expressions help to convey the emotional state of each character?

Performance Skills:

- Focus
 - Consider the central actor's use of focus throughout the play. How did the focus shift between characters?
 - How did focus shift between the moments of direct address and characterisation?
- Timing
 - How was timing used in this production? What were some moments where the timing slowed down? What were some of the moments of higher pace and energy?
- Energy
 - Consider the central actor's use of energy throughout the production.
 - What were some of the moments of particular intensity?
 - What were some of the lighter moments within the piece?
 - Was there a dynamic use of energy throughout the production?
- Actor-audience relationship
 - How effective was the actor-audience relationship throughout the production?
 - How engaged were you during the sections of direct address?
 - How did you respond to the emotional journey of the central character – and to other key characters' emotions during the performance?

Performance Styles:

- Some of the performance styles include direct address / narration, aspects of poor theatre, verbatim, storytelling and caricature.
- There were also some aspects of Epic Theatre within the production. They include direct address, song, narration and references to political contexts
- Discuss how each of these performance styles were used throughout the production.

FURTHER READING

Books:

- *Owen Roe O'Neill and the Struggle for Catholic Ireland* by Jerrold I Cawsay
- *Star of the Sea* by Joseph O'Connor
- *Ulster 1641* – Aspects of the Rising editor Brian Mac Cuarta
- *The Sharing of the Green* – A modern Irish History for Australians by Oliver Macdonagh
- *The Catholics of Ulster* by Marianne Elliot

Interviews:

Radio National Books and Arts – Interview with Michael Cathcart, featuring an excerpt from the show <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/booksandarts/vanessa-o27neill/6569052>

Northcote Leader – Interview with Julia Irwin

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/leader/north/one-woman-show-at-la-mama-proves-dead-irish-men-do-tell-tales/story-fnglenug-1227395383000>

Reviews:

Theatre Press

<http://theatrepress.com.au/2015/06/26/review-la-mama-presents-in-search-of-own-roe/>

“a funny, emotional and clever performance by a strong and confident performer, and I really enjoyed myself.” Margaret Wieringa

Tinteán

<http://tintean.org.au/2015/07/06/irish-men-and-a-special-one-owen-roe/>

“I would count this play as one of the finest I have enjoyed at this much loved theatre.”

Renee Leen Huish

Sound Recording:

Here is a link to a soundscape that features in the play. It features the voices of a number of the characters that you will encounter throughout the play. It also includes much of the music that is part of the show.

<https://soundcloud.com/anessaeill/owen-roe-promo-audio-clip-2>

Images:

All of the production photos can be found here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/y0q7hjp9y0nj7hb/AAAiLvlyDueEssneDCI2LHkZa?dl=0>

All production photos by Sarah Walker

Internet Research:

Facebook page for *In Search of Owen Roe*

Find out more about the show here – and feel free to leave any comments or questions about the show for Vanessa here:

<https://www.facebook.com/Vanessa-ONeill-In-Search-of-Owen-Roe-521619344643892/>

Owen Roe O'Neill (Wikipedia)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Owen_Roe_O'Neill

Owen Roe O'Neill (Encyclopaedia Britannica)

<http://www.britannica.com/biography/Owen-Roe-ONeill>

State Library of Victoria: Family History

<http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/search-discover/explore-collections-theme/family-history>

Ancestry.com

<http://www.ancestry.com.au/>

Trove (Digitised Newspapers)

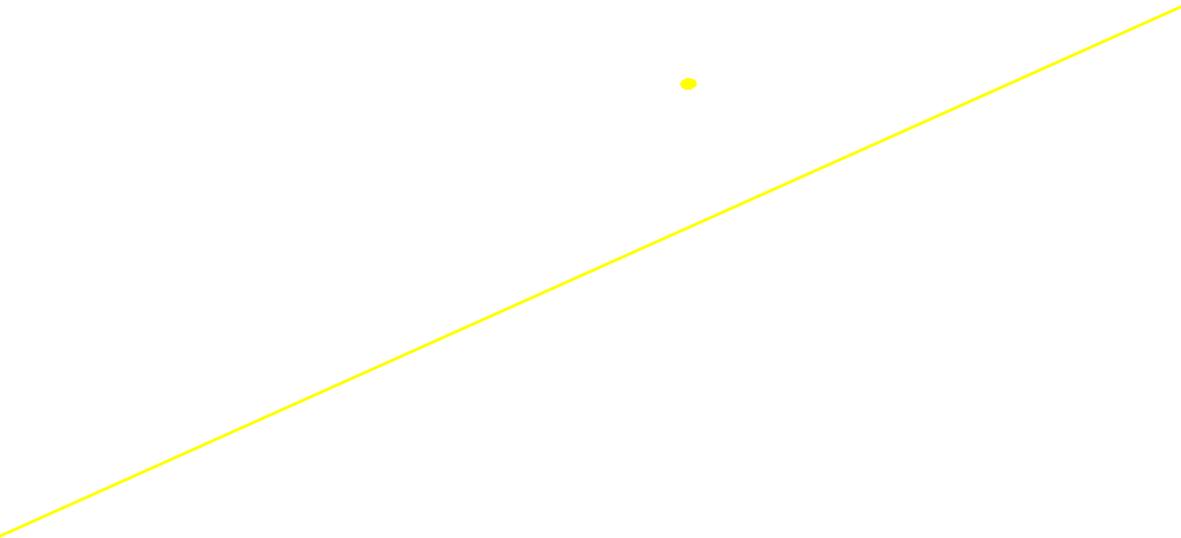
<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/>

Public Record Office Victoria

<http://prov.vic.gov.au/research>

Alzheimer's Australia

<https://vic.fightdementia.org.au/>



Contact the Education and Families team at education@rav.net.au with further questions or, even better, examples of your work!

This resource was compiled by Regional Arts Victoria in consultation with Vanessa O'Neill and the VCAA

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