Party like it’s 1988!

Black Swan State Theatre Company of WA has announced additional seats have been released for its production of Anton Chekhov’s *The Cherry Orchard*.

Presented in association with Perth Festival, *The Cherry Orchard* is a wildly Australian take on Anton Chekhov’s comedy of inevitable catastrophe, written by Adriane Daff and Katherine Tonkin.

This immersive experience will see audiences traverse the character-filled Sunset Heritage Precinct in Dalkeith 17 Feb – 14 Mar 2021.

Black Swan Artistic Director Clare Watson says, “Our 2021 Season ‘With Love’ marks the company’s 30th birthday year. Site specific Perth Festival productions were synonymous with Black Swan in our early years. So, it makes sense that our first performance of the year is performed at such an iconic site in Dalkeith, on the banks of the river as part of Perth Festival.”

The final play written by Chekhov in his dying days was intended to be his most hilarious comedy. This adaptation takes the story from Russia in the 1880s and replants the orchard to a fictional late 1980s Manjimup in WA. From boom to bust, as the recession hit in 1987 and the America’s Cup put WA on the world stage, Madame Ranyevskaya has to sell up and move out.

Venue capacity is small, so audiences get to experience this production across the Sunset Heritage Precinct, from inside the family home in the former ballroom, flowing through to a sunset picnic under the gum trees overlooking the Swan river, to an outdoor courtyard dress-up party.”

Clare Watson says, “This is a radical way of presenting a Russian classic, steeped in Australiana, and promises some great eighties tunes. It’s our way of sharing stories that create brave and playful conversations – For you. About you. With you.

The ensemble cast features Humphrey Bower, Emily Rose Brennan, Grace Chow, Kieran Clancy-Lowe, Michelle Fornasier, Brendan Hanson, Sam Longley, Hayley McElhinney, Bridie McKim, Ben Mortley, Mark Nannup and George Shevtsov, plus two adorable canine friends.

Play Snapshot

“It’s a family emergency. Rani’s losing the plot. Literally. The Balmoral apartment’s been sold, and the St Kilda fling is cactus. Anya’s finally managed to drag her mum across the Nullarbor back to Manjimup.

Now it’s BBQs and costume parties, champagne and music. But with debts mounting it’s becoming a total clusterf@%k of a situation, pardon my French. I’m sorry to say it, but the estate’s gonna have to be auctioned.”

Not a single slice of salami has been spared in this immersive theatrical experience. This premium cheese platter of self-absorbed characters will have you at once wishing for the glorious blooming days of the eighties and shrinking at the familiarity of it.
You are both well known as theatre makers and actors and have worked for independent and main stage companies. Have either of you acted in a Chekhov play before? What were your experiences?

(Kath): I’ve had a few experiences working with Chekhov, and in fact this is my third time working on *The Cherry Orchard*. My first encounter was while studying at WAAPA under the direction of Chris Edmund. The class was split into two ensembles and we worked simultaneously on the first halves of *The Cherry Orchard* and *Uncle Vanya*, and then the ensembles switched over and worked on the second half of the other play. It was a great way to immerse ourselves in the common themes, character types and personal dilemmas that Chekhov kept returning to. It was a really treasured experience.

Some years later I worked on *The Cherry Orchard* again in a Simon Stone production for The Melbourne Theatre Company. It’s one of the most fulfilling experiences of “ensemble performance” I have ever had. There’s something about *The Cherry Orchard* as a story that really brings out a deep sense of connection between people. Perhaps it’s because Chekhov writes these superbly flawed characters through such kind eyes and with such good humour that it really invites us all to embrace our common humanity, warts and all. He delves so intelligently into themes of community and belonging, love, loss and acceptance – of our own faults and others – and how to start taking responsibility for the hurt we’ve caused others. He allows us to see ourselves in these characters so easily. And lets not forget that it’s very, very funny – and who doesn’t need a good reminder to laugh at themselves from time to time!?! The other encounter with Chekhov I’ve had was in quite a radical reimagining of *Three Sisters* in a big warehouse space in Melbourne. There were three different directors who took on different sections of the play to adapt in wildly different ways, and I mean wildly - one section even had lines from *Taxi Driver* interspersed throughout it! It definitely ruffled a few feathers and sparked some interesting and passionate debate around what constitutes an “adaptation,” but the most exciting response came from a wonderful Russian actor Alex Menglet who lives and works in Australia who came up to us after the show screaming “Yes! Yes! You have got to the heart of Chekhov!!” I think what he was getting at was this sense that Chekhov has always been interested in challenging the status quo. The fact that Chekhov’s work has come to sit quite comfortably inside the ‘white male western cannon’ for so long means it’s easy for people to forget that he was quite radical, and that as a writer he was not afraid to ruffle a few feathers. He was actually interested in social and hierarchical change in ways that echo a lot of sentiment in our world today. He also just happens to be a fine observer of human nature and all the wonder and heartache and absurdity that comes with that.

**Why did you set the play in Manjimup in the late eighties?**

The appeal of the eighties lies with the echoes it affords the piece with regards to asking questions around privilege.

We tend to look back on the eighties as a period of excess and indulgence – a great big shoulder pad of a party that eventually led us to crashing stock markets and a recession. There’s often a sense of nostalgia tinged with irreverence (which is a fun playground for any production to find itself in!), but this sense of the glory days running out is at the heart of *The Cherry Orchard* – so too the question “for whom were these the glory days?”

The eighties were a period of great economic divergence between the rich and poor (not unlike the world we see emerging now post COVID). There was the rise and fall of our own oligarchs - think Alan Bond, and, just like in Chekhov’s time, we had our own debates running around land ownership, native title, and land rights. With the bicentenary looming there was a great push towards some kind of reconciliation and an acknowledgment of the great injustices of our past. Sadly,
our First Nations people are still fighting for many of these same issues today. One thing we hope our version of *The Cherry Orchard* speaks to is the need for White Australia to take up this fight too. *The Cherry Orchard* invites us to consider the demise of a social, political, and economic system that has profited from the exploitation of others, and offers up a space for us to imagine a new way of being.

**CAST**

Humphrey Bower  
Piss-Cheek; a family friend

Emily Rose Brennan  
Dunyasha; the family maid

Grace Chow  
Varya; Ranyevskaya’s adopted daughter

Kieran Clancy-Lowe  
Yasha; a young servant

Michelle Fornasier  
Charlotta; the governess

Brendan Hanson  
Gayev; Ranyevskaya’s brother

Sam Longley  
Yepikhodov; the family’s accountant

Hayley McElhinney  
Ranyevskaya; a landowner

Bridie McKim  
Anya; Ranyevskaya’s daughter

Ben Mortley  
Lopakhin; a noveau riche neighbour

Mark Nannup  
Trofimov; a university student

George Shevtsov  
Firs; the family’s very old servant

Firs’ dog Jezebel, (Irish Wolfhound Cross) and Arlo (Cavoodle)

**Perth in the Eighties; A Story of Excess**

The decade of the 1980s has sometimes been described as ‘the age of the entrepreneur’. It was a period of high hopes and brilliant successes, with a small group of millionaires making fantastic profits. Living in a dream world of high living where the realities of life were too often ignored, these wealthy men eagerly hatched and pursued all kinds of money-making schemes, with billions of dollars at stake. To affect their schemes, many borrowed huge sums of money at high rates of interest, and paid inflated prices for the assets which they purchased. For a time the illusion of success was maintained, but the stock market crash of October 1987 brought the main players back to earth with a thud. Many of the plans for creating unimagined wealth turned sour, bringing crippling losses to large and small investors alike. Unfortunately, it also resulted in huge losses for the State as well.

Source: A brief History of WA, AJ Koutsoukis

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5u_dvP0tvw
Lost Perth Awesome 80s video by Channel Nine
ADRIANE DAFF CO-WRITER

Adriane Daff is an actor, writer and theatre maker. She is one of the founding artists of The Last Great Hunt. Some theatre credits for TLGH include Lé Nar (nominated for two Helpmann awards), The Irresistible (a co-production with Side Pony Productions also nominated for a Helpmann award), Falling Through Clouds, All That Glitters and Elephants. For Black Swan State Theatre Company Xenides, A Perfect Specimen, Blithe Spirit, Flood, The Importance of Being Earnest, Arcadia, A Midsummer Night's Dream and The Visit. On screen Adriane has appeared in The Big Spaghetti, Three Summers, Small Town Hackers, DAFUQ? and Otherlife. In 2018 Adriane won a PAWA for Best Actress for The Irresistible and Best Actress in the Next Gen Webfest for The Big Spaghetti.

KATHERINE TONKIN CO-WRITER

Theatre credits include: Xenides – which she also co-devised (Black Swan State Theatre Company); Cosi (Melbourne Theatre Company/Sydney Theatre Company); Abigail's Party, Three Little Words, The Cherry Orchard, Apocalypse Bear Trilogy, Cloud Nine, and Explorations: A Streetcar Named Desire (Melbourne Theatre Company); The Histrionic and Baal (Sydney Theatre Company/Malthouse Theatre); The Wild Duck, and Elektra/Orestes (Belvoir); Conversation Piece (Lucy Guerin Inc/Belvoir); Tame, OT: Chronicles of the Old Testament (Malthouse Theatre); The Eisteddfod (Malthouse Theatre/Brisbane Powerhouse/Downstairs Belvoir); Gilgamesh (Melbourne Festival/Sydney Opera House/Barbican/China tour); Smashed (Griffin Independent); I Heart John McEnroe (Theatreworks); Duets for Lovers and Dreamers (45downstairs); and 3XSisters (Hayloft Project). Screen credits include: Preacher (Series 4), My First Summer, Wentworth, The BBQ, Macbeth, Nowhere Boys, The Future is Expensive, Winners and Losers (Series 3 and 4), City Homicide (Series 3 and 4), Neighbours, Blue Heelers, Snake Tales and Kick.

PLOT SUMMARY:

It’s October 1987; Bob Hawke’s back in, the America’s Cup has put Freo on the map, Kylie’s topped the charts, and the New York stock exchange has crashed and burned, plunging Australia into "the recession it had to have." For some the heydays of excess are on a rapid decline, while for others the outlook has never been so good.

It's against this backdrop that we find ourselves in Manjimup Western Australia, where the fate of a grand Cherry Orchard and its accompanying estate are being decided. It's four in the morning, and Lopakhin, an upwardly mobile property developer and former employee of the household, lies splayed out asleep on the couch. He's awaiting the return of Ranyevskaya, the owner of the property, who's just spent 5 years in the eastern states, drowning her grief in alcohol and sex.

The household is on tenterhooks...

Despite her adopted daughter’s attempts to save the place, the money's run out, the credit cards are maxed and it seems there’s no option left but to sell.

Lopakhin pitches a plan to save the day but Ranyevskaya and her infantile brother would prefer to just pour another glass of champagne and leave their heads firmly in the sand.

As we sit poised on the cusp of Australia’s bicentennial “celebrations,” beloved family friend Trofimov asks this self-absorbed menagerie of white Australian privilege to examine their claim to land and belonging, and urges them to consider - is there another way forward? Over the course of 5 months, we watch on as hopes and dreams are dashed, and new loves are forged.

This adaptation of Anton Chekhov’s tale of shifting classes and dismantled ideologies is also a celebration of our very human need to make sense and make amends, to connect and feel loved, to dance when you feel like crying, and to stare bravely into the face of a changing world.
About Anton Chekhov

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov was born in the small seaport of Taganrog, Ukraine on January 29th in the year 1860. Today he is remembered as a playwright and one of the masters of the modern short story. He was the son of a grocer and the grandson of a serf who had bought his freedom, and that of his sons, 19 years earlier. Chekhov spent his early years under the shadow of his father’s religious fanaticism while working long hours in his store. Chekhov attended a school for Greek boys in his hometown from 1867-1868 and later he attended the local grammar school from 1868 -1876 when his father went bankrupt and moved the family to Moscow. Chekhov, only 16 at the time, decided to remain in his hometown and supported himself by tutoring as he continued his schooling for 3 more years.

After he finished grammar school, Chekhov enrolled in the Moscow University Medical School, where he would eventually become a doctor. Chekhov's medical and science experience is evident in much of his work, as evidenced by the apathy many of his characters show towards tragic events.

While attending medical school Chekhov began to publish comic short stories and used the money to support himself and his family and by 1886 he had gained wide fame as a writer. Chekhov's works were published in various St. Petersburg papers, including Peterburskaia Gazeta from 1885, and Novoe Vremia from 1886. Chekhov also published two full-length novels during this time, one of which, The Shooting Party, was translated into English in 1926.

Chekhov graduated from medical school in 1884 and he practiced medicine until 1892. While practicing medicine in 1886 he became a regular contributor to St. Petersburg daily Novoe Vremia and it was during this time that he developed his style of the dispassionate, non-judgmental author. The lack of critical social commentary in Chekhov's works netted him some detractors, but it gained him the praise of such authors as Leo Tolstoy and Nikolai Leskov.

Chekhov was awarded the Pushkin Prize in 1888. The next year he was elected a member of the Society of Lovers of Russian Literature. However after the failure of his play The Wood Demon (1889) he withdrew from literature for a while. Instead he turned back to medicine and science in his trip to the penal colony of Sakhalin, north of Siberia. While there, he surveyed 10,000 convicts sentenced to life on the island as part of his doctoral research. When finished, he travelled extensively, including such places as South East Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, and the Middle East.

In 1892 Chekhov bought an estate in the country village of Melikhove and became a full time writer. It was during this time that he published some of his most memorable stories including 'Neighbors' (1892), 'Ward Number Six' (1892), 'The Black Monk' (1894), 'The Murder' (1895) and 'Ariadne' (1895). In 1897 he fell ill with tuberculosis moved to Yalta, while he wrote his famous stories 'The Man in a Shell,' 'Gooseberries,' 'About Love,' 'Lady with the Dog' and 'In the Ravine.' In 1901 Chekhov finally married actress, Olya Knipper, who had performed in his plays. But their bliss would be short lived; Chekhov died on July 15, 1904, in Badenweiler, Germany. He is buried in the cemetery of the Novodeviche Monastery in Moscow.

Though a celebrated figure by the Russian literary public at the time of his death, Chekhov remained rather unknown internationally until the years after World War I, when his works were translated into English. As a writer Chekhov was extremely fast, often producing a short story in an hour or less, overall during his career he authored several hundred stories. He didn't have as much success with his plays - the early ones were failures and it wasn't until The Seagull was revised in 1898 by Stanislavsky at the Moscow Art Theatre that he gained popularity as a playwright.

Liubov Ranyevskaya, a widowed landowner, returns home more or less insolvent after five years abroad. Everything appears just as she remembers it but hers is a diminishing world. The vast and beautiful cherry orchard is soon to be sold off against her mounting debts. The insistent warnings of Lopakhin, a peasant’s son turned wealthy businessman, go unheeded, and more than the family estate is on the block; in the words of Trofimov, the eternal student who hopes to inherit the future, ‘the whole of Russia is our orchard.’

Chekhov’s last play (1904) is a poignant snapshot of the great, slow-rolling change that came to a head with the Russian revolution in 1917.

Source: http://www.online-literature.com/anton_chekhov/
CLARE WATSON  DIRECTOR

Clare commenced in the role of Artistic Director of Black Swan State Theatre Company in October 2016. For the company, she has directed Let The Right One In, The Events, You Know We Belong Together (two seasons), Xenides, Our Town and The Torrents. Previously, Clare was Artistic Director at St Martins collaborating with children and teenagers. Her recent work includes I Saw the Second One Hit (Malthouse Theatre) and Fitter. Faster. Better. (Dance Massive, Junction Arts Festival, Malthouse Theatre). She directed the critically acclaimed What Rhymes with Cars and Girls for Melbourne Theatre Company in 2015, which received four Helpmann nominations including Best Director. In 2014 Clare was Female Director-in-Residence at Malthouse Theatre and she is an MTC Women Directors Program alumna. Her stage credits also include I Heart John McEnroe (Uninvited Guests/Theatre Works – winner Green Room Award for Best Ensemble, and five nominations including Best Director); The Man with the September Face by Kylie Trounson (Full Tilt/Arts Centre); Smashed by Lally Katz (Stables); and Hotel (Melbourne Fringe Festival – winner Best Director). Clare is a graduate of Directing at the Victorian College of the Arts. In 2016, her mainstage work also included Lungs by Duncan MacMillan at Melbourne Theatre Company and The Events by David Greig for Malthouse and Belvoir, Sydney Festival and Adelaide Festival. Clare is a trained teacher and worked in high schools in Victoria for 15 years and was also Education Manager at Malthouse Theatre.

IAN MICHAEL  ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR


Films: Jandamarra. Assistant Director: Sydney Theatre Company: The Picture of Dorian Gray; Sydney Theatre Company/Black Swan: Black Is The New White (Directing Placement); Black Swan /Yirra Yaakin: Skylab. Awards: Ian has been awarded Melbourne Fringe Festival’s Most Outstanding Indigenous Actor in 2013 and 2015. He has also been awarded Best Emerging Artist at the 2016 Adelaide Fringe Festival. HART was nominated for a Green Room Award for Best Production (Independent) in 2016 and was awarded the Tiki Tour Ready Award (NZ) and SA Tour Ready Awards at the 2015 Melbourne Fringe Festival. Nominated for Best Actor at the 2019 and 2017 PAWA Awards for Our Town and Let the Right One In. Ian was a finalist in the Western Australian of the Year Awards in 2019 and a finalist in the Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Awards in the Future Leadership category. Training: WAAPA.
ZOË ATKINSON  SET & COSTUME DESIGNER

Zoë is a Perth based designer who has worked across many art forms in Australia and internationally for over twenty-five years. Some of her most recent local work includes Cloudstreet (Black Swan Theatre/Malthouse), Hecate (Yirra Yaakin), Boorna Waanginy: The Trees Speak (Perth Festival 2019/2017) for which she was also Artistic Associate; HOME (PIAF 2016) and The Museum of Water (PIAF 2017/18). Her most recent interstate work includes The Importance of Being Earnest (Ridiculousmus/Malthouse/Barbican London), The Life of Galileo (Belvoir) and The Black Rider (Victorian Opera/Malthouse). Zoë’s long history of working with Black Swan entails the design of many past shows including Xenides, Signs of Life, Jandamarra, The Carnivores, Uncle Vanya, Copenhagen, The Unexpected Man, Away and Plainsong. Zoë studied Scenography at the Prague Academy of Performing Arts under the late Professors Petr Matasek and Joseph Svoboda, and has been the recipient of many awards including a Helpmann for her costume design on The Odyssey (Malthouse/Black Swan). Zoë is driven by visual ways to tell stories, sense of place, and a deep love of the South West of Western Australia.

LUCY BIRKINSHAW  LIGHTING DESIGNER

Lucy Birkinshaw is an accomplished lighting designer and artist. Lucy’s lighting practice encompasses theatre, opera, music theatre, concert lighting, dance, film and television. She trained formally in fine arts and lighting for performance. Lucy has designed lighting for companies such as Black Swan State Theatre Company, Sydney Theatre Company, Perth Theatre Company, Malthouse, Griffin Theatre, Barking Gecko, The Aphids, Melbourne Opera, Lyric Opera Melbourne, WAYTCO, Performing Lines, My Darling Patricia, OpticNerve, Side Pony Productions, Hayloft Project, Magnormos, Red Ryder, Perth International Arts Festival, Opera in the Park, Australian Opera Studio and many others. She enjoys collaborating with a diverse range of directors, choreographers and composers. Lucy’s distinctive approach to depth, contrast and beauty within her designs make her an identifiable theatre artist.

DR CLINT BRACKNELL  COMPOSER & SOUND DESIGNER

Clint is Associate Professor at WAAPA and Kurongkurl Katitjin, ECU. His credits as composer, sound designer and musical director include Hecate (Yirra Yaakin/Bell Shakespeare) Water, The Caucasian Chalk Circle (Black Swan), Skylab (Black Swan/Yirra Yaakin), Mission Songs Project: 1957 Palm Island Strike (Sydney Festival, Darwin Festival), King Hit (Yirra Yaakin), and The Red Tree (BGTC) which was nominated for ‘best original score’ in the Helpmann Awards. His PhD in Music from UWA was awarded the 2016 Robert Street Prize for most outstanding thesis.
CAST

HUMPHREY BOWER  PISS-CHEEK; A FAMILY FRIEND

Humphrey is an award-winning actor, writer and director based in Perth. He’s worked with companies and artists across Australia for over 30 years. He was a founding member of Melbourne collective Whistling in the Theatre in the 1980s and Perth independent company Last Seen Imagining from 2001 to 2007, and was Artistic Director of Night Train Productions from 2007 to 2015. Recent performance credits include: The Golem, (The Blue Room, 2020), The Apparatus (The Blue Room, 2019); Sunset (Maxine Doyle, STRUT/Perth Festival, 2019), Hiro (Sam Chester, Blue Room, 2018); and Coma Land (Black Swan, Studio Underground, 2017). Awards: 2019 Blue Room Award for Best Performance (The Apparatus); 2013 Equity Guild Award for Best New Play (Skin); 2012 Blue Room Award for Best Production (Skin); 2011 Blue Room Members’ Choice Award and Best Performance Award (Wish); 2010 Helpmann Award for Best Supporting Actor (Richard III); 2005 Victorian Green Room Award (Independent Theatre) for Best Actor (Savage Grace); 2003 Blue Room Members’ Choice Award (The Reader); 2000 Green Room Award (Independent Theatre) for Best Production (The Terms and Grammar of Creation).

EMILY ROSE BRENNAN  DUNYASHA; THE FAMILY MAID

Emily graduated from NIDA in 2005. Since then she has worked extensively in theatre and television. Emily toured with Bell Shakespeare in 2005 and 2009, and played lead roles in television series: 30 Seconds for Foxtel, Underbelly:Razor for Channel 9 and The Legend of Gavin Tanner for ABC. Having moved back to Perth, Emily has performed in Tim Winton’s Dirt Music, Water for Black Swan Theatre Company, The Torrents for Black Swan/Sydney Theatre Company, and television series’ The Gruen Transfer, Dahuq and Ashbeclee. Emily is a prolific voice over artist and the voice of some of Australia’s leading television campaigns.

GRACE CHOW  VARYA; RANYEVSKAYA’ S ADOPTED DAUGHTER

Grace Chow is an emerging Asian-Australian theatre-maker, playwright and actor who trained in the Bachelor of Performing Arts at WAAPA, 2020. Her work primarily takes place on Whadjuk Noongar Boodjar. Grace has worked with various Australian theatre companies such as the Black Swan State Theatre Company, WA Youth Theatre Company (WAYTCo), Australian Theatre for Young People (ATYP), Barking Gecko Theatre Company, Squid Vicious, PROPAGATION NATION and Public Service Announcement. Her recent performance and performance-making highlights include WAYTCo’s multi-national-award-winning hit REST (2019), Dance Myself to Death at the National Studio Residency (2019) and her solo show Noodle Shop on the Corner of Fifth Street (2020) at the Blue Room Theatre. In 2020 Grace was a part of the Performing Lines WA Culturally Diverse Artist Residency, and continues to carry a passion for inclusivity, accessibility, and diversity in the Australian performing arts ecology.

KIERAN CLANCY-LOWE  YASHA; A YOUNG SERVANT

Kieran Clancy-Lowe is a graduate of WAAPA. His television career has included Les Norton, directed by David Caesar, and Riot, directed by Jeffrey Walker. Kieran Clancy Lowe’s theatre credits include Mars: An Interplanetary Cabaret (Old 505 Theatre), directed by Andrew Mclnnes, Safe (Sotto Theatre Company), directed by Sarah Hadley, Macbeth (Australian Shakespeare Company), directed by Glenn Elston, and It doesn’t Snow Here, as part of Sydney Fringe Festival. Kieran’s time at WAAPA saw him in productions including A Tale of Two Cities, Coriolanus, Much Ado About Nothing and Marat Sade, and in the Channel 9 short film Not Like Us.
MICHELLE FORNASIER
CHARLOTTA; THE GOVERNESS


BRENDAN HANSON
GAYEV; RANYEVSKAYA’S BROTHER

Brendan is a creative nomad. He is an actor, singer, director, writer and lecturer. As a performer Brendan’s recent credits include, Assassins, I Am My Own Wife, Clinton, Next to Normal, Midsummer(a play with songs) and Arcadia, all for Black Swan State Theatre Company. The Telephone for Lost and Found Opera, Into the Shimmer Heat for Nova Ensemble. He performed in Strut Dance’s Sunset for Perthfest. For Brainbox productions he performed in Lebensraum, The Last Five Years and Grande Revue. He performed in Les Miserables for Cameron Mackintosh. Grease for Gordon Frost and Singin’ in the Rain for David Atkins Enterprises. Brendan has acted in As You Like It, The Comedy of Errors and Twelfth Night in Shakespeare in the park for deckchair theatre. He is the brains, breath and body behind the cabaret enigma Petit Mort and has appeared regularly on the Perth cabaret scene and played Ringmaster for La Soirée. He has sung for WA Opera in Tosca, The Tales of Hoffmann, The Magic Flute, Orpheus in the Underworld and Carmen.

He has directed opera, musicals, cabaret and plays and is a lecturer in performance skills in the classical voice department at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts. His directorial credits include The Cloak and Dagger for FRINGE WORLD, Actéon for Lost and Found Opera, The 50th Anniversary Opera in the Park for WA Opera and the company’s ongoing schools opera programmes. For WAAPA he has directed, Cabaret Carnivale, Opera! The Opera, Angelique, Acis and Galatea, Guess Who’s Coming To Dinner?, Dido and Aeneas and La Serva e l’Ussero.

He was a finalist in Channel Ten’s I Will Survive and played Hudson Fysch in Air Australia for the ABC. Brendan was awarded the PAWA award for his portrayal of Kenneth Starr in Clinton, and the Best Actor award for Lebensraum by the Equity Guild. He is a WAAPA graduate and a proud member of MEAA since 1990.

SAM LONGLEY
YEPIKHODOV; THE FAMILY’S ACCOUNTANT

Sam Longley has been working as an actor, comedian, writer and director since the late nineties. Some of his highlights include 10 years performing Shakespeare In The Park, Hoods for Barking Gecko Theatre, The Adventures of Alvin Sputnik: Deep Sea Explorer US/Japan/ Turkey/ Canada/ Rio tours, Horse Head national tour, A Midsummer Night’s Dream with Black Swan State Theatre Company, Stones for Barking Gecko Theatre, Not Like Beckett for Deck Chair Theatre, Bindjareb Pinjarra Australian tour, Tony Galati: The Musical and Beanstalk with Spare Parts Puppet Theatre. Sam has performed in the feature films Jasper Jones, Three Summers, H is For Happiness and Where The Wild Things Are. Sam has written plays, hosted TV shows and is the creator of the improv comedy show The Big Hoo-Haa.
Hayley McElhinney is a graduate of the Western Australia Academy of Performing Arts. Television credits include series regular, Penny in Doctor Doctor (series 1-5), Peter Allen: Not the Boy Next Door, Rizzoli & Isles, My Place, Twentyfourseven, Always Greener, All Saints, Blue Heelers, Love is a Four Letter Word, Backbender, Water Rats and Good Guys Bad Guys.

On the big screen, Hayley can be seen in Hearts & Bones, Rams, Love You Twice, The Babadook, Redd Inc, My Mother Frank and City Loop.

As a member of the Sydney Theatre Company from 2006-2009, Hayley performed in Uncle Vanya, The War of the Roses, Gallipoli, The Serpent’s Teeth, Tales from the Vienna Woods, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, The Art of War, The Season at Sarsaparilla, The Bourgeois Gentleman, The Lost Echo, Bed and Mother Courage and Her Children, for which she received the Sydney Theatre Award for Best Supporting Actress in 2006.

Her other stage credits include You Animal You (Force Majeure), Pride and Prejudice and Life After George (Melbourne Theatre Company), A Moment on the Lips (Old Fitzroy Theatre), Noir and Don’t Stare Too Much (Darlinghurst Theatre), Medea (Steamworks), Uncle Vanya, Proof, Buried, Darling Oscar, Family Running for Mr Whippy (Black Swan) and The Danger Age (Deckchair Theatre).

Bridie graduated from NIDA by stepping into a lead role, Sabine, on the ABC TV drama The Heights. Bridie has since completed a second season of the series. Bridie’s other screen credits include the comedy web series All We Have Is Now, Laura Nagy & Daniel Monks’ short film Bodies, and the multi-award winning short film Gimpsey, directed by Sofya Gollan, for which Bridie won the Award of Merit for a Lead Actress in the Best Shorts Competition as well as a nomination for Best Supporting Actress in the Madrid International Film Festival. In 2019, Bridie starred in Fat Salmon Production’s short film, Cinderella, for which she won Best Australian Actor at the Focus On Ability Short Film Festival. Bridie’s theatre credits include role of the School Girl in Downstairs, Belvoir’s production of Tuesday, as well as This Hollow Crown, Face it, Not Our Story and Saison de L’amour all for the Queensland Theatre Youth Ensemble. Bridie will next be seen in the STAN Original TV series Bump, opposite Claudia Karvan.

Ben is a performer and film maker. His screen credits include the feature films Dingo, Lantana, Drift, Pinch, The Gateway, and award-winning performances in Zelos, and The Decadent and the Depraved.

His television credits include: McLeod's Daughter's, Cloudstreet, Home & Away, A Place to Call Home and Itch.

He has performed in theatres around Australia including Black Swan, Sydney Theatre Company, Company B Belvoir, Bell Shakespeare Company, The Ensemble Theatre, Barking Gecko, Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, Griffin Theatre Company and the Blue Room Theatre.

Most recently, he played the lead in the short film Carmentis, which had its world premiere at Tribeca Film Festival, winning best film awards at CinefestOz and the San José International Short Film Festival.

Ben is currently developing a TV series and studying for his Master of Counselling.
MARK NANNUP

Mark Nannup is a Yamatji Nyoongar man from Port Hedland and Meekatharra in Western Australia. He is next to be heard voicing the ‘Inspector’ in Fist of Fury Noongar Daa directed by Kylie Bracknell and produced by the Perth Festival, a dubbing of the Fung Fu film Fist Of Fury into Nyoongar language. Mark was recently seen as the role of ‘Malcoms’ and ‘Mischief Maker’ in the 2020 Perth Festival production of Hecate directed by Kylie Bracknell; a Nyoongar language adaptation by the Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company of Macbeth that subverts Shakespeare’s play by setting the drama on boodja. Mark completed the Victorian College of the Arts Acting short course in 2016, where he played ‘Thisbe’ in A Midsummer Nights Dream, and a year later was accepted into the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Acting) graduating in 2019. Throughout his three years at VCA he has played ‘Monster’ in F***ING A, ‘Montano’ in Othello, ‘Mike’ in Arthur Miller’s A View From The Bridge and ‘Securitate’ in Caryl Churchill’s Mad Forest. He has starred in a number of short films and documentaries, including the film 3,000 years of Longing. Mark also works a casual narrator for SBS.

GEORGE SHEVTSOV

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<th>FRI</th>
<th>SAT</th>
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<td>18 Feb 6:00pm PV</td>
<td>19 Feb 6:00pm PN*</td>
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**PRINCIPAL PARTNER**

**GOVERNMENT PARTNERS**

**MAJOR PARTNERS**

**SEASON PARTNERS**

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS**

**MEDIA & MARKETING PARTNERS**

**FOUNDATIONS**

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**BLACK SWAN STATE THEATRE COMPANY OF WA**