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# ***THE FACE OF JIZO***

**AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE**

**BY HISASHI INOUE**

**TRANSLATED BY ROGER PULVERS**

**DIRECTED BY SHINGO USAMI & DAVID LYNCH**



Image Jasmin Simmons

  
**MUSUBI**  
productions



Photo: Hisashi Inoue and Roger Pulvers, December 1975, Tokyo

## ***A NOTE FROM THE TRANSLATOR***

The primary theme running through his writing is the plight of the weak and their struggle to keep their head above water in an uncaring society. He never let his gaze slip from society's dispossessed. He strove to give the underdog the benefit of the doubt and the tools to rectify their helpless circumstances.

"I want to show people who have little power the way to use their ingenuity in order to make their presence felt, so that they may gain some advantage in their misery," Hisashi said to me when we met in Tokyo in 1974, commencing a close friendship that lasted until he passed away in 2010.

It is this humanistic theme that runs through most of his more than sixty plays and forty novels. In addition to these, he published some fifty books of essays and miscellany. Despite his meticulous attention to detail—especially in the kind of language a particular character in a particular era or setting would use—Hisashi never lost sight of the big picture. And the big picture for him was his dialogue with the Japanese people over their history, culture and future.

In the 1990s he turned his attention to the catastrophes of August 1945, when atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But for Hisashi, as in all his work, historical incidents are depicted on an individual scale. What happened to Mitsue and Takezo in *The Face of Jizo* is representative of the fate of hundreds of thousands of people maimed and killed in the two cities.

I saw him for the last time on 3 October 2009, at the opening of his play *Suite Slaughter* about the life and murder in custody of the proletarian author Takiji Kobayashi.

"You look good," I said.

But he didn't.

"Really? Actually, I'm falling apart at the seams. I'd be lucky to have another ten years in me."

As it turned out, a couple of weeks after that he was diagnosed with the lung cancer that killed him less than six months later.

If his voice of reason and hope manages to cross over the oceans, then my dear and gentle friend Hisashi Inoue will come to represent the generous, open-minded, kindhearted and peaceful face of his country around the world.

What more could be asked of any writer?

Roger Pulvers  
September 2023  
Sydney

# ***NOTES FROM THE DIRECTORS***

War has been associated with my acting career as a Japanese actor in Australia for the past 25 years. It's been a privilege to give authenticity and dignity to each character I play, but I admit that many roles I had the opportunity to portray in war films and TV productions were often one-dimensional and stereotypical. In the context of the war stories told in Australia and the US, it almost seemed like any hint of humanity was not allowed in the Japanese characters. Breaking this mold has become one of my missions as an actor ever since.

Presenting *The Face of Jizo* doesn't mean denying or ignoring the atrocity that Japan inflicted on so many people during the war. As the playwright Hisashi Inoue articulated in the prologue of this play, we Japanese people have an undeniable responsibility to keep facing and learning from past mistakes. At the same time, it's also our duty to keep telling the untold stories of innocent people who tragically lost their lives because of the acts of warfare. In this play, the father Takezo rightly says, "It was so inhuman, what people did to people just like them." That's exactly the ridiculous nature of wars, and unfortunately, human beings have miserably failed to learn from it.

Unless we start freeing ourselves from the blame game, justification, and denial at least in the world of storytelling, we will simply keep making the same mistakes over and over again, as we are witnessing in so many parts of the world right now.

It is our tremendous honour and pleasure to share this beautiful, sad, and hopeful story with you all. I sincerely hope the message of love and resilience will be securely passed on to the audience.

Shingo Usami



# NOTES FROM THE DIRECTORS

When I first read this play I was immediately attracted to it for myriad reasons, not the least of which was the playwright's (and the translator's) patent love of language and imagery, that the story is told in a very unique way, but most importantly that it is about the relationship between a father and a daughter, a subject so very close to my heart.

I hope that you enjoy this story of suffering and distress, memory, beauty and hope, love, friendship, family and community.

Arigato

David Lynch



**David Lynch**

*Director*

David's recent theatre acting includes: The Crucible (Sport for Jove @ Seymour), A View from the Bridge (Red Line @ Old Fitz, Glen Street, Ensemble, Merringong), Neville's Island and The Good Doctor (Ensemble), TREVOR (Outhouse @ KXT), The Wider Earth (Queensland Theatre, Dead Puppet Society, Sydney Festival @ Sydney Opera House), AIR (Mophead @ Old 505). Other as director and/or actor: Griffin, Marian Street, Riverina Theatre Co., Belvoir Downstairs, QUT, QPAC, Out of the Box Festival, Arts Centre Melbourne, Adelaide Festival Centre, Self Raising Theatre, Theatre Inc., University of Wollongong, Monkey Baa Theatre Co., Theatre South, Q Theatre, and New England Theatre Co. Television includes ANZACS, Barracuda, All Saints, G.P., A Country Practice, and E Street. David is a teaching artist for Monkey Baa and teaches and directs for Inner West Drama at Flight Path Theatre. He was also Associate / Resident Director for several national/international tours including South Pacific, Hello Dolly!, An Ideal Husband and How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying. David is a graduate, Diploma of Creative Arts (Theatre), DDIAE (USQ).



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**WITH  
MAYU IWASAKI  
SHINGO USAMI**

## **Creative team**

<b>Written by</b>	<b>Hisashi Inoue</b>
<b>Translated by</b>	<b>Roger Pulvers</b>
<b>Directed by</b>	<b>Shingo Usami &amp; David Lynch</b>
<b>Set Designer</b>	<b>Tobhiyah Stone Feller</b>
<b>Lighting Designer</b>	<b>Matt Cox</b>
<b>Lighting Assistant</b>	<b>Tim Hope &amp; Veronique Benett</b>
<b>Music composed by</b>	<b>Me-Lee Hay</b>
<b>Sound Designer</b>	<b>Zachary Saric</b>
<b>Stage Manager</b>	<b>Mia Kanzaki</b>
<b>Co-Producers</b>	<b>Jade Fuda &amp; Mayu Iwasaki</b>

**This production is proudly supported by The City of Sydney,  
The Japan Foundation Sydney, and Girgensohn Foundation.**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

**We acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation as the owners and custodians of the city we call Sydney, and recognise it as Aboriginal land on which we work and live. We acknowledge Aboriginal culture, heritage, connection to land, water and community, and pay our respect to elders past and present.**

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**Hisashi Inoue**  
*Playwright*

Hisashi Inoue was born in 1934 in Yamagata Prefecture and educated at Sophia University in Tokyo. He worked as a scriptwriter and stage manager at the France Theatre, a vaudeville theatre in downtown Asakusa before becoming a writer for radio and television. For five years he wrote scripts for the popular puppet show *Hyokkori Hyotan Island*. He debuted in the theatre with *The Belly Button of the Japanese* following it with many highly successful plays such as *The Adventures of Dogen*, *The Blind Master Yabuhara*, *Makeup* and a series of plays about Japanese authors, Ichiyo Higuchi, Soseki Natsume and Osamu Dazai among them.

Inoue also wrote dozens of novels and books of collected essays and won many prizes, including the Naoki Prize and the prestigious Asahi Prize. In 1984 he founded Komatsuza, a theatre troupe dedicated to the production of his work. He donated his private library of some 70,000 books to his hometown, where the "Writers Block Library" was established. Kawanishi-machi Friendly Plaza is the location of the Library and the "Citizens' School" founded under the auspices of Komatsuza with Inoue as principal. He was chairman of the Japan Pen Club and artistic director of Komatsuza. Hisashi Inoue passed away on April 9, 2010, age 75.



**Roger Pulvers**  
*Translator*

Acclaimed author, playwright, theatre and film director, translator and journalist. Roger has published more than sixty-five books in Japanese and English. In 2017 the feature film of *Star Sand*, written and directed by him, had wide release throughout Japan. His two memoirs—*My Japan: a cultural memoir* and *The Unmaking of an American*—have been praised as forming a unique record of cultural life in Japan in the past fifty years. Roger has worked extensively in film, television and theatre. He was assistant to director Nagisa Oshima on the film *Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence*, starring David Bowie, Tom Conti and Ryuichi Sakamoto. He has twice directed major productions at the Adelaide Festival of Arts; and his translation/adaptation of Nikolai Gogol's *The Government Inspector* toured Australia in a Bell Shakespeare Co. production. Roger received the prestigious Miyazawa Kenji Prize in 2008 and the Noma Award for the Translation of Japanese Literature in 2013; in 2018, Japan's highest honour, the Order of the Rising Sun; and in 2019, the Order of Australia (AM). Over the past fifty years he has translated prose, drama and poetry from Japanese, Russian and Polish.

# CAST



**Shingo Usami**  
*Takezo/ Director*

Originally from Japan, Shingo has worked extensively in theatre, film, TV and voiceover in Australia since 1998. His theatre credits include Twelfth Night (Fingerless Productions), Measure for Measure (Sport for Jove), Servant of Two Masters (Sport for Jove), The Floating World (Griffin Theatre Company), Coup d'Etat (bAKEHOUSE Theatre Company), Sadako and The Thousand Paper Cranes (Canute Productions), Underland (Sydney Theatre Company Rough Draft #13), Someday Suddenly (Tunks Productions) and the Australian tour of Miss Saigon 2007/2008. For recent TV and film credits, Shingo played a season regular role Henry Nakayama in the US network AMC's The Terror: Infamy, and a recurring role of Akira Hashimoto in Apple TV's Invasion. Other film and TV credits include Unbroken (Universal), Paper Planes (Paper Plane Production), Backyard Ashes (Crow Crow Productions), The Wolverine – Samurai (Fox Films), Emperor (Krasnoff/Foster Entertainment), Red Dog (Red Dog Productions), Broken Sun (JackaFilms), The Pacific (HBO), The Strip (Channel 9) and Curtin (ABC). The short film RICEBALLS, written and directed by Shingo, has been accepted for a number of film festivals around the world including TIFF Kids International Film Festival and Heartland Film Festival and received several awards.



**Mayu Iwasaki**  
*Mitsue/ Co-Producer*

Hailing from Tokyo, Japan, Mayu Iwasaki is an actor, puppeteer, and cultural consultant who is bilingual in Japanese and English. Mayu is a graduate of the Atlantic Theatre Conservatory and trained extensively with the SITI Company in New York. Theatre credits include: White Pearl (STC), Love and Honor and Pity and Pride and Compassion and Sacrifice (NIDA), directed by Priscilla Jackman, Erth's Dinosaur Zoo Japan and Doha Tour (ERTH Visual & Physical Inc.), Fallen (Mozawa) in Chicago, Love and Information (Atlantic Theatre Company) in NYC, and One woman show Morgan O-Yuki: Geisha of Gilded Age (Shakespeare&Co) in MA. Her TV credit includes Top Knot Detective on SBS.

Mayu is an inaugural Penny Cook creative associate of Monkey Baa Theatre Company since 2020, for which she wrote an original puppet show, "Little Bozu and Kon Kon", based on Japanese folklore. Since her mother is also a puppeteer and Mayu grew up watching her perform puppet shows for children with disabilities, she is passionate about creating an imaginative theatre for young audiences.

Mayu is founder of Omusubi Productions, of which 'The Face of Jizo' is the inaugural production. She is determined to connect people through culturally rich stories that bypass language barriers and enrich the world's spirit.

# CREATIVE



**Matt Cox**  
*Lighting Designer*

Since 2003, Matt has designed numerous theatre productions including; Bangarra Dance Theatre: Waru Journey of the small Turtle, Dubboo, One's Country, OUR Land People Stories, Blak, Belong. for Carriageworks: Lake Disappointment. for Ensemble: A Christmas Carol, Boxing Day BBQ, A View From the Bridge, A Broadcast Coup, The Caretaker, Nearer the Gods, Diplomacy, Murder on the Wireless. for Marrugeku: Burrbgaja Yalirra, Burrbgaja Yalirra 2. for Monkey Baa: Edward the Emu, Possum Magic, The Unknown Soldier, Diary of a Wombat. for Soft Tread: Wharf Revue 2023 Pride in Prejudice, Wharf Revue 2022 Looking for Albanese, Wharf Revue 2021 Can of Worms. for Sydney Theatre Company: Wharf Revue 2020, Wharf Revue 2019, Wharf Revue 2018, Ruby Moon. for William Zappa: The Iliad Out Loud. for Tinderbox Productions: David Suchet, Poirot and More. for Louise Withers and Associates: The Mousetrap, and A Murder is Announced. for Company B: The Seed for Sport for Jove: The Libertine, Othello, Antigone, The River at the end of the Road, The Tempest. for Red Line Productions: This Much is True, A View From the Bridge.



**Tobhiyah Stone Feller**  
*Set Designer*

Tobhiyah is a multidisciplinary designer and educator dedicated to live performance, interior, and installation projects. Set and Costume Design credits include: ATYP: Bustown, Desire Din and the Red Forest, The Laramie Project, The Resistance, and This Territory; Bell Shakespeare Education: Macbeth; Blacktown Arts Centre: My Name is SUD; Clockfire: Night Parade of One Hundred Goblins, and Plenty of Fish in the Sea; Ensemble Theatre: Blue/Orange, Clybourne Park, e- baby, Good People, Killing Katie: Confessions of a Bookclub, My Zinc Bed/Blood Bank, and Sorting Out Rachel; Griffin: Splinter, Replay, and Wicked Sisters; Musica Viva: Da Vinci's Apprentice; Performing Lines: Variant; Red Line: Being Here Now!, and Goddess; Riverside Theatres: Fall! Falter!! Dance!!!, and Parramatta Girls. In 2019, Flowstate, a multi-arts outdoor performance venue for which Tobhiyah was a lead designer, was awarded 'The Great Place Award' - QLD Planning Institute of Australia; and in 2020 the same project received an Honourable Mention from the Australian Institute of Architects. Tobhiyah worked with ATYP as fit-out design consultant for their new home at Pier 2/3 Walsh Bay, Sydney for which the 'Chillzone' interior was Shortlisted. in the Public Space and the Colour categories of the 2022 IDEA (Interior Design Excellence Awards). Tobhiyah is a proud member of the Australian Production Design Guild for which she is the Live Performance Coordinator for the MENTORAPDG program.





**Me-Lee Hay**  
*Music Composer*



**Zachary Saric**  
*Sound Designer*

Me-Lee Hay composes for film, TV, dance and theatre. A Chinese-Malaysian-Australian, she has had works shown across many platforms including Netflix, commercial TV channels, mainstream cinemas and planetariums.

Me-Lee has been commissioned by Australia's leading arts companies such as Sydney Dance Company's PPY & Sydney Theatre Company for *White Pearl* as well as *Guards at the Taj* (4 ½ stars in Sydney Morning Herald) produced by National Theatre of Parramatta. She recently returned from performing and composing for the 5 star Guardian reviewed theatre show *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of World* season at Edinburgh Fringe Festival co-produced by Javaad Alipoor Company and National Theatre of Parramatta. Pertinent screen credits include co-composer for feature film *A Second Chance Rivals!* (Netflix top ten children's category in June 2021 release) and the SBSOne cooking show series *Luke Nguyen*. She recently scored the USA produced documentary *Finding Her Beat* which opened California's prestigious Mill Valley Film Festival and screened at DOC NY in New York among 30 or so other screenings. Classically trained in piano and cello, Me-Lee is a graduate of the Australian Film Television & Radio School (AFTRS), is an Associate Composer Representative of the Australian Music Centre and is the Vice President of the Australian Guild of Screen Composers. She is published by Gaga music

Zac Saric is a Sydney-based Sound Designer and Composer. A graduate of NIDA's BFA in Technical Theatre and Stage Management, Zac works with sound in a variety of forms and mediums, including theatre, musical theatre, podcasting and post-production film and TV. Coming from a background in music, Zac quickly found a talent for composing for the stage and is continually expanding his skillset using new technologies while developing works with other artists. Zac also works as a freelance audio engineer, working across theatre, musicals and live events. Recent Sound Design, Composer credits include: *The Hero Leaves One Tooth* (Ratcatch Theatre), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Redline Productions), *One Hour No Oil* (KWENTO), *A Practical Guide to Self Defence* (National Theatre of Parramatta), *netARChive* (UNSW, iCinema & Powerhouse Museum), *Lady Grey* (JollyGood Theatre), *Love & Information*, *ANTIGONICK* (NIDA). As Sound Designer; *Tim* (Christine Dunstan), *Yong* (Monkey Baa), *Horses* (kunst), *iFire* (UNSW, iCinema), *NotToday* (Rogue Projects), *Twinemies* [Podcast], *Amélie* (NIDA) As Associate Sound Designer; *Tell Me Before the Sun Explodes* (Rockbottom Productions), *Edward the Emu* (Monkey Baa), *44 Sex Acts in One Week* (Clubhouse Productions) As Sound Realiser; *The Poison of Polygamy* (Sydney Theatre Company).

# PRODUCTION TEAM



**Mia Kanzaki**

***Stage Manager***

Mia Kanzaki is a Japanese-Australian stage manager who is passionate about diverse stories and inclusive practices in the arts. She is a recent graduate of WAAPA's Bachelor of Performing Arts (Stage Management). Her credits include *Blessed Union*, the *At What Cost?* National Tour, *The Weekend* (Belvoir), *Summer of Harold* (Ensemble Theatre) and *Assassins*, *Gloria* and *Cabaret* (WAAPA).



**Jade Fuda**

***Co-Producer***

Jade Fuda is a Sydney based actor, director and producer with a Bachelor of Performance from the Australian Academy of Dramatic Arts. She has performed in, directed and collaborated on a number of new plays, films and Theatre in Education related work. In 2018 Jade was accepted into the Stella Adler Art of Acting Studio in Los Angeles where she completed the Film and Television Acting intensive program.

Jade has had the privilege of touring nationally with CDP's productions of *Magic Beach* and *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and internationally with *The 13-Storey Treehouse* (dir. Liesel Badorrek). Jade's producing credits include *AKIO! UNCUT!* a part of 'Bondi Feast' in 2019 with her company Bare With Me Theatre Co. and co-produced Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* with Fingerless Theatre as a part of World Pride 2022. Jade's recent theatre credits include: Celia/Phebe - *As You Like It* (Sport for Jove), Benvolio - *Romeo and Juliet* (Sport for Jove), Sheila the Emu - *The Tale of the Great Emu War* (Fingerless Theatre), Eve - *Paradise Lost* (Poetry In Action/ Legs on the Wall), Hermia/Starveling - *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Sport for Jove) and Stacey in the Australian Premiere of *Girl Band* by Katy Warner (New Ghosts Theatre).



# CREW



**Tim Hope**  
**Lighting assistant**

Tim is a Sydney-based theatre and film maker. In addition to lighting and AV design, Tim has worked as an actor, director and cinematographer. His credits include, as Lighting Designer: *This Changes Everything* (dir. Jessy Heath), *The Village* (dir. Bali Padda), *Ladies in Black* (dir. Aaron Farley), *Clambake* (choreo. Natasha Sturgis), *Twelfth Night* (dir. Alex Kendall Robson); as AV Designer: *Symphony at the Domain: The Sound of Kubrick* (Sydney Festival), *A Man With Five Children* (dir. Anthony Skuse), *Blood Bank* (dir. Anthony Skuse).



**Veronique Bennett**  
**Lighting assistant**

Veronique is a lighting designer as well as a set and costume designer. In 2019, Veronique made her debut with Sydney Theatre Company as lighting designer on *Banging Denmark* directed by Jessica Arthur at the Sydney Opera House. Other lighting designs include: *The Life Of Us* (Hayes Theatre), *Krapps Last Tape* (Old Fitz), *John* (Seymour Centre – Sydney Theatre Award Best Independent Production 2019, Nominee Best Independent Lighting Design), *Chorus* (Old Fitz), *Anatomy Of A Suicide* (Old Fitz), *The Wolves* (Belvoir), *Nosferatu* (Old 505), *The Smallest Hour* (Griffin Theatre), *Stupid Fucking Bird* (New Theatre – Sydney Theatre Award Best Independent Production 2018), *Permission To Spin* (Old Fitz), *Toby Schmitz Live*, (Old Fitz), *A Girl Is A HalfFormed Thing* (KXT), and *The Wolves* (Old Fitz). Veronique was associate lighting designer for *Cry-Baby* (Hayes Theatre Co); and *Prima Facie* (Griffin Theatre). Assistant lighting design roles include: *Metamorphosis* (Apocalypse Theatre); *Visiting Hours* (KXT Bakehouse); and *Ariodante* (Apollo Opera Collective). Veronique was the lighting design realiser for *Sport for Jove's* education season which includes *Macbeth*, *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Veronique was associate designer for *Beauty Queen* at Sydney Theatre Company. She was associate designer for *Gloria* and *John* (Outhouse Theatre Co). Veronique designed set and costumes for *Exit The King* and *Our Blood Runs In The Street* at the Old Fitz. For NIDA, Veronique's designs include: set and lighting design for *Venus In Fur*; and costume and lighting design for *Women On The Verge Of A Nervous Breakdown*.



# THANK YOU

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In loving memory of Kei Iwasaki

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