

For immediate release: 21 September 2026

Th' Unguarded Duncan and Theatre Works present

Timon of Athens

By William Shakespeare and Thomas Middleton

Directed by Kevin Hopkins and Claire Nicholls

28 October to 7 November 2026

Theatre Works – 14 Acland Street St Kilda

www.theatreworks.org.au



Independent theatrical provocateurs **Th'**

Unguarded Duncan return to **Theatre Works** in **St Kilda** from **28 October to 7 November** with a gritty and darkly funny adaptation of **William Shakespeare** and **Thomas Middleton's** rarely performed masterpiece, ***Timon of Athens***. Hot on the heels of their highly acclaimed 2025 season of *Titus Andronicus*, this international collaboration transports the Bard's most prophetic tragedy about late-stage capitalism into the relentless, tumultuous world of an exclusive, commercial restaurant.

Timon is an exceptionally wealthy philanthropist who wines, dines, and magnanimously funds the Athenian elite under the blissful delusion that humanity is inherently good. But when the well runs dry, their golden circle of fair-weather flatterers evaporates, transforming an idealist's riches-to-rags downfall into a ferocious, anti-capitalist satire.

Blending a **Kafkaesque** psychological menace with the absurdist dread of **Samuel Beckett**, this 90-minute powerhouse production uses highly physical ensemble movement in an inventive, contemporary setting to expose the raw dishonesty promoted by capital and markets.

*"As a company, we're very interested in working on lesser-known Shakespeare plays", explains **Co-Director Kevin Hopkins**. "Both Claire and I have worked on so many productions of popular Shakespeare titles, (*Macbeth*, *Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, etc.), that it's been a breath of fresh air to explore plays we knew little about and collaborate with **Prague Shakespeare Company** to stage them here in Australia."*

*"As always with **Th' Unguarded Duncan's** work, the production is incredibly physical and employs stylised ensemble movement to drive the story", adds **Co-Director Claire Nicholls**. "We've set the story in a high-class restaurant, a tumultuous space that reflects the world of *Timon*; it's highly charged, it's future precarious, and it's one of the hardest hit industries when a society is in economic crisis. The play feels very contemporary. I think audiences will be surprised by how relatable the subject matter is considering the current cost of living crisis and general global malaise."*

Continuing its impressive international collaboration with **Prague Shakespeare Company**, the production will star principal artist **Jovanna Hepburn** (also a celebrated member of **Shakespeare in Paradise** in the Bahamas) in the titular role. Featuring an experienced ensemble of local talent, this vibrant new production of ***Timon of Athens*** holds a mirror up to the grotesque, violent truths of

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humanity through a fiercely contemporary lens, asking a timeless question: “*What truly constitutes effective leadership in a world pushed to its absolute limits?*”

Supported by **Theatre Works** and playing as part of their 2026 **With Theatre Works** programming, don't miss the chance to see this rarely performed work, reimagined by one of Melbourne's most thought-provoking theatre companies. Playing at the **Acland Street** venue for **nine performances only**, tickets are now on sale.

Th' Unguarded Duncan is a creative collaboration between **Kevin Hopkins and Claire Nicholls**. Their relationship with **Prague Shakespeare Company** has enabled them to explore **Shakespeare** in a unique way as Australian artists and has led them to craft a style that is distinctly physical and ensemble based. Since 2019, **Th' Unguarded Duncan** has developed classes and coaching in *Psychophysical Actor Training*, incorporating elements of Asian acting methodologies, moving meditations, and martial arts, which often inform its productions.

Praise for Th' Unguarded Duncan:

★★★★★ “Directors Kevin Hopkins and Claire Nicholls craft a production that feels purposeful in every moment.” - **What's The Show** (Titus Andronicus)

“The ensemble work ... is exceptional — a testament to Th' Unguarded Duncan's psychophysical approach to theatre.” - **It's On The House** (Titus Andronicus)

“Nicholls and Hopkins' take on Titus Andronicus is thoroughly engaging.” - **ArtsHub**

Directed by Kevin Hopkins and Claire Nicholls

Performed by James Cerche, Nick Crawford-Smith, Anthea Davis, Tegan Harrod, Jovanna Hepburn, Helen Hopkins, Scott Jackson, Ashlynn Parigi, Tony Rive, Henry Vo and Seon Williams

Lighting Design by Kevin Hopkins

Set Design by Kevin Hopkins, Claire Nicholls and Josh Morrison

Costumes by Kaspia Elston and ASC, and Chloe Moore

28 October to 7 November 2026

Tues – Sat 7:30pm

Preview: Wednesday 28 October

Opening Night: Thursday 29 October

Tickets: \$48 Full, \$38 Concession, \$30 Preview and Tuesday 3 November

Bookings: www.theatreworks.org.au/2026/timon-of-athens

Venue: Theatre Works – 14 Acland Street St Kilda

Duration: 90 minutes no interval

Age suitability: 15+

Warnings: flashing lights, loud noises

Accessibility: Theatre Works is a wheelchair accessible venue. A full access guide will be available closer to the date

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