

GRIFFIN THEATRE COMPANY IN ASSOCIATION  
WITH MALHOUSE THEATRE PRESENTS

THE HOMOSEXUALS  
OR 'FAGGOTS'  
BY DECLAN GREENE  
17 MARCH - 29 APRIL

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DIRECTOR'S  
NOTE

The Farce is popular enough, when it comes to revivals. In the last few years in Australia we've seen plays like *Noises Off*, *A Flea In Her Ear*, and *One Man, Two Guvvners* hit stages to mass delight. But as far as new playwriting goes, over the last few decades the Farce has gone the way of the Passion Play, the Verse Drama, and *Commedia dell'Arte*... All thoroughly—and in some cases, mercifully—extinct.

A couple of years ago I was speaking with another writer about why farces are so rarely written these days. We both agreed that the stakes necessary to manufacture this mechanical type of playwriting were, in general, absent from our contemporary lives. The plays of Feydeau— unquestionably the greatest farceur—were written during the *Belle Époque* era, a time of tremendous moral upheaval in France. Most of his farces feature highly-repressed married couples who, for one reason or another, are driven wild with the desire to cheat on their spouse—even though to be discovered *en flagrante* would mean social death.

When I decided to try my hand at writing a contemporary farce, I hit my first obstacle in the creation of these stakes. In 2017 we're a less repressed bunch where sex is concerned. Having your affair outed might raise the ire of a few relatives and close friends, but most people won't care, unless it's with a horse or a sibling. In my own inner-city Left-wing bubble, we aren't afraid of being outed as 'sexual deviants' anymore. But we are afraid of being labelled a 'bigot'... Or any of its equally bone-rattling sub-labels: 'misogynist', 'racist', 'homophobe', 'transphobe', 'ableist'...

If you spend any amount of time commenting on social media, this fear is particularly well-founded. The graduation of identity politics from academia into public discourse has been swift. New sets of parameters have been created around language and culture, which shift in specificity to both the person speaking and the person listening, along the axes of gender, race, sexuality, ability (and sometimes, where convenient, class). For people who have been historically marginalised—such as women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, or People of Colour—these rules offer a new frontier of self-determination. An opportunity to exert control over one's place in culture, after generations of being forced into clumsy semantic pigeonholes designated by the majority.

For people who don't know these rules—or resent them—they can seem like a ruthless and over-sensitive claim for territory that is publicly owned. Impinging on that fundamental human right: 'Freedom of Speech'.

Declan Greene's *Eight Gigabytes of Hardcore Pornography* was the first play I programmed in my first season as Artistic Director of Griffin Theatre Company. It was spare and compassionate – two people and a chair to create a portrait of contemporary loneliness.

*The Homosexuals*, or *'Faggots'* is nothing like that. This play is a cluttered, messy, cruel modern farce. And right now, in the midst of the anarchy of the rehearsal room I am hating both the form and the playwright: the form for embracing implausibility and props, and the playwright for leaving me with no choice but to put these issues on the stage. If Declan Greene had a less urgent voice, my life would be a lot simpler this week.

For what this play does share with *Eight Gigabytes* is Declan's extraordinary capacity to detail the humiliations and horrors of ordinary modern urban existence. His

This is where I've wound up setting my farce: square in the cross-fire of a culture war where outrage is currency, feelings are facts, sensitivities are ignored, atonement is impossible, and simplistic buzz- words like 'Cultural Marxism', 'Social Engineering', and 'Snowflake' are used to stifle discourse in much the same manner as 'Bigotry', 'Privilege', and 'Nazi'. As the Left and Right slowly distil their values into pure black and white, I've tried to write a play of muddy grey in-betweens. It's a comic play about comedy. An offensive play about offence. A work which oscillates moment to moment between Politically Correct and Problematic (or its 'fun' alternative: *Probbol!*); attempting to defy the lazy categorisations we've taken to using in our knee-jerk summation of art, public discourse, and the existence of certain human beings.

In 2017, perhaps the only thing that unites the members of the Left and Right is a fear of being interned in one of these sticky categories—because it's impossible to escape, and often the company really fucking sucks. Amy Schumer enjoyed three seconds of being the world's most adored feminist comedian, before some idiotic jokes from a decade earlier relegated her to the category of racist—alongside alt-right lunatics like Richard Spencer and Milo Yiannopoulos, who protest this label just as loudly. Non-binary trans-femme performance poets DarkMatter reached almost unprecedented levels of fame and influence for their inflammatory, galvanising activism, before one poorly-worded Facebook post had them classed as rape apologists. Fred Nile—a man who has campaigned obsessively for decades to suppress the civil rights of LGBTQIA+ people—is hugely outraged whenever someone calls him homophobe. Meanwhile, anyone who knows the correct vocabulary can cloak harmful ideas—unintentional or otherwise—under surfaces that look perfectly PC. All of which seems to me, if nothing else, slightly farcical.

**Declan Greene**  
Writer

writing is challenging for actors and audience alike. It requires a deep honesty about frailty and pretension. It is painful to make... and not just because of all the slamming of doors. It is painful because it requires us all to dip into the 'well of worst moments' in order to bring the best moments of the play to life.

Yes there are big contemporary political issues wrapped around the play but the heart of the story is filled with love, age, friendship, the crises of choice and the horror of mistakes. If *Eight Gigabytes* laid bare our fears of being alone, *The Homosexuals*, or *'Faggots'* dissects the aspirations of coupledom but with the scalpel of farce. Everyday at work is like entering the humiliation Olympics.

It is a privilege to direct the first production of a new Australian play. It is an honour to direct a second production by Declan Greene. It is a real joy to be working across the states bringing the audiences of Melbourne and Sydney together in a play that speaks to the identity future of this country.

**Lee Lewis**  
Director

PLAYWRIGHT'S  
NOTE

## BIOGRAPHIES

### Declan Greene

#### Playwright

Declan Greene is a theatre-maker based in Melbourne. His previous works as a playwright include: for Griffin Theatre Company and Perth Theatre Company: *Eight Gigabytes of Hardcore Pornography*, which won the Max Afford Playwright's Award; for Malthouse Theatre: *I Am A Miracle*, which won the Green Room Award for Best Writing for the Australian Stage, *Pompeii* and *L.A.*; for Malthouse Theatre & Arena Theatre Company: *Moth*, which won the AWGIE Award for Theatre for Young Audiences. As a director and dramaturg his credits include: for Griffin, La Mama and MKA: *The Unspoken Word is Joe*" (by Zoey Dawson); for ZLMD Shakespeare Company: *Conviction* (by Zoey Dawson); for Sydney Theatre Company: *Hamlet: Prince of Skidmark* (co-created with the Liesties). Alongside Ash Flanders, Declan co-runs queer independent theatre company Sisters Grimm. He has directed and co-created all their shows to date, including: for Griffin Independent and Theatre Works: *Summertime in the Garden of Eden*; for Belvoir: *La Traviata*; for Malthouse Theatre and Sydney Theatre Company: *Calpurnia Descending*; for Melbourne Theatre Company: *Lilith: Jungle Girl*; for Sydney Theatre Company: *Little Mercy*. Declan is Resident Artist at Malthouse Theatre.

### Lee Lewis

#### Director

Lee is the Artistic Director of Griffin Theatre Company and one of Australia's leading directors. For Griffin she has directed: *The Bleeding Tree*, for which Lee was awarded Best Director at the 2016 Helpmann Awards, *Gloria*, *Eight Gigabytes of Hardcore Pornography*, *Masquerade* (co-directed with Sam Strone), *Emerald City*, *A Rabbit for Kim Jong-il*, *The Serpent's Table* (co-directed by Darren Yap), *Replay*, *Silent Disco*, *The Bull*, *The Moon and the Coronet of Stars*, *The Call*, *A Hoax* and *The Nightwatchman*; for Griffin and Bell Shakespeare: *The Literati*; for Bell Shakespeare: *The School for Wives* and *Twelfth Night*; for Belvoir: *That Face*, *This Heaven*, *Half and Half*, *A Number*, *7 Blowjob* and *Ladybird*; for Melbourne Theatre Company: David Williamson's *Rupert*, which toured to Washington DC as part of the World Stages International Arts Festival and to Sydney's Theatre Royal in 2014; for STC: *Honour*, *Love-Lies-Bleeding* and *ZEBRA!*; for

Darwin Festival: *Highway of Lost Hearts*; for the National Institute of Dramatic Art: *Big Love*, *Shopping and Fucking*, *After Dinner* and *The Winter's Tale*; and for the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts: *As You Like It*.

### Marg Horwell Designer

Marg is a multi award winning designer and is the Designer In Residence at Malthouse Theatre. Marg has won six Greenroom Awards and two Sydney Theatre Awards for her work. Her theatre credits include: for Griffin: *Eight Gigabytes of Hardcore Pornography*; for Angus Cerini Doubletap: *Chapters From The Pandemic*, *Resplendence*, *Save For Crying*, *Wretch*; for Dee & Cornelius: *Savages*, *Shit*; for Bell Shakespeare: *The School For Wives*; for Belvoir: *Nora*; for Malthouse Theatre: *Edward II*, *I Am A Miracle*, *The Good Person of Szechuan*, *The Histrionic, Tame*; for Melbourne Theatre Company (MTC): *Birdland*, *Peddling*, *Constellations*, *Cock*, *Music*, *The Dream Life Of Butterflies*, *The Water Carriers*, *Circle Mirror Transformation*, *I Call My Brothers*; For Sisters Grimm: *Lilith The Jungle Girl*, *La Traviata*, and *Summertime in the Garden of Eden*. Marg was nominated for a Helpmann Award for *Marlin* presented by MTC and Arena Theatre.

### Trent Suidgeest Lighting Designer

Trent's recent credits as a Lighting Designer include: for Ambassador Theatre Group: *The Beast*; for Opera Australia: John Bell's *Carmen*, *The Opera (The Eighth Wonder)*; for Opera Australia and Barking Gecko Theatre Company: *The Rabbits*, which was part of Perth Festival, Melbourne Festival, Sydney Festival and QPAC Brisbane Season; for The Production Company: *DUSTY*, *Nice Work If You Can Get It*; for Sydney Theatre Company: *Hayfever*, *TALK*. Trent's early career began with 20+ commissions at Black Swan State Theatre Company including: *Boy Gets Girl*, *Dust*, *Extinction*, *The House On The Lake*, *Laughter On The 23rd Floor*, *The Motherf\*\*cker With A Hat*, *Next To Normal*, *The Red Balloon*, *When The Rain Stops Falling* and *The White Divers Of Broome*, which was part of Perth International Arts Festival. Trent's credits as Set & Lighting Designer include: for Black Swan State Theatre Company: *Death Of A Salesman*, *Dinner*, and *Shrine*, which was the WA representative at Centenary of Canberra Festival. In co-productions with Black Swan

State Theatre Company and Belvoir: *The Sapphires*, which toured nationally, and to South Korea and London's Barbican Theatre; with Melbourne Theatre Company: *National Interest*; with Queensland Theatre Company: *Other Desert Cities*, *Gasp!*, *Managing Carmen*. Other highlights: *I Am Eora* at Sydney Festival and *Waltzing The Wilarra* at Perth International Arts Festival. Trent is a recipient of the Mike Walsh Fellowship and WA Department of Culture and the Arts Young People Fellowship. A graduate of WAAPA (Production & Design).

### Steve Toulmin Composer & Sound Designer

Steve's credits as Composer and/or Sound Designer include: for Griffin: *Gloria*, *The Bleeding Tree*, *Beached*; for Griffin and La Boite: *A Hoax*; for Bell Shakespeare: *Othello*, *Richard III*; for Belvoir: *Jasper Jones*, *The Blind Giant Is Dancing*, *Ivanov*, *La Traviata*, *Blue Wizard*, *Is This Thing On?*, *20 Questions*, *The Seed and Scorched*; for La Boite: *Tender Napalm*, *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*. For La Boite and STC: *Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness*; for Michael Sieders Presents: *Porn*, *Cake*; for the Royal Queensland Show (Ekka): *Arena Spectacular* (2013-2015); for Sydney Theatre Company (STC): *A Flea In Her Ear*, *Power Plays*, *Little Mercy*; for Ensemble Theatre: *Great Falls*, *Liberty Equality Fraternity*, *Circle Mirror Transformation*; For Queensland Theatre: *Pregnant*, *Rommy* and *Trapture*. Steve's credits as Associate Designer include: for Belvoir: *Radiance*, *The Baukhram Hills African Ladies Troupe*. His credits as Audio Visual Designer include: for Griffin: *Angela's Kitchen*, *Between Two Waves*; for STC: *God of Carnage*, *Tot Mom*. As Foley Artist, Steve has worked on: for STC: *Our Town*. Steve is also known as a songwriter and music producer, having worked with artists such as Ricki-Lee Coulter, Samantha Jade and Megan Washington.

### Mama Alto

#### Bae Bae/ Pam

Mama Alto is a jazz singer and cabaret artist. Her past festival credits include: Adelaide Cabaret Festival, Adelaide Fringe, American Songbook Festival, Castlemaine State Festival, Darwin Festival, Fringe World Perth, Havana International Theatre Festival, Marysville Jazz & Blues Weekend, Melbourne Cabaret Festival, Melbourne Fringe Festival, Midsumma, and Stonnington Jazz Festival. Mama has performed at venues such as: Arts Centre Melbourne, Bendigo Art Gallery (Bendigo), Bruno's Art Gallery (Marysville), Brisbane Powerhouse (Brisbane), The Butterfly Club, Chapel off Chapel, The Copa Room at the Havana Riviera (Havana, Cuba), Entrecôte, Hares & Hyenas, La Bohème (Adelaide), The Melba Spiegeltent, Melbourne Recital Centre, MPavillion, National Gallery of Victoria, RMIT Design Hub and Sofitel Melbourne on Collins. She was the recipient of the 2014 Weekly Award for Best Cabaret at Adelaide

### Charles O'Grady Assistant to the Director

Charles is a transgender playwright and director. Charles' credits as a playwright include: for Australian Theatre For Young People: *Intersection*, co-written as part of their

National Studio program; for Jetpack Theatre Collective: *How Dare...*, co-written for Sydney Fringe Festival; for Montague Basement: *Kaleidoscope*, *Telescope*; for Old Fitz Theatre: *Are We Awake?*, written as part of the New Fitz Writers Program; for Smoking Gum Theatre: *Before the Water Gets Cold*. His credits for dramaturgy include: for leftofcentre: *Transience*; for Montague Basement: *The Big Bruise*. Charles is currently directing drama students at the Australian Institute of Performing Arts in a play about trans youth.

### Rhianne Perrie Stage Manager

This is Rhianne's first production with Griffin. Rhianne's theatre credits include: for Barking Gecko Theatre Company: *Bamberts Book of Lost Stories*, *In A Dark Dark Wood*, *Jasper Jones*, *This Girl Laughs*. As Assistant Stage Manager: for Barking Gecko Theatre Company: *Storm Boy*; for Black Swan Theatre Company: *Clinton The Musical*, *A House On The Lake*, *A Perfect Specimen*; for West Australian Ballet: *Coppelia*. She has also worked for West Australian Symphony Orchestra, Woodford Folk Festival, Perth International Arts Festival, Fringe World Perth, Ochre Aboriginal Dance Company, Perth Theatre Company and Spare Parts Theatre Company. Rhianne is a graduate of WAAPA (Stage Management).

Fringe, the 2016 Outstanding Access Award at Melbourne Fringe, and a 2015 Nominee for GLOBE LGBTI Artist of the Year. Mama has worked with Brook Andrew, Phillip Adams BalletLab, is a proud alumni of Monash Uni Student Theatre, and a company member of Finucane & Smith, with whom she was amongst the cast who received the Best International Production Award at the CHAMACO Awards, Cuba.

### Simon Burke Warren

Simon has appeared in over 130 stage productions in Australia and the UK, including for Griffin: *October*, *Satango*; for Belvoir: *Snugglepot & Cuddlepie*; for Black Swan State Theatre Company: *Clinton The Musical*; for Ensemble Theatre: *They're Playing our Song*; for Kookaburra Theatre Company: *Company*; for Harvest Rain Theatre Co: *Hairspray*; for IMG: *Chicago The Musical*; for Melbourne Theatre Company: *Take Me Out*; for Sydney Theatre Company: *A Little Night Music*, *Mr Kolpert*, *Mrs Warren's Profession*, *She Stoops To Conquer*, *The Wharf Revue*, *Up For Grabs*; and for Performing Lines' national tour of *Three Furies*. In London's West End he has starred as Captain von Trapp in *The Sound of Music*, as Raoul in Phantom of the Opera, in *A Little Night Music* opposite Dame Judi Dench and in the European premieres of the Australian classics *Holding the Man* and *When the Rain Stops Falling*. Simon's television credits include: *Deep Water*, *Hustle*, *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, *Rake* and *South Pacific*. For 25 years, Simon was one of ABC TV's Play School's best-loved presenters. At age 13, Simon starred in Fred Schepisi's feature film *The Devil's Playground*, winning the AACTA Award for Best Actor, the youngest-ever recipient of this honour. He went on to reprise this role 40 years later in mini-series *Devil's Playground* for which he was also Executive Producer. In 2015 Simon received the AO (Officer of the Order of Australia) for his service to the

performing arts as an actor, singer and producer.

### Simon Corfield Kim

Simon's acting credits include: for Griffin: *Motortown*, *Orestes 2.0*, *Tattoo*; for Belvoir: *Bliss*; for Darlinghurst Theatre Company: *The Bee*, *Every Second*, *Torch Song Trilogy*; for Melbourne Theatre Company: *The Goat or Who is Sylvia?*, *The Lonely Wolf*; for Tamarama Rock Surfers: *Poster Girl*, *Trapture*; and for Vass Theatre Group: *Bad Jews*. He performed in *The One Eyed Man is King* for Schaubuhne Berlin. Simon was in the national tour of Critical Stage's multi-award winning musical cabaret, *Songs For The Fallen*. His TV and film credits include: *Blue Heelers*, *COPS: L.A.C.*, *Savvies*, *Darwin's Brave New World*, *Packed To The Rafters*. Simon is the co-creator of the web comedy series *The Birth of Creation* and a founding member of the award-winning performance group *SandS through the hourglass*. He is a graduate of WAAPA (Acting).

### Genevieve Lemon Diana

Genevieve's theatre credits include: for Griffin: *The Big Picture*; for Belvoir: *The Blind Giant Is Dancing*, *The Cosmonaut's Last Message*, *Death Of A Salesman*, *Seventeen*; for Ensemble Theatre: *Tribes*, *Broken Glass*; for Melbourne Theatre Company: *Piaf*, *Summer Of The Seventeenth Doll*; for Sydney Theatre Company: *The Girl Who Saw Everything*, *The Hanging*, *Hanging Man*, *Harbour*, *Hay Fever*, *The Madras House*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Miracle City*, *Morning Sacrifice*, *Noises Off*, *Once In A Lifetime*, *The Recruit*, *The Republic of Myopia*, *The Seagull*, *Summer Rain*, *Victory*, *The Wharf Revue*; for Queensland Theatre Company: *And A Nightingale Song*, *Bright Lies*, *The Venetian Twins*. Genevieve also performed in the Australian premieres of *Steaming*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* *The Musical*, and *The Mousetrap* 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

production. She was in the London and Sydney seasons of Working Title's production of *Billy Elliot*, for which she received a Helpmann Award for Best Female Actor in a Musical, the Sydney Theatre Critics Award for the Judith Johnson Award for Best Performance by an Actress in a Musical and the Green Room Award for Best Female Artist in a Leading Role. Genevieve's TV credits include: *After the Beep*, *Heartland*, *Neighbours*, *Prisoner*, *Rake*, *Redfern Now*, *The Secret River*, *Three Men and a Baby Grand* and *Top of the Lake*, for which she received Equity Ensemble Award for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Telemovie or Mini-Series. Her film credits include: *Billy's Holiday*, *The Dressmaker*, *Holy Smoke*, *The Piano*, *Soft Fruit*, *Suburban Mayhem*, and *Sweetie*, for which she received the Australian Film Critics Award for Best Actress. Genevieve has an album of her Sydney Opera House concert, *Angels in the City*.

### Lincoln Younes Lucacz

This is Lincoln's first production with Griffin. His credits for television include: *City Homicide*, *Hiding*, *Home & Away*, *Love Child*, *Tangle*, for which he won Most Outstanding Performance by an Actor. Lincoln's film credits include: *Down Under*, *The Wedding Party*.

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