

LA MAMA PRESENTS
BILLY HUGHES PM
“DIRTY LITTLE RAT!”

In 1946, William Morris Hughes, former Prime Minister and at the time a member of Robert Menzies' newly formed Liberal Party, played himself in a Hollywood funded biopic of Charles Kingsford Smith, the much admired but ill-fated aviator. He re-enacted a scene from 1921 when he was PM and the best known Australian in the world.



The man never lacked confidence and was more than pleased to be part of a film, “Smithy”, about a man of whom he had a low opinion. Hughes, as usual, would put the truth aside and, as he saw it, take his rightful place at the centre of events.

Hughes was out longest serving politician but he was never a time server – he was dynamic and forceful, relentless in his pursuit of power. He seems to have had no friends in politics, only interests. Indeed, he appears to have possessed little personal warmth. His beautiful daughter, Helen, born when he was fifty-five, was surely his most cherished object. Hughes' personality – and how its flaws influenced the young nation – permeate this short play. It begs the question: “How does he sleep at night?” Perhaps, he finds no peace, his repose engulfed in nightmares? So be it. Let the play begin.

OCTOBER 26 & 27, 2024 AT LA MAMA COURTHOUSE
349 DRUMMOND STREET, CARLTON

Dennis Coard as Billy Hughes | **Kevin Summers** as Prosecutor

Written by Kevin Summers | **Devised by** Coard and Summers | **Image by** Darren Gill

MEDIA INQUIRIES, INTERVIEWS, OR FURTHER INFORMATION:
Kevin Summers, writer: ksummers@internode.on.net

La Mama Theatre, 205 Faraday Street Carlton VIC 3053 Australia
info@lamama.com.au | +613 9347 6948 | www.lamama.com.au

La Mama is financially assisted by Creative Victoria (Creative Enterprises Program), and the City of Melbourne (Arts and Creative Partnership Program). We are grateful to all our philanthropic partners and donors, advocates, volunteers, audiences, artists and our entire community. Thank you!



BILLY HUGHES PM... DIRTY LITTLE RAT by Kevin Summers

Dennis Coard*, a distinguished actor and friend of many years, plays Hughes. He looks like him and I wrote the part with Den in mind. In fact he has already played Hughes in a telemovie about John Monash.

The writer** plays Ken G. Hall, the director of the film and The Prosecutor who invades the old man's sleep as he dozes while waiting to perform his scene. This will be his fifth play that La Mama has produced.

It is hoped that the play will tour next year – it is designed to be readily performed with a simple set of a few small tables and chairs. Trades Hall, where Hughes would have strutted about many years ago, retain a strong interest in the man and are keen to host this work in the future.

*Best known for his five years on Home and Away, starring with his wife, Debra Lawrence.

** Core cast member of Phoenix, Prisoner and Neighbours (a decade as the local detective).

SEASON OCTOBER 26 & 27 AT LA MAMA COURTHOUSE, 349 DRUMMOND ST, CARLTON

Times (running time 60 mins) Saturday 2pm & 7.30pm | Sunday 4pm

Bookings: <https://lamama.com.au/whats-on/seniors-festival-at-la-mama-2024/billy-hughes-p-m-dirty-little-rat/>

Phone: 03 9347 6948