

TAKING THE WATERS

PRESENTED BY
**LEMONY S PUPPET THEATRE
AND DAREBIN ARTS SPEAKEASY**

20 November - 30 November, 2019
Main Hall, Northcote Town Hall Arts Centre

Three sisters gather together after many years apart.
One of them is dying.

In this complex world, old patterns of behaviour play out, old wounds are re-exposed and ultimately, a new reality where three becomes two must be found.

Created in collaboration with internationally celebrated artist Kyoko Imazu, singer-songwriter Suzannah Espie and Lemony S Puppet Theatre, Taking the Waters is a visually stunning, aching and humorous examination of the absurdity of life and death.

This new work from Lemony S Puppet Theatre combines live performance, sung voice, bunraku puppets and object theatre with stunning and multi-layered shadow scenes.



WRITER'S NOTE

Taking the Waters began with a question that led us in an entirely different direction to where we first intended. We thought we would make a show about the miracle that is modern medicine. But, as we delved deeper into the material, we kept bumping up against stories and experiences where medicine, despite all its advances, could do nothing but ease physical pain. And so, we began to wonder, in cases like these, where do we turn to instead to receive the care we need to ease us into death? Our families? Our friends? Our memories? Consequently, our questions became: What do we expect of the living as we die? How far do we expect those around us to go to give us a 'good death'? Difficult questions to ask and even more difficult to answer.

This is a work of fiction and yet, in many ways, it is a true story, not just for myself but for countless others before me and countless more to come. In 2010, my beloved brother-in-law was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease. Upon diagnosis, the family rallied around him to care for him as he died. *Taking the Waters* is not our story but reflects instead the many conversations we have had since that time with other people about their experiences of caring for the dying. Every time someone opens up about this experience, I think "wouldn't it have been great to have had this conversation before we were in that situation so we were armed with some knowledge".

We are bad at talking about dying, we are bad at talking about death and most of us are utterly unprepared when we are confronted with these situations. And so we present *Taking the Waters* to you in the hope that, through the world of Duck, Chook and Maggie, you will find the bravery to talk.

Dedication. For those who chose to care and those who have caring forced upon them.

CREATIVE TEAM

Composer/performer & co-creator Suzannah Espie

Performer Fiona Macleod

Performer/puppeteer/Duck puppet maker Tamara Rewse

Writer/director & co-creator Sarah Kriegler

Co-creator & Little Duck puppet maker Jacob Williams

Dramaturg & co-creator Ben Grant

Set, costume design & Duck puppet design Yvette Turnbull

Lighting designer Rachel Burke

Shadow puppetry design & construction Kyoko Imazu

Sound designer Marco Cher-Gibard

Lighting Intern Noah Huxtable

Production Management Bronwyn Pringle

Producer Erin Milne (Bureau of Works)

Promotion photography Sarah Walker

"The Day I Lost You" was co-written by Suzannah Espie & Charles Jenkins.

Lemony S Puppet Theatre would like to thank the extraordinary group of artists working with on this show. It has been an indescribable pleasure to collaborate with you all. You are luminous.

An extra-special thank you to Bronwyn Pringle for stepping in as our production manager – we so appreciate you!

The Team Would Like to Thank; Dave Allen, Ian Collard, Martin Hetch, James Saunders and Jacob Williams for all the child wrangling, David Campbell for electrical expertise, Oleksandr Pogorilyi for artistic support, David and Kate Rewse, Judy Espie, Noel Hanway, Ann, Tony & Katja Kriegler for babysitting help and love, John Collard for all the puppy wrangling and excellent artistic suggestions, Henry & Ada Williams Kriegler, Francis & Maeve Allen, Sylvie & Hamish Saunders, Isla Collard and Thea and Gideon Hetch for putting up with Art Mothers, Stodge Stoddard & the Flying Fruit Fly Circus, The Wheeler's Centre, Samantha Butterworth, Beau McCafferty and the team at Darebin Arts & the staff of Northcote Town Hall, all those at Siteworks and Tumnus, Panda, Romba, Maccie, Goerdie & Hank for lightening the mood when we needed it most.

