



GRIFFIN THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

THE ELOCUTION OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

BY *steve j. spears*

21 FEB – 29 MAR 2026

📍 DOWNSTAIRS THEATRE, BELVOIR ST THEATRE

GRIFFIN
THEATRE
COMPANY

CAST & CREATIVES

Director Declan Greene

Designer Isabel Hudson

Lighting Designer BROCKMAN

Composer & Sound Designer David Bergman

Community Engagement Strategist Bayley Turner

Vocal Coach Linda Nicholls-Gidley

Intimacy Coordinator Chloë Dallimore

Producer Gus Murray

Stage Manager Isabella Kerdijk

With Simon Burke AO

"The Jean Genie"

By David Bowie

Tintoretto Music (BMI)

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

"The greater the number of homosexuals the greater the threat to innocent boys."

Sir Peter Delamothé OBE (Attorney-General of Queensland 1963–71)

In 1976, **steve j. spears** premiered a play about a gay man who is destroyed by a very old moral hysteria. The idea that queer people are, somehow, inherently dangerous to children.

The Elocution of Benjamin Franklin is a portrait of a time. In Australia: **David Bowie**, **The Skyhooks**, **The Rocky Horror Picture Show**, **Betty Blokkbuster** were all wildly popular entertainment. In 1976, male flamboyance, it seemed, was passable. But if that flamboyance was conflated with *homosexuality*, it was not. Male homosexual activity remained illegal in every Australian state except the ACT and South Australia. As retort to the growing push for decriminalisation, one idea was parroted endlessly on the nightly news, by men like **Peter Delamothé**: *gay men will harm your children*. Then, change the channel—there's **Red Symonds** on *Countdown* playing guitar in a feather boa and lipstick, as **Shirley Strachan** sings "*I feel a little mixed up / I feel a little queer...*"—to screaming crowds of teenage boys and girls.

In *The Elocution of Benjamin Franklin*, **steve j. spears's** towering anti-hero Robert O'Brien does not harm his voice students. Yet, when his sexuality is exposed, it becomes a pretext for accusation, incarceration and worse. With all the play's shock value (including its infamous nude opening), it can be easy overlook how radical it was for **spears** to write, at that time, a play about a homosexual teacher of children. And one who was—in the words of **Richard Wherett AM**—a

"fiercely honourable and principled" man, but "trapped by the hypocritically puritanical society of the 1970s."

Six years ago I sent this play to **Simon Burke**, feeling in my gut that—should I ever get to direct *The Elocution of Benjamin Franklin*—he was the person to take on this role. And so we circled this work for years: tantalised, terrified and waiting for the moment when a revival felt not only necessary, but urgent.

That urgency did not arrive in a single flash. It came as a slow accumulation. A tumble of troubling occurrences that eventually built into a landslide. Last year, Liberal senator **Alex Antic** asked the ABC why they were "grooming children" by allowing a gay man in a dress—**Courtney Act**—to read a picture book on *Play School*. Hysteria reignited around the rights of trans women to access bathrooms. Sex education for queer students was banned in schools across the United States—which might feel distant, until we remember that our own moral panic around the Safe Schools program was only seven years ago.

It is both uncanny and tragic that *The Elocution of Benjamin Franklin* is now fifty years old and yet it understands this contemporary hysteria intimately.

To make that resonance as clear as possible in this production, I am grateful to the estate of **steve j. spears** for trusting us to adapt aspects of the play—including returning its location to Double Bay, as in its original staging, rather than the later relocation to Toorak.

This is not to say, of course, that *The Elocution of Benjamin Franklin* is a morally perfect vessel for this message.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

It would be boring if it was. Like its protagonist, *The Elocution of Benjamin Franklin* is larger-than-life, grotesque, contradictory and uses humour in a way that is discombobulating, especially for some contemporary sensibilities.

It still astounds me that when *The Elocution of Benjamin Franklin* was first produced, it was received largely as a raucous comedy. Its iconic original star **Gordon Chater AM**, beloved from *The Mavis Bramston Show*, drew in audiences ready to laugh—and they did.

A great deal has changed since 1976. The Catholic church scandals of the 90s fundamentally reshaped our cultural understanding of child abuse. Spears dared us to laugh at the absurd transgression of a child attempting to seduce his revolting, ridiculous sissy of teacher. Yet in 2026 this idea carries a gravity that resists comedy, irony, or theatrical play.

As I write this, deep in rehearsals, Simon and I can feel that resonance of this story. Its tragedy, its triumph, its emotional heft—its “*diatribe about injustice*”, to quote Chater. But we genuinely do not know how funny audiences will find it anymore. *The Elocution of Benjamin Franklin* dares us to laugh—with the blackest humour—at the machinery of accusation, at hysteria itself. But it also brushes uncomfortably close to material we now refuse to treat lightly. I daresay this is part of the reason why the play has not been produced, professionally, in 24 years.

With this production, we are attempting to live inside that tension. Inside Spears's righteous anger and the rough, troubling, majestic play he forged to contain it. I am deeply grateful to all who have assisted us on the preparation of this production—in particular **Anthony Blair, Rob George, Bayley Turner**—as well as my colleagues at Griffin, for their careful and patient stewardship of this idea over many years. And above all, I am grateful to Simon.

Declan Greene
Director

PERFORMER'S NOTE

"See, I think all he needs is a father figure" [sipping daintily]

Robert O'Brien in *The Elocution of Benjamin Franklin*

One afternoon in 1974, my somewhat unfatherly father picked me up from school and drove me to the new Nimrod Theatre (now Belvoir St Theatre) for my first ever audition—a new Australian play that **Richard Wherrett AM** was directing. I was 12 years old (the same age as Benjamin Franklin is in our play). Richard led me to the Upstairs Theatre, handed me a page of script and told me to go down to the stage and sight read it for him. The kid in the play had to swear like a trooper and he obviously wanted to see if I was spooked by "language". I was not. I settled myself, took a deep breath and let rip, my little alto tones spraying the back of the house with the foulest language I'd never dared voice. I can still see the look on Richard's face; a little shocked, kind of delighted, and clearly trying to suppress a giggle. I got the part, did the play and I've been doing plays ever since.

Richard and I only worked together a couple more times over the years but from that day until his death in 2001 he was a towering figure in my life. Warm and distant, imperious and impetuous, stern and indulgent, ribald and censorious, high and low (low, low) brow, always ready with the best—and the worst—advice, a perfect gentleman and camp as fuck. I loved him with all my heart. Rehearsing this play I find myself freshly grateful to Richard and the other unconventional father figures that I encountered as a young adult, whose wholly safe and positive influences on me sprang from a mutual recognition of sameness in a world that spurned difference.

To be back in this building where it all began for me, to essay this monumentally challenging role in this unexploded landmine of a play in the same theatre that Richard first directed it exactly 50 years ago feels like almost unbearably sweet serendipity. And for that I thank **Declan**, for whom and with whom I would do anything. Onstage that is.

Simon Burke AO
Performer

BIOGRAPHIES



steve j. spears

PLAYWRIGHT

Steve's theatre credits included: for Griffin Theatre Company: *Glory, When They Send Me Three and Fourpence*; for Actors Co of Cleveland: *Froggie*, which received the Cleveland Critics Circle Award; for Circle Theatre: *People Keep Giving Me Things*; for Crossroads: *Namatjira Park*; for La Boite Theatre: *King Richard*, which he later adapted for radio and won the AWGIE; for Pram Factory: *Africa*; for Nimrod Theatre: *The Elocution of Benjamin Franklin* went on to become an international success, touring three continents and winning the OBIE for Best Play Off-Broadway and AWGIE for Best Play, *There Were Giants in Those Days* and *Young Mo*, which earned the National Critics' Circle Awards for Best New Talent and Best Play; for Stage Company: *The Death of George Reeves, Those Dear Departed*; and for State Youth Theatre: *Mad Jean*.

Steve's television credits included: for the Australian Children's Television Foundation: *The Greatest Tune on Earth*, winning the Penguin Certificate of Merit; for Network Ten: *E Street, Heartbreak High, Winners*, nominated for AFI's Best Children's Drama and Best Screenplay and winning Chicago's International Festival of Children's Films Award for Outstanding Humour; for Nine Network: *All Together Now, Chances*; and for Seven Network: *A Country Practice, Hey Dad!, Sky Trackers*.

Steve died in 2007.

BIOGRAPHIES



DECLAN GREENE

DIRECTOR

Declan Greene is Artistic Director of Griffin Theatre Company.

Declan's credits as a director include: for Griffin Theatre Company: *Dogged*, *Green Park*, *Naturism*, *Sex Magick* (co-directed with Nicholas Brown), *The Lewis Trilogy*, *Whitefella Yella Tree* (co-directed with Amy Sole); Sydney Theatre Company: *Hamlet*, *Prince of Skidmark*; Griffin Theatre Company and Hayes Theatre Co: *Flat Earthers: The Musical*; Malthouse Theatre: *Wake in Fright*; for Malthouse Theatre and Sydney Theatre Company: *Blackie Blackie Brown*; ZLMD Shakespeare Company: *Conviction*. As a playwright: *Eight Gigabytes of Hardcore Pornography*, *The Homosexuals, or 'Faggots'*, *Melancholia*, *Pompeii L.A.* and *Moth*.

Declan co-founded queer experimental theatre company Sisters Grimm with Ash Flanders in 2006, and has directed and co-created all their productions to date, including: for Griffin Independent and Theatre Works: *Summertime in the Garden of Eden*; for Malthouse Theatre and Sydney Theatre Company: *Calpurnia Descending*; for Melbourne Theatre Company: *Lilith: The Jungle Girl*; and for Sydney Theatre Company: *Little Mercy*. He was previously Resident Artist at Malthouse Theatre.

BIOGRAPHIES



ISABEL HUDSON

DESIGNER

Isabel is an award-winning set and costume designer. Isabel's design credits for the stage include: for Griffin Theatre Company: *Ghosting the Party*, *Jailbaby*, *Pony*, *Nucleus*; for Belvoir St Theatre: *Blessed Union*, *Every Brilliant Thing*, *Winyanboga Yurringa*; for Belvoir 25A: *Jess & Joe Forever*, *Tuesday*; for Ensemble Theatre: *Master Class*; for Hayes Theatre Co: *American Psycho*, *Cry-Baby*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Razorhurst*, *The View Upstairs*; for Melbourne Theatre Company: *Torch the Place*; for New Theatricals: *Darkness*; for NIDA: *Mr Burns*; for Pinchgut Opera: *Farnace*; for Shake and Stir: *The Lovers*; for Sydney Festival/Rising/Darwin Festival: *Maureen: Harbinger of Death*; for Sydney Theatre Company: *A Fool In Love*, *Constellations*, *Hubris & Humiliation*. Isabel was the costume designer for *Dear Evan Hansen* (Michael Cassel Group) and costume designer and associate set designer for *The Mousetrap* (Crossroads Productions). Isabel has won four Sydney Theatre Awards for her outstanding designs; best set design for *Constellations*, *American Psycho*, and *Cry-Baby*, and best costume design for *Hubris And Humiliation*. She also won an APDG award for best set design for *American Psycho*. She was awarded the Kristian Fredrikson Scholarship in 2022 and The Thelma Afford Award for Costume Design in Stage and Screen in 2022

BIOGRAPHIES



BROCKMAN

LIGHTING DESIGNER

BROCKMAN is an award-winning lighting and set designer who has worked both in Australia and internationally.

For Griffin Theatre Company: *Diving For Pearls*, *Family Values*, *Replay*, *Splinter*; for Griffin Theatre Company and Hayes Theatre Co: *Flat Earthers: The Musical*; for bAKEHOUSE: *Coram Boy*, *Dresden*, *Visiting Hours*, *The Laden Table*, *Jatinga*; for Belvoir 25a: *Horses*, *Jess & Joe Forever*, *Greater Sunrise*; for Campbelltown Arts Centre: *Mirage*, *Apocalypse*, *Cleansed*, *Metamorphoses*, *Angels In America Part 1 And 2*; for CDP: *Are we there yet?*, *Guess How Much I Love You*, *Spot Live On Stage*; for Critical Stages: *Alphabetical Sydney*; for Dance Makers Collective: *The Rivoli*, *Wolverine*; for Darlinghurst Theatre Company: *Overflow*, *Torch Song Trilogy*, *Broken*, *Detroit*, *Mother Fuckers With A Hat*, *Tinder Box*; for Ensemble Theatre Company: *Tribes*, *The Big Dry*, *The Plant*, *Neville's Island*; for Hayes Theatre Co: *Ride The Cyclone*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, *Carmen Alive Or Dead*, *Razorhurst*; for Legs On The Wall: *Cat's Cradle*, *The Raft*, *Waters Edge*; for Little Eggs Collective: *Symphonie Fantastique*; for National Theatre Of Paramatta: *Things Hidden Since The Foundation Of The World (AUS/UK)*, *Lady Tabouli*, *Girl In The Machine*, *The Girl/ The Woman*, *The Sorry Mum Project*, *Let Me Know When You Get Home*; Pinchgut Opera: *Farnace*; for Queensland Theatre Company: *Family Values*; for Shaun Parker & Company: *In The Zone*, *King*; for Squabbalagic: *Day of the triffids development*, *Good Omens The Musical development*, *Herringbone*, *Grey Gardens The Musical*, *Man Of La Mancha*; Sydney Mardi Gras Festival: *Sissy Ball 2022*, *Sissy Ball 2020*; Sydney Theatre Company: *Constellations*, *A Fool In Love*, *American Signs*.

BIOGRAPHIES



DAVID BERGMAN

COMPOSER & SOUND DESIGNER

David's designs for theatre include: for Griffin Theatre Company: sound designer *Green Park*, composer and sound designer *Superheroes*, composer, sound and video designer *First Love Is The Revolution*, composer and sound designer, *Naturism*; for Bell Shakespeare: sound designer *Twelfth Night*, *The Lovers*: for Belvoir St Theatre: composer and sound designer *Scenes From The Climate Era*, sound designer *Into The Woods*, video designer *Blue*, sound designer *At What Cost?*; for Ensemble Theatre: composer and sound designer *Aria*, *Memory Of Water*; for Hayes Theatre Co: sound and video designer *Merrily We Roll Along*, sound designer *Dubbo Championship Wrestling*, *The Rise And Disguise Of Elizabeth R.*, *Catch Me If You Can*, *Spring Awakening*; for Michael Cassel Group: video design *Dear Evan Hansen*; for Monkey Baa Theatre: video designer *Possum Magic*, *The Peasant Prince*, sound designer *Josephine Wants To Dance*; for Shake and Stir: *The Lovers*; for Soft Tread: video and sound design *The Gospel According To Paul*; for Sydney Theatre Company: video designer *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, sound design *Playing Beatie Bow*, video and sound design *A Cheery Soul and The Wharf Revue* (from 2009-2018), video design *Julius Caesar*, *Muriel's Wedding: The Musical*, *The Hanging*, *The Effect*, *The Long Way Home*. David has won two Sydney Theatre Company awards: for Best Stage Design of a Mainstage Production for *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and for Best Sound Design of a Mainstage Production for *Green Park*.

BIOGRAPHIES



BAYLEY TURNER

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIST

Bayley Turner (she/her) is a consultant on consent-based practice, inclusion, and intimacy coordination. As Consent and Intimacy Consultant: for Griffin Theatre Company: *Jailbaby*, *The Lewis Trilogy*, *swim*; for Griffin Theatre Company and Sydney Theatre Company: *Whitefella Yella Tree*; for Andrew Henry Presents: *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*; for Bullet Heart Club: *The Hall*, *In The Club*, *The Inheritance*, *The Placeholder*, *Things I Know to Be True*; for Malthouse Theatre: *Truth*; for Melbourne Theatre Company: *The Almighty Sometimes*; for Michael Cassel Group: *Hamilton*; for Sydney Theatre Company: *Sweat*; for Victorian College of the Arts: *Spring Awakening*; for Bunya Productions: *Ladies in Black*; Fremantle Media: *Neighbours*; and as Performer: for Black Apple Theatre: *Thrive: Queer Voices Out Loud*; for Bullet Heart Club and fortyfive downstairs: *Thirty-Six*; for Mean Projects: *Burlesque by Force*. Bayley has trained with Intimacy On Set and IDC Professionals. Bayley has also presented at various conferences and events on consent in the creative sector, including Creative Toolkit 2024, and SXSW 2024, 2025. Bayley is honoured to be part of trans storytelling and truth-telling working with the next generation of artists.
@createconsent

BIOGRAPHIES



LINDA NICHOLLS-GIDLEY

VOCAL COACH

Linda's theatre credits include: for Griffin Theatre Company: *Pony*; for Crossroads Live: *Cluedo*, *Back to the Future*, *Annie*, *The Odd Couple*, *Cinderella*, *9 to 5*, *An American in Paris*; for Darlinghurst Theatre Company: *Let the Right One In*, *Once*, *A Chorus Line*, *I'm With Her*, *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, *Love*; for Dreamworks: *How To Train Your Dragon – Arena Spectacular*; for Ensemble Theatre: *True West*, *Primary Trust*, *The Half-Life of Marie Curie*, *The Lover/The Dumb Waiter*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *The Heartbreak Choir*, *Colder Than Here*, *Master Class*, *Ulster American*, *Switzerland*, *Alone it Stands*, *The Memory of Water*, *Summer of Harold*, *Benefactors*, *Clyde's*, *Suddenly Last Summer*, *Boxing Day BBQ*, *The Caretaker*, *Photograph 51*, *Black Cockatoo*, *Baby Doll*, *The Last Five Years*; for Gordon Frost: *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Shrek*, *Saturday Night Fever*, *The Bodyguard*, *Dirty Dancing*; for GWB Entertainment: *The Lord of The Rings – A Musical Tale*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *Jagged Little Pill*, *Girl From the North Country*, *An American in Paris*; for Hayes Theatre Co: *Ride The Cyclone*, *Zombie!*, *Murder for Two*, *Jekyll and Hyde*; for Jones Theatricals: *Pretty Woman*; for Matt Ward Productions: *Beautiful*; for Monkey Baa Theatre: *Hitler's Daughter*; for NTofP: *Daytime Deewane*, *Yoga Play*, *Fade*, *Grounded*; for New Theatricals: *Gaslight*; for Opera Australia: *Guys and Dolls*, *Miss Saigon*; for Outhouse Theatre: *Eureka Day*, *A Case for the Existence of God*, *Consent*, *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*; for Playlab: *Slow Boat*; for TEG Dainty: *Tina*; for Seymour Centre: *The Inheritance*, *Museum of Modern Love*; for Sport For Jove: *Betrayal*, *The Player Kings*, *Isolde and Tristan*, *The Crucible*.

Linda's television credits include: for Paramount +: *Shantaram*; for Netflix: *Wellmania*; for Stan: *Year Of*; for Fremantle: *Mary: The Making of a Princess*.

Linda's film credits include *We Will Never Die*, *Sleeping Dogs*, *Seeds of Gold*, *Jungle*.

BIOGRAPHIES



CHLOË DALLIMORE

INTIMACY COORDINATOR

Chloë is an internationally trained and accredited Intimacy Coordinator/Director. Theatre: for Griffin Theatre Company: *Blaque Showgirls*, *Naturism*, *Sex Magick*; for Griffin Theatre Company and Hayes Theatre Co: *Flat Earthers: The Musical*; for Belvoir St Theatre: *At What Cost?*, *Big Girls Don't Cry*, *Miss Peony*, *The Master & Margarita*; for Crossroads Live: *Chicago*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Wicked*; for Hayes Theatre Co: *Jekyll and Hyde*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Ride The Cyclone*, *Zombie!*; for Opera Australia: *Amadeus*, *Hadestown*, *Miss Saigon*, *RENT*, *Summer Season '26*; for Sydney Theatre Company: *Circle Mirror Transformation*, *Dear Evan Hansen*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Shiralee*, *The Talented Mr Ripley*.

Film: for Stan: *Bump Christmas (2025)*; for Columbia Pictures, Screen Gems, and Original Film: *I Know What You Did Last Summer (2025)*; for Amazon MGM Studios: *Play Dirty (2025)*; for Raimi Productions, 20th Century Studios and TSG Entertainment: *Send Help (2026)*.

Television: for Binge: *Mix Tape*, *Strife*, *The Last Anniversary*, *The Twelve*; for Netflix: *Heartbreak High*, *Wellmania*; for Paramount+: *Last King of the Cross*, *NCIS: Sydney*, *Playing Gracie Darling*; for Stan: *Bump*, *Colin From Accounts*, *Last King of the Cross*.

Chloë received the Australian Entertainment Mo Award for Female Musical Theatre Performer (2004), the Helpmann Award for Best Female Actor in a Musical (2005), the Sydney Theatre Award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role (2005), the Victorian Green Room Association Awards for Best Leading Female Artist in Music Theatre (2005).

BIOGRAPHIES



ISABELLA KERDIJK

STAGE MANAGER

Isabella graduated from the production course at the National Institute of Dramatic Art in 2008. She has worked as a Stage Manager and Assistant Stage Manager on many shows, including: for Griffin Theatre Company: *And No More Shall We Part*, *Blaque Showgirls*, *Green Park*, *Replay*, *Sex Magick*, *swim*, *The Smallest Hour*, *This Year's Ashes*, *Ugly Mugs*, *Whitefella Yella Tree*, *Wicked Sisters*; for Belvoir St Theatre: *Big Girls Don't Cry*, *An Enemy of the People*, *The Dog/The Cat*, *The Drover's Wife*, *Every Brilliant Thing*, *FANGIRLS*, *Girl Asleep*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *HIR*, *Jasper Jones*, *Kill the Messenger*, *Mother*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *My Name is Jimi*, *Stories I Want to Tell You In Person*, *The Sugar House*, *Thyestes (European Tours)*, *Well-Behaved Women*, *Winyanboga Yurringa*; for Sydney Theatre Company; *Blithe Spirit*; for Circus Oz: *Cranked Up*; for Darlinghurst Theatre Company: *Fourplay*, *Ride*, *Silent Night*; for Ensemble Theatre: *Benefactors*, *Boxing Day BBQ*, *Rainman*, *The Half-Life of Marie Curie*, *The Ruby Sunrise*; for *Legs on the Wall: Bubble*; for LWAA: *The Mousetrap* (Australia/New Zealand Tours); for Spiegelworld: *Empire*; for Sydney Festival: *A Model Murder*.

BIOGRAPHIES



SIMON BURKE AO

ROBERT O'BRIEN

In 2015, Simon was named an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) “for distinguished service to the performing arts as an actor, singer and producer”.

Australian stage credits include for Griffin Theatre Company: *The Homosexuals*, *October*, *Satango*; for Sydney Theatre Company: *Mary Stuart*, *Mrs Warren’s Profession* and *The Wharf Revue* (2013, 2017 & 2019); for Griffin Theatre Company and Bell Shakespeare: *The Misanthrope*; for Melbourne Theatre Company: *Noises Off*, *Three Furies* (Sydney/Auckland/Perth/Adelaide Festivals); for Seymour Centre: *Strangers In Between*. He starred in *The Inheritance* (2025 Sydney Theatre Award for Best Ensemble and Best Independent Production).

Australian musical theatre credits include: *Wicked* (The Wizard) the Australasian tour; *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* (Harold Zidler, for which he won a Sydney Theatre Award for Best Performance in a Supporting Role-Musical); *Catch Me If You Can* (Frank Abignale); *Hairspray* (Edna); *Clinton The Musical* (Bill Clinton); *Mary Poppins* (Mr Banks); *Chicago* (Billy Flynn); *Anything Goes* (Billy Crocker, for which he won a Green Room Award Best Actor – Musical), *Les Miserables* (as Marius in the original Australian cast).

London West End credits include: *The Sound of Music* (Captain von Trapp); *The Phantom of the Opera* (Raoul); *A Little Night Music* (Carl-Magnus); *La Cage Aux Folles*(Georges); UK premiere of *Holding the Man*; *When The Rain Stops Falling* (Almeida Theatre).

Film and Television credits include: *The Devil’s Playground* (1976 AFI Best Actor Award), *Devil’s Playground* (Executive Producer, 2015 AACTA and Logie Award for Best Mini-Series), 25 years presenting *Play School* and the upcoming *Five Minute Call* (producer and co-writer).

Federal President of Actors Equity for MEAA 2004-2014, Vice President of FIA (International Federation of Actors) 2012-2016. Awarded Actors Equity Life Membership Award in 2015.

ABOUT GRIFFIN

Griffin is the only theatre company in the country exclusively devoted to the development and staging of new Australian writing. Located in the historic SBW Stables Theatre, nestled in the heart of Kings Cross, Griffin has been Australia's home for the exploration of new stories since 1979.

We are the launch pad for new plays, ideas and writing that other theatres won't take a risk on. We boldly contribute to Australia's unique and powerful storytelling culture. Plays like *Prima Facie*, *Holding the Man* and *City of Gold* all had their world premieres at Griffin

before going out to capture the national imagination. In the words of our longest-serving Artistic Director, **Ros Horin**:

"We are the theatre of first chances."

We are passionate about nurturing emerging and established practitioners alike. We pride ourselves on supporting our vast community of artists, audiences and supporters who consider our theatre their creative home. We help ambitious, bold, risk-taking and urgent Australian work get from the page onto the stage. We tell the stories that help us know who we are as a nation and who we want to become.

Acknowledgement of Country

Griffin Theatre Company operates and tells stories on the unceded lands of the Gadigal of the Eora Nation. We acknowledge and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the oldest continuous living culture on the planet, with more than 60,000 years of storytelling practice shaping and underpinning all aspects of Australian culture. It is a privilege that we do not take lightly: to work on this land, and to tell stories on its soil.

GRIFFIN THEATRE COMPANY

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ABOUT BELVOIR ST THEATRE

Belvoir St Theatre is a theatre company on a side street in Surry Hills, Sydney.

We share our street with a park and a public housing estate, and our theatre is in an old industrial building. It has been, at various times, a garage, a sauce factory, and the Nimrod Theatre. When the theatre was threatened with redevelopment in 1984, over 600 likeminded theatre-lovers formed a syndicate to buy the building and save it from becoming an apartment block. More than thirty years later, Belvoir continues to be at the forefront of Australian acting and storytelling for the stage. In 2026, that story takes a new turn. While Griffin Theatre Company's home is being redeveloped, Belvoir's Downstairs will be its temporary base. Two companies that care deeply about new Australian theatre, sharing a space with decades of creative history behind it and plenty more to come.

At Belvoir we gather the best theatre artists we can find, emerging and established, to realise an annual season of works – new works, both Australian and international, reimaged classics

and a lasting commitment to Indigenous stories. Audiences remember many landmark productions including *Counting and Cracking*, *The Drover's Wife*, *Angels in America*, *Brothers Wreck*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Neighbourhood Watch*, *The Wild Duck*, *Medea*, *The Diary of a Madman*, *Death of a Salesman*, *The Blind Giant is Dancing*, *Hamlet*, *Cloudstreet*, *Aliwa*, *The Book of Everything*, *Keating!*, *The Exile Trilogy*, *Exit the King*, *The Sapphires*, *Faith Healer*, *FANGIRLS*, *The Jungle and the Sea* and many more.

Today, under Artistic Director Eamon Flack and Executive Director Aaron Beach, Belvoir tours nationally and internationally, and continues to create its own brand of rough magic for new generations of audiences. We are proud to be creating work that speaks to life and experience in Australia and abroad, continuing our commitment to deliver diverse stories to diverse audiences. Belvoir receives government support for its activities from the federal government through the Australia Council and the state government through Create NSW. We also receive philanthropic and corporate support, which we greatly appreciate and welcome.

BELVOIR ST THEATRE

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