

BLACK SWAN STATE THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

WATER

by Jane Bodie
Directed by Emily McLean

AT
STATE
THEATRE
CENTRE

09 → 26
MAY MAY



BLACK SWAN
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COMPANY



'19

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FEATURING

CAST INCLUDES

Emily Rose Brennan	JOEY / WOMAN / JOSEPHINE
Glenda Linscott	BETH / ELIZABETH
Richard Maganga	YIZE / CLERK / ANDREW
Amy Mathews	GEMMA / NURSE
Igor Sas	PETER / ROBERT

CREATIVES

Emily McLean	DIRECTOR
Fiona Bruce	SET & COSTUME DESIGNER
Lucy Birkinshaw	LIGHTING DESIGNER
Dr Clint Bracknell	SOUND DESIGNER & COMPOSER
Polly Low	DRAMATURG
Luzita Fereday	DIALECT COACH
Katie Moore	STAGE MANAGER
Amelia Trenaman	ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

PRODUCTION

Jennifer Edwards	COSTUME MAKER
Laura Heffernan	SET & COSTUME DESIGN INTERN

Black Swan State Theatre Company acknowledges the Whadjuk people of the Nyoongar nations who are the traditional owners and custodians of country on which the State Theatre Centre of WA stands. We pay our respects to all First Peoples, to their ancestors and Elders. It is a privilege to be together on Nyoongar country.

DURATION:

120mins



Contains adult themes,
strong language, haze.

SYNOPSIS

AUSTRALIA, IN A NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE.

Peter, a once powerful man, is celebrating his birthday at his island holiday house and the water's running out. When his favourite daughter brings an uninvited guest to dinner, it's soon clear the newcomer isn't here to celebrate Peter's life, or his controversial immigration policies.

ELLIS ISLAND 1921.

An elderly Australian couple are detained, whilst trying to gain passage into America for a new life. As they're interrogated, it's revealed they've fled a savage drought in Australia, but that they haven't escaped tragedy.

QUEENSLAND, 1905.

The daughter of a plantation owner and a cane field worker meet. As the conversation deepens, we discover their complex, forbidden relationship, and uncover the story of a darker secret, of Australia's own forgotten slave trade.

Spanning three eras, *Water* explores three families, born in different times, but united by stories of immigration and transportation. Epic, bold and deeply moving, the play explores guilt, history and whether asylum is a human right, asking if and how we will be judged for our own current immigration policy.

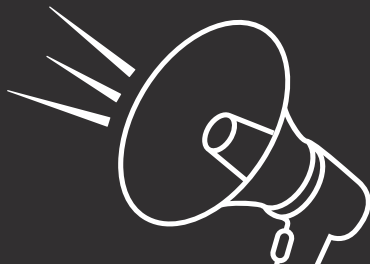
'They recovered thirteen bodies in the water, just off the coast of Australia, thirteen women and children. You made an example of them, to stop them, you made an example of their lives, to prove a point.'

'Because we deserve that, the chance of a new life, don't we, after everything? Why would anyone deny us that, a life?'

– *Water*, Jane Bodie

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Black Swan would like to thank Brian Heller and the Arts Angels, Cathy Penglis and our Black Swan Student, Metro and Regional Ambassadors. We would also like to thank the team at the State Theatre Centre of Western Australia for their support and assistance.



A note from the PLAYWRIGHT

When Clare approached me to write a play for *Black Swan*, she wanted it to be big, bold and ambitious. A family drama for now, that spoke to the moral questions and dilemmas of our time. We spoke of the plays of Arthur Miller – one of my heroes – of their ability to tell a bigger world story by focusing on a family.

I was excited by a play that might be set in, or near, Perth. When a dear friend took me to her family holiday house on Molloy Island, a strangely beautiful place walled in by nature, I was bewitched. Not far from the mainland, the island felt deserted, frozen in time. I was struck by the odd rules and restrictions for entrance, at the crossing, at the border of land and water, by its metaphorical potential. By now, I'd decided to write of the plight of asylum seekers and of a looming environmental crisis – how our role in both might be viewed in the future. Things swam in my mind – Australia as an island, a drought, a silent bush, emptied of birds, vast bodies of water that people must cross to find safety.

Over two years I searched for the places and eras for each of the stories in *Water* to exist, and the characters to tell them. The play felt

audacious, sometimes terrifying, like the world itself. I felt the responsibility of its themes. Like the characters at the core of *Water*, we must learn that fear and believing the lies we are being told don't keep us safe. I fiercely believe that Australia is made stronger by the rich diversity of our migrants. We must welcome them and their stories, as ours now.

As a writer, it's my responsibility to ask – as human beings, what right do we have to deny other humans a safe place to live? When the alternative before has led to acts of war and genocide that we cannot take back. If we are a lucky country, then we must share that luck with those less fortunate.

Thank you to the actors along the way and our wonderful cast for this first outing. Thanks to Emily, our director, for her huge warm heart and History Major brain. Thank you to Black Swan and to Clare and Polly for urging me, without fear, to dare to dream bigger.

Jane Bodie

PLAYWRIGHT



Jane Bodie PLAYWRIGHT

Jane is an internationally renowned playwright, screenwriter and mentor. Her plays, including *Lamb*, *Savage*, *Music*, *Hinterland*, *This Years' Ashes*, *A Single Act*, *Still*, *Ride* and *Fourplay* have been performed worldwide, from London to New York and Brazil.

She won the Victorian Premier Literary Award in 2006 for *A Single Act* and a Green Room Award in 2003 for *Still*. Jane has written extensively for TV and radio, including *The Secret Life of Us*, *Crash Burn*, *Tashi* and *Moving Wallpaper*. Radio plays include, *Seeing Somebody*, *In Glass* for Radio National and *Well* for BBC Radio 4.

She is currently adapting *This Years' Ashes* for screen, for Screen Australia. Her short film *Alice* directed by Garth Davis was the Winner of Best Film in the anthology series *POV* and was selected for screening at Cannes Film Festival.

Jane has worked as dramaturg on many standout Australian productions, including Katie Beckett's *Which Way Home* and Michelle Lee's *Rice*. She worked at The Royal Court Theatre in the UK as a tutor and was Head of Playwriting at NIDA from 2009-2012. She was Associate Artist at The Griffin Theatre in 2013 and Artistic Associate at Playwriting Australia in 2014. In 2014 she was awarded an Arts Victoria Fellowship to create three new works. Her most recent play, *Lamb* (with songs by Mark Seymour), had a sell-out season at Melbourne's Red Stitch Theatre and will tour Australia nationally next year.

Jane won the 2019 Griffin/Lysicrates Award for a new Australian play, *Tell Me You Love Me* and she is currently creating a new 8-part TV drama series.

A note from the DIRECTOR

It's fascinating which parts of history we choose to learn from and which we don't.

Women have the vote now but not equal pay. Indigenous Australians are now citizens but the incarceration and suicide rates are disproportionate. When it comes to the issue of refugees though, we seem unable to learn from our history. The movement of people displaced from their homes has been divisive and worried generation after generation. Yet the Italians, Vietnamese and Sudanese have arrived and we still have our jobs and our houses. The sky hasn't fallen and the food is better.

Water is a play about two urgent current issues, immigration and the environment, in the guise of a family kitchen-sink drama. The family, as society, argues different points of view. This allows the arguments to twist and turn ferociously quickly and use both intellect and emotion. The arguments exist as a family's personal history and an issue's public history.

Jane Bodie has written a layered, intelligent, sparkling script. Its humanity is powerful. She has taken a black and white moral issue and created a play and characters that are not. What an energy to have in the room. We loved working with her. Her fierce ability to think five thoughts at once, her comedy routines and her experience meant that we could throw

questions and suggestions and she knew what was worth catching and what wasn't. Her ability to find clarity through distillation was impressive and *Water* is muscular because of it.

The first production of a new script is thrilling and demands much of everyone. The cast have been wonderful – completely rigorous about the story and in particular their characters. They have also been hilarious. Fiona Bruce's set allows us to watch history play out on the same island with objects hiding in plain sight that move across time and space. Just like our ideas, hopes, fears. Lucy and Clint have given light and sound respectively to a strange world somewhere in the near future and made things slightly skew. Katie and Amelia – our Stage Manager and Assistant Stage Manager – have tracked people, cheese platters and script changes magnificently.

I came on board for a workshop after the script had already been commissioned and workshopped twice. I thank Clare Watson and Polly Low for their work and for giving a new script what it needs – time and multiple thoughtful and playful examinations.

Come over to our island –
you are welcome here.

Emily McLean
DIRECTOR

CAST



Emily Rose Brennan JOEY

Emily is a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Arts NIDA (BA Acting). After graduating, Emily immediately joined the Bell Shakespeare Actors at Work Team, touring Australia for nine months. Following this, she performed across the country and at the Sydney Opera House in Bell Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*. Emily went on to perform for the Sydney Theatre Company, Griffin Theatre Company, Old Fitz Theatre/Tamarama Rock Surfers, Deckchair Theatre Company and Barking Gecko Theatre Company, The Blue

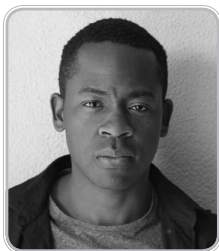
Room and NIDA Theatre Company. She most recently appeared on stage in *Cotton Wool Kid* in the 2019 Perth Fringe Festival. For television, Emily is currently working on the *Madkids*/ABC iView series *KGB*. Other TV Credits include *The Legend of Gavin Tanner* (ABC), *Underbelly: Razor* (Channel 9), *30 Seconds* (Foxtel/ABC) *Tricky Business* (Channel 9), *Dafuq* (ABC iView), *Ultimate Fanj* (ABC iView). In 2015 she wrote and acted in her own short film *Welcome to Paradise* which was shortlisted for Tropfest and screened at Cinefest and she will soon be seen in the much anticipated feature film, *Dirt Music*. This is Emily Rose's debut with Black Swan.



Glenda Linscott BETH

Since graduating from NIDA, Glenda has worked extensively in all aspects of the industry around the country. Theatre highlights include Australian premiere of *Angels in America*, Sydney Theatre Company; world premiere of *Speaking in Tongues*, Griffin Theatre Company; *Hate* for Malthouse Theatre; *Bad Blood Blues* which earned her a Greenroom Award nomination for Best Actress; *Blood Brothers*; national tours of *Steaming*, *Shirley Valentine* and *Daylight Saving*. Television credits include her Penguin Award winning portrayal of Rita Connors in

Prisoner: Cell Block H, *Murder Call*, *McLeod's Daughters*; *Neighbours*; *Underbelly*, *Phryne Fisher's Murder Mysteries*; *Winners and Losers*. Films include *Jindabyne*, *The Nugget*, *The Man Who Sued God*. Apart from her considerable acting credits, Glenda has directed theatre, including cabaret, and has gained an impressive reputation as a Performance Coach on major feature films. Glenda ran her own performance coaching and actor training business for nine years. Since 2015, Glenda has been Head of Acting at WAAPA. Under her leadership this program has just won the 2018 ECU Vice Chancellor's Award for Teaching Excellence, and the AAUT National Award for Program Excellence. This is Glenda's debut with Black Swan.



Richard Maganga YIZE

Richard is completing a final year of acting training in The Actors' Hub Gap program. Following a stint in community theatre appearing in several productions back to back, including *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Basin Street Blues*, *Sweet Charity*, *High Fidelity The Musical*, and *A Little Princess*, he went on to study acting craft. Through the Actor's Hub, he has appeared in productions of Friedrich Dürrenmatt's *The Visit*, *Burning Rose*, an Australian adaptation of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, and most recently *Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet* playing Friar Lawrence.

He has also lent his voice to online adverts for the Qenza Muslim prayer mats. This is Richard's debut with Black Swan.



Amy Mathews GEMMA

Amy graduated from ACA in 2000. Theatre credits – *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, *Coma Land* Black Swan, *Toast Maiden Voyage*, *The Anzac Project*, *Richard III* Ensemble, *Othello*, *Comedy of Errors*, *Tempest*, *Macbeth*, *Taming of the Shrew* Sport for Jove, *Dangerous Lenses* The Impending Room, *Transparency* Seymour Centre, *Orange Flower Water* Stella Green, *Chicom Brand* Spanking New, *Push Up* 1-3 Cipher Productions, *The Lady's Not For Touching* Sydney Writer's Festival, *Tracked* Prompt Theatre Co., *Cigarettes and Chocolate* See-Saw

and *Actors At Work* Bell Shakespeare. Television credits: *A Place to Call Home*, *Crownies*, *Rescue Special Ops*, *Packed to the Rafters*, *Home and Away*, *All Saints*, *Blue Heelers*, *Skool Sux*, *Love Bytes*, *Jeopardy*, *Always Greener* and *Head Start*. Film credits: *I Met A Girl* Monsoon Pictures and *Gabriel* Redline Films. Awards: PAWA 2018 Best Actor (female) *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, Blue Room Award best performance 2017.



Igor Sas PETER/ROBERT

Igor Sas has performed with many of Australia's major theatre companies throughout his extensive career. Highlights include The State Theatre Company of South Australia productions of *The Blind Giant is Dancing*, *The Season at Sarsaparilla*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Conquest of Carmen Miranda*, *Twelfth Night* and *The Marriage of Figaro*. With the Melbourne Theatre Company, *The Swimming Club* and a touring production of *Art*. Sydney Theatre Company *The Trial*, Perth Theatre Company, *Stories from Suburban Road* and *Soulmates*. Igor has enjoyed

many productions with Black Swan State Theatre Company including *The Female of the Species*, *Hir*, *When the Rain Stops Falling* and *Death of a Salesman*. Igor won the 2015 PAWA best actor award for his portrayal of Val Kolsky in *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*, again for Black Swan. With Barking Gecko Theatre, Igor performed in the 2017 Helpmann Award winning production of *Bambert's Book of Lost Stories*.

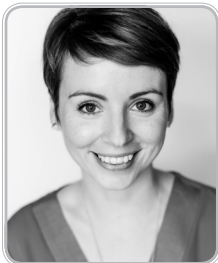
CREATIVES



Emily McLean DIRECTOR

Emily trained at WAAPA, is a founding member of Red Ryder Productions and is currently a Black Swan State Theatre Company (BSSTC) resident artist. She has directed for BSSTC, Perth Theatre Company, Deckchair, Red Ryder, WAAPA, Curtin, Maiden Voyage Theatre Company, and others. Her most recent productions were *Toast* by Liz Newell (Maiden Voyage, 2017) and *Grounded* by George Brandt (Red Ryder, 2016) both of which won the Best Production for their respective years at The Blue Room Theatre. *Grounded* also won the PAWA award for the Best Independent Production in 2016.

In 2018, she directed third year acting students at WAAPA in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and then *Blackrock* at Curtin. McLean directed *Dust* by Suzie Miller for BSSTC in 2014 which was awarded The Premier's Award for Best Script in 2016. In the last 10 years she has directed the first production of eight new Australian scripts.



Fiona Bruce SET & COSTUME DESIGNER

Fiona's previous Black Swan State Theatre Company set, and costume design credits include *The Seagull* (2014), *Dust* (2014), *Midsummer [A Play with Songs]* (2013), *Shrine* (costume 2013), *Shakespeare Shenanigans* (2013), *Boy Gets Girl* (2012), *Yellow Moon* (2010) and *The Shape of Things* (2010). In 2017 Fiona was selected to participate in Melbourne Theatre Company's *Women in Theatre* Program and was part of the National Gallery of Victoria's exhibition design team for the 2017 *Art and Design Triennial*. She has also collaborated on a number of independent theatre productions, was an Art Department attachment

to Fiona Crombie on the film *Son of a Gun*, and set dresser and performer in the PIAF show *Oraculous* (2012). She has won two Performing Arts WA Awards for set design, and was a 2011 ArtStart grant recipient. Fiona holds a Master of Communication Design (RMIT), a Bachelor of Design (WAAPA) and a Bachelor of Performance Studies (Curtin University).



Lucy Birkinshaw LIGHTING DESIGNER

Lucy Birkinshaw is a lighting designer, artist, and co-founder of Filament Design Group whose design work spans theatre, music theatre, concert lighting, opera, dance, film and television. She graduated from the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts with an Advanced Diploma of Lighting Design for Production and Performance and Curtin University with a Bachelor of Art, Fine Arts.

Lucy has designed lighting for Black Swan State Theatre Company, Perth Theatre Company, Malthouse, Griffin Theatre, Barking Gecko, The Aphids, Melbourne Opera, Lyric Opera Melbourne, Performance 4a,

WAYTCO, My Darling Patricia, OpticNerve, Side Pony Productions, Hayloft Project, School With No Walls, Magnormos, Red Ryder, Perth International Arts Festival, Opera in the Park, Australian Opera Studio and many others.

She has collaborated with a diverse range of directors, choreographers and composers. Lucy's distinctive approach to depth, contrast and beauty within her designs make her an identifiable theatre artist.



Dr Clint Bracknell

SOUND DESIGNER & COMPOSER

Clint is Associate Professor at WAAPA and Kurungkurl Katitjin, ECU. His PhD in Music from UWA was awarded the 2016 Robert Street Prize for most outstanding thesis. His credits as composer, sound designer and musical director include *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (Black Swan), *Skylab* (Black Swan/Yirra Yaakin), *Mission Songs Project: 1957 Palm Island Strike* (Sydney Festival, Darwin Festival), *King Hit* (Yirra Yaakin), and *The Red Tree* (BGTC) which was nominated for 'best original score' in the 2012 Helpmann Awards.



Polly Low DRAMATURG

Polly is Black Swan's Literary Director. Since her appointment to the role in 2014, she has worked on script development with all Black Swan's commissioned writers. Her credits as dramaturg with the company are numerous and include: *The Lighthouse Girl*, *Rising Water* and *The Red Balloon*.

Polly began her career in theatre as an actor, before expanding her skillset to include dramaturgy and playwriting. Outside of her work at Black Swan, Polly works extensively as a freelance dramaturg. Another of the plays she has dramaturged – Barbara Hostalek's *Cracked* – is currently in production at Yirra Yaakin. Polly has dramaturged plays by highly experienced playwrights, by those not quite so experienced, and by those just beginning their playwriting journeys. She has also developed performance scripts with many community groups (including in Esperance, Shark Bay and Albany), and last year wrote *Between Wind and Water* for Agelink and the 2018 Fremantle Festival.



Luzita Fereday DIALECT COACH

Luzita is a graduate of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA), Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (RCSSD) and holds a Masters by Research from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA). Credits with Black Swan State Theatre Company include: *In the Next Room*, *HIR*, *I Am My Own Wife*, *Angels in America*, *Extinction*, *Blithe Spirit*, *A Perfect Specimen*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Dinner*, *The Damned*. Other theatre credits include: *Jasper Jones*, *Driving into Walls*, *ONEFIVEZEROSEVEN* (Barking Gecko), *Mimma* (Orana Productions), *Annie* (Gordon Frost) *Grounded*, *An Almost Perfect Thing*, *Joey: The*

Mechanical Boy (Blue Room). Directing credits include: John Curtin College of the Arts, WA Youth Theatre and the National Youth Theatre of Great Britain. Luzita has worked with the RSC, Channel, Almeida and Bloomsbury Theatres. Luzita teaches Voice to Acting and Music Theatre students at WAAPA. She has a passion for the infinite variety of ways in which people speak.



Katie Moore STAGE MANAGER

Katie is a graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (BA Performing Arts). She has worked with Black Swan Theatre Company on *Hir*, *Assassins*, *Skylab* (Regional Tour, 2018), the world premiere of *Xenides* and *You Know We Belong Together* (2019). Other theatre credits include *The Nature of Why* (The British Paraorchestra, PIAF 2019), *Sami In Paradise* (Belvoir), *Threshold* and *Tissue* (The Blue Room Theatre). She has recently returned from NSW after working as Logistics Coordinator for Sydney Festival.



Amelia Trenaman ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Amelia is a graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (Stage Management). Amelia has worked with Black Swan State Theatre Company on *Switzerland* and *I Am My Own Wife*. Other credits include *Fiddler on the Roof* (Concept Entertainment), *Three Little Words* (Melbourne Theatre Company), *In Situ* (STRUT Dance), *The Astronaut*, *3 Seeds* (The Blue Room), *Sound of Music*, *Phantom of the Opera* (ICW) and *TedX Perth* (2016). Amelia has worked on numerous festivals and major events including: Sydney New Year's Eve, Adelaide Fringe, NRL

Grand Final 2018, Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, and Invictus Games. Amelia is a lover of coffee and dad jokes.

KEY PROGRAM AREAS

Fronted by the leadership of our Artistic Director, Clare Watson, we are creating a strong brand of theatre that portrays a uniquely Western Australian voice. One that reaches out and speaks to who we are and who we want to be.

In a place as vast as WA, we have the entirety of our State's story to tell, and we know the absolute importance of sharing it with both our own community and the world.

Our ambition is for Black Swan to match the beauty and boldness of the state that we call home. We will continue to be audacious, ambitious and authentic. We will explore our city and our State to find new ways to inspire audiences and help shape the broader narrative of what it means to be Western Australian.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

From our home in the State Theatre Centre, we reach far and wide. From regional cities to small towns and remote areas, we aim to anchor theatre, and its ability to bring people together, in the lives of communities large and small. Whether it's supporting regional areas through touring, community engagement, live broadcasts or ambassadorships – these are all vital ways of connecting with the heart of these communities.

EDUCATION

Enabling students to experience theatre has been pivotal in the flourishing of our local arts scene. More importantly, it's where our youth build their confidence, their voice and continue to develop who they are. Through workshops, productions and mentorships in schools, at both a metropolitan and regional level, and of course their attendance at our shows, we are creating a stronger connection with culture and identity.

ARTIST DEVELOPMENT

As these generations develop, giving emerging artists the means to explore and experiment is critical to establishing careers. Whether it's through our Emerging Writers Program or partnerships with WAAPA, we're committed to immersing these talents in our productions, to help them shine under the spotlight. Our Resident Artists work closely with the Artistic Director in collaboratively curating the season. They are emerging and established Western Australian artists who work on productions in their area of expertise and contribute to activation activities throughout the year.

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In recognition of donations received between March 2018 and 2019.

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Thank you to our board members, who demonstrate outstanding commitment to our philanthropy program.

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A fund that enables Black Swan to create bold and adventurous theatre with the world's best artists, take WA stories to the world and be sustainable, now and in the future.

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