

RAW THEATRE TO EXPOSE THE NAKED TRUTH ABOUT LIFE & SOCIETY

Brisbane Powerhouse presents

Being Harold Pinter

How is a play born? What is the difference between truth in life and truth in art? Should an artist be involved with politics? Take the teachings from a Nobel Prize winning playwright, the plays that earned him the honour, the tales of political prisoners and an underground theatre movement founded by playwrights and human rights activists. The resulting production **Being Harold Pinter** is a rare theatre experience exposing the naked truth about humanity in the Visy Theatre **21 – 24 January 2008**.

Brisbane Powerhouse is a far call from the secret locations where Belarus Free Theatre from Minsk are used to presenting their productions. Set up to produce uncensored work in response to the authoritarian rule of President Alexander Lukashenko, Belarus Free Theatre fight for democracy and free expression at their own risk, with state police raids and arrests during performances a regular occurrence.

Theirs is wild, anarchic theatre at its purest. Scenes from acclaimed British playwright Harold Pinter's plays (*The Homecoming, Ashes to Ashes, The New World Order, One For The Road and Mountain Language*) and extracts from his Nobel Prize speech transform into a harrowing account of real life in Europe's last dictatorship. Sometimes funny and definitely menacing, **Being Harold Pinter** is a powerful instance of life imitating art, with a search for the answers to a world-wide problem...violence.

Commanding physicality, overwhelming stage presence and hauntingly powerful imagery have created a stand-out production that present images of frustration, anger and despair, so emotionally harrowing that they can sometimes be a little hard to digest.

The characters explore various scenarios linked to the problem - violence in the family, violence as a foundation of a social institution and violence as a form of international relationship. Highlighting the relationships between these, **Being Harold Pinter** leaves the audience to examine themselves, comparing the everyday bullying and brutality they experience to the political atrocities normally seen only on the news or in films.

As a production that doesn't discriminate between private and public cruelty, between being actively involved in something and passively allowing it to happen, **Being Harold Pinter** is political theatre demanding not just a change of leadership in Belarus but a change of mentality in the world from all involved in the performance, as a participant or spectator. Belarus Free Theatre insist society questions its truths and its principals, performing with the hope that each audience member will leave the theatre empowered and ready to change. Don't miss this deeply moving piece of theatre.

As part of Sydney Festival the production will appear at Belvoir St Theatre from 6–11 & 28–31 January, 1 February; and Q Theatre Penrith on 14–17 January. Performed in Russian with English subtitles.

"Drama doesn't come more urgently political than in the work of the Belarus Free Theatre." - Sam Marlowe, The Times

"... their visual invention is striking ... poor theatre can often deliver the richest dramatic experience" - Alfred Hickling, The Guardian

"... they're bringing back the essence meaning of theatre." - Harold Pinter

"I wish that all my plays would be performed by a theatre like this." - Tom Stoppard

-ENDS-

Date	Wed 21 – Sat 24 January 2009
Time	8pm
Venue	Visy Theatre
Tickets	\$36/\$30
Bookings	07 3358 8600 or brisbanepowerhouse.org

**For further information, images and interview opportunities please contact
Brisbane Powerhouse PR Manager, Olivia Guglielmino**

**p 07 3358 8671 m 0409 187 289 f 07 3358 8611 e oliviag@brisbanepowerhouse.org
or Brisbane Powerhouse Publicity Coordinator, Rachael Morgan
p 07 3358 8670 m 0404 775 377 f 07 3358 8611 e rachaelm@brisbanepowerhouse.org**