

## *A Journey to Australia, by Dario Costa*

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On January 19th, the comedian Dario Costa from the company “Drama Ties” performed his show called “Journey to Australia” for the students of Descartes High School. For an hour, we were immersed in the Australian history through four different stories he told us. Different characters were played by this impressive actor who wrote, staged and of course performed this unique play.

From the discovery of Australia by James Cook to the story of a road train driver, this play was a great glimpse of rich Australian history and culture. We attended the first meeting of Cook with the Aboriginals and the Australian biodiversity. Then, we met Alexander Pearce, the man who escaped Australia when it was a penal colony and followed him throughout his escape through the rainforest with his fellow prisoners. Moreover, we met Giuseppe, an Italian immigrant of post- World War II, on his trip to Australia for a better life. Finally, we met Mad Dan, a road train driver, and learned more about Burke and Wills, two explorers who went for a four months journey in the outback.

Dario Costa is undeniably an excellent actor. He succeeded in playing all the characters of the play by his perfect mimicking and his ability to change his voice in accordance with the characters. For example, he played five men at the same time for the story of Alexander Pearce and was still understandable even though he was alone. The mimicking was without doubt the essence of the humoristic side of the play, and it was impossible not to laugh or give a faint smile as he impersonated an Australian farmer or truck driver. Furthermore, he was able to occupy the entire space of the “stage”.

However, the props were almost nonexistent and the style of the play was very minimalistic. The comedian only had a balloon with the Australian map on it, a chair and a suitcase with him on the stage. There were no costumes, no lighting and no special effects. There was also no background or pictures to feel more immersed in the story. Everything was based on Dario Costa’s acting skills and some rare sound effects, which was quite risky. It was very difficult indeed to feel immersed in what the comedian was telling and acting. It was of course, a stage direction choice as it was a “one man show,” and it presented some benefits because this play can be played almost everywhere since there is no need for many costumes or props.

I think this play was very interesting to learn some anecdotes about Australian history in an original way. The performance of Dario Costa was absolutely stunning. I think that which made the originality of the play was the fact that it was a “one man show”; however, it was also his weakness and was a bit strange or unsettling at times. To the future potential viewers, I would like to recommend them to not have too many expectations about the play; the more they imagine impressive staging, settings, or costumes, the more they might be disappointed. I think the best thing to do is to just try to appreciate the play as it is, a “one man show,” and focus on Dario Costa’s acting skills.

By Elise and Emma, 1ère euro

