

WRITERS

ADÈLE SHELLEY ‘Swimming Champions’

Adèle is a passionate director, actor and writer. Her plays have been produced for The Melbourne Fringe Festival (*She's My Baby*), The Dog Theatre (*Nothing to Lose*), Madwomen Monologues (*Fairytale Endings*) and Melbourne Writers' Theatre (*Girls' School Delights*, *Love is a Dish* and *The Singing Butcher*). Adèle has won People's Choice Awards at Short + Sweet Festivals for *The Bee Charmer* and *Weeing on a Stick*. She is thrilled to be involved with *The Best*, *The Fairest*, *The First*.

***Performed by Emma Cox and Cosima Gilbert.**

CLARE MENDES ‘The Shoemaker's Daughter’

Clare is a playwright, producer and out-of-the-boxer. Her plays include *The Agreement* (2015), *Trash Goes Down The River* (2017), *Invisible Petition* (*Stark. Dark. Albert Park*, 2018), *Rhapsody in Purple* (*Beachside Stories*, 2019), *A Flower for Moses* (coming up in May), ‘Skating in the Clouds’ (just finished!) and now *The Shoemaker's Daughter*, written just for Betty. Clare loves poetry, chess, boxing, the colour purple and producing new shows for Melbourne Writers' Theatre, where she has been Company Manager since 2015.

***Performed by Rebecca Quin, Alec Gilbert and Annie Morris.**

MAZZ RYAN ‘This Way, That Way, My Way’

Mazz Ryan is an experienced playwright, performer and director who endeavours to speak to a wide audience through her art. Her scripts have been performed in venues across the city, and in the MWT shows *The Melbourne Monologues*, *Six Degrees in Melbourne*, *St Kilda Stories* and *Stark Dark Albert Park*. In researching and writing *This Way, That Way, My Way*, Mazz felt inspired by the achievements of Sinead Diver, and she is full of admiration for Sinead and all of the remarkable sportswomen featured in this show.

***Performed by Marli van der Bijl, Isabella Gilbert and Cindy Leigh.**

STAGE MANAGER

BARBARA TOOHEY

Barbara is originally from Ireland and has many years' experience on and off the stage. She is delighted to be joining the Melbourne Writers' Theatre again as Stage Manager, having stage managed last year's productions of *The Metropolis Monologues* and *The City Park Plays*. Barbara has also stage managed for Essendon Theatre Company's *Suite Surrender* and *Home Grown* and at Strathmore Theatre Arts Group, working on *Children of the Wolf* and *Fool for Love*.

PERFORMERS

NUJ B Calisthenics Soloist

Nuj is from a Kurdish/Irish background. She loves performing to make people happy, and has performed in festivals, concerts and competitions in Calisthenics, Dance and Circus, placing fourth in a competitive dance solo. Nuj is a role model and helps teach Calisthenics to children. In 2019 she was selected to travel overseas to teach circus skills to disadvantaged youth from Sweden, Turkey, South Korea and Cambodia. Nuj has faced many challenges, but doesn't let these stop her from achieving her life goals.

EMMA COX ‘Swimming Champions’

Emma, a Bachelor of Dramatic Arts graduate (University of Ballarat – Arts Academy – formerly BAPA), made her acting debut as Rosalind in a Melbourne Fringe Festival production of *As You Like It*. Since then, some of her favourite productions have been *Speaking In Tongues* (Valerie/Jane), *Chapter Two* (Faye), *Orpheus Descending* (Lady Torrance), *Ursula* (Placida), *Charles Manson and the Subtle Art of Radicalisation* (Susan 'Sadie' Atkins), *The Removalists* (Kate) and *Trash Goes Down The River* (Melody).

COSIMA GILBERT ‘Swimming Champions’

Cosima has been acting from a young age with credits including: *D-Baby* (2019), *Stark Dark Albert Park* (Fringe, 2018), *The Melbourne Monologues* (2017), *Six Degrees In Melbourne* (MWT), *Underground – The Julian Assange Story* (Underground Productions, 2012) and *Predestination* (Black Lab Entertainment, 2013). Cosima has appeared in numerous dance and school productions and is also an experienced singer/songwriter.

REBECCA QUIN ‘The Shoemaker's Daughter’

Rebecca Quin joins us from the Ilbijerri Theatre Ensemble. Rebecca is an aspiring stage performer from the Heart of Tasmania. She is performing as Betty Wilson in this play, and this is the first time she has appeared in a Melbourne Writers' Theatre production.

ALEC GILBERT ‘The Shoemaker's Daughter’

Alec Gilbert trained with Uta Hagen at the HB Studios in NYC. Theatre credits include: *Madwoman Monologues* (2020), *The Toorak Rules* (2019), *Beachside Stories*, *Stark Dark Albert Park*, *Sidelined*, *Suicide Row*, *St Kilda Stories*, *Wuthering Heights* (ASC), *Trash Goes Down the River*, *Dark Summer* and *The Melbourne Monologues*. TV credits include: *Tomorrow Tonight*, *City Homicide*, *The Secret Life of Us*, *Stingers*, *Blue Heelers*, *Crash Burn*, *Neighbours*, *Fergus In Hell*. Recent films: *True Love* and *Melbourne After Dark*.

ANNIE MORRIS ‘The Shoemaker's Daughter’

Annie Morris is an Australian/English actor and singer/songwriter. Annie is a graduate of the National Theatre Drama School and has spent her time working between Melbourne and London in theatre and music. 2019 saw Annie studying with the London Improv Theatre and in 2020 she made her debut with MWT for *The Metropolis Monologues*.

MARLI VAN DER BIJL **‘This Way, That Way, My Way’**

Marli has been working as an actor and singer since 2009 and holds a Masters degree in Theatre (UFS, South Africa). She has been involved in theatre, music and screen productions across four countries. Career highlights include her television debut in ‘7 de Laan’ (South African soap opera) and principal roles in ‘Les Misérables’, ‘The Mikado’, ‘Hairspray’, ‘Fame’, ‘Hamlet’ and two Afrikaans classics, ‘Puts onderwater’ and ‘Christine’. Marli made her Melbourne theatre debut in MWT’s Season 2020 double-bill *The Metropolis Monologues* and *The City Park Plays*, performing in both shows.

ISABELLA GILBERT **‘This Way, That Way, My Way’**

Isabella Gilbert works across theatre, dance, film, sound and spoken word. She graduated from VCA with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Dance) in 2020. Performance credits include: *Suadade* (2021), *Daring Dog Monologues* (2019) *Melbourne Monologues* (2016-2018), *The Trauma Project* (La Mama Explorations 2017), *The Dr Blake Mysteries* (ABC TV 2016) and *Miss Fisher’s Murder Mysteries* (ABC TV 2013). Her solo dance works *NEXUS* (2018) and *Elemental* (2019) were presented at The West Projections Festival.

CINDY LEIGH **‘This Way, That Way, My Way’**

Cindy Leigh is a professional actor who has been in the industry for four years. Originally from Perth, Cindy now bases herself in Melbourne and attended The Australian Film & Television Academy in 2019. Cindy has had lead roles in several short films and music videos, and feature roles in TV series such as AMC’s *Preacher*. When she’s not on set, Cindy enjoys Muay Thai, dancing and learning Spanish.

MONICA WONG **Appearing as Monica Wong**

Monica Wong’s life philosophy is: *Move it or lose it*. She has played competitive squash (where she met her husband many moons ago) and tennis, as well as dancing (Greek and Israeli) and Taichi. More recently Monica took up running after joining the Parkrun 2014, and became involved in guiding vision-impaired athletes with Achilles Melbourne. In 2018 she ticked off a big ‘bucket list’ dream when she completed a full marathon. Keeping fit with her many activities allows Monica to be social and make a lot of friendships.

The BEST, The FAIREST, The FIRST

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