

EXPLORATIONS 2016



Image by Stefania Di Gennaro

Creative exploration is at the core of all works produced and presented at La Mama, however the EXPLORATIONS' annual season of works in development is a special time of year where artists are given three nights in the space to explore their practice and develop their theatrical pursuits.

La Mama's EXPLORATIONS season has been supporting works in development since 1980, and this year, a record 34 productions (that's 102 performances!), will take place involving hundreds of Melbourne's most exciting theatre-makers across ten full weeks of genuine risk-taking theatrical adventures.

Many of La Mama's EXPLORATIONS go on to enjoy full seasons as part of La Mama's Primary Program (*The Masque of Beauty*, *Charles Manson and the Subtle Art of Radicalisation*, *Catherine: The Body Politic*), others go on to tour works at other theatres around Australia (*Of Cows, Women and War*, *This Is Eden*, *Love Onion*, *Plunge*), and some take an even bigger leap and tour their works internationally (*My Pet My Love*; New York 2016, *Miss Jean Batten*; New Zealand 2016).

"Explorations 2016 celebrates all the things that excite and delight the team at La Mama. Across two months 34 productions will bring new energies, ideas, designs, stories and theatrical experiences to share. With all the celebrated differences, each team is united by the same comfort: the opportunity to develop and present their latest theatrical imaginings without the expectations of main seasons and with the absolute freedom to explore and play with a live and ready audience. There will be moments of magic, raw gems, massive risks and wonderful failures. Every day will bring creativity, community and theatre that speaks to us. And we love that."

- Caitlin Dullard
La Mama Company Manager and EXPLORATIONS Curator

LAND AND HOME	6
TO LONELY, WITH LOVE	7
ROMEO AND JULIET	8
PEDAÇOS	9
WHERE'S DAVID?	10
LIGHT AS A FEATHER STIFF AS A BOARD	11
THE CRYING MACHINE	12
I SAT AND WAITED BUT YOU WERE GONE TOO LONG	13
LAST YEAR'S EVE	14
RUNNING JANUS-FACED	15
HOW TO REJECT A PROPOSAL	16
THE RUG	17
FORTUNA, LEEWARD HO!	18
THE FEATHER PILLOW	19
LAST CALL	20
CONVERSATIONS WITH DEAD RELATIVES	21
THE TANGO TOUCH	22
I HEART FRIDA KAHLO	23
THE CROSSING	24
HANDS OVER EYES	25
MADAME NIGHTSHADE'S POISON GARDEN	26
LIFE'S A GAMBLE	27
GOLDFISH	28
US	29
ECHO	30
MR PHASE	31
DUALITY, OK!	32
VARIATIONS SUR LE MÊME THÈME	33
CLEAVE	34
FUGUES	35
HALLOWED GROUND: WOMEN DOCTORS AT WAR	36
DURAS: THE LOVER	37
DURAS: DESTROY, SHE SAID	38
WHAT IF IT DOESN'T MATTER?	39

LAND AND HOME

OCT 10, 11 & 12



My land! Our home? We're all descendants. Why me? Why here? Why now?
Ghosts – the lamp-lighter, a Gold Rush doctor, her heart-broken return soldier.
Alone on foreign shores. Ghostly echoes whisper from ancestral voices. Place?
Time? Identity? Untangling our daily transformations to show hidden stories
and aspirations.

A collaborative work by ACU and VU Education students that explores place, space and time.

Created by Gillian Schroeter with ACU students and Mary-Rose McLaren with VU students

Mon 6.30pm | Tue 8.30pm | Wed 6.30pm

TO LONELY, WITH LOVE

OCT 11, 12 & 13



Compared with the immediacy of posting online, a letter is a deliberate and thoughtful means of communication. It's a piece of yourself floating in the ether hoping for connection. *To Lonely, with love* looks at those in isolation and how a letter can bring them out of their personal cells. Inspired by real letters, real people's stories are intertwined with pop culture moments and told through sassy, physical and musical interludes.

Created by Jennifer Monk, Perri Cummings and Lisa Dallinger from real letters

Directed by Jennifer Monk

Performed by Jennifer Monk and Lisa Dallinger

Movement director: Harriet Devlin

Costume designer: Emma Howchin

Image by Eadie Testro-Girasole

Tue 6.30pm | Wed 8.30pm | Thu 6.30pm

ROMEO AND JULIET

OCT 14, 15 & 16



Romeo and Juliet is the continuation of a set of works that Elnaz Sheshgelani has created in the past 5 years in the style of Naghali (Persian Storytelling). Here the approach is fundamentally unique, being set in a miniature theatrical raised frame. "I lived in this frame over the past 6 months as part of my preparation."

Naghali, creator and designer: Elnaz Sheshgelani
Script Advisor: Liz Jones
Light Manipulator: Simon Fisher
Music, sound design and narrator: Myfanway Hunter
Image by Rick Evertsz

With support from the Victorian College of Arts (VCA)
as part of Elnaz Sheshgelani's doctoral candidature

Fri 6.30pm | Sat 8.30pm | Sun 6.30pm



A solo exploration from Lembrança.

Live Performance made from a box carried across the sea with a range of texts inside: some objects, a movement score or two, an idea about mediated mapping, and a handful of written text.

Conceived and performed by Magda Miranda
Directed by Rea Dennis
Image by Rea Dennis

Sat 6.30pm | Sun 8.30pm | Mon 6.30pm



WHERE'S DAVID?

OCT 18, 19 & 20



*I killed my best friend. I also burnt my toast this morning.
I don't know what's more disappointing.*

With a dark confession, *Where's David?* follows the consequent unravelling of absurd apathy, guilt and the denial of sentimentally. How does one protect themselves from grief?

Created and performed by Sandra Chui

Special thanks to Adam Cass, Myffy Hocking, Claire Miller and Jean Tong for their work and contribution to the development of *Where's David?*

Image by Cassandra-Elli Yiannacou

Tue 6.30pm | Wed 8.30pm | Thu 6.30pm

LIGHT AS A FEATHER STIFF AS A BOARD

OCT 19, 20 & 21



Confused and bewildered, staggered and hurt, tubes and bandages:
I was dead. Rather than floating up a shaft of light into a celestial palace,
it was like being turned into a piece of space smaller than the size of a
bubble in a bottle of tonic water. Dying was not what I thought it would be.

Based on John Smale's 2008: *The Metaphor of Life and Death*

Conceived, adapted and performed by Brian Lowe
Directed by Lloyd Jones

Wed 6.30pm | Thu 8.30pm | Fri 6.30pm

THE CRYING MACHINE

OCT 22, 23 & 24



The sweaty labyrinth of the slaughterhouse killing floor; Animals destined for oblivion on the supermarket shelf; the slaughterhouse workers who process them, at breakneck speed along the 'disassembly' line – that corporeal transition from 'being' to 'product'. An exploration of the politics of visibility and voice, the cruel consequences of the self-inflicted schism between human and beast, accompanied by original music and song.

Warning: This piece contains material pertaining to animal slaughter, which may be upsetting to some people.

Written by Kenneth MacLeod
Directed by Kate Stones
Designed and performed by Kenneth MacLeod and Kate Stones
Original music by Kenneth MacLeod

Sat 6.30pm | Sun, Mon 8.30pm



I SAT AND WAITED BUT YOU WERE GONE TOO LONG

OCT 23, 24 & 25



A motherless girl and a nameless woman meet in a swimming pool changing room. They both thought they'd be alone here. Neither of them can leave. They sit together and gradually realise that they may find comfort in each other. This new play explores the relationship between grief and the female body, the difficulty of speech, and the intimacy of strangers.

Written and directed by Olivia Satchell
Performed by Rosie Clynnes and Emily Tomlins
Dramaturgy by Emma Valente
Sound design by Russell Goldsmith
Set and costume design by James Lew
Lighting design by Kelsey Watt
Image by Sarah Walker
A VIMH production

Sun, Mon, Tue 6.30pm



LAST YEAR'S EVE

OCT 26, 27 & 28



Hugo was 8 years old when he came to the country as an immigrant. He has spent the last 15 years of his life living and working in this place that he has slowly grown to call home.

Tomorrow, Hugo will leave the country and never return.

Devised and performed By Zac Kazepis

Image by Stefania Di Gennaro

Wed 6.30pm | Thu 8.30pm | Fri 6.30pm

RUNNING JANUS-FACED INTO THE RED ABYSS FOLLOWED BY THE BLACK DOG

OCT 27, 28 & 29



The natural instinct, and in many ways, societies expectation of those with mental illness, is for it to remain hidden and for the 'sufferer' to withdraw.

Performers explore the internal world of mental illness, drawing on their own experience, to highlight an issue that society still struggles to accept, define and treat.

Devised and performed by Ebony Beaton, Grant Foulkes,
Anna Priestly and Elnaz Sheshgelani

Puppet design and construction by Elnaz Sheshgelani

Lighting design by Simon Fisher

Lighting and stage management by Annabel Warmington

Image by Ebony Beaton

Thu 6.30pm | Fri 8.30pm | Sat 6.30pm

HOW TO REJECT A PROPOSAL

OCT 30, 31 & NOV 1



I was proposed to nine days ago.
I also had my last good sleep nine days ago.
Coincidence?

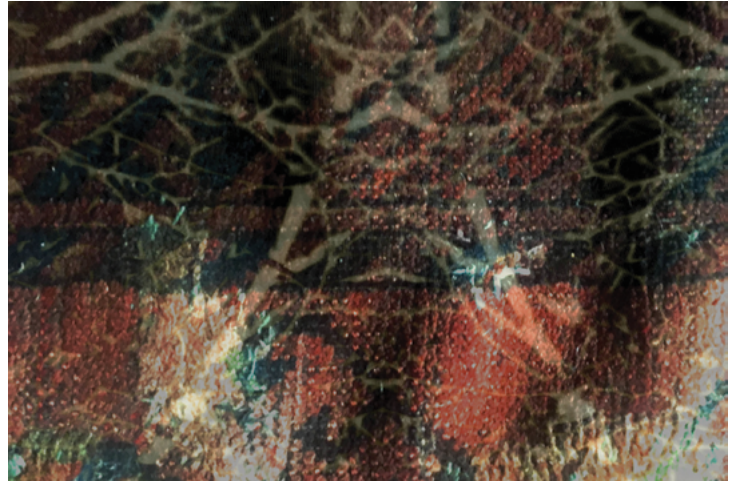
Oh, and I last saw my new fiancé eight days ago.
We are very deeply in love and care very much for the three kids we haven't even had yet.

Performed and devised by Adrian Del-Re
Directed and devised by Julia Hanna
Image by Shannon Ly

Sun 6.30pm | Mon 8.30pm | Tue 6.30pm

THE RUG

OCT 31, NOV 1 & 2



*Time falls wrong.
3 a.m. wake.
Blood fires this night.
Sun sparks of hate.
Bad damper downed.
Deadly. They wait
under the rug.*

An electropera for one pale male.

Created and performed by Ben Grant

Mon 6.30pm | Tue 8.30pm | Wed 6.30pm

FORTUNA, LEEWARD HO!

NOV 3, 4 & 5



Who is the eternal woman on the prow of those ancient ships? She lead sailors into the liminal wind to seek shelter in the mother whose blood is the sea of her being. Why is woman unwelcome aboard the very vessel whose energy she commands? Who were the women whose blood ran with those tides of adventure, exploration and freedom, who ran to the sea in search of escape from the poverty and condemnation of her sex, and even so had to disguise her true nature to survive. *Fortuna, Leeward Ho!* is an exploration of the true journeys of some of our radical foremothers.

Devised and performed by Bridget Haylock
Dramaturge and directed by Sue Ingleton
Sound design in collaboration with Malcolm Hill
Image by Bridget Haylock
Thanks to Michael Womack and the Enterprize Ship Trust

Thu 6.30pm | Fri 8.30pm | Sat 6.30pm

THE FEATHER PILLOW

NOV 4, 5 & 6



What is.. "Monster"?
The lover whose coldness leaves you in Eternal Winter..
Or the thing living in your pillow, feeding off you as you sleep?
Step inside the pages of a Living Book and enter
the macabre world of South America's "Edgar Allen Poe."
Through movement, storytelling, sonic and visual installation, experience
Gothic-esque horror, curious perspective shifts and fragmented sensations.

Based on *El Almohadón de Plumas* by Horacio Quiroga, 1907

Devised and performed by Brigid Morgan
Sound design in collaboration with Xen Ochren
Visual and image based dramaturgy: Ahmarnya Price
Image by Evan Morgan

Fri 6.30pm | Sat 8.30pm | Sun 4.30pm

LAST CALL

NOV 7, 8 & 9



"Half of the American people have never read a newspaper. Half never voted for President. One hopes it is the same half." - Gore Vidal

It is October 29th 2012. Hurricane Sandy approaches the US coast of New Jersey. It is seven days before a Presidential Election. Political Operative Lee Atwood is planning his retirement after a second straight loss for the Republican Party at the hands of Barack Obama. Stranded in a bar as the hurricane approaches, Atwood strikes up an unusual relationship with the bar's owner.

Written by Bill Ten Eyck
Directed by Christine Sinclair
Performed by Bill Ten Eyck, Sharon Corbier, James Mason,
Emma Ten Eyck, and Robert Ten Eyck

Mon 6.30pm | Tue 8.30pm | Wed 6.30pm

CONVERSATIONS WITH DEAD RELATIVES

NOV 8, 9 & 10



Conversations with Dead Relatives is a story about how we see ourselves, where we come from and who we are.

Our country was colonised by adventurers, explorers and refugees. Many of them came to escape their past so how do we, their descendants, know who we really are?

We've definitely got some questions that need answering.

Created and performed by Phil Ormsby and Alex Ellis
Image by Phil Ormsby

Tue 6.30pm | Wed 8.30pm | Thu 6.30pm



THE TANGO TOUCH

NOV 11, 12 & 13



A hybrid of movements, sounds and images from Melbourne public spaces and from the tradition of Argentine tango dance sets the stage to explore interactively how a direct and shared experience of the sense of touch can enhance our bodily connection with self and others and trigger creative forms of engagement with the rhythms of city life.

Concept, choreography and direction by Raffaele Rufo
Performed by Raffaele Rufo and Valentina Vitolo (with special guests)
Music by Elian Sellanes
Light design by Rachel Burke
Image by Jorge de Araujo

The Tango Touch exploration is part of Raffaele Rufo's PhD project at Deakin University.

Fri 6.30pm | Sat 8.30pm | Sun 6.30pm

I HEART FRIDA KAHLO

NOV 12, 13 & 14



Frida-Mania sweeps the world. La Mama is swept up too.

An interdisciplinary performance lecture originating in Frida Kahlo's private journal. Through this icon of icons, we shall imaginatively delve into revolution, feminism and cultural appropriation.

Which other ways can we dance, play or tease the complex questions of our times?

Created and performed by Amaya Vecellio
Sound Artist: Ben TD
Research Consultant: Jerico Mandybur
Image by Theresa Harrison

Sat 6.30pm | Sun 8.30pm | Mon 6.30pm

THE CROSSING

NOV 15, 16 & 17



On an overnight ferry / In the deep waters off Sumatra epicentre of earthquake and tsunami / Where the earth's tectonic plates collide / Drunk / On his honeymoon / A man falls overboard / into pitch darkness

Based on a true story, *The Crossing* uses lyrical text, projection & movement to explore the contours of surrender and survival, light and shadow, unconsciousness and awakening.

Written and performed by James Lawson
Directed by Anna Loewendahl
Visual design and creation by Greg Pritchard
Additional visual design by Lynne Kent
Sound design by Declan Kelly
A Vessel production

Tue 6.30pm | Wed 8.30pm | Thu 6.30pm



HANDS OVER EYES

NOV 16, 17 & 18



How can you tell if someone is being honest with you? Is intimacy something that can be sustained? What if it is only what you chose to be told? These are questions that conversationalist Paul Havour is asked every day. Working for a company that conducts simulated experience sessions, Paul must try to manage a troubled client whilst beginning to question the worth of his profession.

Written and directed by Peter Danastasio
Performed by Rowan Howard, Ashton Sly, Ezekiel Day,
Alex Rouse, Danny Carroll, Alex Rowe and Amelia Burke
Lighting design by Darcy Conlan
Sound design and composer: Ben Griffiths

Wed 6pm | Thu 8.30pm | Fri 6.30pm

MADAME NIGHTSHADE'S POISON GARDEN

NOV 19, 20 & 21



"They said, 'Do not play, in the Poison Garden...'"

Planting. Watering. Tending. There is so much to do in one's little patch of garden. Ripping. Digging. Burying. But just what has Madame Nightshade planned for this season?

A one-woman show incorporating clown, physical theatre and vegetable manipulation.

Devised and performed by Anna Lehmann Thomson
Dramaturg: Jaye Hayes
Direction and creative support: Kimberley Twiner, David Maney and Jaye Hayes
Sound design by Jack Thomson
Image by Mikey J White

Sat 6.30pm | Sun 8.30pm | Mon 6.30pm

LIFE'S A GAMBLE

NOV 23, 24 & 25



*Like a drug hope surges through their veins.
Desire embedded in their DNA.
The elusive dream realised in the flip of a coin,
the press of a button, the click of a mouse.*

Come see this band of broken and brilliant characters.
What have you got to lose? After all... Life's a gamble.

Written and performed by Dennis Coard
Dramaturge/Director: Catherine Hill
Image by Grace Coard

With any luck, the evening will include Michelle Wright's *Last Man Standing* (Winner 2014 Alan Marshall Short Story Award)

Wed 6.30pm | Thu 8.30pm | Fri 6.30pm

GOLDFISH

NOV 24, 25 & 26



Fiona has a new pet goldfish called Terry. Terry is Fiona's best friend. There's one problem with Terry. Terry is not real. Terry appeared harmless, in the beginning, as all imaginary friends are. Terry did not eat Just Fiona. Terry ate Fiona. Terry evolved into something uncontrollable. So, be careful what you wish for... it might have wished you first.

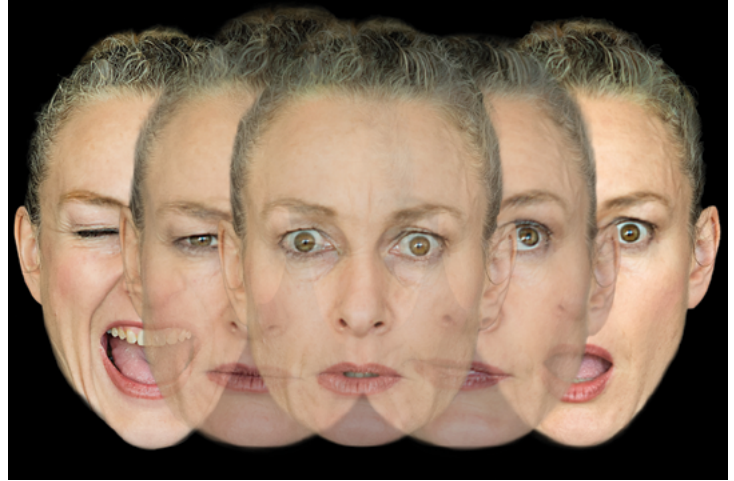
Devised and performed by Suzie Hardgrave
Music by Piotr Nowotnik
Lighting Design by Bronwyn Pringle
Stage Management and Technical Operation by Annabel Warmington
With special thanks for the artistic support of
director & dramaturge Tom Healey
With appreciation to The Space, Prahran
for sponsoring the development of this new work

Thu 6.30pm | Fri 8.30pm | Sat 6.30pm



US

NOV 27, 28 & 29



"It is hard to imagine another performer with a body so pliable and eccentric."
- Stage Whispers

Us exposes the complex navigation between our public face versus our private thoughts. Mining the nuanced interactions between structure and improvisation, *Us* abstracts movement, text and sound to create an absurd world, where the desire for connection and the discomfort of disclosure become ridiculous bedfellows.

Created and performed by Penny Baron
Sound Artist: Michael Havar
Outside Eye: Carolyn Hanna
Dramaturgy by Glynis Angell
Lighting design by Bronwyn Pringle

Sun 6.30pm | Mon 8.30pm | Tue 6.30pm

ECHO

NOV 28, 29 & 30



Echo - a sound heard again after being reflected.

Echo is a comedic journey through the perilous terrain of motherhood. Let's take a trip down unplanned pregnancy lane...

We'll be tearing down some outdated ideologies and tossing out some social stigmas along the way. According to our Facebook feeds, motherhood should be a blissful vacation of babycinos and infinite wonder. But is it real?

Written by Amber Hart and Christie Rohr
Performed by Amber Hart, Christie Rohr and River Gaines
Designed by Amber Hart
Lighting and sound operated by Annabel Warmington
Image by Lindsay Gaines

Mon 6.30pm | Tue 8.30pm | Wed 6.30pm

MR PHASE

DEC 1, 2 & 3



Just like the kid who grew up with the apes.
Except he didn't, he grew up with the ads.

Put down your anti-ageing eye balm and come stroll through the uncanny valley. Inspired by the persona he created fourteen years ago, Christopher Brown grapples with time, media saturation and the voices in his head. Part eulogy, part docusophical monologue, part phenomenological embrace of the past.

Written and performed by Christopher Brown
Creative Team includes Luke Kerridge, Rhian Hinkley, David Franzke, Thomas Howie, Jason Maling, Daniel Crooks and Shio Otani
Image by Daniel Crooks
An Encyclopaedia of Animals production

Thu 6.30pm | Fri 8.30pm | Sat 6.30pm

Encyclopaedia
of Animals



DUALITY, OK!

DEC 2, 3 & 4



Have you ever experienced your body as a foreign land? What if your left and right sides started to behave independently and develop their own personality?

1987, Sarah was involved in a car accident that left her with a brain injury. She offers you to explore the duality that defined her new reality, seeking her own self within.

Created, performed and written by Sarah Mainwaring
Original script writer: David Mainwaring
Directed by Iris Gaillard
Dramaturgy and performance support: Kate Stones
Sound design by Jess Keefe
Image by David Burrows

Fri 6.30pm | Sat 8.30pm | Sun 6.30pm

VARIATIONS SUR LE MÊME THÈME

DEC 5, 6 & 7



"The ordinary children, the unique ones, are ogres who have devoured their brothers in the mother's womb. Only we the twins are innocent"
- Michel Tournier "les meteores" (Gemini)

Visual theatre, puppetry and Butoh

Concept design & performance by Kaira Hachefa
Directed by Penelope Bartlau
Butoh movement mentor and choreographer: Helen Smith
Puppet makers: Vanessa Ellis and Michael Conole
Produced by Compagnie Articulate and Kaira Hachefa

Mon 6.30pm | Tue 8.30pm | Wed 6.30pm

CLEAVE

DEC 6, 7 & 8



Inspired by the incredible lives of Daisy and Violet Hilton, conjoined twins born in 1908 in Brighton, England. At age 4, they were shown as freaks at Luna Park, Melbourne.

Burke was born with two vaginas an anomaly that caused a great deal of grief and had a 'twin' sister who also different.

Can family ties ever be cut?

Written and performed by Colleen Burke
Dramaturgy by Doug McLeod
Image by Michael Camilleri

Tue 6.30pm | Wed 8.30pm | Thu 6.30pm

FUGUES

DEC 9, 10 & 11



Devised and performed by the Boutique Theatre Ensemble, *Fugues* explores the interplay of identity, introspection and the public performance of self. In content and form, it takes inspiration from the psychological and musical meaning of the word fugue as performers bring interpretations of a single character, enacting the cycle of losses and gains that contribute to this particular person's identity.

Collaborators and performers: Matthew Sini, Emma Caldwell, Tamiah Bantum Mathew Young, Charlotte Fox, Jessica Tanner, Jessica Stenglein, Leah Winterton, Lucinda Barratt, Laila Thaker, Max Gettler, Seon Williams and Scott Mackenzie

Directed by Tamiah Bantum and Mathew Young

Image by Bodie Strain

Fri 6.30pm | Sat 8.30pm | Sun 6.30pm



HALLOWED GROUND: WOMEN DOCTORS AT WAR

DEC 10, 11 & 12



From the civilian trailblazers of WW1, to those recently serving with our military in the Middle East, *Hallowed Ground* examines the vast experience of women doctors at war throughout the past century from their own personal perspectives.

Supported by Australian Government's Anzac Centenary Arts & Culture Fund

Written by Carolyn Bock and Helen Hopkins

Directed by Tom Healey

Lighting design by Rebecca Etchell

Sound design by Nick Van Cuylenberg

Performed by Carolyn Bock, Helen Hopkins, Fiona Macleod and Chi Nguyen

Image by Nancy Flammea

Sat 6.30pm | Sun 8.30pm | Mon 6.30pm

the shift theatre



auspicious
arts
projects



DURAS: THE LOVER

DEC 13, 14 & 15



"Very early in my life it was too late." – Duras

Laurence Strangio's long-awaited adaptation of Marguerite Duras' *The Lover*. Performed as a duologue between the older Duras and her younger self, this sensational memoir about a young girl's illicit affair with a wealthy Chinese man in 1930s French Indochina is an intoxicating meditation on memory, death and desire.

"A revelation... exhilarating, sexy, melancholy, truthful, modern and female."

– Deborah Levy in *The Independent*, on reading *The Lover*

Text by Marguerite Duras

Adapted and directed by Laurence Strangio

Performed by Brenda Palmer and Sophia Riozzi

Tue, Wed, Thu 6.30pm

DURAS: DESTROY, SHE SAID

DEC 13, 14 & 15



"I don't understand ..."
"... Don't try to understand."

Four guests at an isolated hotel in the midst of a shadowy forest.
A tennis game one never sees. A card game without rules.
A game of seduction that may consume all.

"No Australian director is as attuned to Duras' work as Laurence Strangio."
– Cameron Woodhead, *The Age* 2016

Text by Marguerite Duras
Adapted and directed by Laurence Strangio
Performers include Richard Bligh, Dean Cartmel and Natasha Herbert
Designed by Mattea Davies, Bronwyn Pringle and Raya Slavin
Dramaturgical associate: Caitlin Dullard

Tue, Wed, Thu 8.30pm

WHAT IF IT DOESN'T MATTER?

DEC 16, 17 & 18



Theatre maker Lloyd Jones and The Ensemble
examine the idea of theatre as 'naked space'.

Performers play a secondary role to intrinsic
aspects of theatre: light, dark, sound, movement.

'Emptiness' is transformed into the more ethereal
notions of nothingness, stillness, silence.
Unexpected beauty awaits.

Devised, designed and directed by Lloyd Jones
in collaboration with The Ensemble
An O.T.H.A.N. Theatre Company presentation
Image by Darren Gill

Fri 7.30pm | Sat, Sun 6.30pm