

MEDIA RELEASE  
6 May 2015

EXCESS ALL AREAS

# BIRDLAND

BY SIMON STEPHENS

MTC

Cast **Michala Banas**, **Bert LaBonté**,  
**Socratis Otto**, **Anna Samson**,  
**Peta Sergeant**, **Mark Leonard Winter**  
Director **Leticia Cáceres**  
Set Designer **Marg Horwell**  
Costume Designer **Adam Gardnir**  
Lighting Designer **Andy Turner**  
Composer & Sound Designer  
**Jethro Woodward**  
Voice & Dialect Coach **Geraldine Cook**

★★★★★

*'As hypnotically tell-all as the best rock biography ... it's funny and it's tragic.'*

Exeunt Magazine

*'Simon Stephens [is] one of Britain's most important contemporary playwrights.'* ABC Arts

*'Ceaselessly inventive critique of rock stardom.'* The Guardian

## Venue

Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

## Season dates

Saturday 6 June – Saturday 11 July 2015

## Opening night

8pm Thursday 11 June 2015

## Production Briefing

6pm Monday 1 June 2015

## Tickets

\$36 – \$106

## Bookings

Southbank Theatre Box Office  
03 8688 0800 or [mtc.com.au](http://mtc.com.au)

#mtcBirdland  
@MelbTheatreCo  
[mtc.com.au/Birdland](http://mtc.com.au/Birdland)

From award-winning British playwright **Simon Stephens** comes *Birdland*, a piercing satire about celebrity obsession starring **Mark Leonard Winter**, **Michala Banas** and **Peta Sergeant**. Directed by MTC Associate Director **Leticia Cáceres**, this sexy and revealing exploration of fame and stardom in the 21st century opens at **8pm Thursday 11 June 2015** at **Southbank Theatre, The Sumner**.

Director **Leticia Cáceres** said, '*Birdland* charts the unravelling of a man who seemingly has it all, taking us behind the glitter and glamour of rock & roll to reveal a victim of his own fortune. **Simon Stephens** does this with great wit and deft writing, resulting in one of the most innovative new plays to come out of London in the past twelve months. I'm thrilled to be collaborating with such a mesmerizingly talented cast and crew on this exciting Australian premiere.'

Following his hugely successful adaptation of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, **Simon Stephens** wrote *Birdland* as an examination of fame, fortune and decadent disregard in our celebrity obsessed world.

**Mark Leonard Winter** (*Balibo*) takes the lead as Paul, the damaged idol whose fame and fortune is at a catastrophic high. He is joined by a stellar ensemble featuring **Michala Banas** (*Upper Middle Bogan*), **Bert LaBonté** (*The Mountaintop*), **Socratis Otto** (*Wentworth*), **Anna Samson** (*The Sublime*), and **Peta Sergeant** (*House of Hancock*).

With a week left on his sold-out international tour, rock star Paul is more famous than ever. Everybody looks when he walks into a room. They all know his name. They know he can have whatever he wants. He can screw anybody he wants. Buy anything. Eat anything. Drink anything. Smoke anything. Go anywhere. But the pressure is starting to get to him, and with the inevitable return home looming, Paul is set to implode at any moment.

**Simon Stephens** has gained a reputation as one of Britain's most important contemporary playwrights. His work includes *Wastwater*, *Motortown*, *Hérons* and *Bluebird* (Royal Court Theatre); the Olivier Award-winning adaptation of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, *Harper Regan* and *Port* (National Theatre); an adaptation of *A Doll's House* (Young Vic); *Punk Rock* (Royal Exchange, Manchester and Lyric Hammersmith); *Pornography* (Edinburgh Festival); and *On the Shore of the Wide World* (Royal Exchange, Manchester and National Theatre). He won the Pearson Award for Best New Play for *Port*; an Olivier Award for Best New Play for *On the Shore of the Wide World*; and for *Motortown* German critics in Theater Heute's annual poll voted him Best Foreign Playwright in 2007. Stephens has also written radio plays and adapted a number of works for screen. He is currently an Associate Artist at London's Lyric Theatre.

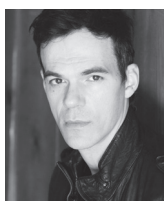
**MTC Associate Director Leticia Cáceres** has been lauded as one of the most exciting talents in the country. For MTC she has directed *The Effect*, *Cock*, *Constellations*, *Yellow Moon*, *Helicopter* and *Random*. She has also directed for Belvoir (*Miss Julie* and *The Dark Room*, nominated for seven Sydney Theatre Awards), La Mama (*Tall Man*), Creative Regions (*Tales of the Underground*), Queensland Theatre Company (*The Orphanage Project*, *Far Away*, and *The Memory of Water*), Sydney Opera House (*Random*, *Hoods*, and *Children of the Black Skirt*, all recipients of Drama Victoria Awards), La Boite Theatre/Brisbane Festival (*Kingswood Kids*), Arts Centre Melbourne, and Brisbane Powerhouse (*Hoods* and *Children of the Black Skirt*). She is the co-founder of nationally-acclaimed independent theatre company RealTV whose seminal work *Hoods* won the 2009 Matilda Award for Best Independent Production. RealTV is currently under commission with Belvoir.



Michala Banas



Bert LaBonté



Socratis Otto



Anna Samson



Peta Sergeant



Mark Leonard Winter

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MTC is a department of the University of Melbourne

