

June 24 - July 10
Meat Market Stables

ANTIPODES

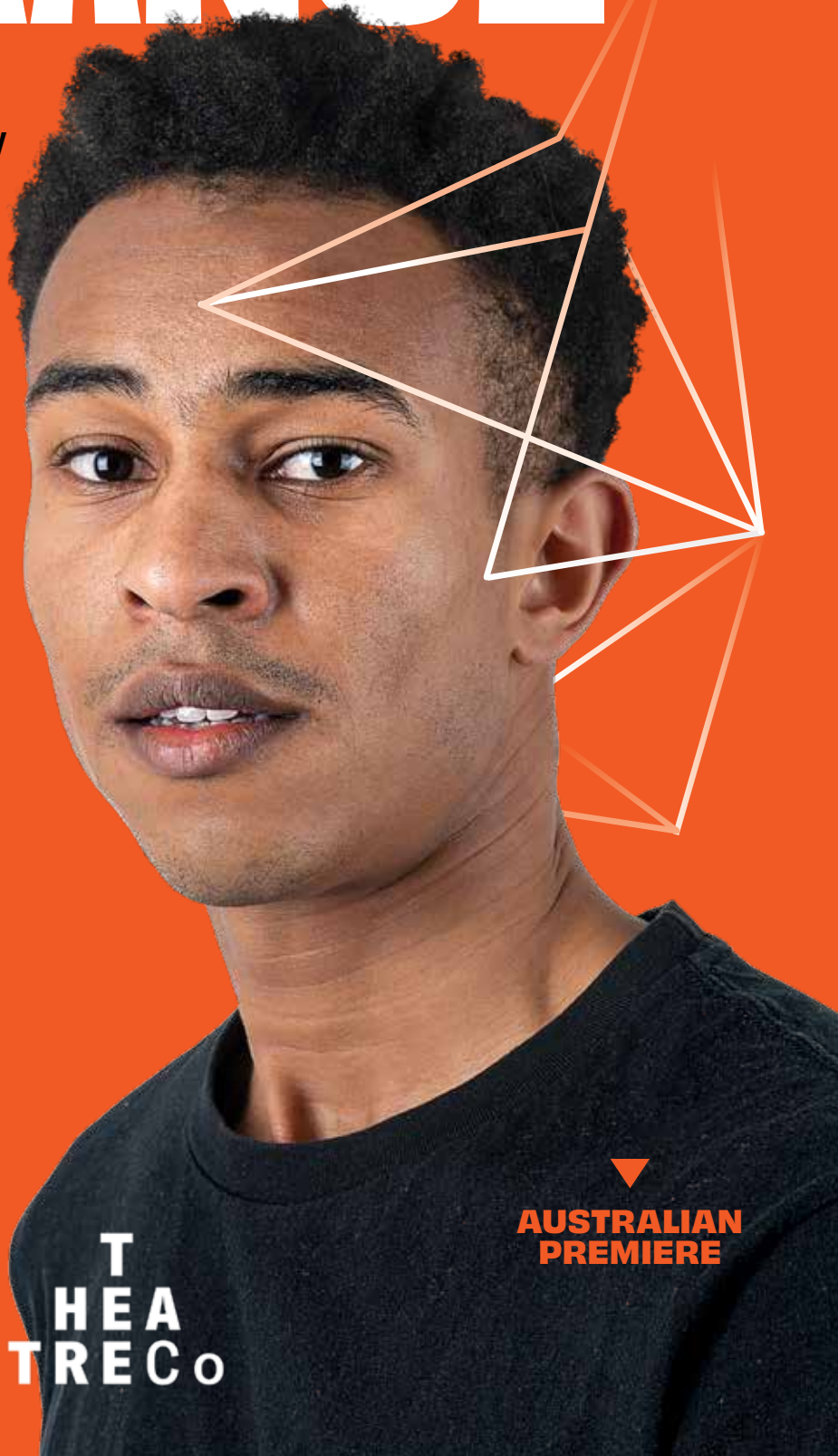
SEE LIFE THROUGH SOMEONE ELSE'S EYES

PASSING STRANGE

Book and Lyrics by Stew
Music by Stew and Heidi Rodewald

Created in collaboration with
Annie Dawson
Directed by Dean Drieberg

By Arrangement with Music
Theatre International
(Australia) on Behalf of
Dramatists Play Service, Inc.



SHOW PROGRAM

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**AUSTRALIAN
PREMIERE**

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SEE LIFE THROUGH SOMEONE ELSE'S EYES



PASSING STRANGE

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Cast

Narrator **Augustin Tchantcho**
Youth **Grant Young**
Mother **Sasha Hennequin**
Ensemble **Zahrah Andrews, Tier Ataing, Gabriela van Wyk
& Theo Williams**
Swings **Guillaume Gentil & Asha Khamis,**

Creative Team

Director **Dean Driberg**
Associate Director / Equity & Inclusion Support Officer
Cessalee Stovall
Musical Director / Conductor **Marissa Saroca**
Choreographer **Loredo Malcolm**
Text / Dialect / Vocal Coach **Mark Wong**
Set & Costume Designer **Bianca Pardo**
Lighting Designer **Sam Wylie**
Sound Designer **Evan Drill**

Band

Keys **Marissa Saroca**
Drums **Chelsea Allen**
Guitar **Will Gijbers**
Bass **Christopher Michigan**

Production Team

Stage Manager **Annie Gleisner**
Casting by **Evolution Casting**
Casting Director **Rhys Velasquez**
Publicist **Eleanor Howlett (Sassy Red PR)**
Producer **Brandon Pape**
Social Media Manager **Chloe Towan**
Head Electrician **Kit Cunneen**

Graphic Design **Rob Chivers of PUSH Collective**
Program Design **Chloe Towan**
Photography **Angel Leggas**
Front of House Managers **David Butler & Melissa David**

Crew

**Holly Anderson, Max Bowyer, Kit Cunneen, Alex Donnelly
& Nathan Santamaria**

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A NOTE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

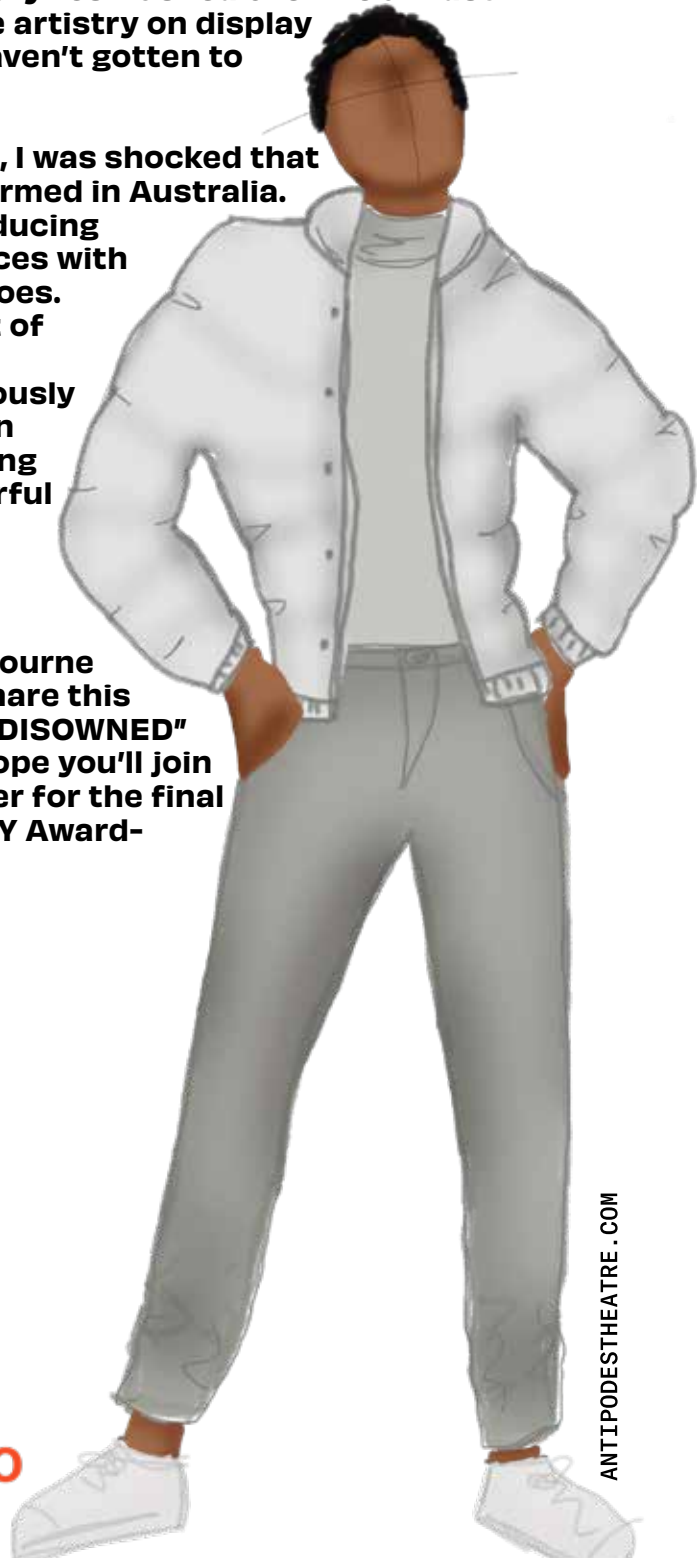
One of the most significant theatrical experiences I've had occurred fourteen years ago in New York City. One of my friends invited me to see a new Broadway show I knew nothing about. Skeptical, I joined and ended up being taken on a unique, soul-quenching musical journey that left me breathless. The combination of searing rock music with poetic lyrics washed over me amidst waves of profound, emotional storytelling. The artistry on display was something I had never seen before and haven't gotten to experience since...until now.

When it came time to choose our 2022 season, I was shocked that this unforgettable show had never been performed in Australia. As a company, Antipodes is committed to producing never-before-seen works that provide audiences with an opportunity to step into someone else's shoes. *Passing Strange*, a semi-fictionalised account of author Mark 'Stew' Stewart's real life story, is simultaneously incredibly personal and deliciously vicarious. What is, on the surface, a rumination on the Hero's journey as experienced by a young African American artist ends up being a powerful parable about how the search for our own purpose often comes at the expense of those closest to us.

We are so thrilled to present this work to Melbourne audiences in its Australian premiere, and to share this remarkable story as part of our "EMBRACED | DISOWNED" season focusing on how families shape us. I hope you'll join us back at Meat Market Stables this September for the final production this season, Stephen Karam's TONY Award-winning play *The Humans*.

Brandon Pape, Artistic Director

COSTUME DESIGN
SKETCHES BY
BIANCA PARDO



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DIRECTORS' NOTE

Passing Strange tells the story of a hero's quest. Our hero, Youth, is searching for 'the real'. A universally relatable story of wanting to become one's authentic self, finding a purpose and connection to places and people. Many of us can look back at our youth, feeling that there was a bigger purpose we would find at a destination. Did we ever find it and what price did we pay in searching for it?

The title (inspired by a quote from Shakespeare's Othello) can be interpreted through its many meanings, all explored in this story - passing through places, passing through time, passing by people, the passage of something and passing something on to someone. Then there's the idea of 'passing' for lighter-skinned Black folk who can be perceived as or accepted by white folk.

We are in a new era where we are exposed to stories told through different lenses, widening the possibilities of who gets to participate in these stories. Our cast of Black-identifying artists play many characters who are close to and far from their own identities, ethnicities and lived experiences; providing an opportunity to challenge commonplace notions of which bodies can be transformative on stage.

Although Passing Strange is often defined as a musical it has been quoted as an 'anti-musical', a play with songs, a concert with a narrative, or gig theatre (alongside the likes of Six, Barbara and the Camp Dogs, Hedwig and the Angry Inch, or David Byrne's American Utopia). Passing Strange proves that you don't need to follow the rules of traditional music theatre in order to successfully incorporate music and theatre. We hope this show inspires artists to break the mould, shake up the form and find their 'real'.

Dean Drieberg & Cessalee Stovall

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ABOUT THE SHOW

A rock musical about a young African American's artistic journey of self-discovery, *Passing Strange* takes us from black middle-class America to Amsterdam, Berlin and beyond on a journey towards personal and artistic authenticity.

From singer-songwriter and performance artist Stew comes *PASSING STRANGE*, a daring musical that takes you on a journey across boundaries of place, identity and theatrical convention. Stew brings us the story of a young bohemian who charts a course for "the real" through sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. Loaded with soulful lyrics and overflowing with passion, the show takes us from black middle-class America to Amsterdam, Berlin and beyond on a journey towards personal and artistic authenticity.
(Dramatists Play Service)

PASSING STRANGE premiered at Berkeley Rep and the Public Theatre in 2006/07 before transferring to Broadway in 2008. A documentary film was also adapted for the screen in 2009 by acclaimed director, Spike Lee.

Awards:

2008 - WINNER - Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical
2008 - WINNER - Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Musical
2008 - WINNER - Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Lyrics
2008 - WINNER - Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Music

2008 - Tony Award Nominations: Best Musical; Best Original Score; Best Orchestrations; Best Lead Actor in a Musical; Best Featured Actor in a Musical; Best Featured Actress in a Musical

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Sponsorship Opportunities Available

"Money, pardon the expression, is like manure. It's not worth a thing unless it's spread around, encouraging young things to grow."

Thornton Wilder



As a new company, we do not have immediate access to grants, government funding or other forms of support that established organisations have. We DO have an amazing team of artists who have already banded together to help get our programming off the ground. Now, we need your help to achieve our artistic goals and produce work that will resonate with the broadest audience possible so we can contribute to the vibrant landscape of Australian theatre for years to come.

Ticket sales account for less than half of our operating budget, so we've created a donations platform through the Australian Cultural Fund. Any donations we receive will go directly toward the art we create and artists we support – your donation will be an investment in our future. Starting a new theatre company can be daunting but also extremely rewarding, and your donation allows you to be with us from the start... the start of something new.

WANT TO SUPPORT US?

Help support our 2022 Season by visiting antipodestheatre.com/donate

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COMING SOON...

Family dinners can be hard to swallow.

September 14-24

THE HUMANS

▼
VICTORIAN
PREMIERE

Written by Steven Karam
Directed by Brandon Pape

The Blake family has gathered at the youngest daughter's Manhattan apartment. Over the course of one evening, they grapple with aging, illness, and a changing economy as their family reunion slowly goes awry... and then things start to go bump in the night.

Coming to Meat Market Stables

**For more information visit
antipodestheatre.com/the-humans**



ANTIPODES

BIOGRAPHIES

Stew
(He/Him)



BOOK, MUSIC & LYRICS

Stew is the critically acclaimed singer, songwriter, founder, and leader of The Negro Problem, a pop-rock combo from Los Angeles whose works include "Post Minstrel Syndrome" (1997), "Joys and Concerns" (1999), and "Welcome Black" (2002). Along with Heidi Rodewald, he cofounded the Afro-Baroque cabaret ensemble known as STEW. Their works include "Guest Host" (2000), "The Naked Dutch Painter" (2002), and "Something Deeper Than These Changes" (2003). He was an artist-in-residence at the California Institute of the Arts (2004-2005), Sundance Theater Lab (2004-2005), Sundance Screenwriter's Lab (2005), and Sundance Director's Lab (2005). Stew is also the composer of "Gary Come Home" for the "SpongeBob SquarePants" cartoon.

Heidi Rodewald
(She/Her)

Heidi Rodewald has spent over a decade as a performer, arranger, producer, and composer for both The Negro Problem and the multi-disciplinary ensemble known as Stew. She co-wrote the musical *Passing Strange*, which premiered at Berkeley Rep/The Public Theatre (2006-2007) and then transferred to Broadway in 2008, where it was nominated for seven Tony Awards, including Best Musical, Best Original Score, and Best Orchestrations. The show has been honored with the Drama Critics' Circle Award for Best Musical and the 2008 Obie Award for Best New American Theater Piece. She composed music for Karen Kandel's *Portraits: Night and Day* (2004) and co-wrote with Stew the screenplay "We Can See Today," Sundance Screenwriters Lab/Director's Lab (2005). She wrote and performed with seminal female punk band Wednesday Week.

MUSIC



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Zahrah Andrews (She/Her)

Zahrah has spent a lifetime immersed in the arts, from performing her own spoken word poetry to being in plays, musicals and Film and Television work and also hosting burlesque shows. She is currently working with the Mackay Council on a forum theatre piece that will be workshopped and performed by underprivileged Mackay youth. Some of Zahrah's favourite roles she has had the privilege to play are Matron Mama Morton in Chicago, Dolores Van Cartier in Sister Act the Musical and Dragon in Shrek the Musical. Zahrah is striving to make her break into professional Australian Theatre.

ENSEMBLE



Tier Ataing (He/Him)



Tier Ataing is a South Sudanese born Actor with over a decade of experience in the Film and Television industry. He has been a part of many great projects over the years such as Mr. Black (Ten Network) and The Family Law (SBS). Originally from QLD, he moved to Melbourne in 2017 to continue his acting journey. Tier is very much excited to be taking part in this project and is looking forward to connecting with the audience and meeting great people along the way.

ENSEMBLE

Guillaume Gentil (He/Him)

Guillaume Gentil began performing at the age of 14 and has since gone on to train at Theatre Blacks where he completed a Diploma of Musical Theatre. Guillaume recently performed in Antipodes' And She Would Stand Like This where he portrayed the role of Miss Scott. Other notable credits include Grady in the Australasian premier of The Color Purple (StageArt) and Respectful Relationships (The Good Society). Along with 101 other young BIPOC performing artists, he was nominated for a 2021 Green Room Award for 'I Need You To See Me' and was a top 30 finalist for the AOC initiative.

SWING



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Sasha Hennequin (She/Her)



Sasha Hennequin started her professional acting career in the US where she also trained with actors currently working in film, TV & Broadway. Since returning home, she has featured in *The Color Purple*, wrote & performed her own solo cabaret, sung at the Athenaeum Theatre for "Encore 2!" (a concert celebrating musicals), sung as a backing vocalist for Australian artists Thando & Kwame, and is a member of the Halo Vocal Ensemble. Sasha has many credits in TV, most notably the final seasons of the prison drama *Wentworth*.

MOTHER

Asha Khamis (She/Her)

Originally from Coffs Harbour, Asha made the move interstate to study at the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) in the Foundation Program and then the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Music Theatre). In 2021, Asha appeared in Antipodes Theatre online Ricochet Reading presentation of *The Secret Life of Wonder* (dir Cheyenne Barboza) and Citizen Theatre's Sci-fi original play *Mara KORPER* (dir. Jayde Kirchet) as Superior Pretz/Chorus Member.



SWING

Augustin Tchantcho (He/Him)



Augie is best known for his role as The General in The Gordon Frost Organisation's *The Book of Mormon*, which toured in Australia from 2016 to 2020. His Australian Theatre debut was in StageArt's highly successful Australian musical premieres *Dreamgirls* (Marty) and *The Color Purple* (Pa/Ole Mister) both of which received critical acclaim. Augie enjoys the full range of theatrical performances from Shakespearean tragedies to comedies and high energy musicals. Shakespeare credits include: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Moonshine), *Julius Caesar* (Brutus), *The Taming of the Shrew* (Petruccio), *Othello* (Othello) and *King Lear* (Albany).

NARRATOR

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Gabriela van Wyk (She/Her)

Gabriela van Wyk is a proud South African–Australian actor based on Meanjin country in Queensland. She is a recent graduate (2021) from Queensland University of Technology (QUT). At QUT she studied a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Acting). Gabriela has experience as a freelance model and singer. Her theatre credits include: For Griffin Theatre Company: Orange Thrower; For QUT: Algorithm, Gloria, Twelfth Night, Children of the Sun, The Laramie Project, Lungs.



ENSEMBLE

Theo Williams (He/Him)



Theo Williams has been performing all over Newcastle (NSW) since he was 8, doing at least one show a year to work on his skills as a singer, actor and dancer ever since. It wasn't until Covid-19, where Theodore had 4 shows canceled or postponed due to the pandemic that Theodore realised just how much time he was dedicating to theater and how much he missed it. Having since applied for multiple professional productions despite a lack of any professional theater training, Theodore leapt at the opportunity to audition for a show that didn't care about his history as a performer, but his history as a minority in today's society.

ENSEMBLE

Grant Young (He/Him)

Grant Young is originally from Denver Colorado and got the acting and performing bug after getting involved in theatre in school here in Australia. Grant recently completed an Advanced Diploma in Film Television from Swinburne University of Technology, but his real love is acting. He has worked on a variety of projects both front and behind the camera and is looking forward to jumping on board this project and connecting with audiences through the story and characters!



YOUTH

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Dean Drieberg
(He/Him)



DIRECTOR

Dean Drieberg is Resident Director of Hamilton Australia and Co-Artistic Director of Watch This where he co-directed Sunday In The Park With George with Sonya Soares, receiving two Green Room Award nominations for Best Direction and Multimedia Design. For Antipodes, he previously directed a development of Michelle Gould's IO7 and a reading of Harrison David Rivers' This Bitter Earth. For StageArt, he directed bare: The Musical and the Australian Premiere of Memphis The Musical. Dean has worked on over 20 national tours such as Madiba, Matador, The 39 Steps and Bombshells, playing at over 50 venues around Australia and New Zealand.

Cessalee Stovall
(She/Her)

Cessalee Stovall is an Intimacy Director, Director, Cultural Consultant and Equity, Access and Inclusion Specialist and she is an unapologetic champion for the physical, psychological and cultural safety of all humans in our industry. As an Intimacy Director, Cessalee has trained with Intimacy Directors and Coordinators, Intimacy Directors of Color and Theatrical Intimacy Education and studied under Intimacy Coordinators Australia. As an actor, Cessalee is a proud union member who has worked in film, TV and theatre in Australia and the US. Cessalee is the founder of Stage A Change, Mama to Alula and wife of Scott.

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,
EQUITY & INCLUSION
SUPPORT OFFICER**



Marissa Saroca
(She/They)



**MUSICAL DIRECTOR,
CONDUCTOR, KEYBOARD**

Marissa Saroca is a singer/musician/actor with an extensive recording, songwriting, coaching, and live performance career. They have released two original albums and was on Team Lea (Salonga) of The Voice of the Philippines. Acting highlights: Ensemble in Ghost and Shrek (Manila), Gabriella in High School Musical (Newcastle Entertainment Centre), Ensemble/'Seasons Of Love' soloist/cover for Maureen & Joanne in Rent (Sydney Opera House), The Arbiter in Chess (Civic Theatre Newcastle), and the title character in Lizzie (Hayes Theatre, Sydney).

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Loredo Malcolm (He/Him)

Loredo Malcolm started training at age nine at Ashe Caribbean Performing Arts in Jamaica. In 2009, he made it into the top nine on So You Think You Can Dance. Theatre credits include The Lion King (Australia, Shanghai and London's West End), Chicago (Singapore and Hong Kong), Hairspray, Wicked, Mame, Follies, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels (The Production Company), The Book of Mormon (Australian tour), and is currently in Hamilton (Michael Cassel Group). Loredo is Director/Owner of Locreatedo Dance Company Australia and is a proud member of MEAA. @Loredomalcolm www.loredomalcolm.com

CHOREOGRAPHER



Mark Wong (He/Him)



Mark Wong is a Malaysian-born, Melbourne-based voice, speech and accent coach. Trained at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London, Mark teaches voice and speech at the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA Theatre). His production coaching credits include Next to Normal (Pursued by Bear), The Phantom of the Opera (Ballarat Lyric Theatre Company), Titanic The Musical (StageArt), The Color Purple (StageArt), and One Man, Two Guvnors (Heidelberg Theatre Company).

TEXT, DIALECT, VOCAL COACH

Bianca Pardo (She/Her)

Bianca Pardo is a passionate Melbourne/Naarm based designer and maker. Her credits in 2018 include costume roles on The Gallery Workout with the NGV, The Dressmaker and School of Rock. Throughout 2019, her graduate year at the Victorian College of the Arts, she was the Set Designer for Fucking A and Costume Designer for Mad Forest. Bianca also interned with Semafor Theatre and Česká Televize in Prague and with Set and Costume Designer Christina Smith. In 2021, Bianca designed for two femme-BIPOC projects, TakeBack! and Ngarngk: Giver of Life. This year, Bianca dressed for Jagged Little Pill and is now dressing for Hamilton.

SET & COSTUME DESIGNER



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Sam Wylie (He/Him)



LIGHTING DESIGNER

Sam's diverse Lighting Design work has taken him from large scale events to intimate cabaret experiences. His Lighting Design credits include: Ngaiire: Takeover 2.0 Tour, Carols by Cabaret (LPD/Hayes Theatre Co.), Queens Feast at Sydney Town Hall (Sydney Solstice), Anything Goes, The Odd Couple, Monty Python's Spamalot, Vicar of Dibley II: Born Again (Players Theatre Inc.), Comedy Kiki, Big Thick Energy, Bloom Festival and Thirsty Thursdays with Andrew Bukonya (Darlinghurst Theatre Company). In his design for music, he has worked with artists such as Odette, Huck Hastings, Hot Potato Band, Amanda Palmer, HANDSOME, Baby et Lulu and Banoffee.

Evan Drill (He/Him)

Evan Drill is a Melbourne-based sound designer, working mainly in music theatre. Design credits include Ghost Quartet (Antipodes Theatre), Heathers (Australian Tour), Madiba (Aus/NZ tour). As a mix engineer, Evan has toured productions of Girl From The North Country, Kinky Boots, Les Miserables, Phantom of the Opera, Mamma Mia! & Barnum. In the Cabaret world, Evan was part of the team which began the Melbourne Cabaret Festival, and was technical manager of the Butterfly Club for many years, helping design the city venue. He recently toured the world's largest Spiegeltent around Australia as head of sound.

SOUND DESIGNER



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IMAGES BY ANGEL LEGGAS

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Antipodes Theatre Company Greatly Appreciates

CHLOE TOWAN CREATIONS

JOHN SCANDRETT AT SYSTEM SOUND

IKSHVAK SOBTI AND RESOLUTION X

ANGEL LEGGAS

TOMMY RYAN

ANDREW BOSWELL, ANTONIA KORATZOPOULOS AND

PHILASANDE DLADLA AT MEAT MARKET

Antipodes Theatre Company Committee Members

**Claire Blowers, David Butler, Melissa David, Aubrey Flood,
Kristy Griffin, Angel Leggas, Brandon Pape, Chloe Towan.**

Advisory Board Members

**Simone Aybar, Theresa Borg, Brett Burley, Tony Coombs, Lillian Nejad,
Conor O'Malley, Allison Robinson, Stephen Younane**

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