

DAREBIN ARTS

SPEAKSY

and **29 Scenes** proudly present

The Fence

by Fleur Murphy



Darebin Arts

Darebin Arts Speakeasy: Celebrating 10 Years of supporting local art

Darebin is thrilled to celebrate 10 years of supporting local artists through the Darebin Arts Speakeasy program. Since 2013, the program has been an influential hub for performing artists to develop and present innovative new work across contemporary dance, circus, theatre and multi-disciplinary work that speaks to issues that matter to the community and celebrates cultural diversity.

As we celebrate 10 years of the Darebin Arts Speakeasy program, it is with great pride and joy that I reflect on its impact and success. Over the past decade, Darebin Art Speakeasy has supported over 1,500 artists to create over 150 original works presented to over 75,000 patrons, receiving 40 creative industry awards and a further 116 nominations. It has been a highlight of our cultural calendar and has brought people together in a way that has enriched our city and our lives.

The Darebin Arts Speakeasy is not just a program, but a reflection of the vibrant arts precinct that exists across our suburbs. It showcases the rich talent and creative energy that we are so lucky to have in our community.

I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the artists, partners and patrons who have made this program a resounding success!



Cr Julie Williams
Mayor

Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung people who are the Traditional Owners of the land on which Darebin stands. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging

Director's Note

What are we like as neighbours?

Personally, I am pretty average. I know first names, we chat about the weather and who is dumping stuff on the nature strip.

What are we like as friends?

Since having kids I would have to own up to being a sub par friend. I don't really do phone calls any more, I send emoji-laden text messages on birthdays (but only because my phone reminds me to), and I end our yearly 'big night out' at 10pm because I don't want to deal with a rampaging toddler on less than six hours sleep.

But despite all that, would I recognise if my friend was in trouble? "Absolutely yes" I want to say.

Would I know if there was a life-threatening situation playing out right next door? "I definitely would" I want to say.

The Fence turns our gaze inward and asks our deepest selves whether we are truly up to the task of recognising violence hidden in plain sight. And then, if we recognise it, what are we prepared to do with that information? How would we walk that volatile tightrope?

It has been an immense pleasure to grow this new Australian work with Fleur, Lou and our stunning, smart team. *The Fence* is based on real experience. It makes a delicate and precise contribution from the point of view of a witness, to the ongoing urgent conversation about intimate partner violence in Australia.

Alice Darling
Director

About the Production

What do you do when you can't look away?

In the quiet streets of an ordinary suburb, the fence between two neighbouring houses comes down. Where once there was a clear separation between you and the couple next door, now there's only a dirt line and human decency keeping prying eyes out of each other's backyards.

Except you've noticed they have a new baby and that she keeps locking herself out. And then there are the sounds late at night that have become impossible not to hear. Should you say something, do something? But is it what you think it is? And is it really your place to get involved?

Shortlisted for the 2022 Rodney Seaborn Playwrights Award, *The Fence* is a scintillating solo work about privacy, bravery, and testimony by acclaimed playwright Fleur Murphy (Nothing, Hearth). Performed by Louisa Mignone (Anna K, Wentworth, The Twelve), this gripping new play will lead you through the streets we know, shining a light on the violence found in our own backyards.

Running time: approx. 90mins, no interval

Show warnings: this production contains references to and descriptions of domestic violence.

Creative Team

Written by: Fleur Murphy

Directed by: Alice Darling

Performed by: Louisa Mignone

Understudy: Veronica Thomas

Set & Costume Design: Karine Larché

Sound Design: Sidney Millar

Lighting Design: Clare Springett

Assistant Director: Fiona Scott-Norman

Production Manager/Stage Manager: Naavikaran

Production Intern: Molly England

Family Violence & Abuse Consultant: Sheridan Byrne

Producer: Fiona Stafford

Creative Producer: Tom Royce-Hampton

Image by: Gregory Lorenzutti

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body. The initial research and script development was proudly supported by Merri-bek City Council through the 2020 Flourish: Arts Recovery Grant program. Further script development and workshopping is proudly supported by Creative Victoria's Sustaining Creative Workers Grant 2022.



Artist Bios



Louisa Mignone (Performer) - (she/her) is a graduate of the Flinders Drama Centre, Louisa has worked on stage for Bell Shakespeare Company, Belvoir St Theatre, Griffin Theatre Company, Malthouse Theatre, Red Stitch Actors' Theatre, Sport for Jove, State Theatre Company of SA, Tamarama Rock Surfers, and Windmill Theatre. She is especially proud of her own theatre company *isthisyour?*, established upon graduation from Flinders with the five women in her year. They have created and performed six original and completely devised works that have toured nationally and picked up numerous awards.

Louisa's film and television highlights include; *The Twelve*, *Scrublands*, *Australian Gangster*, *Ms Fisher's MODern Murder Mysteries* (1,2), *Wentworth* (8,9), *Halifax Retribution*, *Secret City: Under the Eagle*, *Rake* (2,3,4), *How to Stay Married* (2), *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, *Fat Tony & Co*, *My Place*, *East West 101*, *Danger 5*, *Infini*, *Two Fists One Heart*, and *Latte e Miele*, which she created and which was official selection for Sydney Flickerfest, also appearing on ABC iView's *Best of Flickerfest* series.



Veronica Thomas (Understudy) - (she/her) has been a local and avid performer, accomplished dancer and cellist since childhood. Following studies at the Victorian College of the Arts, she toured shows at the Adelaide Fringe Festival and the Melbourne International Comedy Festival. She has performed at the Red Stitch Actors' Theatre, La Mama, Theatre Works and fortyfivedownstairs amongst others.

Some of her recent credits include *Neighbours*, *Bruce*, *Sexy Herpes*, *The Dr Blake Murder Mysteries*, *Shantaram*, *How to Talk Australian*, *Five Bedrooms*, *Ride Like a Girl* and *Low* (Victorian Theatre Company).



Fleur Murphy (Playwright) - (she/her) is originally from country Victoria and based in Melbourne/Naarm. Fleur has a B.A. in Theatre Performance - Acting from the University of Ballarat, Arts Academy (2004) and holds a Masters in Writing for Performance at the Victorian College of the Arts (2019). In 2020 she was a recipient of Career Development funding from the Australia Council to support an 18-month mentorship with award-winning playwright Tom Holloway, and has also interned on Melbourne Theatre Company's *Cybec Electric* readings. She was a 2022 Theatre Works

Associate Artist.

Her short film, *Rain for Morgan* won multiple awards around the world including "Best International Short" (Ireland International Film Festival 2010). Her plays include: *Shadows of Angels* (Adelaide Fringe/Shepparton Arts Festival/TBC Theatre), *My Country for a Peach* (Vessel & Arts Centre Melbourne), and an adaptation of Janne Teller's award-winning novel *Nothing* (fortyfivedownstairs). Recently, *HEARTH* (La Mama & Victorian Tour), was selected for the 2022 VCAA Playlist, longlisted for the Theatre503 Award in London, and shortlisted for the 2021 Rodney Seaborn Playwrights Award. Her one-act play *Don't Say (Bubba)* was shortlisted top 10 for the 2023 Lysicrates Prize.



Alice Darling (Director) - (she/her) is a Melbourne/Naarm based Theatre Director who is passionate about new Australian writing and collaborative practice. Alice is currently working on the new Australian play *The Exact Dimensions of Hell* by Bridget Mackey. Alice holds a Bachelor of Creative Arts (hons) from Flinders University, a Post Graduate Diploma in Performance Creation - Directing from VCA, and was the inaugural graduate director at Red Stitch Actors' Theatre. Her directing credits include: *Top Acts 2022* (VCAA), *RUST* by Vaughn Rae (TBC Theatre 2020),

Thigh Gap by Jamaica Zuanetti (La Mama 2019), *FIERCE* by Jane e Thompson (Theatre Works 2018), *The Chapel Perilous* by Dorothy Hewett (Federation University 2018), *Catherine: the body politic* by Caroline Lee (La Mama 2016, 2017), *Undercoat: a parafoxical tale* by Cynthia Troup (La Mama 2017), *True West* by Sam Shepard (Matchstick Theatre 2016), *Middletown* by Will Eno (Red Stitch 2015), *Kindness* by Bridget Mackey (Theatre Works 2015).



Karine Larché (Set & Costume Design) - (she/her) is a set and costume designer based in Melbourne. Recent credits include costume design for *Underneath Ms Archer* (2023) directed by Peter Houghton, set & costume design and audio visual design for the 2022 Suitcase Series production *Atlantis* (Malthouse Theatre), design for *Laurinda* (Melbourne Theatre Company, 2022) directed by Petra Kalive, short film *Gugu naGogo* (ABC/ Screen Australia, 2022) directed by Taku Mbuzi, *Nothing* (fortyfivedownstairs, 2022) directed by Alonso Pineda, *And She Would Stand Like This* (Antipodes Theatre at Meat Market, 2022), directed by Margot Tanjutco,

Pool (No Water) (VCA - University of Melbourne, 2021), and *Project F* (Abbotsford Convent, 2021) choreographed by Prue Lang. Previously, Karine has worked as a costumier for a decade in France and in Australia, mainly at The Australian Ballet. Karine has recently graduated with a Master of Design for Performance at VCA where she was awarded the Portland House Outreach Program Scholarship, the Trina Parker Scholarship and the Jim Marks Postgraduate Scholarship. Karine was the 2021-2022 Set & Costume Design recipient of the Besen Family Artist Program at Malthouse Theatre.



Sidney Millar (Sound Design) - (she/her) is a Melbourne based sound designer and composer. Originally from Adelaide, she moved in 2015 to study at the Victorian College of the Arts (Fine Arts - Production), and has since designed for theatre, dance, film and installations. Her unique style has emerged from her extensive experience as a performer and composer of classical and jazz music. She particularly enjoys using sound and music to create emotional states and subtle tensions in a work.

Sidney's prior sound designs include *Wild* (Melbourne Theatre Company); *Girls & Boys* (Melbourne Theatre Company); *LOTUS* (MICF); *Lousical the Musical* (MICF); and *Three Blind Mice* (Melbourne and Adelaide Fringe). She was the composer and musician for *Mother Courage and her Children* (Victorian College of the Arts Acting Company 2017).

Sidney's other interests include lighting, visual art, stage and production management. In 2016 she was nominated for the Union House Theatre Stage Management Award for the musical *Rent*. In 2018 participated in Melbourne Theatre Company's Women in Theatre program.



Clare Springett (Lighting Design) - (she/her) is a Melbourne based Lighting Designer and Theatre Maker. She was the resident lighting designer for Red Stitch Actor's Theatre from 2013 to 2020. In 2014, she was nominated for a Green Room Award for lighting design on *Eurydice* (Red Stitch) and again in 2022 for *Mara Korper* (Citizen Theatre). She was chosen for the 2016 Besen Family Artist Placement at Malthouse Theatre. Clare was selected to participate in the 2018 Women in Theatre program at Melbourne Theatre Company, and in 2019 was the Associate Lighting Designer working with Matt

Scott on *Shakespeare in Love*.

Other lighting design credits include: *CUT*- dir. Laurence Strangio, *WAY*- dir. Sean Mee, *The Six Guys* - dir. Beng Oh, *Traps* - dir. Laurence Strangio, *Variations or Exit Music* - dir. Justin Nott, *Hearth* - dir. Thomas Royce-Hampton, *Mara Korper* -dir. Jayde Kirchert, *When the Rain Stops Falling* - dir. Briony Dunn, *Everyone is Famous* w/ Riot Stage - dir. Katrina Cornwall, *Burn This* - dir. Iain Sinclair, *My Wife Peggy* - dir. Gavin Roach, *Shakespeare In Love* - Lighting Associate w/ Matt Scott (Melbourne Theatre Company), *My Wife Peggy* (Melbourne Season) - dir. Gavin Roach, *Gloria* - Lighting Assistant w/ Paul Jackson - dir. Lee Lewis (Melbourne Theatre Company), *True West* - dir. Alice Darling



Fiona Scott-Norman (Asst. Director) - (she/her) is a Melbourne/Naarm based performance maker, director, dramaturg and writer currently undertaking a Masters in Theatre Directing at the Victorian College of the Arts. She is currently exploring the role of collaboration, inclusion and community arts practices in theatre making.

Fiona is also dramaturg on Die Roten Punkte's touring production *Otto and Astrid's Joint Solo Project*, and writing mentor for Sophie Smyth's upcoming autobiographical musical about autism. Her recent directing credits include *Ovariacting: a Period Drama* with Jamie Boiskin, *Women of the White House* with Ebony Lee McGeady and Sam Coats, and *The Aspie Hour* with Sophie Smyth and Ryan Smedley, which won a 2019 Green Room Award for best writing. She was dramaturg for Andi Snelling's award-winning physical theatre show *Happy-Go-Wrong*, artistic director of the Ballarat Cabaret Festival in 2017, has directed some 150 cabaret shows, and toured internationally with her own solo works *The Needle* and the *Damage Done*, and *Disco: The Vinyl Solution*.



Naavikaran (Production & Stage Manager) - (she/they) is a club & theatre producer, DJ and musician from India, based in Naarm (Melbourne). Her work creates and supports magic, narrative, community whilst building platforms for accessible and anti-racist storytelling for identities of marginalized intersections. Naavikaran's debut album, *Brown Church* is available on all streaming platforms.



Molly England (Production Intern) - (she/her) is an actor and theatremaker based on Wathawurung Land in Geelong. She has studied with NIDA and the National Theatre Melbourne. She was an assistant writer and intern on the development of *ROARING*, an immersive production with Fleur Murphy.

Some of Molly's credits include *Blackrock* (Platform Arts) and *My Brilliant Career* (La Mama), for which she was awarded a Victorian Drama League Award.



Fiona Stafford (Producer) - (she/her) is a freelance producer based in Melbourne and has worked in the arts and entertainment industry for over 15 years in a number of roles, from artist management to immigration, publicity and marketing, and event management. Currently, she also works as the Operations Manager at Sidney Myer Music Bowl. *HEARTH (29 Scenes)* was her debut independent theatre production, giving her the opportunity to expand her skills and pursue her passion for supporting emerging independent theatre-makers in developing, staging and

touring new Australian works.



Tom Royce-Hampton (Creative Producer) - (he/him) is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts School of Music, Actors Centre Australia, and most recently of the Victorian College of the Art's 2020 Master of Theatre (Directing), Tom began his career as a member of Taikoz, Australia's leading taiko ensemble, performing with artists and companies as diverse as John Bell and the Bell Shakespeare Company, Lingalayam Dance Company, and Kodo, as well as concerto performances with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Western Australia Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, and Dresden Sinfonika.

Orchestra, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, and Dresden Sinfonika.



About 29 Scenes

29 Scenes is an emerging, independent theatre company founded by Fleur Murphy, Fiona Stafford, and Tom Royce-Hampton with a mission to develop, present, and tour contemporary work by exciting new Australian playwrights.

In 2022, 29 Scenes launched onto the Melbourne independent theatre scene with their acclaimed first production; *Hearth*. In addition to stellar audience engagement, *Hearth* was selected for the 2022 Theatre Studies Playlist and was seen by over 20 schools across its two-week season at La Mama Courthouse and self-produced two-week metro/regional tour. Building on this success, 29 Scenes' 2023 offering *The Fence* is the company's second world premiere and first collaboration with Darebin Arts Speakeasy.

By offering nimble, tour-ready productions, 29 Scenes seeks to engage with audiences in both metro and regional centres, and with comprehensive educational offerings, foster a generation of new theatre-loving audiences.

A massive thank you to our wonderful donors who made generous donations to the production via our Australian Cultural Fund campaign: Laura Gordon, Mark Woodward, Marisa Brown, Samuel Boyd, Keith Gow, Dan Bellis, Liz Ryan, Rod Hulme, Ella Barton, Tony Hampton, Lesley Forwood, Jenny Gay, and Anonymous x 5.

About Darebin Arts Speakeasy

Darebin Arts Speakeasy is Darebin City Council's award-winning year-round independent performance and development program. For 10 years, the program has curated and invested in contemporary dance, circus, theatre and multi-disciplinary artists whose works offer audiences a dynamic and diverse mix of stories that matter to the community, celebrate cultural diversity and reflect the times we're living in.

Since 2013 Darebin Arts Speakeasy has supported **over 1,500 artists** to create over **150 original works** presented to **over 75,000 patrons**, receiving **40 creative industry awards** and a further **116 nominations**. Darebin Arts has backed many of the groundbreaking artists and companies that make Melbourne's art sector so iconic: RAWCUS, Ilbijerri Theatre Company, The Hayloft Project, Little Ones Theatre, Stephanie Lake Company, Elbow Room, MKA, Double Water Sign, and lead artists like Joel Bray, Michele Lee, Emilie Collyer, Anna Seymour, Stella Young and Sammy J.

Support Resources

Family violence is defined by acts of threatening, violent or controlling behaviour carried out by someone against a family member or someone whom they have, or has had, an intimate relationship with.

Violent behaviour includes:

- Physical assault
- direct or indirect threats
- sexual assault
- emotional and psychological torment
- economic control
- property damage
- social isolation.

The Fence contains references to family violence. If you or someone you know is affected by family violence or wish to discuss this theme further with a professional, you can contact the below services:

- For immediate emergencies, call the Police on **000 (triple zero)**
- **Orange Door**: Orange Door is a free service for adults, children and young people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence. It supports families who need extra support caring for children, and is the support service for perpetrators of family violence. Phone: **1800 319 355** (north-east region specific)
- **Safe Steps** Family Violence Response Centre: Victoria's 24/7 family violence support service. Phone: **1800 015 188** (24 hours)
- **1800RESPECT**: Open 24 hours to support people impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse. Phone: **1800 737 732**
- **Djirra**: Supports Aboriginal people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence. Phone: **1800 105 303**
- **w|respect**: A family violence and intimate partner violence service supporting LGBTIQ+ communities and their families. Phone: **1800 542 847**
- **InTouch: Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence**: A specialist family violence service that works with multicultural women, their families and their communities. Phone: **1800 755 988**
- **Men's Referral Service**: This service from No to Violence offers assistance, information and counselling to help men who use family violence. Phone: **1300 766 491**