

A SHOW OF DESIRE
AND BETRAYAL

CLOSER

A PLAY BY PATRICK MARBER
DIRECTED BY COURTNEY STEWART

LA
BOITE



Queensland
Government



Australian Government



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.



LA BOITE THEATRE PRESENTS

CLOSER

A PLAY BY PATRICK MARBER
DIRECTED BY COURTNEY STEWART

DATES

4 - 20 APRIL

DURATION

APPROX.
2 HOURS &
20 MINUTES
*(includes a
20-minute
interval)*

CONTENT

ADVISORIES

*Recommended for
audiences aged 15+.
Contains strong sexual
themes, depictions
of domestic violence,
discussions of death,
explicit language
and use of
haze/smoke effects.*

CREATIVE TEAM

Playwright	Patrick Marber
Director	Courtney Stewart
Set & Costume Designer	M'ck McKeague
Lighting Designer	Glenn Hughes
Composer & Sound Designer	Wil Hughes
Fight, Intimacy & Movement Director	Nigel Poulton
Creative Consultant	Eli Free
MakeUp SFX	Nicholas James
Director Observership Participants	Fikrte Bushell Chelsea August Peter Sutherland
Stage Manager	Kayla Cahill
Assistant Stage Manager	Riley Camejo
Lighting Operator	Helen Howard
Voice and Accent	

CAST

Alice	Sophia Emberson-Bain
Anna	Anna McGahan
Larry	Colin W Smith
Dan	Kevin Spink

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



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I acknowledge the lands of the Jagera and Turrbal people and pay my respects to Elders past and present and celebrate all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander storytellers who have been creating on these lands for millennia, bringing their culture forward for generations to come.

It's been 24 years since La Boite presented *Closer*, and in a play that has been touted to be one of the best and most intricate representations of the politics of sex, it feels right to re-examine this work with a contemporary lens. I wanted to put this work in conversation with current socioeconomic, cultural and political circumstances.

Specifically, the team and I were fascinated by the role of Alice, and we were set on challenging our preconceived notions of who she is and the function she plays in the piece. Alice can be read as a typical 'steal-your-man' femme fatale. However, as we sat with the piece more and more, what began to emerge was a far more nuanced version of this 'girl from the country'. There are so many references in the text to honesty, truth, identity and morality. It seems at first that Alice does everything she can to conceal the truth – her name, her job, and everything about her seems fabricated. However, as we dig deeper, Alice seems to be the character who is the *most* honest.

Because Alice is so authentically herself, ultimately Larry, Dan and Anna are left scrambling to hold onto the lies about love, sex and relationships they have made for themselves. Larry is incapable of vulnerability, Dan uses other people's flaws to distract from his own, and Anna is set on contorting herself into everyone else's idea of who she should be.

Having worked almost exclusively on new Australian writing, making this version of *Closer* with this team has been an exhilarating experience and the team and I can't wait to share it with you all!

COURTNEY STEWART
DIRECTOR / LA BOITE
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CEO



Images by Barbara Lowing

CAST MEMBERS



SOPHIA EMBERSON-BAIN (she/her)

ALICE

Sophia is an actor, producer and lawyer who grew up in the British Virgin Islands in the Caribbean. She went to boarding school in England before moving to Brisbane, Australia at the age of 12. In 2007 Sophia graduated from both the Actors Conservatory and the Jazz

Music Institute in Brisbane where she completed an Advanced Diploma in Stage and Screen and Jazz Improvisation respectively. She then went on to complete a Bachelor of Laws degree at QUT. Sophia has worked as an actor on various high-profile film and television projects, including *Barrumbi Kids*, which was recognised as Children's Production of the Year at the 2023 Screen Producers Awards; NBC's *Joe vs Carole*; *Darby and Joan*; *Godzilla vs Kong: The New Empire*; *Aquaman* and Foxtel's critically acclaimed *The End*. She has also worked on stage with La Boite Theatre in *Prize Fighter* and with Queensland Theatre in *School of The Arts*. In 2014 Sophia was admitted to the legal profession in Queensland. She continues to juggle her acting and law. Sophia is a proud MEAA member and Vice President of the Queensland Equity Committee.



ANNA MCGAHAN (she/they)

ANNA

Anna is an actor and writer. Her first professional job was in La Boite Theatre's 2011 production of *Julius Caesar*. She has since worked extensively in Australian film, television and theatre, received the Heath Ledger Scholarship and been nominated for multiple awards, including

two Logies and the ADG Award for Best Actress. Her screen work includes *Underbelly Razor*, *ANZAC Girls*, *House Husbands* and most recently *In our Blood* and *Darby and Joan*, both for ABC. She is currently developing her debut novel *Immaculate* for screen with Hoodlum Productions, after it received The Australian/Vogel's Literary Award in 2023. Anna is a proud MEAA member, living on unceded Jagera land.



COLIN W SMITH (he/him)

LARRY

Colin is an award-winning two-decade-plus veteran of the Brisbane (Yuggera country) theatre scene and a proud Australian Aboriginal of the Jagera people. He previously appeared in La Boite Theatre's *A Streetcar Named Desire* (2016), *Romeo & Juliet* (2019), and *From Darkness* (2019). He was in the Core Ensemble of the Queensland Shakespeare Ensemble between 2007 and 2019, performing with the company in over twenty productions. His other theatre credits include: Queensland Theatre - *Black Diggers*, *The Odd Couple*, *An Octoroon*, *Twelfth Night*, *Nearer The Gods*, *Our Town*, *The Sunshine Club*, and *As You Like It*; Ensemble Theatre - *Black Cockatoo*; Belloo Creative - *Boy, Lost*.



KEVIN SPINK (he/him)

DAN

Kevin is a Scottish Australian actor, writer and director, renowned for his dynamic presence on both stage and screen. He has honed his craft creating and touring work with theatre companies around the country and writing and directing short films.

Kevin has previously performed with La Boite in *An Ideal Husband*, *Away and Colder*. He has taken the stage with Queensland Theatre in *Drizzle Boy*, *First Casualty*, *Antigone*, *Hydra*, *Twelfth Night*, *St Mary's in Exile*, *Kelly*, *Gloria* and *Macbeth*. He has also been involved with productions for Dead Puppet Society, Hive Collective, The Good Room, QSO, 23rd Productions, DeBase, Imaginary Theatre, The Forward Movement, Three Sisters, The Restaged Histories Project, AndMoor Theatre and Zen Zen Zo.

Kevin has appeared in several films including *Thirteen Lives*, *Celeste* and *The Moths Will Eat Them Up* and on television shows such as *Mako Mermaids*, *Parer's War* and *Heartbeat*. He has written and directed three short films which have each received local and international recognition.

CREATIVE TEAM



PATRICK MARBER PLAYWRIGHT

Patrick Marber was born in London in 1964. He is an award-winning playwright, screenwriter and director. His work has won Evening Standard, Olivier, Time Out, New York and London Critics' Circle and Writers' Guild Awards and received BAFTA, British Comedy and Royal Television Society Awards. His screenplays have been nominated for Golden Globe, BAFTA and Academy Awards. He received the British Independent Film Award for *Notes on a Scandal*. His second play, *Closer*, has been produced in more than 200 cities across the world.

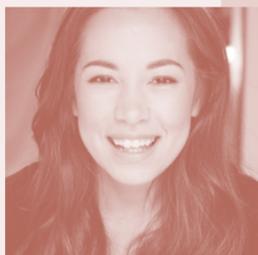
Other plays include: *Dealer's Choice*, *Howard Katz*, *The Red Lion*, *Three Days in the Country*, *The Musicians*, *The School Film*, *After Miss Julie*, *Don Juan in Soho*. Stage adaptations include versions of *Hedda Gabler*, *Exit The King* and *The Beaux' Stratagem* (NT); and *Trelawny of the 'Wells'* (Donmar).

Screenplays include: *Closer* (Columbia Pictures); *Notes on a Scandal* (Fox Searchlight Pictures); *Old Street* (Film4/Box Films); *Love You More* (Film4). Patrick is the co-creator (with Peter Curran) of *Bunk Bed* (BBC Radio 4).

As a director his productions include *Dealer's Choice* (NT/Vaudeville), *After Miss Julie* (BBC), *Closer* (NT/Lyric/Music Box NY), *'1953'* (Almeida), *Blue Remembered Hills* (NT), *The Old Neighborhood* (Royal Court), *The Caretaker* (Comedy), *Howard Katz* (NT), *Three Days in the Country* (NT), *Travesties* (Menier/Apollo/Broadway), *Don Juan in Soho* (Wyndhams), *Venus in Fur* (Theatre Royal Haymarket), *Exit The King* (NT).

Most recently, he directed Tom Stoppard's *Leopoldstadt* at the Wyndhams Theatre, which won the Olivier Award for Best New Play in 2020. *Leopoldstadt* opened on Broadway in October 2022 and in June 2023 Patrick won the Tony Award for best Director of a Play and the Outer Critics Circle Award for outstanding Director of a Play.





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 *Poison of Polygamy* for La Boite and STC, *Miss Peony* for Belvoir Street Theatre, and *The Hate Race* for Malthouse Theatre. Other productions include *Top Coat*, *Julius Caesar*, *Playing Beatie Bow* and *Hamlet – Prince of Skidmark* and *Australian Graffiti* for STC; *Double Delicious* for Contemporary Asian Australian Performance; *Neon Tiger* by Julia-Rose Lewis and *Single Asian Female* by Michelle Law for La Boite and Belvoir Street Theatre; *Barbaric Truth* by Jordan Shea, 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 companies and organisations including Sydney Theatre Company (Directing Associate and Richard Wherrett Fellow) and Contemporary Asian Australian Performance (Artistic Associate).

Courtney was previously Chair for the Equity Diversity Committee, a delegate to the National Performers Committee and a former board member for Contemporary Asian Australian Performance. She is the Artistic Director & CEO of La Boite Theatre and is a board member of Creative Australia.





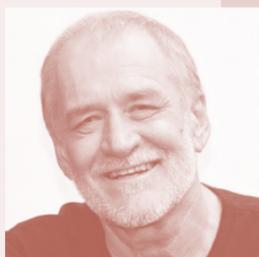
M'CK MCKEAGUE (it/its/they/them)

SET & COSTUME DESIGNER

M'ck McKeague is a performance maker, set and costume designer and scenographer currently living on unceded Yuggera and Turrbal land.

Since completing the Master of Design for Performance at Victorian College of the Arts in 2018, M'ck has collaborated with Ivor MacAskill

& Rosana Cade (UK), Krishna Isha (UK), Michael Zavros, Rachel Hann & Nic Farr (UK), Company Bad (KOR/AUS), The Hole Collective, Lenine Bourke, All the Queens Men, Polyglot Theatre, Elbow Room, and Embittered Swish. M'ck advocates for trans and non-binary approaches to scenography and has presented on panels at Prague Quadrennial (CZ), World Stage Design (CAN), People of Theatre (UK), Brisbane Art Design, University of Melbourne, Australian Production Design Guild and Ahead of the Game Artist Residency. Dissatisfied with master narratives and the systems and spaces that uphold them, M'ck seeks out collaborative scenographic practices that embrace difference and disrupt privilege in process, form and content.



GLENN HUGHES (he/him)

LIGHTING DESIGNER

In a career spanning over 45 years, Glenn has worked as a Lighting Designer for many companies including the Melbourne, Sydney and Queensland Theatre companies, Playbox, Malthouse, Victorian Arts Centre, Barking Gecko, La Boite Theatre, Queensland Ballet, Creative

Regions, Real TV, debase, Australasian Dance Collective, Grin and Tonic, Ballet Theatre of Qld and Bangarra Dance Theatre. Glenn also has held positions as Production Manager with the Victorian Arts Centre and QTC. He has toured extensively with Melbourne Theatre Company, Bangarra and Queensland Ballet throughout Australia and internationally has taught lighting design at WAAPA, RMIT and QUT.





WIL HUGHES (he/him)

**COMPOSER &
SOUND DESIGNER**

Wil's credits as a composer, songwriter and sound designer range from theatre to contemporary ballet to musicals and include, *Is That You Ruthie?* (Queensland Performing Arts Centre); *IRL*, *Capricorn*, *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 Company); *Blue* (Belvoir St); *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); *Every Brilliant Thing*, *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).

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



NIGEL POULTON (he/him)
**FIGHT, INTIMACY &
MOVEMENT 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. He is a certified fight director and past President of the Society of Australian Fight Directors Inc and an honorary fight director with Fight Directors Canada. Nigel has worked as a fight director with companies including: 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 Theatre, La Boite Theatre, Kooemba Jdarra and many more. Nigel's film and television work includes: *Deadlock*, *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*.



PETER SUTHERLAND (he/him)

STAGE MANAGER

Peter has been a Stage Manager for almost 30 years. After graduating from NIDA he worked for many of the state theatre companies in Australia, and spent almost a decade touring with The Bell Shakespeare Company. Peter is particularly proud of the work he has done in

First Nations theatre. Stage managing *Single Asian Female* at La Boite Theatre is a career highlight.



KAYLA CAHILL (she/her)

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Kayla is an emerging Brisbane based Stage Manager and Technical Production artist. She is a recent graduate of the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree majoring in Technical Production from the Queensland University of Technology.

Kayla was the Assistant Stage Manager of *IRL* (2023) and *An Ideal Husband* (2022) for La Boite. She has also worked as assistant stage manager on: *Billy Elliot* (Matt Ward Entertainment, 2023), Queensland Music Awards (2022, 2023), Australian Women in Music Awards and Conference (2022, 2023), and as Stage Manager: *The Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes* (Offside Theatre Company, 2023), *Gloria* (QUT, 2021). As Sound Coordinator: *Gloria, Mr Burns, Dinner, Love and Money* (QUT, 2020-2021).



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

Venue Technician

Natalie Scott

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

Barbara Lowing, Kevin Hides, Grant Heaton, Ben Hughes

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Artistic Director & CEO

Courtney Stewart

Head of Business

Ian Prowse

Head of Development and Stakeholder Engagement

Jackie Maxwell

Communications Agency

Aruga

Marketing Consultant

Jacqueline Bawtree

Venue & Operations Manager

Nick Seery

Ticketing & Executive Officer

Sophie Wickes

Company Accountant

Karen Mitchell

Finance Officer

Elizabeth Lepua

Front of House & Espresso Bar Staff

Cassidy Cahill, Kayla Cahill, Will
Carseldine, Courtney Cavallaro, Billy
Fogarty, Peter Keavy, Peta Kishawi,
Bryson McGuire, Georgia McKenzie,
Michael Meredith, Aimee Sheather,
Olivia Sullivan, Carys Walsh, Liam
Wallis and Lily Williams

Photography Credits

David Kelly (Hero)
Barbara Lowing (Rehearsal)

Video Trailer

PixelFrame

Program Design

Dowling & Dowling Design

LA BOITE SPONSORS



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



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



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