

LA MAMA AND 29 SCENES
PRESENT THE WORLD PREMIERE
OF THIS NEW AUSTRALIAN
PLAY SET DURING THE BLACK
SATURDAY BUSHFIRES

HEARTH



“It looked so beautiful. It looked magical – snow, falling here, in January. But it wasn’t snow.”

Australian playwright Fleur Murphy premieres a compelling new drama about family and belonging, HEARTH, from 18 – 29 May at the La Mama Courthouse.

“I’ve been extremely humbled by the response we’ve received from various communities and individuals throughout the development of the work. What’s been amazing is the space it’s provided others to share their own stories of hope and resilience – whether in the rehearsal room, the classroom, over a cuppa and a scone after a reading, or in the theatre foyer. After all the pivots, cancellations, and rescheduling throughout the last two years, I’m looking forward to finally bringing HEARTH to the stage,” said Murphy.

Forged in the exploration of an environmental threat Australians know all too well – an approaching bushfire, HEARTH brilliantly strikes the balance between pathos and humour, immediately drawing audiences in with its witty and lyrical dialogue, relatable characters and timely themes.

It’s the 7th of February 2009 – forever known in Australia’s history as Black Saturday. It’s also Tom Robinson’s 18th birthday. Celebrations kick off at the family’s Kinglake home and nothing seems out of the ordinary. But tensions start to rise between Tom and his older brother Matthew, along with the temperature outside, and before the ice-cream cake has time to melt a deeply held family secret is revealed.

Will bringing everything out in the open finally give the Robinsons the peace and acceptance they’ve constantly struggled for – or will it tear them further apart and make them question the very structure they’ve tried to uphold?

Urgent, heartfelt, at times hilarious, and achingly raw, this play investigates how good intentions can slowly erode away and reveal the cracks in the foundation of a family. It poses the questions: What makes a family? Is it love, blood or law? And, what breaks a family?

“The play is inspired by a number of things: my own upbringing in a small country town, family secrets and the heartbreaking accounts from those involved in the Black Saturday bushfires. In the beginning it may look like a familiar family drama but it’s a play scorched in secrets and trauma. For me, HEARTH is about striving for a sense of belonging and a desperate yearning to heal,” Murphy said.

Playwright: Fleur Murphy
Director: Tom Royce-Hampton
Producer: Fiona Stafford
Dramaturge: Emma Fawcett
Set & Costume: Chantal Marks
Lighting: Clare Springett
Sound: Tom Royce-Hampton & Max Royce-Hampton

HEARTH features a stellar cast including Geoff Paine (Neighbours), Sonya Soares (Melbourne Talam, MTC), Martin Blum (Boy out of the Country, Larrikin Productions), Carole Patullo (Button, La Mama) and rising star Kurt Pimblett (Hir, Belvoir and Because The Night, Malthouse).

SEASON 18 - 29 May
TIMES Tue & Wed 6.30pm
Thu - Sat 7.30pm
Sun 4pm
VENUE La Mama Courthouse
349 Drummond Street, Carlton
LENGTH Approx. 85 minutes
TICKETS \$30 Adult | \$20 Concession
BOOKINGS 03 9347 6948 or www.lamama.com.au

“Fleur’s writing is as humorous as it is deft, and HEARTH takes its audience on a rollercoaster ride. It is a vital and important work told within a stylistic framework that would typically not include me, an artist of colour,” said Sonya Soares (Abbey).

This bold new work is guaranteed to not only be a thought-provoking night at the theatre, but also an extremely enjoyable one.

HEARTH was long-listed for the Theatre503 Award in London (2020) and shortlisted for the Rodney Seaborn Playwrights Award (2021).

HEARTH has been selected for the VCAA 2022 Playlist for VCE Theatre Studies Unit 3 & 4.

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