

# WE ARE BELL SHAKESPEARE



We ensure Shakespeare's work lives and breathes in theatres, schools and communities throughout Australia, where his words can be truly appreciated.

We value the beauty of Shakespeare's ideas, language and imagery. His work helps us find modern perspectives on timeless truths.

We believe Shakespeare and other great works are not stuck in the past. They are the lens through which we can explore and question the present and imagine the future.

These plays are not static. They're constantly helping us make sense of who we are, where we've been, and where we're going. And we're not static either. We've been travelling the country for more than 30 years, bringing classic theatre to Australia, looking for new ways to inspire, imagine and ignite.

Shakespeare and the other classic plays we present challenge our beliefs and urge us to see ourselves in a new light. Their ability to discover the things that make us human inspires us to make work that challenges preconceptions and encourages new interpretations and contemporary parallels – work that speaks to every age.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Bell Shakespeare acknowledges the First Peoples of the lands and waters on which we rehearse, perform and work across Australia.

We recognise their continuous connection to Country, community and culture and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We honour the sharing of traditional stories; stories that have been passed down through generations.

# WELCOME



We are delighted to welcome you to the world premiere of *The Lovers*, a brand-new Australian musical written by the fiercely talented Laura Murphy and directed for Bell Shakespeare by Shaun Rennie.

Shakespeare's plays and poems have inspired artists of all disciplines across centuries. His works are malleable enough to be reinvented and reimagined. They have been the inspiration for opera, film, theatre, visual arts, dance, new writing and more. But it is rare that Shakespeare in combination with Australian musical theatre hits the mark. However on hearing Laura's first few songs, we felt that something truly unique was in the making. And that's perhaps what is particularly special about The Lovers: Laura's obvious and deep affection for the source material, A Midsummer Night's Dream, in combination with her astonishing musical prowess. It was exhilarating from the beginning, and we couldn't pass up the opportunity to get in behind this new work.

The fractured nature of the past several years afforded us the space to invest both time and resources to creatively develop The Lovers toward this premiere season at Sydney Opera House, the final production of our 2022 season. We have been delighted along the way to have welcomed an incredible array of artists as we nurtured this work through creative development in support of Laura and Shaun's vision. This process has undoubtedly been one of the silver linings in an otherwise exceptionally difficult period for the performing arts sector. We're sure that this musical will be enjoyed widely and that audiences, and perhaps especially new audiences, will appreciate the brilliance of artistic endeavour; both past and current.

There are many people to acknowledge and thank who support Bell Shakespeare's work across Australia in theatres, schools and communities. We are grateful to our funding partners the NSW and Commonwealth Governments for their continued investment in the company, and to our longstanding donors, supporters, corporate partners, and trusts and foundations who together ensure we can deliver on our mission to make Shakespeare's works in performance accessible to Australians nationally.

We also extend our sincere gratitude to Katie Page (CEO, Harvey Norman) for her very generous support as *The Lovers* Production Patron, and to *The Lovers* Supporting Syndicate who have helped us bring this production to life.

And we thank you, our audience, and hope you enjoy the performance!

Peter Evans
Artistic Director

Gill Perkins
Executive Director



Image © Brett Boardman

# FROM THE DIRECTOR



In July of 2020, amongst the craziness of lockdowns and zoom meetings, Laura invited me to a read of the first act of her new musical *The Lovers*. Within 90 Seconds, I knew that this was something special, and that I wanted to be a part of it.

I was instantly taken by its humour, its heart and most notably, her incredible score. Laura's songs are instantly accessible whilst at the same time feeling exciting and fresh. More than that, the way in which she had adapted the source material was so smart and instinctual, it felt inevitable, like it was always meant to be a musical and Shakespeare had just never found the right composer!

What truly excites me about Laura's adaptation of Shakespeare's most well known work, is that it takes everything he says about young love, honours it and celebrates it, gives it a contemporary twist and then asks us to question everything we have been told about it. It asks us to consider what healthy love looks like in 2022. What stories should we be telling young lovers today to help prepare them for their own journeys into the forest?

The juxtaposition of Shakespeare's words and Laura's pop music was the exciting entry point into the world of *The Lovers*. From there we spoke about how love can quickly morph from the best feeling in the world to something saccharine and, in its excess, more sinister and toxic. How it can bring out the worst in each of us, and the way we change ourselves in the pursuit of it.

Working on a brand new commercial Australian musical is all too rare an opportunity, and I want to thank Peter, Gill and everyone at Bell for taking on this huge task and trusting me with it. It is not lost on me how great a risk a new musical is for any company, however from the very outset the faith they have shown in the project has allowed us to dream big and to gather the most incredible team of creatives, band and cast to realise the show. I want to thank each of those who have worked tirelessly on this world premiere season and all who participated in workshops over the past two years, whose contribution was invaluable.

Lastly, I want to thank Laura, for trusting me with her baby. I am constantly in awe of her talent, brain and heart. After keeping the secret of *The Lovers* to ourselves for the past two and a bit years, I am so excited to finally unleash it into the world. Now... let's see where this fairy flies.

"Maybe the happy ending we fixate on needs a little... adaptation".

Shaun Rennie Director



# FROM THE WRITER



### "I have had a most rare vision"

I was still in my school uniform when my journey with *The Lovers* began. Fresh from playing the character of 'Flute' in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to rave reviews (from Mum and Dad on the drive home), I began to relish in decoding Shakespeare's language in the same way I would enjoy interpreting the lyric of a great song. And so the dream began.

These characters have been living inside Shakespeare's timeless words for more than four centuries. In an era of Tinder and eggplant emojis, what might they say to a modern audience? Music and lyrics allow me to explore their inner world, to communicate what mere words cannot express and give these beloved characters a new language to articulate parts of their story that they've never shared before.

Pop music was the ideal thread to connect a contemporary audience with these classic characters. Within one catchy chorus a pop song can speak directly to the complexities of being a person. It is a universal language that can have a room full of people with absolutely nothing in common vibrating to the pulse of the same infectious beat, letting the meaning of the lyric wash over you, around you and within you.

In pairing the traditional Shakespearean text with a modern pop voice it became evident just how much language, music and society at large has changed since Shakespeare's time. And yet the same cannot be said about the way we portray romantic love. From Bach to Beyoncé. From Michelangelo to Married at First Sight. In art, in words, in songs and in stories, how have these narratives shaped our expectations of love?

After composing the final notes of the score in 2020, I began to dream of the future for *The Lovers* and the possibility of bringing this work from the page to the stage. I am delighted that its very first production has found its home with Bell Shakespeare, a company with an incredible legacy of making Shakespeare accessible for everyone. To all at Bell Shakespeare, Shaun Rennie, Andrew Worboys, Yvette Lee and the magical team celebrated on the pages of this program, it has been a great honour to place this new Australian musical, and a piece of my heart, in your trusted hands.

As a teenager, I wanted to create a musical that demystified Shakespeare for young people, so that they could perhaps experience the empowerment I felt at 15: drawing on a fake moustache in the bathrooms of the school hall, reciting my lines ("I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all!"), feeling like I'm one step closer to decoding this Shakespeare fella. But today's youth culture may also require a bit of decoding. I hope that The Lovers in turn demystifies young people for older generations and reminds us of what it felt like to experience that first love. That be-all-and-end-all. do-or-die, listen-to-Billie Eilish-on-repeat-and-cry type of love. Who knows? Maybe recognising this shared experience will help us better guide young people around the corners of romantic love or offer us solace when faced with unfamiliar corners of our own. One can only dream...

Laura Murphy

Creator of The Lovers

Lawa Muphy

# TheOLovers

### CAST

Helena Natalie Abbott
Demetrius Blake Appelqvist
Oberon Stellar Perry
Puck Monique Sallé
Hermia Brittanie Shipway
Lysander Jerrod Smith

### UNDERSTUDIES

Lysander/Demetrius Tomáš Kantor Helena/Oberon Sarah Murr Puck/Hermia Laura Murphy

### **CREATIVES**

Writer and Composer Laura Murphy
Director Shaun Rennie
Orchestrations, Arrangements
and Music Supervision Laura Murphy
Music Director Andrew Worboys
Set and Costume Designer Marg Horwell
Lighting Designer Trent Suidgeest
Sound Designer David Bergman
Choreographer Yvette Lee
Fight & Intimacy Director Nigel Poulton
Assistant Director Miranda Middleton
Music Programmer Michael Tan







### BAND

Bass Konrad Ball
Associate Music Director/Drums Cypress Bartlett
Guitar Rex Goh
Bass Amanda Jenkins
Keys Andrew Worboys

### CREW

Stage Manager Sophie Alexandra Assistant Stage Manager Lillian Lee Second Assistant Stage Manager Christopher Starnawski Head Mechanist Bob Laverick **Head Mechanist David Tongs** Head Electrician Sam Wylie Lighting Programmer Lachlan Hogan Head of Audio Todd Hawken Front of House Mixer David Grigg Monitor Mixer Reinert Wasserman Head of Costume Sara Kolijn Costume Assistant/Dresser Sally-Anne Mason Costume Cutter Fiona Warmbath Costume Cutter Valerie Adele Set built by Thomas Creative Lighting supplied by Chameleon Sound provided by Audio Visual Events Sound provided by Coda Audio Services

### REHEARSAL PHOTOGRAPHY

**Daniel Boud** 

### SPECIAL THANKS

Gustavo Balboa Alloquois Callaway Gianna Cheung Tim Corne Joe Cox Katie Hankin Emma White Anthem Chris Doyle & Co Dewi Groves Special T Low Kii



# YOU KNOW YOU LOVE SOME BANGERS!



### THE LOVERS ACT 1 SONGS

1 A Story About Love 2 Love and Pop and Shakespeare

2a Happy Be Theseus
3 Perfect Little Princess

3a Overfull of Self Affairs

4 Start Over

4a Here Comes Helena5 Chasing My Tail6 Down To Love

7 The Magic Touch7a I Am Invisible

8 Helena Follows Her Nose 9 What I Cannot Have 9a Chasing My Tail Reprise

Hast Thou The Flower There?

10a Euphoria

10

10b The Magic Touch Reprise

11 Wrap Around You12 Puck's Spell

13 What I Cannot Chase

14 Lysander Is In Love
14a Keen Mockery
15 Hiss Hiss Bitch
15a Cruel Prey

16 To Die For

Oberon & The Lovers

All & Fairy Band

All All All

Lysander & Hermia

Lysander, Hermia & Helena

Helena Oberon

Puck, Oberon & Fairy Band

Oberon

Helena & Demetrius

Demetrius, Helena & Fairy Band

Helena & Oberon Oberon & Puck

Oberon

Oberon & Puck

Hermia, Lysander & Fairy Band

Puck

Helena & Demetrius

Lysander

Helena & Lysander Snake & Snake Minions

Hermia, Snake & Snake Minions

The Lovers

### THE LOVERS ACT 2 SONGS

17 Down To Love Reprise Oberon, Puck & Fairy Band

18 Gimme Gimme The Lovers

9 Thou Hast Mistaken Quite Oberon, Puck, Demetrius & Hermia

 19a
 Euphoria Reprise
 Oberon

 20
 What I Cannot Have Reprise
 Demetrius

21 **Oberon's Spell** Oberon

22 Gimme Gimme Reprise Oberon, Puck, Lysander & Helena
23 Demetrius Is In Love Demetrius

24 Gimme Gimme A Boy Fight The Lovers

24a Injurious Hermia! The Lovers and Snake

 25
 Diss Diss Bitch
 All

 26
 How To Love
 All

 27
 Start Over Reprise
 The Lovers

 28
 Down To Love Finale
 All & Fairy Band

# IT'S JUST A LITTLE TOUCH OF MAGIC\_







# CREATIVE TEAM

# LAURA MURPHY WRITER, COMPOSER, ORCHESTRATIONS, ARRANGEMENTS & MUSIC SUPERVISION



Laura Murphy is a writer, composer and award-winning performer whose passion for music and storytelling has led her to the forefront of creating new Australian musicals. This is Laura's

first Bell Shakespeare production. Laura's theatre writing credits include music and lyrics for critically acclaimed Australian musical *The Dismissal* and immersive dance musical *Qween Lear*. Laura's latest original work, *Zombie! The Musical* will be presented as part of Hayes Theatre Co's 2023 season. Laura's television writing credits include *William and Sparkles' Magical Tales, Magical Tales: Surprises, Imagination Train* and *I Am Me*. Laura's performing credits include the Australian Tour and World Premiere production of *Muriel's Wedding The Musical; Cry Baby* with LPD Productions; the Australiasian tour of *Grease* and Hayes Theatre Co's *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* for which Laura received a Sydney Theatre Award.

# SHAUN RENNIE DIRECTOR



Shaun Rennie (he/him) is an award-winning National Institute of Dramatic Art and Royal Academy of Dramatic Art graduate director who has worked across Australian premieres of new works,

innovative revivals of treasured musicals and opera. This is Shaun's first production with Bell Shakespeare. Shaun's musical theatre directing credits include Rent at Sydney Opera House; The View Upstairs, Rent, You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown, Carmen, Live or Dead and Only Heaven Knows for Hayes Theatre Co; Wicked for Free-Rain Theatre Company; Sweet Charity and Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson for the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts; #Val at His Majesty's Theatre,

Perth. For Opera Australia Shaun recently revived La Boheme; was the assistant director for Il Trovatore and Aida, and earlier this year was the assistant director for The Phantom of the Opera on Sydney Harbour, Other theatre credits include the Australian premieres of Jess and Joe Forever for Belvoir St Theatre and Baby Doll for Ensemble Theatre; I Am My Own Wife for Redline Productions; The Rise and Fall of Little Voice for Darlinghurst Theatre Company; A Christmas Carol for The Tabard Theatre, London. Shaun was the recipient of the 2017 Sandra Bates Directors Award, the Broadway World Award for Best Direction of a Musical and has received three Sydney Theatre Award nominations for Best Director. In 2023, Shaun will direct Suddenly Last Summer for Ensemble Theatre as well as continuing to work with Opera Australia.

### ANDREW WORBOYS MUSIC DIRECTOR KEYS



Andrew Worboys is a musical director, composer, video designer, vocalist and pianist who grew up in Orange in regional New South Wales, surrounded by pub rock and musical theatre. This is

Andrew's first Bell Shakespeare production. Andrew's musical direction credits include Merrily We Roll Along, Sweet Charity, Truth, Beauty and a Picture of You, Little Shop of Horrors, High Fidelity, Rent, Assassins, American Psycho and Young Frankenstein for Hayes Theatre Co; The Dismissal for Squabbalogic; A Chorus Line for Darlinghurst Theatre Company; and was performer and musical director for Sydney Theatre Company's 2013, 2018 and 2019 The Wharf Revue. Andrew has toured with Christine Anu, Jenny Morris, Melanie Safka, Florence and the Machine, Jimmy Sommerville and John Cameron Mitchell. He co-produced the original Australian cast recording of Hedwig and the Angry Inch, and Jimmy Somerville's album Suddenly Last Summer. Andrew was nominated for a Helpmann Award for his work on Sweet Charity, in 2015 he received from The Glug



Awards, the Hayes Gordon Memorial Award for Important Contribution to Theatre and in 2019 received a Sydney Theatre Award for Best Musical Direction for his work on *American Psycho*.

### MARG HORWELL SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER



Marg Horwell is a Set and Costume Designer for a wide range of live performance including opera, theatre, dance and immersive performance spaces. This is Marg's first production with **Bell** 

Shakespeare. Marg's design credits include Salome for the English National Opera; Avalanche; A Love Story for The Barbican; The Marriage of Figaro and The Sopranos for Opera Queensland; The Picture of Dorian Gray, The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, Lord of the Flies, The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui for Sydney Theatre Company; Because the Night, Blasted, Melancholia, Bliss, Caravan, The Testament of Mary, The Real and Imagined History of The Elephant Man, Revolt She Said Revolt Again, Edward II, I Am A Miracle, The Good Person of Szechuan and The Histrionic for Malthouse Theatre: The Truth, Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes, The House of Bernarda Alba, Lilith The Jungle Girl, Birdland, I Call My Brothers, Peddling, Cock, Constellations and Marlin for Melbourne Theatre Company; Happy End and Lorelei for Victorian Opera; Leviathan for Circa; Nora and La Traviata for Belvoir St Theatre; and Common Ground for Chunky Move. Marg has won eight Greenroom Awards and three Sydney Theatre Awards including Best Stage Design for The Picture of Dorian Gray for Sydney Theatre Company.

### TRENT SUIDGEEST LIGHTING DESIGNER



Trent Suidgeest (he/him) is a lighting designer working across all genres and scales of live performance; theatre, opera, musicals, events and public art installations. He is a graduate of the Western

Australian Academy of Performing Arts in production and design. This is Trent's first production with Bell Shakespeare. Trent's musical theatre credits include the world premiere and national tour of Muriel's Wedding The Musical for Sydney Theatre Company and Global Creatures; Rent, Dubbo Championship Wrestling, Young Frankenstein, Calamity Jane, The View UpStairs, Only Heaven Knows and Gypsy for Hayes Theatre Co; Jesus Christ Superstar, Dusty and The Boy from Oz for The Production Company and Rent at the Sydney Opera House. Other theatre credits include The Tenant of Wildfell Hall, Appropriate, Hay Fever, Accidental Death of an Anarchist for Sydney Theatre Company; Kill Climate Deniers, First Love Is The Revolution, and Prima Facie for Griffin Theatre Company; and for Sydney Festival, Betty Blokk-Buster Reimagined for Red Line Productions, I Am Eora for Performing Lines and 44 Sex Acts in One Week for Club House Productions: Fourteen for Shake & Stir/Brisbane Festival and Let The Right One In for Darlinghurst Theatre Company. Trent's opera credits include The Eighth Wonder, Carmen and The Rabbits for Opera Australia and Médée for Pinchgut Opera.



# CREATIVE TEAM

### DAVID BERGMAN SOUND DESIGNER



David Bergman (he/him) is an award-winning composer, video and sound designer for theatre, dance, opera, installation and film. David is a National Institute of Dramatic Art graduate and now teaches

at the National Institute of Drama. This is David's first Bell Shakespeare production. David's recent theatre credits include The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, The Picture of Dorian Gray, Julius Caesar, Muriel's Wedding The Musical, The Hanging, The Effect, The Long Way Home, Playing Beattie Bow, The Wharf Revue for Sydney Theatre Company; Green Park, Superheroes, First Love is the Revolution for Griffin Theatre Company; At What Cost? and Packer and Sons for Belvoir St Theatre; Spirit and Knowledge Ground for Bangarra Dance Theatre; Maggie Stone for Darlinghurst Theatre Company; Merrily We Roll Along, Dubbo Championship Wrestling, The Rise and Disguise of Elizabeth R. and Catch Me If You Can for Hayes Theatre Co. David has extensive theatre credits in sound, video and composition with Monkey Baa Theatre Company. Sydney Chamber Opera, Musica Viva, Seymour Centre, ATYP and NIDA. David has won two Sydney Theatre Awards; one for Best Stage Design of a Mainstage Production and for Best Sound Design of a Mainstage Production.

### YVETTE LEE CHOREOGRAPHER



Yvette Lee (she/her) is a choreographer, creative director, and creative producer whose work across television, theatre and live touring events has led to a large body of work in Australia and internationally.

This is Yvette's first **Bell Shakespeare** production. Yvette's **theatre** credits include *American Psycho*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Caroline*, *or Change* for Hayes Theatre Co; *The History Boys* for Melbourne

Theatre Company; Candide for the New Zealand Opera; Resident Director & Choreographer for the Australian tour of Rock of Ages; Little Match Girl for Malthouse Theatre; In The Heights for Stage Art; the world premiere of All Out Of Love. Yvette's television credits include The Masked Singer, Dancing With The Stars, So You Think You Can Dance, X Factor, Cosentino – The Grand Illusionist, The Aria Awards, the Logie Awards, and The Taiwanese Wiggles for the Disney Channel. Yvette's choreography and creative design credits include work for recording artists including Jessica Mauboy, Tim Minchin, Tones & I, Guy Sebastian, Baker Boy, Dami Im, Anthony Callea, Vera Blue, Samantha Jade, Ricki Lee, Rob Mills and Casey Donovan. Yvette has worked extensively on a number of live and stadium events and tours. Yvette is the Artistic Director of the Victorian Dance Festival.

## NIGEL POULTON FIGHT & INTIMACY DIRECTOR



Nigel Poulton (he/him) is an award-winning movement and fight director, intimacy director/coordinator, SAG-AFTRA stunt performer and actor. For Bell Shakespeare Nigel's credits

include Much Ado About Nothing, The Miser, Antony and Cleopatra, Richard 3, Othello, four productions of Hamlet, three productions of Romeo And Juliet, four productions of The Dream/A Midsummer Night's Dream, Macbeth, Julius Caesar, King Lear, The Duchess of Malfi, The Servant of Two Masters, two productions of As You Like It, Twelfth Night, and Wars of the Roses. In opera, theatre and dance, Nigel's credits include works with Finnish National Ballet, Australian Ballet, New York City Ballet, Washington Opera, the Metropolitan Opera, Opera Australia, Circus Oz, Melbourne Theatre Company, Sydney Theatre Company, Queensland Theatre, Belvoir St Theatre, La Boite Theatre, Playbox Theatre and Kooemba Jdarra. His film credits include Poker Face, Thor: Love & Thunder, Escape from Spiderhead, Occupation: Rainfall, Pirates of the Caribbean V, The



Water Diviner, Winter's Tale and The Bourne Legacy.

Television credits include Deadlock, Nautilus,
Gallipoli, The Good Wife, Person of Interest,
Boardwalk Empire, The Sopranos, 30 Rock and Law &
Order: Criminal Intent. Nigel is a practitioner
of Vsevolod Meyerhold's Theatrical Biomechanics
system, a Fight Master with the Society of American
Fight Directors (1 of only 2 non-US to be awarded
this title), past president of the Society of Australian
Fight Directors Inc, an Honorary Fight Director with
Fight Directors Canada, and a certified Intimacy
Director and Coordinator with Intimacy Directors and
Coordinators (IDC). Nigel has been awarded a Green
Room Award for outstanding contribution to the stage.

### MIRANDA MIDDLETON ASSISTANT DIRECTOR



Miranda Middleton (she/her) is a director, writer, and choreographer with a Master of Fine Arts in Directing from the National Institute of Dramatic Arts. She is particularly interested in the

intersection of text, music, and movement on stage, and aims to create theatrical events which spark joy and connection. This is Miranda's first production with Bell Shakespeare. Miranda's most recent directing credits include Senser for Theatre Works, Not Today for Theatre Works and Seymour Centre; PASH for Melbourne International Comedy Festival; Sowing Seeds for Gasworks Arts Park; and assistant directing Come Rain or Come Shine for Melbourne Theatre Company. Miranda has directed and choreographed the Australian premiere production of Voldemort and the Teenage Hogwarts Musical Parody for Salty Theatre and Ned: A New Australian Musical at the New Theatre, Miranda was the dramaturg on A Letter For Molly for Ensemble Theatre. In 2022, Miranda is the Resident Writer at Theatre Works, and a member of their She Writes Collective. She has completed a Directing Internship with Michael Cassel Group on their production of Harry Potter and the Cursed Child. As a writer. Miranda has three new works in development: Paper Stars, Silver Tongue, and Pear-Shaped.

### MICHAEL TAN MUSIC PROGRAMMER



Michael Tan is an ARIA award-winning and Platinum multi-instrumentalist, producer and musical director who composes, creates and performs numerous styles of music for a diverse

range of platforms. This is Michael's first Bell Shakespeare production. Michael's composing credits include the soundtrack to the Opening Ceremony of the XXI Commonwealth Games, including an orchestral piece performed by Queensland Symphony Orchestra, composed for the arrival of the Queen Elizabeth II's Baton received by the then-Prince, King Charles III. Michael has composed music for Dreamworks, Nickelodeon, Stan, Netflix and for the World Expo in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Michael has performed and toured extensively with well-known Australian artists including Dami Im, Shannon Noll, and Samantha Jade, as well as the Queensland and Sydney Symphony Orchestras. Several of his productions have achieved ARIA Gold and Platinum status. Michael's producing credits include the coproduction of the soundtrack to the feature film I Am Woman, which was subsequently awarded Best Original Soundtrack at the 2020 ARIA awards.



# CASI

### NATALIE ABBOTT HELENA



Natalie Abbott (she/her) is an actor, singer and performer hailing from Yuin country, South Coast NSW. This is her first production with Bell Shakespeare and she hopes it is the first of many! Natalie's

love of performing was solidified after being one of three recipients to win Bell Shakespeare's regional performer's scholarship in 2013. Nat then went on to study at the Australian Institute of Music, where she obtained her Bachelor of Music majoring in Musical Theatre. In 2019, Natalie's professional theatre debut was leading the Australian national touring production of Muriel's Wedding The Musical as the titular role of Muriel Heslop, for which she was nominated for a Helpmann Award, a Green Room Award and a Sydney Theatre Award. In 2020, Natalie played the leading role of Diana West in her television debut in the ABC TV series Aftertaste. which has since filmed a second season. In 2021 she appeared as Kylie in the Netflix film A Perfect Pairing and later performed in As You Like It for Melbourne Theatre Company playing the role of Phoebe, directed by Simon Phillips.



## BLAKE APPLEQVIST DEMETRIUS



Blake Appelqvist (they/them) is a Māori (Ngāti Porou) and Swedish multidisciplinary artist who graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre. This is their

first Bell Shakespeare production. Blake's musical theatre credits include Fangirls at Sydney Opera House; the Australian tour of Frozen for Disney Theatricals; Kiss of the Spiderwoman for Melbourne Theatre Company; Bonnie and Clyde, American Psycho, Spamalot and Brigadoon for Hayes Theatre Co; The Dismissal for Squabbalogic; and Priscilla, Queen of the Desert and Kinky Boots for the Michael Cassel Group. Blake's recording credits include "Harry" in the Aria-nominated Fangirls World Premiere Cast Recording.

# STELLAR PERRY OBERON



Stellar Perry (she/her) is a musician and singer who has cowritten, coproduced and top-lined with DJs and Producers worldwide for almost two decades with several songs reaching the top

of the Dance charts in Australia and the US. This is Stellar's musical theatre debut and first **Bell Shakespeare** production. Stellar's musicianship began at an early age, performing in cover bands from the age of 17, travelling to the Middle East several times to perform as a resident singer in some of the world's most prestigious 5-star hotels. Appearing on **television** from 2008 to 2020, Stellar appeared in the 2020 season of *The Voice* and reached the Grand Final.



### MONIQUE SALLÉ PUCK



Monique Sallé (she/her) is a musical theatre performer. This is Monique's first Bell Shakespeare production. Monique has appeared in musical theatre productions of The Deb as Janette for

Australian Theatre for Young People; RENT (25th anniversary tour) as Maureen for LPD/Sugary Rum Productions; A Chorus Line for TML Productions; Mamma Mia! for Louise Withers; Ghost for Ambassador Theatre Group; Hair (50th anniversary tour) for Peace Productions; and Shrek for Gordon Frost Organisation. Monique has been seen in numerous independent musical theatre productions for Squabbalogic Independent Music Theatre and at Sydney's Hayes Theatre Co including Catch Me If You Can, The Drowsy Chaperone, The Dismissal, Sondheim on Sondheim, Triassic Parq and Carrie. Monique's television credits include Significant Others for FremantleMedia and Bump for Stan.

BRITTANIE SHIPWAY
HERMIA



Brittanie Shipway (she/her) is an actor, singer, writer and dramaturg with a Diploma in Musical Theatre from the National Institute of Dramatic Art with further studies in New York at The Lee Strasberg

Theatre & Film Institute. This is her first Bell Shakespeare production. Brittanie's musical theatre credits include the Australian tours of Chess and The Sapphires; Big Fish for Hayes Theatre Co; Ordinary Days for Chapel Off Chapel; Kinky Boots for Free-Rain Theatre Company; Fanny Brice in Funny Girl for Theatre & Company and Jesus Christ Superstar for Packemin Productions. Other theatre credits include Othello and Rose Riot for Sport For Jove and A Letter for Molly for Ensemble Theatre. Brittanie's writing credits include her debut play, A Letter for Molly for Ensemble Theatre which was a

semi-finalist in the Rodney Seaborn Playwrights Award in 2021 and Senser for Theatre Works. Brittanie is developing a new Gumbaynggirr musical, Yellow Rock for which she received the prestigious 2022 Dreaming Award from Australia Council of the Arts, one of the 2022 APRA AMCOS Professional Development Awards (Music Theatre) and a Koori grant from Create NSW. Brittanie is the Festival Director for the First Stories program at Theatre Works, a new initiative that aims to engage and inspire First Nations storytellers.

## JERROD SMITH



Jerrod Smith (he/him) is a singer, songwriter and musical theatre performer with a Bachelor's degree in Musical Theatre from the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University. This is his first

Bell Shakespeare production. Jerrod has toured Australia as a professional actor and musician, performing alongside talents such as Patti Lupone and Lucy Durack. Jerrod's musical theatre credits include the lead role of Jason Dean in Heathers for The Mitchell Old Company at the ARA Darling Quarter Theatre; Company, Godspell, West Side Story and Seven Brides for Seven Brothers for the Queensland Conservatorium.



# CAST



### TOMÁŠ KANTOR UNDERSTUDY



Tomáš Kantor (they/he) is an actor, singer, cabaret artist and musical theatre performer who trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art before completing their Bachelor of Fine Arts at the Victorian College of the

Arts. This is their first Bell Shakespeare production. Tomáš' musical theatre credits include the national tour and Sydney Opera House production of Fangirls for Belvoir St Theatre; the national tour of West Side Story for Opera Australia and GWB Entertainment; Brigadoon at Hayes Theatre Co for Neglected Musicals; Next to Normal for James Terry Collective; and On The Town for the Victorian College of the Arts. Tomáš' other theatre credits include Meow Meow's Pandemonium for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra; The Gruffalo for CDP Theatre Producers; 50th Anniversary Woodstock for the Melbourne Cabaret Festival; and Morning Melodies for Arts Centre Melbourne.

SARAH MURR UNDERSTUDY



Sarah Murr (she/her) graduated from the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University with a Bachelor of Musical Theatre. This is Sarah's first Bell Shakespeare production.

Sarah's **theatre** credits include *The Phantom of the Opera* for HANDA Opera on Sydney Harbour; the Australian and International touring casts of *Les Miserables*; *Candide* for Opera Queensland; *Shrek The Musical* for The Gordon Frost Organisation; A *Little Night Music* with the Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra; *Jekyll & Hyde*, *Bonnie & Clyde* and *Lizzie* at Hayes Theatre Co and *Priscilla*, *Queen of the Desert* on the Norweigian Cruise Lines.

### KONRAD BALL BASS



Konrad Ball (he/him) is a multi-instrumentalist, having performed in a wide range of ensembles and settings over the years, from covers to cabaret and classical trance, from Gypsy to jazz and Arabic

dance. This is Konrad's first Bell Shakespeare production. Konrad's musical theatre credits include Rent at Sydney Opera House and Hayes Theatre Co; Sweet Charity, Truth, Beauty and a Picture of You, Little Shop of Horrors, Cabaret, Assassins, High Fidelity, In The Heights, The View Upstairs, Cry Baby, Young Frankenstein, Merrily We Roll Along and Dubbo Championship Wrestling for Hayes Theatre Co; Jersey Boys for Newtheatricals and Hedwig and the Angry Inch. His cabaret credits include In Loving Memory for Mia Morrissey; Forever Diamond for Peter Byrne; Back to Crack for Lisa Adam; The Divine Miss Bette for Cath Alcorn and the Surprisingly Good tour for Rob Mills.

# CYPRESS BARTLETT ASSOCIATE MUSIC DIRECTOR/DRUMS



Cypress Bartlett is a drummer, arranger and teacher from the Central Coast NSW who holds degrees from the Australian Institute of Music and the University of Newcastle.
This is Cypress' first Bell

Shakespeare production. Cypress' theatre performance credits include Come From Away for New Theatricals; Rent at Hayes Theatre Co and Sydney Opera House; Merrily We Roll Along for Hayes Theatre Co; Bernie Deiter's Club Kabarett for Dead Man Label and The Italian Tenors. Cypress has been involved in the arrangements, orchestrations and amanuensis of sheet music in works including Dubbo Championship Wrestling for Hayes Theatre Co, The Gospel According to Marcia with Marcia Hines and The Lovers for Bell Shakespeare. Cypress was the associate musical director at NIDA for Mr Burns:



A post-electric play for the 2021 graduating performance. Cypress is passionate about teaching and passing on his knowledge and love of music.

# REX GOH



Rex Goh is a Singaporeanborn Australian rock guitarist and producer, widely regarded as Australia's best session guitarist. Rex has studied Jazz Studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. This

is his first Bell Shakespeare production. Rex was the lead guitarist of ARIA-award winning and multiplatinum Australian band Air Supply. Rex has also been a member of bands Q.E.D., Eurogliders, Duff and Rhodes, The Inevitables and The Blazing Salads; and has performed with Savage Garden, Brothers of Oz and The Wiggles. Recent musical theatre credits include Fame, Saturday Night Fever, Kinky Boots, Mamma Mia, Jersey Boys, School of Rock and Jagged Little Pill. Television credits include Zero Zero, a musical film by Mike Batt with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra for the ABC, Australian Idol and The Midday Show. Rex has worked extensively with a range of successful musicians including Jenny Morris, Tommy Emmanuel, Jimmy Barnes, Katie Noonan, Wendy Matthews, Tom Jones, Randy Crawford, Paul Kneipp, Guy Sebastian, Daryl Braithwaite and James Reyne. Rex's musical direction credits include the Brothers in Arms live tour. The Beatles Albums live shows and he was the musical and artistic director of the Centenary of Federation Concert, Tasmania.



### AMANDA JENKINS BASS



Amanda Jenkins (she/her) is a session musician, contemporary performer, educator and bassist with a Bachelor's degree from the Australian Institute of Music and Masters in Secondary

Education. This is Amanda's first Bell Shakespeare production. Amanda's musical theatre credits include SIX The Musical for Global Musicals LTD at Sydney Opera House; Come From Away for Newtheatricals at Capitol Theatre Sydney; Catch Me If You Can for LPD Productions at Hayes Theatre Co; Bring It On for David Venn Enterprises and Starstruck The Stage Musical for the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA). Amanda has also performed for the Telstra Business Women's Awards, The Young Women's Jazz Orchestra and the Lancers Army Reserve Band.







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Hamlet, Act 2, Scene 2

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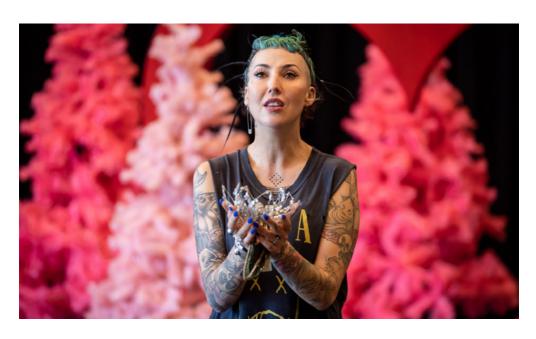
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