



**A SHOW OF  
TRANQUILITY  
AND GRACE**

# **BLUE**

A PLAY BY THOMAS WEATHERALL  
DIRECTED BY DEBORAH BROWN

A BELVOIR ST PRODUCTION



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

At La Boite, we acknowledge the country on which we work and the traditional custodians of this land – the Turrbal and Jagera people.

We pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We honour the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people whose lands, winds and waters we all now share and their ancient and enduring cultures. This country was the home of storytelling long before La Boite existed, and we are privileged and grateful to share our stories here today.



CREATING THEATRE SINCE 1925

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LA BOITE THEATRE PRESENTS A BELVOIR ST PRODUCTION

# BLUE

A PLAY BY THOMAS WEATHERALL  
DIRECTED BY DEBORAH BROWN

## DATES

16 MAY - 1 JUNE

## DURATION

APPROX.  
80 MINUTES  
(no interval)

## CONTENT ADVISORIES

*Contains references to suicide, the use of coarse language, theatrical haze and herbal cigarettes.*

*Every effort has been made to ensure that all information was correct at the time of printing.*

## CREATIVE

<b>Playwright</b>	Thomas Weatherall
<b>Director</b>	Deborah Brown
<b>Stage Manager</b>	Isabella Kerdijk
<b>Set and Costume Designer</b>	Jacob Nash Cris Baldwin
<b>Lighting Designer</b>	Chloe Ogilvie
<b>Sound Designer &amp; Composer</b>	Wil Hughes
<b>Video Designer</b>	David Bergman
<b>Associate Director &amp; Dramaturg</b>	Dom Mercer
<b>Lighting Realiser &amp; Production Manager</b>	Richard Whitehouse
<b>Technical Mechanist</b>	Matthew James

## CAST

**Mark** Thomas Weatherall

## FEATURING

**Mother** Frances Rings  
**John** Darius Williams



**BELVOIR ST  
THEATRE**

**THE  
BALNAVES  
FOUNDATION**



WELCOME  
TO LA BOITE

La Boite Theatre is thrilled to be bringing Belvoir's *Blue* by Thomas Weatherall to Brisbane audiences.

It's a wonderful opportunity for us to have Thomas back in Brisbane to share this story with Queensland audiences. We are also thrilled to have the creative team behind this production at La Boite too – many of whom have ties to our local community.

La Boite has long collaborated with Belvoir to bring amazing storytellers and their stories to audiences in Sydney and Brisbane.

*Blue* is an exquisite piece of theatre that had its initial beginnings in Brisbane – Thomas talks about beginning the writing journey with *Blue* just a few blocks away from La Boite.

The way the story weaves together themes of identity, masculinity, a sense of belonging, and grief all through the lens of a young person is breathtaking.

Oftentimes society can dismiss a young person's experience or perspective on the world. Society tells young people that they haven't lived long enough yet, and that things are never as bad as they were for previous generations.

However, young people are the most present members of our society. They are often having a particular experience for the first time – and there is nothing that brings you more sharply into the present than experiencing loss, love, and grief for the first time. *Blue* brings all of us back to that place of being present with ourselves.

We strive to bring works to our audiences that provoke thought, challenge conventions, and ignite conversations. *Blue* is no exception.

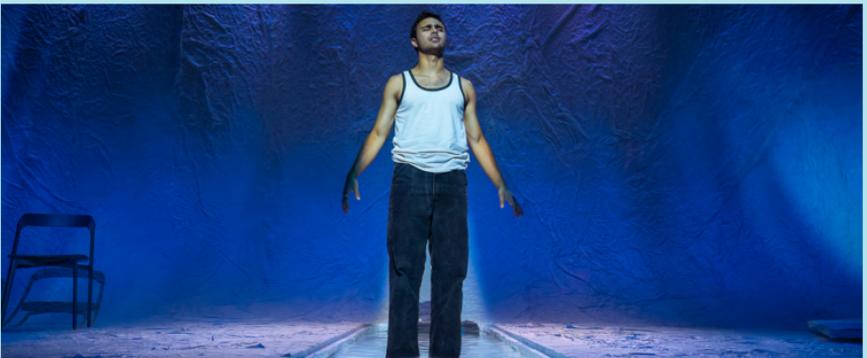
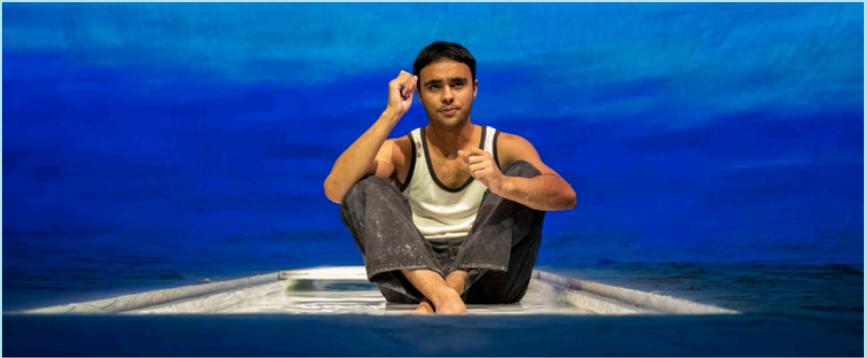
Through the mesmerising story of Mark, this production invites us to reflect upon our own journeys, and the way we navigate all life has to throw at us. It delves into themes of identity, self-discovery, and the boundless capacity of the human spirit.

Thank you to Thomas, Deborah, and the entire creative and production team for bringing this work to Brisbane. Thank you also to our colleagues at Belvoir – we love collaborating with you!

I invite you to immerse yourselves fully in the world of *Blue* and allow its magic to transport you to places both familiar and unknown. May this production be a catalyst for meaningful connection, finding a sense of belonging, and a celebration of the transformative power of theatre.

Thank you for supporting new Australian writing and exquisite Australian talent here at La Boite. Enjoy the show!

**COURTNEY STEWART**  
LA BOITE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CEO





# WRITER'S NOTE

When I was 17 and finishing my final year of high school, there was a period where I felt overwhelmingly depressed. I had felt similar before, but this was different. I couldn't articulate it to anyone in a concise or meaningful way and frankly, I believe that was because I myself could not make sense of it.

I attempted to talk about it, and for a young man who felt ill-equipped to do so, I thought I did a pretty good job. However, I lacked the literacy, or maybe vocabulary to truly describe what I was going through.

Since then I've experienced similar bouts of such feelings, some of which have felt more insurmountable and debilitating, but this particular one acted as a catalyst of sorts.

In a search for healthy coping mechanisms and artistic outlets, I discovered a love that I never knew would become so fruitful and sacred to me: writing. I wasn't aware at the time I was writing a play, or even anything of substance for that matter, but for the next four years, I would write, sometimes only a few sentences, sometimes pages at a time, that would ultimately accumulate into the play you are about to watch. (Thank you).

Now returning to the piece and sharing it with a Brisbane audience - mere blocks away from where I began writing it in my University share house - the work still rings true and affects me in ways I'd never imagined. I approach this piece now in a time of my life, much more full of contentment and hope, but still only steps ahead of the sort of despondency I've at times come both accustomed and resigned to.

This play has done wonders for me professionally, but even more so on a personal level. Life is very brief and terrifying. I'm trying to make the most of it and find the beauty in it. Blue has helped me do that, I hope it can help you do that too.

This play is not a cry for help, or an exercise of trauma, but more so an opening to a discourse that I truly believe so many people need. Blue is, in its rawest form, a kind of unprescribed therapy. Mark is not me, the story you are about to see is not my life, but more so a very personal fiction.

If nothing else, I hope this play makes you talk to your friends and family, love each other, set boundaries, read better books, swim in the ocean, and listen to music constantly!

A very sincere thanks to; my family, Stevie and Henry, Hastie, Jack, Sofia, Addy, Hen and Bryn, Lee-Anne, Justine, and everyone at United and Aurora. I have dedicated this play to my mother. Blue would not exist without her, and I most certainly would not be here today if I didn't have such a strong mum. Thank you. I love you.

**THOMAS WEATHERALL**  
PLAYWRIGHT





# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Upon reading Thomas Weatherall's, *Blue*, I immediately began visualising a world that could float and translate anywhere, in any space. My first read of the script I found myself sitting on the foot of my bed in my childhood home in Brisbane, after a day spent with my own mother, after months of feeling isolated and disconnected during the pandemic. Here was a writer that struck a chord with me.

*Blue* resonated not only as a script but also as a piece of music. It evoked the dancer in me and from that, I knew I wanted a team that could ground themselves in the poetry on the page but also allow the audience to be in the mind of our lead character, Mark.

Thomas has crafted an exquisite take on coping with the dichotomy of love and grief. It's taking someone at their most vulnerable and opening up their thoughts and provocations in the form of a landscape. A calling to the coast. A calling to a place that we often run to find calm but also forming a boundary that we may dare, or dare not, cross. With Mark, do we stand at the shoreline, or do we dive in?

I've experienced landscapes created by Jacob Nash firsthand as a performer in which I never felt alone on stage. Even when he's sculpted a space adhering to the vastness of *Country*, there is always a presence, a soul that watches over the performer, that keeps us safe and connected.

Alongside Cris Baldwin, I have found the creative process echoing these same sentiments. "The Wave" set piece allows us to add another emotional layer reflecting Mark's head space, that of projection.

A big thank you to Dave Bergman and team for creating such precious vignettes and to the beautiful artists, Darius Williams and my inspiration for many years, Frances Rings. It is a great pleasure to collaborate with Chloe Ogilvie again alongside associate Kelsey Lee to sculpt and caress an ever-subtle shifting landscape at the heart of *Blue*.

Thomas has created a sensual and textured world with his writing. Wil Hughes's exploration between the textures of sounds that evoke youth, life and home, as well as the varying measures of tides, supports Blue's sense of nostalgia.

I'd love to thank the production team, led by Richard Whitehouse, for bringing the conceptual wave to life, Stephanie Storr for grounding the room, the artistic team, Dom Mercer for bringing light to this tender script, Kodie Bedford for your insight and spark and Eamon and Aaron for your guidance and care.

Courtney Stewart and the La Boite family, thank you for inviting and welcoming us into a space that has an everlasting impact.

Last but not least, I'd like to thank Thomas Weatherall for diving in and entrusting myself and all the team to help shape such a beautiful story. I look forward to sharing this story on the country of the Turrbal and Jaggara people.

I hope Blue leaves a lasting impression with Brisbane audiences just as much as La Boite did for me from my youth.

**DEBORAH BROWN**  
DIRECTOR



# CAST & PLAYWRIGHT



## **THOMAS WEATHERALL** (he/him) **MARK**

Thomas Weatherall is a Kamilaroi writer and actor. His debut play BLUE premiered in 2023 at Belvoir Theatre in a sold-out season in which he also starred. Commissioned by Belvoir Theatre as part of the Balnaves Fellowship, the world premiere of BLUE received resounding critical acclaim. BLUE was chosen to take part

in the 2023 Australian Theatre Festival in New York, before going on to be programmed by State Theatre Company of South Australia and La Boite Theatre Company in Brisbane for their 2024 seasons. BLUE is shortlisted in the 2024 Premier's Literary Awards for the Nick Enright Prize for Playwriting.

In his acting work, Thomas is best known for his performance as Malakai Mitchell, in HEARTBREAK HIGH for Netflix. This performance earned him both an AACTA Award for Best Supporting Actor in a Television Drama, and a Silver Logie for Most Outstanding Supporting Actor, along with multiple other nominations.

After making his acting debut in 2018 in ABC's AACTA award-winning series DEADLOCK, Thomas has been solidifying his position in the industry, with many roles across stage and screen, including Network Seven's RFDS, which saw him named as one of Casting Guild Australia's Rising Stars for 2020.

Thomas can be seen in upcoming Australia Drama series THE LAST DAYS OF THE SPACE AGE for Disney+, EXPOSURE for Stan, and THE NARROW ROAD TO THE DEEP NORTH for Prime Video.

Thomas currently has several writing projects in development, across screen, stage and longform literature.



# CREATIVE TEAM



## DEBORAH BROWN DIRECTOR

**The production of *Blue* by Thomas Weatherall at La Boite Theatre in 2024, marks Deborah's directorial debut for the iconic Queensland theatre company.**

Deborah has been Assistant Director for STC for *The Long Forgotten Dream*, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, and *Wonnangatta*. In 2023 she choreographed for La Boite and STC's collaboration, *The Poison of Polygamy*. In 2019 she was Associate Director on *Winyanboga Yurringa* for Belvoir St and also participated in Belvoir's *Artists At Work* in 2020.

Other independent works as Director/Choreographer include *Spinifex Gum*, a collaboration with Felix Riebl, Ollie McGill and Marliya of Gondwana Choirs; *The Wave* for Project Animo and *hide* for Campbelltown Arts Centre.

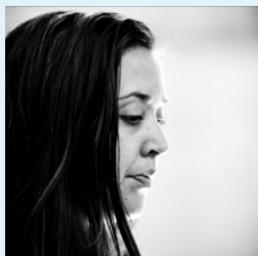
Deborah was a Senior Artist for Bangarra Dance Theatre, having worked on award-winning shows choreographed by Stephen Page and Frances Rings. She was awarded the 2013 Helpmann Award for Best Female Dancer in a Dance or Physical Theatre Production, for *Terrain*. That same year, she was named one of Arts Queensland's Culture Champions for her contribution to the Queensland arts and culture sector as well as making her choreographic and directorial debut, creating a short dance film titled *dive*, paying homage to the Pearl Shell divers of the Torres Strait Islands for Bangarra's season of Dance Clan 3, leading her to co-create *I.B.I.S.* as part of the Lore national season in 2015.

Her career highlights with Bangarra were returning to Country, including Mer Island, Yirrkala and Kati Thanda as well as performing at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Harvey Theatre and partnering with The Australian Ballet at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris.

Deborah was honoured to be the recipient of the 2016 Australian Dance Award, Outstanding Performance by a Company, Lore (*IBIS* and *Sheoak*) with Bangarra Dance Theatre.

In 2024 Deborah returns to Bangarra as a choreographer for the world premiere season of *Horizon* touring nationally.

Deborah received her Masters in Screen Directing from the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS). Her capstone project, *Bala*, has made the official selection for various film festivals around the world. *Bala* is currently screening on ABC iView. This led her to direct Episode 8 of AACTA nominated Children's Series, *Barrumbi Kids*.



**ISABELLA KERDIJK** (she/her)

## **STAGE MANAGER**

After graduating from NIDA in 2008, Isabella has made her mark as both a Stage Manager and assistant stage manager on an impressive array of productions collaborating with renowned companies including Belvoir Theatre, Sydney Theatre Company, Griffin Theatre,

Darlinghurst Theatre Company, Opera Australia, Ensemble Theatre, Circus Oz, Spiegelworld and more.

At Belvoir Theatre she has been a part of: *An Enemy of the People*, *The Dog/The Cat*, *The Drover's Wife*, *Every Brilliant Thing*, *Fangirls*, *Girl Asleep*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *HIR*, *Jasper Jones*, *Kill the Messenger*, *Mother*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *My Name is Jimi*, *Stories I Want to Tell You In Person (National Tour)*, *The Sugar House*, *Thyestes (European Tours)* and *Winyanboga Yurringa*.

For Griffin Theatre, *And No More Shall We Part*, *Blaque Showgirls*, *Green Park*, *Replay*, *Sex Magick*, *The Smallest Hour*, *This Year's Ashes*, *Ugly Mugs*, *Whitefella Yella Tree*, *Wicked Sisters*; for STC *Blithe Spirit*; for Darlinghurst Theatre Company *Fourplay*, *Ride* and *Silent Night*; and for Ensemble Theatre, *Boxing Day BBQ*, *Rainman*, and *The Ruby Sunrise*.

Isabella has also worked on various festivals including The Garden of Unearthly Delights, Sydney Festival and the Woodford Folk Festival.



**CHLOE OGLIVIE** (she/her)

## **LIGHTING DESIGNER**

Chloe Ogilvie is an Indigenous, Lighting Designer based in Perth where she graduated from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (2015).

Chloe works mostly as a designer but has crossed over into other areas including Production Management and Event Coordination.

Chloe was a resident Artist with Black Swan for two years and assisted on productions such as *Assassins*, *The Events*, *Xenedies*, and also designed her own show, *Our Town*.

Chloe is a member of the arts collective The Farm where she has designed and managed the production of shows including *Throttle* (Matilda Award Nominee), *Cockfight* (Drover Award Winner), *Ninth Wave*, *Tide* (Helpmann Award Winner) and *Depthless*.

Other highlights include, *Spinifex Gum* (LD/ALD), *Winyan Boga Yurringa* (Belvoir, ALD), *Fever and the Fret* (Yirra Yaakin, LD), *Bayala* (Sydney Festival, Event Coordinator) and *Toast* (Maiden Voyage Theater Company, LD).



**JACOB NASH** (he/him)

**SET & COSTUME DESIGNER**

Jacob is a descendant of the Daly River people, west of Darwin, and has spent the last 20 years living, working and creating in Sydney on Eora country.

He graduated from the NIDA Design Course in 2005. In 2010, he designed the set for *of earth & sky* for Bangarra and received a Green Room Award for Best Design in Dance. He was appointed Artist-in-Residence at Bangarra the following year, and then Bangarra Head of Design through February 2023.

Jacob's portfolio boasts an impressive array of set designs for Bangarra's annual productions, including acclaimed works like *Dark Emu*, *Bennelong*, and *Patyegarang*. His exceptional work on *Bennelong* earned him a Helpmann Award for Best Scenic Design in 2018. Beyond Bangarra, Jacob has lent his creative vision to various projects, from serving as Production Designer for *Cleverman* Season 2 to crafting immersive installations for Sydney Festival and Vivid Sydney.

In addition to his achievements in theatre and film, Jacob remains dedicated to fostering creativity within the community. As a Board Director of Belvoir St Theatre and a Creative Artist in Residence at Sydney Festival, he continues to inspire and uplift emerging talents.





**WIL HUGHES** (he/him)

**COMPOSER &  
SOUND DESIGNER**

Wil is an internationally acclaimed composer for film, television and other media. He recently won Best Music for a Short Film at the 2022 Australian Screen Music Awards and in 2018 was awarded Composer of the Year by the California Independent Film Festival.

Wil's credits as a composer, songwriter and sound designer for theatre range from contemporary ballet to musicals and include *Blue* (Belvoir St); *Tiddas*, *Single Asian Female*, *The Dead Devils of Cockle Creek*, *The Village*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Wind in the Willows* (La Boite Theatre); *Face to Face* (Playlab); *Lucie In The Sky*, *Arc*, *Still Life* (Australasian Dance Collective); *Propel* (Expressions Dance Company); *Mind Your Head*, *From Within*, *Sonder*, *B- Sides* (Queensland Ballet); *Kill Climate Deniers* (That Production Company); *Elizabeth I* (Monsters Appear/Wonderland Festival); *Rice*, *The Scene Project 2018* (Queensland Theatre); *Day After Terrible Day*, *We Will Not Kiss/ Touch/Frighten You in the Dark*, *Caligula* (The Danger Ensemble); *The Theory of Everything* (Brisbane Festival/Metro Arts); *Dust Covered Butterfly* (Metro Arts); and *Sweet Meniscus* (Anywhere Theatre Festival).



**DAVID BERGMAN** (he/him)

**VIDEO DESIGNER**

David is an award-winning composer, video and sound designer for theatre, dance, opera, installation and film with recent theatre credits including video design for *Blue* with Belvoir Street Theatre and the ground-breaking productions of *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr.*

*Hyde* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* for Sydney Theatre Company.

Other work for Sydney Theatre Company includes sound design for *Playing Beatie Bow*, video and sound design for *A Cheery Soul* and *The Wharf Revue* (from 2009-2018); and video design for *Julius Caesar*, *Muriel's Wedding: The Musical*, *The Hanging*, *The Effect* and *The Long Way Home*.

David was the sound designer for *Rent* at the Sydney Opera House and for Bangarra Dance Company, delivered video design for *Sandsong*, *Spirit* and *Knowledge Ground*.

David extensive experience in sound and video design also includes works with Griffin Theatre Company, Bell Shakespeare, Soft Tread, State Theatre Company of South Australia, Monkey Baa Theatre, Seymour Centre, Darlinghurst Theatre Co, Hayes Theatre Co.

David is a National Institute of Dramatic Art graduate and shares his industry knowledge and experience as a teacher at NIDA.

# THE COMPANY

## BOARD

### Chair

Adam Brunet  
Gresham Congoo  
Amanda Jolly  
Sarah McAree  
Lynn Rainbow-Reid AM  
Jessica Simpson  
Sarah Townsend

## TEAM

### Senior Producer

Jess Bunz

### Resident Dramaturg

Katrina Irawati Graham

### Production Manager

Teegan Kranenburg

### Workshop Manager

Andrew Mills

### Technical Coordinator

George Pitt

### Marketing Coordinator

Siluni Kumarapperuma

## FRONT OF HOUSE

### Espresso Bar + Café Barista

Annabel Gilbert

### Front of House Supervisors

Kat Collins, Megan Dale,  
Marie David and Sophia Harris

## PRODUCTION

### Casual Technicians

Tim Gawne  
Sophie Watkins  
Briana Clarke  
Abigail Taylor

### Set Builder

Tim Monley

## SPECIAL THANKS

Andy Geppert

## SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

### Artistic Director & CEO

Courtney Stewart

### Head of Business

Ian Prowse

### Head of Development and Stakeholder Engagement

Jackie Maxwell

### Head of Marketing and Audience Development

Jacqueline Bawtree

### Communications Agency

Aruga

### Venue & Operations Manager

Nick Seery

### Ticketing & Executive Officer

Sophie Wickes

### Company Accountant

Karen Mitchell

### Finance Officer

Elizabeth Lepua

### Front of House & Espresso Bar Staff

Mia Bennie, Cassidy Cahill,  
Will Carseldine, Billy Fogarty,  
Peter Keavy, Peta Kishawi,  
Bryson McGuire, Georgia McKenzie,  
Aimee Sheather, Olivia Sullivan,  
Carys Walsh, and Lily Williams

### Photography Credits

Dan Boud (Hero)  
Joseph Mayers  
(Rehearsal and production)

### Video Trailer

PixelFrame

### Program Design

Dowling & Dowling Design

# LA BOITE SPONSORS



Queensland  
Government

La Boite Theatre Company is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland



Australian Government

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body.



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*



MULTICULTURAL  
AUSTRALIA  
*it's who we are*



## Media Partners



## Season Partners



## Presenting & Development Partners



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