

# The actors and their roles

## Pozzo: Paul Barret

**Q:** What do you think *Waiting for Godot* is about, and what do you hope the audience will take from it?

**PB:** It is about terror of the unknown – fear that life may be meaningless. Is there a purpose to our existence? For the characters in *Godot*, as in Beckett's *Endgame* and *Happy Days*, there are always rituals and routines to be performed to give them a sense of structure and meaning. I think most audiences will find that familiar. I love the characters, and I hope the audience does, for their attempt to fight off inertia and despair as they contemplate the abyss.

**Q:** What preparation do you usually do before rehearsals begin? In particular, how did you prepare for *Waiting for Godot*?

**PB:** I don't have any particular routine apart from trying to be at rehearsals a good 10–15 minutes beforehand so I can change into rehearsal clothes (when necessary), look over my lines for the upcoming scenes, and just chat with the other actors. *Godot* is very difficult. I have had to spend a lot of time at home on the lines; trying to find patterns and through-lines. It is often infuriatingly repetitive and seemingly illogical.

**Q:** What do you do during the hour before you go on stage?

**PB:** I like to get dressed and made up as soon as I arrive, so that by the time I appear on the stage, I am wearing the costume as comfortably and familiarly as my own clothes. At no later than the half hour call I will usually spend about 10–15 minutes onstage 'feeling' the space, and doing a vocal and physical warm up.

## Lucky: Jon Brazier

**Q:** What do you think *Waiting for Godot* is about and what do you hope the audience will take from it?

**JB:** Beckett has said that Godot may just as easily been given any name, like Bert or Peter or whatever. For me, *Waiting for Godot* is about the non-existence of a higher being or a God. I can imagine some audiences find that a very bleak outlook. Alternatively, being pro-active can provide advancement. I look forward to the reaction from this production.

**Q:** What preparation do you usually do before rehearsals begin? In particular, how did you prepare for *Waiting for Godot*?

**JB:** Before rehearsals begin I read the play as often as possible. Sometimes you are cast in a part months in advance, sometimes just days, so time is a factor in the amount of preparation that can be achieved. Ideally, with lots of time, I like to research the time the play was written and is set. The literature, art, politics, etc. of the times. For this production, I read heaps of essays on interpretations and meanings. Some stuff stays with you – you filter out what you think is appropriate and discard other ideas.

**Q:** What do you do during the hour before you go on stage?

**JB:** A physical warm up is important in any pre-performance preparation and particularly for an actor playing Lucky. My body will be quite distorted for the time I'm on stage and, unless I'm warm, all sorts of problems could arise – from cramp to serious injuries. I'll probably go through Lucky's speech as a vocal warm up along with vocal dexterity exercises.

## **Vladimir: Raymond Hawthorne**

**Q:** What do you think *Waiting for Godot* is about and what do you hope the audience will take from it?

**RH:** Many things to do with the human condition. To define it is not very helpful. However!! It questions man's conditions. Why we are born. How we live. How we die. The nature of relationships. The need for human contact. Man's purpose and function in the world. Hope. Redemption. Resurrection. Fate.

**Q:** What preparation do you usually do before rehearsals begin? In particular, how did you prepare for *Waiting for Godot*?

**RH:** Study the text. Research the background of the play and the playwright. Read other works of the playwright. Slowly and methodically learn and understand the lines, the sub-textual undertones, the dramatic shape and form of the play (– its arc). All this in preparation for stepping onto the rehearsal floor to be in a position to make creative and constructive offerings to both the director and one's fellow actors.

**Q:** What do you do during the hour before you go on stage?

**RH:** It's probably two hours in most cases. Exercise both physical and vocal, make-up, look through the script of the play to reaffirm or see new things.

**Boy: Jake Howie**

**Q:** What do you make of *Waiting for Godot*?

**JH:** To be honest, I was quite confused initially. I had heard about the play but had not read it until I found out about the audition. But the more time I spent in rehearsal, both talking to Colin (the director) and the other actors, and simply watching the other people perform, the more I understood. I guess in very general terms it asks questions about life and our existence. In fact, to some degree, it questions reality, which is quite scary in a way.

**Q:** What do you do during the hour before you go on stage?

**RH:** I do some vocal and physical warm-ups, but I try not to get too active otherwise I don't have enough energy when I get on stage. So generally I try to sit quietly and think, and let the energy build gradually.

**Q:** You're in year 13 at school now – what is your typical day like at the moment?

**RH:** Well, I have exams coming up in a couple of days so I spend most of the morning and afternoon revising. Because I come on towards the end of the first half, I only need to get to the theatre about 35 minutes before the show. This is a great opportunity, so I'll suffer now and hope that it will pay off later!

**(Note:** The actor who played Estragon was not available for interview.)