

**ENS**  
THEATRE  
**MBE**

FOR EVERYONE



BY JORDAN HARRISON

# MAJORIE PRIME

15 JUNE – 21 JULY 2018

# WELCOME

## WE HOPE YOU ENJOY MARJORIE PRIME!

One of the most pleasurable parts of my job as Artistic Director is assembling great creative talent for a production, particularly of a wonderful new play. We were thrilled when Mitchell Butel (one of the busiest people in showbiz) made himself available to direct Jordan Harrison's beautiful MARJORIE PRIME. Jordan's play is ultimately about what it means to be human with all the faults and fears of our lot in life and it occurred to me that changing our possible life stories continues a running theme in this year's season; from Bruce's help with his wayward granddaughter in David Williamson's SORTING OUT RACHEL to two dissatisfied women attempting to be something they're not in Catherine Moore's & Genevieve Hegney's hilarious comedy UNQUALIFIED. Human nature finds its own redemptive way of not taking no for an answer. Mitchell has

assembled a top cast of actors and creatives for this play and it is always a thrill being a member of the audience knowing we are in very safe hands.

We are very excited about our upcoming 2019 season and can't wait to reveal our line up for next year! Keep an eye on your mailbox around Monday 6th August to discover your next year of theatre at the Ensemble.

In the meantime, explore the great array of intimate special events on offer as part of our Boatshed Projects and discover the creative development behind our plays – including a rehearsed reading of Tracey Trinder's brand new play KILLING KATIE: CONFESSIONS OF A BOOK CLUB on 11 August directed by Liz Arday.

**Mark Kilmurry**  
Artistic Director

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# MAJORIE PRIME

BY JORDAN HARRISON

15 JUNE – 21 JULY 2018

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### CAST

TESS **LUCY BELL**  
MARJORIE **MAGGIE DENCE**  
WALTER **JAKE SPEER**  
JON **RICHARD SYDENHAM**

### CREATIVES

DIRECTOR **MITCHELL BUTEL**  
SET & COSTUME DESIGNER **SIMON GREER**  
LIGHTING DESIGNER **ALEXANDER BERLAGE**  
SOUND DESIGNER **THOMAS MOORE**  
COMPOSER **MAX LYANDVERT**  
STAGE MANAGER **LAUREN TULLOH**  
COSTUME SUPERVISOR **MARGARET GILL**  
PRODUCTION MANAGER **SLADE BLANCH**

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RUNNING TIME APPROX 85 MINUTES NO INTERVAL

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PROGRAMS: \$2 which helps enormously with the cost of printing.



## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

MARJORIE PRIME is a play about questions and answers. About sharing information and sharing lives. And it ponders what separates the human from the machine. Descartes said "I think therefore I am" but if artificial intelligence "thinks", does it become our equal? Is our imperfection and a machine's desire to be perfect at constant odds?

Scientists predict that A.I. will be increasingly capable and more prevalent in our lives in the next 60 years. The benefits could be huge, the ethical challenges immense. The benefits of love can also be huge, its challenges also immense. But in love, perhaps we have an opportunity to find the greatest wisdom and transcendence. We've covered many subjects in our rehearsals – The Turing Test; the writings of Isaac Asimov, Philip K. Dick and Ursula K. Le Guin; science fiction media ranging from 2001 to HER to BLACK MIRROR; A.I. programs from

Deep Blue to Amazon Alexa; robots like Bina 48 and Sophia; holograms; the Loebner Prize for "The Most Human Human"; psychologist Arthur Aron's "accelerated intimacy" studies; dementia and memory loss; film noir and classic romantic cinema. But here are some words that I think capture this play's essence:

*"Some people worry that artificial intelligence will make us feel inferior, but then, anybody in his right mind should have an inferiority complex every time he looks at a flower."*

Alan Kay

*"The sad thing about artificial intelligence is that it lacks artifice and therefore intelligence."*

Jean Baudrillard

*"Love is the extremely difficult realisation that something other than oneself is real."*

Iris Murdoch

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"Marjorie Prime" is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC. Marjorie Prime was originally produced by Center Theater Group, Michael Richie, Artistic Director, and received its world premiere at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, CA in 2014. Marjorie Prime was commissioned by Playwrights Horizons in association with Theater Masters and its Visionary Playwright Award, and with additional funds provided by the Harold and Mimi Steinberg Commissioning Program.

The play was written with the support of the Clubbed Thumb Writers' Group. It was work-shopped in the 2013 Pacific Playwrights Festival at South Coast Repertory, and was further developed with the support of the Rose Green Award at Cleveland Play House.







## **JORDAN HARRISON** PLAYWRIGHT

Jordan Harrison was a Pulitzer Prize finalist for *MARJORIE PRIME*, which premiered at the Mark Taper Forum and

had its New York premiere at Playwrights Horizons. A film adaptation by Michael Almereyda debuted at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival. Harrison's other plays include *LOG CABIN* (Playwrights Horizons), *THE AMATEURS* (Vineyard Theatre), *MAPLE AND VINE* (Playwrights Horizons), *THE GROWN-UP* (Humana Festival), *AMAZONS AND THEIR MEN* (Clubbed Thumb), *DORIS TO DARLENE* (Playwrights Horizons), *ACT A LADY* (Portland Center Stage), *FINN IN THE UNDERWORLD* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre), *FUTURA* (NAATCO), *KID-SIMPLE* (Humana Festival), and a children's musical, *THE FLEA AND THE PROFESSOR* (Arden Theatre). He is the recipient of the Horton Foote Prize, Guggenheim and Hodder Fellowships, the Kesselring Prize, the Roe Green Award, the Heideman Award, and a NEA/TCG Residency. A graduate of Stanford University and the Brown MFA program, Harrison is an alumnus of New Dramatists. He has developed TV series for Sundance and TNT, and wrote for three seasons of Netflix's *ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK*.



## **MITCHELL BUTEL** DIRECTOR

Mitchell holds three Helpmann Awards, two Green Room Awards and two Sydney Theatre Awards as an actor/director. He has

worked for STC, Belvoir, Bell Shakespeare, MTC, QTC, STCSA, ATYP, Bell Shakespeare, Griffin, Malthouse, Opera Australia, The Production Company and the Sydney, Adelaide and Perth Festivals. Mitchell's directing credits include the Hayes/Blue Saint production of *VIOLET* (Sydney Theatre Award for Best Director of a Musical), *SPRING AWAKENING* for ATYP (Sydney Theatre Award for Best Production for Young People), *APPROXIMATE BALANCE* for Griffin, *AN ACT OF GOD* (Darlinghurst Theatre – co-director), *PORGY AND BESS* and *THE BERNSTEIN SONGBOOK* for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Recent acting highlights include *ARTURO UI*, *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE*, *MR BURNS*, *DISGRACED*, *ARMS AND THE MAN*, *ANGELS IN AMERICA*, *THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR*, *MEOW MEOW'S LITTLE MATCH GIRL*, *THE MIKADO*, *AVENUE Q* and on screen, *HOLDING THE MAN*, *GETTIN' SQUARE*, *THE BANK*, *DANCE ACADEMY*, *HIDING* and *JANET KING*.



### **LUCY BELL TESS**

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Lucy Bell will next be seen in the much anticipated Foxtel drama series FIGHTING SEASON and the fifth series of the ABC's RAKE. Lucy has performed extensively

on stage including productions of ROMEO AND JULIET, THE DUCHESS OF MALFI, PERICLES and TWELFTH NIGHT for Bell Shakespeare; THE CHERRY ORCHARD, AS YOU LIKE IT and DARLING OSCAR for STC; EMERALD CITY for which she received the Norman Kessell Memorial Glug Theatre Award for Most Outstanding Actor, SPEAKING IN TONGUES, THROUGH THE WIRE, THE FALLS, WOLF LULLABY and DREAMS IN WHITE for Griffin Theatre; TWELFTH NIGHT and BLUE MURDER for Belvoir; and FOR JULIA for MTC. Recent feature film credits include THE SQUARE and TEN EMPTY, as well as the short films SECOND BEST and DOTS. On television, Lucy has appeared in HERE COME THE HABIBS, CATCHING MILAT, LOVE CHILD, A PLACE TO CALL HOME, 30 SECONDS, CITY HOMICIDE, WILDSIDE, DIRT GAME, BASTARD BOYS, FARSCAPE, ALL SAINTS, GRASS ROOTS, MY HUSBAND, MY KILLER, MURDER CALL, CROWNIES, and the ABC Telemovie MAGAZINE WARS.



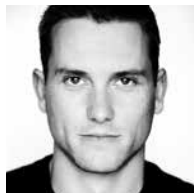
### **MAGGIE DENCE MARJORIE**

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Maggie Dence trained at the Independent Theatre at 16 and appeared in THE CRUCIBLE, RHINOCEROS, THE GLASS SLIPPER. She has appeared in THE

ONE DAY OF THE YEAR and NOISES OFF for Ensemble Theatre, THE TURQUOISE ELEPHANT for Griffin, SEVENTEEN, ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY for Belvoir, BENGAL TIGER AT THE BAGHDAD ZOO for Old Fitz, KOOKABURRA, THE SEA for Nimrod, THE MAN FROM MUCKINUPIN, MONGRELS, FOUR LADY BOWLERS for STC, THE AUNT'S STORY for MTC, THE SEASON AT SARSPARILLA for STC of SA, SWEENEY TODD, GOOD WORKS for Q Theatre, SEE HOW THEY RUN, A SMALL FAMILY BUSINESS for Marian Street. TV: THE MAVIS BRAMSTON SHOW, THE SULLIVANS,

KINGSWOOD COUNTRY, A TOWN LIKE ALICE, PRISONER, NEIGHBOURS, WONDERLAND, RAKE, BLACK COMEDY, READY FOR THIS. Films: WAKE IN FRIGHT, THE BIG WISH, LOOK BOTH WAYS. Short films: THE WIDOW, SETACEOUS, GRANNY, INSIDE WATER, and 25<sup>th</sup> Tropfest short film festival prize winner, THE MOTHER SITUATION. First female recipient of MEAA/ Foxtel Lifetime Achievement Award. Proud member of MEAA since 1962.

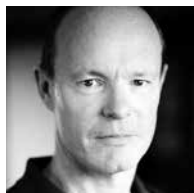


### **JAKE SPEER WALTER**

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Jake Speer is a graduate of NIDA. During his training Jake made a memorable impact as Richard in Shakespeare's RICHARD III, amongst other roles.

Following graduation Jake booked a series regular role on Australia's highest rating drama series, HOME & AWAY playing Oscar Maguire. Between graduating from NIDA and signing on to HOME & AWAY, Jake found time to produce, direct, write and star in the documentary film, LEETON: THE FORMATIVE YEARS. His next screen project is the short film INSIDE WATER which he wrote, and will star in alongside Myles Pollard and Maggie Dence. On stage Jake was most recently seen in HAND TO GOD for The Alex Theatre and in the musical KINKY BOOTS for Michael Cassell. Other theatre credits include BAREFOOT IN THE PARK for Ensemble Theatre and THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR (regional tour). Film credits include BACKYARD ASHES directed by Mark Gentell.



### **RICHARD SYDENHAM JON**

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Richard's already a familiar face to Ensemble audiences having appeared in ABSENT FRIENDS, CLYBOURNE PARK, MURDERERS and THE BIG DRY. Other stage

credits include: SPRING AWAKENING for ATYP, THE DAPTO CHASER for Griffin Theatre & tour, MACBETH, TWELFTH NIGHT, THE ALCHEMIST, TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA, HENRY IV 1 & 2, CORIOLANUS for Bell Shakespeare, ROCK 'N' ROLL for MTC, THE TEMPEST, LOVE FOR LOVE for STC, TWELFTH NIGHT, THE UNDERPANTS,

THE SMALL POPPIES, THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO for Belvoir, PORGY & BESS for SSO at Sydney Opera House. On the small screen he's been busy with roles in BLUE MURDER, THE HIGH ROAD, LOVE CHILD, GINA V ROSE: THE HOUSE OF HANCOCK, WONDERLAND, CARLOTTA, POWER GAMES: THE PACKER MURDOCH STORY, RAKE, HOME & AWAY, RESCUE: SPECIAL OPS, ALL SAINTS, CHANGI, and WATER RATS. Feature films include BLOOD PULLS A GUN and MATRIX 2. Richard is a NIDA graduate.



### **SIMON GREER** SET & COSTUME DESIGNER

Simon graduated with a Bachelor of Dramatic Art in Production Design from NIDA in 2001 and has designed over 100

productions. Recent design credits include the set design for the acclaimed production of IN THE HEIGHTS for Blue Saint Productions at the Hayes, set and costume design for SPRING AWAKENING at ATYP and the set design for VIOLET at the Hayes Theatre, which was nominated for a Sydney Theatre Award. He also designed the set for GREY GARDENS and MAN OF LA MANCHA for Squabbalogic at the Seymour Centre, the Australian Premiere of THE MOUSETRAP at the Zenith Theatre for Bump In Productions and the set design for ROPE and AND THEN THERE WERE NONE, also for Bump In Productions. Simon has designed the set and costumes for Merrigong Theatre Company's productions of FOUR PLAYS ABOUT WOLLONGONG and VALLEY SONG, SKATE for ATYP, LA BOHEME for Opera South and ANGEL CITY for Tamarama Rock Surfers at the Old Fitzroy. Simon has designed over 20 productions for the Marian Street Theatre for Young People and the 3 plays for NSW State School Drama Company. Simon has been a regular design judge for the Rock Eisteddfod Challenge and has tutored Production Design for the NIDA Open Programme. Simon was a finalist in the Young Australian of the Year Award 1999 and the 1999 Australia Day Youth Awards for Arts.



### **ALEXANDER BERLAGE** LIGHTING DESIGNER

Alexander Berlage is a Sydney-based Lighting Designer and Director. Recent credits include: As Lighting Designer: LETHAL

INDIFFERENCE, CLOUD NINE for STC, GOOD COOK. FRIENDLY. CLEAN, NOSFERATUTU OR BLEEDING AT THE BALLET for Griffin, BUYER AND CELLAR, THE KITCHEN SINK for Ensemble Theatre, VICTORY OVER THE SUN for Sydney Chamber Opera, THE EFFECT, THERE WILL BE A CLIMAX, VERTICAL DREAMING, 4:48 PSYCHOSIS, DOUBT, CRIMES OF THE HEART, THE JUDAS KISS, THE BITTER TEARS OF PETRA VON KANT, THE WHALE, MEN, FREAK WINDS, HOWIE THE ROOKIE for Old Fitz, HOME INVASION, THE BLOCK UNIVERSE, HILT. ATYP: MOTH, WAR CRIMES, BETWEEN US, LUKE LLYOD: ALIENOID for Old 505 Theatre, PPY15: REVEALED for Sydney Dance Company, HIGH FIDELITY, DOGFIGHT, EVERYBODY LOVES LUCY for Hayes Theatre, SONGS FOR THE FALLEN, 4000 MILES, STONES IN HIS POCKETS for Critical Stages. As Director: THERE WILL BE A CLIMAX for Old Fitz, HOME INVASION for Old 505/An Assorted Few, THE VAN DE MAAR PAPERS for An Assorted Few. Alexander won the 2017 Sydney Theatre Award for Best Lighting Designer of an Independent Production for his work on 4:48 PSYCHOSIS by Sarah Kane. He has previously also received nominations for his work on THE WHALE, THE BITTER TEARS OF PETRA VON KANT and DOUBT.

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The management reserves the right to make any alteration to cast which may be rendered necessary by illness or any other unavoidable cause. Patrons are reminded that out of consideration for others, latecomers cannot be admitted until a suitable place in the performance.





**THOMAS E. MOORE**  
SOUND DESIGNER

Thomas is a 2014 graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts in Sound Production. His sound design credits

include CRIMES OF THE HEART for Imperial Artistry at the Old Fitz, AFTER THE END for the Kings Collective at KXT, BRIGHT THOSE CLAWS THAT MAR THE FLESH for The Hermetic Theatre Company at the Old Fitz, DIRTY PEOPLE with Jack Rabbit Theatre for The Depot Theatre, THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF DISSOCIA with the Kings Collective and WE WERE ONCE KINGS for Third Culture Kids at the Blue Room Theatre in Perth. Thomas has worked in audio post-production with Soundfirm Sydney and the West Australian Screen Academy, also as venue technician with Fringe World Perth and audio crew for PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE with MTC. He currently works as an audio technician for Carriageworks, most notably with Sydney Dance Company and as senior technician for Björk Digital. Thomas' greatest passion is live music and jazz recording, and has worked extensively in Perth's live music scene and festivals including live mix for DOWNSYDE and stage crew for EMPIRE OF THE SUN.



**MAX LYANDVERT**  
COMPOSER

Max is a multi-award winning composer, sound designer and stage director. Max's composing screen credits include:

the miniseries THE KETTERING INCIDENT (Winner 2016 AACTA, Best Original Music Score in Television along with composer Matteo Zingales) and THE DEVILS PLAYGROUND, feature documentaries: GAYBY BABY, AFTER THE WAVE, choir arrangements for feature HEY HEY IT'S ESTHER BLUEBURGER. For theatre, his Composer and Sound Designer credits include: TOP GIRLS, DINNER, TESTAMENT OF MARY, HAY FEVER, THE GOLDEN AGE, ENDGAME, MACBETH, PERPLEX, WAITING FOR GODOT (Sound Design) FURY, MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION, GROSS UND KLEIN, TRUE WEST, LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT, ORESTEIA, ELLING, THE CRUCIBLE, KING LEAR, WAR OF THE ROSES, THE VERTICAL HOUR, DOUBT, FESTEN PENTECOST, LA DISPUTE, FIREFACE, LADY IN THE VAN and LIFE IS A DREAM for STC; ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA, MERCHANT OF VENICE and OTHELLO for Bell Shakespeare; THE WINTER'S TALE for QTC; THE WIZARD OF OZ, OEDIPUS REX, THE HAM FUNERAL, UBU, GULLS, MACBETH, THE



IDIOT, COURTYARD OF MIRACLES, CLOSER, THE ROSE TATTOO and TWELFTH NIGHT for Belvoir; ART AND SOUL and DESIGN FOR LIVING for STC of SA; EL DORADO, and DIARY OF A PLAGUE YEAR for MTC. Max has won two Helpmann Awards for Best Sound Design and been nominated for seven Sydney Theatre Awards.



### **LAUREN TULLOH** STAGE MANAGER

Lauren's passion is to create the magic of theatre for the audience; as a young girl she was enthralled by many theatrical and musical

productions. However it wasn't until her final year in high school that she discovered her local musical societies. This led to three years of skills development in Stage Management before attending NIDA, completing a Bachelor of Dramatic Art (Production) in 2009. Theatre credits include THE GRUFFALO and THE GRUFFALO'S CHILD for CDP Theatre Producers, which toured Australia and New Zealand extensively. Lauren believes she has now seen the back of nearly every theatre in Australia! She also toured THE GRUFFALO: SONGS FROM THE SHOW for Tall Stories UK to Singapore. Lauren then worked at Sydney



Opera House for a season of CHARLIE AND LOLA'S EXTREMELY NEW PLAY. Most recently Lauren has Stage Managed: CALAMITY JANE which toured to Parramatta

Riverside Theatres, Orange Civic Centre, IPAC Wollongong and Arts Centre Melbourne. Other productions include: HIGH FIDELITY, ASSASSINS, CALAMITY JANE, THE FANTASTICKS and VIOLET for Hayes Theatre Co, THE PLANT and BETRAYAL for Ensemble Theatre, LIGHTEN UP for Griffin, SPRING AWAKENING at ATYP, SONGS FOR A NEW WORLD and VIOLET at Chapel Off Chapel.

### **MARGARET GILL** COSTUME SUPERVISOR

Margaret is a freelance theatre milliner, costume cutter/maker. Film: AUSTRALIA, THE GREAT GATSBY, X MEN ORIGINS, WOLVERINE, UNBROKEN, PETER RABBIT, LADIES IN BLACK. Theatre : SEMINAR, CAMP, A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD, OTHER DESERT CITIES, DARK VOYAGER, LADIES IN LAVENDER, RELATIVELY SPEAKING, THE GOOD DOCTOR, SIX DANCE LESSONS IN SIX WEEKS, DREAM HOME, WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?, EDUCATING RITA, THE ANZAC PROJECT, THE SHOE-HORN SONATA, LIP SERVICE and DIPLOMACY for Ensemble Theatre. FAME for John Frost, KING KONG for Global Creatures, HENRY V for Bell Shakespeare, HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON for Global Creatures/Dreamworks, THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST for Sport for Jove, THE NUTCRACKER for Australian Ballet, ALADDIN for Disney, MY FAIR LADY for Gordon Frost/Opera Australia, THE KING & I and THE MERRY WIDOW for Opera Australia, LET'S MISBEHAVE, SEVEN, LIFE AS WE KNOW IT for Nigel Shaw Designs. TV: SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE, A PLACE TO CALL HOME, DANCE BOSS. In 2017 Margaret had the pleasure of working on the soon to be released film LADIES IN BLACK as costume maker. Margaret is currently working on DANCE BOSS for Channel 7 as a costume cutter/maker.

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[www.akcs.com.au](http://www.akcs.com.au)



# SUPPORT US

## HELP US SET THE SCENE WITH SOLAR ENERGY.



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At Ensemble Theatre we experience the environment at its best,  
surrounded by stunning scenery! We now have the opportunity  
to set the scene by going solar, helping us protect our beautiful  
environment, save energy and reduce running costs.

Our quest to harness solar energy  
to light our stage will be made  
possible with the installation of  
quality solar panels significantly  
reducing our electricity bills.

With your generous support we  
can harness solar energy and  
move positively into the future,  
aware of how fortunate we are to  
work in the midst of such beautiful  
scenery - both onstage and off!

Now is a great time to make a  
special tax deductible donation  
and help us reach our target of  
\$50,000.

For more information please  
contact David Balfour Wright on  
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call 9929 8877 or go to  
[ensemble.com.au](http://ensemble.com.au)