

A promotional photograph for the play 'Laurinda'. Two women are standing against a bright yellow background. The woman on the left is dressed in a school uniform, including a blue blazer, a blue and white striped tie, and a blue and white plaid skirt. She has a blue hair tie in her hair and is wearing white knee-high socks and black Mary Jane shoes. She has a serious expression. The woman on the right is wearing a red jacket, a dark red knit beanie, and black pants. She is smiling and has her arms around the first woman's shoulders. She is wearing black sneakers with a white 'Z' logo. The title 'Laurinda' is written in large white letters across the middle of the image.

Laurinda



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. 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 Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, and by the State Government of Victoria through Creative Victoria.

COVID-19 Arts Sustainability Fund – an Australian Government initiative



Australian Government
Sustainability Fund

Melbourne Theatre Company presents

AN MTC NEXT STAGE ORIGINAL

Laurinda

A NEW PLAY BY

Diana Nguyen

WITH Petra Kalive

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY Alice Pung

DIRECTED BY Petra Kalive

6 August—10 September 2022

Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

ABOUT THE PLAY

When 15-year-old Lucy Lam wins the inaugural Equal Access Scholarship to a prestigious private school, the smart and well-liked student is not prepared for the new world she's suddenly propelled into. It's a world of wealth and opportunity, overseen by The Cabinet – a trio of girls who wield power over their classmates, and even their teachers. But when The Cabinet turn their attention to Lucy she has to make a choice: fit in and succeed, or stay true to herself. Either way, there's a cost.

CAST

Katie/Mrs Leslie/As cast Fiona Choi
Linh/Brodie Gemma Chua-Tran
Trisha/Mrs Grey/Mrs White/As cast Georgina Naidu
Mum/Amber/Charlotte/As cast Chi Nguyen
Lucy/Lucy-38 Ngoc Phan
Dad/Dr Vanderwerp/As cast Roy Phung
Tully/Chelsea/Mrs Newberry/As cast Jenny Zhou

CREATIVE TEAM

Director Petra Kalive
Set Design and AV Concept & Design Eugyeene Teh
Costume Designer Karine Larché
Lighting Designer Rachel Lee
Composer & Sound Designer Marco Cher-Gibard
AV Designer Justin Gardam
Movement Director Xanthe Beesley
Assistant Director & AV Composition Roshelle Fong
Cultural Consultant Alice Qin
Voice & Dialect Coach Mark Wong
Dance Consultancy Vietcharm Traditional Dance Group
Rehearsal Stage Manager Christine Bennett
Show Stage Manager Brittany Coombs
Assistant Stage Manager 1 Whitney McNamara
Assistant Stage Manager 2 Lucie Sutherland
Rehearsal Photographer Sarah Walker
Production Photographer Jeff Busby
Marketing Campaign Photographer Brett Walker
Vietnamese dialogue by Chi Nguyen

This production contains coarse language, references to bullying, racial violence and mature themes.

The running time for this production is approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes with no interval.

Media Partner

Commissioned with support from the Malcolm Robertson Foundation, with play development supported by MTC's Playwrights Giving Circle Donors, The Ian Potter Foundation, Naomi Milgrom Foundation, The Myer Foundation and The University of Melbourne, and community engagement support by Playking Foundation.



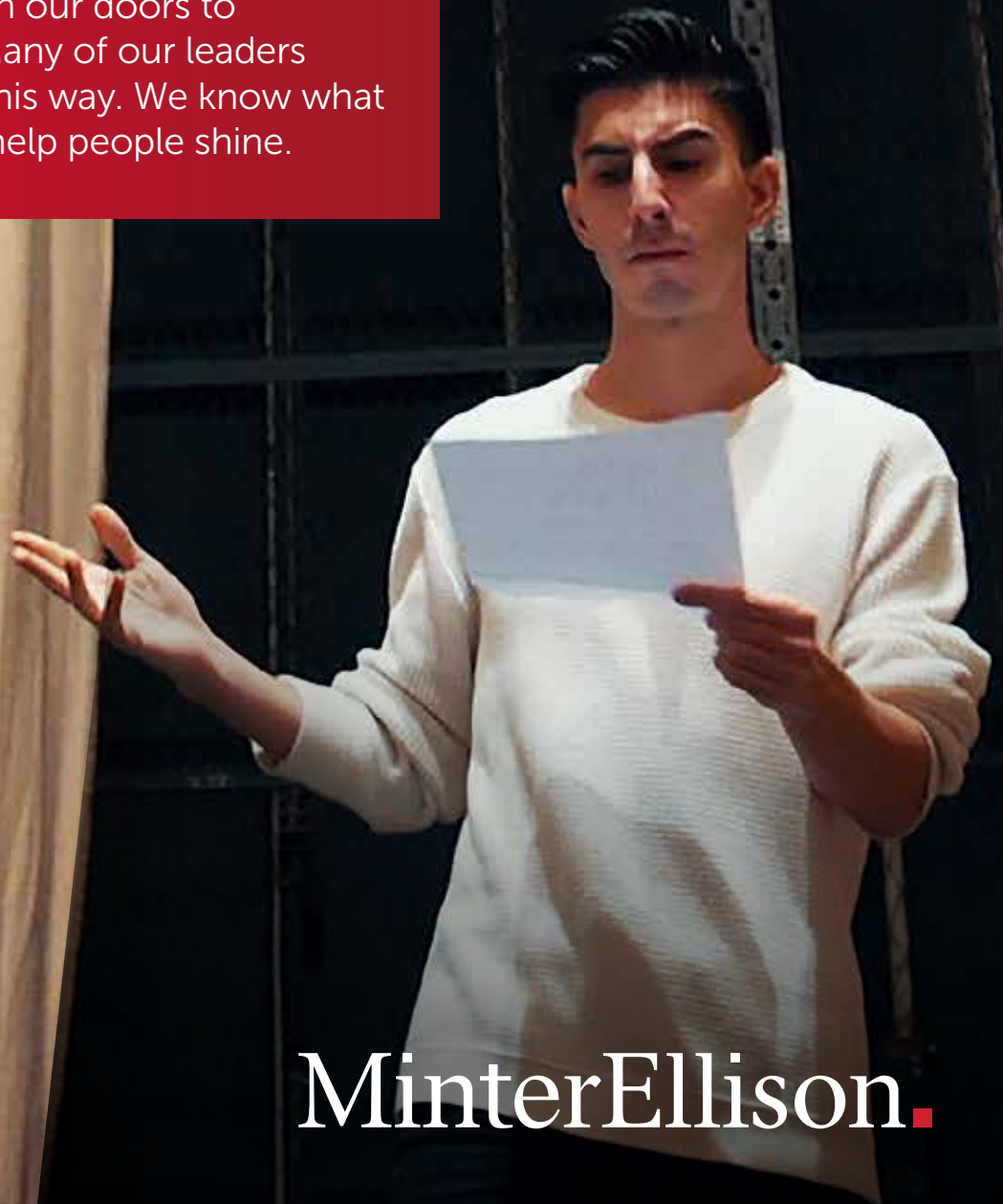


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Tomorrow's stars need development. That's why MinterEllison is supporting Melbourne Theatre Company's Future Directors Initiative. Every year we open our doors to graduates. Many of our leaders started out this way. We know what it means to help people shine.



MinterEllison.



A COMING-
OF-AGE FOR
EVERY AGE

Petra Kalive and Diana Nguyen reflect on the impact of Alice Pung's novel and why it's imperative to continue the powerful, complex conversations the story demands about culture, class and race – this time on stage and with a twist.

by Petra Kalive and Diana Nguyen

Alice Pung's *Laurinda* had been sitting on the shelf for a while at Melbourne Theatre Company. While several people had wanted to realise it, for some reason it hadn't happened. Then, the first Melbourne lockdown hit in 2020 and being new to the Company with the energy for something to sink her teeth into, Petra grabbed it with both hands. Diana immediately popped into her mind as a collaborator on this work – there was a sensibility to Diana's humour and perspective that Petra thought married well with the essence of Alice's novel. Diana's work had also featured in Alice's anthology *Growing Up Asian in Australia* – and both were huge fans of Alice's writing.

We had worked together years previously in an improvisational company and knew our values centred around collaboration, advancing and extending offers, deep listening, the use of metaphor and the drive to find the 'heart' of a moment – and the humour – always humour.



Writer Diana Nguyen and Assistant Director & AV Composition Roshelle Fong

So, during that first lockdown, we began developing this work over Zoom (and sometimes phone when internet connection was dodgy) and had a series of workshops (live and virtual) with actors. These workshops were invaluable. Developing the work with the support of so many Asian–Australian actors and creatives has made the work what it is. We could not have articulated the nuance of experience, nor been so bold, without their challenges and generosity. We thank them from the very bottom of our hearts.

We could not be more grateful to Alice Pung. Not only for her trust in us to translate her coming-of-age story but also for her generosity in allowing us to adapt the work so it speaks to a whole new audience. While so many reviews of the book categorise *Laurinda* as ‘charming’, ‘relatable’, ‘important’ and ‘insightful’, what sits underneath their positive statements is a diminishing of the power of what we have uncovered through

Alice's work. She has written an honest, uncomfortable and exposing investigation of the negotiation necessary to walk between cultures. She effortlessly and with humour communicates the internal trauma that is carried intergenerationally and the strength and self-love that is required to simply exist. The magnificence of what Alice has achieved is that she makes this complex and difficult existence relatable and charming, important and insightful, while exposing structural, casual and internalised racism. Perhaps her book was ahead of its time. Although set in a high school, what was clear to us from the beginning was that this was a coming-of-age story that isn't only experienced at 15 years old. It is a coming-of-age for every age because reconciling the constant and unrelenting negotiation that the dominant (white) culture demands is unceasing.



Georgina Naidu and Fiona Choi

Roy Phung and Gemma Chua-Tran





Writer & Director Petra Kalive, Chi Nguyen, Fiona Choi, Ngoc Phan, Movement Director Xanthe Beesley, Jenny Zhou and Roy Phung

So, we decided to set *Laurinda* deliberately in 1997 and 2021 – two periods of intense and visible Asian hate in Australia. In 1997, Pauline Hanson formed the One Nation Party and her maiden speech railed against Indigenous rights, so-called ‘political correctness’ and ‘reverse-racism’ and called for the halting of migration to Australia because she feared that Australia was being ‘swamped by Asians’. She contributed to shaping the cultural conversation about racism, normalising xenophobia. In 2020, with the arrival of the coronavirus (COVID-19), like many other parts of the world, anti-Asian hate crime soared following news that the virus originated in Wuhan, China. While in the intervening years, conversation about Asian-focused racism was not front and centre, what the coronavirus event demonstrated was how close to the surface the racist sentiment was in Australia. It revealed how much work there is still to do. So, while we were experiencing the real-life events of 2020, it was impossible to interrogate a

book set prior to the advent of Google and not engage with the complex conversations about how far we've come as a society, how far we have still to go and where the pressure points are on the individual who experiences prejudice, bigotry and bias. It is for this reason that we made the character of Lucy begin the play as a woman in her late 30s, living today, reliving her 15-year-old self through the lens of her adulthood. We took inspiration from the coming-of-age classic *Freaky Friday*. Lucy is transformed into her own body, 20 years younger. This form allows us to stay true to the comedy and light touch of Alice Pung's novel, but layers in a dramatic tension that gives the play momentum.

We also deliberately centralised this family home of Vietnamese refugees. We both have lived experience of growing-up as second generation Australians and felt it was important to articulate the specific pressures on a young Vietnamese–Australian woman. It was very important for Diana to see a production on the mainstage articulate the nuance of a refugee family fleeing war for a better life. We would like to thank Chi Nguyen for her Vietnamese translation, which we feel really grounds this family arc of the story and authentically communicates a Vietnamese sensibility.

Returning to the 1990s allowed us to revel in 90s music. We have had the best time reliving our teenage years and injecting the play with references you will only get if you lived it. Relooking at the 1990s through a post-2020 lens offers the opportunity to play, reframe, cringe and laugh at what we were, to better understand where we find ourselves today.

What we have endeavoured to do in adapting *Laurinda* is reveal current ideas about representation, appropriation and

deep dive into who gets to tell what stories. We know that the stories we tell have a cultural 'ripple effect'. Alice Pung's novel has already made significant impact. We hope that by adapting it for the stage, we continue the conversation she started with a new audience. We hope to improve connection, empathy and understanding and, if we're lucky, generate discussion and debate about where we are headed as a culture.

A big thank you to MTC's NEXT STAGE Writers' Program. We couldn't have done it without the support. We need ongoing investment in Australian stories and storytellers so that the cultural identity on our stages is as rich and complex as the Australia we live in.

Big love. And thank you.

Diana and Petra. ■



Writer & Director
Petra Kalive

Ngoc Phan



AN MTC NEXTSTAGE ORIGINAL

NEXT STAGE is a \$4.6 million program commissioning and developing new Australian works and playwrights that has set a new benchmark for play development in Australia.




NEXT STAGE is made possible thanks to the generous support from MTC's Playwrights Giving Circle. Thank you for sharing our passion and commitment to Australian stories and Australian writers.

Louise Myer and Martyn Myer AO, Maureen Wheeler AO and Tony Wheeler AO,
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Tony Burgess and Janine Burgess, Dr Andrew McAliece and Dr Richard Simmie,
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Roy Phung, Ngoc Phan,
Gemma Chua-Tran,
Chi Nguyen and
Jenny Zhou

LIFE IS
NOTHING
BUT HIGH
SCHOOL

Alice Pung's first novel, *Laurinda*, is set in a prestigious, private high school. She speaks to us about the inspiration behind this choice and what she is looking forward to the most about seeing her story adapted for the stage.

After writing her incredibly successful and celebrated memoirs *Unpolished Gem* and *Her Father's Daughter*, Alice Pung set her sights on writing her first novel in 2014. The result was *Laurinda* – a coming-of-age story about 15-year-old Lucy Lam's struggle for identity and belonging as she lands a scholarship to the prestigious and exclusive girls' school Laurinda. It is also a truthful and compelling exploration of family, culture and class.



Chi Nguyen and Jenny Zhou

Georgina Naidu and Fiona Choi



Pung was partly inspired to explore these topics in fiction because of her own high school experiences. ‘I changed high schools five times during my teenage years, and as an author have visited hundreds of high schools in Australia and all over the world,’ she says. ‘From firsthand experience I know the difference that going to, say, a state school in the Western suburbs (of Melbourne, Sydney or Adelaide) and a private school in a leafier suburb can make to a child’s experience of education, the friendships they make, their outlook on the world, their exposure to adult hardships and their relationship to work. So much is at stake when we put up with such inequalities for Australian children.’

Fortunately, the private school Pung attended wasn’t horrible like the fictional Laurinda of her novel, but she also remembers the real sense of alienation she felt. She couldn’t relate to the other students, for instance, who spent more

than \$400 on their formal dresses. 'Dresses that my friends' parents might have sewn for below minimum wages in their home garages. So this is the world of Lucy Lam in *Laurinda*,' she explains.

What Pung was also interested to examine in the novel was the idea of a powerful institution against an individual. 'I still find it a bit baffling how some private schools are concerned about their reputations to a degree you might not find in state schools ... they are also places where early "networking" goes on. So *Laurinda* is a satire about toxic private school culture.' Though she is clear to state she knows this isn't the case for all private schools. 'But I am never surprised when teachers from private schools come up and secretly tell me that *Laurinda* describes their culture,' she adds.

Throughout the novel, the toxic environment of *Laurinda* becomes overwhelming for Lucy. At first excited and hopeful for her world to open beyond the suburb of Stanley where she grew up, dealing with the politics of popularity and power at *Laurinda* – personified by a trio of girls called The Cabinet who control the student body and some of the teachers – starts to take its toll.

'Lucy is not only a different culture, but a different class to the majority of her new classmates,' Pung explains. 'So her mannerisms, speech and even movements are different; and she is a bit chameleon-like in her ability to try and adapt to the new environment.' But these efforts cause her increasing unhappiness. 'At times she's excruciatingly ashamed of her family, not for their poverty but the small and subconscious ways this manifests (eating with their mouths open, for instance) and ashamed of herself for becoming like haughty Pip in *Great Expectations*,' Pung says.

Movement Director Xanthe Beesley



Jenny Zhou, Chi Nguyen, Ngoc Phan and Gemma Chua-Tran



‘I liked how these two talented creatives made the play entirely their own ... a lot of depth of thought has gone into every element of this production.’

— Alice Pung

At the end of the novel, Lucy comes to the understanding that ‘having integrity means piecing together all the separate parts of yourself and your life.’ Pung hopes this resonates with audiences of all ages, even those who have long left high school behind. ‘Kurt Vonnegut says “life is nothing but high school” – you see this play out in workplaces, politics and anywhere where groups of adults are forced to work and be together.’

It makes sense then that Pung was more than happy for Petra Kalive and Diana Nguyen to adapt her story for the stage and allow even more people to connect with Lucy’s journey. ‘I liked how these two talented creatives made the play entirely their own. Lucy Lam is a 38-year-old school principal – I could not have imagined a better future for Lucy even if I tried. Also, Diana added her Vietnamese culture to it, so Lucy speaks Vietnamese at home and so does her mother. (In my book, she spoke Chinese) ... a lot of depth of thought has gone into every element of this production.’

Pung also appreciates how Kalive and Nguyen have interpreted the character of Linh, to whom Lucy writes a year-long letter in the novel. ‘It is exactly how I would imagine Linh to appear if she were to be onstage or on screen,’ she says. ‘Throughout the book, Linh is like Lucy’s alter ego, they

have conversations with each other and the reader only finds out that Linh is not a separate person until the very end. So Diana and Petra took the perfect approach.'

Seeing the story on stage will also add another dimension hard to replicate in other mediums. 'Every performance is a once-off gift for the attendee and no two performances are the same,' Pung says. 'The actors often feed off the energy the audience gives, and so it is a two-way exchange which you do not get from film or television.' And finally, speaking of the actors, Pung says 'I am most excited to see this majority Asian–Australian cast play almost EVERY character in the adaptation!' ■



Chi Nguyen, Ngoc Phan, Roy Phung, Gemma Chua-Tran and Jenny Zhou



Explore videos and interviews with the cast and creatives at mtc.com.au

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Roy Phung, Writer & Director Petra Kalive, Movement Director
Xanthe Beesley and Chi Nguyen



CAST & CREATIVE TEAM



FIONA CHOI — KATIE/MRS LESLIE/AS CAST

For Melbourne Theatre Company, Fiona Choi has appeared in *Torch the Place*, *Golden Shield*, *The Lady in The Van* and *Metamorphoses*. A graduate of WAAPA, Fiona's musical theatre highlights include *Dragon Lady: The Many Lives and Deaths of Anna May Wong* for the 2019 Adelaide Cabaret Festival; *Into the Woods* (Watch This); the original Australian cast of *RENT* (Cameron Mackintosh); *Mamma Mia!* (Littlestar/Dainty); and *Plainsong* (Black Swan) as well as creating roles in Off-Broadway productions of *Apathy – The Gen X Musical*, *Insecurity*, *The Street* and *FAMBAM360*. Fiona is best known for her role as Jenny Law in Benjamin Law's award-winning SBS comedy *The Family Law*, for which she received an AACTA nomination for Best Performance in a Television Comedy. Fiona has also been seen on Australian television in *Surviving Summer* (Netflix); *Wentworth* (Foxtel); *True Story with Hamish & Andy* (Nine Network); *My Life is Murder* (Network 10); *Secret Bridesmaid's Business* (Seven Network); *Utopia*, *Mustangs FC*, *The Letdown*, *Harrow*, *Get Krack!n* and *Back in Very Small Business* (ABC TV).



GEMMA CHUA-TRAN — LINH/BRODIE

Laurinda marks Gemma Chua-Tran's theatre debut at Melbourne Theatre Company. They began acting professionally at the age of fourteen, playing one of the lead characters, Anusha, in award-winning television series *Mustangs FC* (ABC). Gemma additionally appears on *Diary of an Uber Driver* (ABC) and *Back of the Net* (Disney Channel). Amongst a number of short films, their performance in *Clap* received a nomination for Best Actor in a World Short at SOHO film festival in 2020. Gemma's most recent work in Netflix's highly anticipated remake of *Heartbreak High* is soon to be released later in 2022.



GEORGINA NAIDU — TRISHA/MRS GREY/
MRS WHITE/AS CAST

Georgina Naidu is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts. Georgina appeared for Melbourne Theatre Company most recently in *Minnie & Liraz*. Her numerous theatre credits include *Feather in the Web*, *Dance Nation* (Red Stitch Actors' Theatre); and *Ganesh Versus the Third Reich* (Back to Back Theatre). Georgina has worked extensively in the theatre as an actor, director, writer, dramaturg and cultural consultant. In 2005 Georgina's play *Yellowfeather* premiered at the Sydney Opera House. Georgina starred as Phrani Gupta on ABC's *Seachange*. Other TV credits include *A Beginner's Guide To Grief* (SBS), *Harrow* (ABC), *Clickbait* (Matchbox Pictures), *Fisk* (ABC), *Rosehaven* (ABC), *Playing for Keeps* (ScreenTime), *How to Stay Married* (Princess Pictures) and *Newton's Law* (ABC). Film credits include *Run Rabbit Run* (Carver Films), *Ali's Wedding* (Matchbox Pictures), *Vessel* (Klopek Films), *The Boys are Back* (Miramax Film), *Playing for Charlie* (Queen Ant Films Pty Ltd), *Mall Boy* (Twenty 20 Pty Ltd), *Dead Letter Office* (Artist Services Productions) and *Road to Nhill* (Gecko Films Pty Ltd).



CHI NGUYEN — MUM/AMBER/CHARLOTTE/
AS CAST

Chi Nguyen was born and raised in Vietnam and moved to Australia when she was sixteen to pursue the performing arts. Her recent theatre credits include River in *FAST FOOD* (Red Stitch Actors' Theatre); Lead Player in *AIR RACE* (Arena Theatre Company) and Tam in *Hallowed Ground: Women Doctors in War* (The Shift Theatre). Characters Chi has worked on in previous script developments are Nim in *COPYCAT* (Elbow Room and Polyglot Theatre); Bingo in *Bluey's Big Play* (Windmill Theatre Company); Grace in *SECURITY* (Malthouse Theatre) and Duyen in *FLAKE* (Red Stitch Actors' Theatre). Chi's recent TV credits are recurring role Megan Vu in *Class of '07* (Amazon Prime Video) – premiering in 2023; Jeanette Dao in *The Wilds* (Amazon Prime Video) and Juliana in *Fisk* (ABC). Chi is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts where she received the Grace Marion Wilson Scholarship for Excellence in Acting. Chi undertook the Vietnamese translation and dialogue in *Laurinda*.



NGOC PHAN — LUCY/LUCY-38

Ngoc Phan is an actor and a playwright. *Laurinda* is Ngoc's debut for Melbourne Theatre Company. Other theatre performances include *Boy Swallows Universe*, *Seeding Bed*, *Good Grief* (Queensland Theatre); *Away*, *Mathematics of Longing*, *The Village*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Hedonism's Second Album* (La Boite Theatre); *What I'm Here For*, *The Motion of Light in Water*, *After All This* (Elbow Room); *That's What She Said* (The Good Room); *Horizon* (Playlab Theatre); *Medea* (Shock Therapy Productions). Her screen performances include *Kidnapped* (Steve Jaggi/Sepia), *Tidelands* (Netflix/Hoodlum), *Australia Day* (Hoodlum/Foxtel), *Pawno* (Toothless Pictures), *Schappelle* (Fremantle Media), *At World's End* (New Holland Pictures), *Sea Patrol* (Nine Network), *Terra Nova* (Terra Nova Productions), *Secrets and Lies* (Network 10) and the AFI award-winning film *The Black Balloon*. As a playwright, she participated in the Lotus Program supported by Playwriting Australia (PWA) and Contemporary Asian Australian Performance (CAAP). She was an artist-in-residence at La Boite Theatre Company where she worked on her play *My Father Who Slept in a Zoo*, her writing was featured in their production of *The Village* and she was also a creative assistant in its companion piece, *The Neighbourhood*. She is currently part of La Boite's Artist Company.



ROY PHUNG — DAD/DR VANDERWERP/AS CAST

Roy Phung is a trained professional actor with more than 14 years' experience in various roles in film and theatre. He has produced and written his own work for stage and theatre for award-winning and critically acclaimed sketch comedy group The Golden Phung. A theatrical highlight for Roy was in *Jasper Jones* as Jeffrey Lu (State Theatre Company South Australia) in 2019. Roy is a two-time finalist at the world's largest short film festival, Tropfest, for *A Safe Space* and *Suburban Samurai*. He was previously on season 2 of *PLONK* (Nine Network) and *Aftertaste* (ABC). Roy is a winner of Best Performance in *Suburban Samurai* and Winner for Best Comedy for *Happy Anniversary* at the South Australian Screen Awards. Recently Roy was at the 2022 St Kilda Film Festival for its world premiere of *Bunker: The Last Fleet*, which won Best Achievement in Indigenous Filmmaking.



JENNY ZHOU — TULLY/CHELSEA/
MRS NEWBERRY/AS CAST

Laurinda marks Jenny Zhou's debut with Melbourne Theatre Company. She previously worked with MTC in *Cybec Electric* 2021/2022 and *First Stage* 2021. A graduate of Shanghai Theatre Academy, Jenny is proud of her Chinese heritage and has worked on several bilingual productions. Screen credits include *Girl, Interpreted, Chosen, The Time of Our Lives* and *Summer Love*. Jenny also co-wrote, co-produced and starred in *Celebration Nation*, which was nominated for the 2021 AACTA Best Short Form Comedy.



ALICE PUNG — AUTHOR

Alice Pung OAM is an award-winning writer based in Melbourne. She is the bestselling author of the memoirs *Unpolished Gem* and *Her Father's Daughter*, and the essay collection *Close to Home*, as well as the editor of the anthologies *Growing Up Asian in Australia* and *My First Lesson*. Her first novel, *Laurinda*, won the Ethel Turner Prize at the 2016 NSW Premier's Literary Awards. *One Hundred Days* is her most recent novel. Alice was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for services to literature in 2022.



DIANA NGUYEN — WRITER

Since graduating from Monash University and John Bolton Theatre School, Diana Nguyen's career has evolved into that of being an actor, writer, comedian and producer, and in 2021 she was awarded the Overall Top 40 Under 40 Asian Australian Leadership Award. Her writing credits include her comedy standup shows, '5 Ways to Disappoint Your Vietnamese Mother' in the anthology *Growing up Asian in Australia* edited by Alice Pung, and the award-winning web series *Phi and Me*, which won a Best International Narrative accolade at New Zealand Web Fest. Subsequent to this, the upcoming TV series *Phi and Me* (Northern Pictures) is currently in development with Screen Australia. Diana has also appeared on *Q + A* (ABC), *The Project* (Network 10) and featured in acting roles include the award-winning role of Kim Huong in *Phi and Me* (Sicily Web Fest); *Tunnel Rat* (Malthouse Theatre); *Viet Kieu* (Melbourne Fringe); *How to Stay Married* (Network 10) and more. Diana is passionate about improvisation and participates with the Melbourne ensemble companies the Humour Foundation and Melbourne Playback Theatre Company. You can listen to Diana on comedy interview podcast *The SnortCast*.



PETRA KALIVE — WRITER & DIRECTOR

Petra Kalive is Associate Director at Melbourne Theatre Company and has previously directed *Touching the Void*, *The Lifespan of a Fact*, *Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes* (Green Room Award-nominated Outstanding Direction & Outstanding Production), *Hungry Ghosts* and *Melbourne Talam* (Green Room Award-nominated Best Director) for the Company, as well as *Pandora* for MTC NOW. She has also worked for Belvoir Street Theatre, Sydney Theatre Company, Arena Theatre Company, Complete Works Theatre Company, St Martins Youth Arts Centre, Monash University Centre for Theatre and Performance, La Trobe Performing Arts Department and the Victorian College of the Arts. Independent directorial credits include: *Taxithi* (fortyfivedownstairs – Green Room Award-nominated Best Director); *Oil Babies*, which she also wrote (Lab Kelpie – shortlisted for the NSW Premier Literary Awards); and *My Brilliant Career*, a musical adaptation by Dean Bryant and Matthew Frank of the Miles Franklin novel (Monash University). Petra was Artistic Director of Union House Theatre from 2014–2019.



EUGYEENE TEH — SET DESIGNER AND AV CONCEPT & DESIGN

Eugyeene Teh is a theatre maker and designer across various forms. Recent design credits include *Endgame*, *Straight White Men*, *Hungry Ghosts*, *Abigail's Party* (Melbourne Theatre Company); *Die Troerinnen*

(Burgtheater, Vienna); *Blaque Showgirls*, *Meme Girls*, *Loaded* (Malthouse Theatre); and as co-artistic director of Little Ones Theatre, *The Happy Prince* trilogy, *Merciless Gods* (with Griffin Theatre Company and Arts Centre Melbourne), *Dracula* and *Dangerous Liaisons* (MTC NEON, Brisbane MELT, Darwin Festival). Other recent credits include *Titus Andronicus* (Bell Shakespeare); *Golden Square* (RISING Festival); *Lady Eats Apple* (Melbourne Festival, Back to Back Theatre); *Book of Exodus Part II* (Fraught Outfit); *Exil* (Sydney Chamber Opera, Carriageworks) and *The Howling Girls* (Sydney Chamber Opera, Carriageworks, Tokyo Festival, Music Theater Now Rotterdam); *The Seen and Unseen* (Asia TOPA) and *Shanghai Mimi* (Sydney Festival). Eugyeene is the recipient of a Green Room Award with other nominations, three Sydney Theatre Awards nominations, the Keith and Elisabeth Murdoch Fellowship and a placement through the Besen Family Artist Program.



KARINE LARCHÉ — COSTUME DESIGNER

Karine Larché is a set and costume designer. Originally trained in France (ENSATT), Karine worked in couture and theatre in Paris before moving to Melbourne, where she studied the Master of Design for Performance at the Victorian College of the Arts. Her set and costume design

credits include *Nothing* (Forty Five Downstairs) and *And She Would Stand Like This* (Antipodes Theatre at Meat Market). Her costume design credits include *Pool (No Water)* (VCA); *Project F* choreographed by Prue Lang and the short film *Gugu naGogo* (ABC/Screen Australia). At VCA, Karine was awarded the Portland House Outreach Program Scholarship, the Trina Parker Scholarship and the Jim Marks Postgraduate Scholarship. Currently, Karine is participating in the Besen Family Artist Program 2021 in Set and Costume at Malthouse Theatre.



RACHEL LEE — LIGHTING DESIGNER

Rachel Lee is a Singaporean-Chinese lighting designer and artist based in Naarm. She has previously worked with Melbourne Theatre Company as Assistant Lighting Designer for *The Heartbreak Choir*. Her works reflect her interest in exploring and interrogating the social ecosystem of her cultures. As an artist, Rachel is concerned with the politics of spaces and challenges that notion in the visual spaces she creates. She also works primarily with new writing. Rachel designs across several companies and festivals including Malthouse Theatre; Stephanie Lake Company; Red Stitch Actors' Theatre; Western Edge Youth Arts; Asia TOPA; RISING; Brighton Festival; Adelaide Festival; Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, Yirramboi, Midsumma, Fringe Circuits, and Melbourne International Comedy Festival. She co-produced and designed award-winning 落叶归根 (Luò yè guī gēn) *Getting Home* (Melbourne Fringe). She was awarded the Green Room Award for Best Production. Rachel was part of the 2020 Besen Family Artist Program and 2019 MTC Women in Theatre Program.



MARCO CHER-GIBARD — COMPOSER & SOUND DESIGNER

Marco Cher-Gibard is an artist working with sound exploring contemporary culture, expression and experience. He is a constant collaborator who works in a variety of contexts including performance, installation, workshops and composition. Theatrical compositions and sound designs include: *Complexity of Belonging* (Melbourne Theatre Company and Chunky Move); *Super Discount* (Back to Back Theatre and Sydney Theatre Company); *Lady Eats Apple* (Back to Back Theatre); *I am a Miracle* (Malthouse Theatre); *New Breed* (Sydney Dance Company); *Siren Dance* (Lilian Steiner); *Kinetic Gestalt* (Cass Mortimer-Eipper & Project Animo); *Daughters Opera* (Black Box Okhla, Delhi); *Memoir for the River and the Dictator* (Lilian Steiner); *Give Me Your Love* (Ridiculusmus); *We All Know What's Happening* (Samara Hersch and Lara Thoms). Marco has won Green Room Awards for best Composition and Sound Design (*I am a Miracle*) and Innovation in Site Specific Work (*MASS*).



JUSTIN GARDAM — AV DESIGNER

Justin Gardam is an award-winning sound and video designer. He is a graduate of Monash University's Bachelor of Performing Arts and completed a Master of Dramaturgy at the Victorian College of the Arts. Highlights of his design work include *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*, *Lamb*, *Control* and *Wakey Wakey* (Red Stitch Actors' Theatre); *Paradise Lost*, *Bad News*, *The Market is a Wind-Up Toy* and *The Nose* (Bloomshed); *Everyone is Famous*, *The Lockdown Films* and *F.* (Riot Stage); *Us* (St Martins Youth Arts Centre); *Driftwood* (Umbrella Productions); *I'm Not a Mime* and *Mime Consultant* (Patrick Collins); *Sneakyville* (Before Shot). As associate: *Abigail's Party* (Melbourne Theatre Company); *Considerable Sexual License* (Joel Bray Dance); *Suddenly Last Summer* and *The Moors* (Red Stitch Actors' Theatre); *Merciless Gods* (Little Ones Theatre). In 2020, Justin won a Green Room Award for Sound Design and Composition. He has received a further four Green Room Award nominations.



XANTHE BEESLEY — MOVEMENT DIRECTOR

Xanthe Beesley is a movement director and performance maker with a background in theatre and dance. Her recent movement direction and theatre making credits include *Touching the Void*, *Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes* (Melbourne Theatre Company); *Let Bleeding Girls Lie* (VIMH/La Mama); *My Brilliant Career* (Monash University); *Nora: A Doll's House*, *things we should talk about*, *The Lonely Crowd*, *Ida* (Union House Theatre); *Oil Babies* (Lab Kelpie/Darebin Speakeasy); *Ricercar* (Present Tense/Theatre Works); *Body Move Space* (Footscray Community Arts Centre) and performer/collaborator *In Plan* (Michelle Heaven/Castlemaine State Festival). She is the Artistic Director at Union House Theatre and has worked with and taught for some of Australia's leading arts and cultural organisations including the Victorian College of the Arts, La Mama, Melbourne Fringe, Footscray Community Arts Centre, Queensland Performing Arts Centre and KITE Theatre – where she was resident movement artist. Xanthe holds a Master of Theatre Practice from the VCA and was a participant in the 2019 Women in Theatre program at MTC.



ROSHELLE FONG — ASSISTANT DIRECTOR & AV COMPOSITION

Roshelle Fong is a Hong Kong Australian multidisciplinary artist who created the Melbourne Fringe award-winning immersive show *nomnomnom* in 2018, adapted in East Iceland, Shanghai and Sydney as part of Kings Cross Hotel's Vivid program. She created and performed in the live-streamed interactive show *Thirsty!* (2020) for Griffin Theatre's Griffin Lock-in and Google Creative Lab's *Theatre, made for the internet*, and her interactive theatre show *Poona* (2021) co-created with Keziah Warner for Next Wave was nominated for Best Ensemble in the Green Room Awards. Roshelle is an alumni of MTC's Women in Theatre Program 2019, First Stage 2021 and Cybec Scenes 2022. She is currently completing Australia Council for the Arts and Creative New Zealand's Digital Fellowship Program and a Headroom Award mentorship with RISING Festival, and studying Writing for Performance at the Victorian College of the Arts.



ALICE QIN – CULTURAL CONSULTANT

Alice Qin is a Melbourne-based theatre maker, actor and educator, with an interest in lifting voices from undervalued communities into a theatrical context. With Melbourne Theatre Company, she was the Assistant Director on *The Lifespan of a Fact* and *Golden Shield*.

She has directed *Security* (Darebin Arts Speakeasy) and she was the directing mentor on the award-winning 落叶归根 (Luò yè guī gēn) *Getting Home* (Melbourne Fringe). She was the directing placement for the Besen Family Artist Program at Malthouse Theatre in 2021, working on *Monsters* and *S.S. Metaphor*. As a performer, her Australian credits include *A Resourceful Hero Struggling against Incredible Odds* (Rawcus/ Midsumma Festival); *The Enlightenment of the Siddhartha Gautama Buddha* and the *Encounter with the Monkey King, Great Sage Equal of Heaven* (Elbow Room); *Mad as a Cute Snake* (Theatre Works); *Atomic* and *Little Emperors* (Malthouse Theatre). As a workshop artist with a focus on inclusion support, she has worked with St Martins Youth Arts, Western Edge, House of Muchness and Polyglot Theatre.

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