

JOHN BELL AO – A HISTORY

- 1940** Born Newcastle, New South Wales (1 November)
- 1953 – 1958** Marist Brothers High School, Maitland, NSW
- 1959 – 1962** University of Sydney – graduated BA (Hons) English
- 1962** Performed one man Shakespeare production at Genesian Theatre, *This Scept'r'd Isle*
- 1963** **Old Tote Theatre Company**
Acting roles included:
Trofimov – *The Cherry Orchard* by Anton Chekhov
Hamlet – *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare
Eisenrigh – *The Fire Raisers* by Max Frisch
Founded Three Bob Theatre (Lunch Time Theatre)
- 1964** **Adelaide Festival – Tent Theatre**
Acting roles included:
Henry V – *Henry V* by William Shakespeare
Private Ear And Public Eye by Peter Shaffer – Richbrooke Theatre with Gordon Chater and Judith Stott
Awarded British Council Scholarship to Bristol Old Vic Theatre School
- 1965** Joined the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-on-Avon, working extensively with Michael Saint-Denis, Peter Hall, Peter Brook and John Barton
- 1966** Made Associate Artist at the **Royal Shakespeare Company**
Acting roles included:
Rosencrantz – *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare
Paris – *Romeo And Juliet* by William Shakespeare
- 1969** Joined Philip Hedley's Company at Theatre Royal, Lincoln
Acting roles included:
Romeo – *Romeo And Juliet* by William Shakespeare
Mirabell – *The Way Of The World* by William Congreve
Taught acting at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School for six months
- 1970** Returned to Australia as Head of Acting at the National Institute of Dramatic Art
Directed original production of *The Legend Of King O'Malley* (Jane Street) and subsequent national tour
Co-founded Nimrod Theatre Company with Ken Horler and Richard Wherrett
- 1970 – 1985** **Nimrod Theatre Company**
Acting roles included:
Richard III – *Richard III* by William Shakespeare
King Lear – *King Lear* by William Shakespeare
Prince Hal – *Henry V* by William Shakespeare
Hamlet – *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare

Astrov – *Uncle Vanya* by Anton Chekhov
Vershinin – *The Three Sisters* by Anton Chekhov
Trigorin – *The Seagull* by Anton Chekhov
Volpone – *Volpone* by Ben Jonson
Hatch – *The Sea* by Edward Bond
Arturo – *The Resistible Rise Of Arturo Ui* by Bertolt Brecht
Platonov – *Wild Honey* by Michael Frayn

Directed the following productions:

Macbeth by William Shakespeare
Measure For Measure by William Shakespeare
Much Ado About Nothing by William Shakespeare
Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare
The Comedy Of Errors by William Shakespeare
Tartuffe by Moliere
The Club by David Williamson
Travelling North by David Williamson
The Removalists by David Williamson
Celluloid Heroes by David Williamson
Flash Jim Vaux by Ron Blair
The Christian Brothers by Ron Blair
Last Day In Woolloomooloo by Ron Blair
Perfect Strangers by Ron Blair
President Wilson In Paris by Ron Blair
A Hard God by Peter Kenna
Mates by Peter Kenna
How Does Your Garden Grow by Jim McNeil
The Venetian Twins by Nick Enright/Terrence Clarke
Variations by Nick Enright/Terrence Clarke
Candide by Leonard Bernstein
The Speakers by Heathcote Williams
The Oresteia by Aeschylus
The Servant Of Two Masters by Carlo Goldoni

1972 – 1974 **Old Tote Theatre Company**

Acting roles included:

Arturo – *The Resistible Rise Of Arturo Ui* by Bertolt Brecht
Uncle Vanya – *Uncle Vanya* by Anton Chekhov
Petruccio – *The Taming Of The Shrew* by William Shakespeare
Berowne – *Love's Labour's Lost* by William Shakespeare
Satin – *The Lower Depths* by Maxim Gorky

Directed the following productions:

How Could You Believe Me? (Vaudeville)
The Legend Of King O'Malley by Michael Boddy
Kabul by Ron Blair
The Good Woman Of Setzuan by Bertolt Brecht

1976 Appeared in the film *Break of Day* directed by Ken Hannam

1976 – 1985 Director of the Loudon Sainthill Design Scholarship

1980 – 1991 Sydney Theatre Company

Acting roles included:

Cyrano de Bergerac – *Cyrano de Bergerac* by Edmond Rostand

Macbeth – *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare

Henry – *The Real Thing* by Tom Stoppard

Colin – *Emerald City* by David Williamson

CS Lewis – *Shadowlands* by William Nicholson

1982 Appeared in the film *Far East* directed by John Duigan
(John Bell nominated for AFI Best Supporting Actor)

1988 *Acting roles included:*

Pastor Manders – *Ghosts* by Henrik Ibsen for Belvoir St Theatre

1989 Directed *Lost Weekend* for Royal Queensland Theatre Company
Directed and played Brazen in *The Recruiting Officer* by George Farquhar for
State Theatre Company of South Australia

1990 *Acting roles included:*

The Duke – *Big River* for Gordon Frost Organisation

Prospero – *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare for Belvoir St Theatre

Jude Brack – *Hedda Gabler* by Henrik Ibsen for Melbourne Theatre Company

1991 – 1994 Governor of the Actor's Benevolent fund

1990 Founded Bell Shakespeare as Artistic Director

1991 to date Bell Shakespeare

Acting roles have included:

1991 Hamlet's Ghost – *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare

Shylock – *The Merchant Of Venice* by William Shakespeare

1992 Richard III – *Richard III* by William Shakespeare

Shylock – *The Merchant Of Venice* by William Shakespeare

Hamlet's Ghost – *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare

1993 Richard III – *Richard III* by William Shakespeare

Claudius – *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare

1994 Macbeth – *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare

1995 Malvolio – *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare

1996 Benedick – *Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare

Coriolanus – *Coriolanus* by William Shakespeare

1997 Leontes – *The Winter's Tale* by William Shakespeare

Prospero – *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare

1998 King Lear – *King Lear* by William Shakespeare

1999 James Tyrone – *Long Day's Journey Into Night* by Eugene O'Neill

2000 Ulysees – *Troilus And Cressida* by William Shakespeare

2002 Richard, Duke of Gloucester – *Richard 3* by William Shakespeare

2008 Titus Andronicus – *Anatomy Titus Fall Of Rome: A Shakespeare Commentary* by Heiner Müller

Has directed the following productions:

- 1991 *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare
1992 *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare
Richard III by William Shakespeare
1993 *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare
Richard III by William Shakespeare
1994 *The Taming Of The Shrew* by William Shakespeare
1995 *Pericles* by William Shakespeare
1996 *Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare
1998 *Henry 4* by William Shakespeare
1999 *Henry 5* by William Shakespeare
2001 *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare
Antony And Cleopatra by William Shakespeare
2002 *The Comedy Of Errors* by William Shakespeare
2003 *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare
The Servant Of Tivo Masters by Carlo Goldoni
2004 *The Servant Of Tivo Masters* by Carlo Goldoni
The Comedy Of Errors by William Shakespeare
2005 *Wars Of The Roses* by William Shakespeare
Measure For Measure by William Shakespeare
2006 *Romeo And Juliet* by William Shakespeare
The Comedy Of Errors by William Shakespeare
2007 *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare
The Government Inspector by Nikolai Gogol
2008 *As You Like It* by William Shakespeare
2009 *The Alchemist* by Ben Jonson
Pericles by William Shakespeare

AWARDS

- 1978 Order of the British Empire (OBE)
1987 Member of the Order of Australia (AM)
1994 Honorary Doctorate of Letters: University of Newcastle
1996 Honorary Doctorate of Letters: University of Sydney
1997 Named by the National Trust of Australia as one of Australia's National Living Treasures
2001 Painting of John Bell by artist Nicolas Harding wins the Archibald Prize
2002 Helpmann Award: Best Male Actor in a Play, *Richard III*
2003 Cultural Leader of the Year (awarded by Prime Minister John Howard and Dame Elisabeth Murdoch)
2006 Honorary Doctorate of Letters: University of New South Wales
2009 Officer of the Order of Australia (AO)
2009 JC Williamson Award for contribution to live performance in Australia (Helpmann Awards)