

QPAC AND SOFT TREAD PRESENT

THE WHARF REVUE

PRIDE IN PREJUDICE



CREATED BY JONATHAN BIGGINS, DREW FORSYTHE AND PHILLIP SCOTT

5-9 MARCH 2024
PLAYHOUSE, QPAC



THE
WHARF
REVUE

Qpac
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Welcome



It should come as no surprise that political satire is one of our most enduring forms of popular entertainment: a staple of late-night television shows and social media clips while also firmly established in the history of theatre. Where governments and politics have emerged through history so too has political satire. The stages of ancient Greece were as likely to feature topical lampooning of those in power as they were epic dramas or tragedies.

Beyond pure entertainment value, satire enables us to speak truth to power, to make sense of political behaviour and decisions, and to emerge better informed and connected.

The satirist's weapon of choice is wit and The Wharf Revue team wield this weapon with alacrity and skill second to none. Whip-smart intelligence, sharp-as-a-tack humour and impeccable caricatures are the hallmarks of this satirical crew, and it is with pleasure that we co-present this season of *Pride in Prejudice*.

John Kotzas AM
Chief Executive, QPAC

Creators' Note

It's that time! Settle back while The Wharf Revue team reveals its latest policy settings, and dips into its Reserve Bank of gags to address the Cost of Laughing crisis.

We consult with Costa on the future of the planet, examine our "mutually respectful" relationship with America in the South Pacific, hear the conflicting viewpoints of political puppets on Avenue Q&A, and reveal the nightmare that is the British Royal Family.

We dive into the world of Russian opera, so sadly lacking on our stages, with the tragic story of a flawed hero in Mussorgsky's unacclaimed masterpiece "Raise-Putin".

We saw the No Vote arising, and tap into the general mood of the country with the pertinent title *Pride in Prejudice*.

The Wharf Revue (minus wharf) is now in its third year of self-government, and twenty-fourth year of existence. Yes, we began our work with the century, and have followed the political fortunes of Australia every misstep of the way.

The show is written by Jonathan Biggins, Drew Forsythe and Phillip Scott, entirely without Artificial Intelligence or intelligence of any kind. It features Amanda Bishop and guest stars David Whitney and Michael Tyack, with Musical Direction by Andrew Worboys, and is produced by Jo Dyer through her company Soft Tread.

Assisting the above in this journey is an invaluable production team making costumes and wigs, filming video segments, creating images, recording backing tracks and putting together the all-purpose set. They are too few to name, but we appreciate every one of them.



Artist Biographies:



Jonathan Biggins

Writer/Creator/Co-Director/Performer

Jonathan Biggins is an award-winning writer, director and performer, perhaps best known as one of the creators and performers for Sydney Theatre Company's long-running and much loved annual political satire, *The Wharf Revue*, which celebrated its 21st Anniversary in 2021 after which it started a new life as an independent venture. As an actor Jonathan has also worked with all of the major theatre companies, including Sydney Theatre Company, Melbourne Theatre Company and the State Theatre Company of SA, and has appeared on multiple comedy shows on the ABC. He is the winner of two Australian Writers' Guild awards for *The Republic of Myopia* and for a new libretto for *Orpheus in the Underworld* (with Phil Scott), and a Helpmann Award for Best Director for *Avenue Q*. His two full-length plays, *Australia Day* (2012) and *Talk* (2017) both premiered at Sydney Theatre Company before touring nationally. His most recent play, *The Gospel According to Paul*, a one-man play about the life and political legacy of Paul Keating in which he also starred, was a smash hit that played to sold out houses across the country.



Drew Forsythe

Writer/Co-Director/Performer

Drew is a graduate of NIDA. He was a company member of the Old Tote Theatre Co and Nimrod Theatre Company and appeared in the productions that opened Sydney Opera House's Drama Theatre, Sydney Theatre Company's Wharf Theatre and Belvoir Street Theatre (then the New Nimrod). Across his storied career he has won awards including AFI and Green Room awards and has worked with most of Australia's major theatre companies. He co-created *The Wharf Revue* for Sydney Theatre Company and has performed in most of its 26 productions, and for STC also appeared in many productions including *Hedda Gabler*, *The Way of the World* (1983), *Amadeus*, *Emerald City*, *Big and Little* and *The Republic of Myopia*. He has appeared in musicals including *Strictly Ballroom*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *The Mikado* and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. His screen appearances include the films *Newsfront*, *Burke and Wills*, *Travelling North*, *Billy's Holiday* and *Ned*, and the TV series *Devil's Dust*, *David Tench Tonight*, *The Dingo Principle*, *The Party Machine*, *Whose Baby and Three Men and a Baby Grand*.

Drew's writing credits include *The Wharf Revues*, *The Republic of Myopia*, *Three Men and a Baby Grand* and *The Last Man Standing*.



Phillip Scott

Writer/Creator/Musical Supervisor

Phillip Scott is a writer/actor/composer/pianist, best known for the annual *Wharf Revues*. His cabarets include the award-winning solo show *Reviewing the Situation*, *Mario* (with Blake Bowden), *Newley Discovered* (with Hugh Sheridan), and *No Cabaret for Old Men* (with Jonathan Biggins). He worked with director Ted Robinson on many ABC TV series including *The Gillies Report*, *The Big Gig* and *Good News Week*.

Phil was Script Consultant on *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert – The Musical*. He co-wrote and composed the musicals *Safety in Numbers* and *The Republic of Myopia* and wrote the music and lyrics for Monkey Baa Theatre's children's shows including *Pete the Sheep* and *Josephine Wants to Dance*. With Trevor Ashley he co-wrote the adult pantos *Fat Swan*, *Little Orphan Trashley*, *The Bodybag*, and *The Lyin' Queen*.

Phil recently played Dr. Pangloss and Narrator in Leonard Bernstein's *Candide* at the Sydney Opera House and was Musical Director/Arranger of *Torch Song Trilogy* for the Darlinghurst Theatre Company. With Catherine Alcorn, he appeared at the Hayes Theatre in *30 Something*, set on New Year's Eve 1939. Phil has published four novels, and is also a music reviewer for *Limelight* and *Fanfare* magazines.



Mandy Bishop

Performer

Mandy Bishop is an Australian actress, singer and writer and key collaborator of *The Wharf Revue*. Other recent theatre: national tour of *Bel Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing*, *Irene for Neglected Musicals*, *Dubbo Championship Wrestling* (Hayes Theatre Workshop), Sydney Symphony Orchestra's *The Happiness Box*, *The Pill* (La Mama New York workshops), numerous Sydney Theatre Company Wharf Revues, *All The World's A Pickle* (Theatre 54 NYC) and *Silent Night* (Darlinghurst Theatre Company). Television: *Drop Dead Weird S1 & 2*, *Law and Order: SVU*, *Chaperones* (pilot), *Maximum Choppage*, *Australia*, *The Story of Us*, *Wednesday Night Fever*, *Rake*, *The Outlaw Michael Howe* (MEAA Ensemble Award), *Julia Gillard in At Home With Julia* (also co-writer, associate producer (MEAA Ensemble Cast Award, nominated for AWGIE Awards and AACTA Award for Best Comedy Series), *Debt Defying Acts*, *My Place*, *Review With Myles Barlow S1 & 2* (AACTA Awarded series). Film credits include *Next Is The One*, *Legends of the Guardians*, *The Owls of Ga'Hoole*, *Vulnerable*, *Fresh Air*.

Artist Biographies:



David Whitney

Performer

David is a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Art. He is delighted to return to The Wharf Revue, having appeared in the Seymour Centre season of *Goodnight and Good Luck* in 2021. David has appeared for Opera Australia in roles including Monsieur Firmin in *The Phantom of the Opera*, Baron Zeta in *The Merry Widow*, Doc in *West Side Story* on Sydney Harbour and as Zoltan Karparthy in *My Fair Lady* directed by Dame Julie Andrews. Other music theatre credits include: *An American in Paris*, *Fiddler on The Roof*, *Monty Python's Spamalot*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *The Producers*, *Cabaret*, *A Chorus Line*, *The Wizard of Oz* and *Little Shop of Horrors*. David's extensive theatre credits include: *Saint Joan*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Mrs Warren's Profession*, *Summer Rain*, *Woman In Mind* (STC); *Luna Gale*, *Relatively Speaking* (Ensemble); *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet* (Bell Shakespeare); *The Power of Yes* (Belvoir); *Cho Cho* (National Theatre of China).

TV appearances include: *A Place to Call Home*, *Love Child*, *Wonderland*, *Fatal Honeymoon*, *Home & Away*, *McLeod's Daughters*.



Michael Tyack

Performer

Michael began working as a professional musician for J.C. Williamson in Melbourne. He moved to Sydney to conduct Sydney Theatre Company's *Chicago* then was MD for their productions of *The Stripper*, *Four Lady Bowlers*, *Jonah*, *Company*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Falsestos*, *Miracle City* and *Summer Rain*. He has been Musical Director of many productions including *Nunsense*, *Chess*, *The Wizard Of Oz*, *Jerry's Girls*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Tivoli*, *The Witches Of Eastwick*, *Eureka*, *High School Musical* and the original and Hugh Jackman tours of *The Boy From Oz*. Michael was Associate MD for *Spamalot*, Musical Director and arranger of the new Australian musical *Breast Wishes*, MD of the Australian musical *Metro Street* for its presentation at the Daegu International Musical Festival in South Korea, MD for the inaugural *Neglected Musicals* production *No Way To Treat A Lady* and arranged and supervised the music for The Shakespeare Centre's *As You Like It*. He has been Musical Supervisor for two Premier's Concerts at the Sydney Entertainment Centre as well as featured performer in another.

Creative Biographies:



Andrew Worboys

Musical Director

Andrew grew up in Orange, a town in the central west of New South Wales Australia, surrounded by Pub Rock and Musical Theatre.

Andrew has musically directed productions of *The Wizard of Oz – In Concert*, *The Lovers*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Sweet Charity*, *Truth Beauty and a Picture of You*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *High Fidelity*, *Rent*, *Assassins*, *American Psycho*, *The Dismissal*, *Betty Blokkbuster Reimagined*, *A Chorus Line*, *Young Frankenstein* and was performer and musical director for the Sydney Theatre Company's 2013, 2018 and 2019 *Wharf Revue*.

Andrew has toured with Christine Anu, Jenny Morris, Melanie Safka, Florence and The Machine, Jimmy Somerville and John Cameron Mitchell.

Andrew co-produced the Original Australian cast recording of *Hedwig and The Angry Inch*, and Jimmy Somerville's album *Suddenly Last Summer*.

Andrew was nominated for a Helpmann Award for his work on *Sweet Charity*, in 2015 he received from the

Glugs the Hayes Gordon Memorial Award for Important Contribution to Theatre, and in 2019 received a Sydney Theatre Award for Best Musical Direction for his work on *American Psycho*.



Matt Cox

Lighting Designer

Matt Cox has designed numerous productions for Australia's leading performing arts companies. A selection of his extensive credits is: for Bangarra Dance Theatre: *Dubboo*, *One's Country*, *Blak*, *Belong*. For the Hayes Theatre Company: *She Loves Me*. For Ensemble: *Diplomacy*, *Murder on the Wireless*. For Marrugeku: *Burrbgaja Yalirra*. For Bell Shakespeare: *The Miser*, *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*. For Monkey Baa: *Possum Magic*, *The Unknown Soldier*, *Diary of a Wombat*. For Sydney Theatre Company: *Wharf Revues 2018 - 2020*, *Ruby Moon*. For Louise Withers and Associates: *The Mousetrap*, *A Murder is Announced*. For Belvoir: *The Seed*. For Sydney Festival: *The Famous Spiegeltent* (2016-2017). For the Sydney Chamber Opera: *His Music Burns*.

Creative Biographies:



Todd Decker

Video Director

Todd has been a Television Director for 25 years and has worked with The Wharf Revue team for over a decade. He also works for ABC TV, SBS, the Sydney Opera House, the Seven Network and

Network Ten, directing live broadcasts and recorded programs. Productions include *Q+A*, *Yo-Yo Ma Six Suites for Unaccompanied Cello*, *Lea Salonga in Concert*, *Audra McDonald and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra*, *Bangarra Dance Theatre*, *Paul Kapsis and Emma Pask Live*, *Play School*, *Whovians*, *2020 Tokyo Olympic Games*, *All About Women*, *Festival of Dangerous Ideas*, *Antidote* and *Stereosonic*.

Todd has also been a tutor at AFTRS in Advanced Presenter Training.



Hazel Fisher

Costume Designer

Hazel grew up in Liverpool, UK and trained in theatre wardrobe and design...many years ago. Having made her home here in Sydney for more than 30 years she has worked

not only in theatre but retail, teaching kids to sew, and production management in a small fashion business specialising in incorporating Japanese kimonos into clothing. Hazel is currently the coordinator of the costume store for Sydney Theatre Company.



Scott Fisher

Costume Designer

Scott, a native of Adelaide, spent his formative years in theatre working on shows including *Cats* and *Les Misérables* as well as a stint as a tailor's assistant at the National Theatre of Great Britain. He joined Opera Australia in 1989 as a wardrobe assistant before moving to the roles of buyer and then coordinator for the wardrobe department. He has spent the past 18 years as manager of Sydney Theatre Company's costume department where he was introduced to The Wharf Revue team. The rest, as they say, is history.



Cameron Smith

Sound and Video Systems Designer

Cameron is a sound and video designer and technician who has an extensive background in music and musical theatre. After completing a

Bachelor of Fine Arts (Technical Theatre and Stage Management) from NIDA, he has worked for numerous companies around Sydney including Sydney Theatre Company, Monkey Baa, Sydney Festival, Channel 7, and more. Cameron is interested in theatre that aims to redefine the artform using new and innovative technology that plays with the audience's expectations. He is also looking outward and wants to explore other mediums such as film, TV and other digital video formats. As Video Designer: *The Linden Solution* (RATCATCH), *Dracula* (NIDA), *Icarus* (NIDA), *When The Rain Stops Falling* (NIDA); As Video Editor: *Julius Caesar* (STC); As Sound Designer: *Pagliacci* (NIDA), *God of Carnage* (NIDA); As Systems Designer: *Lifespan of a Fact* (STC), *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (STC), *Miracle City* (NIDA), *Pagliacci* (NIDA), *Flora* (NIDA), *Roberto Zucco* (NIDA).



Jo Dyer

For Soft Tread Enterprises: Producer

Soft Tread is an independent production house working across theatre and film led by Jo Dyer, former Executive Producer of Sydney Theatre

Company, General Manager of Bangarra Dance Theatre and CEO of Sydney Writers' Festival. Its recent productions include Jonny Hawkins' *Maureen: Harbinger of Death*, which premiered at the Sydney Festival in 2021 before playing at Melbourne's RISING Festival and Darwin Festival in 2022 and the Adelaide Festival and Edinburgh Fringe in 2023, and *The Gospel According to Paul*, by and starring Jonathan Biggins, that premiered to great acclaim in 2019, before touring nationally. Its feature film co-production with Adelaide's Windmill Theatre Company, *Girl Asleep*, had its international premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival before screening at Festivals across Australia and the world. The film went on to win the Best Film Award at the Seattle Film Festival and was nominated for Best Film at the 2016 AACTA awards.

As well as the annual Wharf Revue, recent projects include a season at the Brooklyn Academy of Music of legendary performer Meow Meow's *A Very Meow Christmas Show*. In 2024, Soft Tread will tour Emmanuelle Mattana's incendiary play, *Trophy Boys*.

Program

Running Time: 1 hour and 40 minutes (no interval)

The Bonnets

Avenue Q&A

French Demonstrators

Lidia oh Lidia

Robo Debt

Pollies

Trump & Giuliani

Play School

The Crown

Putin Opera

Sussan Ley

Costa

The Voice

Robin Hood

South Pacific



QPAC and Soft Tread present

THE WHARF REVUE: PRIDE IN PREJUDICE

Writers: Jonathan Biggins, Drew Forsythe and Phillip Scott

Co-Directors: Jonathan Biggins and Drew Forsythe

Musical Director: Andrew Worboys

Lighting Designer: Matt Cox

Video Designer: Todd Decker

Sound and Video Systems Designer: Cameron Smith

Costume Designers: Hazel and Scott Fisher

Cast: Jonathan Biggins, Mandy Bishop, Drew Forsythe and David Whitney with Michael Tyack

Producer: Jo Dyer

Company Stage Manager: Tim Burns

Sound Operator: Dylan Robinson

Touring Lighting Realiser/Technician: Cameron Menzies

Production Manager: Barry Searle

Marketing: Phillipa Sprott

Cover Image: Ashley de Prazer

Production Photography: Vishal Pandey

Graphic Designer: Leading Hand Design

The Producers wish to thank:

Tim Jones and all the staff at the Seymour Centre, Marcus Kelson, Sydney Theatre Company particularly the Costume, Staging, Sound and Props Departments, Charlie Aplin, Margaret Gill, Ros Keam, Nyok Kim Chang, Jenny Irwin, Rick McGill and Mathilde Montredon. Thanks to Warrick Baker.

Piano Partner: Kawai Australia

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SOFT TREAD

**THE
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QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Queensland Performing Arts Trust is a statutory body of the State of Queensland and is partially funded by the Queensland Government

The Honourable Leeanne Enoch MP: Minister for Treaty,
Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships,
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Director-General, Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships,
Communities and the Arts: Ms Clare O'Connor

We pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestors of this land, their spirits and their legacy. The foundations laid by these ancestors – our First Nations Peoples – gives strength, inspiration and courage to current and future generations, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, towards creating a better Queensland.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

QPAC warmly thanks our key donors who help us engage broadly across the state and continue enriching lives through performing arts.

Tim Fairfax AC and Gina Fairfax AC, Dr Lee and Professor Peter Coaldrake AO, Leigh Tabrett PSM, Susan Rix AM, Julian Myers, Dr Sally Pitkin AO, Dare Power, Dr Cathryn Mittelheuser AM, Queensland Community Foundation, de Groots Charitable Fund, Sandi Hoskins, Klaus Beckmann, Barbara Snelling, Jill Hutchins, Leigh Wheeler, Joachim and Paula Erpf, Frank and Karen Alpert, Alison Iverach, Jenny Morton, John Ryan, Margaret Heggie, Natalie Nelson, Ben Castleton, Meg Bock, Anthony Wade-Cooper and several donors who wish to remain anonymous.

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