

MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY



SEASON 2019

MEDIA KIT

EMBARGOED UNTIL 7.30PM TUESDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2018

MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY

SEASON 2019

Melbourne Theatre Company Artistic Director Brett Sheehy AO today revealed MTC's 2019 Season; a feast of theatrical delights at Victoria's state theatre company.

'Making theatre relevant to 21st century Australia is the lifeblood of MTC and in 2019 we present a season of challenging, brilliant and entertaining works that speak to our times with great urgency and in ways only possible through theatre,' Brett Sheehy said.

'Amongst the suite of productions on our stages, we are especially pleased to present six terrific works by Australian writers, including the first commission from our landmark NEXT STAGE Writers' Program.'

The season opens with Alan Bennett's legendary and autobiographical, *The Lady in the Van*, starring stage and screen legend Miriam Margolyes, directed by Dean Bryant.

Melita Jurisic plays the irrepressible Mae West opposite Diana Glenn as Diane Arbus in the world premiere of *Arbus & West* by Stephen Sewell, directed by MTC Associate Director Sarah Goodes.

Iain Sinclair returns to MTC and to Arthur Miller's tragic masterpiece *A View from the Bridge*, to direct a new production of this visceral drama featuring Daniela Farinacci and Ivan Donato.

Esther Hannaford, Hunter Page-Lochard, Rahel Romahn and Katherine Tonkin star in the MTC and Sydney Theatre Company co-production of *Così*, Louis Nowra's darkly funny and deeply moving Australian classic, directed by Sarah Goodes.

The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You by Finegan Kruckemeyer tackles the ticking time-bomb of adolescence in a smart, sweet and fiery tale about two offbeat kids at war with the world, starring Harry Tseng and directed by Prue Clark.

Kat Stewart and Peter Kowitz take to the stage in Simon Stephens's latest Broadway and West End hit, *Heisenberg*, turning our attention to life's intangible mysteries and the peculiarities of the human heart in an Australian premiere production directed by Tom Healey.

The timeless and much-loved classic novel, *Storm Boy*, is brought to the stage in an epic MTC and Queensland Theatre co-production, in association with Dead Puppet Society, directed by Sam Strong and featuring a cast including John Batchelor, Tony Briggs and Emily Burton.

The illustrious Simon Phillips directs an Australian premiere stage adaptation of the Oscar-winning film and glorious romantic comedy, *Shakespeare in Love*, featuring a cast including Aljin Abella and Adam Murphy.

Nicholas Bell, Jing-Xuan Chan, Josh McConville and Yuchen Wang star in the world premiere MTC NEXT STAGE commission, *Golden Shield*, an urgent legal thriller by rising star Anchuli Felicia King, directed by Sarah Goodes.

Continued >

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Nakkiah Lui's hit Australian satire ***Black is the New White*** arrives in Melbourne with a brilliant cast including **Kylie Bracknell, Tony Briggs, Luke Carroll, Vanessa Downing, Melodie Reynolds-Diarra, Tom Stokes** and **Anthony Taufa**, directed by **Paige Rattray**.

Nadine Garner returns to the stage under the direction of **Pamela Rabe** in the Australian premiere of **Anna Ziegler's Photograph 51**, a moving portrait of a dazzling scientist and unsung hero, Rosalind Franklin.

And the season closes in spectacular style with **Kander & Ebb's** Tony Award-winning Best Musical, ***Kiss of the Spider Woman***, starring music theatre icon **Caroline O'Connor, Adam Jon Fiorentino, Natalie Gamsu** and **Bert LaBonté** directed by **Dean Bryant**.

'2019 at MTC is filled with stories of adventure, love, friendship, discovery and drama. We have curated a year that takes audiences on a journey around Australia and the world via the very best new plays, reimaginings of beloved classics and fresh productions of international smash-hits. Add the country's best creative talents to bring it all to life and there's no question we're in for a special year,' **Mr Sheehy** said.

As well as the works on stage, in 2019 MTC continues its array of renowned artist development programs and initiatives including the **Cybec Electric** play reading series, **Women in Theatre Program, CAAP Directors Initiative** and the Company's ground-breaking **NEXT STAGE Writers' Program**, which enters its second year with 20 writers under commission or in residency.

Through MTC's acclaimed **Education Program**, thousands of students across the state will be provided with life-changing theatre and learning opportunities through programming for young audiences, specialised enrichment programs, education resources and workshops.

And MTC's celebrated ***Sharing the Light*** initiative again makes theatre more accessible through subsidised \$5 tickets, **MTC's Indigenous Scholarship Program** and extensive regional touring of the Company's Education production.

'Through the theatre we present and the programs we provide, we aim to enrich the lives of all who come into our orbit,' **Mr Sheehy** said.

'As the most subscribed theatre company in the country, we are ever grateful for the enthusiasm and generosity with which our audience embrace the art on our stages. We are passionate about creating vibrant theatre for audiences of today and tomorrow and look forward to sharing another wonderful year at MTC with our dedicated theatre-going community.'

Subscription packages for MTC's 2019 Season are on sale from Tuesday 4 September at 9pm.

Tickets for *The Lady in the Van, Arbus & West, A View from the Bridge* and *Così* go on sale to the public on 29 November.

All remaining productions go on sale on 7 March 2019, except *Kiss of the Spider Woman* which will be on sale from 19 June 2019.

mtc.com.au/2019

     [MelbTheatre2019](#)

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MTC MELBOURNE
THEATRE
COMPANY

MTC

SEASON 2019

CALENDAR



THE LADY IN THE VAN

2 FEBRUARY — 6 MARCH

Opening Night
Thursday 7 February



STORM BOY

17 JUNE — 20 JULY

Opening Night
Friday 21 June



ARBUS & WEST

22 FEBRUARY — 30 MARCH

Opening Night
Thursday 28 February



SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE

15 JULY — 14 AUGUST

Opening Night
Friday 19 July



A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

9 MARCH — 18 APRIL

Opening Night
Thursday 14 March



GOLDEN SHIELD

12 AUGUST — 14 SEPTEMBER

Opening Night
Friday 16 August



COSÌ

30 APRIL — 8 JUNE

Opening Night
Saturday 4 May



BLACK IS THE NEW WHITE

2 OCTOBER — 6 NOVEMBER

Opening Night
Saturday 5 October



MTC FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

THE VIOLENT OUTBURST THAT DREW ME TO YOU

2 MAY — 18 MAY

Opening Night
Monday 6 May



PHOTOGRAPH 51

1 NOVEMBER — 14 DECEMBER

Opening Night
Thursday 7 November



HEISENBERG

17 MAY — 29 JUNE

Opening Night
Thursday 23 May



KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN

18 NOVEMBER — 28 DECEMBER

Opening Night
Friday 22 November

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MEDIA RELEASE
4 SEPTEMBER 2018

THE LADY IN THE VAN

BY ALAN BENNETT

Melbourne Theatre Company opens its 2019 Season with Alan Bennett's extraordinary and mostly true story, *The Lady in the Van*, starring Miriam Margolyes (*I'll Eat You Last*).

Made famous by the book and film of the same name, *The Lady in the Van* is a bitter-sweet, moving memoir about the legendary writer himself and his very peculiar tenant who 'temporarily' parked her dilapidated van outside his London home – and stayed for 15 years.

Dean Bryant (*An Ideal Husband*) directs this Australian premiere production, opening on **Thursday 7 February** at Arts Centre Melbourne, Playhouse.

Dean Bryant said, '*The Lady in the Van* is a sharp and affectionate look at a decade and a half in Alan Bennett's life when Miss Shepherd, both an irritant and a mystery, appeared and brought outsized colour and interest along with her. I can't wait to work again with the life force that is Miriam Margolyes and build this unforgettable character with her.'

In 1974 Alan Bennett befriended Miss Mary Shepherd, an eccentric, cantankerous and rather smelly old lady. Was she a fugitive on the run? A talented pianist? A nun? Or just an old lady struggling with mental health and homelessness?

Alan Bennett has been one of the UK's leading dramatists since the success of *Beyond the Fringe* in the 1960s. His television series *Talking Heads* has become a modern-day classic, as have many of his works for the stage, including *Forty Years On*, *The Lady in the Van*, *A Question of Attribution*, *The Madness of George III* and his adaptation of *The Wind in the Willows*. *The History Boys* won Evening Standard, Critics' Circle and Olivier Awards, and the South Bank Award. On Broadway it won five New York Drama Desk Awards, four Outer Critics' Circle Awards, a New York Drama Critics' Award for Best Play, a New York Drama League Award and six Tonys including Best Play. The film of *The History Boys* was released in 2006. Bennett's other plays include *The Habit Of Art*, *People*, and the short plays *Hymn* and *Cocktail Sticks (Untold Stories)*. His latest play *Allelujah!* opened at The Bridge Theatre in London in July 2018.

Dean Bryant is one of Australia's most accomplished and versatile directors. He has directed numerous productions for MTC including *An Ideal Husband*, *Wild*, *Vivid White*, *Born Yesterday*, *Skylight*, *I'll Eat You Last* and *Next to Normal*. 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 MTC. His other directing credits include *Assassins*, *Sweet Charity* (Helpmann Award, Best Director of a Musical) and *Little Shop of Horrors* (Sydney Theatre Award, Best Director of a Musical) for Hayes Theatre Company; for Opera Australia *Two Weddings, One Bride* and *Anything Goes* (also GFO); *Once We Lived Here* (London); *DreamSong* (Theatre Works); *Straight* (Red Stitch); *The Last Five Years*; *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*. Dean created verbatim piece *Gaybies* (Midsumma, Darlinghurst Theatre Company) and is Worldwide Associate Director of *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert – The Musical*.

'Guaranteed to please absolutely everyone.'

Daily Telegraph

'One of the saddest, funniest and most distinguished offerings for years.'

Sunday Times

Cast includes Miriam Margolyes

Director Dean Bryant

Set & Costume Designer

Alicia Clements

Lighting Designer Matt Scott

Composer & Sound Designer

Mathew Frank

Voice & Dialect Coach Leith McPherson

Season Dates

2 February – 6 March

Opening Night

Thursday 7 February

Venue

Arts Centre Melbourne, Playhouse

Subscriptions

On sale from Tuesday 4 September, 9pm

Tickets

On sale from Thursday 29 November

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ARBUS & WEST

by Stephen Sewell

Melita Jurisic (*The House of Bernarda Alba*) stars as the irrepressible Mae West opposite **Diana Glenn** (*The Slap*) as Diane Arbus in the world premiere of **Arbus & West**, directed by **MTC Associate Director Sarah Goodes** (*The Children*).

In 1964, sassy blonde bombshell Mae West was captured on film by Diane Arbus, the most fêted female photographer of her generation. **Stephen Sewell's Arbus & West** contemplates what might have transpired between these two extraordinary women in a powerful rendering of beauty, regret, independence and longing.

Jennifer Vuletic (*Merciless Gods*) completes the cast of this intimate three-hander that opens on **Thursday 28 February** at Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio.

Sarah Goodes said, 'Stephen Sewell is one of our most celebrated playwrights and has written a beautiful play filled with humour and mystery. The meeting of Mae West and Diane Arbus dives a lot deeper than each woman is expecting; their shared mistrust shines light into each woman's inner life in a way that is both exciting and terrifying.'

Stephen Sewell has won great popular and critical acclaim as a playwright, screenwriter and novelist, as well as directing for both theatre and film over a career that has spanned 30 years. He is the recipient of numerous awards and his work has been performed in most major Australian theatres and in New Zealand, the US, the UK and Europe. Stephen is best known for his film and theatre work including his AFI Award-winning screen adaptation of *The Boys*, his role as script editor on the feature film *Chopper* and his numerous plays such as *The Blind Giant is Dancing*, *It Just Stopped* and the highly awarded *Myth, Propaganda and Disaster in Nazi Germany and Contemporary America: A Drama in 30 Scenes*. In 2016 Stephen made his film directorial debut with *Embedded*. Stephen is currently the Head of Writing for Performance at NIDA.

MTC Associate Director Sarah Goodes last directed *A Doll's House, Part 2* and *The Children*, which won three Helpmann Awards including Best Play and Best Direction. Also for MTC she directed *Three Little Words* following her critically acclaimed direction of *John* and *Switzerland*. Sarah's reputation as a leading director of new Australian and international work has been built on widespread praise and multiple award nominations. Formerly Resident Director at Sydney Theatre Company, Sarah directed *The Hanging*, *Disgraced*, *Orlando*, *Battle of Waterloo*, *Switzerland*, *The Effect*, *Vere (Faith)*, *The Splinter* and *Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness*. Sarah recently directed *The Sugar House* at Belvoir and her other directing credits include *Elling*, *Black Milk*, *The Sweetest Thing*, and *The Small Things* (Downstairs Belvoir); *The Colour of Panic* (Sydney Opera House); *Vertigo and the Virginia*, *The Schelling Point*, *Hilt* and *What Happened Was* (Old Fitz 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.

'No one had more fun with the double entendre than Mae West.'

Chicago Tribune

'Diane Arbus was one of the most powerful American artists of the 20th century.'

The New York Times

Cast Diana Glenn, Melita Jurisic, Jennifer Vuletic

Director Sarah Goodes

Set & Costume Designer Renée Mulder

Lighting Designer Paul Jackson

Season Dates

22 February – 30 March

Opening Night

Thursday 28 February

Venue

Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio

Subscriptions

On sale from Tuesday 4 September, 9pm

Tickets

On sale from Thursday 29 November

mtc.com.au/2019

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MEDIA RELEASE
4 SEPTEMBER 2018

A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

by Arthur Miller

Daniela Farinacci (*Glitch*) and **Ivan Donato** (*The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*) star in Arthur Miller's tragic masterpiece, **A View from the Bridge**, opening on **Thursday 14 March** at Southbank Theatre.

Directed by **Iain Sinclair** (*The Beast*), this muscular drama's themes of family, loyalty, immigration and justice take on contemporary relevance in the world today.

Iain Sinclair said, '**A View From The Bridge** is Arthur Miller at the top of his game. Visceral, lean, gut wrenching, compelling and devastating. We call ourselves modern and civilised now but Miller's masterpiece reveals that we are all bound by the same ancient codes, the same unspeakable passions and the same unsolvable mysteries that have been with us since the discovery of fire.'

In 2017 Iain Sinclair attracted a chorus of critical acclaim for his staging of this brilliant drama for Red Line Productions in Sydney. Now, he returns to MTC and to Miller's masterpiece with a brand new production for Melbourne audiences.

Brooklyn dockworker Eddie Carbone and his wife Beatrice agree to take in two Sicilian relatives – illegal immigrants trying to find work. Hardworking Marco is sending money home to his wife and sick children. Rodolpho is chasing the American dream, but finds being different makes him an outsider. When Rodolpho falls for Eddie's beautiful niece, the protective uncle must confront his own feelings and his jealous mistrust threatens to expose an unspeakable secret – one that drives him to commit the ultimate betrayal.

One of the twentieth century's greatest writers, **Arthur Miller's** writing earned him a lifetime of honours including the Pulitzer Prize, seven Tony Awards, two Drama Critics Circle Awards, an Obie, an Olivier and the John F Kennedy Lifetime Achievement Award. His most famous plays include *Death of a Salesman*, *The Crucible*, *All My Sons* and *A View From the Bridge*; and his most noted screenplays include *The Misfits* (starring his then wife Marilyn Monroe), *The Hook* and *Everybody Wins*.

Iain Sinclair previously directed *The Beast* by Eddie Perfect for MTC. For Sydney Theatre Company, *Mojo* by Jez Butterworth, *Blood Wedding* by Federico Garcia Lorca (translation by Iain Sinclair), and *Our Town* by Thornton Wilder. For Queensland Theatre, *Brisbane* by Matthew Ryan. For Belvoir, *The Seed* by Kate Mulvany, *Killer Joe* by Tracey Letts, *Beyond the Neck* by Tom Holloway, and *My Arm* by Tim Crouch. For the Eternity Theatre, *All My Sons* by Arthur Miller and for NIDA, *Lost Illusions* by Alana Valentine. Iain has been Assistant Director to Max Stafford Clark and Cate Blanchett and holds a Masters degree from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art and King's College London. He is currently Head of Acting at 16th Street Actor's Studio.

'Resonates powerfully. Emotionally intense. Unmissable.'

Daily Telegraph

'Grittily passionate.'

The Australian

Cast includes Ivan Donato, Daniela Farinacci

Director Iain Sinclair

Season Dates

9 March – 18 April

Opening Night

Thursday 14 March

Venue

Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Subscriptions

On sale from Tuesday 4 September, 9pm

Tickets

On sale from Thursday 29 November

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COSÌ

by Louis Nowra



Esther Hannaford (*Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*), **Hunter Page-Lochard** (*Cleverman*), **Rahel Romahn** (*The Principal*) and **Katherine Tonkin** (*Abigail's Party*) star in **Così**, the darkly funny and deeply moving Australian classic by **Louis Nowra**.

Directed by **MTC Associate Director Sarah Goodes** (*A Doll's House, Part 2*), this Melbourne Theatre Company and Sydney Theatre Company co-production opens on **Saturday 4 May** at Southbank Theatre before a season at the Sydney Opera House.

Sarah Goodes said, '**Così** is an Australian classic – a show within a show that explores the transformative power of music and performance. Many people have grown up watching **Così** either on stage or on film, or even performing in it. The opportunity to revive this play in Melbourne where it is set is so exciting – to celebrate who we are, how far we have come and to remind us of the power and importance of art in our lives.'

It's 1971 Australia and outside a nation is protesting the war in Vietnam. Inside, a cast of complete amateurs are preparing for a performance of Mozart's famous comic opera, *Così Fan Tutte*, even though no-one can sing, act or speak Italian. Its aspiring young director, Lewis, has just finished drama school and his first directing gig is at a psychiatric facility. What could possibly go wrong?

Louis Nowra is a prolific writer working across stage, film, radio and both non-fiction and fiction books. His plays include *Inner Voices*, *Visions*, *Inside the Island*, *Sunrise*, *The Golden Age*, *Capricornia*, *Byzantine Flowers*, *Summer of the Aliens*, *Così*, *Radiance*, *The Temple*, *Crow*, *The Incorruptible*, *The Jungle*, *The Language of the Gods*, *The Boyce Trilogy* and *This Much is True*. His novels include *The Misery of Beauty*, *Palu*, *Red Nights*, *Abaza*, *Ice*, *Into That Forest*, and *The Prince of Afghanistan*. Louis' two memoirs are *The Twelfth Of Never* and *Shooting the Moon*. Some of his radio plays include *Albert Names Edward*, *The Song Room*, *Sydney*, *The Divine Hammer*, *Far North*, *Jez* and *The Light of Darkness*. He wrote the telemovies *Displaced Persons*, *Hunger* and *The Lizard King*, and created the TV series *The Last Resort* and *The Straits*. His screen credits include *Map of The Human Heart*, *Così*, *Heaven's Burning*, *The Matchmaker*, *Radiance*, *K-19: The Widowmaker* and *Black and White*. His non-fiction works include *The Cheated*, *Warne's World*, *Walkabout*, *Chihuahuas*, *Women and Me*, *Bad Dreaming*, *Kings Cross: A Biography*, and *Woolloomooloo: A Biography*.

MTC Associate Director Sarah Goodes last directed *A Doll's House, Part 2* and *The Children*, which won three Helpmann Awards including Best Play and Best Direction. Also for MTC she directed *Three Little Words*, *John* and *Switzerland*. Sarah's reputation as a leading director of new Australian and international work has been built on widespread praise and multiple award nominations. Formerly Resident Director at STC, Sarah directed *The Hanging*, *Disgraced*, *Orlando*, *Battle of Waterloo*, *Switzerland*, *The Effect*, *Vere (Faith)*, *The Splinter*, and *Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness*. Sarah recently directed *The Sugar House* at Belvoir and her other directing credits include *Elling*, *Black Milk*, *The Sweetest Thing*, and *The Small Things* (Downstairs Belvoir); *The Colour of Panic* (Sydney Opera House); *Vertigo and the Virginia*, *The Schelling Point*, *Hilt*, and *What Happened Was* (Old Fitz 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).

'A great Australian comedy.'
Sydney Morning Herald

'Così occupies a special place in the Australian canon.'
The Daily Review

Cast includes Esther Hannaford, Hunter Page-Lochard, Rahel Romahn, Katherine Tonkin

Director Sarah Goodes
Set Design Dale Ferguson
Costume Design Jonathon Oxlade

Season Dates
30 April – 8 June

Opening Night
Saturday 4 May

Venue
Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Subscriptions
On sale from Tuesday 4 September, 9pm

Tickets
On sale from Thursday 29 November

mtc.com.au/2019
03 8688 0800

A co-production with Sydney Theatre Company

SYDNEY
THEATRE
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MTC MELBOURNE
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THE VIOLENT OUTBURST THAT DREW ME TO YOU

by Finegan Kruckemeyer

From multi-award-winning writer **Finegan Kruckemeyer** comes *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You*, a smart, sweet and fiery tale about two offbeat kids at war with the world.

Starring **Harry Tseng** (*Jasper Jones*) and directed by **Prue Clark** (*Contest*), this production for teenagers, and anyone who's ever been one, opens at Southbank Theatre on **Monday 6 May** as part of MTC's acclaimed Families and Education Program.

Prue Clark said, 'Finegan writes from the heart and is damn funny too. I'm a big fan of his work and am delighted to be directing this gutsy and astutely observed portrait of turbulent adolescence. I can't wait to bring *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You* to life.'

Winner of the 2014 AWGIE for Best Theatre for Young Audiences, *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You* tackles the ticking time bomb of adolescence with humour and heart. Following its season at Southbank Theatre, the production will tour around Victoria and Tasmania as part of MTC's annual Regional Tour.

Connor is 16 and angry. He doesn't know why. Lately everything and everyone is annoying him. He's slamming doors, flipping desks and always fighting. But, when he takes his rage one step too far, his parents decide to leave him in the forest for a week, alone. That should sort him out. Until he meets Lotte – also 16, also angry – but maybe just the friend Connor needs.

Renowned internationally as a leading figure in theatre for young people, **Finegan Kruckemeyer** has had 84 commissioned plays performed on five continents and translated into eight languages. He is committed to making strong and respectful work for children, which acknowledges them as astute audience members outside the plays, and worthy subjects within. In 2015 MTC presented an award-winning production of his play, *The Boy at The Edge of Everything*. He has received 35 awards including the 2017 Mickey Miners Lifetime Achievement Award (for services to international theatre for young audiences), the 2015 David Williamson Award for Excellence in Australian Playwriting, six AWGIE Awards, the 2012 Helpmann Award for Children's Theatre and 2010 Rodney Seaborn Award. He is currently a board member of the Story Island Project promoting youth literacy and empowerment through storytelling with the state's most marginalised young people.

Prue Clark is a Melbourne-based theatre director and an alumna of MTC's Women in Theatre Program. She recently directed Emilie Collyer's critically acclaimed *Contest* and is currently in rehearsals for a new devised work *All That is Right* at Monash University. She has made two works with writer/performer Emma Hall; *Ode to Man* and *We May Have to Choose*. The latter earned awards for Best Director and Best Theatre at Auckland Fringe, three Melbourne Fringe awards, and two Green Room nominations. Other directing credits include MTC's *Cybec Electric* season 2018, *Reasons to Stay Inside* (Melbourne Fringe, Roola Boola Children's Festival); *Dropped* (Melbourne Fringe, La Mama Theatre) and MKA's *Group Show* (Darebin Speakeasy). Prue has received two Green Room nominations for Best Director (*Reasons to Stay Inside* and *Dropped*). She has assisted directors Susie Dee (*Savages*), Richard Murphet (*Eddie Goes to Poetry*) and Lee Lewis (MTC's *Hay Fever*). In 2012 Prue completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Directing at the Victorian College of the Arts and was the recipient of an Orloff Family Charitable Trust Scholarship for Excellence.

Winner of Best Theatre for Young People
Australian Writers Guild Award

'Funny without being patronising and serious without seeming earnest.'
Sydney Morning Herald

Cast includes Harry Tseng

Director Prue Clark
Lighting Designer
Amelia Lever-Davidson

Season Dates
2 May – 18 May

Opening Night
Monday 6 May

Venue
Southbank Theatre, The Lawler

Subscriptions
On sale from Tuesday 4 September, 9pm

Tickets
On sale from Thursday 7 March

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MTC MELBOURNE
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HEISENBERG

by Simon Stephens

Kat Stewart (*Offspring*) stars as the eccentric, free-spirited Georgie opposite **Peter Kowitz** (*The Weir*) in the Australian premiere of **Heisenberg**, **Simon Stephens's** latest Broadway and West End hit.

Directed by **Tom Healey** (*The Spook*), this intimate, uplifting romantic comedy opens on **Thursday 23 May** at Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio.

Tom Healey said, 'As the erstwhile king of "in-yer-face" gritty British modernity, Simon Stephens transfigures his familiar themes into an ode to the possibility of transformation. **Heisenberg** is about staring down loneliness, defying convention, and the high-voltage rush of leaping into uncertainty. I am super excited to be working once again with my long-standing colleague, and one of Melbourne's finest actors, Kat Stewart, on this exquisite, life-affirming jewel of a piece.'

Turning his attention to life's intangible mysteries and the peculiarities of the human heart, Tony and Olivier Award-winning playwright **Simon Stephens** (*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*) applies the prominent Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle of quantum physics to personal relationships and dares us to embrace the magic of the unknown.

At a bustling London train station, 42-year-old American Georgie kisses the neck of a much older Englishman, Alex. This electric encounter thrusts two perfect strangers into a fascinating and unlikely relationship, part friendship, part love-affair. But is Georgie really all she seems?

Tom Healey's directing credits include *American Song* and *Jumpers for Goalposts* (Red Stitch); *Let's Get it On* (room 8); *Doris Day – So Much More Than the Girl Next Door* (Boldjack); *Disarming Rosetta* (Hothouse); *Turns* (CDP) with Nancye Hayes and Reg Livermore; *Good Evening* (Token) with Shaun Micallef and Stephen Curry; the world premieres of *Falling Petals*, *The Fat Boy*, *Insouciance* and *Elegy* (Playbox); Helpmann Award-winning *The Man In Black* (Folsom Prison Productions); *The Kid* (Griffin Theatre Company); *The Spook* (Malthouse Theatre); *The Shape of Things* (Red Stitch and national tour); and Eddie Perfect's solo shows, *Drink Pepsi, Bitch* (Malthouse Theatre, Sydney Opera House, Edinburgh Fringe, Melbourne International Comedy and Adelaide Cabaret Festivals) and *Angry Eddie* (Chapel Off Chapel, Melbourne International Comedy Festival).

Simon Stephens is a prolific British playwright whose work has been produced extensively around the world. His adaption of Mark Haddon's novel *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* won the Oliver and Tony Awards for Best New Play and premiered in Melbourne in 2018 presented by MTC and Arts Centre Melbourne. In 2015, *Heisenberg* opened at Manhattan Theatre Company in New York, transferred to the Friedman in 2016 and opened in the West End in 2017. His many other plays include *Song from Far Away*, *Pornography*, *Punk Rock*, *Bluebird*, *Hérons*, *Country Music*, *Motortown*, *Harper Regan*, *Sea Wall*, *Carmen Disruption*, and *Birdland* (which had its Australian premiere at MTC in 2015). Other credits include adaptations of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* and Brecht and Weill's *The Threepenny Opera*. In 2017 his plays *Nuclear War*, *Fatherland*, his English language version of *Obsession* and his new adaptation of *The Seagull* all opened in theatres around the UK. Simon is Artistic Associate at the Lyric Theatre and Associate Playwright at the Royal Court.

'Heisenberg's sparky romantic comedy hits the spot.'

The Sunday Times

'Resonates in your mind long after it's over.'

The New York Times

Cast Peter Kowitz, Kat Stewart

Director Tom Healey

Season Dates

17 May – 29 June

Opening Night

Thursday 23 May

Venue

Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio

Subscriptions

On sale from Tuesday 4 September, 9pm

Tickets

On sale from Thursday 7 March

mtc.com.au/2019

03 8688 0800

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MTC MELBOURNE
THEATRE
COMPANY

STORM BOY

by Colin Thiele,
adapted for the stage by Tom Holloway

The timeless and much-loved classic novel, **Storm Boy**, is brought to the stage in a spectacular Melbourne Theatre Company and Queensland Theatre co-production in association with Dead Puppet Society, opening at Southbank Theatre on **Friday 21 June** before going on to play at Queensland Performing Arts Centre.

Directed by **Sam Strong** (*Jasper Jones*), **Storm Boy** brings together the creative team behind MTC's Helpmann Award-winning production of *Jasper Jones* and **Dead Puppet Society** to bring the wild beauty of the Coorong to life. An array of magnificent wildlife puppets will feature on stage, alongside the cast including **John Batchelor** (*Underbelly: Razor*), **Tony Briggs** (*Black is the New White*) and **Emily Burton** (*The Wider Earth*).

Sam Strong said, '**Storm Boy** is such a cherished Australian story because it so movingly charts the journey from childhood to adulthood, and speaks with equal poignancy to adults and children. Tom Holloway has lovingly translated the original novel for the stage and created a beautiful story of life, loss and mending what's broken. We're looking forward to bringing the Coorong magically to life in a way that only the theatre can. We've combined the *Jasper Jones* design team, who so successfully made the Australian landscape a character in that show, with the country's most exciting visual theatre company, who will create not just the iconic pelicans but a whole menagerie of animals.'

In a wild and remote area of coastline on South Australia's Coorong, Storm Boy and his reclusive father live in a secluded shack, hidden away from the harsh realities of city life. After befriending a local Ngarrindjeri man, Storm Boy discovers three orphaned pelican chicks and decides to take them in. What follows is a remarkable journey of discovery that will change his life forever.

Tom Holloway is a multi-award-winning playwright whose work has been staged extensively both in Australia and around the world. In 2016, MTC staged his adaptation of *Double Indemnity*, also directed by Sam Strong. His adaptation of *Storm Boy* won the 2014 AWGIE Award for Young Audiences. His plays include *And No More Shall We Part* (2010 AWGIE Award for Best Stage Play and 2010 Louis Esson Prize for Drama), *Forget Me Not*, *Beyond The Neck* (2007 winner AWGIE Award for Best Stage Play), *Red Sky Morning* (2007 R. E. Ross Trust Development Award, 2009 Green Room Award for Best New Writing) and *Love Me Tender*. He was librettist for operas *South Pole* and *Make No Noise* for the Bavarian State Opera. Tom is currently under commission as part of MTC's NEXT STAGE Writers' Program and the Bavarian State Opera.

Sam Strong is currently the Artistic Director of Queensland Theatre and has previously been the Chair of Circa, Associate Artistic Director of MTC, Artistic Director of Griffin Theatre Company, Literary Associate at Belvoir, and the founding Dramaturg in Residence at Red Stitch Actors Theatre. His recent productions have included *Jasper Jones*, *Twelfth Night* with songs by Tim Finn, and *Once in Royal David's City*. He has directed productions for Queensland Theatre, MTC, STC, State Theatre Company of South Australia, Black Swan State Theatre Company, Belvoir, Griffin Theatre Company, Red Stitch and Sydney and Melbourne Festivals. Sam has won Best Direction of a Mainstage Production at the Sydney Theatre Awards, and has received multiple nominations for Best Direction and Best Play at the Green Room Awards, the Sydney Theatre Awards, and the Helpmann Awards.

**'The stuff of cherished memories.
A must see.'**

Arts Hub

**'An exquisite adaptation of an
Australian classic.'**

Canberra Times

Cast includes John Batchelor,
Tony Briggs, Emily Burton

Director Sam Strong
Puppet Designer & Associate Director
David Morton
Set & Costume Designer
Anna Cordingley
Lighting Designer Matt Scott
Composer & Sound Designer
Darrin Verhagen

Season Dates
17 June – 20 July

Opening Night
Friday 21 June

Venue
Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Subscriptions
On sale from Tuesday 4 September, 9pm

Tickets
On sale from Thursday 7 March

mtc.com.au/2019
03 8688 0800

A co-production with Queensland Theatre in
association with Dead Puppet Society

QUEENSLAND
THEATRE



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MTC MELBOURNE
THEATRE
COMPANY

MEDIA RELEASE
4 SEPTEMBER 2018

THE MTC PRODUCTION OF

Shakespeare in Love.

BASED ON THE SCREENPLAY BY MARC NORMAN & TOM STOPPARD
ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY LEE HALL

MUSIC BY PADDY CUNNEEN

Melbourne Theatre Company presents the Australian premiere stage adaptation of Oscar-winning film *Shakespeare in Love*, directed by the illustrious **Simon Phillips** (*Muriels Wedding The Musical*).

An ode to theatre itself and life on the stage, this new MTC production featuring a lavish musical accompaniment and a cast including **Aljin Abella** (*Aladdin*) and **Adam Murphy** (*The Drowsy Chaperone*) opens on **Friday 19 July** at Arts Centre Melbourne, Playhouse before travelling north for a season at Canberra Theatre.

Simon Phillips said, 'This is a real treat. *Shakespeare in Love* is far and away my favourite romantic comedy – unsurprisingly, given that it combines the work of two of my favourite playwrights: William Shakespeare and Tom Stoppard. It deliciously mixes the rudimentary stuff of life – comedy, passion, music and mayhem – with the more cerebral pleasures of wit and literary allusion. And given how much I enjoy the challenge of transferring films to the stage, the chance to work on Lee Hall's excellent adaptation, with a cast of Melbourne's finest character actors, is an absolute gift'.

Shakespeare in Love won seven Oscars in 1998 when Gwyneth Paltrow and Joseph Fiennes stole audiences' hearts on screen. Now, **Lee Hall** (*Billy Elliot*) has brilliantly transformed **Tom Stoppard** and **Marc Norman's** Academy Award-winning script into a lively stage comedy with a stirring love story at its heart.

Young Will Shakespeare has a bad case of writer's block and desperately needs a muse. His new comedy, *Romeo and Ethel the Pirate's Daughter*, is less than inspired and he's running out of time to deliver his next masterpiece. That is, until he meets Viola, and a real-life *Romeo and Juliet* story starts to take hold. But Viola has a secret, and this damned Romeo play is turning out to be nothing like the comedy the Queen demanded.

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*. His production of *Muriel's Wedding The Musical* premiered at Sydney Theatre Company in 2017 receiving widespread praise and multiple awards. 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. Throughout his 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 *Dream Lover*, 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.

★★★★★

'A joyous celebration of the possibilities of theatre itself.'

The Daily Telegraph

'Makes you feel grateful to be alive.'

The Independent

Cast includes Aljin Abella, Adam Murphy

Director Simon Phillips

Set & Costume Designer

Gabriela Tylesova

Voice & Dialect Coach Leith McPherson

Season Dates

15 July – 14 August

Opening Night

Friday 19 July

Venue

Arts Centre Melbourne, Playhouse

Subscriptions

On sale from Tuesday 4 September, 9pm

Tickets

On sale from Thursday 7 March

mtc.com.au/2019

03 8688 0800

Originally produced on the West End by Disney Theatrical Productions & Sonia Friedman Productions, directed by Declan Donnellan, and designed by Nick Ormerod.

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CREATIVE VICTORIA

MTC MELBOURNE
THEATRE
COMPANY

GOLDEN SHIELD

by Anchuli Felicia King



With interweaving storylines from across the globe, **Golden Shield** is an urgent legal thriller that explores the personal and political ramifications of corporate greed in the global economy.

Directed by **MTC Associate Director Sarah Goodes** (*A Doll's House, Part 2*), this piercing, funny and extremely timely new work marks the mainstage debut of a remarkable young writer, **Anchuli Felicia King**, and the first MTC NEXT STAGE commission to be produced.

Nicholas Bell (*The Ex-PM*), **Jing-Xuan Chan** (*Hungry Ghosts*), **Josh McConville** (*The Sublime*) and **Yuchen Wang** (*Little Emperors*) star in this gripping world premiere, opening on **Friday 16 August** at Southbank Theatre.

Sarah Goodes said, '**Golden Shield** is one-part thriller, one-part human drama about translation and how we communicate amongst the overwhelming hum of the digital world. Reading Felicia's brilliant play, I was captivated by its investigation of cross-cultural values and philosophies of our information age, while the bilingual characters illuminate the frequently fraught lines of human interaction. It is an astounding new play by a very exciting new voice.'

It's 2006 and less than 10% of China is online. The Chinese government looks to Silicon Valley to protect its citizens from the unfiltered chaos of the internet, resulting in the construction of an epic firewall called the Golden Shield. With American companies actively working to build it – stifling political debate in the process – are they responsible, or just doing good business? If they can be prosecuted for working against the promotion of democracy, should they? And if dissidents start disappearing, who should be put on trial?

Anchuli Felicia King is a multidisciplinary artist of Thai-Australian descent who works primarily in live theatre. In 2018, her play *Slaughterhouse* was part of MTC's Cybec Electric play reading series and she was awarded a commission through MTC's NEXT STAGE Writers' Program. Felicia is interested in linguistic hybrids, digital cultures and issues of global urgency. She is a member of EST's Youngblood Group, Ars Nova's Play Group and Roundabout's Space Jam Program. Currently based in New York, Felicia has worked with a wide range of companies and institutions, including Punchdrunk, PlayCo, 3LD Art & Technology Center, Roundabout Theater, 59E59, Ars Nova, the Obie Awards, The Builders Association, Ensemble Studio Theater and Red Bull Theater. She also works with companies such as Playwriting Australia, Sydney Theatre Company, Belvoir Theatre, Yellow Earth Theatre (London), House of North (Berlin) and SHIFT Festival (Shanghai).

MTC Associate Director Sarah Goodes last directed *A Doll's House, Part 2* and *The Children* which won three Helpmann Awards including Best Play and Best Direction. Also for MTC she directed *Three Little Words*, *John* and *Switzerland*. Formerly Resident Director at Sydney Theatre Company, Sarah directed *The Hanging*, *Disgraced*, *Orlando*, *Battle of Waterloo*, *Switzerland*, *The Effect*, *Vere (Faith)*, *The Splinter*, and *Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness*. Sarah recently directed *The Sugar House* at Belvoir to critical acclaim.

'First there was the Berlin wall. Now there is the great firewall of China.'
Washington Post

'Private companies play an important role in facilitating internet censorship in China.'
The Guardian

Cast includes Nicholas Bell, Jing-Xuan Chan, Josh McConville, Yuchen Wang

Director Sarah Goodes
Set & Costume Design The Sisters Hayes

Season Dates
12 August – 14 September

Opening Night
Friday 16 August

Venue
Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Subscriptions
On sale from Tuesday 4 September, 9pm

Tickets
On sale from Thursday 7 March

mtc.com.au/2019
03 8688 0800

Commissioned through MTC's NEXT STAGE Writers' Program with the support of our Playwrights Giving Circle Donors, The Ian Potter Foundation, The Myer Foundation, Malcolm Robertson Foundation and The University of Melbourne.

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BLACK IS THE NEW WHITE

by Nakkiah Lui



Nakkiah Lui's hit Australian satire ***Black is the New White*** arrives in Melbourne following two sell-out seasons in Sydney and a critically acclaimed run in Brisbane.

Opening on **Saturday 5 October** at Southbank Theatre, STC Associate Director **Paige Rattray** (*Boys Will Be Boys*) directs an array of brilliant, unpredictable and loveable characters played by **Kylie Bracknell, Tony Briggs, Luke Carroll, Vanessa Downing, Melodie Reynolds-Diarra, Tom Stokes** and **Anthony Taufa** in this laugh-out-loud romantic comedy.

Nakkiah Lui said, 'I wanted to present a family of Aboriginal people that hasn't been seen before in the Australian canon – not just in theatre, but in any form. That is, an Aboriginal family who have money, who are not oppressed but who are culturally quite strong. For me, that is quite similar to what I grew up with – a regular family who were political and culturally connected to their community.'

Paige Rattray said, '***Black is the New White*** is a play that comes along once in a lifetime. It has been an incredible privilege to work on. The cast are ridiculously talented, as well as being hilarious and Nakkiah is a downright genius. We are very lucky to have her writing for our stages.'

Charlotte Gibson is a lawyer with a brilliant career ahead of her. As her father Ray says, she could be the next female Indigenous Waleed Aly. But she has other ideas ... she's in love. The thing is, her fiancé, Francis Smith, is not what her family expected – he's unemployed, he's an experimental composer ... and he's white! When the families come together for Christmas, the stage is set for a riotously funny struggle for dominance where insults fly, secrets come flooding out and sacred cows of all descriptions are mercilessly skewered.

Paige Rattray is currently Associate Director at STC. Prior to that, she was Queensland Theatre's Associate Artistic Director. Directing work for STC includes *Black is the New White*, *Australian Graffiti*, *Power Plays* and *Boys will be Boys*. She worked as Dramaturg on *The Golden Age* and Assistant Director on *Speed-the-Plow*, *Arms and the Man*, *Battle of Waterloo* and *Travelling North*. Paige was Richard Wherrett Fellow at Sydney Theatre Company in 2015-2016, is co-founder of independent theatre company Arthur, was the 2011 Resident Director at Griffin Theatre Company as well as its 2010 Affiliate Director. Other directing credits include *Scenes From a Marriage*, *Hedda*, *Switzerland (QT)*, *Bright World*, *The Sea Project*, *Return to Earth*, *The Myth Project: Twin*, *The Mesh*, *The Midlands*, *Dirtyland*, *Cut Snake* (Arthur), and *Heartbreak Hotel* (Griffin Theatre Company).

Nakkiah Lui is a writer/actor and Gamillaroi/Torres Strait Islander woman. She was a co-writer and star of ABC's *Black Comedy*. She has been an artist in residence at Griffin Theatre Company (2013) and was playwright in residence at Belvoir from 2012-2014. In 2012, Nakkiah was the first recipient of The Dreaming Award from The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Arts Board of the Australia Council. The same year, Nakkiah was also the inaugural recipient of the Balnaves Foundation Indigenous Playwright Award. In 2014, Nakkiah was the recipient of the Malcolm Robertson Prize and a Green Room Award for Best Independent Production. Most recently, Nakkiah won the NSW Premier's Literary Award 2018; Nick Enright Prize for Playwriting for *Black is the New White*. Nakkiah co-hosts the BuzzFeed podcast series, *Pretty for an Aboriginal*, with Miranda Tapsell and has appeared as a regular guest on *Screen Time* on ABC. Her latest six-part comedy series, *Kiki & Kitty*, premiered on ABC Comedy in 2017.

★★★★

'A thought provoking, joyously entertaining comedy.'
Daily telegraph

'This comedy deserves to become a classic.'
The Australian

Cast includes Kylie Bracknell (Kaarlijlba Kaardn), Tony Briggs, Luke Carroll, Vanessa Downing, Melodie Reynolds-Diarra, Tom Stokes, Anthony Taufa

Director Paige Rattray
Designer Renée Mulder
Lighting Designer Ben Hughes
Composer & Sound Designer Steve Toulmin

Season Dates
2 October – 6 November

Opening Night
Saturday 5 October

Venue
Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Subscriptions
On sale from Tuesday 4 September, 9pm

Tickets
On sale from Thursday 7 March

mtc.com.au/2019
03 8688 0800

A Sydney Theatre Company production

SYDNEY
THEATRE
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Presented in association with
Melbourne International Arts Festival

MELBOURNE
International Arts
FESTIVAL

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MTC MELBOURNE
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PHOTOGRAPH

51

by Anna Ziegler

Nadine Garner (*Di and Viv and Rose*) returns to the stage in the Australian premiere of **Anna Ziegler's Photograph 51**, a delicate exploration of sacrifice in the pursuit of science, love and a place in history.

Opening on **Thursday 7 November** at Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio and directed by **Pamela Rabe** (*Jumpy*), **Photograph 51** is a moving portrait of the brilliant British scientist, Rosalind Franklin, who became an unsung hero in the race to capture the 'secret of life'.

Pamela Rabe said, 'I love science. I love thrillers. I love forgotten history. And particularly the forgotten stories of women who have changed our world. Rosalind Franklin should be a household name – she was a key contributor to one of the greatest discoveries of modern times. But because of the era she lived in, working with singular focus and meticulous skill in a field dominated by men, she paid a price. I can think of no one better to embody her ferocious intelligence, independent spirit and prickly integrity than Nadine Garner, and I look forward to audiences being beguiled by Rosalind's story. This beautiful, delicate play invites us to put her back in the picture.'

Rosalind Franklin was one of the great scientists of the 20th century. In 1952 she used X-ray diffraction photography to examine the intricate structure of DNA, but her trail-blazing work was never recognised. The scientific establishment at King's College, London simply could not cope with her genius, her self-confidence or her stern disregard for authority. Threatened by her brilliance, Rosalind's rivals scandalously stole her research and were awarded the Nobel Prize for discovering the double helix.

Anna Ziegler is an award-winning playwright who received London's WhatsOnStage award for Best New Play in 2016 for *Photograph 51*. It was selected as a Best of the Year play by *The Washington Post* and *The Telegraph*. Her play *Boy* was nominated for the 2016 John Gassner Award by the NY Outer Critics Circle. In 2017, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Manhattan Theatre Club and Geffen Playhouse premiered her play *Actually* (winner of the Ovation Award in Los Angeles for Playwriting of an Original Play), and Roundabout Theatre Company produced *The Last Match*. Geffen Playhouse will produce her new adaptation of *Antigone* in 2019. She currently holds commissions from Roundabout Theatre Company, Geffen Playhouse, Second Stage Theater, Seattle Rep and Grove/Whitman Productions.

Pamela Rabe has directed *Jumpy*, *Solomon and Marion* and *Elling* for MTC; *In the Next Room or the Vibrator Play*, *Elling*, and *The Serpent's Teeth: Citizens* for STC; and *Porn.cake* for Malthouse Theatre. As an actor, she has appeared for MTC in more than 40 productions including *The Children*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *His Girl Friday*, *Hamlet*, *Boston Marriage*, *God of Carnage*, *Things We Do for Love*, *Dinner*, *Blithe Spirit*, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, *A Little Night Music*, and *Private Lives*. She has performed for most major theatre companies in Australia, notably in ten productions as a founding member of STC's Actors Company, including *The War of the Roses*, *The Lost Echo*, and *Mother Courage and Her Children*. Her other STC productions include *The Cherry Orchard*, *Holy Day*, *Three Sisters*, and *The Ham Funeral*. Most recently, she has appeared for Belvoir in *The Glass Menagerie* and *Ghosts*, and for Malthouse Theatre in *The Testament of Mary*.

'A beautiful, tender, and surprising play.'
The Stage

'A triumph.'
The Telegraph

Cast includes Nadine Garner

Director Pamela Rabe

Season Dates
1 November – 14 December

Opening Night
Thursday 7 November

Venue
Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio

Subscriptions
On sale from Tuesday 4 September, 9pm

Tickets
On sale from Thursday 7 March

mtc.com.au/2019
03 8688 0800

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MEDIA RELEASE
4 SEPTEMBER 2018

KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN

BOOK BY
TERRENCE McNALLY

MUSIC BY
JOHN KANDER

LYRICS BY
FRED EBB

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY
MANUEL PUIG

The legendary **Caroline O'Connor** (*Bombshells*) returns to Melbourne Theatre Company in ***Kiss of the Spider Woman***, the Tony Award-winning musical from **Kander & Ebb** (*Chicago*, *Cabaret*), with book by **Terrence McNally**, directed by **Dean Bryant** (*Sweet Charity*).

For the first time in Australia, this redemptive story of love, fantasy and the kind of friendship that develops when humanity is pushed to its limits will receive a major musical production, opening **Friday 22 November** at Southbank Theatre. **Adam Jon Fiorentino** (*Aladdin*), **Natalie Gamsu** (*Mary Poppins*), **Bert LaBonté** (*The Book of Mormon*) will star alongside **Caroline O'Connor**.

Dean Bryant said 'I've been dreaming of building this thrilling musical with the incandescent Caroline O'Connor as Aurora, the ultimate cinematic vision of song-and-dance glamour. This musical has the electricity of Kander & Ebb's biggest hits; *Cabaret* and *Chicago*, while being a heart-wrenching tale of human survival.'

Based on the 1976 novel by Manuel Puig, ***Kiss of the Spider Woman*** has been adapted into a play, an Academy Award-winning film and Tony Award-winning Broadway musical. In a dark South American prison, two very different men share a small cell. Valentin is a Marxist revolutionary who refuses to betray his comrades. Molina is a gay window dresser who distracts himself by escaping to a fantasy world of movies starring the glamorous diva, Aurora. Valentin can't stand Molina's cinematic fantasies but eventually, as they share their visions for a better life, they develop a deep bond.

Kander & Ebb were an American song writing duo made up of John Kander and Fred Ebb who worked together for more than 40 years, from the mid-1960s to the early 2000s. They are responsible for the scores for many successful musicals and films including *Cabaret*, *Chicago*, *Woman of the Year*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *The Happy Time*, *Zorba*, *Seventy Girls Seventy*, *Steel Pier*, *Funny Lady* and *New York, New York*. In 1991 they were inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame in New York.

Terrence McNally is a highly regarded American playwright, librettist and screenwriter whose works often draw on the theme of how people connect and fail to connect. He won a Tony Award for Best Play for *Master Class* and *Love! Valour! Compassion!* and a Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical for *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. His love of music saw him collaborate on other musicals including *The Rink* and *Ragtime*.

Dean Bryant is one of Australia's most accomplished and versatile directors. He has directed numerous productions for MTC including *An Ideal Husband*, *Wild*, *Vivid White*, *Born Yesterday*, *Skylight*, *I'll Eat You Last* and *Next to Normal*. 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 MTC. His other directing credits include *Assassins*, *Sweet Charity* (Helpmann Award, Best Director of a Musical) and *Little Shop of Horrors* (Sydney Theatre Award, Best Director of a Musical) for Hayes Theatre Company; for Opera Australia *Two Weddings*, *One Bride* and *Anything Goes* (also GFO); *DreamSong* (Theatre Works); *Straight* (Red Stitch); *The Last Five Years*, *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*. Dean created verbatim piece *Gaybies* (Midsumma, Darlinghurst Theatre Company) and is Worldwide Associate Director of *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert - The Musical*.

Winner of 7 Tony Awards including Best Musical

Cast includes Adam Jon Fiorentino, Natalie Gamsu, Bert LaBonté, Caroline O'Connor

Director Dean Bryant
Lighting Designer Matt Scott
Choreographer Andrew Hallsworth

Season Dates
18 November – 28 December

Opening Night
Friday 22 November

Venue
Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Subscriptions
On sale from Tuesday 4 September, 9pm

Tickets
On sale from Wednesday 19 June

mtc.com.au/2019
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NEXT STAGE

WRITERS' PROGRAM

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

Through increased resources dedicated to commissioning, workshopping and developing plays, NEXT STAGE allows MTC to both build on existing and foster new artistic relationships over the long-term and on a scale that was previously unattainable.

It is the most rigorous playwright commissioning and development process ever undertaken by the Company, and has set a new benchmark for play development in Australia.

Now in its second year, there are 20 writers under commission or in residency as part of the program, and in 2019 the first commission to be produced will take to the stage as *Golden Shield* by Anchuli Felicia King receives its world premiere.

For more information about the program and the NEXT STAGE writers visit mtc.com.au/NEXTSTAGE

COMMISSIONED WRITERS

Angus Cerini
Patricia Cornelius
Louris van de Geer
Michael Gow
Tom Holloway
Anchuli Felicia King
Benjamin Law
Joanna Murray-Smith
Ellen van Neerven
Joe Penhall
Leah Purcell
Chris Ryan, Megan Washington (composer) and Mark Leonard Winter

WRITERS-IN-RESIDENCE

Declan Furber Gillick
Dan Giovannoni
Melissa Reeves
Chris Summers
Natesha Somasundaram
Kylie Trounson

NEXT STAGE is made possible by MTC's Playwrights Giving Circle

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 is a department of the University of Melbourne



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, tours of MTC HQ, **curriculum-based workshops** for students and **professional development seminars** for teachers. For the past two years MTC has partnered with Distance Education Centre Victoria to run a Year 8 Drama course.

MTC also produces theatre made especially for students, and in 2019 MTC's Education production is *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You* by Finegan Kruckemeyer. This production will premiere at Southbank Theatre in May 2019 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, Youth Ambassador Giving Circle, The Betty Amsden Foundation and Gailey Lazarus Charitable Foundation

SHARING THE LIGHT

MTC is passionate about making theatre accessible for all and through 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, 220 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 4,000 students from outer-metro and regional areas to get to the theatre.

Through *Sharing the Light*, MTC also offers an **Indigenous Scholarship Program** to help create career and further study pathways for young Indigenous people. This program takes the form of four week-long intensive workshops in the school holidays and is designed to allow participants to learn about different roles within the industry through the creation of their own performance piece.

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

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MTC MELBOURNE
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MTC INITIATIVES



CAAP DIRECTORS PROGRAM

For the next two years MTC will be working with four emerging directors as part of the CAAP Directors Initiative, a new program offered in partnership with Sydney Theatre Company, Queensland Theatre and Contemporary Asian Australian Performance (CAAP). Ra Chapman, Joe Paradise Lui, Diana Nguyen and Alice Qin have been selected for the MTC component of the program, which will involve a series of seminars, workshops, networking opportunities and placements to observe MTC productions up-close. A further nine directors have been selected by STC and Queensland Theatre to participate in the program in Sydney and Brisbane. For more information visit mtc.com.au/ArtistAccess

CYBEC ELECTRIC PLAY READING SERIES

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 *Hungry Ghosts* by Jean Tong, *The Waiting Room* by Kylie Trounson, *Melbourne Talam* by Rashma N. Kalsie and *8 Gigabytes of Hardcore Pornography* by Declan Greene. 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 supports women pursuing careers in theatre. The program encompasses a broad range of disciplines from production to artistic, design, education, and executive management, and has assisted 57 women in their career pursuits since 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 2019 Women in Theatre Program and details about the application process will be available in late 2018, with the program due to commence in early 2019. For more information visit mtc.com.au/ArtistAccess

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

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MTC MELBOURNE
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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.

MTC is the state theatre company of Victoria and has over 22,000 subscribers. The Company stages over 550 performances annually and through its mainstage season, tours, education productions, public readings and other events, reaches more than 200,000 attendances each year.

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, CAAP Directors Initiative and secondments. MTC also collaborates with companies and artists from the independent and small-to-medium sector through NEON NEXT and other initiatives.




MTC is now in the second year of its NEXT STAGE Writers' Program, a \$4.6 million investment in Australian writers co-funded by the foundations and donors of MTC's Playwrights Giving Circle and MTC. The program addresses the need for greater investment in Australian writers through increased resources dedicated to commissioning, workshopping and developing plays. To date there are 20 writers under commission or in residency as part of the program.

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, supported by the Crown Resorts Foundation and Packer Family Foundation, is making a significant impact on the lives of young people through 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'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 (559 seats), with smaller-scale works and other activities in the Lawler (163 seats). The balance of the mainstage season is staged at nearby Arts Centre Melbourne's Playhouse (882 seats) and Fairfax Studio (376 seats), 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. Approximately 56% of MTC's revenue comes from the Box Office; 13% from private donations; 8% (net of government duties) from the government; 7% from corporate partnerships; and the remaining 14% from other income such as Southbank Theatre venue hire.

Support from the private sector is increasingly vital to the sustainability of MTC and the Company is fortunate to have a community of passionate donors and corporate partners. In 2016 MTC launched its Foundation to manage and distribute all donations and bequests to the Company. The MTC Foundation is also responsible for building and managing MTC's general endowment fund to help secure a strong and artistically vibrant future for the organisation.

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