

Special Thanks

This project would never have happened without the dedicated and selfless work of the High Priestesses of The Bacchae Project, the original development workshop actors: Madeline Anderson, Kerith Manderson-Galvin, Freya Pragt, Ellen Grimshaw, Lisa De Silva, Sharna Cousland, Tegan Harrod, and Laura McAloney, with Lucy Hotchin, Rebecca Mezei, Kaitlyn Claire.

I would also like to thank Alison Croggon, Jane Montgomery Griffiths, Jesse Rasmussen and Suzanne Chaundy for dramaturgical feedback during the development; Yvonne Virsik, Jason Lehane, MUST and La Mama for their unstinting support; and Chris Kohn & VCA for extra rehearsal space in the last few weeks.

Thanks also to Kathryn Yates, MUST Interns Kitty Malam, Nesceda Blake, Agata Dmochowska, Ashleigh Baxter and Matt Wanford; Ashleigh Basham & Jane Montgomery Griffiths (Greek Language Consultants); Elizaveta Dilanyan, Damian Petrov and Lowan Sist from MSA.

Finally, so many people have worked on, read for or passed through the various development stages, from day-long readings, staged readings and impulse workshops, that I can't remember them all. To those people too, thank you.

Robert Reid



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La Mama Theatre is on traditional Wurundjeri land. We pay our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, past and present, and we recognise their continuing spiritual and cultural connection to the land.

La Mama Theatre is registered by the Heritage Council Victoria and has received National Trust status.



La Mama is financially assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council – its arts funding and advisory body, the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, and the City of Melbourne through the Arts and Culture triennial funding program.



La Mama presents

THE BACCHAE

A Robert Reid and MUST Co-Production



10-21 JULY

La Mama Courthouse
349 Drummond Street, Carlton
lamama.com.au
msa.com.au/must

*A new, two-part exploration of
the Bacchae myths steeped in
ritual and rebellion that puts
women right at the forefront.*

THE BACCHAE

Director Notes

This project began life in 2011, initially inspired by the incarceration of the Russian punk band Pussy Riot. Since then, women banding together to fight patriarchal power structures around the world has only become increasingly relevant. The spirit of this struggle reminded me of the ancient Greek tragedy, *The Bacchae*. I've never been a big fan of the extant text by Euripides because the most interesting part of the play, the women, is left almost entirely off stage while two not very interesting men spend the show complaining about how terrible the women are. I've always been more attracted to The Performance Garage's adaptation, *Dionysus in 69*. Beginning with bits and pieces from various play texts, academic/historical research and a group of actors, we worked together improvising on the themes and characters suggested by the text. We developed performance text that became readings over several years, which eventually became the cycle of three plays and a prologue (satyr play) that we present tonight. The playwright Aeschylus also wrote a Bacchic cycle for the City Dionysia competition, lost in the collapse of the Roman Empire, which I've taken as a broad template for our story. This is not only about the ancient Greek cult of Dionysus worshippers, but is also a story about tyranny, revolution and their aftermath. All the women who have stood up to power over the generations, in our world, these are all The Bacchae.

Robert Reid



Crew

Robert Reid - Director
Kelly Wilson - Assistant Director, Musical Director & Performer
Sarah Macky - Assistant Director & Movement Director
Georgia Kate Bell - Producer
Monique Cheng - Stage Manager
Caitie Murphy - Stage Manager & Lighting Op
Isabella Preston - Assistant Stage Manager
Logan Trask - Assistant Producer
Georgie Wolfe - Lighting Technician
Matt Wanford - Lighting Assistant
Jason Lehane - Set Designer & Technical Manager of MUST
Yvonne Virsik - Artistic Director of MUST
Julia Kaddatz - Promotional Photographer & Graphic Designer
Pranjali Sehgal - Filmographer
Aleksandr Corke - Rehearsal Photographer

Crew:

Aleksandr Corke is a Melbourne-based multidisciplinary artist and writer, most recently known for his production of *Q* at La Mama, and as assistant director of *Suddenly Last Summer* at Red Stitch.

Caitie Murphy is excited to be part of the "sisterhood" of this piece, and to be stage managing her second show with MUST after *The D'oh Show* earlier this year.

Georgia Kate Bell most recently produced MUST's *The D'oh Show*, was Intimacy Choreography for MUST's *Climbers*, Stage Manager for *NEWK! @ The Butterfly Club* and is Co-Technical Manager for *The 2019 MUST Cabaret Festival*.

Georgie Wolfe is a theatre maker focused on lighting and sound design, whose recent credits include *Q* (La Mama), *Frankenstein xx* (MUST), *Tone Death: A Ghost Musical* (Butterfly Club/ MCF), *Vinegar Tom* (MUST), *The Temple* (Malthouse Internship) and *Lovely Mess* (Riot Stage).

Isabella Preston has completed a Diploma in Live Production and Technical Services at Melbourne Polytechnic, and is now enjoying refining her SM skills on this complex show.

Jason Lehane is a director, designer, lighting designer and performer. He is MUST's Technical Manager and has been working with Barking Spider Visual Theatre since 2007. In 2017 he was awarded a Green Room Award for his design work on Ash Dyer's *Tremor*.

Julia Kaddatz has worked closely with theatre makers such as Marshall & Marrows, MUST, and Ashton Turner as a promotional & performance photographer, set designer and graphic designer.

Kelly Wilson has stage managed *Slaughterhouse Five* (MUST/Theatre Works), *After Hero* (MAPA/Malthouse) and the 2017 & 2018 MUST Cabaret Festivals.

Logan Trask is best known for stage managing at Garrison Players and Seacoast Repertory Theatre in New Hampshire, USA, and is very excited to be part of her first Australian production.

Matt Wanford has been involved in many shows such as MUST such as *Holloway* and *Climbers*, in which he assisted with Lighting Design and Set Design respectively.

Monique Cheng is currently a fourth year/ honours student studying Education in Primary & Secondary teaching. At MUST, Monique has been the Assistant Stage Manager for *Next To Normal* and the Stage Manager for *The 2018 O Show*.

Robert Reid is a freelance playwright, director, game designer and academic. He was Artistic Director and founder of the independent theatre company Theatre in Decay and the Australian live games company Pop Up Playground. He is currently co-editor and founder of *WitnessPerformance.com* and has had plays produced by MTC.

Pranjali Sehgal is a Film and Journalism Major at Monash and is currently working on her first independent short film.

Sarah Macky has performed in the *Top Class Drama VCE Season of Excellence* (2019), *Antigone*, *Into the Woods*, and *Love's Magic*. Sarah has loved the creative opportunity of *The Bacchae* and looks forward to directing again in the future.

Yvonne Virsik has been lucky enough to mentor hundreds of brilliant emerging theatre makers at MUST. As a freelance director, she has worked with Malthouse Theatre, MTC, MKA, La Mama, Red Stitch and St. Martins. She is currently VP of The Australian Women Directors Alliance.

Cast:

Agata Dmochowska (Artemis, Linda Kasabian & Chorus) is best known for her work as Production Manager on *Climbers* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*, (MUST), and is excited to return to the stage in *The Bacchae* after a successful run in the cast of *R & J*. She is currently interning at MUST.

Aileen Lau (Trung Nhi & Chorus) is in her final year of a Bachelor of Biomedical Science, and is best known for her role as Sherri Mackleberry in the *The D'oh Show*.

Alice Stewart (Chorus) graduated from Monash University's BA (Theatre & Performance) in 2016. She is known for her performances in *Slaughterhouse Five* (MUST 2016) and for her work with her sketch comedy group. Alice co-directed *antony//cleopatra* as a part of Melbourne Fringe Festival 2018.

Amanda Dhammanarachchi (Livy & Chorus) is best known for her roles as Tiny in *Holloway: A New Musical*, and Bart Simpson in *The D'oh Show*.

Audrey Li (Thi Sac & Chorus, Semele) is a student at Monash, best known for her work in *The D'oh Show*.

Baria Khan (Chorus) is a current Monash student who is very excited to make her stage debut.

Bianca Montagner (Kosko & Chorus) is currently studying music and theatre at Monash. Bianca is best known for her work in *The D'oh Show*.

Caitlin Harry (Cin Que & Chorus) is best known for her work in MUST's *Holloway: A New Musical*.

Carissa Lee (Charlie) is a Wemba Wemba and Noongar actor. She performs in stage, film and television, and is best known for her role as Deadly Questions ambassador for *Treaty VIC*.

Casey Bohan (Baubo) recently returned from BYTE's international tour of *What Country Friend Is This?*, originating the role of Viola, performing across Asia & Europe.

Celina Mack (Chorus) is an actor/singer best known for playing Elizabeth in *Bitten* By Production's *Dracula*, *Last Voyage of the Demeter* and *Lady Macbeth* in the European tour of *Macbeth, a Rock Opera*.

Chelsea Rabi (Alecto & Chorus) is best known by rather small people for her work over many pantomime seasons with Make Believe Theatre, and by slightly bigger people as Marley in *Nowhere Boys*, Season 3.

Eleanor Howlett (Pentheus) is a graduate of WAPA, who has worked extensively in Brisbane, Perth, and Melbourne on numerous theatre productions. She has various film and television credits to her name including *House*

Husbands, *Wentworth*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *Neighbours*, and the upcoming new Australian feature film, *Judy & Punch*.

Elena Fanaritis (Megeara & Chorus) is a student at Monash University and The National Theatre, St Kilda. She is making her stage debut with *The Bacchae*.

Ellen Grimshaw (Paccula Annia) is a playwright and performer. She has most recently been commissioned to write *Just Us Girls*, and recently performed in *Freefall*, which she also co-wrote.

Ellen Ma (Euripides & Chorus) is best known for her work in *antony//cleopatra*.

Felicity Steele (Charcot) is a Fight Director, Yoga Instructor, and Actor.

Freya Pragt (Thyssa) has graduated from the VCA and performed in and toured with various shows locally, nationally and internationally.

G Ulrich (Nemesis & Chorus) is best known for their set design of *Death Match* and MUST's *Frankensteinxx*.

Gemma Livingstone (Achos & Chorus) is currently studying a BA/BMus at Monash, specialising in classical voice and theatre. She is excited to be participating in her first production since graduating high school.

Georgina Bright (Aura & Chorus) is best known for her work in *Slaughterhouse Five* as Lazzaro, Lily and ensemble, *Project Exiles* as The Girl and *Onstage 2018* performing her Queen Elizabeth I monologue.

Gillian Lee (Trung Trac & Chorus) is an actor and musician with MUST, best known for playing Harry Potter in *The 2017 O Show*.

Jess Gonsalvez (Squeaky) is better known for being a queer activist, social justice bard and cabaret cat than a theatremaker, but insists that this stage is her true love.

Jessica Hayden (Cylon & Chorus) is best known for *The D'oh Show* and is excited to now perform in *The Bacchae*.

Kathryn Yates (Mark Rudd) is a director, manager and performer, currently studying a Masters of Direction for Performance at VCA.

Kerith Manderson-Galvin (Richard Schechner & Aeschylus) is a maker, performer and dramaturg. They have performed in theatres, galleries, online, and at music and arts festivals across Australia. unofficialkerithfanclub.com

Madeleine Brown (Chorus) is very excited for her first performance with La Mama and MUST after spending her school years as a student performer at Masquerade Talent Studios.

Melanie Beddie (Tisiphone) has been working in the performing arts for over 30 years as an actor, director, dramaturg, researcher and actor trainer.

Mia Fine (Chorus) is best known for performing in musicals, new works at MUST, original cabarets, and for being a part of the team who wrote the original libretto for *Death Comes Calling: The Final Chapter of Avery Mann*.

Peita Collard (Alcibiades/Aristagoras) is best known as the Artistic Director of WAX Studios 1996-2003 and has been a Melbourne director, actor and producer for over 30 years. Some of the productions she remembers fondly include *M. The Scottish Play*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Deathwatch*, *A Night on Bald Mountain* and many original works with Melbourne writers such as Robert Reid's *Joy of Text*.

Roxana Paun-Trifan (Acteon, Lupe & Chorus) is a professional theatre and film actor, with a substantial career in European theatre, and a PhD candidate in Theatre Performance at Monash University.

Shamita Sivabalan (Fahiza) is an actor and performing artist who has toured around Australia performing in shows ranging from experimental theatrical productions to sellout physical comedy and burlesque, including the award-winning cabaret *Baby Got Back*.

Sharon Kershaw (Pythia) has been seen as Eros Claire in *Tyranny*, performed in *Builders* (La Mama), and performed in the *Mad Women Monologues*.

Tess Luminati (Patty) Since Graduating Federation University at the end of 2018, Tessa has worked with the Australian Shakespeare Company on *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*, and was an actor in Opera Australia's *Il Viaggio a Reims*.

Tijen Irmak (Chorus) is a student at Monash University who is excited to perform in this project.

Xanthe Sefton (Navarre & Chorus) is best known for *Cosmic Wars* and *End Transmission* with MUST and is thrilled to be part of *The Bacchae*.

Yoni Prior (Hera) is a performer, maker, teacher and scholar.

Zainab Abdul (Chorus) has been involved in several MUST productions, most notably *The O Show*, and is thrilled to be involved in this unique project by La Mama and MUST.

MUST (Monash Uni Student Theatre) is a department of the Monash Student Association, led by professional theatre-makers. We create vibrant, innovative performances by and with Monash students, for everybody. Our works are diverse, ranging from devised pieces to bold adaptations, from large-scale immersive work and festivals to intimate experiments.

We've staged works at the Melbourne and Adelaide Fringe, winning the Melbourne Fringe Live Art Award in 2015, and collaborated with La Mama, Theatre Works, MAPA and fortyfivedownstairs.
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