

BY THEATRE WORKS

SERVING SCANDAL, SMASHING EGOS AND DRIPPING SWEAT

AUSTRALIAN



THEATRE WORKS PRESENTS

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

BY ANGUS CAMERON

PHOTO CREDIT: TOM NOBLE

21 - 31 JANUARY | THEATRE WORKS

theatre works, 14 acland street, st kilda



Theatre Works respectfully acknowledges First People's sovereignty and recognise the continuing connection to lands, waters and storytelling by Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia.

We pay our respects to the many clans and language groups in Victoria, to their elders past and present, and acknowledge the strength and resilience of all Aboriginal peoples.

Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.

ABOUT THEATRE WORKS

Theatre Works is Australia's home of independent theatre: a creative precinct where artists take risks, new stories are born, and audiences discover the bold voices shaping contemporary culture. For more than 45 years, Theatre Works has supported artists to develop, make, and share ambitious new Australian work. Today, our precinct is stronger and more interconnected than ever.

Located in the heart of St Kilda, the Theatre Works Precinct brings together four purpose-built venues: the Main Theatre, the Explosives Factory, the TWiSK Rehearsal Space, and the Black Box Café & Outdoor Stage. Each space plays a distinct role in the creative lifecycle, providing artists with everything they need to move from idea, to development, to premiere, to tour; all within a single, supportive ecosystem.

Our model is simple but rare: we share investment and risk with independent artists. Through co-producing, commissioning, and tailored producing support, we ensure artists are backed by real resources: free development space, professional equipment, rehearsal infrastructure, marketing, ticketing, and technical support. This gives artists the freedom to take creative risks while removing the financial and logistical pressures that so often limit independent work.

Every year, more than 600 artists pass through our precinct, developing and presenting work across 50+ productions.

Many go on to regional and national touring, VCE Playlist recognition, and major awards. Our audiences are equally diverse: from loyal locals to school groups, visiting families, and new theatre-goers who discover us through the café, bar, or festival partnerships.

The precinct allows us to operate at a scale unique in Victoria's independent sector. The Main Theatre offers a fully equipped black box for bold, ambitious work; the Explosives Factory provides a home for experimentation, residencies, and intimate performance; the TWiSK Rehearsal Space offers year-round free development space; and the Black Box Café & Outdoor Stage connect the precinct to the daily life of St Kilda, welcoming more than 20,000 visitors each year.

Together, these venues form a pipeline that supports artists at every stage of their practice while building community, diversifying income, and embedding independent theatre deeply into the cultural fabric of St Kilda. This integrated precinct model - development to presentation, bar to black box, artist to audience - is what makes Theatre Works unique.

This is the heart of Theatre Works: a place where artists are held, supported, and challenged; where audiences encounter work that surprises and moves them; and where community grows, one story at a time.

TEAM THEATRE WORKS

DIANNE TOULSON (she/her) Executive Director / Creative Producer

ADAM GARDNER (he/him) Marketing / Graphic Design / Box Office Manager

JADE HIBBERT (she/her) Company Producer

CHRIS PATRICK HANSEN (he/him) Marketing and Producing Associate

RIVER STEVENS (he/him) Front of House Co-Ordinator

JOSHUA FERNANDEZ (he/him) Venue Operations Assistant

ANNE HENDERSON (she/her) Finance Administrator

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

BY ANGUS CAMERON | PRESENTED BY THEATRE WORKS

WRITTEN BY

Angus Cameron

DIRECTED BY

Riley Spadaro

SET & COSTUME DESIGNER

Harry Gill

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Sidney Younger

SOUND DESIGNER & COMPOSER

Jack Burmeister

STAGE MANAGER

Clara Camm

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Cat Baud

CAST

Eddie Orton

Sebastian Li

Jane Montgomery Griffiths

Alec Gilbert

Melissa Kahraman

PROMOTIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY

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PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHY BY

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PUBLICITY BY

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PRODUCED BY

Theatre Works

SPECIAL THANKS

Jessamine Moffett

Ashley Reid

Viv Hargreaves

Kadey McIntosh

AUSTRALIAN OPEN IS A BY THEATRE WORKS PRODUCTION

Shows in the **BY THEATRE WORKS** stream are produced and presented by Theatre Works in-house, lead by artists who are either on staff and/or alumni of our professional development programs.



DIRECTORS' NOTE

RILEY SPARADO

Australian Open is about two things I find incredibly confronting — open relationships and tennis. I'm an only child who never played team sports, so sharing and hand-eye-coordination have never been particular strengths. But, despite these personal inadequacies, I truly adore this play.

I stumbled across the play by chance in March 2019. I caught wind of a play reading happening over at the Melbourne Theatre Company of a new comedy about tennis by some hot-shot queer writer. I'm a sucker for a rom-com, and I had some time on my hands, so, on a whim, I went along. To my gleeful astonishment, the play was a total slam dunk... or grand slam, whichever sporting metaphor is more appropriate. It was raucously funny, buoyantly horny and unexpectedly heart-warming. It had the makings of a smash hit! Twelve months later, I found myself in a tiny traverse theatre above a pub in Kings Cross, directing the premiere production. It was a great deal of fun (and remains my mum's favourite thing I've directed), but it didn't go anywhere, largely because the world shut down only a few days after we opened.

So, you can imagine my surprise when, almost six years later, I got a call from Angus and Di asking if I'd revisit the play in an entirely new production. It's rare to get a do-over, so of course I said yes — and I'm very glad I did. It meant I got to collaborate with some exceptional people and make them do some gloriously ridiculous things.

Thank you to Sebastian Li, Eddie Orton, Jane Montogmoery Griffiths, Alec Gilbert, and Melissa Kahraman who freely lent their athletic imaginations and hearts to the process, and who took every one of my notes (e.g. "it's a punchline, make it one"). And snaps to the sensational combined talents of Harry Gill, Sidney Younger, and Jack Burmeister who have created a big, gay, joyful, sexy, explosion of a show.

The world has changed a lot in the intervening years, so much so that the play now feels like a quaint little queer period piece. But it also imagines a utopic future where an elite male athlete can publicly declare his love for another man. We're closer to that future, sure, but we're also frustratingly far from it. And while *Heated Rivalry* can send us into mass-psychosis, I'm not convinced the world is ready for an out gay man at the absolute peak of sport. Maybe one day! Hopefully soon. And ideally he'll be single.

– Riley Spadaro, January 2026







ANGUS CAMERON

PLAYWRIGHT



Angus is a Melbourne-based playwright and academic (Ph.D. Theatre, Victorian College of the Arts). His recent credits include writing *For Love Nor Money* (Melbourne Fringe Festival, 2023); *Cavemxn* (Chapel Off Chapel, 2022); *Dirt*, which was nominated for a Green Room Award for Best New Writing, winning an additional 6 awards and receiving over 20 five-star reviews on its tour of Australia; *Australian Open* was written for MTC in 2019, was produced in Sydney in 2020, Brisbane in 2025 and has been published by PlayLab. He has also worked with Queensland Theatre, Sydney Theatre Company and Arts Centre Melbourne. His next play *Luke* opens at Red Stitch in September.

RILEY SPADARO

DIRECTOR



Riley is a director and dramaturg. Directing credits include the world premieres of *Hot Tub* by Lewis Treston and *The Italians* by Danny Ball for Belvoir, *Australian Open* by Angus Cameron, and *This Bitter Earth* by Chris Edwards. Riley developed Lewis Treston's *Hubris & Humiliation*, which later premiered at Sydney Theatre Company, and dramaturged Luke Di Somma's *The Unruly Tourists* for New Zealand Opera and Auckland Arts Festival — the latter was the subject of Alison Mau's documentary *Unruly* for New Zealand's Stuff. Riley assisted Leticia Cáceres on the Helpmann Award-winning rock musical *Barbara* and the *Camp Dogs* for Belvoir, Malthouse Theatre, and Queensland Theatre, and directed Paul Capsis in the revival of *La Cage Aux Folles* at Arts Centre Melbourne and Sydney's State Theatre.

Later this year, Riley will direct *Log Boy* by Anthony Nocera for State Theatre Company South Australia. Riley holds a BA in Performance Making from WAAPA and an MFA in Directing from NIDA.

HARRY GILL

SET & COSTUME DESIGNER



Harry is a graduate of the VCA and an Award Nominated Set and Costume Designer based in Naarm. Harry has a keen eye for design and aesthetics and through his designs seeks to make theatre relevant and meaningful to contemporary audiences. Harry's recent design credits include Set & Costume Design for: The Boys In The Band, (James Terry Collective, 2025) Bunyi Bunyi Bumi (AsiaTopa, 2025), Ilarun (Forty-Five Downstairs, 2024), Werewolf (Arts Centre Melbourne, 2024), Parade (Seymour Centre, 2024). Set Design for: Footloose (National Tour, 2025), Addams Family (Stars and the Moon, 2024), The Whale (Melbourne Shakespeare Company, 2024), Every Lovely Terrible Thing (Lab Kelpie, 2024), Songs for a New World (Soundworks Productions, 2023). Harry was recently nominated for a Greenroom award for his work on 'Parade' and 'Songs for a New World'. In 2021, Harry was recognised for his efforts, being awarded the Orloff Family Charitable Trust Scholarship for excellence.

You can see Harry's work at harrygilldesigns.com.

SIDNEY YOUNGER

LIGHTING DESIGNER



Sidney is a Green Room award winning Lighting Designer, and a 2021 graduate of the BFA (Design and Production) degree at the VCA.

His credits include 'American Psycho' (Mark Taylor), 'Werewolf' & 'A Case for the Existence of God' (Gary Abrahams), 'Meet Your Maker' (Brisbane Festival), 'Ghost Quartet' (Hayes), 'Parade' & 'Songs for a New World' (Soundworks), 'Bach's Universe' (Brandenburg Orchestra).

His works have been seen by audiences across Australia, praised by reviews as ""one of the best lighting designers Melbourne has to offer".

Sidney is proudly represented by Ian White Management.

His website portfolio can be found at <https://sidneyyounger.com/>

JACK BURMEISTER

SOUND DESIGNER & COMPOSER



Jack Burmeister is a Sound Designer & Composer who works primarily in theatre and film, which enables him to explore the unique relationship between music and other art forms to create bespoke, immersive experiences.

He has garnered recognition for his work with a Green Room Nomination for Outstanding Sound Design with 'The Roof is Caving In', and Best Score at the Geelong Independent Film Festival for his work on 'With Everything I Am'.

He graduated with a Bachelor of Music (Interactive Composition) from VCA. His notable design credits include 'Othello' by Melbourne Shakespeare Company, 'ILARUN: The Cutting Comb' (Dir. Effie Nkrumah), and 'Love & Information' (Dir. Belle Hansen). He was the sound designer for 'Tarzan: The Musical', and worked as composer & associate sound designer for 'Boys in the Band' (dir. Alister Smith). He was the sound designer for 'NIUSIA' (dir. Kat Yates), that has won the 'Cultural Diversity Award' in Adelaide Fringe 2025, and most recently 'The Scotsman Fringe First Award' at Edinburgh 2025.

CLARA CAMM

STAGE MANAGER



Clara is an emerging Stage manager and production designer based in Melbourne.

She is currently undertaking a bachelor of stage management at the Australian College of the Arts, specializing in set design and props realization.

Her most recent work includes the role of Stage manager for "The Breath of Kings" dir. Robert Johnson (Theatre Works) and set designer for "Nora: A Doll's House" dir. Emma Valente (COLLARTS)

CAT BAUD

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER



Cat graduated from The Australian College of the Arts with a Diploma of Performing Arts (Stage Management) in 2023. After spending the best part of the last two years overseas, travelling and running the theatre department at a US summer camp, she is back in Melbourne to rejoin the Independent theatre scene as Assistant Stage Manager for Australian Open. Cat's credits include *Broke[n]* (Melbourne Fringe Festival), *Prisoner at The World's End* (La Mama), *Home Economics* (Theatreworks) and ASM at the Green Room Awards.

EDDIE ORTON

CAST



Eddie is a graduate of the National Theatre Drama School. His recent credits include *37* (Melbourne Theatre Company & Queensland Theatre), *Touching The Void* (Melbourne Theatre Company); *Let The Right One In* (Darlinghurst Theatre Company); *Werewolf* (Arts Centre Melbourne); *Heroes Of The Fourth Turning* (Outhouse Theatre); *Jurassica* (Red Stitch Actors' Theatre); *The Last Train To Madeline* (Fever 103) and *The Players* (Bell Shakespeare). He is proudly represented by Ian White Management.

SEBASTIAN LI

CAST



Sebastian Li (he/him) is a Melbourne-based actor of mixed Chinese-Indonesian and Australian heritage. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting from the Victorian College of the Arts, where he was honoured to receive the Grace Marion Wilson Trust Scholarship for Excellence in Acting.

While studying, Sebastian starred as Chen in the SBS mini-series *New Gold Mountain* (Goalpost Pictures). He has performed with Melbourne Shakespeare Company on numerous productions including *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Julius Caesar*, *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It* and *The Whale*.

His additional theatre credits include *Prince Chululongkorn* in *The King and I* (Opera Australia), *Don Quixote* and *Manon* (The Australian Ballet), *Climbers* (Fever103), *How To Be A Person When The World Is Ending* (Edinburgh Fringe), *The Boys in the Band* (James Terry Collective) and *The Beep Test: The Musical* (Neylon & Peele).

JANE MONTGOMERY GRIFFITHS

CAST



Jane Montgomery Griffiths is an actor, playwright and academic. Before moving to Australia, she performed with major theatre companies across the UK. In Australia, she has worked with Bell Shakespeare (*King Lear*; *Titus Andronicus*; *Midsummer Night's Dream*; *Twelfth Night*), *Belvoir* (*Wizard of Oz*), *Malthouse* (*Sappho* in 9 fragments; *Wild Surmise*; *Frankenstein* [with *The Rabble*]; *Antigone*); *MTC* (*Macbeth*; *Story of O* [with *The Rabble*]); *45Downstairs* (*Wit*); *Red Stitch* (*Good People*); *The Human Voice* (*Theatreworks*). TV includes *Miss Fisher Modern Murder Mysteries*; *The Rings of Power*; *Five Bedrooms*; *Casualty*; *The Bill*; *Red Dwarf*.

She's won Best Actress Awards from the *Greenrooms* (*Wit*); *Manchester Evening News* (*Electra*); *White Rose Awards* (*Gaslight*); and a *Helpmann* nomination for Best Supporting Actor (*Macbeth*). Her plays have been nominated for or won the Victorian and NSW Premiers' Awards, *Greenroom* and *Sydney Theatre Awards*.

Jane was formerly Professor of Theatre Practice at Monash University and Professor of Theatre at Collarts.

ALEC GILBERT

CAST



Alec Gilbert is an actor/director/writer/producer who has worked extensively in Australia and London. Recent theatre credits include: Last Sunday in June, (Chapel off Chapel) Oedipus, (MC Showroom) Ron & Isobel, (Motley Bauhaus) An Audience With Don Dunstan (Chapel off Chapel and SA Tour) 2025. Vespertillio, (Meat Market) Car Crash, (Butterfly Club) Cymbeline, (Collarts) 2024 Not Finished with You Yet (Alex Theatre) Essendon Champions, (Chapel off Chapel) 2023 Kiss of the Spiderwoman (Wax Studios) and Measure for Measure (Heidelberg Amphitheatre). Television credits include: All Her Fault (2025 miniseries, Binge), Big Flirt, Tomorrow Tonight, Ex-PM, It's A Date, City Homicide, The Secret Life of Us, Stingers, Blue Heelers, Elephant Princess, Marshall Law, Crash Burn, Neighbours, Fergus In Hell, Boys from the Bush BBC, Calling the Shots, BBC Lovejoy BBC and numerous TVCs. Recent films: Love Rewind (2023), Saudade (2021), Mother (2020), Bad Lesbian (2020) and Melbourne After Dark (2018). Alec trained with Uta Hagen and Sandy Dennis at the HB Studios in New York City. He is a Life Member of the HB Studios, NYC and a proud member of MEAA and full member of British Actors' Equity.

MELISSA KAHRAMAN

CAST



Theatre: Hot Tub (Belvoir 25a), King Lear (Bell Shakespeare); A Fool in Love, The Importance of Being Earnest, Hubris & Humiliation (Sydney Theatre Company); The Almighty Sometimes (Queensland Theatre); Othello (Sport for Jove); Delilah by the Hour (Kleine Feinheiten/Brand X); A Midsummer Night's Dream (Melbourne Shakespeare Company); Suitcases, Baggage & Other Synonyms (Nick of Time). Television: NCIS: SYDNEY, Bad Behaviour, Prosper, Australia on Trial. Film: Three Thousand Years of Longing; Short Film: You Are My Tomorrow, Let Me Love you. As a Writer: Günlük Geçer. Training: National Institute of Dramatic Arts (BFA Acting). Awards: Leslie Walford AM Award - Recipient, Cinefest Oz Film Festival 2024 - Best Actor nominee

TWO GUYS. A HIKE IN THE OUTBACK. A CAMPSITE AND A STRANGE
CREATURE CHASING THEM... WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

CAMPFIRE UNLEASHED



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CAMPFIRE UNLEASHED

BY SPLIT FOCUS

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