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La Mama Theatre is on traditional land of the people of the Kulin Nation. We give our respect to the Elders of these traditional lands and to all First Nations 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, Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund - an Australian Government initiative, the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, and the City of Melbourne through the *Arts and Creative Partnerships Program*.



L A M A M A P R E S E N T S I N T H E M I R R O R



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IN THE MIRROR

Written by Mammad Aidani

Directed by Mammad Aidani

Performed by Scott Welsh, Helen Doig, Mark
Tregonning, Sahra Davoudi, Zachary Kazepis

Set design by Helen Doig

Lighting design by Camille Bortz Knight

Sound design by Zachary Kazepis

Stage manager Camille Bortz Knight

Photography credit Darren Gill

Creator's Notes:

We live in a world full of catastrophes characterised by violence, brutality and injustices imposed on citizens in closed societies by despots where people like me come from; and there are some societies which pride themselves of being open, democratic, just and inclusive like Australia, where a sharp knife of visible and invisible racism, exclusion, and injustices pierces into the beings of those who are different and deemed undesirable, rendered into nothing.

Those who have directly experienced injustices, the devastation of war, poverty, discrimination, physical and psychological torture, suffering, and trauma due

[Creator's note, continued...]

to dispossession, uprootedness from their homelands, loneliness and alienation and survived the darkest moments of their lives, live in a world that has treated them like it is a permanent feature in their lives.

How do the beaten, rejected, traumatized keep surviving by carrying their deep wounds, which continue to haunt them internally?

Why does society reject or patronize its powerless members? Why do those in positions of power undermine those who are less fortunate than them? Why does a society that claims to be accessible, democratic, inclusive, and caring shuts its doors to the underprivileged and those who seek asylum to live it in peace and be free?

Who benefits from forcing others who are not powerful to go through agonizing and humiliating experiences in their lives? Do they see or care about this deep feeling of isolation, loneliness and despair experienced by individuals like Shaun and Virginia? Why do these individuals put themselves through such an agonizing struggle to figure out how to preserve their human dignity and survive in a hostile world that ignores, rejects, marginalizes and misunderstands them?

- Mammad Aidani

Scott Welsh, Shaun

After a lifetime of being looked at, having played himself for three decades, as well as Christ, the devil in Manson, and channelling a host of hobos, Scott Welsh is retiring from acting. In his final performance ever, Scott Welsh will combine his life as an actor and an existentialist, in a real and imagined descent into nothingness...

Helen Doig, Paula

A Curtin University and WAAPA graduate, Helen has performed in numerous productions at La Mama, including: 'Avon Calling'; 'Bring on The Talent'; 'The Elephant's Tusk'; 'Little Time Bombs' and as 'the woman' in Mammad Aidani's 'That Was Then'. She was on the board of The Melbourne Workers Theatre for seven years and one of their Rapid Response Street Theatre performers. She was also a founding member of The Wallace Co-op, a company specialising in the rarely performed genre of Grand Guignol, the theatre of horror and terror. She has played Olive in 'Summer of the Seventeenth Doll', Marcus in an all-female version of Shakespeare's 'Titus Andronicus', Agnus in Tracey Lett's 'Bug', Shirley in 'Shirley vs the Possums', Mrs Winemiller in Tennessee Williams' 'Summer and Smoke' and was last seen at La Mama in 2019 as Erna in the punk Austrian classic, 'Holy Mothers'. TV credits include, 'Ship to Shore', 'Blue Heelers', 'MDA', 'Streetsmartz', and 'Cloudstreet'. Plus, Feature Films: 'Dingo'; 'Mallboy'; Short Film 'Maker'; the Science fiction thriller, 'OtherLife' and the soon to be released, 'Some Happy Day'.

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." - Aesop

Mark Tregonning, Paul

Mark has worked in NZ and Australia for over 25 years as an actor, improviser and producer. He holds a BA (Theatre & Film) from Victoria University of Wellington and a BA (Acting) from the VCA. Theatre acting credits include 'Gilgamesh' (Uncle Semolina & Friends), 'Savages' (45 Downstairs), 'The Lonesome West' (Theatreworks). In 2019 he played the lead part of Eddie in

Arthur Miller's 'A View From The Bridge'. He was last seen in the premiere production of 'A Name For Herself' playing WB Yeats in April this year. His screen credits includes 7 series of the webseries 'Queer as Fxxk'.

"Compassion is the basis of morality"- Arthur Schopenhauer

Sahra Davoudi, Virginia

Sahra Davoudi graduated with a Bachelor of Theatre Art in 2009 at the University of art and architecture in Tehran. While studying she was involved in many productions as a writer, actor and costume and set designer. Her dissertation thesis was an adaptation of the short story by Raymond Carver 'Neighbors'. She was actor and writer for Vessel at the Arts Centre Melbourne 2017 and has featured in campaign videos for the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre(ASRC) in Melbourne. For Outer Urban Projects, a bold performing arts company that serves as a platform for emerging artists, she was writer and actor for The Audition, for which she was well acclaimed by many reviewers. She is currently involved in the development of Vigil – a dance/film/ theatre project with Outer Urban Projects.

Zachary Kazepis, Hendro

Zachary Kazepis is an actor, writer and music composer who has performed in numerous staged productions in Melbourne and interstate over the last 5 years, including his critically acclaimed one man show 'Last Year's Eve'. Most recently Zac performed in the Melbourne Comedy Festival show 'The Business of God', which was staged at La Mama in April 2021. As a musician, Zac creates atmospheric and evocative scores for stage and screen, as well as releasing music under the name KIT HEPBURN. Most recently Zac released his latest single 'left alone' in May 2021, which was premiered and featured in Rolling Stone Magazine and met with overwhelming critical reception from national and international media. Zac will be performing on stage next in his new play 'In Blood', later this year at La Mama.

Cami Bortz Knight, Lighting Designer, Stage Manager

Cami is a lighting designer and technician from London. She has freelanced as a technician (both in lighting and sound) over the years in London as well as in Melbourne. Cami spend three years as a full time Performance Technician at the MCT in South London, where she worked across all areas of technical and theatre production for various performances, including dance, corporate photoshoots and theatre amongst others.

“Compassion is everyone’s concern. No matter how different others may appear or how little, if at all, you know them.”

Cherian Jacob, Cicero’s Circle, Producer

Cicero’s Circle (www.cicierocircle.com) was formed in 2013 with the objective of pushing the limits of staging and exploring Australian works and performances through a diversity of artists and cultures primarily engaging with Australian writers, actors and performing artists, incorporating various physical forms, mask play, multicultural ensembles and the works! It’s been a pleasure working with and learning from Mammad Aidani - an iconoclast in his own right!

“You who saw it all, or saw flashes and fragments, take from us some example, ‘try and get yourselves together, clean up your act, find your community, pick up on some kind of redemption of your own consciousness, become more mindful of your own friends, your own work, your own proper meditation, your own proper art, your own beauty, go out and make it for your own eternity” - Allen Ginsberg

Thank you...

I would like to wholeheartedly thank Liz Jones, who welcomed me to La mama all those years ago. Lloyd Jones, who directed my first Play at La mama in 1996 and continued to do so at La mama over the last two decades. They embraced me when I was in a deep state of a shock coming to terms with the loss of my city of birth during the war, far away from my beloved ones, having being uprooted from my homeland, Iran (you may recall no one talked about Iran in the ‘80s and ‘90s, except that most people assumed that, we Iranians were Muslim fanatics and potentially terrorists) and could not speak for my plays adequately over those years. I would also like to convey a special thanks to Caitlin Dullard and the entire La Mama family for their relentless support for me during the years.

I finished writing this play in March 2002. It was first performed in August 2002 at La Mama Theatre and was directed by David Everest with the following cast:

Alen Kind (Paul), Helen Hopkins (Paula), Afshin Nokousersht (Hendro), Andrew S. Gilbert (Shaun) and Funda Simikal (Virginia).

My experiences of working with these dedicated, committed, caring, and fantastic team for this production of the play has been one of the most meaningful artistic experience in my life.

I also want to thank you for making the effort to come along and witness this performance at such a critical period where we continue to battle an invisible enemy and the devastation that ensues.

Let us hope it will be over soon

– Mammad Aidani