

BY THEATRE WORKS

FOUR FRIENDS. ONE HOLIDAY. GLOBAL OUTRAGE.

SAVAGES

BY PATRICIA CORNELIUS | DIRECTED BY KITAN PETKOVSKI

2 - 12 SEPTEMBER | THEATRE WORKS



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📍 theatre works, 14 acland street, st kilda



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.

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.

TEAM THEATRE WORKS

KRYSTALLA PEARCE (she/her) Artistic Director

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

BEK SCHILLING (they/them) Front of House Co-Ordinator

ANNE HENDERSON (she/her) Finance Administrator

SAVAGES

WRITER

Patricia Cornelius

DIRECTOR

Kitan Petkovski

SET & COSTUMES DESIGN

Bianca Pardo

LIGHTING DESIGN

Harrie Hogan

SOUND DESIGNER AND COMPOSER

Jess Keeffe

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Belinda McClory

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR

Freya List

INTIMACY COORDINATOR

Eve Morey

CONSENT-BASED PRACTICE CONSULTANT

Bayley Turner

CAST

AYA

Laila Thaker

Nicci Wilks

Zoe Boesen

STAGE MANAGEMENT

Charlotte Fischer

PRODUCED BY

Theatre Works

Dianne Toulson

PROMO IMAGE

Meagan Harding

PUBLICITY

Eleanor Howlett, Sassy Red PR

CONTENT WARNINGS

- COARSE LANGUAGE
- THEMES OF MISOGYNY
- GENDERED VIOLENCE
- NUDITY



SAVAGES 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.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

KITAN PETKOVSKI

Patricia Cornelius writes with extraordinary precision. Her language is muscular, unsentimental and alive with contradiction, asking us to sit with discomfort rather than rushing towards certainty. *Savages* is, for me, one of her boldest works.

At first glance, these four men are funny, familiar and deeply recognisable. Their camaraderie is warm, their banter effortless. Yet beneath it runs an unmistakable current of menace. Rather than asking us simply to condemn these characters, the play invites us to look more closely at the forces that shape them: the expectations they inherit, the performances they learn, and the fear of vulnerability that so often becomes violence.

Our production places women and non-binary performers at the centre of this story, creating a constant awareness of both the performance of masculinity and the people performing it. This perspective allows us to examine the play through another lens, exploring how these men are made while holding space for complexity, accountability and humanity.

More than a decade after *Savages* premiered, its questions remain painfully urgent. Theatre cannot solve systemic violence, but it can create space for honest conversations, empathy and reflection. My hope is that audiences leave not with easy answers, but with difficult questions that continue long after the lights come up.

Thank you for joining us.

PATRICIA CORNELIUS

PLAYWRIGHT



Patricia Cornelius is a founding member of Melbourne Workers Theatre. Patricia has a fierce commitment to class and her work often examines the lives of the marginalized. She's a playwright, novelist and film writer. Cornelius is the recipient of the Windham-Campbell Literature Prize, the Mona Brand Award and the 2019 Green Room award for Life Achievement. Her prizes for stage work include the 2011 Victorian and NSW Premiers' Literary Awards, the Patrick White Playwright's Award, the Richard Wherrett Prize, the Wal Cherry Award and numerous AWGIES for stage, community theatre, theatre for young people. She was awarded the Australian Writers Foundation Playwriting Award in 2015 as well as the Patrick White Fellowship (2012), and a Fellowship from the Australia Council's Theatre Board. Patricia has won the AWGIE Major Award three times. She has written over 35 plays including: TRUTH, My Sister Jill, Bad Boy, Runt, Anthem, In the Club, Shit, Big Heart, Savages, Do not go gentle..., Slut, Love and The Call. Patricia wrote the adaption of SHIT for film and co-wrote the feature film adaptation Blessed, Patricia's novel, My Sister Jill (Random House) was published in 2002.

BIANCA PARDO

SET & COSTUMES DESIGN



Bianca is a passionate Melbourne/Naarm-based designer and maker. She has worked in set and costume design roles on Shoelace Chaser, West Gate, Mother Play, A Streetcar Named Desire (Melbourne Theatre Company); What's Yours (Red Stitch); Tarzan (James Terry Collective); RED (Little Life Productions); En Masse, Interior (Rawcus); One Day in September (Perryman Theatre Company); Guys and Dolls, Passing Strange (Antipodes Theatre Company); TakeBack! (Multicultural Arts Victoria), Ngarngk: Giver of Life (La Mama/YIRRAMBOI Festival); Fucking A, Mad Forest (Victorian College of the Arts); L'Oréal For Women in Science and Kenworth's Legacy (Moo Motion). She was nominated for two Green Room Awards for her Guys and Dolls design. Throughout 2024, she completed the Besen Family Artist Program at the Malthouse Theatre with placements on The Hate Race and Fuck Christmas. Bianca was delighted to be a part of the inaugural Future Creatives Program at the Melbourne Theatre Company in 2024 and 2025.

KITAN PETKOVSKI

DIRECTOR



Kitan Petkovski (he/him) is a multi-award-winning theatre director. His practice is embedded in cross-form and queer dramaturgies, and often investigates themes of identity, equity, social and restorative justice. Recent directing highlights include Thirty-Six, The Hall, The Inheritance and The Gospel According to Jesus, Queen of Heaven (fortyfivedownstairs), SUGAR (National and International Tour), Things I Know to be True, In The Club and Burgerz (Theatre Works). He is the co-founder and creative director of Bullet Heart Club and served as a panel member on the Theatre Companies Green Room Association 2023-2025. Kitan holds an MFA in directing from the VCA and is a regular guest director and tutor in theatre-making and collaborative practices. www.kitanpetkovski.com

HARRIE HOGAN

LIGHTING DESIGN



Harrie Hogan is a lighting designer working across theatre, circus, musical theatre and experimental performance. She grew up in Sydney before completing a Bachelor's Degree at the Victorian College of the Arts in 2019. Her recent design credits include Do Not Pass Go, Much Ado About Nothing, World Problems (Melbourne Theatre Company) Honour (Red Stitch Actors' Theatre, 2025); Back to Te Maunga (La Mama); Milk + Blood (fortyfivedownstairs, 2024). She is also an ongoing design collaborator with theatre collective Pony Cam, most recently for The Orchard (Malthouse Theatre, 2025). She has been nominated for five Green Room Awards for her work on kerosene, SIRENS, Grace, Flesh Mirror and The Orchard. Her designs have been featured in state festivals and toured overseas.

AYA

PERFORMER - RABBIT



AYA (they|them) is a Japanese-Australian multidisciplinary theatre-maker, actor, physical performer and dancer. Originating from lutruwita (TAS), and with roots in downtown New York and Brooklyn experimental theatre, AYA is a graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, Experimental Theatre Wing, and The Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute. AYA has collaborated with theatre and dance companies locally and internationally – Theatre Mitu (NY), The Dance Cartel (NY), Phantom Limb Company (NY), 5AngryMen (Naarm), La Mama (Naarm), Calamity Practice (Naarm), Lightning Jar Theatre (Naarm), Wit Incorporated (Naarm), Spinning Plates Co. (Naarm). Recent theatre credits include: Year of the Rooster (fortyfivedownstairs, dir. Alex Aldrich); Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again. (Bluestone Church Arts Space, dir. Emily O'Brien Brown); The Comeuppance (Red Stitch, dir. Gary Abrahams); POTUS: Or, Behind Every Great Dumbass Are Seven Women Trying to Keep Him Alive (fortyfivedownstairs, dir. Marni Mount). AYA is a Green Room Awards winner for Outstanding Ensemble with the cast of The Comeuppance at Red Stitch.

NICCI WILKS

PERFORMER - RUNT



NICCI is a freelance artist creating works of various art forms, touring the world for over 40 years, performing in 14 languages from the Pitjantjatjara lands to 42nd St. NYC. She has made work with Circus Oz, Malthouse Theatre, Melbourne Theatre Company, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Ilbjerri Theatre Company, CIRCA, KAGE, Na Djinang Circus, Hothouse Theatre, Legs on the Wall, We 3, Company 2, Dee & Cornelius and the Flying Fruit Fly Circus and artistes from across the globe. She co-created and performed the award-winning shows The Long Pigs, ANIMAL, SHIT which she performed at the Venice Biennale in 2019. Other works include Caravan, Rodeo Clown, RUNT, BAD BOY and The Teensy Top (she wears the venue!). She directed the award-winning circus show Party Ghost and was Assistant Director of the award-winning site-specific work Taxi. A recipient of 5 Green Room Awards, she was recently nominated for Most Outstanding Performer in Independent Theatre 2025 for BAD BOY. Film credits include SHIT and the award-winning short film Tarneit. In 2025 her directorial debut show with Circus Oz, Non-Stop was presented for a five week season on 42nd St. New York. In 2026 Nicci will direct another main stage production for Circus Oz: Here, There & Everywhere, develop a collaboration with Circus Oz and Flying Fruit Fly Circus, create the third play in the trilogy with Dee, Cornelius & Wilks. She is also conspiring with other artists to make live theatre of all forms. Nicci is delighted to be returning to Theatre Works after sell out seasons of both ANIMAL and The Long Pigs.

LAILA THAKER

PERFORMER - CRAZE



LAILA THAKER (Meriam/Wagedagam) has been an industry professional for over a decade. She studied acting at JCU in Cairns and Lesly Kahn in Los Angeles. Her recent Theatre credits include Super (Red Stitch Theatre), The Chosen Vessel (Street Theatre), The Return (Malthouse Theatre) and Coconut Woman (YIRRAMBOI). Film credits include Careless (Stan), RFDS (Seven), Five Bedrooms (Paramount), Wentworth (Foxtel), and Bad Mothers (Nine Network). Laila's role in Prayers to Broken Stone (Boutique Theatre) won her Best Emerging Indigenous Artist (Melbourne Fringe Awards 2017), and Best Ensemble in Malthouse Theatre's The Return (Green Room Awards 2023).

ZOE BOESEN

PERFORMER - GEORGE



Zoe Boesen is a performer and theatre maker who graduated from VCA Acting in 2010. Zoe's recent stage credits include Shoelace Chaser (Melbourne Theatre Company); Is Anyone Even Watching (Arts House); Vampire Lesbians of Sodom (Little Ones Theatre/45 Downstairs); Abigail's Party (Melbourne Theatre Company); Dance Nation (Red Stitch Actors Theatre); Suddenly Last Summer (Red Stitch Actors Theatre); The Moors (Red Stitch Actors Theatre), My Romantic History (Red Stich Actors Theatre). Other highlights include; Dangerous Liaisons (Melbourne Theatre Company - Neon/Little Ones), Salome (Malthouse – Helium/Little Ones), Psycho Beach Party (Little Ones/Theatre Works/Tamarama Rock Surfers/Brisbane Festival) and After All This, (Elbow Room). Screen credits include Neighbours (Fremantle Media); Sisters (Network 10); Time of Our Lives (ABC TV); Offspring (Network 10). Zoe has been nominated for several Green Room Awards and received the Melbourne Fringe Festival Award for Best Performance and the Green Room Award for Best Ensemble for After All This, (Elbow Room).

JESS KEEFFE

SOUND DESIGNER AND COMPOSER



Jess Keefe is a sound designer, composer and musician working across a multitude of genres. Recent work includes playing in the house band for the Corner Hotel, sound, cello and visuals for a Celebration of Kate Bush, hidden sound in Recollections (potkettleblack productions), musical score and disembodied voice for June (fabricated rooms and theatre works) immersive fire soundscapes in The View from Up Here (Voice in my Hands). In 2016 she was selected for the Melbourne Theatre Company's inaugural Women in Theatre Program.

FREYA LIST

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR



Freya List is a versatile choreographer, movement director and educator working across theatre, film, TV, company works and music. Freya was recently awarded the Green Room Award for Outstanding Choreography for The Grinning Man, and is a former winner for her work on Cruel Intentions: The 90's Musical. Other recent stage credits include: Candide (Victorian Opera), Bright Star (Pursued by Bear- Green Room Nomination), National tours of Tick, Tick, Boom (StoreyBoard Entertainment) and Chess in Concert (StoreyBoard Entertainment). Freya is passionate about how movement can enhance text, music and the story being told.

BELINDA MCCCLORY

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR



Belinda is a VCA graduate and screenwriter, and has worked as a professional actor across all mediums. Her theatre collaborations include: STC, Belvoir Street, Griffin Theatre Company, MTC, Malthouse, Playbox, La Mama, Melbourne Workers Theatre, Red Stitch Actors Theatre, Black Swan Theatre Company, STCSA, VIMH and Bullet Heart Club. She has won both a Green Room and a Helpmann award for her theatre work. Her film work includes The Matrix, Life, Redball, Mullet and Sweet Milk Lake. She co-wrote and performed in the features darklovestory, Turkey Shoot, Acolytes and X. This is her third collaboration with Kitan Petkovski and her second foray into the world of assistant directing.

CHARLOTTE FISCHER

STAGE MANAGEMENT



Char Fischer (she/her) is a Naarm/Melbourne based stage manager and holds a Bachelor of Performing Arts (Stage Management). Char thrives in fast-paced theatre environments and deeply values building community through her work. Her credits include Stage Manager for The Wolves (dir. Belle Hansen), Mature Skin by Darebin Arts Speakeasy (dir. Justin Nott), The Placeholder (dir. Kitan Petkovski) at Midsumma Festival, Bullet Heart Club's SUGAR – Edinburgh Gala at Arts Centre Melbourne, High School Musical Jr at The Methodist Ladies' College and Lunatix Theatre Company's Blackrock. She has also worked with companies such as GWP Entertainment and Melbourne Theatre Company.

DIANNE TOULSON

PRODUCER



Dianne Toulson is an experienced creative producer with more than 25 years' experience producing and supporting independent theatre across Australia. She has worked with artists and companies at every stage of development, from new works and emerging practitioners to established productions, helping bring ambitious creative ideas to life. Throughout her career, Dianne has produced and presented hundreds of theatre productions, festivals, tours and special events, with a passion for championing bold new voices and diverse storytelling. Her work spans independent theatre, disability-led practice, community arts and regional touring, and she is recognised for building strong creative partnerships and delivering high-quality productions. Dianne is passionate about creating opportunities for artists to thrive and for audiences to experience engaging, thought-provoking theatre. She believes in the power of live performance to connect communities, spark conversation and celebrate the richness of contemporary Australian storytelling.



HOLY FOOL



THEATRE WORKS PRESENTS

HOLY FOOL

BY FABIO MOTTA | DIRECTED BY GIOVANNI FUSETTI

9 - 19 SEPTEMBER | EXPLOSIVES FACTORY

LORD OF THE FLIES



THEATRE WORKS PRESENTS

WILLIAM GOLDING'S

LORD OF THE FLIES

ADAPTED BY NIGEL WILLIAMS | DIRECTED BY STEVEN MITCHELL WRIGHT

18 SEPTEMBER - 2 OCTOBER | THEATRE WORKS

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ST KILDA

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