

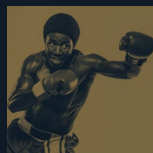
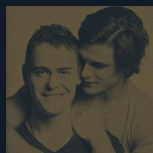
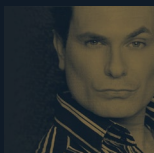
LA BOITE ENCORES

THE NARCISSIST

BY STEPHEN CARLETON



MONDAY 2 JUNE



Welcome to the reading of another Epic Play from the Archive

THE NARCISSIST

By Stephen Carleton
Directed by Ian Lawson

CAST

Jonathan Brand
Sandro Colarelli
Judy Hainsworth
Cameron Hurry
Andrea Moor

Xavier is a narcissist. He is a jaded, single, urban professional living in New Farm and the prospects of finding a psychosexually well-adjusted partner are beginning to fade.

Enter Bronwyn, an equally committed boozy malcontent and best friend who challenges Xavier to a duel – “Six weeks to bag a man! No ifs, no buts, no limits, no boundaries and no rules!”

First taking the stage at La Boite in 2007 and returning in 2008, *The Narcissist* is a riotous and politically incorrect post-modern comedy of manners in a play about middle-class, middle-age sexual politics.

LA BOITE ENCORES
PRESENTED BY

EPIC HAIR
DESIGNS

Thanks La Boite for offering us this opportunity for an Encore reading, and it's so wonderful that Ian has been able to reassemble so many of the talented actors who made that first version of the play such a hit.

It was first produced at the beginning of 2007, a few months ahead of the famous Kevin O'Keefe federal election. For me, it captures a lot of the transitional energy that had been building up in Queensland, ahead of that death knell of the long, long, very conservative John Howard era.

Nowhere was this playing out more firmly for (then) young millennial and Gen X audiences than in relation to LGBTQ representation and what was a concerted effort on Howard's part to keep us in our box and away from his cherished ideas of what constituted traditional marriage.

The Howard regime was, for me and many others, one that was encouraging us all to look after and look out for ourselves - remember the infamous "We decide who gets to come into our country" mantra that became his signature? It was an era of self-interest and self-absorption.

A culturally isolated and inward-looking Australia that didn't care about minorities or others of various persuasions. Home ownership, personal profit, and growing investment portfolios for those who could afford it was the major political preoccupation of the time.

The era was also encapsulated by the rise of social media and reality TV. As I wrote in the original program notes, "I decided that farce was the right form to comment on the narcissistic nature of Australian cultural and political life, as expressed through the prism of early 21st-century Brisbane." As the tagline we used summed it up: Sex, Politics and Religion. It's all about me!

I've updated the script in small increments as the years have passed, to weed out some of the dated cultural references and values. This version of the play is the last edit, and is more than 10 years old. Governments have come and gone; gay marriage has been won but replaced by a nasty new attack on trans rights. Reality TV has largely replaced scripted drama on our free-to-air TV. Free-to-air TV has almost become a thing of the past.

The times have changed. Some of the narcissistic values have left us; others have only become more firmly entrenched. Some of the satire still lands, I suspect.

I hope new and return audiences enjoy the look back.

STEPHEN CARLETON
WRITER



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BOY GIRL WALL

**BY MATTHEW RYAN &
LUCAS STIBBARD**

MONDAY 9 JUNE

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