

THE POISON OF POLYGAMY

A PLAY BY ANCHULI FELICIA KING
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY WONG SHEE PING,
TRANSLATED BY ELY FINCH
DIRECTED BY COURTNEY STEWART

4 LA
BOITE

SYDNEY
THEATRE
CO



A SHOW OF COLLIDING WORLDS, MURDER AND BETRAYAL

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.

A LA BOITE THEATRE AND SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY
WORLD PREMIERE CO-PRODUCTION

THE POISON OF POLYGAMY

**A PLAY BY ANCHULI FELICIA KING
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY WONG SHEE PING,
TRANSLATED BY ELY FINCH
DIRECTED BY COURTNEY STEWART**

DATES

8 - 27 MAY

DURATION

APPROX. 180 MINS

*(Includes a 20
minute interval)*

CONTENT ADVISORIES

*Recommended for
audiences aged 15+*

*Contains depictions
of murder (including
infanticide), violence, drug
use, brief instances of sexual
activity, sexual themes, and
references to suicide.*

*This production also contains
loud noises and use of
theatrical haze / smoke
effects.*

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

CREATIVE TEAM

Playwright Anchuli Felicia King

Director Courtney Stewart

Set & Costume Designer James Lew

Lighting Designer Ben Hughes

Sound Designer Guy Webster

Composer Matt Hsu's Obscure Orchestra

Fight & Intimacy Direction Nigel Poulton

Choreography Deborah Brown

Dance Captain Anna Yen

Vocal Coach Melissa Agnew

Cultural Consultant Institute for Australian
and Chinese Arts and Culture

UQ Dramaturg Secondment Yuchen Yao

Director Observership Participants

Triona Calimbayan-Giles, Grace Law,
Peter Wood

Stage Manager Kat O'Halloran

Assistant Stage Manager Kristina Marjanac

CAST

Ching / Villager 1 Ray Chong Nee

Mrs Lui / Mrs Ching Hsin-Ju Ely

Chan / Ma's Cousin / Villager 2 Silvan Rus

The Preacher / Sleep-Sick Shan-Ree Tan

Ma Merlynn Tong

Tsiu Hei Kimie Tsukakoshi

Villager 3 / Sleep-Sick's Mother / Ma's

Mother / Ms Lin Anna Yen

Doctor Ng / Pan / Song Gareth Yuen

THIS STORY IS BIG



SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to Ely Finch for his unerring generosity with his translation, Professor Jing Han at the Australia-China Institute for Arts and Culture for her nuanced notes, my playwright's group Youngblood at the Ensemble Studio Theatre in New York for their feedback on early drafts, and Polly Rowe, who shepherded this play at STC from commission to production. Above all, thanks to Courtney Stewart, my champion and collaborator since I was a baby playwright. Watching you flourish as an artistic leader has been one of the great joys of my professional life.

WRITER'S NOTES

The *Poison of Polygamy's* epic scope can be somewhat attributed to its original form. It appeared in fifty-three instalments in a Chinese-language newspaper in 1909-1910. The newspaper's readership was a nascent category: the Chinese-Australian.

In writing this social fable, Wong Shee Ping was driven by his values as a Christian preacher and political organizer for the Kuomintang. Yet it's also a *romp* – a rollicking serialized saga written in Literary Chinese. *Poison* ricochets between two competing imperatives: to evangelize and to entertain. It's uniquely compelling and, to my mind, an Australian classic.

Yet it's languished in obscurity. Academics rediscovered it in 2019. As soon as I read Ely Finch's mellifluous English translation, I felt it deserved a wider audience.

While I have remained (mostly) faithful to the novel's central events, I admit that I'm a promiscuous adaptor. The play is infused with my own jokes, research, politics. My approach was reciprocal, not parasitic. I felt I was in conversation with a ghost. It's a sentiment all of us have felt working on this production – that in staging this lost piece of our cultural heritage, we're speaking to our ancestors.

Now the ghosts can speak to you too.

ANCHULI FELICIA KING
PLAYWRIGHT

This play by Anchuli Felicia King is a social homily adapted from Wong Shee Ping's novella of the same name.

While Ping attempted to wrangle the narrative to support his ideas around morality and encourage his readership to push towards virtuous self-betterment – King makes space for the audience to look at these words and ideas anew, and questions the original writer's authority to tout the perfection of Christian monogamy.

Working on this play with this team has been a highlight of my career – I have never had the chance to interrogate so deeply the origins of the Chinese diaspora in this country and look at how we as a people also contributed to colonisation. These characters are deeply flawed, with even the most virtuous of the characters having imperfect politics or personal weaknesses. *The Poison of Polygamy* is a gift to the Australian canon – a chance for Chinese characters to play against the model minority myth, and to be grappling with ideas that extend beyond a mere exploration of self-identity.

Felicia is right in saying this play is big! We traverse themes of Chinese Nationalism, political and social thinking, race relations, women's rights, the challenges of migration, marriage, religion, modernisation, and the value of kinship and solidarity between Chinese diaspora in Australia. But ultimately, I think this play is about legacy and how fixated we are as human beings by the mark we will leave behind. How will we be remembered? How can we take control of our own personal histories and curate them to shine us in a certain light for generations to come? This production offers up a live conversation between the Chinese Diaspora of then and the Chinese Diaspora of now, and asks the question: How do we ensure we become good ancestors?

COURTNEY STEWART
DIRECTOR



**WORKING
ON THIS
PLAY WITH
THIS TEAM
HAS BEEN A
HIGHLIGHT OF
MY CAREER**

MESSAGE FROM SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY



It gives me and everyone at STC great pleasure to be collaborating with our colleagues at La Boite Theatre to premiere this remarkable and groundbreaking new Australian work.

Over the last few years of programming, my team and I have been particularly interested in exploring new and underrepresented perspectives on Australian history. When our 2019 Patrick White Playwrights Fellow, the extraordinary Anchuli Felicia King,

came to us with this classic, vast, and criminally under read novel – indeed Australia’s first Chinese language novel – we knew it was a perfect match. Wong Shee Ping’s tale contains all the pleasures of epic literature; an expansive adventure that crosses seas and deserts, moral conundrums of the highest order and a cast of unforgettable characters. Add to this King’s wry, sardonic and electrifyingly contemporary eye and you have an explosive cocktail.

It also brings me great personal pleasure to be working again with La Boite Artistic Director and former Sydney Theatre Company Resident Director Courtney Stewart. Courtney’s extensive and profound theatremaking gifts make her the ideal director for this piece that so gracefully weaves together many different forms of storytelling. You are about to experience a fantastic and thrilling work of Australian theatre, so sit back and enjoy the ride.

KIP WILLIAMS
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CO-CEO, STC

THE STORY ABOUT TO BE TOLD IS NECESSARY BUT WILL NOT BE A PLEASANT ONE ...

ACT I

The story begins with an impoverished and opium-driven Sleep-Sick setting out to find his fortune in the far-off Victorian goldfields. Boarding a boat to Australia from Hong Kong, he leaves behind his long-suffering wife, Ma. On the boat he befriends fellow fortune seekers Pan and Ching.

After 76 days they land in South Australia, far from the location of the goldfields. Embarking on a perilous journey, they encounter wilderness and harsh terrain, until at last finding haven at Chan's market garden. The four men decide to go into business together.

However, a year passes without profit and Sleep-Sick abandons his duties, leading to unintended consequences. Deciding to return to China, Sleep-Sick unravels a dramatic turn of events that threaten to upend everything he has worked for.

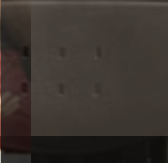
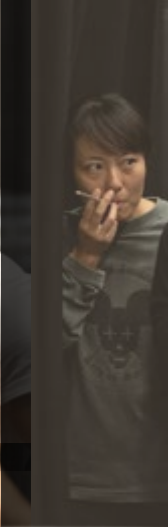
ACT II

Sleep-Sick reunites with Pan, Ching and Chan in Australia. The story takes a dark turn as we witness the ramifications of his insatiable desires. Tsiu Hei, a bondmaiden, becomes a prisoner of Sleep-Sick's destructive obsession.

As Sleep-Sick becomes increasingly disturbed, his business plummets. Tsiu Hei falls into the crossfire of his rage. Meanwhile, the other characters face their own struggles – Pan's political efforts are quashed, Chan meets tragedy and Ching is forced to close his shop due to Sleep-Sick's embezzlement.

Ruined, Sleep-Sick and Tsiu Hei return to China, but their relationship is fractured and fragile. Tensions escalate, leading to a shocking climax that will leave you on the edge of your seat.

SYNOPSIS



Credits L-R: (Row 1) Anna Yen, Shan-Ree Tan, Hsin-Ju Ely, Silvan Rus, Hsin-Ju Ely; (Row 2) Gareth Yuen, Hsin-Ju Ely, Ray Chong Nee; (Row 3) Shan-Ree Tan, Kimie Tsukakoshi, Shan-Ree Tan, Kimie Tsukakoshi, Silvan Rus, Ray Chong Nee, Hsin-Ju Ely.

REHEARSAL IMAGES

TIMELINE

As you settle into your seats for *The Poison of Polygamy*, we invite you to take a moment to glance through this timeline of historical events that contextualise the play's setting. From the First Opium War to the Westernisation Movement, the timeline sheds light on the larger historical context of the play, providing a glimpse into the struggles faced by Chinese miners and communities during this time.

1839-1842

The First Opium War

1851

The Discovery of the Gold in New South Wales, followed by a much larger scramble to Victoria

1853-1855

The largest pre-federation Chinese migration to Australia

1854

July William Denovan called for an uprising for the purpose of 'the driving of the Chinese population off the Bendigo goldfield'

1855

12 June Victoria imposed a limitation of one Chinese passenger for every 10 tons of cargo and levied a poll tax of £10

1855-1861

Extra £1 per annum residency tax for Chinese miners ("the protection tax")

1856-1860

The Second Opium War / Convention of Peking / Treaty of Tientsin

1857

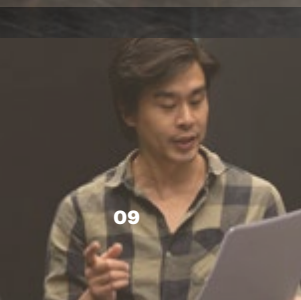
4 July Buckland Riot

1860-1861

10 months Lambing Flat Riot

1861

Westernisation Movement

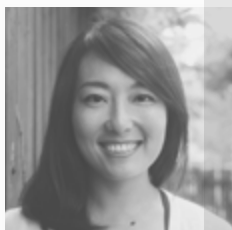


CAST MEMBERS



RAY CHONG NEE (he/they)
CHING / VILLAGER 1

Ray is excited to return to the La Boite family after having last being seen on the Roundhouse stage in 2015 and facilitating a workshop with The Mamas Boys Collective in 2019. Having worked extensively in the industry with many independent and mainstage companies, Ray was last seen as King Claudius for Bell Shakespeare's production of *Hamlet* in 2022. Ray can be seen as series regular Eddie Ioane in the upcoming teen drama TV show *Year Of* via STAN.



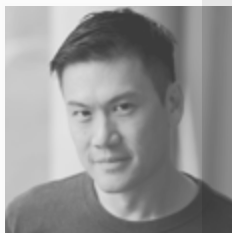
HSIN-JU ELY (she/her)
MRS LUI / MRS CHING

Hsin-Ju Ely (aka Raw) was born in Taiwan and has been dancing since she was 5. She has worked extensively across the dance industry and the country, working for many companies including Dancenorth, The Farm, Stalker Theatre Company, Lisa Wilson Projects, Phluxus2 Dance Collective (including a month-long season at Edinburgh Fringe Festival for the show called *angel-monster*). Since 2021 she has stepped into the theatre world and has performed in Queensland Theatre's *Boy Swallows Universe*, Belloo Creative's *The Woman Remembers* and Shock Therapy Productions' *Locked In*. She is very excited to start her journey with La Boite Theatre as an actor.



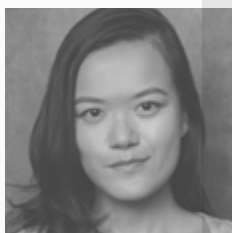
SILVAN RUS (he/him)
CHAN / MA'S COUSIN / VILLAGER 2

The Poison of Polygamy is Silvan's debut with La Boite. In 2013, he relocated from Sydney to Brisbane to join the Queensland Shakespeare Ensemble. Recently, he has worked with Queensland Theatre in *Our Town* and received a Matilda Nomination for his performance in Playlab Theatre's *Slow Boat*. In 2020, Silvan graduated with first class honours at UQ, double majoring in Chinese and Philosophy. He then wanted to learn Ancient Greek, so he attended the University of Melbourne for Classical Studies before finishing a Masters in Philosophy at Macquarie University with High Distinction. Silvan takes great pride in his education and hopes to spend the rest of his days as an artist enriched by his historical and philosophical understanding of this complex world.



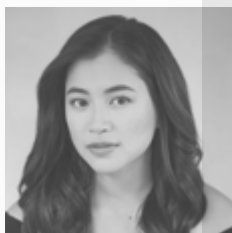
SHAN-REE TAN (he/him)
THE PREACHER / SLEEP-SICK

The Poison of Polygamy is Shan-ree's debut with La Boite. Based in Sydney, he recently appeared at the Ensemble Theatre as Eric Ming / Lazy Susan in *The One*, Vanessa Bates' bittersweet comedy about growing up between two cultures, and as Robert Hooke, the relentless nemesis of Isaac Newton and Edmund Halley, in the Sydney premiere of David Williamson's *Nearer the Gods*. He received a Sydney Theatre Award in 2022 for his leading role as DHH, the alter ego of playwright David Henry Hwang, in *Yellow Face* (Dinosaurus / Kings X Theatre). Other recent theatre credits include *For the Grace of You Go I* (Secret House / New Ghosts); *As You Like It* (Sport for Jove); *Wit* (Clock & Spiel); *Crime and Punishment* (Secret House); *Pygmalion* and *Nell Gwynn* (New Theatre). Recent screen appearances include *The Twelve* and *The Secrets She Keeps*. He has studied arts at Columbia University in New York, law at UNSW, and producing and screen business at the Australian Film Television and Radio School. His family hails from Malaysia.



MERLYNN TONG (she/her)
MA

Merlynn likes cats, a lot. She is also an actor and a playwright. Her first mainstage performance was with La Boite in *Straight White Men* by Young Jean Lee. She has since performed across Australia, ran away with the circus to Taiwan, wrote about gangsters from Singapore and directed dinosaurs in China. Merlynn was one of La Boite's resident playwrights in 2022. Her stories grapple with family, inheritance, lost, longing, delicious food and sometimes, cats. She was recently in Athens where she got to pet many cats. Next time, she will bring cat food—so she can pet more cats.



KIMIE TSUKAKOSHI (she/her)
TSIU HEI

Kimie starred as Kyra in the hit series *The Bureau of Magical Things* and as Heidi Thomson in award-winning comedy series *The Family Law*. Other TV credits include: *Ms Fishers Modern Mysteries*, *Secret City*, *Doctor Doctor*, *H2O: Just Add Water* and the feature films *Great White* and *Rip Tide*. Theatre credits include *Top Coat* (STC), *Death of a Salesman* (STC), *Nearer the Gods* (QT, Matilda nomination Best Supporting Actress), *The Dead Devils of Cockle Creek* (La Boite), *Hanako: Desire and Other Secret Weapons* (Matilda nomination for Best Female Actor) among many others. In 2018 Kimie received the Rising Star Award by Casting Guild of Australia.



ANNA YEN (she/her)
VILLAGER 3 / SLEEP-SICK'S MOTHER
/ MA'S MOTHER / MS LIN / DANCE CAPTAIN

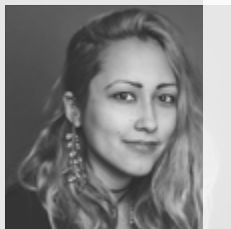
Anna acted in *Fortune* and *Wicked Bodies* (Zen Zen Zo) at La Boite. Other performance credits include: *Death in a Statesman* (debase); *Concerto for Harmony* and *Presto* (debase); *Tower of Babel* (Baran Theatre); *Monstera* (GUSH); *It All Begins With Love* (Creative Regions); *The Serpent's Table* (CAAP / Griffin / Sydney Festival); *Waterwheel* (Igneous); *After China* (QUT); *Load-ed Stories* (QTC-Ed); multiple Rock'n'Roll Circus shows; *Cravings* (Vulcana); and *The Case of All Things* (Los Lunch Dates). Anna's Matilda-Awarded *Chinese Take Away* (QPAC), was adapted into a film by Looking Glass Pictures. Her play *Slow Boat* was produced by Playlab Theatre / Brisbane Festival / Brisbane Powerhouse.



GARETH YUEN (he/him)
DOCTOR NG / PAN / SONG

Gareth has worked extensively in theatre, film and television in Australia, New Zealand and the United States. Early Theatre credits include: *Sabat Jesus* (Playbox/Melb Int. Fest.), *The Wizard of Oz* (Vic Arts Centre) Early TV credits: *Head Start* (ABC/Foxtel), *Ponderosa* (US Cable TVs prequel to *Bonanza*), *Round the Twist*, *Neighbours*, *Kath & Kim* and many others. He then trained at NIDA. Since graduating, he's been seen on screen in shows such as *Underbelly*; globally as the 'Blue Ranger' in the inimitable U.S. action series, *Power Rangers: Operation Overdrive*, and in the acclaimed feature film, *The Jammed*. Gareth has regularly performed and developed new work with Melbourne Theatre Company. As Director, Gareth won best play in the inaugural Collingwood 24-hour Play Festival. More recent credits include: Malthouse Theatre's adaptation of Lars von Trier's *Melancholia*, *Doubt* and *L.A. Confidential* for CBS Television (USA), *Photograph 51* (Ensemble Theatre), and *Hungry Ghosts* (SBS, Winner - Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Mini-Series, Equity Awards).

CREATIVE TEAM



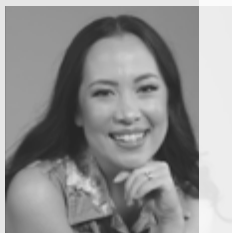
ANCHULI FELICIA KING (she/her)
PLAYWRIGHT

Anchuli Felicia King is a playwright, screenwriter and multidisciplinary artist of Thai-Australian descent. As a playwright, King is interested in linguistic hybrids, digital cultures and globalization. The Royal Court Theatre's mainstage production of King's play *White Pearl* marked her professional debut in May 2019, directed by Nana Dakin. *White Pearl* was subsequently produced by Sydney Theatre Company / National Theatre of Parramatta in Sydney in 2019 and the Studio Theatre in Washington, DC in the United States. Her play *Golden Shield* was commissioned through Melbourne Theatre Company's Next Stage program and made its Off-Broadway debut at Manhattan Theatre Club in 2022. As a screenwriter, King recently wrote on HBO's/Team Downey series *The Sympathizer* with Robert Downey Jr and Hoa Xuande based on the book of the same name due for 2024 release, HBO/Sky's dark horror comedy *The Baby* and the Foxtel drama series *The Twelve*. She has TV projects in development with a range of companies including See-Saw, SK Global, Warner Bros, Amazon, Netflix, and Lucky Chap Entertainment.



ELY FINCH (he/him)
TRANSLATOR

Ely Finch (林雍堂; www.elyfinch.com) is an Australian translator and consultant linguist, with an abiding interest in Chinese languages and traditional Chinese literature, who specialises in historical texts written in Literary (Classical) Chinese, Cantonese, and related Southern Chinese vernaculars. His largest translation to date is Australia's and possibly the West's first Chinese-language novel, Wong Shee Ping's 1909–1910 newspaper serial *The Poison of Polygamy: A Social Novel*, which translation was published by Sydney University Press in 2019 in a bilingual parallel format. In keeping with a continued focus on the nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Chinese diaspora in Australia, his most recent book, cowritten with historian Dr Juanita Kwok, is a work entitled *Bew Chip's Register: a Chinese Australian remittance register from the Tambaroora and Hill End goldfield*, which was published in April 2022 by the Hill End and Tambaroora Gathering Group.



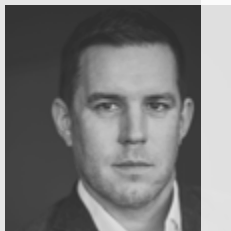
COURTNEY STEWART (she/her)
DIRECTOR

Courtney Stewart is an acclaimed director, dramaturg, actor and teaching artist with a deep passion for intercultural works and multicultural dramaturgies. She has worked on a number of productions and developments of new Australian work such as *Top Coat* (STC), *Eat Me: The Necklace* (NIDA / STC), *Julius Caesar*, *Playing Beatie Bow*, *Hamlet - Prince of Skidmark* and *Australian Graffiti* (STC), *Double Delicious* (Contemporary Asian Australian Performance), *Neon Tiger* by Julia-Rose Lewis and *Single Asian Female* by Michelle Law (La Boite / Belvoir St Theatre), *A Ghost in My Suitcase* by Vanessa Bates, *Siti Rubiyah* by Katrina Irawati Graham, *Barbaric Truth* by Jordan Shea, *Orange Thrower* by Kirsty Marillier and *White Pearl* by Anchuli Felicia King. A proud Queenslander, Courtney started her professional career as an actor before honing her talents as an artistic leader, director and change-maker for some of the country's most prolific organisations including Sydney Theatre Company, Belvoir and Contemporary Asian Australian Performance. Courtney was previously Chair of the Equity Diversity Committee, a delegate to the National Performers Committee, and a former board member for Contemporary Asian Australian Performance. *The Poison of Polygamy* is the first play of Courtney's debut season as Artistic Director at La Boite.



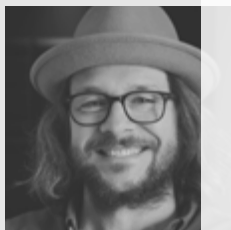
JAMES LEW (he/him)
SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER

James is a Chinese-Australian designer and theatremaker from Melbourne. His recent work includes *Top Coat*, a body swap comedy written by Michelle Law and directed by Courtney Stewart. *Daddy*, an immersive dance work by Wiradjuri man Joel Bray, which has performed at YIRRAMBOI, Liveworks, Arts Centre Melbourne, Brisbane Festival, Darwin Festival, Perth Festival, and will soon tour internationally. *I sat and waited but you were gone too long*, *my sister feather*, and *let bleeding girls lie*, a trilogy of new work by Olivia Satchell exploring shared grief as a point of connection between strangers in transitional places. James is a Green Room Award nominee, alumni of the Besen Family Artist Program at the Malthouse Theatre and the Design Associate Program at Sydney Theatre Company.



BEN HUGHES (he/him)
LIGHTING DESIGNER

Ben Hughes' lighting design spans theatre, dance, opera, concerts and events. Ben's lighting designs have appeared on stages throughout Australia, and internationally in the United Kingdom, United States, China, India & New Zealand. He has designed for companies including: Queensland Theatre, Sydney Theatre Company, Melbourne Theatre Company, State Theatre Company of South Australia, Malthouse Theatre, Opera Queensland, Belvoir, La Boite Theatre, Queensland Ballet, Sydney Festival, Brisbane Festival, Australasian Dance Collective, The Danger Ensemble (current Associate Artistic Director), HotHouse Theatre, The Nest Ensemble, Queensland Performing Arts Centre, Kooemba Jdarra and many others. Ben lectures in lighting design at Queensland University of Technology.



GUY WEBSTER (he/him)
SOUND DESIGNER

Working across the mediums of theatre, dance, circus, sound art, installation and new media, Guy developed his practice as a sound artist during his early career as a dancer & choreographer. His work has since featured in theatres, festivals and galleries throughout Australia, Japan, Europe, UK, USA and China and his live performances have shared the stage with the likes of Beth Orton, Ed Harcourt, Powderfinger, The Cruel Sea, Mad Professor and Sarah Blasko. Guy has created music and sound for theatre and dance works with Queensland Theatre, Sydney Theatre Company, La Boite Theatre, Shake & Stir Theatre, Dancenorth, Brisbane Festival, Bleach Festival, Lisa Wilson Projects and many others.



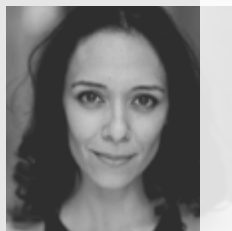
MATT HSU'S OBSCURE ORCHESTRA
COMPOSER

Hailed "one of the freshest feeling projects in Australian music right now" by Happy Mag, Matt Hsu is a 2020 and 2022 QMA winning Taiwanese-Australian composer, orchestra director and anti-racism activist from Meanjin. Matt leads the exhilaratingly kooky 22-piece alt-orchestra Matt Hsu's Obscure Orchestra. Beginning as his solo multi-instrumental tinkering, Obscure Orchestra has grown to become one of Australia's most respected ensembles, collaborating with QPAC, GOMA, Museum of Brisbane, La Boite Theatre, State Library of Queensland and Brisbane Powerhouse. Challenging the pomp and formality of classical orchestras, Matt has created a grassroots radically-inclusive ensemble underpinned by community-minded inclusivity, visibility and gender diversity, comprising of BIPOC, First Nations, disabled, trans and non-binary artists.



NIGEL POULTON (he/him)
MOVEMENT / INTIMACY / FIGHT DIRECTOR

Nigel is an award-winning movement director, fight and intimacy coordinator, SAG-AFTRA/MEAA stunt performer and actor with over 25 years of professional experience. Nigel is a certified Intimacy Director with Intimacy Directors and Coordinators and has been awarded Fight Master status with the Society of American Fight Directors. Nigel is also a certified Fight Director and past President of the Society of Australian Fight Directors Inc and an Honorary Fight Director with Fight Directors Canada. In addition to working with La Boite Theatre, Nigel's choreography credits include Finnish National Ballet, The Australian Ballet, New York City Ballet, The Metropolitan Opera, Sydney Theatre Company, Bell Shakespeare, Washington Opera Company, Opera Australia, Circus Oz, Melbourne Theatre Company, Queensland Theatre, Belvoir, Playbox Theatre, Kooemba Jdarra and many more. Nigel's film & TV work includes *Deadloch*, *Nautilus*, *Poker Face*, *Thor: Love and Thunder*, *Escape from Spiderhead*, *Ding Dong I'm Gay*, *Occupation 2*, *Pirates of the Caribbean V*, *Deadline Gallipoli*, *The Water Diviner*, *The Bourne Legacy*, *Vikings* and *Winter's Tale*.



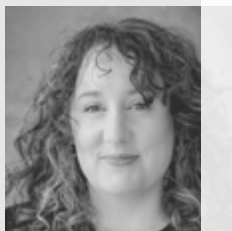
DEBORAH BROWN (she/her)
CHOREOGRAPHER

Deborah is excited to make her La Boite debut with *The Poison of Polygamy*. Deborah has been Assistant Director for *The Long Forgotten Dream*, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* and *Wonnangatta* (STC). She directed *Blue* and was Associate Director on *Winyanboga Yurringa* (Belvoir St Theatre). She created short film *dive* and co-created *IBIS* (Bangarra Dance Theatre). She was awarded the 2013 Helpmann Award for Best Female Dancer in a Dance or Physical Theatre Production, *Terrain*. Other choreography includes, *The Wave* (Project Animo) and *Spinifex Gum*. Deborah received her Masters in Screen Directing from AFTRS and recently directed *Barrumbi Kids* (NITV).



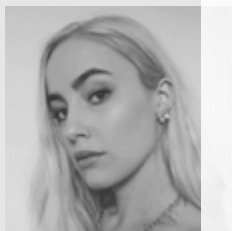
MELISSA AGNEW (she/her)
VOCAL COACH

Melissa Agnew enjoys a long association with La Boite Theatre as a Voice, Speech and Dialect Specialist. Beginning with Sue Rider's Artistic Directorship, she provided drop-in classes for actors and consulted on mainstage productions such as *Freedom Ride* in the Nineties. More recent La Boite productions include *Prize Fighter* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Melissa has coached many QT productions, musicals, and film and television projects. She coaches television and radio news presenters and other professional voice users across Australia and beyond, and teaches Bachelor of Musical Theatre and Bachelor of Acting students at the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University.



KAT O'HALLORAN (she/her)
STAGE MANAGER

Kat has worked in stage management across many styles of performance over the last 15 years, including drama, ballet, opera, children's theatre, festivals and orchestral performances. She last worked at La Boite on *Caesar* in 2021, and has also worked at Queensland Theatre, Opera Australia, Brisbane Festival, Sydney Festival, Queensland Ballet, QPAC, Creative Regions, SpoonTree Productions and Opera Queensland. She graduated from the Queensland University of Technology with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Technical Production).



KRISTINA MARJANAC (she/her)
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

A familiar face from La Boite's Front of House staff, Kristina is a Serbian-Australian creator who comes from a filmmaking background and will be beginning her work in theatre as the Assistant Stage Manager for *The Poison of Polygamy*. Kristina studied filmmaking at Griffith University and has since worked on various films, music videos and festivals. Kristina recently studied SFX makeup at AACM and worked as an SFX artist at Movie World's *Fright Night 2022* and on the upcoming *Kong Vs Godzilla 2* film in the prosthetics department. Kristina continues to gain new skills to widen her knowledge of art and appreciate the work put in by each person.

BOARD

Chair

Adam Brunes

Deputy Chair

Vivienne Anthon

Gresham Congoo

Sarah McAree

Lynn Rainbow-Reid AM

Jessica Simpson

Sarah Townsend

TEAM

Artistic Director & CEO

Courtney Stewart

Executive Director

Roxane Eden

Creative Producer

Bri Zammit

Youth & Education Producer

Ari Palani

Associate Producer

Jess Bunz

Marketing & Audience

Development Manager

Yuverina Shewpersad

Graphic Designer

Sarah Ridgway-Cross

Communications Agency

Aruga

Director, Development &

Philanthropy

Jackie Maxwell

Development Interns

Gladys Fung

Kyra Sawtell

Production Manager

Jonathan Harrison

Venue Technician

Sophie Watkins

Workshop Coordinator

Andrew Mills

Venue & Operations Manager

Nick Seery

Ticketing & Reception Officer

Hannah Flannery

Accountant

Karen Mitchell

Assistant Accountant

Emma Wilson

PRODUCTION

Lighting Operator

Morgan Cole-Jones

Set Builder

Jamie Bowman

Scenic Artist

Shaun Caulfield

Props Maker

Sarah O'Neill

Photography

David Kelly (Hero)

CSQUARE Media (Rehearsal)

Video Trailer

PixelFrame

Special Thanks

Dead Puppet Society, Polly Rowe, Ruth Little,

Ming Yang Lim, Anthony Brandon Wong, and

Emily Liu

FRONT OF HOUSE, ESPRESSO BAR & CAFÉ

Espresso Bar Coordinator / Barista

Peter Hatton

Supervisors

Jess Bunz, Megan Dale, Marie David, and

Sophia Harris

Staff


Cassidy Cahill, Courtney Cavallaro,


Annabel Gilbert, Owen Green, Peter Keavy,


Kristina Marjanac, Georgia McKenzie,


Aimee Sheather, Carys Walsh, Lily Williams,

Zoe Walters, and Presley Woods

 laboitetheatre

 LaBoiteTheatre

 LaBoiteTheatreCompany

 LaBoiteTheatre

SYDNEY THEATRE CO

Sydney Theatre Company
Wharf 4/5 15 Hickson Road
Walsh Bay NSW 2000

Telephone Box Office (02) 9250 1777
Administration (02) 9250 1700
Email mail@sydneytheatre.com.au

Website sydneytheatre.com.au
Sign up to our monthly enews at
sydneytheatre.com.au/enews

Board of Directors

Alan Joyce AC (Chair)
Ann Johnson (Deputy Chair)
Anita Belgiorno-Nettis AM
Brooke Boney
Mark Coulter
David Craig
Anne Dunn
Heather Mitchell AM
Gretel Packer AM
David Paradise AO
Annette Shun Wah
Kip Williams

Artistic Director & Co-CEO

Kip Williams

Executive Director & Co-CEO

Anne Dunn

Director, External Relations & Private Giving

Danielle Heidbrink

Acting Director, Finance & Administration

Sue Procter

Chief Operating Officer

Caroline Spence

Director, Technical & Production

James Wheeler

Director, Customer Experience

Heath Wilder

Director, Marketing

Sophie Withers

One of the world's largest not-for-profit theatre producers, Sydney Theatre Company is at the heart of Australia's cultural landscape. It owes its world class creative pedigree to a history of ground-breaking productions.

Since 1978, the Company has produced work that is – in the words of founding Artistic director Richard Wherrett – “grand, vulgar, intelligent, challenging, and fun”. A paradox as playful as our city.

We are proud that over the years Sydney Theatre Company has produced work with some of Australia's – and the world's – most exciting performers, writers, directors and creative teams; and that we continue to invest in the artistic legends of the future.

Learn more and book tickets at
sydneytheatre.com.au

TAG #SYDNEYTHEATRECO
FOLLOW @SYDNEYTHEATRECO





La Boite Theatre Company is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its funding and advisory body

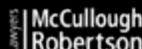
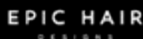
La Boite Theatre Company is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland



Media Partners



Season Partners



WINE & DINE 'M



Presenting & Development Partners



La Boite is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland in partnership with Creative Partnerships. Australia through Puff.



Institute for Australian and Chinese Arts and Culture 澳英中文化研究院

LA BOITE SPONSORS