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## ARTISTIC BIOGRAPHIES

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# MELBURNALIA

5 SHORT PLAYS  
WRITTEN BY  
ROSS MUELLER  
LALLY KATZ  
TEE O'NEILL  
KATE HOLDEN  
ALICE PUNG

DIRECTED BY  
**DAVID  
MENCE**

### **Tee O'Neill – Writer (Ringwood) – *The Queen of Ringwood***

Tee O'Neill's writing has been awarded the RE Ross Trust Playwright's Award, the Siena College International Play Award and an International Residency at the Royal Court Theatre in London. She has been the recipient of a 2006 commendation for the Louis Esson Prize, a 2006 nomination for the NSW Premier's Award, 2007 AWGIE award and the ANPC/New Dramatists Award in NYC, and nominated twice for the Patrick White Play Award as well as the Wal Cherry Award. She won a Churchill Fellowship for Europe, US and Madagascar, and writing grants from the Australia Council and Arts Victoria. Tee currently holds the William Evans Playwriting Fellowship at the University of Otago and is a lecturer in playwriting.

### **Ross Mueller – Writer (CBD) – (*Becoming*) *Greg Stone***

Ross Mueller is an Australian playwright. In May 2007 his play *No Man's Island* had its US premiere with a production at Here in New York City. In March 2007 his play *The Ghost Writer* was premiered by Melbourne Theatre Company at the Fairfax Studio at the Victorian Arts Centre. In 2006 he was short listed for the New York New Dramatists Award for his play – *Construction of the Human Heart*. In 2002 he was the Australian playwright at the International Residency of the Royal Court Theatre in London. He has been commissioned by Playbox, Melbourne Theatre Company, Hothouse and ABC Radio National. He has been an affiliate of the Melbourne Theatre Company and a founding member of Melbourne Dramatists. Several of his plays have been short listed for the Patrick White and Wal Cherry Awards. Two of his plays have been published by Currency Press. His other works include; *A Party in Fitzroy*, *Little Brother*, *Great Ocean Road*, *Colosseum*, *Cold Light of Day*, *Domestic Animals*, and *The Glory*. His newest play - *Pinter's Explanation* - will premiere in New York City in September 2007, as part of the Australia Project.

### **Alice Pung – Writer (Footscray) – *Educating Riah***

Alice Pung's first novel, *UNPOLISHED GEM* (Black Inc.), an account of growing up in a Chinese-Cambodian family in Australia, became the bestselling book at the Melbourne Writer's Festival, was a top ten bestseller at the Queensland Writer's Festival, and reached the top ten books in the Sydney Morning Herald's independent bestseller list. It was nominated for a NSW Literary Award, and three Australian Book Industry Awards. *Unpolished Gem* is studied as a text in schools in Tasmania, Adelaide and Victoria. Alice's short stories have been published in *The Good Weekend* and *MEANJIN*. Alice is a Melbourne-based solicitor, tutor and pastoral care adviser.

### **Lally Katz – Writer (Kew) – *The Fag from Zagreb***

Lally Katz is a graduate of The University of Melbourne's School of Studies in Creative Arts and studied playwriting at London's Royal Court Theatre. She is a core member of Stuck Pigs Squealing Theatre, which has rapidly built a reputation as one of the country's most exciting theatre companies. Stuck Pigs Squealing's production of Lally's *The Black Swan of Trespass* premiered at The Malthouse's Tower Room, toured to Downstairs Belvoir Street and to the New York International Fringe Festival. This production won the 2004 New York International Fringe Festival's Producer's Choice Award as well as winning Green

Room and Melbourne Fringe Awards. Lally has a number of projects in development with new work premiering at the Malthouse, STC's Wharf 2 Loud and Chashama Performance Space in New York in the second half of 2007. Lally is also developing a new work with playwright Mac Wellman and Stuck Pigs Squealing, through Performing Lines.

### **Kate Holden – Writer (St Kilda) – *Waiting It Out***

Kate Holden is the author of *In My Skin: A Memoir* (Text Publishing), about her years as a heroin addict and prostitute in Melbourne, much of it set in St Kilda. First published in 2005, her memoir has been shortlisted for awards in Australia, and has been published in several countries overseas. She is a graduate of the University of Melbourne and RMIT, and is on the CAL Second Book Fellowship at Varuna, the Writers' House, and will be taking up the B. R. Whiting Library residency in Rome in 2008. Kate is now a full-time writer of reviews, essays, and a regular column for *The Age*, and she is working on a novel. *Melburnalia* is her first attempt at writing for theatre.

### **David Mence - Director**

David Mence is a playwright/director and is Artistic Director of White Whale Theatre. In 2007 he spent six weeks in Sydney working as Assistant Director to Marion Potts on Bell Shakespeare's *Othello* and was a participant in the *24-Hour Play Generator* in the Emerging Writers' Festival. David has also been awarded a Creative Fellowship at the State Library of Victoria where he is currently writing a new play about whalers and early settlements in colonial Victoria. In 2006, David edited and re-directed his play *Macbeth Re-Arised* for the Edinburgh Fringe where it received 4 & 5 star reviews and became one of the cult-hits of the festival. David is presenting a new work, *Convict 002*, in the Melbourne Fringe Festival 2007 and is directing a piece in the Short & Sweet Festival in December 2007. David has also worked with Fancy Fish Theatre, Platform Youth Theatre and Union House Theatre.

### **Melanie Beddie – Dramaturg (*Melburnalia*)**

Melanie Beddie is a VCA graduate and actor, dramaturg and director. She is Artistic Director of independent theatre company The Branch and has been resident dramaturg for Playbox, Playlist and Melbourne Theatre Company. Melanie has recently directed theatre performances for WAAPA, VCA and the National Theatre School, and her work *Second Childhood* toured to 13 locations in Australia. In 2002 she cofounded the Dramaturgies forum – an independent organisations which is dedicated to exploring the practical application of dramaturgy in current theatre practice. In 2004 she received the inaugural Dramaturgy Fellowship from the Australia Council. Melanie is a Boardmember of Playwriting Australia and was a panellist on the 2005 Victorian Premier's Awards for Literature.

### **ACTORS:**



**Ra Chapman** trained for two years at the Actors Centre in London and performed as Greta in 'Metamorphosis' and Celia in 'Volpone'. Ra has performed widely in Britain in community theatre and with respected companies the Woodhouse Players and Present Moment Theatre. Ra was a member of the St Martins Ensemble Scholarship and performed regularly in St Martin productions, including Eurydice in 'Live Acts on Stage', Refugee in '7 Chapters of a Shattered World' and the Maid in 'Lucy Devil has Wealth Syndrome'. She has worked with Theatre in Decay, and has completed further training at the Melbourne Actors Studio and the Rehearsal Room. Her work also includes several short films and later this year she will begin work on the feature film 'Birthday' with writer/director J. Harkness.



**Terri Brabon** completed a Bachelor of Theatre at James Cook University, and has gone on to specialise in Shakespearean performance. She has toured extensively with the Australian Shakespeare Company (Titania, Verges, Ophelia, Rosalind, Viola, Juliet) and has also worked with La Mama, Complete Works Theatre, Harvest Rain, Essential Theatre, Jute Theatre and Tropic Line.



**Gareth Yuen** trained at the National Institute for Dramatic Arts. He has worked in diverse performance mediums and has recently returned from a year's filming in New Zealand where he played the role of the Blue Power Ranger. Gareth has performed on ABC TV as a cast member of *Kath and Kim* and *MDA: Medical Defence Australia* as well as pay-TV shows *The Ponderosa* and *Head Start*. His stage credits include NIDA and Chinese Theatre Group performances.



**Nadia Coreno** has performed with a range of outstanding theatre groups, including the Melbourne Theatre Company (*Gulliver's Travels*, *Mad Forest*), Arena (*Oblong*) and Anthill/MTC (*The Marriage of Figaro*). She most recently worked on *A Cherry Orchard* with Actors Anonymous. Since graduating from Victorian College of the Arts she has worked with independent companies, mainstream and theatre in education as well as appearing regularly on ABC TV. This is her first production with White Whale Theatre.



**Laura Maitland** trained at the Victorian College of the Arts. She played Lady Macbeth in White Whale Theatre's highly successful production of *Macbeth Re-Arisen* in the Edinburgh Festival in 2006 and was singled out by the Edinburgh Guide as a standout performer. She recently performed the lead, Barbara, in Michael Gow's *Europe* at University of Melbourne and has performed extensively in musical theatre. She is part of the White Whale ensemble and will appear in *Melburnalia* at fortyfivedownstairs in November 2007, featuring 5 short new works by Ross Mueller, Tee O'Neill, Kate Holden, Alice Pung and Lally Katz.



**Jonathan Woods** trained at the Adelaide Centre for the Arts, and has been seen on Australian TV in a 6-week role on *Neighbours* and on *McLeod's Daughters*. He has performed on stage with the Bakehouse Theatre (Adelaide), the South Australian State Theatre Company, the Adelaide Fringe Festival, Little Black Box, Stir Theatre and the SA Comeout Festival. Jonathan was nominated for Best Actor in the South Australian Short Screen Awards 2007 and works as a voice over, commercial and feature film actor.