

MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY

MEDIA KIT 2018

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7PM MONDAY
28 AUGUST 2017**

SEASON 2018



MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY SEASON 2018

Melbourne Theatre Company Artistic Director **Brett Sheehy AO** today revealed **MTC's 2018 Season** and what promises to be another brilliant year at Victoria's state theatre company.

'Melbourne Theatre Company is where stories come alive and Season 2018 is bursting with plays as relevant, irresistible and complex as any we have presented in recent years,' **Brett Sheehy** said.

'The year begins and ends with two major events on Australia's cultural calendar and in between we have an enviable mix of world premieres, Australian premieres and fresh revivals of theatre classics – made even more irresistible by the host of exceptional actors, directors and creative teams assembled to bring them to life. In 2018, the 13 productions headed for our stages will inspire, entertain and challenge in equal measure and are guaranteed to leave audiences thinking about the world a little differently,' **Mr Sheehy** said.

To open the season, **MTC** and **Arts Centre Melbourne** present the Australian premiere of National Theatre's legendary production of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, adapted by **Simon Stephens** from **Mark Haddon's** best-selling book, and directed by Tony Award winner **Marianne Elliott**.

Pamela Rabe, Sarah Peirse and **William Zappa** star in MTC and Sydney Theatre Company's Australian premiere co-production of *The Children* by **Lucy Kirkwood** – an incisive drama about the responsibility each generation faces in leaving a better world for those that follow – directed by MTC Associate Director **Sarah Goodes**.

Director **Stephen Nicolazzo** brings 70s British suburbia to Southbank Theatre with a lavish revival of **Mike Leigh's** cult-classic, *Abigail's Party*, starring **Eryn Jean Norvill** as Beverly and **Daniel Frederiksen** as her husband Laurence alongside **Katherine Tonkin** and **Benjamin Rigby**.

Hungry Ghosts by **Jean Tong** receives its world premiere for MTC Education exploring issues of cultural and sexual identity, politics, corruption and the often-confusing world we must navigate every day starring **Emina Ashman** and **Jing-Xuan Chan**, directed by **Petra Kalive**.

Olivier Award-winning playwright **Mike Bartlett's** darkly comic twist on the Edward Snowden story, *Wild*, makes its Australian premiere starring **Anna Lise Phillips**, directed by MTC Associate Director **Dean Bryant**.

The House of Bernarda Alba sees celebrated playwright **Patricia Cornelius** take Spanish dramatist Federico García Lorca's classic tragedy out of the villages of Spain and into the heat of rural Western Australia in a raw and exhilarating adaptation directed by **Leticia Cáceres**, starring **Peta Brady, Julie Forsyth, Bessie Holland** and **Melita Jurisic**.

Branden Jacobs-Jenkins's blistering satire and Pulitzer Prize finalist *Gloria* makes its Australian premiere under the direction of **Lee Lewis**, starring stage and screen favourite **Lisa McCune** in the title role alongside **Callan Colley, Aileen Huynh** and **Sophie Ross**.

Gina Riley and **William McInnes** lead an all-star cast including **Simon Gleeson, Brent Hill, Michelle Lim Davidson, Zindzi Okenyo** and **Christie Whelan Browne** in **Oscar Wilde's** effervescent society drama, *An Ideal Husband*, directed by **Dean Bryant**.

Continued >

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The audaciously titled ***A Doll's House, Part 2*** by **Lucas Hnath** makes its Australian premiere, continuing Ibsen's story – 15 years later – with an intriguing and decidedly modern perspective starring **Marta Dusseldorp** as Nora opposite **Greg Stone** as her husband Torvald, directed by **Sarah Goodes**.

The world premiere NEON NEXT commission ***Working with Children*** takes on the sometimes hypocritical lives of teachers, artists and regulators in an emotionally evocative and technologically inventive production written, directed and performed by **Nicola Gunn**.

Linda Cropper stars as the feisty but fiercely determined Helen in the world premiere of **Aidan Fennessy's** surprising, suspenseful and deeply poignant story of two unlikely companions, ***The Architect***, directed by **Peter Houghton**.

Elaine Crombie, Kamil Ellis, Tony Nikolakopoulos and **Calen Tassone** star in the world premiere of ***Astroman*** by **Albert Belz**, an uplifting and humorous coming of age story set in 1980s Geelong, directed by **Sarah Goodes** with **Tony Briggs** as Associate Director.

And to close MTC's 2018 Season, stage and screen luminary **Geoffrey Rush** reunites with director **Simon Phillips** to star as Malvolio in Shakespeare's exquisite comedy, ***Twelfth Night***, alongside a cast of comic talents including **Brent Hill, Richard Piper, Christie Whelan Browne** and **Frank Woodley**.

'Season 2018 is abundant in the urgency and relevance, or indeed renewed relevance, of its stories, and it is with great pleasure that we embark on the year ahead together with our artists and audiences. Every year I am heartened by the enthusiasm, passion and generosity of those who embrace the art on our stages in such great numbers,' **Brett Sheehy** said.

In addition to the productions, 2018 sees MTC continue its award-winning **Education Program**, providing unique learning opportunities, enrichment activities and resources for students and teachers designed to ensure young audiences experience exceptional theatre and educational programs.

Similarly, MTC's **Sharing the Light** initiative enters its fourth year, making theatre more accessible through subsidised \$5 tickets for eligible students and families, scholarships for young Indigenous people and an extensive regional tour of MTC's Education production.

In 2018 MTC's newly announced \$4.6 million **NEXT STAGE Writers' Program** will be well into its first year with seven commissioned writers and three new writers-in-residence.

And MTC's industry-leading initiatives continue, furthering the Company's commitment to artist development through the annual **Cybec Electric** play reading series, celebrating new writing for the stage; the **Assistant Directors** and secondment programs, nurturing the careers of young directors, stage managers and creatives; **NEON NEXT**, supporting the independent theatre sector; and the **Women in Theatre Program**, developing the careers of future leaders in all areas of the sector.

'As we look to 2018 and everything on offer – our productions, programs and initiatives – we are proud to be a company that provides the people of Melbourne, Victoria and Australia with such remarkable experiences and opportunities. I look forward to sharing the year with the many thousands who make up our MTC community,' **Brett Sheehy** said.

Subscription packages for MTC's Season 2018 are on sale from Monday 28 August at 9pm.

Single tickets for *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* go on sale on Monday 13 November, and single tickets for *The Children* and *Abigail's Party* go on sale on Friday 1 December.

All remaining productions, except *Twelfth Night*, go on single ticket sale on Friday 2 March 2018, with *Twelfth Night* on sale from Thursday 7 June 2018.

mtc.com.au/2018

     MelbTheatre2018

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MTC Season 2018

Calendar



THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME

A new play by Simon Stephens.
Based on the novel by Mark Haddon.
11 January — 18 February
Opening Night: Saturday 13 January



Oscar Wilde's AN IDEAL HUSBAND

16 July — 18 August
Opening Night: Friday 20 July



THE CHILDREN

by Lucy Kirkwood
3 February — 10 March
Opening Night: Thursday 8 February



A DOLL'S HOUSE, PART 2

by Lucas Hnath
11 August — 15 September
Opening Night: Thursday 16 August



ABIGAIL'S PARTY

by Mike Leigh
17 March — 21 April
Opening Night: Thursday 22 March



WORKING WITH CHILDREN

by Nicola Gunn
30 August — 29 September
Opening Night: Saturday 1 September



HUNGRY GHOSTS

by Jean Tong
3 — 19 May
Opening Night: Saturday 5 May



THE ARCHITECT

by Aidan Fennessey
27 September — 31 October
Opening Night: Tuesday 2 October



WILD

by Mike Bartlett
5 May — 9 June
Opening Night: Thursday 10 May



ASTROMAN

by Albert Belz
27 October — 8 December
Opening Night: Friday 2 November



THE HOUSE OF BERNARDA ALBA

adapted by Patricia Cornelius,
after Federico García Lorca
25 May — 7 July
Opening Night: Thursday 31 May



TWELFTH NIGHT

by William Shakespeare
12 November — 29 December
Opening Night: Friday 16 November



GLORIA

by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins
16 June — 21 July
Opening Night: Thursday 21 June

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28 August 2017

The acclaimed National Theatre production

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME

A NEW PLAY BY
SIMON STEPHENS

BASED ON THE BEST-SELLING NOVEL BY
MARK HADDON



Melbourne Theatre Company and Arts Centre Melbourne present the National Theatre's Olivier and Tony Award-winning production of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, adapted by Simon Stephens (*Birdland*) from Mark Haddon's best-selling book, and directed by Tony Award winner Marianne Elliott (*War Horse*).

This record-breaking production will make its Australian debut at Arts Centre Melbourne, Playhouse on **Saturday 13 January**.

Director **Marianne Elliott** said 'I'm absolutely thrilled that our production of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* will make its Australian premiere in Melbourne. I was overwhelmed by the way audiences in Melbourne took the NT's productions of *War Horse* to their hearts, and I look forward to sharing with them our staging of Mark Haddon's beautiful story of love, family and bravery in the most unlikely of environments.'

Curious Incident is the recipient of a record-breaking seven 2013 Olivier Awards, including Best New Play, Best Director, Best Design, Best Lighting Design and Best Sound Design – more Oliviers than any other play in the history of London's West End at that time.

It also won five Tony Awards including Best Play, six Drama Desk Awards including Outstanding Play; five Outer Critics Circle Awards including Outstanding New Broadway Play; and the Drama League Award for Outstanding Production of a Broadway or Off Broadway Play.

The show tells the story of Christopher John Francis Boone, who is fifteen years old. He stands beside Mrs Shears' dead dog, which has been speared with a garden fork, it is seven minutes after midnight and Christopher is under suspicion. He records each fact in a book he is writing to solve the mystery of who killed Wellington. He has an extraordinary brain, and is exceptional at maths while ill-equipped to interpret everyday life. He has never ventured alone beyond the end of his road, he detests being touched and distrusts strangers. But his detective work, forbidden by his father, takes him on a frightening journey that upturns his world.

MTC Artistic Director Brett Sheehy AO said, 'Since I first saw this show in March 2013 on the West End I've been desperate for us to bring it to Melbourne. Six years later, and in collaboration with our great friends and colleagues at Arts Centre Melbourne, I'm delighted that the National Theatre production of *Curious Incident* will open our 2018 Season. It is storytelling at its finest and a remarkable work of theatre that resonates with young and old.'

To complement the Australian premiere season of *Curious Incident*, Arts Centre Melbourne will host an Associated Program for students and the public consisting of workshops and talks with creatives, insights into the production, immersive experiences and a Relaxed Performance.

Relaxed Performances are for everyone who will benefit from a more relaxed environment but are specifically designed to welcome patrons with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or other disabilities that create sensory sensitivity. Sound and lighting cues are adjusted, doors

Continued >

Winner of:
Seven Olivier Awards including Best Play
Five Tony Awards including Best Play
Six Drama Desk Awards including Outstanding Play
Five Outer Critics Circle Awards including Outstanding New Broadway Play
Drama League Award for Outstanding Production of a Broadway or Off-Broadway Play

★★★★★

'A phenomenal combination of storytelling and spectacle. A theatrical rush.'
The Times

★★★★★

'Astonishing and unmissable.'
Sunday Express

★★★★★

'A beautiful, eloquent, dazzlingly inventive show about the wonders of life.'
Evening Standard

National Theatre

This production is proudly supported by

MTC
FOUNDATION

Arts
Centre
Melbourne

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MTC MELBOURNE
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remain open and a designated quiet area is available. A pre-show visual story is also available for patrons to prepare for their visit and the performance. The range of events included in the *Curious Incident* Associated Program are designed to enrich audiences' experience of and engagement with this ground-breaking production.

Arts Centre Melbourne CEO Claire Spencer said, 'Arts Centre Melbourne is a place for everyone, and this beautiful, wondrous piece of theatre is the perfect vehicle to bring people of all ages and abilities together to share in a truly remarkable cultural experience. We're delighted to be collaborating with one of our flagship resident companies, MTC, to bring this show to Melbourne.'

Mark Haddon's novel, ***Curious Incident***, was published in 2003 and was the winner of more than 17 literary awards, including prizes in the US, Japan, the Netherlands and Italy, as well as the prestigious Whitbread Book of the Year Award in the UK in 2004. The novel has been translated into 44 languages and sold more than 5.5 million copies worldwide.

The stage production of ***Curious Incident*** transferred to London's West End in September 2012, following a sold-out run at the National Theatre's Cottesloe Theatre. Two years later it premiered at the Barrymore Theatre in New York City and was the longest-running play on Broadway in over a decade.

Curious Incident is currently on a major tour of the US until September 2017, and a second tour of the UK and Ireland continues until September 2017.

Marianne Elliott was an Associate Director of the National Theatre for 10 years, and her latest play for the company was a new production of Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* which opened in April 2017. Her other work includes *War Horse* (co-directed with Tom Morris), *The Light Princess*, *Port*, *Season's Greetings*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Harper Regan*, *Saint Joan* (Olivier Award for Best Revival, South Bank Show Award for Theatre), and *Pillars of the Community* (Evening Standard Award for Best Director). Marianne was consultant director on *The Elephant* for the National Theatre and directed *Sweet Bird of Youth* for the Old Vic with Kim Cattrall. Marianne recently formed a new company with producer Chris Harper – Elliott Harper Productions.

Mark Haddon is an author, illustrator and screenwriter who has written fifteen books for children and won two BAFTAs. His bestselling novel, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, was published simultaneously by Jonathan Cape and David Fickling in 2003. It won seventeen literary prizes, including the Whitbread Award. His poetry collection, *The Talking Horse and the Sad Girl and the Village Under the Sea*, was published by Picador in 2005, and his last novel, *The Red House*, was published by Jonathan Cape in 2012. His latest book is *The Pier Falls*, a collection of stories.

Simon Stephens' plays for the National Theatre include a new translation of *The Threepenny Opera*, *Port* (originally produced at the Royal Exchange and directed by Marianne Elliott) at the National Theatre's Lyttelton Theatre, *Harper Regan* (which was produced at Canadian Stage) and *On the Shore of the Wide World* (co-production with Royal Exchange, Manchester; Olivier Award for Best New Play). His many other plays include *Carmen Disruption*, *Heisenberg*, *Birdland* (which had its Australian premiere at MTC in 2015), *Blindsided*, *Three Kingdoms*, *Wastwater*, *Punk Rock*, *Seawall*, *Pornography*, *Country Music*, *Christmas* and *Heron*s, *A Thousand Stars Explode in the Sky* (co-written with Robert Holman and David Eldridge), and an adaptation of Jon Fosse's *I Am the Wind* and *Motortown*. His version of *A Doll's House* for the Young Vic transferred to the West End and then New York in 2014. Simon is an Associate at the Lyric, Hammersmith and the Royal Court Theatre. Simon's book – *Simon Stephens, A working Diary* – was published in 2016.

Cast Joshua Jenkins (Christopher Boone), Julie Hale (Siobhan), Emma Beattie (Judy), David Michaels (Ed), Debra Michaels (Mrs Alexander), Amanda Posener (Mrs Shears), Oliver Boot (Roger Shears), Crystal Condie (Punk Girl), Emma-Jane Goodwin (Ensemble), Bruce McGregor (Reverend Peters), Sam Newton (Alternate Christopher), Joe Rising (Ensemble), Jâms Thomas (Ensemble), Matt Wilman (Mr Thompson) and Danielle Young (Ensemble)

Director Marianne Elliott
Designer Bunny Christie
Lighting Designer Paule Constable
Video Designer Finn Ross
Movement Directors Scott Graham and Steven Hoggett for Frantic Assembly
Music Adrian Sutton
Sound Designer Ian Dickinson for Autograph
Associate Director Elle While
Resident Director Kim Pearce
Casting Jill Green CDG

Season Dates
 11 January — 18 February

Opening Night
 Saturday 13 January

Venue
 Arts Centre Melbourne, Playhouse

Subscriptions
 On sale from Monday 28 August, 9pm

Single Tickets
 On sale from 13 November 2017

mtc.com.au
artscentremelbourne.com.au

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28 August 2017

THE CHILDREN

by Lucy Kirkwood



Three of Australia's finest actors, **Pamela Rabe** (*Wentworth*), **Sarah Peirse** (*Switzerland*) and **William Zappa** (*Rock 'n' Roll*), star in Melbourne Theatre Company and Sydney Theatre Company's Australian premiere co-production of ***The Children*** – an incisive drama about the responsibility each generation faces in leaving a better world for those that follow.

Opening on **Thursday 8 February** at Southbank Theatre, The Sumner and directed by MTC Associate Director **Sarah Goodes**, ***The Children*** is a new play by one of contemporary theatre's most compelling voices, **Lucy Kirkwood**.

Sarah Goodes said, 'Lucy Kirkwood is one of the most exciting playwrights working today. Her play presents a fragile normality that rumbles with big ideas and questions about generational responsibility and how we choose to live our lives. Pamela and Sarah last performed together on the MTC stage 27 years ago. Don't miss the chance to see these two formidable legends in this razor sharp drama.'

In an isolated cottage on the English coast, two retired nuclear physicists are living a quiet existence. Life is tough, electricity is rationed, and they keep a Geiger counter on hand for good reason. But they have worked all their lives for their retirement and now they are determined to enjoy it. Until one day, an old friend and colleague arrives unexpectedly, bringing memories of the past and a frightening challenge for the future.

Lucy Kirkwood is a British playwright whose first play *It Felt Empty When the Heart Went at First But it is Alright Now* earned her a nomination for Best Newcomer at the Evening Standard Awards. Her critically acclaimed play *Chimerica* premiered at Almeida Theatre in 2013 and subsequently transferred to the West End, winning Best New Play at the 2014 Olivier and Evening Standard Awards, as well as the Critics Circle Award and the Susan Smith Blackburn Award. In 2017 *Chimerica* had its Australian premiere at Sydney Theatre Company to critical acclaim. *The Children* premiered in November 2016 at the Royal Court, London, while her most recent play *Mosquitoes*, opens at the National Theatre in September 2017.

MTC Associate Director **Sarah Goodes'** reputation as a leading director of new Australian and international work has been built on widespread praise and multiple award nominations. For MTC her recent work includes *Three Little Words*, *John* and *Switzerland* (following its acclaimed season in Sydney). Formerly Resident Director at Sydney Theatre Company, Sarah directed *The Hanging*, *Disgraced*, *Orlando*, *Battle of Waterloo*, *The Effect*, *Vere (Faith)*, *The Splinter* and *Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness*. Her other directing credits include *Elling*, *Black Milk*, *The Sweetest Thing*, and *The Small Things* (B Sharp Belvoir); *The Colour of Panic* (Sydney Opera House); *Vertigo and the Virginia*, *The Schelling Point*, *Hilt*, and *What Happened Was* (Old Fitzroy Theatre); and *The Unscrupulous Murderer Hasse Karlson Reveals the Gruesome Truth about the Woman Who Froze to Death on a Railway Bridge* (Darlinghurst Theatre Company). In 2015 she was the recipient of the Gloria Payten Travel Scholarship.

'A brilliant, provocative piece of drama.'
Financial Times

'Lucy Kirkwood's new play is a richly suggestive and beautifully written piece of work.'
The Independent

Cast Sarah Peirse, Pamela Rabe, William Zappa

Director Sarah Goodes
Set & Costume Designer Elizabeth Gadsby
Lighting Designer Paul Jackson
Composer & Sound Designer Steve Francis
Voice & Dialect Coach Geraldine Cook-Dafner

Season Dates
3 February — 10 March

Opening Night
Thursday 8 February

Venue
Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Subscriptions
On sale from Monday 28 August, 9pm

Single Tickets
On sale from 1 December 2017

mtc.com.au
03 8688 0800

#mtcTheChildren
mtc.com.au/TheChildren

A co-production with Sydney Theatre Company

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28 August 2017

ABIGAIL'S PARTY

by Mike Leigh

Director **Stephen Nicolazzo** (*Dangerous Liaisons*, *Merciless Gods*) brings 70s British suburbia to Southbank Theatre with a lavish revival of **Mike Leigh's** cult-classic, ***Abigail's Party***.

Starring **Eryn Jean Norvill** (*All My Sons*) as Beverly and **Daniel Frederiksen** (*Matilda*) as her husband Laurence alongside **Katherine Tonkin** (*Three Little Words*) and **Benjamin Rigby** (*Alien: The Covenant*), this iconic and riotously funny satire opens on **Thursday 22 March**.

Stephen Nicolazzo said, '*Abigail's Party* is a kitsch, grotesque and heart-breaking satire that dissects class and sexuality with a razor sharp blade; it is both a domestic nightmare and a divine farce. Mike Leigh's ability to bring humanity and humour to the darkest of situations and create characters that are bold, flawed, and hysterically funny is key to the success of a play like *Abigail's Party*. It is an audacious classic and I am thrilled to bring it to Melbourne Theatre Company for the very first time. If you love Donna Summer, bad hors d'ouvers, palazzo pants and drunken arguments, *Abigail's Party* will satiate with its transgressive portrayal of the pre-Thatcher era.'

Forty years on from its original staging, ***Abigail's Party*** remains a wonderfully sharp portrait of middle class aspirations, tension and pretensions. And in this age of bold aspiration and excessive consumption, it gains new relevance. Over cheese and pineapple sticks, Demis Roussos records and copious amounts of alcohol, we witness one disastrous evening of social awkwardness, outrageous flirting, cringeworthy one-upmanship and hilarious put-downs at the suburban party from hell.

Mike Leigh is one of the world's most influential dramatists and filmmakers. He has written and directed over 20 stage plays including *Babies Grow Old*, *Abigail's Party*, *Ecstasy*, *Goose-Pimples*, *Smelling A Rat*, *Greek Tragedy*, *It's A Great Big Shame!*, *Two Thousand Years* and *Grief*. Most recently he directed the highly praised biographical film of British artist J.M. Turner, *Mr. Turner*. His first feature film was *Bleak Moments*, followed by full-length television films *Hard Labour*, *Nuts In May*, *The Kiss of Death*, *Who's Who*, *Grown-Ups*, *Home Sweet Home*, *Meantime* and *Four Days In July*. His other feature films are *High Hopes*, *Life Is Sweet*, *Naked*, *Secrets & Lies*, *Career Girls*, *Topsy-Turvy*, *All Or Nothing*, *Vera Drake*, *Happy-Go-Lucky* and *Another Year*.

Stephen Nicolazzo is a Melbourne based theatre director and the Artistic Director of Little Ones Theatre. His directing credits include *Merciless Gods* (Little Ones/Darebin Arts/Griffin Theatre Company), *The Moors* (Red Stitch), *Playing to Win* (Arts Centre Melbourne), *The Happy Prince* (Little Ones/La Mama), *Dracula* (Little Ones/Theatre Works), *Meme Girls* (Malthouse Theatre), *Dangerous Liaisons* (Little Ones/MTC NEON, Darwin Festival/Brisbane Powerhouse/Theatre Works), *The House of Yes* (Little Ones/Malthouse Theatre Helium), *Psycho Beach Party* (Little Ones/Theatre Works/Midsumma Festival/Brisbane Festival), and *sex.violence.blood.gore* (MKA). Stephen has been nominated for two Green Room Awards for Best Direction (*Dracula*, 2015 and *Psycho Beach Party*, 2013).

'A night of continuous guilty pleasure.'
The Telegraph

'Brilliant, awful, vintage Leigh – a party to gatecrash.'
The Guardian

Cast includes Daniel Frederiksen, Eryn Jean Norvill, Benjamin Rigby, Katherine Tonkin

Director Stephen Nicolazzo
Set Designer Anna Cordingley
Costume Designer Eugyeene Teh
Lighting Designer Katie Sfetkidis
Composer & Sound Designer Daniel Nixon
Voice & Dialect Coach Geraldine Cook-Dafner

Season Dates
17 March — 21 April

Opening Night
Thursday 22 March

Venue
Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Subscriptions
On sale from Monday 28 August, 9pm

Single Tickets
On sale from 1 December 2017

mtc.com.au
03 8688 0800

#mtcAbigailsParty
mtc.com.au/AbigailsParty

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28 August 2017



EDUCATION SEASON
HUNGRY GHOSTS
 by Jean Tong

Hungry Ghosts is a stunning new work from writer **Jean Tong** that combines dark humour and vivid imagery to explore issues of cultural and sexual identity, politics, corruption and the often-confusing world we must navigate every day.

Following its development as part of MTC's Cybec Electric play reading series in 2017, *Hungry Ghosts* will have its world premiere on **Saturday 5 May** at Southbank Theatre, The Lawler.

This bold new work will be directed by **Petra Kalive** (*Melbourne Talam*), starring **Emina Ashman** (*Roberto Zucco*) and **Jing-Xuan Chan** (*The Family Law*).

Petra Kalive said, '*Hungry Ghosts* is a new and ambitious Australian play about finding your place in the world, and what enables or disables your ability to speak. It gives voice to those who understand what it is to 'not quite fit' somewhere, to be 'ghosts', neither belonging to their country of origin nor their new home. As part of MTC's Education program, I believe students will readily identify with these themes and I am excited to bring this riveting new work to young adult audiences.'

The MH370 disaster. Malaysia's billion-dollar 1MDB scandal. These two events had international ramifications, but for our unnamed protagonist they were earth shattering. When you're a young, queer Chinese-Malaysian Australian, how do you work out where you belong in the world? Criss-crossing between storylines of the fate of MH370, corruption in Malaysia and the exploration of identity, *Hungry Ghosts* offers an unconventional take on contemporary life.

Hungry Ghosts is MTC's 2018 Education production, forming part of the Company's award-winning Education Program that reaches thousands of students across Victoria every year. Following its world premiere season in Melbourne, *Hungry Ghosts* will tour to regional Victorian arts centres as part of MTC's annual regional tour.

Jean Tong is a Melbourne-based writer and director creating politically irreverent works about the untidiness of cultural identification, structural inequality, and otherness. Her previous work includes *macdeath: a coda*, *TERRORISM*, and *Romeo is Not the Only Fruit*. She has also presented at the Emerging Writers' Festival and been published in *Peril Magazine*. She is currently completing a Master of Writing for Performance at the Victorian College of the Arts.

Petra Kalive is currently Artistic Director of Union House Theatre at the University of Melbourne Student Union. Previously for MTC Education, Petra directed *Melbourne Talam* and *Beached*, as well as *In the Kingdom of Cha* for Cybec Electric and was Assistant Director on *Constellations*. Petra has also directed plays for fortyfivedownstairs (*Taxithi*), La Mama, Arena Theatre Company, Complete Works, St Martins Youth Arts Centre and Monash and Latrobe University's Performing Arts Program, and was Assistant Director on STC's 2014 production of *Macbeth*. She was Co-Artistic Director of Melbourne Playback Theatre Company from 2011-2014, Dramaturg at Red Stitch from 2009-2012 and was Assistant Dramaturg at Malthouse Theatre in 2010. Petra also works professionally as an actor, dramaturg and facilitator.

'Emina Ashman is magnetic.'
 The Age (*Roberto Zucco*)

Cast includes Emina Ashman,
 Jing-Xuan Chan

Director Petra Kalive

Melbourne Season Dates
 3 — 19 May

Opening Night
 Saturday 5 May

Venue
 Southbank Theatre, The Lawler

Regional Tour
 21 May — 8 June

Subscriber Pre-Sale
 On sale from 23 February

Single Tickets
 On sale from 5 March

School Tickets
 On sale in November 2017

03 8688 0800
mtc.com.au

#mtcHungryGhosts
mtc.com.au/HungryGhosts

Developed through MTC's Cybec Electric play reading series as part of the 2017 AsiaTOPA Festival

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28 August 2017

WILD

by Mike Bartlett

Olivier Award-winning playwright **Mike Bartlett's** darkly comic twist on the Edward Snowden story, **Wild**, makes its Australian premiere on **Thursday 10 May** at Southbank Theatre, The Sumner, starring **Anna Lise Phillips** (*Devil's Playground*, *Crownies*, *Animal Kingdom*) and directed by MTC Associate Director **Dean Bryant**.

In 2014 MTC presented the Australian premiere of Mike Bartlett's intimate and provocative play *Cock*, exploring modern questions of relationships and love. In **Wild**, Bartlett once again turns his attention to contemporary issues, this time in a riveting thriller where nothing is as it seems.

Dean Bryant said, 'As fast and furious as a rollercoaster ride, *Wild* literally upends how we see the world and is a must for people who like their politics with a side of black comedy. I love a piece that twists and turns and Bartlett steers this riff on real-world events towards a target you'll never see coming.'

Taking aim at some of the biggest questions of our times, **Wild** wowed audiences when it premiered in London in 2016 with its dazzling special effects and fascinating examination of a world with its cover blown.

Ordinary Joe one day – America's Most Wanted the next. That's what happens when you leak top secret Government surveillance. Having blown the world's biggest whistle, Andrew is on the run, holed up in a Russian hotel room; a political pawn with a target on his back. If you betray your country for the right reasons, are you a hero or a traitor? One thing is certain, you will never know who you can trust.

Mike Bartlett is an award-winning British playwright whose plays include *Cock* (Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre); *King Charles III* (Olivier Award for Best New Play); *LOVE, LOVE, LOVE* (UK Theatre Award for Best New Play) and *Bull* (Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre). His writing for television includes *Doctor Foster* (National Television Award for Best New Drama) and *The Town* (BAFTA for Best Breakthrough Talent – TV Craft).

MTC Associate Director **Dean Bryant** is one of Australia's most accomplished and versatile directors. For MTC he has directed *Born Yesterday*, *Skylight*, *I'll Eat You Last* and *Next to Normal*; and later this year he will direct the world premiere of Eddie Perfect's new play *Vivid White*. Dean also worked on *Macbeth*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (and STC season), *Hitchcock Blonde* and *Urinetown* (and STC season) for the Company. His other directing credits include *Sweet Charity* (Helpmann Award, Best Director of a Musical) and *Little Shop of Horrors* for Hayes Theatre Company (Sydney Theatre Award for Best Direction of a Musical), *Anything Goes* and *Two Weddings, One Bride* (Opera Australia/GFO), *Once We Lived Here* (London season), *DreamSong* (Theatre Works), *Straight* (Red Stitch), *The Last Five Years*, *Prodigal*, *Virgins: A Musical Threesome* and five musicals for The Production Company. With composer Mathew Frank, he wrote Green Room award-winning musicals *Prodigal* and *Once We Lived Here*, as well as *Britney Spears: The Cabaret*, *Virgins: A Musical Threesome*, *The Silver Donkey* and an Amy Winehouse musical for Channel 10's *Mr & Mrs Murder*. Dean created verbatim piece *Gaybies* (Midsumma Festival, Darlinghurst Theatre Company). Dean is Worldwide Associate Director of *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert – The Musical* and is a graduate of WAAPA.

'Bold and mind-blowing.'
The Telegraph

'Bartlett's whistle-blower thriller turns the world upside down.'
The Guardian

Cast includes Anna Lise Phillips

Director Dean Bryant
Set Designer Andrew Bailey
Costume Designer Owen Phillips
Lighting Designer Ross Graham
Voice & Dialect Coach
Geraldine Cook-Dafner

Season Dates
5 May — 9 June

Opening Night
Thursday 10 May

Venue
Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Subscriptions
On sale from Monday 28 August, 9pm

Single Tickets
On sale from 2 March

mtc.com.au
03 8688 0800

#mtcWild
mtc.com.au/Wild

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28 August 2017

THE HOUSE OF BERNARDA ALBA

by Patricia Cornelius, after Federico García Lorca

The House of Bernarda Alba sees celebrated playwright **Patricia Cornelius** take Spanish dramatist Federico García Lorca's classic tragedy out of the villages of Spain and into the heat of rural Western Australia in a raw and exhilarating adaptation directed by the much lauded **Leticia Cáceres** (*The Drover's Wife*).

Starring **Peta Brady** (*SHIT*), **Julie Forsyth** (*Endgame*), **Bessie Holland** (*Blaque Showgirls*) and **Melita Jurisic** (*John*), this MTC commission opens on **Thursday 31 May** at Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio.

Leticia Cáceres said, '*The House of Bernarda Alba* is a project that Patricia and I have been cultivating for a long time. It is the perfect vehicle to explore the politics of gender and the female body. We've dreamed up a non-conventional *Alba*, one that sizzles under the harsh Australian sun.'

With their mining-mogul father dead, the Alba household is in mourning. All four daughters have been called home to pay their respects by their mother, who is truly a force of nature. The future seems wildly uncertain for all but the eldest sister, who has inherited a fortune and is engaged to the local heartthrob. But as tensions rise and tempers flare, will any of them have the power to alter their own destinies?

Patricia Cornelius is one of Australia's most prolific playwrights. She has written over 25 plays including *SHIT* which premiered in 2015 as part of MTC NEON and has since had multiple return seasons; *Savages*; and *Who's Afraid of the Working Class?*, co-written with Andrew Bovell, Christos Tsiolkas, Melissa Reeves and Irine Vela. Her prizes for stage work include Victorian and NSW Premiers' Literary Awards, the Patrick White Playwright's Award, Green Room Awards, the Richard Wherrett Prize, the Wal Cherry Award and nine AWGIES. She won the prestigious Australian Writers Foundation Playwriting Award in 2015 as well as the Patrick White Fellowship in 2012, and a Fellowship from the Australia Council's Theatre Board. Patricia has won the AWGIE Major Award three times and in 2017 was announced as one of MTC's inaugural NEXT STAGE commissioned writers.

Leticia Cáceres is one of Australia's leading theatre directors. Associate Director at MTC from 2013 to 2015, Leticia directed *The Distance*, *Death and the Maiden*, *Birdland*, *The Effect*, *Cock*, and *Constellations* for the Company, as well as MTC Education shows *Yellow Moon*, *Helicopter* and *Random*. She received Helpmann and Sydney Theatre Awards for Best Direction of a Play for *The Drover's Wife* (Belvoir), which also won Best Production at both ceremonies in 2017. For Belvoir, she also directed *Mortido* (co-produced with State Theatre Company of South Australia), *Miss Julie* and *The Dark Room*, nominated for seven Sydney Theatre Awards. Leticia is the co-founder of nationally acclaimed RealTV with multi-award winning playwright, Angela Betzien. For RealTV she has directed *Tall Man*, *War Crimes*, *Hoods* and *Children of the Black Skirt*. RealTV are recipients of Brilliant Careers funding through Screen Australia to adapt their stage content for screen, in consultation with Matchbox Pictures and Madman Productions. In 2017 Leticia will direct two short films: *Wild* (completed) and *Father's Day*. Leticia is the 2017 recipient of a Keith and Elizabeth Murdoch Travel Scholarship.

'Cornelius is one of Australia's most awarded and celebrated playwrights.'
Daily Review

Cast includes Peta Brady, Julie Forsyth, Bessie Holland, Melita Jurisic

Director Leticia Cáceres
Set & Costume Designer Marg Horwell
Lighting Designer Rachel Burke
Composer Irine Vela

Season Dates
25 May — 7 July

Opening Night
Thursday 31 May

Venue
Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio

Subscriptions
On sale from Monday 28 August, 9pm

Single Tickets
On sale from 2 March

mtc.com.au
03 8688 0800

#mtcAlba
mtc.com.au/Alba

The House of Bernarda Alba is an MTC Commission

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28 August 2017

GLORIA

by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins



Branden Jacobs-Jenkins's Pulitzer Prize finalist *Gloria* is a blistering satire of office politics and our exploitative, media-saturated age that has shocked and surprised audiences around the US.

Making its Australian premiere under the direction of **Lee Lewis** (*The Bleeding Tree*), *Gloria* opens on **Thursday 21 June** at Southbank Theatre, The Sumner, starring stage and screen favourite **Lisa McCune** (*Dead Man's Cellphone*) in the title role alongside newcomer **Callan Colley**, **Aileen Huynh** (*Cleverman*) and **Sophie Ross** (*What Rhymes with Cars and Girls*).

Lee Lewis said, 'Branden Jacobs-Jenkins is one of the smartest playwrights in America today. His understanding of the deep awfulness in American society is heartbreaking because it is tempered with a genuine hopefulness for humanity. His writing is brave, funny, and literate; his big philosophies are embedded so deeply that you don't hear a playwright's voice, you hear his characters as alive flawed people. You can sense that he believes in the power of theatre to change the world for the better, and his skill is such that he makes us believe too.'

Editorial assistant Dean stumbles into work, hungover from a party at the home of the 'office freak' Gloria. As his ambitious group of 20-something co-workers squabble, complain and generally avoid work, it's just another day at the office of a fancy Manhattan magazine. Until suddenly it's not.

Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' Gloria was a finalist for the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, adding to his long list of honours including the MacArthur Fellowship, Benjamin Danks Award from the American Academy of Arts, and the Steinberg Playwriting Award. His other plays include *Appropriate* and *An Octoroon* (both Obie Award-winners for Best New American Play). He is a graduate of Princeton University, New York University and The Julliard School. He worked in the fiction department at *The New Yorker* magazine for almost three years.

Lee Lewis is the Artistic Director of Griffin Theatre Company and returns to MTC after directing *Hay Fever* in 2017 and the world premiere of *Rupert* in 2014. Her recent productions for Griffin have included *Rice* (with Queensland Theatre), *The Bleeding Tree*, *The Literati*, *8 Gigabytes of Hardcore Pornography*, *Silent Disco*, *Emerald City*, *The Bull the Moon and the Coronet of Stars*, *A Hoax*, *The Call*, and *The Nightwatchman*. Other work includes *Masquerade* for Griffin and the State Theatre Company of South Australia which played in Sydney, Adelaide and Melbourne; the national tour of *Highway of Lost Hearts* for Darwin Festival; and *The Serpent's Table* for the 2014 Sydney Festival. Lee has also directed for Bell Shakespeare (*Twelfth Night* and *The School for Wives*), Sydney Theatre Company (*Honour*, *ZEBRA!* and *Love Lies Bleeding*) and Belvoir (*This Heaven, That Face*). She holds an MFA from Columbia University and an MFA from NIDA. Currency House published her book *Cross-Racial Casting: Changing the Face of Australian Theatre* as part of their Platform Paper series.

'Whip-smart satire ... sharp-toothed comic drama.'

New York Times

'The biting funny and fierce Gloria is one of the year's best shows.'

New York Post

Cast includes Callan Colley, Aileen Huynh, Lisa McCune, Sophie Ross

Director Lee Lewis
Set Designer Christina Smith
Lighting Designer Paul Jackson
Composer & Sound Designer Russell Goldsmith

Season Dates
 16 June — 21 July

Opening Night
 Thursday 21 June

Venue
 Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Subscriptions
 On sale from Monday 28 August, 9pm

Single Tickets
 On sale from 2 March

mtc.com.au
03 8688 0800

#mtcGloria
mtc.com.au/Gloria

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28 August 2017

Oscar Wilde's AN IDEAL HUSBAND



Gina Riley (*Kath & Kim*) and **William McInnes** (*The Time of our Lives*) lead an all-star cast including **Simon Gleeson** (*Les Misérables*), **Brent Hill** (*Little Shop of Horrors*), **Michelle Lim Davidson** (*Utopia*), **Zindzi Okenyo** (*Disgraced*) and **Christie Whelan Browne** (*Born Yesterday*) in **Oscar Wilde's** effervescent society drama, **An Ideal Husband**.

Directed by MTC Associate Director **Dean Bryant**, Melbourne Theatre Company's sparkling winter offering opens on **Friday 20 July** at Arts Centre Melbourne, Playhouse.

Dean Bryant said, 'I'm not sure if anyone has sculpted the English language into more hilarious and unexpected shapes than Oscar Wilde. In *An Ideal Husband* he throws a whole lot of drama into the mix, showing a society not too far removed from ours, where a carefully built reputation can be wrecked in seconds by one dubious decision. I'm thrilled to bring his world to life with this superlative cast – a team who can walk that Wildean tightrope of gravitas and campery.'

Successful politician Sir Robert Chiltern has it all – money, power and the love of his adoring wife. But when the mysterious Mrs Cheveley threatens to expose a dark secret from his past, will his reputation, career and marriage be ruined?

In this undisputed classic, dukes, dandies and unmarried daughters gather in drawing rooms to sip tea, exchange gossip and flirt. Comically ravishing characters engage in witty repartee, holding a mirror up to late-Victorian society values. However, this story is more than a humorous battle of the sexes. Insider trading, political corruption, hypocrisy and blackmail hold the intrigue in a comedy that, for all its touches of melodrama and farce, offers poignant insights into human frailty.

MTC Associate Director **Dean Bryant** is one of Australia's most accomplished and versatile directors. For MTC he has directed *Born Yesterday*, *Skylight*, *I'll Eat You Last* and *Next to Normal*; and later this year he will direct the world premiere of Eddie Perfect's new play *Vivid White*. Dean also worked on *Macbeth*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (and STC season), *Hitchcock Blonde* and *Urinetown* (and STC season) for the Company. His other directing credits include *Sweet Charity* (Helpmann Award, Best Director of a Musical) and *Little Shop of Horrors* for Hayes Theatre Company (Sydney Theatre Award for Best Direction of a Musical), *Anything Goes* and *Two Weddings, One Bride* (Opera Australia/GFO), *Once We Lived Here* (London season), *DreamSong* (Theatre Works), *Straight* (Red Stitch), *The Last Five Years*, *Prodigal*, *Virgins: A Musical Threesome* and five musicals for The Production Company. With composer Mathew Frank, he wrote Green Room award-winning musicals *Prodigal* and *Once We Lived Here*, as well as *Britney Spears: The Cabaret*, *Virgins: A Musical Threesome*, *The Silver Donkey* and an Amy Winehouse musical for Channel 10's *Mr & Mrs Murder*. Dean created verbatim piece *Gaybies* (Midsumma Festival, Darlinghurst Theatre Company). Dean is Worldwide Associate Director of *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert – The Musical* and is a graduate of WAAPA.

'The most effervescently serious comedy Wilde ever wrote, as well as one of the funniest.'
New York Times

'Runs like an intricately plotted noir thriller with a fine coating of wit.'
The Daily Express

Cast includes Simon Gleeson, Brent Hill, Michelle Lim Davidson, William McInnes, Zindzi Okenyo, Gina Riley, Christie Whelan Browne

Director Dean Bryant
Set & Costume Designer Dale Ferguson
Lighting Designer Matt Scott
Composer & Sound Designer Mathew Frank
Voice & Dialect Coach Leith McPherson

Season Dates
16 July — 18 August

Opening Night
Friday 20 July

Venue
Arts Centre Melbourne, Playhouse

Subscriptions
On sale from Monday 28 August, 9pm

Single Tickets
On sale from 2 March

mtc.com.au
03 8688 0800

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mtc.com.au/IdealHusband

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28 August 2017

A DOLL'S HOUSE, PART 2

by Lucas Hnath



Marta Dusseldorp (*Janet King*) stars as Nora opposite **Greg Stone** (*The Weir*) as her husband Torvald in the audaciously titled ***A Doll's House, Part 2***, opening on **Thursday 16 August** at Southbank Theatre, The Sumner.

A daring creation by US playwright **Lucas Hnath**, the Tony Award nominated drama about family, responsibility and freedom of choice continues Ibsen's story, 15 years later, with an intriguing and decidedly modern perspective.

A Doll's House, Part 2 was the smash-hit of recent Broadway seasons and now receives its Australian premiere in Melbourne directed by MTC Associate Director **Sarah Goodes**.

Sarah Goodes said, '*A Doll's House, Part 2* was recently nominated for 8 Tony Awards for good reason. Peppered with modern language, the play is a fresh, funny and illuminating piece of theatre examining a famous story and characters through an entirely new perspective that speaks directly to our times. The opportunity to see one of our great actors, Marta Dusseldorp, in the lead role is not to be missed.'

In 1879 Nora Helmer handed her husband her keys and wedding ring and left home, slamming the door behind her. But what ever happened to this famous literary figure from Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*? And what of the family she left behind? 15 years later, Nora is now a successful feminist writer returning to get the divorce her husband Torvald never filed for. All she needs is the paperwork.

Lucas Hnath's plays include *The Christians*, *Red Speedo*, *A Public Reading of an Unproduced Screenplay about the Death of Walt Disney*, *Nightnight*, *Isaac's Eye*, *Death Tax* and *The Courtship of Anna Nicole Smith*. His plays are published by Dramatists Play Service. Lucas has been a resident playwright at New Dramatists since 2011, and is a proud member of the Ensemble Studio Theatre. Lucas is a winner of the 2012 Whitfield Cook Award for *Isaac's Eye* and received a 2013 Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award Citation for *Death Tax*. He has also received commissions from the EST/Sloan Project, Actors Theatre of Louisville, South Coast Repertory, Playwrights Horizons, New York University's Graduate Acting Program, and the Royal Court Theatre. Lucas holds a BFA and an MFA from New York University's Department of Dramatic Writing.

MTC Associate Director **Sarah Goodes'** reputation as a leading director of new Australian and international work has been built on widespread praise and multiple award nominations. For MTC her recent work includes *Three Little Words*, *John* and *Switzerland* (following its acclaimed season in Sydney). Formerly Resident Director at Sydney Theatre Company, Sarah directed *The Hanging*, *Disgraced*, *Orlando*, *Battle of Waterloo*, *The Effect*, *Vere (Faith)*, *The Splinter*, and *Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness*. Her other directing credits include *Elling*, *Black Milk*, *The Sweetest Thing*, and *The Small Things* (B Sharp Belvoir); *The Colour of Panic* (Sydney Opera House); *Vertigo and the Virginia*, *The Schelling Point*, *Hilt*, and *What Happened Was* (Old Fitzroy Theatre); and *The Unscrupulous Murderer Hasse Karlson Reveals the Gruesome Truth about the Woman Who Froze to Death on a Railway Bridge* (Darlinghurst Theatre Company). In 2015 she was the recipient of the Gloria Payten Travel Scholarship.

'Smart, funny and utterly engrossing.'
New York Times

'The best play of the Broadway season.'
Time Out New York

Cast includes Marta Dusseldorp,
Greg Stone

Director Sarah Goodes
Set & Costume Designer
Tracy Grant Lord

Season Dates
11 August — 15 September

Opening Night
Thursday 16 August

Venue
Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Subscriptions
On sale from Monday 28 August, 9pm

Single Tickets
On sale from 2 March

mtc.com.au
03 8688 0800

#mtcDollsHousePt2
mtc.com.au/DollsHousePt2

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28 August 2017

STUDIO SEASON

WORKING WITH CHILDREN

by Nicola Gunn



Written, directed and performed by **Nicola Gunn** (*Piece for Person and Ghetto Blaster*, *Green Screen*), ***Working With Children*** takes on the sometimes hypocritical lives of teachers, artists and regulators in an emotionally evocative and technologically inventive production.

Opening on **Saturday 1 September** at Southbank Theatre, The Lawler, this NEON NEXT Commission sees **Nicola Gunn** use her seductively subversive humour to turn our attention to the moral and ethical complexity of working with children and other social taboos.

Nicola Gunn said, 'I've recently noticed a lot of contemporary theatre makers are working with children to make performances for an adult audience. I wondered why this was and how does it change or amplify the meaning of something and what are our responsibilities in doing so. Or perhaps it's just that we've all run out of ideas and children are simply funnier and smarter than us. I should add that unfortunately there are no children in this show.'

Just imagine a woman who works with children. Now imagine a man who works with children. Imagine the woman who works with children has a secret that she's ashamed of. Imagine the man is going through a messy divorce. Now imagine there are regulations in place to protect the children they're working with from inappropriate things like dark emotions or the vulnerability of reality.

Ahead of its world premiere, ***Working with Children*** will receive artistic support from world-renowned Belgian arts centre CAMPO and artistic associate Pol Heyvaert.

Nicola Gunn is an award-winning writer, director, performer and designer, who combines text, choreography and visual art to create contemporary performance productions. She finds parallels between personal experiences and larger social realities, often using subversive humour to explore the fragility of the human condition. Her extensive body of work includes *Piece for Person and Ghetto Blaster* (Green Room Award for Outstanding Contemporary & Experimental Performance), *Mermermer* (Helpmann Award nomination for Best Visual or Physical Theatre Production); *The Interpreters*, performed at Alliance Française in French, English, Auslan and Boon Wurrung; and *Green Screen*, for MTC NEON 2014. She was artist in residence with Kaldor Public Art Projects under the mentorship of Marina Abramovic in 2015. She is the recipient of an Australia Council for the Arts Creative Australia Fellowship, a Churchill Fellowship and a 3-month Paris Cité Residency.

'Gunn's theatre is tantalising, entertaining and often bewildering in the best possible way.'

Herald Sun

'Funny, smart, heartfelt ... Gunn keeps her audience on a knife's edge between profundity and the ludicrous.'

The Age

Concept, Text, Direction & Performance Nicola Gunn
Artistic Associate Pol Heyvaert
AV Design Nick Roux
Music & Sound Kelly Ryall
Costume & Co-set Realisation Eugyeene Teh
Script Dramaturg Jon Haynes

Season Dates

30 August — 29 September

Opening Night

Saturday 1 September

Venue

Southbank Theatre, The Lawler

Subscriber Pre-Sale

On sale from Monday 28 August, 9pm

Single Tickets

On sale from 2 March

03 8688 0800

mtc.com.au

#mtcWorkingWithChildren

mtc.com.au/WorkingWithChildren

A NEON NEXT commission. Supported by CAMPO



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28 August 2017

THE ARCHITECT

by Aidan Fennessey



Melbourne Theatre Company presents the world premiere of **Aidan Fennessey's** latest play, **The Architect** – a surprising and suspenseful story of two unlikely companions that is humorous, startling and deeply poignant.

Opening on **Tuesday 2 October** at Southbank Theatre, The Sumner, **Peter Houghton** (*The Odd Couple*) directs **Linda Cropper** (*Offspring*) as the feisty but fiercely determined Helen.

Hiring a temporary carer requires some serious vetting. When Helen's partner John heads off on a brief overseas trip she takes in a dubious young drifter and jack-of-all-trades to look after her through her illness. With a winning smile and incorrigible zest for life, he could be just the medicine she needs – if it wasn't for the titanic secret he's hiding. As an unexpected bond forms between them, tables begin to turn and Helen faces choices that are both intimate and monumental.

Peter Houghton said, 'This play is deeply moving and beautifully written. It's also very funny at times and has all the tension and knuckle whitening anxiety of a thriller. Best of all, I get to work with one of my heroes. Linda Cropper is a genuine star of the stage, a powerhouse actor and a brilliant and charming communicator. Aidan's beautiful modern classic is the perfect vehicle for this actor at the height of her powers – I can't wait!'

Aidan Fennessey is an award-winning writer, director and dramaturg. His plays have been produced by MTC, Queensland Theatre, Griffin Theatre, HotHouse, Playbox, Black Swan State Theatre Company and many more. Most recently Aidan directed his play, *The Way Things Work*, for Red Stitch Actors Theatre. His musical play *What Rhymes with Cars and Girls* debuted at MTC in 2015 and will be on tour in late 2017. His other plays include *National Interest*, *The House on the Lake*, *The Way Things Work*, *Chilling and Killing My Annabel Lee* (Wal Cherry Award-winner) and *Brutopia* (Griffin Award-winner). In 2002, his comedy festival collaboration *The Trade* won the prestigious Barry Award at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival. Formerly, Aidan was co-founder of the highly successful Chameleon Theatre, a member of the Artistic Directorate of Hothouse Theatre, Artistic Director of the Store Room Theatre Workshop and Associate Director at Melbourne Theatre Company.

Peter Houghton is an award-winning Australian actor, writer and director. His directing work includes *The Odd Couple*, *True Minds*, *The Boy at the Edge of Everything*, *The Recruit*, *Hinterland* and *Art and Soul* for MTC; *Noises Off* for Marriner Theatres; *Footprints on Water* for Griffin Theatre; *The China Incident* for Malthouse; and *Day One*, *a Hotel*, *Evening* for Black Swan State Theatre Company. He has won multiple Green Room Awards for directing, acting and writing, and produced a critically acclaimed trilogy of solo shows; *The Pitch*, *The China Incident* and *The Colours*, all of which he wrote.

'Fennessey's writing is beautiful.'
Herald Sun
(*What Rhymes with Cars and Girls*)

Cast includes Linda Cropper

Director Peter Houghton
Set & Costume Designer Christina Smith
Lighting Designer Matt Scott
Composer & Sound Designer J. David Franzke

Season Dates
27 September — 31 October

Opening Night
Tuesday 2 October

Venue
Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Subscriptions
On sale from Monday 28 August, 9pm

Single Tickets
On sale from 2 March

03 8688 0800
mtc.com.au

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mtc.com.au/TheArchitect

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Joan & Peter Clemenger Trust

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28 August 2017



ASTROMAN

by Albert Belz

Elaine Crombie (*Black Comedy*), **Kamil Ellis** (*Macbeth*), **Tony Nikolakopoulos** (*Wentworth*) and **Calen Tassone** (*Red Dog: True Blue*) star in the world premiere of **Astroman**, **Albert Belz's** uplifting and humorous love letter to the 80s.

Against a backdrop of BMX bikes, Michael Jackson, Gary Ablett, Donkey Kong and Friday night Kentucky Fried Chicken, **Astroman** explores the highs and lows of growing up, the exhilaration of learning and what it means to be truly courageous.

MTC Associate Director **Sarah Goodes** directs this irresistibly charming play, opening on **Friday 2 November** at Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio, with **Tony Briggs** (author of *The Sapphires*) as Associate Director.

Sarah Goodes said, 'Astroman was the hit of the Australian Playwriting Festival in 2015 and I'm thrilled to be a part of its highly anticipated world premiere. It is a coming of age story that offers a nostalgic, hilarious and heartbreaking look at the 80s in Geelong. It is also a beautiful piece of writing that offers wonderful roles for young indigenous actors and I am delighted to be working with Kamil Ellis and Calen Tassone together with Tony Briggs as Associate Director.'

For a troubled but brilliant teenager in 1980s Geelong, the world is a small place. Thirteen-year-old Jiembra Djalu and his brother Sonny are the new kids in town, and while Jiembra may be a video game whizz and maths genius, he's always getting into strife. A friendship with the owner of the local arcade and a chance at gaming glory could see him change his life forever, but could also mean leaving behind what means most – his brother and adoring mother.

Albert Belz is a director, screenwriter, award-winning playwright and lecturer from New Zealand, and has written for television, theatre, print and radio for over a decade. His unique voice has crossed datelines and divides, having had his work performed in London, New York, Lille, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide and even Otaki. His other plays include *Yours Truly* and *Raising the Titanics*. Albert also won the prestigious Bruce Mason Playwriting Award in 2006. Having returned to New Zealand from Melbourne in 2015, he currently resides in Auckland where he lectures in Writing for Screen and Stage at the Faculty of Creative Arts, Manukau Institute of Technology. His new comedy series for Maori Television is currently in post-production and set for broadcast in 2018.

MTC Associate Director **Sarah Goodes'** reputation as a leading director of new Australian and international work has been built on widespread praise and multiple award nominations. For MTC her recent work includes *Three Little Words*, *John* and *Switzerland* (following its acclaimed season in Sydney). Formerly Resident Director at Sydney Theatre Company, Sarah directed *The Hanging*, *Disgraced*, *Orlando*, *Battle of Waterloo*, *The Effect*, *Vere (Faith)*, *The Splinter*, and *Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness*. Her other directing credits include *Elling*, *Black Milk*, *The Sweetest Thing*, and *The Small Things* (B Sharp Belvoir); *The Colour of Panic* (Sydney Opera House); *Vertigo and the Virginia*, *The Schelling Point*, *Hilt*, and *What Happened Was* (Old Fitzroy Theatre); and *The Unscrupulous Murderer Hasse Karlson Reveals the Gruesome Truth about the Woman Who Froze to Death on a Railway Bridge* (Darlinghurst Theatre Company). In 2015 she was the recipient of the Gloria Payten Travel Scholarship.

'An undisputed crowdpleaser. Impossible to resist.'

Realtime Arts

Cast includes Elaine Crombie, Kamil Ellis, Tony Nikolakopoulos, Calen Tassone

Director Sarah Goodes
Set & Costume Designer Jonathon Oxlade
Associate Director Tony Briggs

Season Dates
27 October — 8 December

Opening Night
Friday 2 November

Venue
Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio

Subscriptions
On sale from Monday 28 August, 9pm

Single Tickets
On sale from 2 March

03 8688 0800
mtc.com.au

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mtc.com.au/Astroman

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28 August 2017

TWELFTH NIGHT

by William Shakespeare

Stage and screen luminary **Geoffrey Rush** (*The Importance of Being Earnest*) reunites with director **Simon Phillips** (*Macbeth*) to star in Shakespeare's exquisite comedy of unrequited love and mistaken identity, *Twelfth Night*.

Opening on **Friday 16 November** at Southbank Theatre, The Sumner, **Geoffrey Rush** plays the social-climbing and butt of all jokes, Malvolio.

He will be joined onstage by a cast of comic talents including **Brent Hill** (*Little Shop of Horrors*), **Richard Piper** (*Double Indemnity*), **Christie Whelan Browne** (*Born Yesterday*), and **Frank Woodley** (*Lano & Woodley*).

Following unforgettable productions of *Macbeth*, *Richard III* and *Hamlet*, Simon Phillips again brings the best of the Bard to MTC with this brilliant new production that will close MTC's 2018 Season.

Simon Phillips said, 'Shakespeare's comedies present as many complexities of human existence to us as the tragedies, and in many ways they speak to our own lives more, since one of the rules that makes them comedies is that they aren't about kings or queens. They are by no means packed with shallow laughter, but suffused with melancholy and wisdom as well, and they positively soar with love, both unexpressed and unrequited. And *Twelfth Night* is right up there with the best of them.'

'I can't believe I've never had the opportunity to work on it before. This is a wonderful chance for me to reunite with some of my long-time comic associates, and get to know some others I have long admired, so I can't wait.'

Twins Viola and Sebastian are separated after a shipwreck and forced to fend for themselves in a strange land. Viola (disguised as a boy) falls in love with Duke Orsino, who is in love with the Countess Olivia, who meets Viola and falls in love with her, thinking she is a man. It's all very straightforward.

Internationally renowned director **Simon Phillips** was MTC's Artistic Director from 2000–2011. Over his 30 year history with the Company he has directed an impressive number of productions, with his recent MTC credits including *Macbeth*, *North by Northwest*, *Pennsylvania Avenue*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Hamlet*, *Songs for Nobodies*, *Richard III*, *The Drowsy Chaperone* and *August: Osage Country*. In 2015 Simon directed the award-winning Australian musical *Ladies in Black* for Queensland Theatre which went on to have a highly successful season with MTC in 2016, followed by a commercial tour in 2017. Over his illustrious career Simon has also worked for many other arts organisations nationally and internationally including the State Theatre Company of South Australia, where he was Artistic Director from 1990–1993. On the commercial stage, his productions include The 2016 Australian tour of *The Beast* as well as *Priscilla Queen of the Desert, the Musical*; Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Love Never Dies*, and *Eat Pray Laugh* – Barry Humphries's farewell tour, all of which have had various international seasons. Simon has won seven Green Room Awards and five Helpmann Awards.

'Arguably Shakespeare's most perfect rom-com.'

The Age

'Mistaken identities, cross-dressing, practical jokes, wicked humour, interrupted romance and happy endings.'

Herald Sun

Cast includes Brent Hill, Richard Piper, Geoffrey Rush, Christie Whelan Browne, Frank Woodley

Director Simon Phillips

Set & Costume Designer

Gabriela Tylesova

Lighting Designer Nick Schlieper

Voice & Text Coach Leith McPherson

Season Dates

12 November — 29 December

Opening Night

Friday 16 November

Venue

Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Subscriptions

On sale from Monday 28 August, 9pm

Single Tickets

On sale from 7 June

mtc.com.au

03 8688 0800

#mtcTwelfthNight

mtc.com.au/TwelfthNight

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NEXT STAGE WRITERS' PROGRAM

Launched in June 2017, Melbourne Theatre Company's NEXT STAGE Writers' Program is a \$4.6 million investment in Australian writers co-funded by the visionary donors of MTC's Playwrights Giving Circle and Melbourne Theatre Company.

It is the most rigorous playwright commissioning and development process ever undertaken by the Company, setting a new benchmark for play development in Australia that will enhance the fabric, and legacy, of Australian live storytelling.

Across the five years of the program, NEXT STAGE will provide a total of 50 opportunities for Australian writers, consisting of residencies and commissions.

It will also see an increase in resources dedicated to workshopping and developing plays from drafts through to production to ensure that they have been afforded every level of creative scrutiny and artistic support in making the finest possible work.

The program will ensure a minimum of 35 new play commissions, with flexibility in commissioning fees to allow writers additional time and resources to write; and up to 15 writer-in-residence opportunities for playwrights to embed themselves in the Company for up to three years.

Residencies are offered by application and the writers receive a generous annual stipend, office resources, company support, regular meetings with the Artistic team and integration with all aspects of MTC's operations including programming.

In the first year of the program, there are seven commissioned writers and three writers-in-residence.

The first cohort of commissioned writers is Angus Cerini, Patricia Cornelius, Michael Gow, Benjamin Law, Joanna Murray-Smith, Leah Purcell and Ellen van Neerven.

In August 2017 the inaugural writers-in-residence were appointed with Don Giovanonni, Natesha Somasundaram and Kylie Trounson joining the program.

To support the program, a national group of advisors has been established with whom MTC will consult about writers of promise from a range of creative disciplines. The group represents experts from a broad cross section of performance and literary fields and includes Tony Ayres, David Berthold, Lee Lewis, Rachael Maza, Kate Mulvany, Simon Phillips and Morry Schwartz.

For more information visit mtc.com.au/NEXTSTAGE

This landmark program has been made possible by the visionary donors of MTC's Playwrights Giving Circle who have invested \$2.3 million in NEXT STAGE, matched by \$2.3 million contributed by Melbourne Theatre Company.

Louise Myer and Martyn Myer AO, Maureen Wheeler AO and Tony Wheeler AO, Christine Brown Bequest, Naomi Milgrom AO, Allan Myers AC QC and Maria Myers AC, Tony Burgess and Janine Burgess, Dr Andrew McAliece and Dr Richard Simmie, Larry Kamener and Petra Kamener.



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MTC Education

MTC Education Program

Melbourne Theatre Company's award-winning Education Program enables thousands of young Victorians to access first-class productions and learning opportunities each year. The comprehensive program provides students with unique insight into professional theatre practice, enriching their creative lives and inspiring the next generation of theatre-makers.

MTC Education supports the theatregoing experience for students with complementary pre-show talks, education packs, and a growing body of online educational content. Specialised MTC Education programs include the Betty Amsden Youth Scholarship Course, MTC Ambassadors, Regional Enrichment Program, high school work experience, curriculum-based workshops for students and professional development seminars for teachers.

MTC also produces theatre made especially for students, and in 2018 MTC's Education production is *Hungry Ghosts* by Jean Tong. This new play criss-crosses between storylines of the fate of MH370, corruption in Malaysia and the exploration of identity. *Hungry Ghosts* will make its world premiere at Southbank Theatre, The Lawler in May 2018 before touring regionally.

Full details about MTC's Education Program can be found at mtc.com.au/education

MTC's Education Program is supported by the Education Giving Circle, Ambassador's Giving Circle, the late Betty Amsden AO DSJ, Gailey Lazarus Foundation, Lady Mayoress' Committee and Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation.

Sharing the Light

MTC is passionate about making theatre accessible for all and with our Sharing the Light initiative disadvantaged students throughout Victoria and outer metro communities are enjoying greater opportunity to engage with theatre thanks to the generous support of the Crown Resorts Foundation and Packer Family Foundation.

MTC's subsidised \$5 Student Tickets and \$5 Family Tickets have been welcoming thousands of brand new audience members to the theatre, while the annual Regional Tour is taking our Education production to young people in regional Victoria and Tasmania.

Since Sharing the Light began in 2015, almost 160 schools around Victoria have taken up the \$5 ticket offer, resulting in over 10,000 tickets for students to attend MTC productions. Additionally, MTC has provided travel subsidies for over 2,500 students from outer-metro and regional areas to get to the theatre.

In 2017 the Regional Tour allowed MTC's Education production to tour as a full-scale production to numerous regional venues for the second time, and this will continue in 2018.

Through Sharing the Light, MTC also offers an Indigenous Scholarship Program to help create career pathways for young Indigenous people. This program takes the form of four week-long intensive workshops designed to expose the participants to the many career paths within the field of theatre and live performance production.

Full details about Sharing the Light can be found at mtc.com.au/SharingTheLight

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MTC Initiatives

NEON NEXT

Through NEON NEXT MTC supports the independent theatre sector and its artists with practical opportunities to develop and showcase their work, take part in unique skill-advancement programs and access touring support.

In 2018 MTC will present the world premiere of Nicola Gunn's latest work, *Working with Children*, which was commissioned through NEON NEXT.

For more information visit mtc.com.au/Neon

Cybec Electric

MTC's annual Cybec Electric play reading series celebrates theatre in its essence: great stories, electric writing and brilliant acting all working to ignite the audience's imagination. With scripts in hand, actors present new works-in-progress with the assistance of directors and dramaturgs. Established to create opportunities for playwrights to increase their skills and experience, the stories developed through Cybec Electric reflect the here and the now. The series is a rare opportunity for audiences to be part of the important development stage of new Australian plays.

A number of the plays developed through Cybec Electric have gone on to receive full scale productions at MTC and theatre companies nationwide including *The Waiting Room* by Kylie Trounson, *Melbourne Talam* by Rashma N. Kalsie and *8 Gigabytes of Hardcore Pornography* by Declan Greene. In 2018 MTC will present the world premiere of one of the 2017 Cybec Electric plays, *Hungry Ghosts* by Jean Tong, as part of its Education Program.

For more information visit mtc.com.au/CybecElectric

Cybec Electric is generously supported by Roger Riordan AM and The Cybec Foundation.

Women in Theatre Program

MTC's industry-leading Women in Theatre Program helps create practical pathways for women pursuing careers in theatre. The program encompasses a broad range of disciplines from production to artistic, design and executive management, and has supported 45 women in their career pursuits since its inception in 2014.

As part of the annual program, participants are provided with the opportunity to be mentored by respected theatre practitioners; take part in intensive leadership training; access professional development workshops and coaching across a wide range of business and commercial aspects of the industry; and gain insights to the daily operation of a major performing arts organisation.

More information about the 2018 Women in Theatre Program and details about the application process will be available in late 2017, with the program due to commence in early 2018.

For more information visit mtc.com.au/ArtistAccess

Supported by the Women in Theatre Giving Circle and the Robert Salzer Foundation.

Assistant Directors

MTC's Assistant Directors Program provides opportunities for emerging or mid-career artists to work on an MTC mainstage production. These paid positions aim to enable directors to learn from senior theatre directors about the process of developing shows for large scale companies. During each project, participants shadow the director in rehearsal, attend weekly production meetings, and observe the bump-in of a show in the theatre through to opening night.

For more information visit mtc.com.au/ArtistAccess

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MTC MELBOURNE
THEATRE
COMPANY

Arts Centre Melbourne and Melbourne Theatre Company present

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time – Associated Program

To complement the Australian premiere season of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* and to enrich audiences' experience of this ground-breaking production, Arts Centre Melbourne will host their most extensive Associated Program for a mainstage show to date. Featuring workshops and talks with creatives, insights into the production, immersive experiences and a relaxed performance, the innovative and varied program will enable schools, community groups and the general public to deeply engage with the show, its themes and creators. New artistic work will also be created and showcased in response to the production by emerging creative talent.

The *Curious Incident* Associated Program includes four themes:

Insight into *Curious Incident*

Pulling back the curtain on the performing arts, giving audiences a rare glimpse into the creation of this exceptional international theatre production.

Highlights include:

- Pre-show *Insight* talks
- Post-show *Forums* with cast and creatives
- Drama workshops for young actors and directors
- Full day Sunday *experience* with *Insights*, *Back of House Tour* and lunch

Inspired by *Curious Incident*

Taking to heart the themes of *Curious Incident*, exploring the connections where logic and mathematics meet the world of the arts.

Highlights include:

- *The Curious Coincidence of the Maths in the Day-Time (UK)* shows for secondary students in the Playhouse, exploring maths in an inspiring and interactive way, with insight into the award-winning stage production
- Regional *Maths Inspiration (UK)* tour

Emerging Creative Talent

Unique opportunity for young Australian creatives to work with professional artists and technicians, developing performing arts skills and creating their own responses to the world of *Curious Incident*.

Highlights include:

- *Design Academy* – a four day opportunity for emerging creatives to work with professionals to create an engaging foyer installation inspired by the set, video and sound design of the show
- *Prime Composition* – a two day workshop creating new music inspired by the mathematical patterns highlighted in the production. Compositions will be performed live in the foyer at select performances

Access and Inclusion

Curious Incident progresses Arts Centre Melbourne and Melbourne Theatre Company's commitment and strategy to embrace access and inclusion in the performing arts.

Highlights Include:

- *A Relaxed Performance* where the environment is carefully adapted, friendly and embraces different audience reactions
- Post-relaxed show Q&A with the resident director and actors in the auditorium

The full program of *Associated Program* events will be announced prior to the 13 November Public on-sale.

Associated Program media enquiries:

Clea Woods, Media Manager, Arts Centre Melbourne
clea.woods@artscentremelbourne.com.au / 03 9281 8442

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MTC Leadership

Brett Sheehy AO

Artistic Director



Brett Sheehy AO is one of Australia's most accomplished and acclaimed artistic directors. He is Artistic Director and CEO of Melbourne Theatre Company. Prior to this he was Artistic Director of four Melbourne Festivals, two Adelaide Festivals and four Sydney Festivals.

He was also Artistic Director of the cultural program for the 5th Biennial World Summit on Arts and Culture in 2011. Brett has also been a

mentor for the Australia Council's Emerging Leaders Development Program and a judge for the Sidney Myer Performing Arts Awards since 2012. From 2009–2012 he was selector and mentor for the Harold Mitchell Foundation Fellowships and a member of the Artists' Advisory Panel at Bell Shakespeare Company. He has been Founding Ambassador for Australia Council's We All Play a Part initiative encouraging nationwide community involvement in the arts since 2008. He has also been a member of the Power Panel of the Australian Financial Review Magazine and a member of the Arts Advisory Group of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. He was a member of the Committee for Sydney from 2001–2005.

In the 2012 Queen's Birthday Honours Brett was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for "distinguished service to the performing and visual arts as a director of national festivals, to international artistic exchange, and through mentoring roles."

Virginia Lovett

Executive Director



Virginia Lovett took up the role of MTC's Executive Director in January 2013. Prior to this she was Executive Director of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival where she delivered a funding increase of \$5 million and in 2011 achieved record attendance levels. A highly experienced and well-respected arts executive, she successfully designed a range of strategic initiatives through her roles at Melbourne International Comedy Festival and Sydney Festival.

In addition, Virginia has extensive strategic, marketing and communications experience gained in a range of different organisations including Zoos Victoria, Sydney's Powerhouse Museum, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney Theatre Company and the National Gallery of Victoria. She has also worked as an advisor for state ministers in Victoria and New South Wales.

In 2006 she was awarded a Churchill Fellowship and is a graduate of the Museum Leadership program. She is currently Chair of Arena Theatre Company, on the board of directors for the Committee for Melbourne, a member of the ABC Arts Reference panel, and on the Theatre Panel for Live Performance Australia. She was previously Chair of Force Majeure, on the boards of Craft Victoria and Legs on the Wall, and an Executive Council Member of Live Performance Australia. For the past five years she has been a mentor for the Australia Council Emerging Leaders Course, Teach for Australia and the Council for Museum Directors.

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Melbourne Theatre Company

Melbourne Theatre Company is where stories come alive. For over 60 years the Company has created exceptional theatre, sharing the power of live storytelling with generations of Australians.

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Brett Sheehy AO and Executive Director Virginia Lovett, MTC embodies the creative spirit that Melbourne and Victoria are renowned for, bringing remarkable theatre to the fore to inspire, entertain, challenge and enrich the lives of audiences.

As one of Australia's flagship performing arts companies, MTC produces classic and contemporary Australian and international theatre for today and tomorrow, with excellence, imagination and passion.

The Company has over 20,000 subscribers and stages over 630 performances annually. Through its mainstage season, tours, education productions, public readings and other events, MTC reaches more than 220,000 attendances each year.

In 2018, some of the country's leading actors will grace MTC's stages including Pamela Rabe, Geoffrey Rush, Marta Dusseldorp, Sarah Peirse, Lisa McCune, Gina Riley, Christie Whelan Browne, Frank Woodley, Elaine Crombie, Linda Cropper and Melita Jurisic; along with award-winning directors Leticia Cáceres, Simon Phillips, Lee Lewis, Peter Houghton, Stephen Nicolazzo, Petra Kalive and MTC's Associate Directors Dean Bryant and Sarah Goodes.

These artists will be bringing to life plays by some of theatre's finest writers including Lucy Kirkwood, Patricia Cornelius, Lucas Hnath, Mike Bartlett, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, Oscar Wilde, William Shakespeare, Mike Leigh, Jean Tong and Aidan Fennessy.

As the state theatre company of Victoria, MTC is an important part of the cultural landscape and plays a special role in the lives of thousands of Australians.

MTC runs an award-winning Education Program, connecting thousands of students across the state with life-changing theatre and learning opportunities through programming for young audiences, specialised enrichment programs, education resources and workshops. In addition, the Company's celebrated Sharing the Light initiative is making a significant impact on the lives of young people though heavily subsidised tickets, travel subsidies to get to the

theatre, MTC's Indigenous Scholarship Program and regional touring, all with the aim of reducing geographical and socio-economic barriers that inhibit engagement with the creative industries.

MTC employs over 500 artists and industry professionals annually and is a significant contributor to artist and sector development. The range of opportunities for theatre practitioners to develop their skills and careers includes MTC's industry-leading Women in Theatre Program, Cybec Electric play reading series and Assistant Directors and secondment programs. MTC also collaborates with companies and artists from the independent and small-to-medium sector through NEON NEXT and other initiatives.

In 2017 MTC announced its NEXT STAGE Writers' Program, a \$4.6 million investment in Australian writers co-funded by the donors of MTC's Playwrights Giving Circle and MTC. The landmark initiative will provide a total of 50 opportunities for Australian writers, consisting of residencies and commissions across the five years of the program, and marks a pivotal shift in the playwright development and commissioning landscape.

MTC's home venue, Southbank Theatre, is located in the heart of Melbourne's Southbank Arts Precinct. Each year around half of the mainstage season is performed in the Sumner (560-seats), with smaller-scale works and other activities in the Lawler (162-seats). The balance of the mainstage season is staged at nearby Arts Centre Melbourne's Playhouse (882-seats) and Fairfax Studio (376-seat), with the four theatres enabling MTC to present works of a wide variety and scale.

MTC is a semi-autonomous department of the University of Melbourne. 56% of MTC's revenue comes from the Box Office; 10% from corporate partnerships; 9% from private donations; and 8% (net of government duties) from the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts and the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria.

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MTC Foundation

As the state theatre company of Victoria, MTC has a great responsibility to its audiences and artists to ensure that the Company remains the vibrant cultural beacon that it is today.

MTC has big plans for the future including developing new landmark Australian works for the stage, touring internationally, making theatre as accessible as possible and bringing the best theatre from around the world to Melbourne audiences. The MTC Foundation is committed to making these dreams a reality so that generations of Australians may reap the benefits.

Established to assist Melbourne Theatre Company in attracting major and sustained philanthropic support, the MTC Foundation is charged with appropriately managing and distributing donations across key areas of MTC's business to realise the Company's strategic and artistic goals.

Donations to MTC provide essential and ongoing contributions to the Company's core mainstage operations as well as targeting specific programs.

Many of MTC's initiatives such as the NEXT STAGE Writers' Program, play readings, new writing commissions, subsidised tickets for schools, the Women in Theatre Program, and Education and family initiatives are only possible due to targeted donations to the MTC Foundation. As a state theatre company, these activities are what sets MTC apart from the commercial theatre sector and are central to the fundraising efforts of the Foundation.

All donations to the Company go through the MTC Foundation, which is chaired by philanthropist and businesswoman, Jane Hansen, and governed by Board Members Terry Bracks AM, Fiona Griffiths, Janette Kendall, Dr Sam Margis, Louise Myer, Leigh O'Neill, Hilary Scott and Richard Tegoni along with support from MTC Executive Director Virginia Lovett, Finance Director Liz Chappell and Development Director Jayne Lovelock.

The MTC Foundation is also responsible for building and managing MTC's general endowment fund to help secure a strong, sustainable and artistically vibrant future for the Company. In February 2016, the general endowment fund was seeded with a leadership gift from The Little Foundation of \$1 million – the largest single donation from a private donor in MTC's history.

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28 August 2017

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We gratefully acknowledge our visionary major Donors who share our passion and support our work.

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Acknowledging a lifetime of extraordinary support for MTC

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Supporting the NEXT STAGE Writers' Program.

Louise Myer and Martyn Myer AO, Maureen Wheeler AO and Tony Wheeler AO, Christine Brown Bequest
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Dr Andrew McAlicee and Dr Richard Simmie, Larry Kamener and Petra Kamener



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Donors whose annual gifts help MTC to enrich and transform lives through the storytelling power of the finest theatre imaginable.

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\$250,000+

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MTC is a department of the University of Melbourne.

MTC is assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, and by the State Government of Victoria through Arts Victoria.

MTC is a member of Live Performance Australia and the Australian Major Performing Arts Group.



Current as of August 2017. If you would like to join our corporate family or host a private event, please contact partnerships@mtc.com.au

Details in this media kit are correct at the time of publication. MTC reserves the right to add, withdraw, and substitute artists and vary the program should the need arise. Season photography Justin Ridler. Creative direction Emma Wagstaff.

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