

## ***THIS WAR IS NOT INEVITABLE***

### **Comments from audience members in the first eighteen performances, May to July, 2017, New Zealand and Australia**

Michael Burton's play *This War is not Inevitable* is a rare combination of artistic accomplishment, engaging history and relevance to the dire situation and burning issues of the present time. It was the clearest and most accessible public presentation of the three-fold nature of society I have seen.

*Dr. William Riggins (nutritionist, author and troubadour)*

For anyone who has never read or met Rudolf Steiner - perhaps who has only heard his name - this play is the opportunity to experience Rudolf Steiner in person. Even if we have studied his work for many years, the play is a unique opportunity to travel with him on that most important and fulfilling journey from the head to the heart. The two actors touch our hearts and bring Rudolf Steiner unforgettably to life so that we come away feeling that we've been addressed by him in person.

It would be wonderful for parents and friends of those who have their children at a Rudolf Steiner school to see this show, at least once. Doing so would help us to answer our children's questions regarding the founder of their school.

Having attended the first night of *This War is Not Inevitable*, has been a profound experience for me and I will certainly try to see it more than once.

*Hartmut Borries, (priest of The Christian Community in Auckland)*

It may sound naïve, but I felt so joyful to have met Rudolf Steiner!

*Audience member in Christchurch*

Our students don't often hear about Rudolf Steiner. So that struck me this morning - watching the students seeing someone portraying him. You crossed quite a threshold portraying Rudolf Steiner and Emil Molt. I watched them watching you with great appreciation and a new feeling for what is behind their school. The students were full of JOY in seeing Steiner and Emil Molt portrayed. Europe ripped itself apart in the First World War, but out of this came the first Steiner School. They connected with this deeply. Every pupil at a Steiner School should see this.

*Ray Shaw, High School teacher, Wellington*

Something that stuck with me was when you said that if you want to change things you will have to risk everything. I think that's really true. People don't like to take risks. As a society we have to learn to take risks and take those bold steps in order to improve the world. You got the idea of the problems in the world spot on – and what we can do about them.

*Class 10 student, Wellington*

Although this is a historical play, it seems to me to be deeply relevant to the present situation. I loved the way Steiner was portrayed – with real passion for what he was doing; surely it is only in such a way that we can change the world!

*Audience member in Sydney*

I was particularly interested that in your portrayal of Rudolf Steiner in regard to the implementation of the threefold social order, he experiences a frustration that people always want the plan. He exhorts them to step into a place of connectedness to what wants to come to fruition in our times, and to act out of this. In our regional community, I see people doing these things. They may never have heard of Steiner, Anthroposophy or the Threefold Social Order, but I can see much in the Blue Mountains which is striving to implement the ideas you showed in the play. It seems to me that these ideas are trying to appear in many places in the world. Your play articulates them and helps them to get stronger.

*Lynn Daniel, Kindiehill School. Blue Mountains, Australia*

Studying a book feels so inadequate compared to what you brought to us through art. I believe that for people who find it difficult to take in Steiner's ideas, your portrayal cuts through intellectuality and builds bridges of understanding to the spirit of Anthroposophy.

*Marilyn Lewis, Canberra*

Before the performance I didn't know very much about the TSO, but after I had seen this performance I came away feeling I had met with it first hand and could grasp it. It released in me a whole lot of thinking and fed me with energy for my will.

*Audience member in Sydney*

Our High school students responded to the 50 minute version with some very insightful questions. They were drawn in by the character of the modern young Otto who is struggling with his own demons and those of the zeitgeist. Even though some of the younger students only had a vague understanding of the machinations behind World War One, they followed with close attention the endeavours of Rudolf Steiner and his friends to bring about real social change.

There were many positive comments from them after the show.

*Sophia Montefiore, HSC coordinator at the Newcastle Waldorf School, Australia*

In the evening performance of the full version, our teachers, parents and friends were able to experience Steiner's ideas on threefolding in a lot more detail. And the thoughtful discussions and sharing of ideas at the end of the show sowed a lot of seeds for future will activities.

*Sophia Montefiore, Newcastle*

Watching the actors come in and out of their various characters was refreshing and organic and the historical interpretation was fascinating. I am especially inspired to revisit the Threefold Social Order in response to the deep and serious problems in the world today and feel very moved, at a will level, to help bring this impulse into the world.

*Lisa Corser, Melbourne*

Reading the comments and reactions of people from NZ and Australia, I have nothing to add; the play was received here in Stroud, England, with the same feelings as expressed there. One member of the audience here said to me during the interval, "It is very awe-inspiring to have Steiner speak to us so directly." I think it is very brave and bold of M. Burton to portray Steiner there, but very powerful and true. I just wish we could bring it to audiences who have not heard of Anthroposophy or Steiner.

I sense this play is the seed for future work, carried by many. Thank you Michael and Ryan !!!!

*Allmut Ffrench, Dursley, UK*

A wonderful production and very timely. ...The clarity of the presentation of Steiner's views was refreshing; the understanding of these social impulses have been sadly disregarded and ill-understood to our detriment, even in the structural arrangements within Steiner schools!

*Rod Tomlinson, Principal Hobart Rudolf Steiner School:*