

 **LA MAMA** presents

THIGH GAP

30 OCTOBER - 10 NOVEMBER 2019



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La Mama Theatre is on traditional land of the Kulin Nation. We give our respect to the Elders of this country and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people past, present and future. We acknowledge all events take place on stolen lands and that sovereignty was never ceded.

We are grateful to all our philanthropic partners and donors, advocates, volunteers, audiences, artists and our entire community as we work towards the La Mama rebuild. Thank you!

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.



THIGH GAP

Written by Jamaica Zuanetti

Directed by Alice Darling

Dramaturgy by Keziah Warner

Performed by

Gemma: Lauren Mass

Iris: Veronica Thomas

Set and Costume design by Sophie Woodward

Lighting design by John Collopy and Georgie Wolfe

Sound design by Raya Slavin

Stage manager Jordan Carter

Set and Costume Design assistant Helen Rofe

Produced by Michaela Bedel and Jamaica Zuanetti

Photography credit Darren Gill

WRITER'S NOTES:

I set myself parameters when I started writing Thigh Gap. Two women. One room. They don't leave. It's a comedy. It soon turned dark and absurd.

What kept coming up in the dialogue was a sense of suffocation, of guilt, of shame, of disgust, a sense of feeling worthless. In revealing the habits and daily interactions of these two characters, I was hoping to paint a picture of the world outside; the greater social structures that influence and condition their behaviour and how easily they absorb these expectations and pressures, and how insidious they can be. Especially in terms of social media; our lives are constantly interrupted by technology. Thigh Gap is absurd, it's an amplified version of the world we live in but it also feels like a reality, one that constantly confounds and seduces.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES:

Our bodies. A miracle of flesh and biology that move us through the world. The barrier that separates us from everything else. The literal home of us all.

Simultaneously women's bodies are a stage for constant conflict. Under fire from both inside and out. The frontline between our rational minds, and a social system that relies on women feeling eternally insufficient and incomplete. The harshness, strictness, sharpness of so many regimes that are marketed to solve the problems of our misbehaving bodies, that then become part of our vocabulary, driving an internalised yearning to be smaller, more attractive, stretching to reach an ever-shifting phantom perfection.

Being a woman is to live in a constant absurdity, an impossibility, a madness.

JAMAICA ZUANETTI is a Melbourne based writer. She has a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) degree from The University of Melbourne. She is an acting graduate of the National Theatre Drama School. In 2015, she graduated with a Master of Writing for Performance from the Victorian College of the Arts, where she was the recipient of the Cassidy Bequest Scholarship. Her playwriting credits include Too Ready Mirror (Darebin Arts Speakeasy 2017), Thigh Gap (La Mama Theatre 2019), shortlisted for London's Platform Presents Playwright's Prize and The World isn't Made for Them selected by NIDA Launchpad for development, 2018. She was a writer in residence with And Also Presents at Siteworks, and was selected as a creative in residence at the Centre Pompadour in Ercourt, France in 2019. She has worked as a dramaturgy intern on Melbourne Theatre Company's Cybec Electric season and was selected as a writer in residence with Lonely Company in 2016.

ALICE DARLING is a Melbourne based Theatre Director. Alice holds a Bachelor of Creative Arts (hons) from Flinders University, Post Graduate Diploma in Performance Creation – Directing from VCA, and was the inaugural graduate director at Red Stitch Actors Theatre. Alice's directing credits include: 'FIERCE' by Jane e Thompson (Theatre Works 2018), 'The Chapel Perilous' by Dorothy Hewett (Federation University 2018), 'Catherine: the body politic' by Caroline Lee (La Mama 2016, 2017), 'Undercoat: a parafoxical tale' by Cynthia Troup (La Mama 2017), 'Love Child' by Joanna Murray-Smith (Raspberry Ripple 2017), 'True West' by Sam Shepard (Matchstick Theatre 2016), 'Middletown' by Will Eno (Red Stitch 2015), 'Kindness' by Bridget Mackey (Theatre Works 2015). Alice is passionate about new Australian work.

KEZIAH WARNER is a dramaturg and playwright. She is a current participant in Melbourne Theatre Company's Women in Theatre Program and Playwriting Australia's Post-Production Program. She is an alumna of Red Stitch's INK Program, Malthouse Theatre's Besen Family Artist's Program and Soho Theatre's Writer's Lab, UK. Dramaturgy credits include: Dazza & Keif (Melbourne Fringe, 2018-19), Nomnomnom (Various, 2018-19),

Too Ready Mirror (Darebin Speakeasy, 2017). Writing credits include: Control (Red Stitch, 2019), LuNa (VCA, 2019), Help Yourself (MTC's Cybec Electric, 2019). She has been long-listed for Soho Theatre's Young Writer's Award and short-listed for the Patrick White Playwrights' Award.

LAUREN MASS has been passionate about the arts from a very young age and always knew that she would pursue performing in her adult life. After graduating from The National Theatre Drama School, she proceeded to further hone her skills in the US at the New York Film Academy. Lauren has been fortunate enough to train and work with some of the most well-regarded directors and creatives in the industry. Since returning home to Australia, she has landed key roles for both stage and screen. Among her many stage credits, include a one-woman show that Lauren conceived, wrote and performed, which premiered as part of the Melbourne Cabaret Festival. Her film & television credits include 'Secret Bridesmaids' Business', and Netflix's 'Rostered On'.

VERONICA THOMAS A Melbourne local, Veronica has been an avid performer since the age of 7. An accomplished dancer and cellist from an early age, she then found her calling in acting, performing in various productions and short films, before being accepted into the VCA straight out of school. Whilst training, Veronica performed in The Melbourne International Comedy Festival and The Adelaide Fringe, and sustained her interest in dance, teaching casual classes. Among Theatre credits are: her role as Ruth in 'Cosi' (Directed by Greg Stone); Perdita in, 'A Winter's Tale', (Rhys McConnochie); Alister Smiths 'Hose', and 'Himmelweg', performed at Theatreworks; and 'Alice in Wonderland,' (playing Alice) (Directed by James Wardlaw).

She has done Television and Radio commercials for RACV, iSelect, ANZ, Medibank, and Dennis Family Homes. Extensive screen experience including 'Neighbours', Rachel Griffiths feature film 'Ride Like A Girl', a lead role in the international award-winning 'Bruce' Directed by Tony Rogers; 'Sexy Herpes' Directed by Madeleine Mullen Dyer, screened on the 9 Network; and a lead role in, 'The Dr Blake Murder Mysteries' Telemovie on ABC. Veronica is currently working on a new series due to be released on Netflix in 2020.

SOPHIE WOODWARD Sophie graduated with a Bachelor of Production (Design) from VCA in 2010 winning the Beleura John Tallis Design Award in her final year. Since then she has designed various productions, including; Rules for Living, You got Older, The Honey Bees, The Village Bike, Wet House, Love love love, 4,000 Miles, and Extinction (Red Stitch); hungry ghosts (MTC), The One and Mr Burns, A Post Electric Play (FortyFive Downstairs); The Pyjama Girl, Between the Clouds and Letters from the Border (Hothouse Theatre); A Long Day's Dying, Conspiracy, and Patient 12 (LaMama); and Love Song (Melbourne Fringe).

JOHN COLLOPY is a lighting and visual designer, whose work for the stage has been seen in Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane. His recent lighting design credits include Otello (Melbourne Opera; directed by Bruce Beresford); Paradise Lost; The Nose (The Bloomshed; Green Room Awards 2019 nominee for Best Production, Best Direction); The Market is a Wind Up Toy (The Bloomshed, Critics' Pick of Sydney Fringe 2018); Sensory Decadence and Kilter (One Fell Swoop Circus); Slaughterhouse Five (Theatre Works/Monash Uni Student Theatre); Helping Hands (A_tistic/ La Mama); The Other Place (Theatre Works/ Before Shot); Wrath (Baker's Dozen Theatre/ JackRabbit Theatre); 80 Minutes No Interval (Theatre Works/Hot Mess Productions); Marie Antoinette (Heartstring Theatre); The Man Who Cannot Sleep (White Night/Magic Lantern Studio/Sanctum Theatre); Too Ready Mirror (Darebin Arts Speakeasy); Ironbound; Hurlyburly; and Shining City (Q44 Theatre). He has worked extensively as a lighting assistant and associate with Katie Sfetkidis on shows such as Merciless Gods (Little Ones/Darebin Arts Speakeasy/Arts Centre Melbourne), The Happy Prince (Little Ones/La Mama), and The Moors (Little Ones/Red Stitch). He also seconded Emma Valente on JOAN (THE RABBLE/Theatreworks) and Little Emperors (Malthouse Theatre). The Happy Prince, The Moors, and JOAN were all nominated for 2018 Green Room Awards for Lighting Design in their respective categories.

GEORGIE WOLFE is a Melbourne-based theatre maker, focused on lighting design. She has recently completed a Bachelor of Arts/

Science at Monash University. During her time at Monash, Georgie completed an internship at Monash Uni Student Theatre's (MUST's) Technical Manager, Jason Lehane and an internship with Aedin Cosgrove, lighting/set designer for Pan Pan Theatre Company's The Temple. Her recent lighting design credits include Q (La Mama), Pink Matter (Melbourne Fringe 2019), Disinhibition (MUST), Tone Death: A Ghost Musical (Butterfly Club) Vinegar Tom (MUST), The Bachelor S17 E05 (La Mama/ Mechanics Institute), Death Match (MAPA/ Malthouse) and Lovely Mess (Riot Stage/ Melbourne Fringe 2018).

RAYA SLAVIN is a Melbourne based composer and sound designer working across multi disciplinary art forms. A graduate from the Victorian College of the Arts, Raya incorporates a responsive understanding to the dramaturgy of sound and an enthused interest in electronic music to her artistic practice. She has collaborated on a number of award winning productions that have toured both nationally and internationally to venues and festivals such as Soho Theatre London, Edinburgh Fringe and Sydney Festival. Raya's recent credits include Whale (Northcote Town Hall, MLive Festival Monash University) Lovely Mess (FOLA), Strangers in Between (fortyfivedownstairs, Seymour Centre) Birdcage Thursdays (La Mama Mobile, fortyfivedownstairs, La Mama/ Big West Festival) Brainstorm (Camberwell Girls Grammar School) Wild Bore (Malthouse Theatre) Fallen (Seymour Centre) F. (Poppy Seed Theatre Festival) and Hart (The Blue Room Theatre, Melbourne Fringe Festival). She also designed the theme for the award winning podcast The Messenger (Behind The Wire/The Wheeler Centre). In 2015, Raya was nominated for a Green Room award for her sound design for Ryan (La Mama Courthouse).

HELEN ROFE is a Melbourne-based set/costume designer and scenic artist. She graduated in 2018 from a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Production – Design Realisation) at the Victorian College of the Arts. During her time at the VCA, Helen worked as costume designer on 'A Chorus Line' and as set/properties designer on 'A View From The Bridge', as well as completing secondments with Melbourne scenic art company Scenic Studios and Sydney special effects company Odd Studio. Helen's

2019 design credits include Set and Costume Design for 'Quite Drunk, Very Jesus-y' as part of Melbourne Fringe Festival (Key Conspirators/ North Of Eight), in addition to working as design assistant on 'Mr Burns, A Post-Electric Play' (Lighting Jar Theatre) and wardrobe supervisor on 'Ghost Quartet' (Antipodes Theatre).

JORDAN CARTER is Jordan Carter is a freelance Stage Manager who graduated from The Victorian College of the Arts with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, Production (Stage Management) in 2018 and Swinburne University with a Diploma of Theatre Arts in 2012. Jordan has previously worked on The Crucible (Adena Jacobs), The Production Company's Jesus Christ Superstar (Gale Edwards) The Book of Ducks (Glenn Saunders) and Make Me A Hour (Stephanie Ghajar). Jordan loves the variety of work, people and the many new experiences of working in Stage Management. In her spare time, Jordan enjoys sewing, reading and dying rainbows into her hair.

MICHAELA BEDEL is a graduate of the National Theatre Drama School, where she was awarded the William P. Carr scholarship for acting. She later trained in Meisner Technique with Ward Studio in New York. In 2017 she joined Complete Works Theatre Company's tour of Romeo and Juliet and Macbeth, playing Juliet and Lady Macbeth in over 300 live performances. In 2019 she performed in the US series Preacher, played a recurring role in Realestate.com.au's The Other Saturday Game campaign, and performed the leads in the short films The Spark or The Fuel and Dovetail. Michaela is studying a Master of Marketing Communications at the University of Melbourne, and was selected by Melbourne Fringe Festival for their 2019 Marketing Internship program.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / THANK YOU'S: Thigh Gap is supported by Creative Partnerships Australia through the Australian Cultural Fund. Thank you to the following people who donated to our fundraising campaign: Rachel Baring, Hannah D'Arcy, Dominique Djem, Laura Jane Emes, Lesley Forward, Stephen Helfenbaum, Kathryn Joy, Meredith Kolosov, Loll Lombardi, Greg Neville, Berenice Ong, Sally Rillstone, Kate Shearman, Sophie Simmance, Barbara Smith, Stephen Snelleman

and Anonymous.

Thigh Gap was developed through writing residencies with Terracina Estate and Lonely Company.

Thigh Gap wouldn't be possible without the wonderful insights and support from many creatives whose contributions to the script have been invaluable and shaped the final work. These creatives include: Tanya Dickson, Laura Jane Emes, Russell Goldsmith, Fleur Kilpatrick, Bridget Mackey, Morgan Rose, Jessica Tanner and Izabella Yena.

THANK YOU: Lesley Forwood and James Darling, Rosanna Zuanetti, Idil Izdes, Emily Barber, David Pearce, Mark Wheeler, Melbourne Theatre Company, Anna Kennedy, Liz Jones, Caitlin Dullard, Sophia Constantine and all the staff at La Mama for your ongoing support of Thigh Gap.

LONELY
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