



CAROLINE O'CONNOR STARS IN

KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN

BOOK BY
TERRENCE MCNALLY

MUSIC BY
JOHN KANDER

LYRICS BY
FRED EBB

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY
MANUEL PUIG

MTC MELBOURNE
THEATRE
COMPANY

Welcome



What better way to see out Season 2019 than with a seven-time Tony Award-winning musical. Directed by Dean Bryant alongside a fantastic creative team, *Kiss of the Spider Woman* combines the electric energy of a Kander & Ebb musical with a powerful tale of humanity at its limits.

In this production we're treated to a cast of extraordinary talent led by three wonderful performers – Caroline O'Connor, Adam-Jon Fiorentino and Ainsley Melham – each with impressive Broadway credits to their names. There's no doubt Season 2019 will be going out in style.

It's been a big year at MTC. Twelve astonishing productions, including the premiere of our first NEXT STAGE Original, *Golden Shield*, and the smash-hit *Shakespeare in Love*. We celebrated 10 years of Southbank Theatre and once again delivered our industry-leading Education Program and ground-breaking artist development initiatives.

Via the stories played out on our stages we've been around the world and back again. We've also been physically on the road, touring to Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane, Launceston and throughout regional Victoria.

And from speaking with many of you and reading your feedback, you've been moved, challenged, entertained and inspired by our productions. Thank you as always for being an essential part of the theatre experience and joining us with such passion.

There's a huge amount of work that goes on behind the scenes to get our shows on stage and we're extremely lucky to have the team that we do. As we raise a toast to Season 2019 and this final show of the year, we extend our thanks and congratulations to everyone at MTC for what has been achieved, and the ingenuity, work ethic and passion they bring to work with them every day.

Enjoy the show.

Brett Sheehy AO
Artistic Director & CEO

Virginia Lovett
Executive Director & Co-CEO

Melbourne Theatre Company acknowledges the Yalukit Willam Peoples of the Boon Wurrung, the First Peoples of Country on which Southbank Theatre and MTC HQ stand, and we pay our respects to all of Melbourne's First Peoples, to their ancestors and Elders, and to our shared future.

MTC is a department of the University of Melbourne.



MTC is assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, and by the State Government of Victoria through Creative Victoria.



MTC is a member of Live Performance Australia and the Australian Major Performing Arts Group.



MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN

BOOK BY **TERRENCE MCNALLY** MUSIC BY **JOHN KANDER** LYRICS BY **FRED EBB** BASED ON THE NOVEL BY **MANUEL PUIG**

18 NOVEMBER — 28 DECEMBER 2019

Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

— About the Play —

In a dark South American prison, two very different men share a small cell. Valentin is a Marxist revolutionary who refuses to betray his comrades. Molina is a window dresser who distracts himself by escaping to a fantasy world of movies starring the glamorous diva, Aurora. Valentin can't stand Molina's cinematic fantasies and so draws a line on the floor to stop Molina from coming near him. Surely that will keep them apart.

— Cast —

Spider Woman / Aurora Caroline O'Connor
Molina Ainsley Melham
Valentin Adam-Jon Fiorentino
Ensemble Jakob Ambrose
Esteban / Ensemble Blake Appelqvist
Marta / Ensemble Elandrah Eramiha
Molina's Mother / Ensemble Natalie Gamsu
Marcos / Ensemble Joe Gaudion
Gabriel / Ensemble Ryan Gonzalez
Warden / Ensemble Bert LaBonté
Ensemble Lyndon Watts

— Musicians —

Drums Darryn Farrugia
Violin Susannah Ng
Bass Patrick Schmidli
Cello Paul Zabrowarny

— Creative Team —

Director Dean Bryant
Musical Director & Orchestrator Jack Earle
Choreographer Andrew Hallsworth
Set & Costume Designer Alicia Clements
Lighting Designer Matt Scott
Sound Designer Nick Walker
Projection Designer Jamie Clennett
Voice & Dialect Coach Leith McPherson
Assistant Director & Assistant Choreographer
Luca Dinardo
Intimacy Coordinator Michala Banas
Movement Consultant Lyndall Grant
Stage Manager Julia Smith
Deputy Stage Manager Whitney McNamara
Assistant Stage Manager 1 Ben Cooper
Assistant Stage Manager 2 Brittany Coombs
VCA Stage Management Intern Geetanjali Mishra
WAAPA Design Secondment Riley Tapp
Rehearsal Photographer Deryk McAlpin
Production Photographer Jeff Busby

Opening Night
Partner

 Abercrombie
& Kent

For information regarding running time, please see a member of the
Front of House team.

*Clockwise from centre:
Caroline O'Connor, Blake
Appelqvist (obscured),
Jakob Ambrose, Ainsley
Melham, Lyndon Watts
and Joe Gaudion*



Songs for the Damned

Meet the brilliant minds behind *Kiss of the Spider Woman*,
Chicago and *Cabaret*.

John Kander and Fred Ebb are the composer and lyricist dream team behind some of the 20th century's most evocative, intoxicating and celebratory homages to showbiz. Infused with dark pasts and glamorous dreams, trapped within the oppressive worlds of war-torn Berlin, boring marriages or, well, prison, the characters in Kander and Ebb's most famous show-stoppers all have one common trait: a joy that can spring from the darkest of corners.

After growing up in war-muddled 1940s America, both men had remarkably humble starts to their musical careers; their early solo attempts led to dead ends and early closures, rejection and Broadway flops. It wasn't until they first teamed up in 1962 for a couple of long-forgotten singles that history began to form through the haze of cigar smoke. Their first collaboration, *Golden Gate*, never made it to the stage, however it caught enough attention to secure their 1965 world premiere, *Flora the Red Menace*, featuring none other than Liza Minnelli in her Broadway debut (and first Tony Award-winning performance). The show itself wasn't a runaway success, but it cemented the working relationship

that would change the face of musical theatre forever.

The pair quick-stepped it up; their next composition, in 1966, was the legendary *Cabaret*, which swept up a cabinet-full of Tony Awards including Best Choreography, Best Original Musical Score, Best Costume Design, Best Direction and the lauded Best Musical.

It's perhaps no surprise that hope, perseverance and belief in music as an un-snuffable expression of life is at the core of their greatest works. The world, and thus the artists of the 60s and 70s, were still reeling from the Second World War, trying to understand the human condition in the face of suffering. Displacement, social isolation and dangerous prejudice was a daily reality. So it goes that the pursuit of joy, freedom, identity and rejection of authority go hand in hand with trauma.

In *Cabaret*, we meet the revolutionaries of the underworld – those who survived the war seemingly on spirit, luck and a song; those who were thrown about and persecuted and shunned for their art and



Musical Director & Orchestrator Jack Earle with Jakob Ambrose, Lyndon Watts, Ainsley Melham, Caroline O'Connor, Bert LaBonté, Blake Appelqvist, Adam-Jon Fiorentino, Joe Gaudion and Natalie Gamsu



Lyndon Watts



Joe Gaudion, Caroline O'Connor and Blake Appelqvist with Choreographer Andrew Hallsworth



Adam-Jon Fiorentino



their lifestyles and their politics; those who now have a place in history as icons of resistance. The lead character, Sally Bowles (most famously portrayed by Minnelli in the 1972 film adaptation), was created by novelist Christopher Isherwood in his 1937 novella *Sally Bowles*. Isherwood's enigmatic, troubled heroine inspired the passionate imaginations of Kander and Ebb, and *Cabaret* was born. Full to bursting with show-stopping dance numbers, emotional ballads and humour, *Cabaret* captured the heart of the Berlin clubs of the 1930s. The characters are outcasts, and sing as though they would die before closing a piano. It's no wonder it's one of the most recognisable musical scores the world over; no wonder that it made the world hungry for more Kander and Ebb.

The duo didn't leave their new fans waiting long: *The Happy Time* opened on Broadway in 1968, winning Gower Champion a Tony for Best Direction and Choreography despite going down in history as the first show to lose \$1 million. It was quickly followed by *Zorba*, which won Ebb a Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Lyrics. In 1971, the pair collaborated on the short-lived *70, Girls, 70*, based on Peter Coke's play *Breath of Spring*.

Chicago didn't hit stages until 1975, where it was largely overshadowed by that year's candid exposé of life on Broadway, *A Chorus Line*. And yet, the fast-paced and unapologetically sexy score, devilishly seductive characters and examination of celebrity has ensured its well-earned success.



'Kiss of the Spider Woman is a beautiful, funny, political and emotional roller-coaster that won multiple Tony Awards when it hit Broadway, including Best Musical and Best Original Score for Kander and Ebb.'

Caroline O'Connor and Joe Gaudion with Choreographer Andrew Hallsworth and Director Dean Bryant; Bert LaBonté and others in background; (opposite) Caroline O'Connor





Ryan Gonzalez;
(below) Elandrah Eramiha



Blake Appelqvist, Joe Gaudion and Bert LaBonté
with Choreographer Andrew Hallsworth; (above)
Adam-Jon Fiorentino and Ainsley Melham



Caroline O'Connor with Adam-Jon Fiorentino and Ainsley Melham

The 1996 Broadway revival saw a renewed appreciation for this iconic stage work and has since become the longest running American musical in Broadway history; its fishnet stockings and shadowy, piano-bar atmosphere have audiences returning again and again. There is perhaps no other musical that so joyfully captures the dark and seedy underworld of jazz clubs, courtrooms and prison.

Despite their two runaway successes and award-winning film scores – including the famous theme song from Martin Scorsese’s *New York, New York* – the duo showed no signs of slowing down when in 1992 they produced another golden tribute to the power of performance: *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. Adapted from Manuel Puig’s groundbreaking 1976 novel of the same name (which had already been adapted into

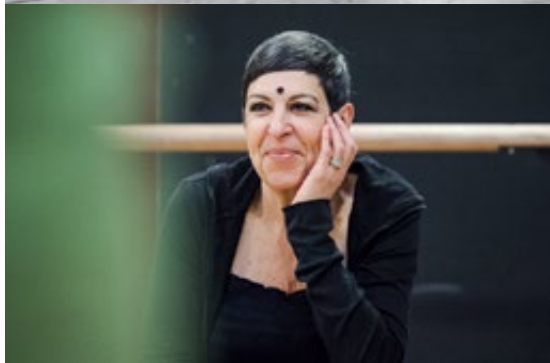
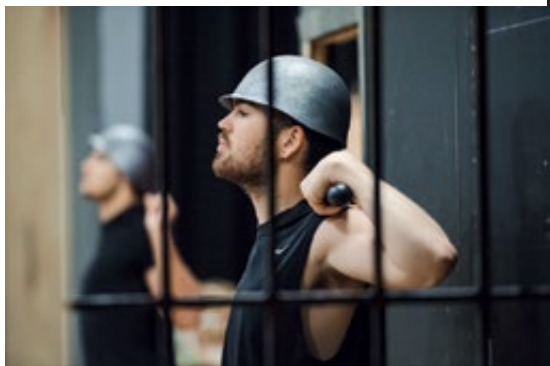
a stage play by Puig himself, and then into a film starring Sonia Braga and William Hurt, who won an Oscar for his performance), it’s a beautiful, funny, political and emotional roller-coaster that won multiple Tony Awards when it hit Broadway, including Best Musical and another Best Original Score for Kander and Ebb – their third, after *Cabaret* and 1981’s *Woman of the Year*.

The story takes place in a dark, dank cell in an Argentine prison, but it also takes place within the fantasies of inmate Luis Molina, who escapes his unjust and humiliating treatment by conjuring film diva Aurora to help him endure his grim reality. Molina was raised on a diet of show business, and bred to believe in the stories of hope and possibility that Kander and Ebb spin through him. With Aurora by his side, he refuses to entertain the bitter cynicism threatening to

(From top) Blake Appelqvist; Elandrah Eramiha and Jakob Ambrose with members of the cast and creative team in the background; Natalie Gamsu; (opposite) Ainsley Melham with Natalie Gamsu

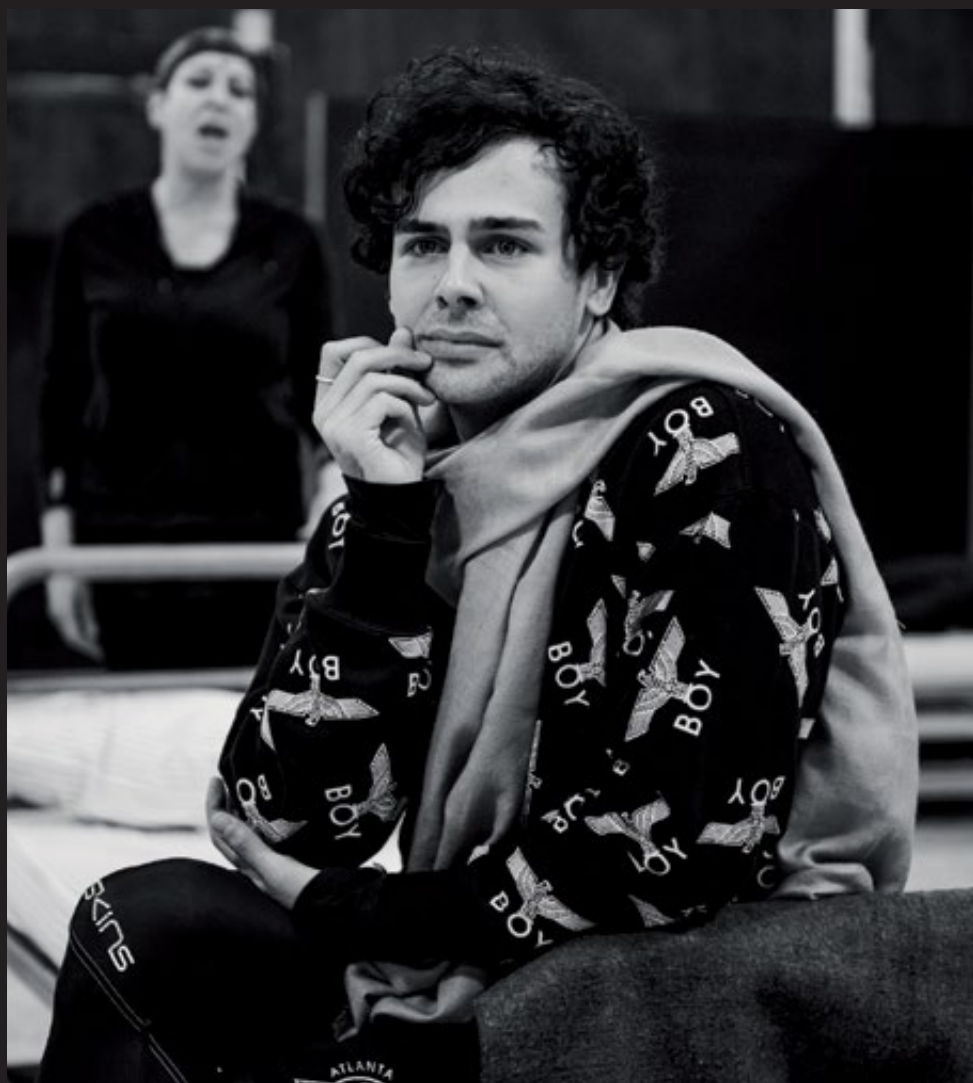
envelop his cell-mate, political prisoner Valentin Paz. The two men could not be more different – the surprising humour of the piece comes from their polar opposition in outlook, personality and view of Aurora, their ‘third roommate’.

The two men behind the music could also not be more different – Kander grew up in a musical household, while Ebb’s family didn’t listen to music at all – but together they made a significant contribution to American music, for which they were recognised in the 1998 Kennedy Center Honours. But the duo weren’t done yet. While *Steel Pier* was the last of their works together that Ebb would live to see on Broadway (he passed away in 2004), the pair continued to shine in the new millennium, with the film adaptation of *Chicago* winning acclaim, awards, and fresh audiences. On stage, three more existing works have premiered since the curtains closed on their collaboration: the sadly prophetic *Curtains*, which they were working on at the time of Ebb’s passing, *The Scottsboro Boys* and, most recently, *The Visit*. This unprecedented career penning songs for the damned has guaranteed Kander and Ebb a place in history, and in our hearts.



Learn more about this iconic musical at mtc.com.au/backstage

'Hope, perseverance and belief in music as an un-snuffable expression of life is at the core of their greatest works.'





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GOING PLACES TOGETHER

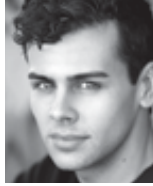
Cast & Creative Team



CAROLINE O'CONNOR

Spider Woman / Aurora

For Melbourne Theatre Company Caroline O'Connor has appeared in *Bombshells* (Green Room Award and Olivier Award nomination for Best Actress in a Play), *PIAF* (Helpmann Award and Green Room Awards), *Scarlett O'Hara at the Crimson Parrott* and *End of the Rainbow* (Helpmann Award, Sydney Theatre Award and The Stage Acting Excellence UK). On Broadway, her credits include *Chicago*, *Anastasia* (Drama League and Outer Critics Award Nominee) and *A Christmas Story the Musical*. Caroline performed at the 2013 Tony Awards. In the USA, *Follies* (Jeff Award, Best Actress) and *Assassins*. In Paris, *Sweeney Todd*. West End credits include *Mack and Mabel* (Olivier nomination for Best Actress in a Musical), *The Rink*, *On the Town*, *Romance-Romance*, *Street Scene*, *Matador*, *Cabaret*, *Me and My Girl*, *Showboat*, *Damn Yankees*, *Baby*, *Into the Woods* and *A Chorus Line*. In Australia, *Candide*, *The Boy from Oz*, *Anything Goes* (Helpmann Award), *Gypsy*, *Chicago* (Green Room Award), *West Side Story* (Green Room Award), *Man of La Mancha* and *Funny Girl*. Her film credits include *De-Lovely* and *Moulin Rouge*.



AINSLEY MELHAM

Molina

Ainsley Melham is making his Melbourne Theatre Company debut in *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. Most recently, Ainsley starred in the title role of the Broadway production of *Aladdin* (Disney Theatrical Productions) following his success in the Australian production. He has also appeared as Sonny Malone in *Xanadu* (Matthew Management) at Hayes Theatre Company. Ainsley was a cast member of *Hi-5* from 2013–2016 appearing in its Australasian tours, the televised *Hi-5 House* series and the documentary film *Some Kind Of Wonderful*. The iconic children's pop group has been released on Netflix with Ainsley as one of the starring hosts. Ainsley trained in musical theatre at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, graduating in 2012. He was nominated for Best Actor in a Musical at the 2017 Helpmann Awards and Male Lead in a Musical at the 2018 Green Room Awards.



ADAM-JON FIORENTINO

Valentin

Adam-Jon Fiorentino recently played Kassim in the Australian national tour of the musical *Aladdin* (Disney Theatrical Productions). Adam's extensive stage work includes starring on Broadway as Bert in *Mary Poppins* (New Amsterdam Theatre, NY), London's West End in *Follies* (London Palladium), *Saturday Night Fever* (Apollo Victoria) and *City of Angels* (Life Like Company). Most recently, Adam appeared in *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (The Production Company). Adam's screen credits include *Wolf Creek Series Two*, *Back in Very Small Business*, *Playing for Keeps* and *Five Bedrooms*. Adam's US screen credits include *30 Rock*, *The Tribe* and *The Sherri Shepherd Show*, as well as *Hollyoaks in the City* for Channel 4 UK. Other Australian TV credits include *Neighbours*, *The Tribe*, *Life Support*, *Sock Monkey Therapy*, and *Lucky 13*. Adam's film credits include *Our Brand is Crisis*, *Balloon Party* and the upcoming *Paper Champions*.

Cast & Creative Team



JAKOB AMBROSE

Ensemble

Kiss of the Spider Woman marks Jakob Ambrose's Melbourne Theatre Company debut. Previous stage credits include Chino in *West Side Story* (Opera Australia/Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour), *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* (Michael Cassel Group), *Aladdin* (Disney Theatrical Productions), Kurt/Kurt's Dad in *Heathers The Musical* (Hayes Theatre Company), *Sweet Charity* (Tinderbox/Neil Gooding/Luckiest Productions), Alonzo in *Cats* (Seoul & Company), *The Pirates of Penzance* and *The Producers* (The Production Company), *The Addams Family* (New Theatricals) and *A Chorus Line* (TML Enterprises). Jakob graduated from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) with a Bachelor of Arts, Music Theatre in 2011.



BLAKE APPELQVIST

Esteban / Ensemble

This is Blake Appelqvist's debut with Melbourne Theatre Company. Musical theatre credits include Diesel in *West Side Story* (The Production Company), Ziegfeld Tenor in *Funny Girl* (The Production Company), *Ghost* (Ambassador Theatre Group), Angel in *Kinky Boots* and Miss Understanding in *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* (both with Michael Cassel Group), Sir Galahad in *Spamalot* (One Eyed Man Productions), and Paul Owen in *American Psycho* (BB Arts). Blake originated the roles of Dorian Gray in the new one-hander musical *Dorian Gray Naked* (Popinjay Productions) and Sir Garfield Barwick in *The Dismissal* (Squabbalagic). 2020 will see Blake reprising the role of Sir Galahad in the touring production of *Spamalot*. Blake graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts in 2015 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Music Theatre) and that same year was a finalist for the Rob Guest Endowment Award.



ELANDRAH ERAMIHA

Marta / Ensemble

This is Elandrah Eramiha's debut performance with Melbourne Theatre Company. Elandrah's previous theatre credits include *In the Heights* (Stage Art, 2015), *Memphis the Musical* (Stage Art, 2017), *Bring It On the Musical* (Stage Masters, 2018), and *Aladdin* (Disney Theatrical Productions, 2018–2019). Elandrah is a graduate of Patrick Studios Australia, where she studied both Performing Arts and Musical Theatre.

Cast & Creative Team



NATALIE GAMSU

Molina's Mother / Ensemble

Natalie Gamsu is delighted to be appearing with Melbourne Theatre Company for the first time. Natalie is a singer, actor and cabaret artist whose performances have been acclaimed internationally. Previous stage credits include *My Dearworthy Darling* (Malthouse Theatre), *Darlinghurst Nights* (Hayes Theatre Company), her one woman show *Carmen, Live or Dead* (Oriel Entertainment Group), *Ladies in Black* (Queensland Theatre), Baz Luhrmann's *Strictly Ballroom* (Global Creatures), *Mary Poppins* (Disney/Cameron Macintosh), *Dr Zhivago* (Gordon Frost Organisation), Barrie Kosky's *Women of Troy* (Sydney Theatre Company) and *Sunday in the Park with George* (Q Theatre). Film and television credits include *Street Smart* (Worldwide Production Services/SBS), a recurring role in *Neighbours* (Fremantle Media) and *Ali's Wedding* (Matchbox Films). Her work as a vocalist has attracted several major awards in New York where she worked for eleven years and is a recording artist of note.



JOE GAUDION

Marcos / Ensemble

Joe Gaudion is thrilled to be making his debut performance with Melbourne Theatre Company appearing in *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. Joe previously appeared in the Australian production of *Aladdin* (Disney Theatrical Productions). His television credits include *Romper Stomper* (Stan) and *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (ABC). Joe completed a Diploma of Musical Theatre at APO Arts Academy and a Diploma of Dance – Elite Performance at Dance World Studios.



RYAN GONZALEZ

Gabriel / Ensemble

Kiss of the Spider Woman marks Ryan Gonzalez's Melbourne Theatre Company debut. Recent theatre credits include *Jersey Boys* (Newtheatricals), *In The Heights* (Blue Saint Productions), *The View Upstairs* (Invisible Wall Productions and Sugary Rum Productions), *Assassins* (Sydney Opera House), *Funny Girl in Concert* (Sydney Symphony Orchestra), and *Bernstein Songbook Series* (Sydney Symphony Orchestra). Further credits include *Kinky Boots* (Michael Cassel Group), *Strictly Ballroom the Musical* (Global Creatures), *King Kong Live on Stage* (Global Creatures), *Legally Blonde* (Gordon Frost Organisation), *Violet* (Blue Saint Productions) and *Carmen* (Opera Australia). Ryan's feature film credits include *Happy Feet 2*, *The Great Gatsby* and *Goddess*. Ryan won a Sydney Theatre Award for Best Male Actor in a Musical for *In The Heights* and a Sydney Broadway World Award for Best Cabaret Performer award for *Hispanic Attack!*

Cast & Creative Team



BERT LaBONTÉ

Warden / Ensemble

One of Australia's leading men, Bert LaBonté's Melbourne Theatre Company credits include *Lungs*, *Rupert*, *Birdland*, *The Mountaintop*, *Elling*, *A Behanding in Spokane*, *Clybourne Park*, *Richard III* and others. Other theatre credits include *All My Sons*, *The Grenade* and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Sydney Theatre Company), *Cloudstreet*, *I am a Miracle* and *Time Share* (Malthouse Theatre). Musical theatre credits include *The Book of Mormon* (Watchtower Productions), *An Officer and a Gentleman* (Gordon Frost Organisation), *Chess* and *Grey Gardens* (The Production Company), *Pippin* (Kookaburra Theatre), *The Full Monty* (IMG/David Atkins), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Really Useful Group), *Showboat* (Livent/Marriner Productions) and *Guys and Dolls* (Ambassador Group). Screen credits include a recurring role on *Wentworth* (Foxtel), *Squinters*, *Upper Middle Bogan*, *Tomorrow When the War Began* and *The Lowdown* (ABC), *Playing for Keeps* and *My Life is Murder* (Network Ten), *Wilfred* (SBS), *The Letdown* (ABC/Netflix). Film credits include *Animal Kingdom* (Porchlight Films) and *The Very Excellent Mr. Dundee* (Kathy Morgan International).



LYNDON WATTS

Ensemble

This is Lyndon Watts' debut with Melbourne Theatre Company. Previously Lyndon has toured Australia with *Sweet Charity* (Luckiest Productions/Neil Gooding Productions and Tinderbox Productions), *Anything Goes* (GFO/Opera Australia), *Singin' in the Rain* (Australian tour and Tokyo production), and Disney's *Aladdin*. Lyndon was a top 6 finalist in the Rob Guest Endowment, after which he toured internationally as Bernardo in *West Side Story* (Opera Australia, GWB Entertainment and BB Promotions). Lyndon is a 2014 graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA).



DEAN BRYANT

Director

Dean Bryant has previously directed *The Lady in the Van*, *An Ideal Husband*, *Wild*, *Vivid White*, *Born Yesterday*, *Skylight*, *I'll Eat You Last* and *Next to Normal* for MTC. For Hayes Theatre Company he directed *Assassins*, *Sweet Charity* (Helpmann Award) and *Little Shop of Horrors* (Sydney Theatre Award); for Opera Australia *Two Weddings*, *One Bride and Anything Goes* (and GFO). Other credits include *The Skin of Our Teeth* (VCA), *Once We Lived Here* (London season), *DreamSong* (Theatre Works), *Straight* (Red Stitch Actors Theatre), *The Last Five Years* and five musicals for The Production Company. With composer Mathew Frank, he wrote Green Room Award-winning musicals *Prodigal* and *Once We Lived Here*, as well as *Virgins* and *Anything Goes*, *The Silver Donkey* and an Amy Winehouse musical for Channel 10's *Mr & Mrs Murder*. The pair just debuted a musical version of *My Brilliant Career*. Dean created verbatim piece *Gaybies* (Midsumma, Darlinghurst Theatre Company). Dean is Worldwide Associate Director of *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert - The Musical* and is a graduate of WAAPA.

Cast & Creative Team



JACK EARLE

Musical Director &
Orchestrator

Jack Earle makes his Melbourne Theatre Company debut after working on *King Kong*, *Strictly Ballroom* (Global Creatures), *The Lion King*, *Aladdin* (Disney Theatrical Productions), *West Side Story*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Hello Dolly* (The Production Company), *Matilda* (RSC), *We Will Rock You*, *The Bodyguard*, *The Book of Mormon*, *Dream Lover* (GFO) – which he also orchestrated – and *Evita* (Opera Australia). His work on *Dream Lover* led to him touring and recording with David Campbell on his albums *Baby It's Christmas* and *Back in the Swing* (Sony Music Australia). He is the musical director for Rhonda Burchmore's *Abbasolutely Fabulous* and *Partners in Crime*. His composition credits include two albums of original music, *The Jack Earle Big Band* and *Is This Real*, numerous jingles for television and radio, and a dance work entitled *SELF* choreographed by Michael Ralph. Jack recently returned to Australia from studying at Berklee College of Music.



ANDREW HALLSWORTH

Choreographer

Andrew Hallsworth's previous credits for Melbourne Theatre Company include *Shakespeare in Love*, *Twelfth Night*, *Vivid White*, *Rupert*, *Private Lives*, *Egg*, *Hamlet*, *Next to Normal* and *The Drowsy Chaperone*. Other theatre credits include *Muriel's Wedding the Musical* (Sydney Theatre Company/Global Creatures), *Assassins* (Hayes Theatre Company), *Dream Lover* (John Frost & Gilbert Theatrical), *Two Weddings One Bride*, *Sydney Opera House – The Opera and Anything Goes* (Opera Australia), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Luckiest Productions/Tinderbox Productions), *Jerry's Girls* and *La Cage Aux Folles* (The Production Company), *Ladies in Black* (Queensland Theatre/MTC), *Sweet Charity* (Luckiest Productions/Neil Gooding Productions), *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* and *An Officer and A Gentleman* (Gordon Frost Organisation). Andrew co-choreographed *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* for Broadway, its worldwide seasons, and the recent 10th anniversary Australian tour. Andrew has won three Helpmann Awards and two Sydney Theatre Critic's Awards for Best Choreography in a Musical.



ALICIA CLEMENTS

Set & Costume Designer

Alicia Clements' previous designs for Melbourne Theatre Company are *The Lady in the Van* and *The Father*. Her other work has been seen at companies such as Sydney Theatre Company, Bell Shakespeare, Pinchgut Opera, Ensemble Theatre, Darlinghurst Theatre Company, Hayes Theatre Company, Barking Gecko and Black Swan State Theatre, where she was previously Resident Designer. Her designs for the Stephen Sondheim musical *Assassins* (Hayes Theatre Company) received Best Set Design and Best Costume Design of an Independent Musical at the 2018 Sydney Theatre Awards. She received the 2014 Kristian Fredrikson Scholarship for Design in the Performing Arts and a selection of her designs now belong to permanent collections at Beleura House and the Arts Centre Melbourne. Alicia graduated from WAAPA in 2008 and furthered her training in Paris and London.

Cast & Creative Team



MATT SCOTT
Lighting Designer

Matt Scott has lit more than 60 Melbourne Theatre Company productions including *Shakespeare in Love*, *Storm Boy*, *The Lady in the Van*, *The Architect*, *An Ideal Husband*, *Minnie & Liraz*, *Born Yesterday*, *The Odd Couple*, *Jasper Jones*, *Skylight*, *The Last Man Standing*, *The Weir*, *Jumpy*, *The Mountaintop*, *Elling*, *His Girl Friday*, *Red*, *Tribes*, *Clybourne Park*, *Next to Normal*, *Blackbird* and *August: Osage County*. Other credits include *The Dance of Death* (Belvoir), *The Pearlfishers* (State Opera of South Australia), *Oklahoma!* and *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* (The Production Company), *Madama Butterfly* (Seattle Opera), *Jasper Jones* (Queensland Theatre) and *Madame Butterfly* (Opera Australia). Matt has received and been nominated for numerous awards including a 2016 Green Room Award for *The Pearlfishers*, a 2005 Helpmann Award for *Urinetown* (MTC) and a 2003 Helpmann Award for *The Blue Room*. Matt is a lecturer in lighting design at the University of Melbourne (VCA).



NICK WALKER
Sound Designer

Nick Walker has worked professionally as a sound designer and engineer for the past 15 years. His career began working in live music, taking him all around the country with some of Australia's biggest rock acts. He soon obtained a permanent position at Australia's leading performing arts venue in Melbourne. In 2013 he started his own business, Spectra Audio Solutions, providing audio production services to Australia. His most recent credits, as a FOH operator and/or sound designer, include FOH Operator for *Birdland* and *Arbus and West* (Melbourne Theatre Company), the Grammy and Helpmann Award winning *Soweto Gospel Choir* (AKA), Helpmann Award winning *Sweet Charity* (Luckiest Productions), *American Psycho* (BB Arts Entertainment), *Blood Brothers* (Enda Markey Presents), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Luckiest/Tinderbox Productions), *High Fidelity* (Highway Run Productions) and *Assassins* (Hayes Theatre & Luckiest Productions), for which Nick picked up the award for Best Sound Design for a Musical.



JAMIE CLENNETT
Projection Designer

Tasmanian designer, animator and author/illustrator Jamie Clennett previously created video for Melbourne Theatre Company's *Wild* and *Astroman*. He has worked in Australia and internationally for clients as diverse as Two Little Indians, SBS, Publicis Mojo, BBC, Picasso London, Pirate Productions, Passion Pictures, Red Cross, and Norwegian Cruise Line, amongst others. Jamie returned to Australia in 2012, after living for several years in Edinburgh and London. Since then he has continued his commercial video practice, as well as lecturing animation at RMIT. In 2008, Jamie created video for *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert - The Musical*. Since then Jamie has created video for several other theatrical productions such as *Shoes: The Musical* (Sadler's Wells Theatre), *Sleeping Horses Lie* (Terrapin Puppet Theatre) and *Little Shop Of Horrors* (Tinderbox). Jamie Clennett graduated from NIDA (Design) in 2002.

Cast & Creative Team



LEITH McPHERSON

Voice & Dialect Coach

Leith McPherson has previously worked on Melbourne Theatre Company's productions of *Shakespeare in Love*, *The Lady in the Van*, *Twelfth Night*, *Astroman*, *A Doll's House: Part 2*, *An Ideal Husband*, *Macbeth*, *Noises Off* (with QT), *Melbourne Talam* (MTC Education), *Born Yesterday*, *Jasper Jones*, *Skylight*, *Double Indemnity*, *Peddling* (MTC Education), *North by Northwest*, *Jumpy*, *I'll Eat You Last*, *Private Lives*, *Other Desert Cities*, *Hamlet*, *Richard III*, *All About My Mother*, *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, *Boston Marriage*, *Madagascar*, *The Swimming Club*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *August: Osage County*, *Explorations: A Streetcar Named Desire* (MTC Education), *Rockabye*, *Songs for Nobodies*, *Ninety*, and *The Dame on the Ten Dollar Note*. Leith is Head of Voice and Movement for the Theatre Department at the VCA.



LUCA DINARDO

Assistant Director & Assistant
Choreographer

This is Luca Dinardo's first time working with Melbourne Theatre Company and she is thrilled to be assisting Dean Bryant and Andrew Hallsworth on *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. Luca's career has seen her assist some of Australia's finest choreographers, including Kelley Abbey, Michael Ralph and Marko Panzic and American choreographers Travis Wall, Stacey Tookey and Al Blackstone. Luca's professional performance credits include *Anybodys & Dance Captain* in *West Side Story on Sydney Harbour* (Opera Australia), Ensemble/Dance Captain in the Australian premiere of *Bring It On – The Musical* (David Venn) and Children Ensemble in *Billy Elliot the Musical* (Louise Withers). Luca is a graduate of Patrick Studios Australia and wishes to thank her family, friends and mentors for their ongoing love and support.

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Bert LaBonté reflects on what MTC means to him.



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[My] first play at Southbank Theatre was *Richard III*. It was a gift, an incredible piece of theatre, and an incredible production. I remember previewing it and we had a double revolve on the stage; we had to stop four times because people hadn't ever actually got on or off the revolve! But we never stopped again after that.

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