

Welcome



One of the many special things about theatre is its ability to help us examine and make sense of the world in which we live. It is a playground and laboratory for ideas, discussions and exploration as we grapple with the modern world.

Mike Bartlett's *Wild* is a mystery thriller tackling some of the biggest issues of the digital era – privacy, identity, surveillance and security. This Australian premiere production may leave you with more questions than answers, but it is perhaps one of the most important plays to come out of London in recent years. You need only look to the daily news for evidence of this play's currency.

Wild welcomes back three extraordinary actors to MTC; Nicholas Denton, who was last seen in Jasper

Jones, Anna Lise Phillips and Toby Schmitz, with MTC Associate Director Dean Bryant leading an excellent creative team that includes Sound Designer Sidney Millar, a member of MTC's 2018 Women in Theatre program.

At MTC we are fortunate to have a company of exceptional artisans on staff, whose craftsmanship is on display in each and every production. Their creativity and dedication to the art of theatre sees every challenge met with passion and determination to always find a solution. As you'll see in *Wild*, some ingenious technological feats are at play and special mention must go to our Production Department for their brilliant work in making it possible. Enjoy.

Virginia Lovett Executive Director Brett Sheehy Ao Artistic Director

Melbourne Theatre Company acknowledges the Yalukit Willam Peoples of the Boon Wurrung, the Traditional Owners of the land on which Southbank Theatre and MTC HQ stand, and we pay our respects to Melbourne's First Peoples, to their ancestors past and present, and to our shared future.

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 Creative Victoria.









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



WILD BY MIKE BARTLETT

5 MAY - 9 JUNE, 2018

Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

About the play

Ordinary Joe one day – America's Most Wanted the next. That's what happens when you leak top-secret government intelligence. Now Andrew is on the run, holed up in a Russian hotel room – a political pawn with a target on his back, and no idea who to trust.

— Cast —

Andrew Nicholas Denton Woman Anna Lise Phillips Man Toby Schmitz

Creative Team

Director Dean Bryant
Set Designer Andrew Bailey
Costume Designer Owen Phillips

Lighting Designer Ross Graham
Composer & Sound Designer Sidney Millar
Voice & Dialect Coach Geraldine Cook-Dafner
Assistant Director Charlotte Day
Video Designer Jamie Clennett
Stage Manager Whitney McNamara
Assistant Stage Manager Kaytlin Petrarca
Rehearsal Photographer Deryk McAlpin
Production Photographer Jeff Busby

For information regarding running time, please see a member of the Front of House team.

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WILD was first produced by Hampstead Theatre on 11th June 2016
The text of the play is published by and available from Nick Hern Books





hen Edward Snowden leaked hundreds of thousands of classified documents from the National Security Agency (NSA) in 2013, he was instantly labelled both a hero and a traitor. Overnight he revealed to the world that the US government had undertaken blanket surveillance of its own citizens, and other nationals, through their individual devices and online accounts. In an interview with reporter Glenn Greenwald from *The Guardian*, Snowden called the NSA's practice, 'the largest program of "suspicionless" surveillance in human history.'

At the time, many people said, 'we have nothing to hide', addressing Snowden's revelations with a collective shrug. In an interview with Jean-Michel Jarre, Snowden replied to this sentiment by saying, 'Arguing that you don't care about the right to privacy because you have nothing to hide is no different than saying you don't care about free speech because you have nothing to say. It's a deeply anti-social

principle because rights are not just individual, they're collective, and what may not have value to you today may have value to an entire population, an entire people, an entire way of life, tomorrow.'

Snowden's motivation for blowing the lid off this program of government monitoring came down to his belief in the Fourth Amendment to the US Constitution. 'Under observation, we act less free, which means we effectively are less free.'

In 2014, both *The Guardian* and *The Washington Post* collected a Pulitzer Prize for Public Service for their reporting on the scope of the NSA's surveillance, made possible by Snowden's whistle-blowing. The following year, *Citizenfour* won the Academy Award for documenting Snowden's real-life espionage story and the incredible risks that he and the reporters involved overcame to bring the truth to light.



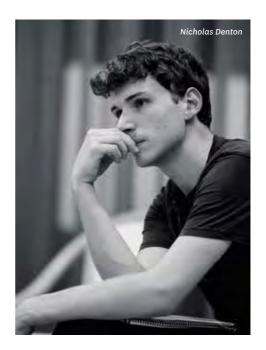
Five years on, after sparking universal controversy and debate, Snowden remains in asylum in Moscow, having had his US passport revoked for two counts of violating the Espionage Act of 1917, and for theft of government property. Russian President Vladimir Putin said Snowden could expect to feel safe in Russia, as long as he didn't inflict any damage on the Russian people.

War journalist Chris Hedges likens Snowden's crusade to the most high profile political activists and whistle-blowers of the last century, saying that moral courage is always defined by the State as treason. 'It is the courage to act and speak the truth. Thompson had it. Daniel Ellsberg had it. Malcolm X had it. Martin Luther King had it. What those in authority once said about them, they say today about Snowden.'

In April this year, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg testified before Congress over his company's involvement in the Cambridge Analytica data scandal, where 87 million Facebook users had their private information harvested to develop psychographic profiles.

Yet the scandal would not have broken if it weren't for Canadian whistle-blower Christopher Wylie, a co-founder of the British political data analytics firm, who revealed that millions of accounts had been carefully selected and targeted with political messaging in the lead up to Donald Trump's election and the Brexit vote.

Unlike Snowden, Wylie didn't breach the United States' Espionage Act by whistle-blowing, and as a result hasn't been rendered stateless. While Snowden continues to seek asylum in Russia as one of America's most wanted fugitives, he



'Under observation, we act less free, which means we effectively are less free.'

continues his campaign for governmental transparency. On his personal website Snowden notes, 'I don't want to live in a world where everything I say, everything I do, everyone I talk to, every expression of creativity and love or friendship is recorded.'

However, the reality remains, the vast majority of the 2.2 billion active users on Facebook every month continue to hand their information over eagerly and effusively. In exchange for the ability to connect instantly with anyone, from anywhere in the world, for free.



What do you value most, freedom or safety?

In the latest edition of our MTC Talks podcast, playwright Mike Bartlett ruminates on the modern age of surveillance.

Mike Bartlett's play Wild takes the story of exposing a major government scandal as its starting point to dissect themes of surveillance, privacy, sovereignty and truth.

'When Edward Snowden was in a hotel room in Moscow and I heard that he was visited by someone from Wikileaks, I just thought, that's such an absurd, strange position for him to be in. To give up his life and to feel that [what he did] was so important,' Bartlett says. 'I got more interested in the existential reality behind it – ideas of privacy, ideas of reality ... the difference between a subjective and objective reality.'

For Bartlett, the most interesting aspect of the Edward Snowden story is that despite revealing to the whole world that the United States government were tracking and spying on their own citizens, most American people still don't know who Edward Snowden is. 'The whole [script] plays with the idea of, "Do we care about the stuff we should care about?" Or is it easier to not care about this stuff?'

Since the play's premiere just two years ago, the world has changed dramatically, Bartlett says. 'The things we've trusted, we now don't. The world has become increasingly horrific and absurd and is feeling quite

dangerous because of that. I think what people are grasping for is some truth again ... something to hold onto because the ground seems to be shifting. What happens when you can't trust anything?'

Bartlett doesn't believe that we have come to a collective consensus on how much intrusion we're willing to allow and how much freedom we're willing to give up.

'Most of us are just sort of sleepwalking into a world where we have absolutely no privacy whatsoever – whether that's to governments or corporations. As long as nothing happens to us, that's fine. But I think the fear that I have, and a lot of people have, is what happens when the wrong people get into government? What happens when a corporation doesn't have checks and balances to not misuse that information? Is there a value in privacy? I suppose for me, there is.'



Listen to the full conversation with playwright Mike Bartlett at mtc.com.au/MTCTalks or subscribe to MTC Talks via iTunes or SoundCloud.



A sense of discovery

Director Dean Bryant sat down with 'himself' during rehearsals to talk about *Wild*.

DB: What did you love about *Wild* when you read it?

DB: The wordplay hits you first. It's so English and delicious and so aware of the game of language. The play's title references the Queen of Victorian Wordplay himself, the great Oscar Wilde, and the first line of one of his characters, the paradoxical Miss Prism.

Reading across a swathe of Mike Bartlett plays, he has such fun with how delightful and mysterious the English language is. It's a treat to work on a play that takes joy in language; that relishes being silly.

DB: So it's funny?

DB: It's ripe. It's not especially funny to Andrew, who is the victim of a lot of the language.

DB: He takes himself very seriously.

DB: Well, he's American.

DB: Cheap shot.

DB: I know. okay, he takes himself seriously because he's done a huge thing – sacrificed his existence to reveal that the US government is spying on its own citizens. He's now on the run in a Moscow hotel room

with no idea of what his life will entail.

DB: Like Edward Snowden five years ago. So it's sort of a docudrama?

DB: It's more like a riff on a real-world subject. Bartlett takes the Snowden facts as a jumping-off interrogation of what he intended, and what happens if you follow that through to an extreme outcome. Bartlett literally interrogates our standing on whether it's good to know what the government is doing.

DB: So is he a hero or traitor?

A: He could be either, depending on how you angle the prism. Or he could be worse. Insignificant.

DB: That's worse?

A: Isn't that part of why social media has flourished? We want to prove we exist and matter. Offspring and achievements and money used to be how we proved it. Now followers and likes do the heavy lifting.

DB: The timing of the play seems prescient.

DB: Yes, we prophesied that Facebook would go nuclear around about now. Theatre has always been about topicality.



DB: Has it?

DB: ...no. It's a happy coincidence.

DB: What do you think about Facebook?

DB: I felt quite chuffed that I deactivated it a week before the scandal. I liked being ahead of the curve but I was also chuffed at just achieving that – it's actually quite difficult. Facebook blatantly uses emotional blackmail if you try to leave. "Your mum will miss you" and a sad photo of her. I do miss the birthday reminders though.

DB: I've read the script-

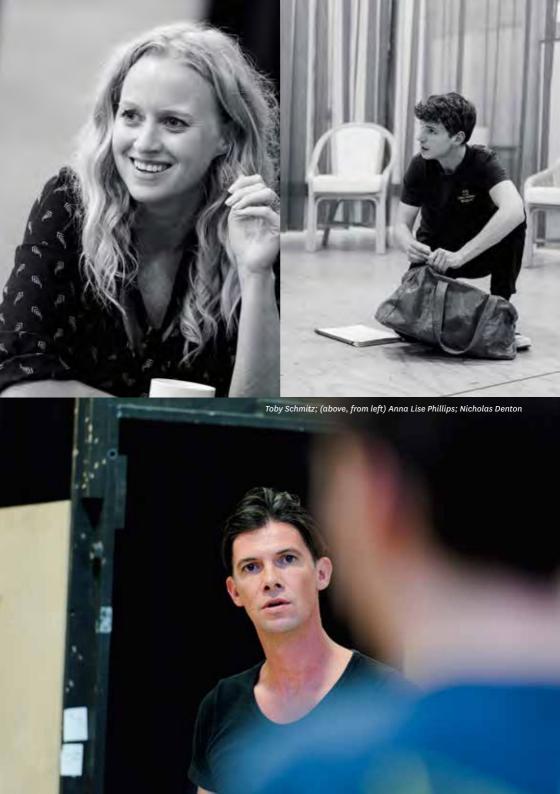
DB: -that's a relief-

DB: —and there's some challenges ahead. Can you talk about that?

DB: Unlike Snowden, I haven't signed any confidentiality agreements. My allegiance is only to the audience's sense of discovery. So yes, we follow Bartlett's thorough debunking of trust in all authority, even that of the physical world. If only theatre technology was as willing to come to the party as our actors, it would have been a much simpler resolution.

DB: That was a very confusing sentence. It felt like it said something, but as I tried to grab on, it slipped away.

DB: Welcome to the world of Wild.



THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET



Cast & Creative Team



NICHOLAS DENTON

Melbourne born actor Nicholas Denton was previously seen at Melbourne Theatre Company as Charlie Bucktin in the critically acclaimed production of Jasper Jones, which will be remounted this year at Oueensland Theatre. Nicholas will also be seen this vear in Sarah Goodes's production of Astroman for MTC. His other theatre credits include: One Flew Over The Cuckoos Nest (Lawler Theatre/Monster Media); Smoking Joe, Cowboy Mouth (Old 505, Sydney); Love Song by John Kolvenbach (Melbourne Fringe), The Glass Menagerie (Melbourne Fringe); The Sugar Syndrome (The Kings Collective); Out of Gas On Lovers Leap (Gasworks Arts Park) and Monologue for a Murderer (La Mama Theatre). In television. Nicholas has appeared in Glitch Season 1 and 2 (Matchbox Pictures/Netflix) and performances on film include Holding the Man, Kath and Kimderella and recent horror film The Unlit. Nicholas was also the recipient of the Best Actor Award (Rabbit, 2015) at the St Kilda Film Festival.



ANNA LISE PHILLIPS

Woman

Anna Lise Phillips last tread the boards of Melbourne Theatre Company opposite Guy Pearce in Sweet Bird of Youth. Stage exploits include Romeo and Juliet and Festen (Sydney Theatre Company), The Dark Room, Gates of Egypt and The Spook (Belvoir), When the Rain Stops Falling (Brink Productions), Don't Say the Words (Griffin Theatre), Becky Shaw (Ensemble Theatre) and Transparency (Seymour Centre). Film credits include Sensitivity Training, Backtrack, The Tank, The Pack, Walking on Water, Envy, The Boys, and Sundance award-winning feature, Animal Kingdom. Anna Lise currently stars in Harrow (ABC). TV highlights include Devil's Playground (Foxtel), Revolution (NBC), The Son (AMC), Bastard Boys (ABC), The Secret Life of Us (Ten), A Difficult Woman (ABC), Young Lions (Nine) and US biopic The Three Stooges (Icon). Anna Lise was nominated for an AFI/ AACTA for best supporting actor for her role in Envy (2002) and won a Glug for her titular performance in Becky Shaw (2012). Anna Lise is a proud member of Equity (MEAA).



TOBY SCHMITZ

Man

Toby Schmitz is a writer, director and actor. Theatre acting credits include: Hamlet, The Wild Duck, Thyestes, Strange Interlude, Private Lives, Measure for Measure, Ruben Guthrie, The Rover (Belvoir); Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead. Travesties, The Present, The School for Scandal, Major Barbara, The Great, Hanging Man, The Great Man, Rabbit (Sydney Theatre Company); The Importance of Being Earnest (Melbourne Theatre Company); Much Ado About Nothing (Bell Shakespeare); The Boyce Trilogy (Griffin Theatre); The Lonesome West (BSharp); Men (Old Fitzroy Theatre); Hamlet (La Boite). His plays include Capture The Flag, I Want To Sleep With Tom Stoppard, This Blasted Earth (with Travis Cotton and Tim Minchin), Chicks Will Dig You! and Lucky for which he won the Patrick White Award. His directing credits include Boy's Life, This Is How It Goes, Shakespearealism, Howie the Rookie, and This Much Is True. TV credits include: Black Sails (Starz). Film credits include: Somersault, Griff The Invisible and The Rage in Placid Lake.

GO BEHIND THE SCENES OF WILD







Watch Director Dean Bryant discuss Mike Bartlett's darkly comic play.



Read interviews with Anna Lise Phillips and Nicholas Denton about their characters in *Wild*







Learn about the creation of *Wild's* innovative set design. Andrew Bailey takes us on a journey into the world of his extraordinary and technical imagination.



Learn about the rehearsal process and development of *Wild's* sound design and composition. Sidney Millar introduces us to her world of audio

Cast & Creative Team



MIKE BARTLETT
Playwright

Plays for theatre include Wild (Hampstead Theatre); Game (Almeida), King Charles III (Almeida Theatre/Wyndham's Theatre/Music Box Theatre, New York), An Intervention (Paines Plough/Watford), Bull (Sheffield Theatres/Off Broadway/Young Vic), Medeα (Headlong/Glasgow Citizens/Watford/Warwick), Chariots of Fire (Hampstead Theatre/Gielgud Theatre), 13 (National Theatre), Decade (co-writer Headlong), Earthquakes in London (Headlong, National Theatre). Love, Love, Love (Paines Plough/ Plymouth Theatre Royal/Royal Court/Roundabout Theatre Company, New York), Cock, Contractions, My Child (Royal Court Theatre), Artefacts (Bush Theatre/Nabokov). Plays for radio include King Charles III, Cock, Heart, The Core, Family Man, Love Contract (BBC Radio 4), The Steps, Not Talking (BBC Radio 3). As Director, Bartlett's plays include Medea (Headlong/ Glasgow Citizens/Watford/ Warwick) and Honest (Theatre Royal Northampton). Bartlett won a 2015 Olivier Awards for King Charles III. Love, Love, Love won Best New Play in the 2011 Theatre Awards UK and Cock won an Olivier Award in 2010 for Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre.



DEAN BRYANT
Director

MTC Associate Director Dean Bryant has previously directed Vivid White. Born Yesterday. Skylight, I'll Eat You Last and Next to Normal for the Company. He also worked on Macheth. The Drowsy Chaperone, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (and STC season), Hitchcock Blonde and Urinetown (and STC season). For Hayes Theatre Dean directed Assassins, Sweet Charity (Helpmann Award) and Little Shop of Horrors (Sydney Theatre Award); for Opera Australia Two Weddings, One Bride and Anything Goes (and GFO). Other credits include Once We Lived Here (London season), DreamSong (TheatreWorks), Straight (Red Stitch), The Last Five Years and five musicals for The Production Company. With composer Mathew Frank, he wrote Green Room awardwinning musicals *Prodigal* and Once We Lived Here, as well as 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, Darlinghurst Theatre Company). Dean is Worldwide Associate Director of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert - The Musical and is a graduate of WAAPA.



ANDREW BAILEY
Set Designer

Andrew studied Design at the VCA School of Production. graduating in 2004. Some of his recent designs include Grief and the Lullaby (Theatre Works Flight Festival), as well as Melbourne Theatre Company's Melbourne Talam, Double Indemnity, Lungs, The Boy at the Edge of Everything, What Rhymes with Cars and Girls, The Effect (2014 Green Room Award nomination), Beached, Happy Ending, The Golden Dragon, On the Production of Monsters (2012 Green Room Award nomination), The Joy of Text, Songs for Nobodies, Ruby Moon, and, for MTC Education, Explorations: A Streetcar Named Desire. Some of his other site-specific designs include The Stream/The Shore/ The Boat/The Bridge (Next Wave Festival; 2012 Green Room Award), Southern Crossings (Green Room Award), Pillow Talk, 24003 and This is Our Youth. Andrew currently holds the position of Production Design Co-ordinator at Melbourne Theatre Company.

WINTER 2018

Drama for your ears

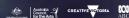
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Cast & Creative Team



OWEN PHILLIPSCostume Designer

For Melbourne Theatre Company Owen has previously designed set for Vivid White, and set and costume design for Egg and I'll Eat You Last. As part of MTC's NEON Festival, Owen designed costumes for Arthur's The Myth Project: Twin and Sisters Grimm's The Sovereign Wife. Other design credits include set and/or costume for Two Weddings. One Bride (Opera Australia); Little Shop of Horrors (Tinderbox Productions/Luckiest Productions); Sweet Charity (Luckiest Productions/Neil Gooding Productions); Niche (Elbow Room); Funny Girl, Jerry's Girls and La Cage Aux Folles (The Production Company); Gaybies (Darlinghurst Theatre Company); Master Class (Left Bauer Productions); Fallen (Sport for Jove/She Said) and The Dust and Us (Human Animal Exchange). Owen's work has been nominated for multiple Green Room Awards, Australian Production Design Guild Awards, and Sydney Theatre Awards, winning the latter in 2017 for Little Shop of Horrors. As a winner of a Major 2017 Mike Walsh Fellowship, he will travel to London in May to pursue further study.



ROSS GRAHAM Lighting Designer

Ross Graham's lighting design credits include for Off-Broadway: Come Light My Cigarette (St Clements); Beirut and True West (Athena Theatre Company) and Romeo and Juliet (Lincoln Centre Education). His Australian Credits include Vivid White and I'll Fat You Last (Melbourne Theatre Company); Boys Will Be Boys and Power Plays (Sydney Theatre Company); Title and Deed and Woyzeck (Belvoir); Little Shop of Horrors, Sweet Charity, Rent, Dog Fight, Love Bites and Violet (Hayes Theatre Company); An Index of Metals, Owen Wingrave and Climbing Towards Midnight (Sydney Chamber Opera); L'amant Jaloux (Pinchgut Opera); Edward II (Sport For Jove); Nothing Has Changed (Sydney Symphony Orchestra); Creature (Stalker Theatre); A Steady Rain (Old Fitz Theatre); Gaybies and This House is Mine (Darlinghurst Theatre Company); The Mesh (Red Stitch Actors Theatre); Good People, Cruise Control, Seminar and Skylight (Ensemble Theatre); Silent Disco, The Sea Project and Return to Earth (Griffin Theatre); Voices Project (Australian Theatre for Young People); Fearless (Milk Crate Theatre); The Fremantle Candidate (Deck Chair); The Underpants and The Olympians (NIDA Guest Artist); Cut Snake and Dirtyland (Arthur, a Theatre Company); Bill W and Dr. Bob (Carriage Works).



SIDNEY MILLARComposer & Sound Designer

Sidney Millar is a Melbournebased sound designer and composer. Originally from Adelaide, she moved in 2015 to study at the Victorian College of the Arts (Fine Arts - Production), and has since designed for theatre, dance, film and installations. Her unique style has emerged from her extensive experience as a performer and composer of classical and jazz music. Wild is Sidney's debut design at Melbourne Theatre Company. Sidney's prior sound designs include Bread Crumbs (Poppy Seed Festival); Occupied (Melbourne Fringe); Speak of the Devil (Adelaide Fringe); and Three Blind Mice (Melbourne and Adelaide Fringe). She was the composer and musician for Mother Courage and her Children (Victorian College of the Arts Acting Company '17). Sidney was the Associate Sound Designer to Russell Goldsmith for Angels In America (prod. by Cameron Lukey); and FIERCE (Theatre Works). Sidney is one of the participants of MTC's 2018 Women in Theatre program.



Cast & Creative Team



CHARLOTTE DAY
Assistant Director

Charlotte Day is an emerging Australian theatre director currently based in New York. This is her first time working with Melbourne Theatre Company. After graduating from Oxford University in 2016, she co-founded the Anglo-Russian theatre collective Bad Neighbour Theatre, and under its aegis has directed Measure for Measure, The Confessions of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Dickinson's Room - the latter of which has been performed in different incarnations at both the Edinburgh and Adelaide Fringe Festivals. Other directing credits include Nikolai Erdman's The Suicide, which she also translated from the original Russian, and Middleton and Rowley's The Changeling. Charlotte has been a technical intern for The Wooster Group, and holds a certificate in stage direction from Russian State Institute of Performing Arts (Saint Petersburg). Upcoming projects include a Russian language adaptation of Goethe's Elective Affinities, also for BNT.



GERALDINE COOK-DAFNER

Voice & Dialect Coach

Geraldine Cook-Dafner previously worked for Melbourne Theatre Company on The Children, Hav Fever. Di and Viv and Rose. Melbourne Talam, John, The Odd Couple, Straight White Men, The Distance, Birdland, The Waiting Room, Top Girls, The Heretic, The Swimming Club, The 39 Steps, The History Boys, All My Sons. The Clean House. Boy Gets Girl, Take Me Out and The Glass Menagerie. Geraldine also works for independent theatre companies, Red Stitch and Hit Productions. She trained at Middlesex University, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and has a doctorate from the University of Melbourne. Geraldine is an Honorary Senior Fellow in the theatre department at the Faculty of the VCA and MCM, University of Melbourne. Geraldine also works as a voice consultant in film. ABC Radio. SBS Radio, and for local corporate and government bodies, and is an Associate Artist of Optic Nerve Performance Group. Geraldine was previously Head of Voice, Head of School of Performing Arts and an Associate Dean at the Faculty of VCA and MCM, University of Melbourne.



Nicholas Denton; Director Dean Bryant with Anna Lise Phillips and the creative team; Toby Schmitz; Anna Lise Phillips

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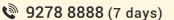
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3 MAY — 19 MAY





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