

Theatre Club 2023

INTO THE WOODS - Belvoir

BRAND NEW PRODUCTION OF THE CLASSIC MUSICAL.

In the thirty-five years since its premiere, *Into the Woods* has become a classic – brilliantly original, dark, funny, absorbing and utterly entertaining.

It begins, of course, with “Once upon a time...” By the end of the opening number not one but six fairytale plots have intertwined, as Cinderella, the Baker and his Wife, Little Red Riding Hood and Jack of beanstalk fame all head into the woods in search of love, happiness, wisdom. Three midnights of brilliant plot twists later they all end up singing “Happy ever after”. Except this is only the interval...

We all want our wishes fulfilled, but are we prepared to pay the price?

Why now? Because this is the truest and happiest thing I can think of to offer audiences in 2023.

HUBRIS & HUMILIATION – Sydney Theatre Company

Jane Austen, eat your heart out

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a down-on-her-luck mother (who has just lost her home to a shady online suitor) must send her only son to Sydney to find and marry a wealthy man.

Jane Austen’s drawing rooms and country estates are switched out for the dizzying dancefloors and leafy avenues of post-plebiscite Sydney in Lewis Treston’s outrageously funny *Hubris & Humiliation*. This laugh-out-loud comedy is a kaleidoscopic pastiche of Jane Austen’s writing and an outrageous satire of life and love in the Emerald City’s pumping gay scene.

Elliott, a naive wallflower from the Sunshine State, spends all his time pining for his best friend until he’s unexpectedly packed up and shipped off to his fabulously wealthy uncle’s Kirribilli mansion to pick up a few dating tips, and bag the man of his (mother’s) dreams. A series of increasingly ludicrous and high-stakes events take Elliott and his stowaway sister Paige from the rainbow mile, all the way to Berlin, and back again in a high-camp exploration of love, family and commitment.

Helpmann Award-winning director Dean Bryant returns to STC with a hilarious cast for this fantastic and boisterous tale of one man’s search for his other half, and

himself. It's *Muriel's Wedding-meets-Kath & Kim* with all the queer fabulousness of *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, topped off with a twist of nineteenth century charm. **Approx. duration** 2 hrs 20 mins (including interval). Subject to change. [More info.](#)
Content Strong language, suicide references and smoking. Subject to change. [More info.](#)

JULIA– Sydney Theatre Company

Not now, not ever

In 2012 Julia Gillard, Australia's first female prime minister, gave a speech that sent shockwaves around the world.

Now, ten years later, one of Australia's most esteemed and celebrated playwrights, Joanna Murray-Smith, brings the human story behind that speech to the stage.

Julia is an extraordinary new play that will see the glorious Justine Clarke (*Children of the Sun*) embody the life and career that led to the 'misogyny speech', in a phenomenal performance directed by Helpmann Award-winning Sarah Goodes (*The Children*).

This is both an intimate and compelling insight into the person behind the public mask, and a reflection on the experience of women in contemporary politics. Combining genuine excerpts from Gillard's speech with Murray-Smith's incredible dramatic imagination this play is also a thrilling coming together of history and art.

Around the world, we are seeing the most profound rollbacks to women's rights legislation in two generations. At the same time, there have been encouraging strides forward in the representation of women in positions of power, both at home and abroad. In this climate, *Julia* is a rousing and energising reminder of where we've come from and an empowering imagining of the challenges we've yet to face.

Approx. duration 90 mins (no interval). Subject to change. [More info.](#)

Content Strong language.

DO NOT GO GENTLE– Sydney Theatre Company

"Rage, rage against the dying of the light."

An all-star cast, John Bell, Peter Carroll, Vanessa Downing, John Gaden, and Brigid Zengeni will join forces with STC Associate Director Paige Rattray to tell this lyrical and moving story of resilience in the face of insurmountable adversity. This is a modern Australian classic written by a true iconoclast, Patricia Cornelius.

Do Not Go Gentle follows Robert Scott's historic attempt to reach the South Pole. Battered by screeching winds and blinded by snow, each member of the expedition must face their own fears and failings, as well as hunger, exhaustion and cold that defies imagination. All the while, a shadowy presence pursues them, barely visible on the horizon.

But all is not as it seems in the frozen wasteland, as beneath the blasted Antarctic landscape another story entirely is lying in wait. As the party draws ever closer to their impossible goal, another world becomes visible through the cracks.

Patricia Cornelius' remarkable career has seen her receive countless awards including the Patrick White Playwrights Award, the NSW Premier's Literary Award and the Windham Campbell Literature Prize. Now, she brings her unflinching honesty to bear on a moving exploration of human frailty at the ends of the Earth. Like the Dylan Thomas poem that inspired its title, *Do Not Go Gentle* is a magnificent ballad to the fleeting and precious nature of life.

Approx. duration 2 hrs (including interval). Subject to change. [More info.](#)

Content References to suicide and infrequent strong language.

JAIL BABY – Griffin Theatre

This wasn't how it was meant to go.

A few iPhones, a huge TV and a Soccerroos jersey—shove them all in the IKEA bag then drive away as fast as you can.

AJ wasn't meant to be spotted at the scene. AJ wasn't meant to get ID'd in the line up. AJ definitely wasn't meant to go to prison. But once AJ is convicted of theft, he is placed behind the walls of an institution where his own body is stolen from him.

In a cramped communal cell, AJ will become a 'jailbaby'—the ward of a justice system that chooses to turn a blind eye to the life-altering sexual violence committed against young men behind bars.

After an acclaimed performance in 2020's *Dogged*, **Anthony Yangoyan** reunites with director **Andrea James** for this crucial interrogation of Australia's legal system by multi-award-winning playwrighting powerhouse **Suzie Miller**. A spiritual sequel to her international phenomenon *Prima Facie*, Miller once again opens our eyes to the darkest corners of society and asks us to pinpoint the exact moment when it all goes so, so wrong.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST – Sydney Theatre Company

By Oscar Wilde

Hilarious, naughty and Wilde

The fabulous Helen Thomson (*Death of a Salesman*, Baz Lurhmann's *Elvis*) is back as Lady Bracknell, the wittiest and most wicked role in one of the greatest comedies ever written.

Algernon Blackwood and Jack Worthington are two best friends who are both living double lives. In the city they're playboys with a libertine reputation, but in the country they assume pious alter egos to get away from it all. Things get sticky when love enters the mix and the men have to keep track of who they're pretending to be and when. Floating haughtily above it all is the withering Lady Bracknell, Victorian London's socialite extraordinaire and the gatekeeper of all things high society.

In *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Oscar Wilde rips the covers off Victorian propriety and relishes in the unbridled silliness and snobbery of London's upper classes. In this production, director Sarah Giles (*No Pay? No Way!*) will dial up the luxuriant excess and the scandalised absurdity to create an unforgettable night of side-splitting hilarity.

The gold standard of theatrical comedy, *The Importance of Being Earnest* is a razor-sharp and endlessly relevant reminder of our tendency to get hung up on small trivialities while the big, important things in life pass us by.

Approx. duration 2 hrs 20 mins (including interval). Subject to change

THE VISITORS – Sydney Theatre Company

By Jane Harrison

Directed by Wesley Enoch

Visitors leave. Right?

On a sweltering day in January 1788, seven clan leaders gather on a sandstone escarpment overlooking the harbour. The attendees, six of them Elders and one new initiate, catch-up, laugh together, share a meal and compare notes. But beyond the friendly banter, protocols, and hospitality, a momentous decision is waiting to be made.

A mysterious fleet of giant nawi is amassing in the harbour and as they creep closer, these seven representatives must choose unanimously: whether to send these strangers on their way or welcome them?

After its Sydney Theatre Award-winning premiere production at the 2020 Sydney Festival, Muruwari playwright Jane Harrison's *The Visitors* will be reworked for this brand new production directed by one of Australia's most celebrated directors, Quandamooka man Wesley Enoch, and starring Wiradjuri actor Luke Carroll, Wiradjuri and Gamilaraay actor Beau Dean Riley Smith, and Gumbaynggirr and Wiradjuri actor Dalara Williams.

Part of Sydney Opera House's 50th anniversary program and co-produced by STC and Moogahlin Performing Arts, *The Visitors* is at once a riveting, deeply researched insight into one of the most impactful and painful days in Australia's history, and a hugely entertaining study of how communities respond to change and the unknown.

Approx. duration 1 hr 15 mins (no interval). Subject to change. [More info.](#)

Content Infrequent coarse language, themes of racial violence, and intergenerational trauma

THE DICTIONARY OF LOST WORDS– Sydney Theatre Company

Adapted by Verity Laughton from the novel by Pip Williams

Directed by Jessica Arthur

Discover the secret power of words

Pip Williams' award-winning New York Times bestseller and book club favourite, *The Dictionary of Lost Words*, will be brought to vivid life in a new adaptation for the stage by Verity Laughton and directed by one of Australia's best directors, Jessica Arthur (*Grand Horizons*, *Wonnangatta*).

It's 1886 and the very first edition of the Oxford English Dictionary is being compiled. Four-year-old Esme Nicoll has a front row seat. Well, she's hiding under the sorting table, anyway. As her father and his male colleagues decide which words stay and which go, Esme collects the discarded (often gendered) scraps to compile her own far more radical, far more magical dictionary.

A sweeping historical tale in the spirit of *The Harp in the South*, *The Dictionary of Lost Words* follows Esme from her childhood in the 1880s, into adulthood at the height of the women's suffrage movement and the beginning of the First World War. This novel captured the imagination of hundreds of thousands of readers around the globe, and was recommended by book club trendsetters like Reese Witherspoon. In 2023, Verity Laughton's adaptation will unfurl this beautiful and transportive reflection on the love between a daughter and her father, at a time when the women's rights movement was first gaining traction, into a delectable and warm night of theatre.

Approx. duration 2 hrs 20 mins (including interval). Subject to change. [More info.](#)

Content Strong language