

We have moved to an exciting new home



Broken neck, months of pain but the show goes on

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT 25 FEB 11 @ 08:30AM BY JULIA IRWIN



The Cherry Orchard was postponed when Phil Roberts broke his neck late last year. He was determined he would play his part and is now in rehearsal for a February 26 opening.

BREAK a leg equates to good luck in theatre circles but broken bones are the last thing actor Phil Roberts wants to hear about.

Roberts broke his neck late last year and still suffers constant pain, wears a brace and is under doctor's orders to lift no more than a kilo in each hand.

"I was cycling to South Kensington Station and I had a big heavy costume over the handlebars and the bike started swaying so I looked down and the next thing I knew I'd catapulted over the handlebars," Roberts said.

But despite this setback, the determined actor will play a major role in Winterfall Theatre's production of Anton Chekov's *The Cherry Orchard*, which will begin on Saturday.

"I'm hoping to take the neck brace off for the couple of hours and pain killers and adrenalin will counteract the pain while I'm on stage," Roberts said.

He had already won the role and was in rehearsal for the production when he suffered the injury.

Winterfall Theatre founder Michelle Williams said the company planned to put the play on late last year but postponed it in the hope Roberts would play his role.

The *Cherry Orchard* runs February 26 to March 20, The Theatre Husk, 161A Heidelberg Rd, Northcote. Tickets \$26/\$32. Bookings at ticketmaster.com.au