

John Bell AO

Theatre Great, National Living Treasure & Keynote Speaker

John Bell is one of Australia's most admired, award-winning theatrical actors and directors. Recognised as a Living National Treasure, he famously launched the acclaimed Bell Shakespeare Theatre in 1990 and went on to produce more than 15 of Shakespeare's greatest works, which have been enjoyed by almost 2.5 million Australians.

John has been enormously influential in shaping Australia's theatrical identity over the past 50 years. A risk-taking impresario and extraordinary educationalist, John Bell received significant accolades for his leadership and contributions to national culture.

John Bell is an Officer of the Order of Australia and the Order of the British Empire; has an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from the Universities of Sydney, New South Wales and Newcastle; and was recognised in 1997 by the National Trust of Australia as one of Australia's Living Treasures. John is an unforgettable speaker. His presentations are infused with humour, surprising insights, enthralling readings and leadership lessons stemming not just from his incredible story of passion, entrepreneurship, trial and success but also from the minds and deeds of Shakespeare's most notable and polarising characters.

John Bell speaks about:

Leadership Lessons in Shakespeare - Giving a voice to some of the most infamous and complex figures of our time - William Shakespeare's talents offer glimpses of insight into some of the most fascinating minds in history.

So, what can we learn from these fallible yet formidable characters? As with Bell Shakespeare, the Australian theatre company he founded and directed for over 25 years, John Bell believes that theatre allows audiences to see themselves reflected and transformed through the prism of Shakespeare's writing. Shakespeare provides many examples of outstanding leadership as well as those who made disastrous mistakes.



In this spellbinding keynote, John draws special reference to Julius Caesar, Mark Anthony and Octavius Caesar, Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V. Their unique lessons in leadership are explored through insightful commentary, flecked with humour and interpreted with readings. Audiences discover surprising insights into:

- Managing teams successfully through change
- Opportunities (and the consequences) of different leadership styles and motivations
- Tipping the scale towards victorious leadership, away dysfunction and tragedy
- Recognisable qualities of great leaders

Lessons in Leadership and Business from John Bell - After founding the Bell Shakespeare Company in 1990, John Bell has learned a great deal from his many monumental experiences of failure as well as business success after creating two theatre companies and more than 25 years as founder and artistic director.

Credited for his significant contributions national culture, John has played a pivotal role in the formation of Australian theatre. He was awarded the Dame Elisabeth Murdoch Cultural Leadership Award in 2003.

In this fascinating keynote audiences are inspired to pursue their passions and write their own script; walking away with leadership lessons from an entirely unique perspective, as well as deep insights into John's journey from humble beginnings to now "Australia's Living National Treasure" including;

- The power of vision: how to follow your passion and lead through uncertain times to success
- What can 'showbusiness' can teach us about business?
- How to create 'buy in', encourage people to invest in you and bring people along for the journey.

Backstage stories & entertainment - John provides your perfect after dinner solution, tailoring the following pieces to bring a remarkable element of world-class performance to any occasion:

- Theatreland - Ever wonder what goes on behind the curtain? John shocks and entertains with his hilarious array of theatre stories, celebrity gossip, personal recollections and untold comedic disasters - all the things that make theatre live!
- My Life in Shakespeare - Audiences will delight in John's personal anecdotes and reminiscences including selected passages from Shakespeare.
- My Favourite Things - John curates a personal selection of his favourite pieces of poetry and prose into a light-hearted and wonderfully entertaining experience. This can be tailored to suit the tastes of different audiences.
- John Bell's Christmas Special - Any Christmas gathering will be enriched by John's selection of seasonal readings from the lighthearted Grinch Who Stole Christmas by Dr. Seuss, to selections from Dickens' A Christmas Carol and a heartwarming Irish Folk tale for all ages.

Client Testimonials



John Bell AO, has shown leadership and vision. I thank John for his hard work, wisdom and determined passion.

Malcolm Turnbull, Prime Minister of Australia



John is a powerful, engaging and impactful speaker who is creative, wise and a little bit magical.

Commonwealth Bank



'He was not of an Age, but for all time.' This comment was made about Shakespeare, but we also think it holds true for John Bell.

BHP Billiton

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