

CRITICAL STAGES TOURING PRESENTS

# BLACK/SUN / BLOOD/MOON

By Chris Bendall



HERE IS NO PLANET B

A fantastical new story about finding your voice and saving the world.

## 2023 NATIONAL TOUR OFFICIAL TOUR PROGRAMME



CRITICAL STAGES TOURING

present

# BLACK SUN/ BLOOD MOON

## 2023 NATIONAL TOUR

Writer and Director **Chris Bendall**

Set & Costume Designer **Isla Shaw**

Sound Designer **Kingsley Reeve**

Lighting Designer **Becky Russell**

Video Designer **Susie Henderson**

Puppetry Director: **Alice Osborne**

Dramaturg **Hilary Bell**

Design Assistant **Claudia Spackman**

Production Manager: **Ryan Mahony**

Rehearsal Stage Manager: **Briana Dunn**

Touring Stage Managers: **Rain Iyahin** and **Emma Maloney**

Costume Supervisor **Rebecca Jones**

Puppetry by **Erth Visual & Physical Inc**

## CAST

**Eloise Bendall:** Maddy

**Francesca Savage:** Katie

**Lani Tupu:** Tino, Adrian, Police Officer

**Matthew Whittet:** Paul, Solveig

For Critical Stages Touring

Senior Producers **Melanie Carolan** and **Scarlet McGlynn**

Touring & Program Producer **Carly Pickard**

Marketing and Engagement Manager **Robbi James**

Creative Producer **Eloise Snape**

Production & Operations Manager **Judy Reardon**

Finance Manager **Kylie Richards**

The producers would like to acknowledge the premiere production was rehearsed on the lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, and first performed on the lands of the Wiradjuri people. We pay our respect to Elders of this country, past and present.



The original production of Black Sun / Blood Moon was generously supported by Wagga Wagga City Council. This production is supported by the Russell Mills Foundation, the NSW Government through Create NSW, and the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body.

# 2023 TOUR DATES

**Cairns Performing Arts Centre**

14 April

**Empire Theatre, Toowoomba**

28 April

**Griffith Regional Theatre**

28 April

**The Wedge, Sale**

22 May

**Lighthouse Theatre, Warrnambool**

25 May

**The Capital Theatre, Tamworth**

30 May

**The Concourse, Chatswood**

2 - 3 June

**Riverside Theatre, Parramatta**

7 - 8 June

**Queen's Park Theatre, Geraldton**

21 June

**Mandurah PAC**

23 June

**Margaret River Heart**

27 June

**Bunbury Entertainment Centre**

30 June



# PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

This story was inspired by my own daughter, whose climate activism and passion very much formed the basis of the character of Maddy. As described in the early scenes of the play, it stemmed from a conversation I had with her, when I unwittingly revealed to her that what we currently call a Climate Emergency, has been a concern of scientists for at least 4 decades now. The betrayal she so keenly felt, that an entire generation had failed to act in time to protect her future was palpable, and heartbreaking.

My own relatively feeble token gestures which were limited mostly to keyboard activism on social media suddenly seemed appallingly slight in the face of the seemingly impossible task ahead, and the likely terrible future impact on my children and their generation. So, the genesis of this play actually came very much from conversations with her, her own growing activism and especially attending school strikes with her. The seeds of the play grew further over the summer of 2019/2020 with the horrendous bushfires across Australia.

This play is based on close and careful research into climate change and its impact on Australia and the globe, as well as current knowledge of what can be done to mitigate these impacts and protect our future generations. It is also based on research into the state of Australia's current legal system especially regarding juvenile justice, and the current age of criminal responsibility at just 10 years of age in Australia.

But the play is also a fantasy and a celebration of the power of storytelling and the imagination. I wanted the play to offer hope, and so there are two storylines. While Maddy's storyline is closely embedded in fact and research, the other storyline follows the path of Katie, originally a climate denier, and her journey of literal flights of fancy as I attempt to imagine a magical solution to the crisis.

This has been a passion project for me for the past three years, and I hope that the work can inspire those that watch it, to follow their own path to learn more about the role that they can play to meet the challenges ahead of us. I also hope that one day, this play will be no more than a history piece about the challenges that faced our country and our globe, and how we imagined our way out of them before the tipping point, and before we met the crisis head on and changed our society, our politics, and our ways of thinking for the better.

**—Chris Bendall  
1 May 2022**





## CHRIS BENDALL

### WRITER & DIRECTOR

Chris is a nationally respected and award-winning arts leader, artistic director, programmer, producer & dramaturg. He is currently Artistic Director of the iconic Bondi Pavilion in Sydney. He was Director & CEO of Critical Stages Touring, curating annual programs of outstanding professional theatre and live performance for regional and metropolitan audiences across Australia and New Zealand (2014-2023). Previous roles include: Guest Curator of the 2013 National Play Festival for Playwriting Australia (2013); Artistic Director & CEO of Deckchair Theatre (2008-2012) in Fremantle WA; Artistic Director of Theatre @ Risk in Melbourne (2001-2007) & Resident Director at Melbourne Theatre Company (2002-2006).

During Chris' time at Critical Stages Touring, awards included the PAC (Performing Arts Connections) Australia Touring Legend Award for 2019, the Sydney Theatre Award for Outstanding Production for Young Audiences (2021). He won the WA Equity Award for Best Director in both 2009 and 2011, and was nominated for a Green Room Award for Outstanding Direction in 2001. He has been awarded the Queen's Trust Australia and Foundation for Young Australians Centenary Grant (2001) and the George Fairfax Memorial Award for Theatre (2003). Chris is a current member of PAC Australia & Regional Arts Australia's Touring Advisory Group and the NSW Touring Roundtable. He was on the nominating panels of the Helpmann Awards for Regional Touring (Deputy Chair) and for Theatre from 2013 to 2021.

Highlights as a director include: *Black Sun / Blood Moon* (writer and director, premiere Wagga Wagga Civic Theatre May 2022, national tour 2023); *Thomas Murray and the Upside Down River* by Reg Cribb (Griffin Theatre world premiere Jan 2016, NORPA, Lismore April 2016,

Critical Stages national tour Feb-April 2018); *Stones in his Pockets* (Critical Stages NSW tours 2015 & 2016, national tour 2017). For Deckchair Theatre productions include: world premiere of *The Magic Hour* by Vanessa Bates (Nominated for Drover Award for Tour of the Year for 2014, National Tour with Performing Lines, including seasons at Queensland Theatre Company and Darwin Festival); *Taking Liberty* (WA Equity Award nominations Best Production & Best Director 2012); *The Modern International Dead* by Damien Millar (WA Equity Award Winners Best Director and Best Production 2011); world premiere of *Grace* adapted from the novel by Robert Drewe (Perth International Arts Festival 2010); *Checklist for an Armed Robber* by Vanessa Bates (WA Equity Award Winner Best Director 2009).

Chris was awarded the Goethe Institut / Playwriting Australia Dramaturgy Fellowship & and Ian Potter Foundation Cultural Trust Award in 2008, which enabled him to travel to Germany and work as Guest Dramaturg on *Hiob* directed by Johan Simons at the Munchner Kammerspiele.



## ISLA SHAW

### SET & COSTUME DESIGN

Isla is an award-winning Theatre Designer. She has worked in the UK, Europe and Australia, designing set and costumes, with many productions touring the world. She has worked at Shakespeare's Globe, also in new writing, Physical Theatre, Opera, dance, musicals and children's theatre. Her work has been seen in the Westend, on and off Broadway, and across Australia. Isla trained at the Wimbledon School of Art, & Swinburne University, Australia. She won the Linbury prize for *Phaedra* at the Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh.

Her work in Opera includes *La Rondine* (BYO Peacock Theatre), *The Barber of Seville* (Denmark), *Maria De Buenos Aires* (Norwich Theatre Royal), *From Berlin*

to *Broadway* (Denmark), *Grabmusick & Bastien and Bastienne* (Germany).

Recent theatre productions include *Alphabetical Sydney: All Aboard!* (Critical Stages Touring); *Guess How Much I Love You* (CDP); *Magic Beach* and the *Midnight Gang* (CDP); *Fully Sikh* and *My Robot* (Barking Gecko); and *The Cat in the Hat* and *Pink Sari Revolution* (Leicester Curve). She has also designed long-running touring productions including *The Gruffalo*, *The Gruffalo's Child*, and *The Snail and the Whale* (Tall Stories - Broadway, Sydney Opera House, UK), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare's Globe), and many more.



## KINGSLEY REEVE

### SOUND DESIGNER

Kingsley is a professional sound storyteller with over 28 years experience. He graduated from the Sound discipline at WAAPA in 1995 as a sound designer and then from the Theatre discipline in 1998 as an actor. He has been designing sound and music since his youth. He forges collaborative relationships with story makers in Australia and abroad. Between 2014-18, he was the lead sound design lecturer at NIDA. He is the recipient of several industry awards for sound and music design.

Recent works include *Boorna Waanginy: The Trees Speak* (PIAF); *Australian Outback Spectacular* (Village Roadshow); *Renew: Forest Experience* (Scitech Discovery Centre); *Ngalang Koort Boodja Wirn* (WA Museum); *Monkey Tales*, *Pete the Sheep* and *Goodbye Jamie Boyd* (Monkey Baa); *Off the Record* (Force Majeure); *Home* (PIAF 2016); *Thomas Murray and the Upside Down River* (Stone Soup) and *Storm Boy*, *Ruby Moon*, *The Mysteries: Genesis* and *August: Osage County* (Sound Realiser) for Sydney Theatre Company.





## SUSIE HENDERSON

### VIDEO DESIGNER

Living and working on Gadigal country, Susie is a video designer with a passion for work that explores the intersection and boundaries of live performance and video. Susie's recent theatre credits include: as Video Designer: for Griffin Theatre Company: *Wherever She Wanders*; for Blush Opera/Riverside Theatres: *Chop Chef*; as Video Systems & Content Designer: for Belvoir: *Stop Girl*; and for Sydney Theatre Company: *The Wharf Revue 2020: Good Night & Good Luck*.



## ALICE OSBORNE

### PUPPETRY DIRECTOR

Alice is a director, puppeteer and movement artist working in theatre and screen. She was Resident Puppetry and Movement Director for the Australian production of WAR HORSE (National Theatre of Great Britain). As a performer, Alice was a member of Compagnie Philippe Genty (Paris), performing *Boliloc* internationally in four languages. In Australia she worked extensively with My Darling Patricia and created the dance theatre work *Falling Woman* with Halcyon Macleod for Performance Space. Further work as Puppetry and Movement Director includes: *The Splinter* by Hilary Bell for Sydney Theatre Company; *Diary Of A Wombat*, *Possum Magic* and *Edward The Emu* for Monkey Baa Theatre; *Ruby's Wish* for MAKEbeLIVE Productions; and Justine Clarke's *Look Look It's A Gobbledygook*, also by Hilary Bell. Alice co-devised and directed *How To Build A Home* with artists with disabilities for Everafter Theatre. She holds a Bachelor of Theatre/Media from Charles Sturt University, Bathurst.

Alice animated the character 'B' in Nickelodeon's *Didi & B*. Other television credits as puppeteer include: *Me & My Monsters* (The Jim Henson Company/ Sticky Pictures); *Five Minutes More* (The Jim Henson Company/



Buster Dandy Productions); *Farscape: The Peacekeeper Wars* (The Jim Henson Company); *The upside Down Show* (Sesame Workshop/Blink Films); *Humpty's Big Adventure* and *Maurice's Big Adventure* (ABC). Over the past two years, as part of Sydney Opera House's Creative Leadership in Learning program, Alice has collaborated with primary school students and teachers in Western Sydney to create performance and film for Amplified Festival.



## BECKY RUSSELL

### LIGHTING DESIGNER

Becky is a theatre and events professional with extensive experience in artistic, technical and project direction. She has focused her career in regional Australia, working on countless productions, festivals and community projects in a variety of roles including; artistic director, project director, lighting designer, event mentor, as well as providing technical and production support for regional artists and communities. A focus on storytelling is core to how she continues to develop her creative practice - be it design, technical or artistic direction.

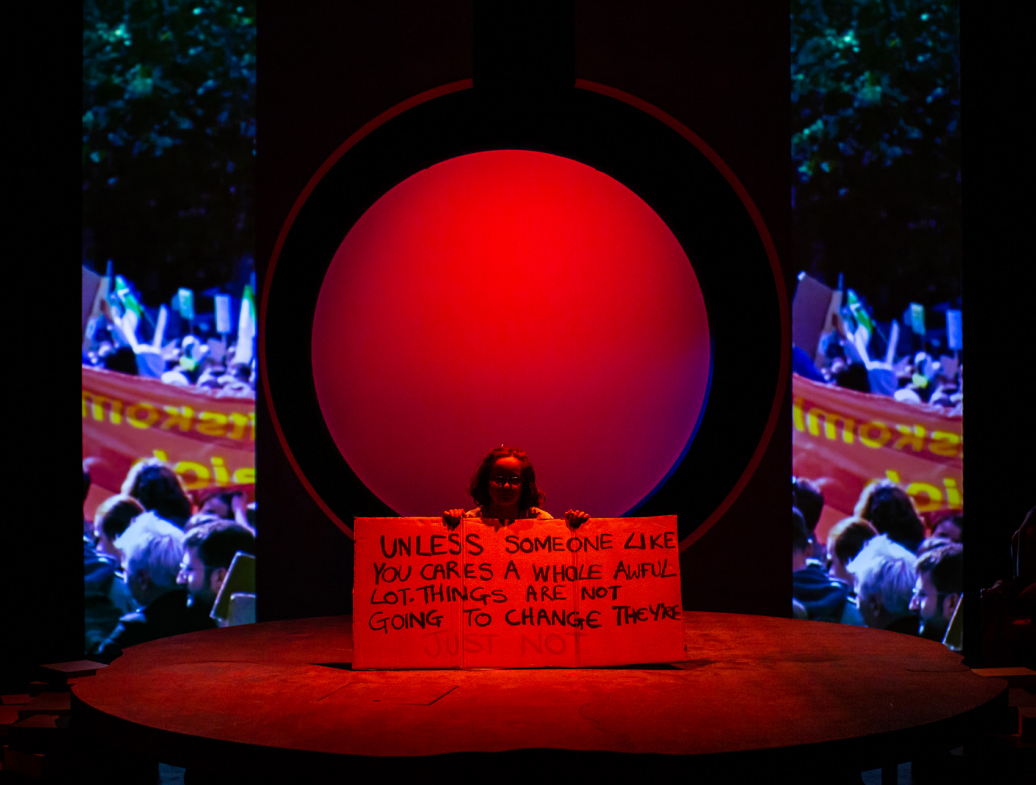
Most recent productions as Lighting Designer include *December* (Jake Silvestro), *The End of Winter* (Siren Theatre Co. 2022 Stables season and 2023 tour) and *Highway of Lost Hearts* (Lingua Franca and Local Stages BMEC); and as Director, *Kangaroo* (Local Stages BMEC).



## CLAUDIA SPACKMAN

### DESIGN ASSISTANT

Claudia is a third year Bachelor of Creative Industries student at Charles Sturt University Wagga Wagga. Her focus is on theatre and production design. She has worked on University productions of *Measure for Measure*, *Party Beach the Musical* and Bloom Theatre Festival. Other shows she has worked on are *The Hall Committee* and *Lazzi in the Park*.





## RAIN IYAHEN

### TOURING STAGE MANAGER

Rain is a freelance Stage Manager and Production Manager born and raised in Spain. She has lived across the UK and the US in the last 10 years, and she relocated to Australia in 2019. Since then, she's been working in Melbourne's theatre scene.

Credits include: Stage Manager - *Melbourne, Cheryomushki* (Victorian Opera, 2023); Assistant Stage Manager: *Sunday* (Melbourne Theatre Company, 2023); Deputy Stage Manager - *Emilia* (Essential Theatre, 2022), *The Butterfly Lovers* (Victorian Opera, 2022); Touring Stage Manager - *THEM* (Critical Stages Touring, 2022); Stage Manager for Red Stitch Actors' Theatre's productions of *Fast Food*, (2022), *Grace* (2022), *The Cane* (2021) and *Single Ladies* (2020).

Her credits also include: Production Manager at Darebin Speakeasy's production of *Security* (2022); and St Martins Youth's production of *Gene Tree* (2022).



## EMMA MALONEY

### TOURING STAGE MANAGER

A recent graduate from the Australian Institute of Music and the Academy of Film, Theatre and Television, previous credits include internships with Global Creatures for *Muriel's Wedding the Musical* and Gordon Frost for *The Wizard of Oz*. Other experience includes *Eurydice* (Mad March Hare Theatre Company), *Margaret Fulton Queen of the Dessert* (Bondi Theatre Company), *King of Pigs* (Redline Productions/Critical Stages Touring), *Roomba Nation* (Hurrah Hurrah), *Deadhouse* (Blancmange Productions), *High Fidelity* (Highway Run Productions), Short and Sweet Festival 2017, Sydney Fringe Festival, *Songs for A New World* (Blue Saint Productions) and *Rhymes with Silence* (Improvising Change).



## ELOISE BENDALL

PERFORMER - MADDY

Eloise has been attending drama lessons at the Australian Theatre for Young People (ATYP) since she was five. She performed in the ensemble piece *I've Been Meaning To Ask You* (The Good Room/Critical Stages Touring /ATYP) at Riverside Theatre in 2021, and played Sadie in *Shack* (ATYP) at the Rebel Theatre in 2022. Eloise enjoys making film and theatre, and writing stories. She is passionate about climate action, and can't wait for audiences around Australia to see *Black Sun / Blood Moon*.



## FRANCESCA SAVIGE

PERFORMER - KATIE

Francesca holds degrees in Theatre and Acting from QUT, and furthered her training in Shakespeare at RADA, Shakespeare's Globe (UK), and Shakespeare & Company (US).

As an actor she has worked both in Australia and overseas for Queensland Theatre, Shake & Stir, Critical Stages, Sport for Jove, Bell Shakespeare, International Actors' Ensemble, Auckland Summer Shakespeare, Griffin, Parramatta Riverside and the Old Fitz, as well as making screen appearances in *Marley*, *Someone*; *The Beehive* (Tribeca Short Film Festival); *Starting From Now*, *Home and Away*, *Packed to the Rafters* and *Venus & Adonis*.

As a director, Francesca directed the premiere production of *Killing Katie* for Ensemble Theatre in Sydney in 2022 which proved a sell-out success. She will return to Ensemble in 2023 to direct *Summer of Harold* by Hilary Bell. Francesca co-directed the hugely popular production of *The Servant of Two Masters* for Sport for Jove's mainstage summer seasons, as well as coordinating and directing for SFJ's youth Second Age

Project since its inception in 2012. She has also directed with Bell Shakespeare and renowned Acting schools Queensland University of Technology, Actors Centre Australia, and JMC Academy.

Francesca received a 2010 Churchill Fellowship to direct and teach Shakespeare in South Africa, a 2015 Globe International Actor's Fellowship to train and perform in London at The Globe Theatre. In 2017 she was a recipient of the Sandra Bates Director's Award at Ensemble Theatre. She is also a proud member of Actors' Equity.



## LANI TUPU

PERFORMER-TINO/ADRIAN/POLICE OFFICER

Born in Auckland, Lani John Tupu is a New Zealand actor and director of Samoan descent, best known for his Duel roles in the internationally acclaimed Sci fi series *Farscape*, playing both Pilot & Captain Bialar Craisas, for the Henson Company. In 1976 he debuted on TV in the mini-series *Epidemic* (1976) and since then has appeared in lead roles in over 70 TV series including *Mission Impossible*, *Time Trax*, *The Feds*, *High Tide*, *Water Rats*, *The New Adventures of Flipper*, *House Gang*, *The Lost World*, *Green Sails*, *The Finder*, *Revelations*, *Grass Roots*, *Stingers*, *Farscape: The Peacekeeper Wars*, *Packed to the Rafters*, and of course, *Home and Away*. Lani's movie appearances include: *Sons for the Return Home* (1979), *Send a Gorilla* (1988), *The Punisher* (1989), *Marlin Bay* (1992), *Heart of Fire* (1997), *Lantana* (2001), and *Liquid Bridge* (2003). Stage Performances include *Between*, *Streetlight*, *Ben Hur*, *References to Dali*, *Anna in the Tropics*, and *The Tempest* (Directed by Jim Sharma), *The Boys in the Band*, *Think of a Garden*, *Starkers*, *The King and I*, and *Tartuffe*. Musical theatre includes *Music Hall*, *Piaf*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, (as Jesus) and the cabaret musical *Tomfoolery*. In 2023 Lani returned to musical theatre in the hit Sydney production of *La Cage Aux Folles*.

He has been nominated for many awards throughout his career, including Best New Talent at the Feltex Television awards, several awards from the New Zealand Film Television Awards for Best Dramatic Performance and a Best Actor award for *Talk of the Town*, which he also directed, at the Dreamaker Festival in Ontario, Canada. Tupu is active in stage production, both as a director and actor, and spends considerable time behind the camera. Most audiences will be familiar with Lani as "THE VOICE" of SBS Television.

Lani is thrilled to be returning to the theatre in *Black Sun / Blood Moon*.



## MATTHEW WHITTET

PERFORMER - PAUL / SOLVEIG

Matthew is an actor, writer and dramaturg who has worked extensively in theatre, film and television. Matt has performed across Australia, for companies including Belvoir, Windmill Theatre, Sydney Theatre Company, Malthouse, Bell Shakespeare Company and State Theatre Company of South Australia, and abroad with directors such as Neil Armfield, Barrie Kosky, Benedict Andrews, Rosemary Myers and Lucy Guerin.

As an actor, Matt performed in the Seymour Centre's *The Dismissal*, and *Mary Stewart* at Sydney Theatre Company. His recent television credits include Network Ten's *The Secrets She Keeps*, ABC's *The Letdown*, and Lingo Picture's *Upright*. His film credits include *Girl Asleep*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Australia*, *Moulin Rouge* and *The Nightingale*.

As a writer, Matt's plays include *Kindness* (NIDA), *Seventeen* (Lyric Hammersmith and Belvoir), *Girl Asleep* (Windmill and Belvoir), *Cinderella*, *Old Man*, *Silver* (Belvoir), *School Dance*, *Fugitive* and *Big Bad Wolf* (Windmill). Matt also wrote the award-winning feature film adaptation of his play *Girl Asleep* (supported by the



Hive Production Fund), which debuted at the Adelaide Film Festival and went on to open the 2016 Generation 14 Plus Program at the Berlin International Film Festival. Matt was among the seven Sidney Myer Creative Fellows chosen in 2012. Matt was also one of the writers for the Netflix/Fremantle reboot of *Heartbreak High*.

## THANK YOU

Thank you to all the people who have so generously supported the development of this play throughout multiple readings, development workshops, drafting and re-drafting. It wouldn't have been possible without your support, feedback, advice and expertise:

Hilary Bell, Annabelle Szewcow, Francesca Savige, Garth Holcombe, Jason Chong, Steve Rodgers, Kaeng Chan, Suzie Miller, Professor Lesley Hughes, Melanie Carolan, Kirrilly Brentnall, Eloise Bendall, and Isobel Bendall.

A special thank you goes to performer and creator Adelaide Kennedy, who originated the role of Maddy for the production's world premiere at Wagga Wagga Civic Theatre in 2022, and reprised the role for a number of early performances during the 2023 national tour.



IMAGES BY JACKIE COOPER

## PRODUCTION DESIGN

The play is epic and challenging. We move between the naturalist space of Maddy's home and the streets of Wagga Wagga to crossing the world, literally flying, and travelling to many incredible places. Sometimes the scenes are split, so there needed to be a fluidity, an effortlessness of transition between spaces.

This led me to look at cycles, the journeys around the planet, the cycles of life and the Sun and Moon.

The floating cracked circular concrete floor is manmade. Held up by piles of books – signifying the knowledge we have of climate change but choose to ignore. Around this we have a dissected house, where Maddy lives with her father, a university professor – again more books and homely furniture.

Behind this is a screen with a circular









## CREATING EXPERIENCES. CONNECTING COMMUNITIES.

**Critical Stages Touring is Australia's national touring theatre company, discovering and developing outstanding independent theatre for audiences everywhere.**

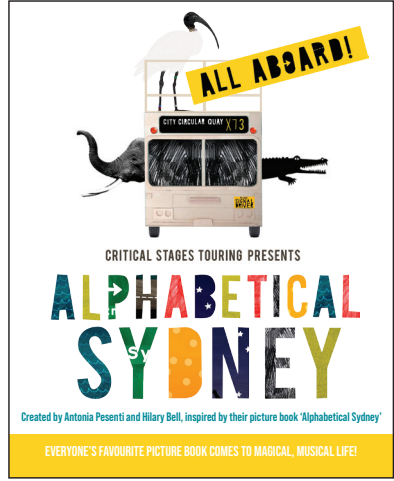
We create outstanding live performing arts experiences that can travel, connecting these with diverse regional communities, and fostering a sustainable and diverse national independent theatre sector. The company has been supporting artists and audiences around Australia for the past 16 years, extending the life of great independent theatre productions through touring and audience development.

Over that time, we have partnered with a strong and ambitious pool of independent artists and earned a reputation for excellent service with presenters. Our work was recognised by the Australia Council, with the company awarded National Touring Status from 2018-2021, and Playing Australia Multi-Year Investment from 2023-2025. We were awarded the highly prestigious Touring Legend Drover's Award by Performing Arts Connections (PAC) Australia in 2019.

We contribute to building a strong and vibrant theatre culture through supporting theatre makers and creatives in their own development, We produce regular forums and industry initiatives that bring them together, start and continue vital conversations, and provide opportunity to connect with each other and share knowledge and resources.

Critical Stages Touring brings together people from across the country to connect with original Australian stories and theatrical works in the venues and places they hold dear. Through touring to an ever-expanding network of locations in regional, remote and rural Australia, and now also throughout New Zealand. We ensure that audiences can experience diverse & innovative professional live performance where they live. With the launch of our digital theatre platform, the CST Screening Room, we can now bring these same outstanding artists and shows into the homes and devices of audiences anywhere.

# ALSO TOURING IN 2023



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