

SYDNEY THEATRE CO

**2020
Season
Media Kit**



“The exchange between the audience and actors is so unique. It’s an incredibly thrilling free-fall. There’s always an element of suspense and you never really know what’s going to happen.”

Rose Byrne

will be appearing in A View from the Bridge

2020

Contents

4	ABOUT SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY
5	A MESSAGE FROM KIP WILLIAMS
6	THE PLAYS
8	FOCUS ON GLACE CHASE
11	FOCUS ON SHARI SEBBENS
13	FOCUS ON MAGGIE MCKENNA
14	FOCUS ON JESSICA ARTHUR
17	FOCUS ON ANGUS CERINI
18	FOCUS ON PAIGE RATTRAY
19	STC ON THE ROAD
20	RESIDENCIES AND ARTIST PROGRAMS
22	STC'S EDUCATION & COMMUNITIES PROGRAMS
24	STC'S WHARF RENEWAL PROJECT
25	CONTACT

Company Overview



Our founding Artistic Director Richard Wherrett said: “Sydney Theatre Company exists to provide first class theatrical entertainment for the people of Sydney... theatre that is grand, vulgar, intelligent, challenging and fun.” And each successive Artistic Director since Wherrett has explored this idiosyncratic mission statement in their own ways, creating a company with a distinctive voice and an adventurous audience.

With around 300,000 ticket sales in Sydney each year, and more on tour around the country and the world, Sydney Theatre Company is one of Australia’s foremost performing arts institutions, and one of the largest not-for-profit theatre companies in the world. A presenter and interpreter of classics as well as new works, the company has been a powerhouse for artform development for more than three decades, providing a platform for new and emerging artists while remaining a place that attracts senior artists at the top of their game. Over the years, internationally acclaimed artists such as Cate Blanchett, Toni Collette, Hugo Weaving, Barrie Kosky, Deborah Mailman, Richard Roxburgh, Sarah Snook, Yael Stone and Rose Byrne have made work with STC; and recent international collaborators have included Liv Ullman, Phillip Seymour Hoffman, Isabelle Huppert, John Crowley and Steven Soderbergh. The company is an active exporter of artistic talent, with outbound tours of its work playing at venues including King’s Theatre, Edinburgh International Festival, the National Theatre, Barbican Centre, Lincoln Centre Festival, Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Kennedy Center and Théâtre de la Ville Paris, and 2017 saw its Broadway debut with *The Present* – the first fully Australian production to play on the Great White Way. Off stage, STC adds to the creative capacity of the community via programs that provide learning not just about but through theatre. This happens through School Drama™, its in-schools literacy course devised in partnership with The University of Sydney, its Connected program for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, and its Juvenile Justice program which delivers drama workshops to young people who are incarcerated.



A MESSAGE FROM Kip Williams

“A year delving into memory and reflecting our city as it is today.”

They say our personal memory of history only extends as far back as our grandparents. That this is why humanity repeats its mistakes. But theatre holds its memory in text – reminding us of what we might otherwise forget. In 2020, we put this to the test by reflecting on the past through the lens of the present. What does the middle of the twentieth century tell us about our world today? What did we know then that we have since forgotten? What hasn’t changed? How have we grown? We start in post-war London with Terence Rattigan’s *The Deep Blue Sea*, directed by Paige Rattray, our Associate Director. Marta Dusseldorp joins us in the central role, a married woman whose longing for true passion has pushed her beyond the bounds of polite society. It’s a story of love, of longing, and of feeling like an outsider even in your own home. And while polite society may have expanded its boundaries, the play is still startlingly revelatory.

We end the year in 1950s Brooklyn. Playwright Arthur Miller has given us some of the great tragic heroes of modern theatre, but none are quite as complex or poignant as Eddie Carbone

in *A View from the Bridge*. It’s a herculean role and we will be blessed with one of the best stage actors on the planet, Bobby Cannavale, starring alongside his real-life partner, Rose Byrne. I’m really looking forward to directing this one – fireworks feels like an understatement for this tale of family, betrayal and misplaced desire.

Between those two mid-century bookends, we also delve into our own country’s memory with two plays in particular. Angus Cerini’s *Wonnangatta*, directed by our newly promoted Resident Director Jessica Arthur, has Hugo Weaving and Wayne Blair playing two bushmen in the 1910s. The play looks unsparingly at the conjoined myths of Australian masculinity and mateship. It’s poetic, riveting and masterful language. For *The 7 Stages of Grieving* by Wesley Enoch and Deborah Mailman, actor and Richard Wherrett Fellow Shari Sebbens (*Black is the New White*) steps up to direct. The play is an Australian classic, but it’s also one of the plays from STC’s history that I vividly remember seeing as a teenager – it was inspiring, with a knock-out emotional punch, and it tells a story of our country that remains desperately current. In *Home, I’m Darling*, we return to our mid-century theme, with a play that quite literally looks back at the 1950s housewife through a contemporary lens. In *Fun Home*, a woman looks back at her life to unpick her relationship with her father and her sexuality. And, in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, I’ll be directing Eryn Jean Norvill in a radical adaptation of Oscar Wilde’s novel, laying bare our current obsessions with image, youth, and perception. Meanwhile, in *The Writer* and *Triple X*, we tackle familiar mid-century themes around creative struggle and family secrets but with decidedly contemporary voices telling their stories.

All this and much more. It’s a year brimming with fantastic writing, electric performances and beautiful designs. I hope you’ll join us for this great year of theatre.

The Plays

“It’s cathartic when you’re in the middle of that stage, going for broke with nothing to lose. You’re just there and it’s happening live. And when you take the audience with you, it’s palpable. It’s hard to put into words, but there’s an indescribable energy that is present.”

Wayne Blair

will be appearing in *Wonnangatta*

SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

The Deep Blue Sea

BY TERENCE RATTIGAN
DIRECTED BY PAIGE RATTRAY

It’s 1952 in post-Blitz London and Hester Collyer’s life is in turmoil. She has gambled everything – her home, her status, her marriage to a High Court judge – to pursue a life with the dashing RAF fighter pilot Freddie, and she has lost. Caught between the devil and the deep blue sea, the deep blue sea suddenly looks very inviting. But Hester is determined to forge her own path in a repressive age.

Terence Rattigan was one of the great stage and screen writers of the twentieth century and *The Deep Blue Sea* one of his master works. In Hester, he has created one of the most striking heroines of his era: strong-willed, unconventional and complex.

After an almost decade-long absence from the STC stage, Marta Dusseldorp returns as Hester. She’s joined by Fayssal Bazzi (*Mary Stuart*) as the feckless Freddie, Brandon McClelland (*Saint Joan*) and iconic performer Paul Capsis.

Helmed by Associate Director Paige Rattray, *The Deep Blue Sea* is a beautiful, humanist drama about loss, longing, and having the courage to want more.

4 FEB – 7 MAR. ROSLYN PACKER THEATRE
OPENING NIGHT: SAT 8 FEB 2020



SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

No Pay? No Way!

BY DARIO FO
IN A NEW ADAPTATION BY MARIEKE HARDY
DIRECTED BY SARAH GILES
WORLD PREMIERE

Prices are out of control – and so is Antonia. Riled by the rising cost of living, she agitates a riot in the local supermarket with an army of unruly housewives, leaving the place gutted. What follows is a wild and unpredictable caper, as Antonia and her friend Margherita attempt to outsmart the police, hoodwink their husbands, and ‘liberate’ more loot. This is high-wire farce.

No Pay? No Way! (sometimes known as *Can’t Pay? Won’t Pay!*) was written by Italian father of farce and Nobel laureate Dario Fo in 1974 and its ever-resonant themes of rising corporate greed, wage stagnation and the thrills of sticking it to the man have seen it staged around the world ever since.

Sydney Theatre Company’s whip-smart new adaptation comes from the pen of Marieke Hardy, one of ABC TV’s great comic forces, and features the incomparable talents of Helen Thomson (*Mary Stuart*) as Antonia. Brought to life by director Sarah Giles (*Accidental Death of an Anarchist*) with a cast of Catherine Van-Davies (*Going Down*), Glenn Hazeldine (*Così*) and Rahel Romahn (*Lord of the Flies*), *No Pay? No Way!* is an irreverent and hilarious comedy with a glint in its eye.

10 FEB – 20 MAR. DRAMA THEATRE, SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE
OPENING NIGHT: FRIDAY 14 FEB 2020
1 APR – 4 APR. RIVERSIDE THEATRE, PARRAMATTA, CO PRESENTED
BY RIVERSIDE THEATRES



FOCUS ON Glance Chase

Triple X was developed through STC's Rough Draft program. Writer Glance Chase performs in this story about a man who falls in love with a transgender woman.

Bisexuals. Pansexuals. Experimenters. Chill open minded straight guys. Chill open minded gay guys. And guys exclusively into trans women. There is a middle ground in sexuality (and gender) that NO-ONE has examined. There's a whole world out there that has never been discussed, and certainly not from a place of empathy. If you're a straight guy who is in to or open to trans women then society at large, and even the trans community itself, mostly regard you as a fetishist, adulterer, or kinkster. (And some are). If you're even seen at all. Or that 'you must be gay'. It's pretty damning. And it's cruel to trans folks. Are trans people worthy of love? Of being seen as legitimate romantic partners and desirable in their own right? Do the guys that are in to trans women deserve to be shamed or otherised?

It's not up to me to answer these questions or decide if this story is important, you can decide, but it is interesting and unique.

And I'm speaking to the specific experience of cis men/trans-feminine folks. I'll leave it to others more qualified to tell the queer or trans-masculine experience.

The Rough Draft process was exhilarating. And exhausting. I landed from New York City on the Sunday, was in the rehearsal room on the Monday, and in five days cut 100 pages and did a complete rewrite averaging about three hours sleep a night (thank you jetlag - you gave me five extra hours writing time each night). And the reading itself - I'll never forget it - the response was electric - I've never experienced anything like it. After the reading I was delirious and couldn't even look people in the eye. I love me an intense experience.

This intense focus of a group of people coming together and working on a play can kick it to the next level and beyond. You can achieve more in a week than you would in a year writing solo. The play starts to live and present itself on its own terms. You can see what it is. You can't write a great play without a great workshop.

What do I love about theatre? The Drama! What's the quote: *Theatre is like life with the boring bits cut out.*

If only life were as cathartic as a three act structure...

Theatre can and should speak to big ideas. And when it's done right it can be a profound collective experience.

But for me it's all about the Epic Drama.



SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

Home, I'm Darling

BY LAURA WADE

DIRECTED BY JESSICA ARTHUR

Judy is a picture-perfect '50s housewife. She spends her days making the perfect devilled eggs, mixing the perfect Screwdrivers and being the perfect homemaker to her husband Johnny. They're totally happy with their pastel-hued life. The only problem is, it's not the 1950s, it's now, and their dream world is about to come crashing down in hilarious style.

Fresh from winning the 2019 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy, *Home, I'm Darling* is full of big laughs, big skirts and big questions. How can we cope with the pressures of modern life? What do we lose in the present when we pine for the past? And can you get stains out of a shirt with just lemon juice and baking soda?

Helmed by Resident Director Jessica Arthur (*Lethal Indifference*) and featuring Andrea Demetriades (*Arms and the Man*), this witty, highly original and thought-provoking comedy takes a look at the complexity of women's choices and the dangers of nostalgia through distinctly rose-coloured glasses.

6 APR – 16 MAY. DRAMA THEATRE, SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE
OPENING NIGHT: THU 9 APRIL 2020



SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

A SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY AND QUEENSLAND THEATRE PRODUCTION

Triple X

BY GLANCE CHASE

DIRECTED BY PAIGE RATTRAY

WORLD PREMIERE

Scotty is living the dream. A successful Wall Street banker, he has just bought a Tribeca loft for a cool three million and is about to marry his beautiful and loaded girlfriend Kymberley. But Scotty has a secret that will outrage both his conservative mother Deb and progressive sister Claire: his ongoing affair with charismatic trans drag performer Dexie. This is an hysterically funny love story, but not for the faint-hearted.

NYC-based, two-time Griffin Award-winner Glance Chase is both the writer and star of *Triple X*, a deep dive into hypocrisy, self-deception, and the unknowable contours of attraction. Directed by Sydney Theatre Company's Associate Director Paige Rattray (*Black is the New White*), it's brilliantly comic, wildly provocative and ultimately moving.

Also featuring Josh McConville (*Cloud Nine*), Contessa Treffone (*The Harp in the South*) and Christen O'Leary, *Triple X* is a tender and wickedly funny look at social taboos and love out of bounds.

30 APR – 23 MAY. THE PLAYHOUSE, SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE
OPENING NIGHT: SAT 2 MAY 2020



SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

The 7 Stages of Grieving

BY WESLEY ENOCH AND DEBORAH MAILMAN
DIRECTED BY SHARI SEBBENS

The 7 Stages of Grieving is a vibrant, funny and insightful account of what it means to be an Aboriginal woman in contemporary Australia. On its premiere in 1995, it became an early triumph for Deborah Mailman and Wesley Enoch, and a beloved classic of Australian theatre. Twenty-five years later, in an updated and vivid new production, it's as urgent and vital as ever.

A woman stands alone on stage. Over one gripping hour, she traces seven phases of Aboriginal history – Dreaming, Invasion, Genocide, Protection, Assimilation, Self-Determination, and Reconciliation. Mailman and Enoch's script is a potent expression of resilience and survival, as well as humour, joy and strength. It's an ode to the power of storytelling.

Making her directorial debut is Shari Sebbens, Sydney Theatre Company's current Richard Wherrett fellow, with Helpmann Award-winner Elaine Crombie (*Barbara and the Camp Dogs*) tackling this performance tour de force with customary vivacity.

30 MAY – 13 JUN. ROSLYN PACKER THEATRE
OPENING NIGHT: TUES 2 JUN 2020



SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

A SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY AND QUEENSLAND THEATRE PRODUCTION

The Writer

BY ELLA HICKSON
DIRECTED BY JESSICA ARTHUR

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

A young writer confronts a director in an empty theatre. In a bristling exchange about his work, the director attempts to disarm her. He flirts. He patronises. He even offers her a job. She stares him down. She wants to do things her way; she wants the world to change shape. And without warning it does, revealing stories nested within stories like Russian dolls, each more brilliant and daring than the last. A play that fractures form and structure, *The Writer* takes aim at the business of making art – the compromises it demands, the people it chews up, and the endless ways patriarchal power can infect.

Ella Hickson is one of the UK's most exciting young playwrights and *The Writer*, which premiered at London's Almeida Theatre in 2018, has been hailed as "momentous" (*Broadway World*), "riveting" (*The Guardian UK*) and "very punk rock" (*Time Out London*), exploding the very nature of what theatre can be.

Directed by Resident Director Jessica Arthur, the ensemble cast features Emily Barclay (*Lethal Indifference*), Heath Ledger Award-winner Charmaine Bingwa and Toby Schmitz (*The Present*).

20 JUN – 11 JUL. ROSLYN PACKER THEATRE
OPENING NIGHT: WED 24 JUN 2020



FOCUS ON

Shari Sebbens

Shari Sebbens is the current STC Richard Wherrett Fellow - a career pathway opportunity for emerging and developing directors. In 2020 Shari will direct *The 7 Stages of Grieving*, starring Elaine Crombie.

I first came across *The 7 Stages of Grieving* in high school and I did the monologue "Murri Gets a Dress" to get into drama school. I then did "Nan's Funeral" to get out, so it's been a part of my life for almost twenty years now. Every Aboriginal actor in this country is deeply familiar with it and I feel like it has become a sort of rite of passage for us women in particular. It's also the perfect piece to cut my director's teeth on.

I admire so many things about Elaine Crombie. She is innately funny, I think that's something we all know but I know there's a depth of honesty and experience there that will be exciting and moving for audiences to see. Not to mention she's fierce and extremely fun to be around! Her energy is infectious, her warmth radiates and she's not afraid to challenge the people around her. I reckon if this play was a person it'd be Elaine.

Being the Richard Wherrett Fellow has been so incredible. To see the inner guts of the company, the way so many people come together to make the machine work. To see people across all departments so passionate about bringing new offerings to the conversation around our national identity. I don't want it to end, they'll have to tear my pass off me.

As far as directing goes, it's been quite liberating to get out of my own head, my own ego and start thinking big picture, that's not something that is required of you as an actor. The directors that have left the greatest impact on me are all excellent collaborators and that's what I love most about theatre, the collaboration. I admire the effort and skill it takes to keep a room inspired and excited so they can offer up a complex conversation to audiences with absolute clarity.

I think theatre is one of the easiest ways to flex our empathy muscle and I believe a society's ability to empathise with another person or group of people is our greatest tool for growth. Also I just love the very simple act of sitting down with people and listening to a story. How human, how wonderful.

SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY AND ALLENS LINKLATERS PRESENT

The Picture of Dorian Gray

BY OSCAR WILDE

ADAPTED AND DIRECTED BY KIP WILLIAMS

WORLD PREMIERE

Oscar Wilde's century-old moral fable, packed with witticisms, is as devilishly wicked today as on its debut.

Seeing himself in a dazzling new portrait, an exquisite young man makes a Faustian wish for eternal youth. Dorian Gray throws himself into a life of wanton luxury drifting from the pampered salons of Victorian London to the darkest recesses of the capital, and revelling in the splendour of his beauty which remains forever golden. Meanwhile, the portrait – banished to an attic – becomes more and more grotesque.

This new interpretation of Wilde's only novel is adapted and directed by Artistic Director Kip Williams. Collaborating once again with Eryn Jean Norvill (*Suddenly Last Summer*, *Romeo and Juliet*), Williams' reimagining will see Norvill performing every role in the story in an audacious cascade of theatrical transformations. The inventive use of live video that made *Suddenly Last Summer* and *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* so visually compelling will capture and amplify every move.

21 JUL – 15 AUG. ROSLYN PACKER THEATRE
OPENING NIGHT: SAT 25 JUL 2020

SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

A SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY AND MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY PRODUCTION

Fun Home

MUSIC BY JEANINE TESORI; BOOK AND LYRICS BY LISA KRON

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY ALISON BECHDEL

DIRECTED BY DEAN BRYANT

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

After smash-hit seasons on Broadway and in London, *Fun Home* comes to Sydney in a soaring brand-new production.

Winner of three Tony Awards including Best Musical and Best Original Score, and a finalist for the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, *Fun Home* has been hailed as a "beautiful, heartbreaker of a musical" (*New York Times*) and "one of the best new musicals of our era" (*LA Times*). Based on Alison Bechdel's graphic novel, it's a heartfelt story about coming out and coming of age.

After the unexpected death of her father, Alison is forced to confront his secrets that come to light. Shifting between past and present, we meet present-day Alison, a successful graphic novelist; college-age Alison on the cusp of self-discovery; and precocious-child Alison, who plays in coffins instead of sandboxes in the family's Bechdel Funeral Home.

Four-time Gold Logie Award winner Lisa McCune and Maggie McKenna (*Muriel's Wedding the Musical*) join an exceptional ensemble including Ryan Gonzalez (*Jersey Boys*), Lucy Maunder (*Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*), Adam Murphy (*Aladdin*) and Chloe Zuel (*West Side Story*). Directed by Melbourne Theatre Company's Associate Director, Dean Bryant, *Fun Home* has laughs, drama and great tunes in spades.

29 AUG – 2 OCT. ROSLYN PACKER THEATRE
OPENING NIGHT: WED 2 SEP 2020



FOCUS ON

Maggie McKenna

Maggie McKenna brought the iconic role of Muriel Heslop to life in the world premiere of Sydney Theatre Company's *Muriel's Wedding the Musical* in 2017. She returns to the STC stage in 2020 playing the college-aged Alison in the musical *Fun Home*.

Playing Muriel in *Muriel's Wedding The Musical* was truly the most magical experience. I still feel so incredibly lucky that I was able to have my professional debut with Sydney Theatre Company and originate the role of Muriel Heslop on stage. The cast and crew of *Muriel's Wedding* will always be family to me and STC was such a wonderful environment to work in, so I can't wait to come back!

Since *Muriel's Wedding*, I played the role of Zoe Murphy in the *Dear Evan Hansen* National Tour in the USA. I have been touring for nearly a year now, so I've been very busy but I couldn't be more grateful for the opportunities *Muriel's Wedding* presented me with.

It's crazy to have been a part of such a successful show, even people in the States have listened to the soundtrack or seen the documentary and tell me how connected they are to the character of Muriel, so the show always stays with me and I think it always will.

I saw *Fun Home* on Broadway in 2016 and was completely mesmerised by the story and the performances. The show so beautifully captures the struggles, excitement and confusion of discovering one's sexuality. I found it to be completely heart-breaking and uplifting at the same time. I love a show that feels so close to reality yet takes you far away from your own reality while you watch it and this show does that in the most wonderful way.

What I love about theatre is that it is always a unique experience. Every single show is different and it will always keep you on your toes. There is nothing quite like coming together in one space with a large group of people you've never met before and going on a journey together. In an intimate show like *Fun Home*, I think it will be an especially cathartic experience for the audience and the actors.



FOCUS ON Jessica Arthur

Sydney Theatre Company Resident Director Jessica Arthur is directing three very different plays in 2020 - *Home, I'm Darling* and *Wonnangatta* at the Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House, and *The Writer* at Roslyn Packer Theatre.

Research is very important for me to prepare and one of my favourite aspects of the process. I have already started reading books, made a list of films to watch and am chatting with creatives and cast members. Two are feminist plays so the research crosses over. I am most excited that the plays explore three very different periods in time and take on varying forms in their style.

With *Wonnangatta*, and any Angus Cerini play, I cannot look past the language. I am looking forward to exploring the scope, the rhythm and the imagery it evokes while delving into deep psychological musings. Already the discussions I have had with Hugo Weaving and Wayne Blair have been so insightful and I cannot wait for them to bring these two complex characters to life. It is also fascinating that this story is based on true events. I have started to delve into researching the case and I look forward to getting even deeper. I'd love to take a trip to the Victorian High Country.

I love being a Resident Director at Sydney Theatre Company. Being part of the machine that is mainstage theatre is so rewarding. I have a secret curiosity for all departments and I have found people to be very generous and happy to answer my questions. I get to work with wonderful artists on a daily basis and feel extremely supported in my process and passions.

The new plays I have worked on have definitely been a highlight of my time as Resident Director. Working to portray a playwright's voice – such as Anna Barnes' *Lethal Indifference* (2018) and Van Badham's *Banging Denmark* (2019), as well as assisting on *The Harp in the South* (2018) and working with Kate Mulvany, and being able to consult these writers throughout the process is a joy. I have also loved assisting the bigger productions at the company. Being able to pay forward what I have learnt at STC has made being a Resident Artist extremely worthwhile. Working with the Young Wharfies and work experience students, teaching a CAAP (Contemporary Asian Australian Performance) directors workshop and sharing knowledge with assistant directors is a rewarding perk of the job.

The thing I love the most about theatre is that it cannot exist without people. You need an entire team to collaborate with to create it and you need an audience to bring it to life. It exists only in the time that you share with it; this is why theatre is so special.

SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

Wonnangatta

BY ANGUS CERINI. DIRECTED BY JESSICA ARTHUR

WORLD PREMIERE

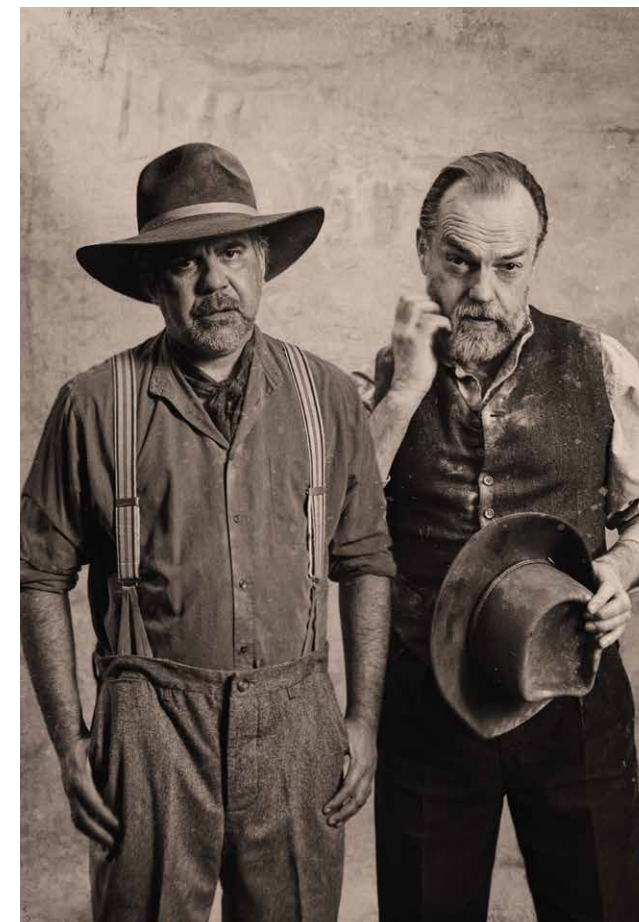
Wonnangatta Station, 1918. Two men arrive at a dark and empty farmhouse looking for the manager, their friend Jim Barclay. No one's heard from him for more than a month. Something's amiss. Then a grim discovery sets the men off on a journey across the harsh Australian terrain, looking for answers, maybe for revenge.

Angus Cerini's multi-award-winning *The Bleeding Tree* was a sensation on its premiere at Griffin Theatre and again when remounted by STC at The Wharf. In *Wonnangatta*, Cerini's dark lyricism explores the Australian landscape – geographic and psychological – in a hard-driving yet poetic celebration of language and story.

Who better than theatrical powerhouses Hugo Weaving and Wayne Blair to bring these words to life in an exciting world premiere production directed by Resident Director Jessica Arthur?

This Australian gothic fable will keep you on the edge of your seat.

7 SEP – 17 OCT. DRAMA THEATRE, SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE
OPENING NIGHT: FRI 11 SEPT 2020



SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

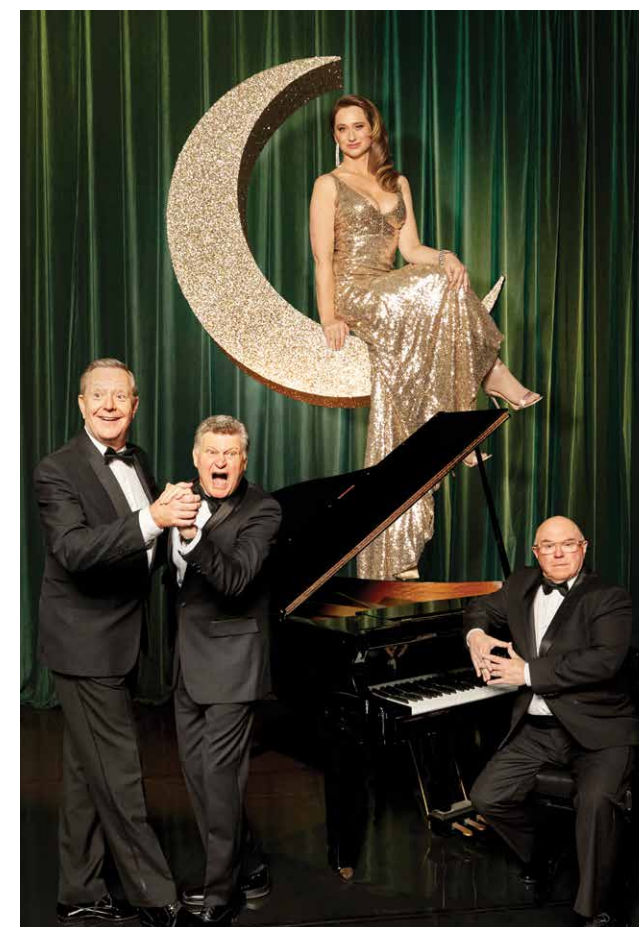
The Wharf Revue 2020: Good Night and Good Luck

BY JONATHAN BIGGINS, DREW FORSYTHE AND PHILLIP SCOTT
CO-DIRECTED BY JONATHAN BIGGINS AND DREW FORSYTHE

Don't miss out on this one last hurrah as the indefatigable trio of Jonathan Biggins, Drew Forsythe and Phillip Scott reunite with dazzling accomplice Mandy Bishop for one final victory lap of *The Wharf Revue*. It's good night and good luck to the comedy juggernaut that's been keeping the bastards honest since 2000.

The bad news is that the planet is on fire and our world leaders are barely qualified to run a chook raffle. And the good? *The Wharf Revue* has fake news, fake hair and real laughs in abundance. No one is safe and no topic too taboo in this night of sketches, songs and side-splitting satire. You'll laugh! You'll cry! You'll want to move to New Zealand!

21 OCT – SAT 21 NOV. ROSLYN PACKER THEATRE
PRESS NIGHT: THU 22 OCT 2020



SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

Rules for Living

BY SAM HOLCROFT

DIRECTED BY SUSANNA DOWLING

Meet the family. Edith is a highly-strung matriarch who prepares for lunch like it's a military offensive. Youngest son Matthew, a frustrated actor and reluctant lawyer, longs for a different career ... and for his brother's wife. But Sheena, peeved and prickling for an argument, longs only for a drink. It's Christmas – what could possibly go wrong?

Sam Holcroft's audacious script cranks the familial tension up to 11 using narrative tricks that clue the audience into a joke of which the hapless characters are unaware. Frenetically funny, *Rules for Living* is about all those expectations and roles that life sets upon us – and tics and twitches that betray us when we struggle to shake them off.

Susanna Dowling makes her STC directorial debut with a brilliant ensemble cast including Heather Mitchell (*The Harp in the South*) and Michelle Lim Davidson (*Banging Denmark*).

26 OCT – 12 DEC. DRAMA THEATRE, SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE
OPENING NIGHT: FRI 30 OCT 2020



SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

A View from the Bridge

BY ARTHUR MILLER

DIRECTED BY KIP WILLIAMS

Rose Byrne returns to STC in *A View from the Bridge*, a play that, by her own account, is one that changed her life and sparked a lifelong love affair with theatre. Appearing alongside her is Emmy Award-winner Bobby Cannavale, her real-life partner and one of the US's most respected screen and stage actors.

Rose plays Beatrice who, together with her husband Eddie, has forged a family with her orphaned niece Catherine on the tough streets of the Brooklyn waterfront. When Beatrice's cousins, Marco and Rodolpho, arrive from Sicily, desperate for a better life, she takes them in without hesitation. But as Catherine falls for Rodolpho, jealousy and desire boil over in an uncontrollable and devastating sequence of events.

After 2016's lauded production of *All My Sons*, Kip Williams returns to Arthur Miller with an arresting new production.

Exploding the tensions between honour, duty and desire, this enduring 1956 classic by one of the twentieth century's great dramatists strikes at the heart of the American dream.

8 DEC – 16 JAN 2021. ROSLYN PACKER THEATRE
OPENING NIGHT: SAT 12 DEC 2020



FOCUS ON

Angus Cerini

Angus Cerini's *The Bleeding Tree* was a sell-out hit of STC's 2017 season. His latest creation, *Wonnangatta*, tells the story of some mysterious murders in the Victorian High Country. Hugo Weaving and Wayne Blair will bring this thriller to life on stage.

I must've first heard the story of the Wonnangatta murders when I was very little. Definitely from Dad – he loved the high country. That story has always intrigued me. And it starts with the name. Wonnangatta.

It is always exciting developing scripts with specific actors. I am looking forward to working with Hugo and Wayne to bring them into the characters – how might their personalities imbue the roles they play? This is an incredibly exciting prospect – I am hoping to find a real muscularity.

Theatre is being encased in magic, that sucks the life out of the world outside. Pushing it away, starving it of air, driving it into the background. And that moment when you realise you've been holding your breath. The lights come up and you emerge back into the harsh reality of existence. The theatre is a place of retreat, of comfort, and of a kind of worship. To be transported. To be caused to feel things. To gain new perspectives. To share with everyone else in the theatre a common journey – despite being strangers we all travel together. These sorts of things are what I love about theatre. That it is so close to the real world, but extraordinarily far from it. An orchestra. Dancers. All creativity really when presented to us is a gift. It is the summation of other people's deepest emotions and ideas. And word play that makes pictures. The laughter or shuffling of children. How some puppet becomes an actual real living character. Animals that come to life. Thrown back a thousand years. This is all extraordinary stuff. It's some sort of human made thing that approaches the power of the most unspoiled of natural places. And I think possibly this goes all the way back to very early humans sitting around a fire trying to decipher the world.

Extraordinary isn't it, going to the theatre, to experience the visions of other people. And those visions bring to us new ways of feeling. I don't believe in organised religion, but I do believe in creativity. The theatre is like a church for me. It should be tax deductible.





FOCUS ON
Paige Rattray

In 2020 Sydney Theatre Company Associate Director Paige Rattray directs *The Deep Blue Sea* at Roslyn Packer Theatre and *Triple X* at The Playhouse, Sydney Opera House.

When Glace Chase the playwright left Australia for New York seven years ago it was such a great loss for Australian new writing. They are a fierce and important voice of their generation - I remember thinking at the time if I was ever in a position to bring them back to our stages I would do anything I could to make that happen. A little over two years ago I was in New York and we reconnected. This play is the result of a hilarious story they told me about a love affair they were having with a stockbroker at the time. It's been an absolute pleasure to work with them on this, we've had a great time, they've introduced me to a world I could never have imagined and been so generous to share that with the audience in their play. It has me in stitches laughing one minute and tears the next. They're a terrific writer, we're so lucky to have this play in the season!

I love so many things about theatre, mostly the people but I also love the relationship between the performers and the audience. There's an unspoken contract that enables us to take risks and present new ideas in a way that the audience (hopefully) haven't seen before. We have the opportunity to change perspectives or views of the world if we do our job right.

The Sydney Theatre Company team are an incredible and passionate group of people. The creativity in the building is thrilling to be a part of. Artistic Director Kip Williams and Executive Director Patrick McIntyre are brilliant to work with, they encourage me to follow my instinct and trust that I will follow through with the goods - whether it's working on a new play with a writer or backing emerging artists and finding pathways for them through the company. It's a productive and energising environment to be in, I hope to be able to create an environment like that for other artists if I am ever in that position.

I love everything about directing. It's an absolute privilege to be in a room with those brilliant minds and create new worlds. Every project I work on I'm learning something new and there's never a dull moment.

STC on the road

NO PAY? NO WAY!

A Sydney Theatre Company production
co-presented by Riverside Theatres
Riverside Theatre, Parramatta
1 April – 4 April 2020

TRIPLE X

A Sydney Theatre Company and
Queensland Theatre production
Bille Brown Theatre, Queensland Theatre
14 March – 4 April 2020

THE 7 STAGES OF GRIEVING

A Sydney Theatre Company production
presented by the State Theatre Company
of South Australia
The Space, Adelaide Festival Centre
25 June – 4 July 2020

THE WRITER

A Sydney Theatre Company and State Theatre
Company of South Australia production
Dunstan Playhouse, Adelaide Festival Centre
15 July – 1 August 2020

FUN HOME

A Sydney Theatre Company and
Melbourne Theatre Company production
The Playhouse, Arts Centre Melbourne
15 July – 22 August 2020

**THE WHARF REVUE 2020:
GOOD NIGHT AND GOOD LUCK**

PENRITH

Q Theatre, Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre
13 Aug – 15 Aug 2020

WOLLONGONG

Merrigong Theatre Company, IMB Theatre,
Illawarra Performing Arts Centre
18 Aug – 23 Aug 2020

NEWCASTLE

Civic Theatre
26 Aug – 27 Aug 2020

BELROSE

Glen St Theatre
1 Sept – 12 Sept 2020

CANBERRA

Playhouse, Canberra Theatre Centre
15 Sept – 26 Sept 2020

WAGGA WAGGA

Civic Theatre
29 Sept – 30 Sept 2020

ORANGE

Orange Civic Theatre
3 Oct – 4 Oct 2020

PARRAMATTA

Riverside Theatres
8 Oct – 10 Oct 2020

PORT MACQUARIE

Glasshouse, Port Macquarie
13 Oct 2020

WYONG

The Art House
17 Oct 2020

STC Resident Artists



Sydney Theatre Company has a proud heritage as a creative hub and incubator for Australian theatre and theatre-makers. Benedict Andrews, Marion Potts, Fiona Crombie, Wesley Enoch and Alice Babidge are all former residents at STC.

Through the Resident Artists program, STC is committed to providing professional development opportunities, access to key personnel and resources, and encouragement and support to pursue interests and projects away from STC. Our Resident Artists also play key roles in the day-to-day artistic life of the Company.

PAIGE RATTRAY ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

In 2020 Paige directs *The Deep Blue Sea* at Roslyn Packer Theatre and *Triple X* at the Playhouse, Sydney Opera House. Paige is a former Richard Wherrett Fellow, a position created in memory of the former STC Artistic Director.

JESSICA ARTHUR RESIDENT DIRECTOR

In 2020 Jessica is directing *Home, I'm Darling* and *Wonnangatta* at the Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House, *The Writer* at Roslyn Packer Theatre. Jessica is a former STC Directing Associate and former Richard Wherrett Fellow.

ELIZABETH GADSBY RESIDENT DESIGNER

In 2020 Elizabeth will be the designer for *The 7 Stages of Grieving* at the Roslyn Packer Theatre and *The Writer* at Roslyn Packer Theatre.

SHARI SEBBENS RICHARD WHERRETT FELLOW

In 2020 Shari will direct *The 7 Stages of Grieving* at Roslyn Packer Theatre.

PATRICK WHITE PLAYWRIGHTS AWARD AND FELLOWSHIP

The Patrick White Playwrights Award has been an annual initiative of STC since 2000. It is held in honour of Patrick White's contribution to Australian theatre and to foster the development of Australian playwrights.

In 2010 an additional prize, the Patrick White Playwrights Fellowship was introduced to recognise and support more established Australian playwrights. The awards are designed to benefit both emerging writers and mid-career writers.

The Patrick White Playwrights Award offers a cash prize for a full-length unproduced play of any genre written by an Australian playwright over 18 years of age. The readers and judges assessing the scripts seek a work that is original and ambitious with great potential for staging.

Pictured: Resident Designer Elizabeth Gadsby, Richard Wherrett Fellow Shari Sebbens, CAAP Initiative Director Kenneth Moraleda, Artistic Director Kip Williams, Associate Director Paige Rattray, STC Emerging Writer Jordyn Fulcher, STC Emerging Writer Wendy Mocke, Patrick White Playwrights Fellow Nakkiah Lui, CAAP Initiative Director Courtney Stewart, STC Emerging Writer Enoch Mailangi, Resident Director Jessica Arthur, CAAP Initiative Director Tasnim Hossain, STC Emerging Writer James Elazzi, CAAP Initiative Director Jennifer Rani.

The Patrick White Playwrights' Fellowship is a position for an established Australian playwright whose work has been produced professionally in Australia within the last four years. The winning playwright receives a cash prize, a year-long Fellowship in recognition of their excellent body of work and a commission to write a new play.

PATRICK WHITE PLAYWRIGHTS FELLOW

The Patrick White Playwrights Fellow for 2019-2020 is Nakkiah Lui.

EMERGING WRITERS GROUP

The STC Emerging Writers Group is an initiative aimed specifically at emerging playwrights, with the objective of supporting professional development and expanding the participants' skill sets, artistic vision and networks.

The group receives mentorship from STC's Associate Director, Literary Manager, Patrick White Playwrights Fellow and Resident Directors. The writers attend STC productions, rehearsals and take part in workshops with STC artists, as well as being given desk space in STC's administration offices.

The 2019-2020 Emerging Writers Group are James Elazzi, Jordyn Fulcher, Enoch Mailangi, Wendy Mocke.

CAAP DIRECTORS INITIATIVE

The CAAP Directors Initiative is aimed at unearthing, nurturing and developing Asian Australian directors for the stage. Working with Contemporary Asian Australian Performance (CAAP), in partnership with Queensland Theatre and Melbourne Theatre Company, Sydney Theatre Company is offering a two-year tailored training program for selected participants.

Now in its final year, the program will provide hands-on directorial training and engagement.

The 2018-2020 CAAP participants are Tasnim Hossain, Kenneth Moraleda, Jennifer Rani and Courtney Stewart.

STC's Education & Communities Programs



STC Education & Communities programs provide enriching and unique opportunities for students, teachers and lifelong learners to engage with theatre.

STC is proactive about improving access and providing subsidies so more people can be enriched by creative learning, whether through experiencing high-quality theatre, utilising extensive digital resources, or making imaginative leaps in the classroom.

Over 30,000 teachers and students have participated in STC's teacher professional learning program School Drama™ since it began in 2009. It is now delivered in satellites across Australia, in Albury-Wodonga (in partnership with HotHouse Theatre and Murray Arts); Darwin (in partnership with Brown's Mart Theatre); Melbourne (in partnership with Drama Victoria, Deakin University and Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority); ACT (in partnership with Canberra Theatre Centre); Perth (in partnership with Barking Gecko Theatre); and Brisbane (in partnership with Brisbane Catholic Education). From 2019, School Drama is also delivered in Auckland, New Zealand (in partnership with Applied Theatre Company).

The School Drama Book, published by Currency Press, provides an informative and practical guide to improving literacy through drama for all teachers, regardless of their location. Digital education resources are also available online, including *The School Drama Companion* multi-touch book, available through iTunes, and STC Documentaries, featuring behind-the-scenes footage and interviews with STC creatives.

TEACHER LEARNING

School Drama™ is a teacher professional learning program with a difference – each teacher is paired with a Teaching Artist to embark on a unique co-mentoring partnership, exploring how drama strategies and quality literature can improve literacy in young learners. School Drama evolved from a four year pilot program with The University of Sydney.

Teacher Professional Learning events bring primary and secondary teachers to STC to participate in specially tailored workshops with STC creatives and leaders in the field of arts education.

Pictured: Rowan Freeman, Emma Gillogly and students from Plunkett Street Public School

STUDENT LEARNING

Schools Shows are performances of STC productions scheduled especially for students during the school term. Prior to each Schools Show performance there is a pre-show briefing that unpacks the production for students, followed by a Q&A session with the actors after the show.

Digital Education Resources, including behind-the-scenes STC Documentaries, are designed to inform teaching and learning in the classroom, with curriculum links and insights from STC directors, designers and creatives.

OnStage Week is an annual event designed to enrich the learning experiences of HSC Drama students, particularly those from regional areas. In 2020, STC's OnStage Week will focus on *The Deep Blue Sea* and provide opportunities for students to access the STC Archives.

Work Experience Week provides twenty-five Drama students with the opportunity to spend a week immersed in all aspects of STC. Encompassing programming, direction, set and costume design, marketing and sponsorship, students leave with a complete picture of the workings of STC. While the program is completely free for all participants, STC also offers a scholarship for a regional student to travel to Sydney for the week.

Young Wharfies is an engaging and free learning program for twenty Year 11 Drama students who are inspired by the power and creativity of theatre. The Young Wharfies spend a year attending productions, participating in workshops and meeting STC artists and creatives.

OUR COMMUNITY

Connected combines drama approaches with English language learning for adult refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. The workshops are an opportunity for participants to have fun, make social connections and gain confidence in speaking English.

The Priority Schools Program provides opportunities for primary and high schools in Western Sydney to experience live theatre and education programs, who may not otherwise have access due to socio-economic status or geographic location. The program is an ongoing partnership with selected schools that aims to develop a culture of theatregoing and appreciation.

The **Juvenile Justice program** delivers drama workshops to young people who are incarcerated. The program utilises quality literature, storytelling and theatre devising techniques to explore character, motivation and empathy.

STC partners with **Holdsworth Community** to deliver drama workshops to children, young people and adults living with an intellectual disability in Sydney. The workshops focus on storytelling, creative communication and collaboration.

SCHOOL DRAMA

“The level of engagement the kids have with it, their understanding of literacy has flourished, and my confidence for teaching drama has improved. I'm happy to do Drama at any time now.”

Nicholas Thompson, Artarmon Public School

WORK EXPERIENCE WEEK

“Every day we went home tired and buzzing with a feeling of knowing what we want to do and how to get there. It's exhilarating, exhausting and really empowering. I can't recommend this week enough.” **Sebastian Fendall, Work Experience participant**

CONNECTED

“We have really noticed an improvement in the communication skills of the students who have been going to Drama... This has had a flow on effect on people's ability to perform well in job interviews. We have noticed a lot more laughter coming from the class, which is heartening to hear in a place where so many are stressed and serious!” **Jenny Tracey, Asylum Seekers Centre**

JUVENILE JUSTICE

“Personally this program allows me to build stronger relationships with my students due to the interactive lesson structures and delivery. My students were given the opportunity to exercise their creativity, build relationships with peers and staff and have their opinions on literature valued, listened to and extended.”

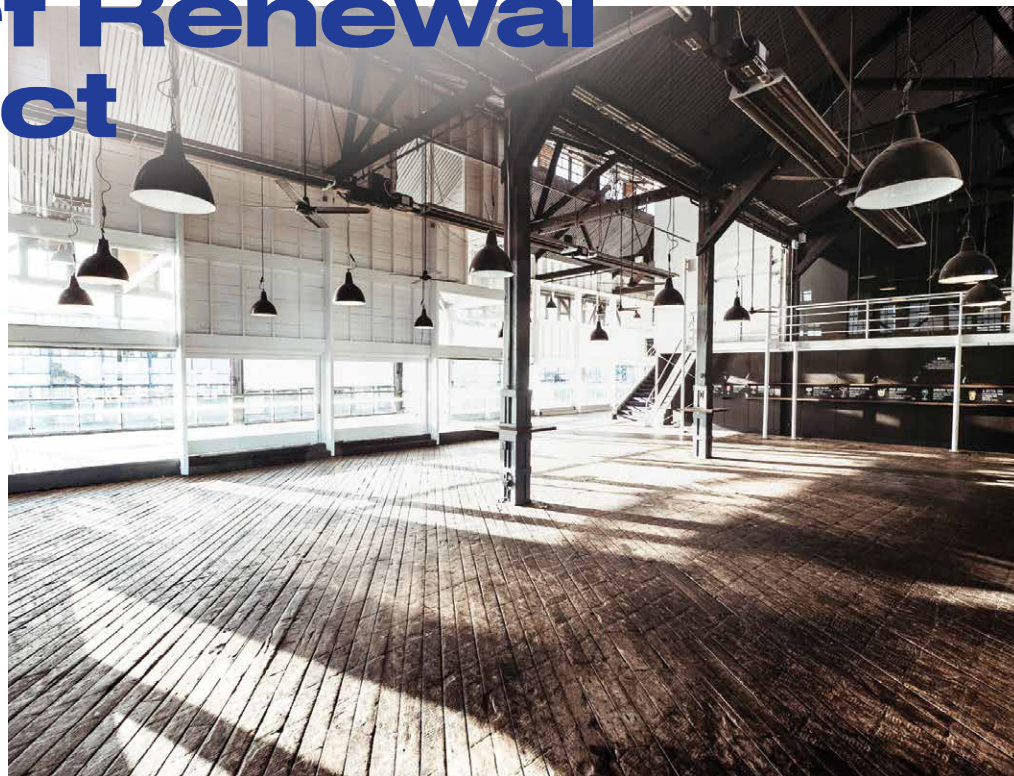
Laurinda Motion, Shepherds Park Education and Training Unit

HOLDSWORTH COMMUNITY

“The rewards of working with the participants in our class throughout the year have been immeasurable both professionally and personally. Having taught for over 25 years I have never experienced such joy, candour, patience and kindness of spirit in participants. Each and every week our class presents unique insights to the complexities of living with disability.”

Bronwyn Batchelor, STC Teaching Artist

Wharf Renewal Project



Left: Executive Director
Patrick McIntyre

Above: The Wharf

MEMORIES OF THE WHARF

By Executive Director Patrick McIntyre

I think the first time I came to The Wharf was in 1991. My dad was in town and had tickets to see David Hare's *Racing Demon*. I had moved to Sydney from a country town in the mid eighties after finishing high school. It seems incredible that it took me so many years to find my way down to Walsh Bay – especially seeing as only two years later, The Wharf became an almost constant presence in my working life up to the present day. I remember the slightly forbidding atmosphere of Hickson Road back then – somewhat dark and deserted – and then that miraculous journey down the long walkway to the bar and theatre jutting out over the water. It definitely had the feeling of a “best kept secret” despite already being well established in the hearts of theatre goers.

In 1993, I joined STC as Publications Manager – writing and editing the company's publications and program notes. The Wharf community included STC, Sydney Dance Company and an army of water rats who enjoyed the run of what is now the Bangarra space, occasionally creeping up into a wall cavity of the STC administration area to die and live on for some time as a disturbing miasma. Occasionally STC would invade the rats' territory, creating pop-up theatre spaces downstairs to house an experimental Shakespeare series, a promenade production of *Away*, the Starfish Club (where *Stomp* made its Australian debut, and Dein Perry's *Tap Dogs* had their world premiere) – and anything else that occurred to Wayne Harrison, the Artistic Director of the time who was never short of an idea. During this period, The Wharf celebrated its tenth anniversary as the home of STC and in my role I oversaw the production of *Walking on Water*, a commemorative book of essays and reminiscences.

Many years and a few different jobs later, I returned to STC as Executive Director in time for the thirtieth anniversary! For any public building, a thirtieth birthday is a difficult milestone when decades of wear and tear, changing community expectations and evolving building codes all make themselves known. So we began the process of working out how to best renew our facilities to make sure that The Wharf remains a vibrant and beloved theatre hub for the coming generation. Plus safer, energy efficient and with more toilets.

As we dreamed and planned the opportunities that came with refurbishing The Wharf, a dog-eared old volume of *Walking on Water* became my constant companion. It contains such useful gems as this, from Founding Artistic Director Richard Wherrett: “I had wanted what is now called Wharf 1 to be a more flexible space in which the seats could be removed and replaced in any configuration the director wanted, but the money wouldn't stretch to that.” This struck a chord with me and our Artistic Director at the time, Andrew Upton – what if we could re-fashion the performance spaces to provide a whole new range of experiences for artists and audiences, including end-on, corner-on, in-the-round or no-seats-at-all? Thanks to technological advancements and the generosity of our capital donors and the NSW Government, this new range of options will become available once the building re-opens.

An important guiding principle throughout was to maintain the building's intrinsic “wharfiness”: the textures of well-worn surfaces, scarred floor boards, soaring roof trusses, low yellow western light, and the diamond sparkle of the water. But in a concession to the more sophisticated expectations of visitors in the 21st century – no water rats.

Find out more at
sydneytheatre.com.au/wharfrenewal

“Theatre helps us laugh at ourselves. We're all ludicrous and life is ludicrous. Without a sense of humour, we're totally stuffed. You can laugh at anything and you should laugh at anything. It's a responsibility.”

Glace Chase

will be appearing in *Triple X*

Contact Us

KATHERINE STEVENSON PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER

P +61 (2) 9250 1705
kstevenson@sydneytheatre.com.au

ANGELINA GRIEN PUBLICIST

P +61 (2) 9250 1703
agrien@sydneytheatre.com.au

PHOTO CREDITS

Production photography: Rene Vaile.
Image credits: Prudence Upton, Inside Front Cover;
Demas Rusli pg 4; Nic Walker pg 5, 20, 21, 24;
Patrick Stevenson pg 22; Hugh Hamilton pg 24.

