

QPAC PRESENTS

SCENES FROM A YELLOW PERIL

BY NATHAN JOE

**“It’s a work of art that says –
and often shouts – the quiet
parts out loud.”**

THE SATURDAY PAPER

**An uncomfortably
funny and eye-opening
look at racism and
privilege – because
laughing and squirming
can go hand in hand.**

3-12 JULY | CREMORNE THEATRE, QPAC

WELCOME



Theatrical attempts at paradigm shifting are all too often hamstrung by an earnest and medicinal tone. In recent years the dominant culture has been lucky enough to have had the white comfort-zone rug tugged from under it by clever, funny people such as *Master of None*'s Alan Yang and Aziz Ansari. What you are about to see by Chinese-New Zealand writer and performance poet Nathan Joe takes a similar approach: upending perspectives through fast and witty entertainment that is as unafraid of inviting laughter as it is of delivering punches.

Described in one review as a 'theatrical mosaic', this unique work is a powerful and affecting series of moments that accrue to something much greater than their sum. It begins from minute one, with the opening unrehearsed questions offering jeopardy and sincerity in equal measure, while also gently introducing the performers we'll be watching not as characters, but as themselves. What follows – dynamism, truth-telling and disarming humour – frequently catches us off guard. It's the stuff that starts conversations, and even nurtures change, one audience member at a time.

We truly believe in the power of the arts to help us step into another's shoes, and so are very proud to present this work by The Reaction Theory. I encourage you to make the most of the glossary of terms provided by the producers in the hope of supporting a shared language as you watch this production and to take with you. Our special thanks to the artists and creatives involved, for giving so much of themselves to this meaningful and impactful work, and for starting conversations that can continue well beyond the theatre.

Rachel Healy

Chief Executive

QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

FROM THE DIRECTORS

In times like these, we don't look back, we listen forward. It's the voices of the unheard that carry the urgency of now. In moments like this, art becomes resistance. It becomes a vessel for the stories that were never meant to be told.

When we first read Nathan Joe's *Scenes From a Yellow Peril* in late 2022, we recognised its powerful and unvarnished exploration of racism, resonating deeply within multiple communities. We know that Joe's candid writing is vital for artists standing up for their beliefs and challenging societal norms that reflect both here and in Aotearoa.

As directors, returning to this work for a mainstage debut is both a gift and an achievement in itself. Riding off the back of two Matilda Awards this year, the real joy of remounting this show is to reunite with this incredible team again.

As you embark on this journey with us, get comfortable with being uncomfortable. You will be welcomed by an ensemble of activists, and while this show isn't for the faint of heart, they will guide you with agency and you won't be left behind.

We get to unpack the words and choices we love so dearly and make it into something fresh. The heart and soul remain unchanged, but our voices are louder and fiercer.

Thanks to the cast and creatives for coming back for round two. Thank you QPAC, Playmarket and BIPOC Arts Australia for having faith in us to bring this show to life.

Finally, thank you Nathan Joe for trusting us again with your words and mentorship.

Chelsea August and Egan Sun-Bin

Co-Directors and Producers

THE REACTION THEORY



ABOUT THE SHOW

An uncomfortably funny and eye-opening look at racism and privilege – because laughing and squirming can go hand in hand.

From award-winning Chinese-New Zealand writer and poet Nathan Joe, *Scenes From a Yellow Peril* is less a play and more of a punchy, poetic mixtape of insights that explores the painful ways people are othered, yet refusing to be silenced.

Performed and created by a fresh, fearless ensemble of upcoming Queensland talent, the two-time QLD Matilda Award-winning production (Best Independent Production and Best Ensemble, 2024) offers a razor-sharp, at times darkly funny look at what it means to be of Asian identity in our current political reality; both here and in Aotearoa.

CAST AND CREATIVES

Playwright **Nathan Joe**

Co-Director and Producer **Chelsea August**

Co-Director and Producer **Egan Sun-Bin**

Cast **Daphne Chen, Chris Nguyen, Peter Wood, Jazz Zhao**

Associate Producer **Jess Bunz**

Set Designer **Alex Riley**

Costume Designer **Frances Foo**

Sound Designer **Emma Kate Burchell**

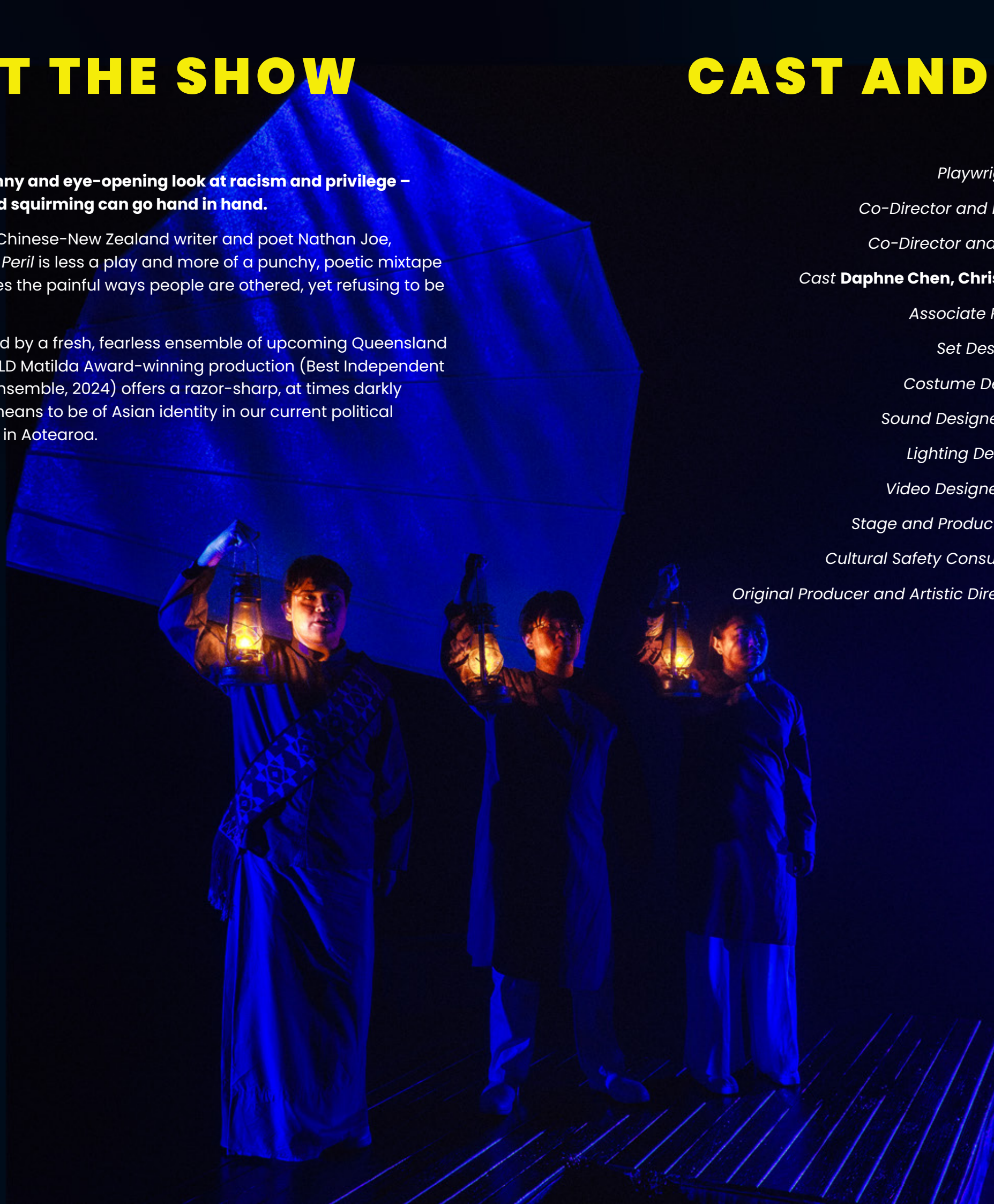
Lighting Designer **Briana Clark**

Video Designer **Imperfect Creatives**

Stage and Production Manager **Petria Leong**

Cultural Safety Consultant **Katrina Irawati Graham**

Original Producer and Artistic Director of BIPOC Arts Australia **Alyson Joyce**





Nathan Joe
Playwright

Nathan Joe (he/him) is a Chinese New Zealand playwright (2021 Bruce Mason Playwriting Award) and performance poet (2020 National Slam Champion). He was the Creative Director for the 2023 and 2024 Auckland Pride festival. Other accolades include winning the Playmarket b425 award two years in a row (2015 and 2016) and being shortlisted for the ADAM NZ award three times. His most recent work includes *Losing Face* (2023) and *A Short History of Asian New Zealand Theatre* (2024, 2025). Later this year, he will be joining the Michener Center for Writers to pursue his MFA in playwriting.



Chelsea August
Co-Director/Producer

Born in Aotearoa (New Zealand), Chelsea August is an award winning Theatre Maker, Performer and Producer; dedicated to creating bold, thought-provoking work. She holds a Fine Arts degree in Drama from QUT and is passionate about initiating diverse conversations in intimate settings. Chelsea's recent credits include working alongside La Boite Theatre, Queensland Theatre, Belloo Creative, and Australian Theatre For Young People (ATYP). Recently, she co-directed and produced the New Zealand script *Scenes From a Yellow Peril*, which went on to win Best Independent Production and Best Ensemble at the 2024 QLD Matilda Awards. Now making her mainstage debut, Chelsea's creative practice focuses on the execution of performance making; crafting intimate audience experiences that transport viewers into new worlds, provoking reflection on societal, cultural, and dramatic themes that resonate beyond the theatre.



Egan Sun-Bin
Co-Director/Producer

Egan Sun-Bin is an up and coming Theatre Maker who has worked in main-stage and independent companies such as Queensland Theatre, La Boite, and Playlab. Recently, Sun-Bin has worked as associate director for the 2024 production of *The Peasant Prince* and has won a Matilda Award for the Queensland Premiere of *Scenes From a Yellow Peril*. As a playwright through initiatives with Australian Plays Transform (Untold Stories Retreat) and Australian Theatre For Young People (Roomworks and Fresh Ink Mentoring Program). Alongside Chelsea August, Sun-Bin acts as one of the creative leads for The Reaction Theory. As a community activist, Sun-Bin has previously worked in various Asian spaces as Brisbane Longhouse Coordinator for Contemporary Asian Australian Performance and works to advocate for performers as an Organiser for the Media Entertainment & Arts Alliance.



Jess Bunz
Associate Producer

Jess Bunz is a Producer, Director, and Theatre Maker originally from Aotearoa. She has worked with many theatre companies across Brisbane, including La Boite Theatre, Queensland Theatre, Shake & Stir and Dead Puppet Society. Jess is currently the Senior Producer at La Boite Theatre, where she facilitates their mainstage season, artist development programs, and youth and education offerings. She has previously produced for the QLD Youth Shakespeare Festival and the Festival of Australian Student Theatre. In her creative practice, Jess is a co-founder of The Naughty Corner Collective, where she directed their sell-out season of *MAZE* at the Brisbane Powerhouse. She has worked across both mainstage and independent projects in a directing capacity, and is also a Teaching Artist, leading workshops for Queensland Theatre and La Boite. She has also led La Boite's Assembly program for the past three years. Jess is overjoyed to be back in the room with the *Yellow Peril* team, and can't wait for audiences to witness the brilliance of these artists!



Petria Leong
Production &
Stage Manager

Petria Leong is a Magandjin based stage manager dedicated to creating inclusive, sustainable and impactful theatre. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Technical Production from Queensland University of Technology (QUT). Working as a stage manager, Petria has learnt to be versatile within the theatrical production space and strives to ensure each production is a reflection of both artistic excellence and environmental responsibility. Her recent credits include working alongside *Scenes From a Yellow Peril* (The Reaction Theory, DOOR3 QT and QPAC), *The Astral Plane* (Queensland Theatre), *Jean Paul Gaultier's Fashion Freak Show* (Brisbane Festival) and *Slow Boat* (Brisbane Festival, Brisbane Powerhouse).



Katrina Irawati Graham
Cultural Safety Consultant

Katrina Irawati Graham is an Indonesian Australian writer, director and dramaturg working in screen and theatre. She creates in many genres including feminist horror, crime and drama. She is twice ADG nominated for her direction on STAN Originals drama series *Bali 2002*. Her Indonesian ghost story, *White Song*, is part of Australia's first all-female directed horror anthology, *Dark Whispers* (SBS). Katrina has adapted a feature script of her supernatural play, *Siti Rubiyah*, with Screen Queensland support. She has written two award winning online crime series and has been in writers' rooms for ABC and SBS. She embeds cultural safety in all aspects of her creative practice. Katrina is also in demand as a speaker and facilitator who supports deep conversations, community connections, and strong creative outcomes. Cultural safety clients have included Queensland Theatre, La Boite, QUT and Endemol Shine. Katrina is represented by BMEG.



Daphne Chen
Performer

Passionate about stories that champion marginalised voices, Daphne Chen is excited to once again be a member of the cast of *Scenes From a Yellow Peril*. Daphne Chen is an Asian-Australian artist based in Meanjin and has since graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Acting) from QUT in 2022. In her time she has worked on a diverse range of stage and screen, including most recently, her mainstage debut with *Pride and Prejudice* (Queensland Theatre), *Breaking* (Metro Arts), *The Wolves* (QUT), *The Trial* (Queensland Theatre), *Much Ado about Nothing* (Shake & Stir), *Lucky, Lucky* (Griffith) and two regional tours of *The Scene Project* with Queensland Theatre. Daphne has additionally won a Matilda Award with her fellow castmates for *Scenes From a Yellow Peril*, winning Best Ensemble.



Chris Nguyen
Performer

Chris Nguyen is a Matilda Award-winning, Vietnamese emerging Brisbane based actor. He is a 2023 graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University's Bachelor of Acting. He made his mark in independent theatre in Reaction Theory and BIPOC Arts Australia's production *Scenes From a Yellow Peril* (2024) as a part of Queensland Theatre's inaugural Door 3 program. He is an award nominated actor in short films such as *Otter and Fox* (2022), and *Spit of You* (2023), as well as partaking in University productions such as: *As You Like It* (2022), *Festen* (2023) and *Oresteia* (2023).



Jazz Zhao
Performer

Jazz Zhao is a Matilda Award-winning actor of Chinese descent. Her latest film and TV credits include AACTA Nominated Best Short Film *And The Ocean Agreed* (2024), Nine Network's *The Actually Really Very Difficult Show*, and *Stiffs*. She has worked with mainstage and independent companies such as Playlab, Dead Puppet Society and La Boite. Notably, *Scenes From a Yellow Peril* has been her fondest achievement to date.

Jazz aspires to contribute to theatre that impacts people and changes perspectives regarding BIPOC and issues close to her heart. She hopes to create work that leaves the world a more understanding, compassionate place. Her writing debut *Make Me Better Ma* is being developed through an Artist Residency at BACKBONE.

She teaches piano at her home studio, frequents the stand-up comedy scene and is an avid collector of pot plants. She is currently represented by BMEG.



Peter Wood
Performer

Peter Wood is a proud Queer, Indonesian Australian actor and performance-maker. Peter recently won Best Ensemble and Best Independent Production with *Scenes From a Yellow Peril* (The Reaction Theory, BIPOC Arts Australia) at the 2024 Matilda Awards. After a successful season under Queensland Theatre's Door 3 program, *Scenes From a Yellow Peril* has made its mainstage debut at QPAC. Peter recently performed as Pythio (Alternate) and Ensemble in *Head Over Heels* with That Production Company. Notable credits include, *A Night With The Villains*, *Wondered* (Mira Ball Productions), *We Will Rock You*, *A Chorus Line* (A Coastal Theatre Collective), *Stranger Sings!*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Grease* (Millennial Productions), *MAMMA MIA!* (The Show Co.), *And She Would Stand Like This* (Antipodes Theatre Company), *Sunny Tribe District* (Robert the Cat/Metro Arts), and *Once On This Island* (Altitude Theatre). From their work on screen to theatre, Peter strives to represent authentic queer and Asian-Australian characters and their stories.



Briana Clark
Lighting Designer

Briana Clark is an Asian Australian, Matilda nominated Lighting Designer and Stage Manager, based in Magandjin. She graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Technical Production. Her niche is creating bold and experimental lighting designs, especially for contemporary circus and dance. Ultimately, her ambition is to uplift BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ voices, and to be involved with political, feminist art. Lighting Design credits include: *Scenes From a Yellow Peril* (The Reaction Theory, Door 3), *The Last Princess of Lebanon* (BEMAC, Nadia Milford), *BREAK* (The Farm, Cecilia Martin), *Blushing 2025* (Zen Zen Zo), *CRIOLLO* (Nudo Dance, BEMAC), *Circus In A Teacup* (Vulcana Circus, QPAC), *Rhonda's After Party* (Wynnum Fringe), and Associate Lighting Designer with Chloe Ogilvie, *Stunt Double* (The Farm).



Emma Kate Burchell
Sound Designer

Emma is an emerging sound designer and all-round theatre technician. Currently based in Brisbane, she works in various venues in the sound and lighting departments. She takes particular interest in unusual and dimensional sound designs. She wishes to help inspire other performers and production artists to discover their creativity and passion in the industry and explore her own artistic realisation.

Sound designer, The Reaction Theory, *Scenes from a Yellow Peril*. Dead Puppet Society, *Holding Achilles*: Sound secondment | *Hamilton Australia*: sound secondment. Touring HOD of *AV, 1984*, Shake and Stir. Sound Designer: Debase Productions, *Death in A Statesman* | QUT Virtual Production *The picture of Dorian Gray* | QUT Vena Cava: Wattlebrush, HOD Sound/ Sound designer and Composer | QUT *Angels in America*: Sound Designer HOD of Sound | Associate sound designer, *Circus in a Teacup* QPAC 2024.



Frances Foo
Costume Designer

Frances is a costume designer of Chinese Malaysian heritage. She originally trained in fashion design before honing her costuming skills in festivals, short films, cosplay and theatre work. Most recently, Frances designed costumes for La Boite Theatre's *Macbeth* as part of its 2025 season. Frances enjoys costuming productions which portray the Asian Australian experience, including *Slowboat* and *White China* with Playlab Theatre. She is thrilled to return as costume designer for *Scenes from a Yellow Peril*, which was nominated for 'Best Costume Design' at the 2024 Matilda Awards.



Alex Riley
Set Designer

Alex Riley is a filmmaker and creative artist, specialising in production design. In addition to working as a production designer on several short films through university from 2019–2022, in 2023, Alex was Set Designer for Offside Theatre Company and Metro Arts' production of *Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes*; Set and Costume Designer for Queensland Theatre's Youth Arts production of *Neighbourhood Watch*; and Co-Creator of Lunch Friend's *The Hearth* for Dead Puppet Society's DPS LAB.

Alex has also designed sets for productions and installations at Brisbane Fringe Festival (TITS AKIMBO's *Sexfest*), Anywhere Festival (Lunch Friend's *34 Scenes About the Weather*) and most recently worked on the *Bluey's World* interactive experience as a Props and Set Specialist. Alex has quickly developed a fascination for the impact set design can have on storytelling in theatre and film and is always excited for opportunities that will allow her to explore and experiment with the form further. Alex has a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Film, Television and New Media) from QUT (2022).



Imperfect Creatives
Video Designer

Imperfect Creatives is an artist-focused production company and education provider based on Queensland's Gold Coast. Founded in 2020 by industry professionals tired of artists being mistreated and overlooked, Imperfect has quickly become a trusted name in the South-East Queensland acting and production communities.

Leading the design is co-founder Jack Alfred Kelly, a camera operator, photographer, and production designer. After studying at the University of Southern Queensland, Jack joined the team at the Seven Network, shooting and editing news for their flagship state bulletins. Since then, he has produced over 200 episodes of documentary television, designed lighting, sets and video for stage, built a studio, and created marketing content for theatre and entertainment companies.



GLOSSARY

Kia Ora	Māori term for ‘hello’
Aotearoa	New Zealand and Māori term for ‘the land of the long white cloud’
Whakapapa	Place of origin or place in layers
Ngā Mihi	Generally an email sign off ‘kind regards’
Pakeha	Māori term for European
Kawakawa	New Zealand native plant
Poll Tax	A tax that targeted Chinese immigration and trade in English speaking countries like Australia and New Zealand in the 1850’s until the 1940’s
Bindi	A mark or sticker worn by Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist women and occasionally men on the forehead between the eyebrows
Colonisation	A violent, extractive system of domination that uses a false narrative of superiority to steal land and subjugate people
Chink	Offensive slur to label a person of Chinese descent
Geisha (芸者)	Female Japanese performing artist
Konichiwa (こんにちは)	Japanese term for ‘hello’
Arrigato (ありがとう)	Japanese term for ‘thank you’
Gweilo (鬼佬)	Cantonese term for Westerner
Feng shui (風水)	An ancient Chinese art that involves strategically arranging spaces to allow for proper energy flow that aligns with natural forces
Confucius	A renowned philosopher who lived in China during the latter half of the Zhou dynasty (Eleventh century–256 BCE)
Buddha	The Buddha, also known as Siddhartha Gautama, was a religious teacher who lived in South Asia during the 6th or 5th century BCE and founded Buddhism

ABOUT THE REACTION THEORY

The Reaction Theory aims to create contemporary theatre for audiences aged 18–29 as a strategy to highlight and elevate performances of emerging and mid-career artists in Meanjin. With the support of the Jennifer Blocksidge Memorial Award sponsored by the Blocksidge Family, the company has delivered multiple productions and developments to showcase the next generation of Queensland artists. Their theatrical works strive to create intellectual and emotional responses for our audiences in order to create an open conversation about our future.

If you or someone you know needs information or support, these organisations are there to help:

Lifeline 13 11 14	1800 Respect 1800 737 732	Griefline 1300 845 745	Headspace 1800 650 890
13YARN 13 92 76	Beyond Blue 1300 224 636	Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467	Support Act 1800 959 50
QLD Mental Health Crisis Number 1300 642 255	MIND Australia 1300 286 463		

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Sharon Schimming Acting Director-General, Department of Education

QPAC rests on the lands of the Yuggera and Turrbal peoples.

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this country and recognise their rich cultural heritage and enduring connection to the land, waters and skies. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are this country's original storytellers, and it is our privilege to continue to share stories and be a place of gathering on this land that has been a meeting place for millennia.

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, Sandi Hoskins, Ningana Trust, Leigh Wheeler, Alida Rae Mayze and John Mayze, Lance and Suzanne Hockridge, Judith Musgrave Family Foundation, Queensland Community Foundation, de Groot's Charitable Fund, Joachim and Paula Erpf, Dr Colin and Mrs Noela Kratzing, Barbara Snelling, Frank and Karen Alpert, Dr Ailbhe and Dr Frank Cunningham, Ann Sherry AO, Jacqueline Walters, Terri Butler, Jenny Morton, Klaus Beckmann and several donors who wish to remain anonymous.

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