



# PERSUASION

By Jane Austen

29 JUN -  
17 AUG

An Amateur Production by arrangement  
with ORiGiN™ Theatrical on behalf of Samuel French Ltd

## Director's Note

There are a lot of different perspectives out there on Jane Austen - however contrary to popular belief her work is not just about boys and bonnets! In this adaptation of *Persuasion*, Tim Luscombe has done a wonderful job in bringing to light the sharp wit and social commentary that many may not instinctively associate with Jane Austen, and I think audiences will be pleasantly surprised by how much humour underlies the text of *Persuasion*.

In terms of this production some Austen fans may be missing a realistic English manor house set, however as this adaption moves back and forth across locations, complete set changes would have been too disruptive to the flow of the story. I have attempted to give our audiences a degree of that Jane Austen world, while having a set which is adaptable and can serve as different representations (such as a hillside, a Cobb or an indoor staircase).

Reflecting on Austen, it is widely believed (and also widely disputed) that Jane was once very much in love with an Irishman named Tom Lefroy, and they were engaged a short time before Tom was forced to break it off due to his family's disapproval. It has been asserted that Jane was heartbroken over Tom and despite another viable suitor she never married, as she never again felt the same for someone as she did for Tom. I do wonder if Jane wrote *Persuasion* with Tom in mind. Perhaps she was always waiting and hoping that the universe would create an opportunity for the two of them to meet again, and writing *Persuasion* was a chance for her to explore the outcome she had wanted for herself with Tom (but sadly never had), through the eyes of Anne Elliot.

So many people tell me that *Persuasion* is their favourite Jane Austen novel, and I wonder if it's because many people can identify with the story of lost love, and how circumstance, timing, persuasion, or other people got in the way of something they believed in. Perhaps audiences can take this away with them - if you hold regret over a lost love, maybe it's time to reach out and reconnect.....! But if you are one of the lucky ones, I hope you walk away with a smile, knowing you got it right the first time around.

*Trudy Ritchie*  
Director

**Jane Austen** (1775 - 1817) Jane Austen was an English novelist who wrote six major novels which wittily critique and comment on the British society of her time. *Persuasion* was her final novel, published six months after her death.

**Tim Luscombe** (1960 - ) Tim Luscombe is a British playwright, director, actor, and teacher known for his adaptations of Jane Austen and other original plays.

**TRUDY RITCHIE - Director** Trudy found her love for the theatre at a very early age, appearing in several musicals as a young adult before moving on to other roles including *Bittersweet* (SPAT), *Polar Bears*, *Mountain Language*, *Blue Window*, *Baby with the Bathwater* (all Darlo Drama), and *Pride and Prejudice* (Genesian Theatre). In 2017 Trudy turned her focus to Directing, working as Assistant Director on *Emma* (GTC July 2017), *Bloody Murder* (GTC Oct 2017), and *Once in Royal David's City* (New Theatre March 2019). Her directing credits include *The Cripple of Inishmaan* (GTC Workshop Dec 2017), and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (GTC May 2018).

**SUSAN CARVETH - Costume Design** Susan has worked as the designer / costumier on dozens of Genesian productions - a few favourites being: *Figaro*, *Under Milkwood*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Three Musketeers*, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *A Man for All Seasons*, *An Ideal Husband*, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, *Witness for the Prosecution*, *Hay Fever*, *Murder on the Nile*, *Richard III*, *Frankenstein*, *Twelfth Night*, *Forsythe Saga*, *The 39 Steps*, and *Blood Wedding*. She has also worked for Opera Australia, the ABC and BBC as a costume coordinator, and costume maker for *Tall Poppeas* (Ondine Productions - Opera Bites) and *Deadhouse* (Blancmange Productions).

**MEHRAN MORTEZAEI - Lighting and Sound Design** Mehran has been involved in numerous shows as a writer, director, designer, stage manager, and actor in Iran, NSW, QL, and Denmark. His most recent light and sound designs were for and at *Dark Voyager* at the Pavilion Theatre, *Necrophilia* in Limelight Theatre, *My Night with Reg* and *Pygmalion* at The New Theatre. Mehran started his theatre journey while he was in high school and then continued it by doing B.A. and M.A. in Theatre and Performing Arts at the University of Tehran. He is a lighting design tutor at Excelsia College, and Technical Manager at The New Theatre and Actors Centre Australia. Genesian was Mehran's first theatre home in Australia and he comes back home anytime he has a chance.



**ROSE TRELOAR - Anne Elliot** Rose studied at Film & Television Studio International, then moved to Melbourne for classes at the Actors Lab, VCA, and TAFTA. She studied at Margie Habers Studio LA. She graduated from ACA, performing as Marsha in *The Seagull*, Rosalind in *As You Like It*, and Miss Julie in *After Miss Julie* at NIDA. She wrote, directed, and starred in *Merry Christmas* last year.

**KENDALL DRURY - Frederick Wentworth** Kendall is a Sydney actor trained at the International Screen Academy. He has since developed his craft on stage, screen, and behind camera; recently as Posthumus Leonatus in *Cymbeline* at Shakespeare by the River. Kendall has loved researching Naval history in preparation, and assisted with costumes by heroically sewing on his own buttons.



**CHARLOTTE ROBERTSON - Louisa Musgrove** Charlotte is studying a Bachelor of Arts at UNSW with a double major in Film Studies and Theatre and Performance Studies. Her recent theatre credits include *This Old Man Comes Rolling Home* with UNSW Theatrical Society, *Crush: The Musical* with UNSW Musical Theatre Society (MTS) and *Ordinary Days* with MTS.

**ANGELA JOHNSTON - Mary Musgrove / Mrs Smith** Angela is a graduate of the University of Wollongong's Bachelor of Performance (Acting) Course. She has appeared in productions such as *Ingle*, *Lulu*, *Once in Royal David's City*, and *Pretty Fly for a Dead Guy*. She is a member of the PYT Ensemble and performs with her KPOP cover group, GLOSS. This is her first show at the Genesian.



**NICK FITZSIMMONS - Charles Musgrove** This is Nick's first production with the Genesian Theatre and he hopes to start his career (and this show) with a bang. Previously, Nick threw food at people in *One Man Two Guvnors*, was forced to wear a dress and play a female dog in *Peter Pan*, and was slapped across the face as Sky Masterson in *Guys and Dolls*. Enjoy!

**NATASHA MCDONALD - Elizabeth Elliot / Mrs Harville** Natasha graduated from QUT with a Bachelor of Creative Industries. She studied at ACA, TAFTA, NIDA, and THE HUB. Productions include *Blithe Spirit* (Darlo Drama), *Death Trap* (Touring Play), *Jekyll & Hyde* (Manly Musical), *Rausch* (NIDA), *Pygmalion* (New Theatre), *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* (Epicentre) and extensive film and TV.





**VITAS VARNAS - Mr William Elliot / Mr Harville** Vitas is an actor with work in theatre, TV, commercials, and voice over. He attended the National Institute of Dramatic Art completing the Young Actors Studio and studied at the Australian Institute of Music - Dramatic Arts. Theatre credits include *Heaven* (Canberra Theatre Centre & Riverside), *The Laramie Project* (Depot) and *Pygmalion* (New).

**ELIAS PARKER - Mr Benwick** Elias graduated from the Academy of Film, Theatre and Television in 2017 completing both an Advanced Diploma and Cert IV in acting. Some of his most recent productions include *Lucia di Lammermoor* directed by Roger Press (Sydney Opera House) and *Insex* directed by Nib Oswald (Blood Moon Theatre).



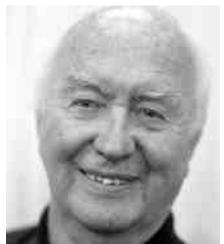
**TOM MASSEY - Sir Walter Elliot** Tom trained at AADA in the 90's and at Atlantic in NYC in 2012. He has worked in all aspects of theatre. Tom appeared in the Australian premiere of Parsley's adaptation of *Brideshead Revisted* for RGP. His most recent of many stage appearances was as Andrey in *Three Sisters* for the Genesian in 2015. He has also directed five productions for the Genesian.

**JODIE SIBLEY - Lady Russell** Recently from Melbourne, Jodie is excited to be in her first Sydney production. After her Australian Acting Academy course in Brisbane, Jodie moved to Melbourne and has played Gwendolyn in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Amanda in *Private Lives*, Claire in *Proof*, and Ursula in *Shush* - just to name a few! Jodie can't wait to get involved in the Sydney scene!



**CATHERINE WATERS - Mrs Clay / Mrs Croft** Catherine has most recently performed as Peter Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at The Guild Theatre and in the premiere of a new play about comedy legend, Benny Hill. Her other roles include Ruth in *Blithe Spirit*, Pippa in *Hotel Sorrento*, Birdie in *The Little Foxes*, and Portia in *Deathtrap*. This is her first appearance at the Genesian Theatre.

**ROD STEWART - Admiral Croft** This is Rod's 11th play with the Genesians, his last was *The Importance of Being Earnest*. He has also appeared in 3 workshops and two of his musicals have been work-shopped here: *Vicki* and *Devil May Care*. He also appeared in 10 plays at the Lane Cove Theatre Company, the last being *Suessical Jr*. This theatre also performed *Vicki* in February last year.



## **Production**

Director

Assistant Director

Costume Design

Lighting and Sound Design

Production Manager

Set Construction

Set Decoration

Costume Assistant

Lighting and Sound Assistant

Photography

Programme

Ticketing

Transport

Acknowledgements

**Trudy Ritchie**

**Tom Massey**

**Susan Carveth**

**Mehran Mortezaei**

**Barry Nielsen**

**Debbie Smith, Garry Bates, Paul**

**Gilbert, Tom Fahy, Grant Fraser,**

**Members of the Company**

**Barry Nielsen**

**Grace Correy**

**Amber Spooner**

**Craig O'Regan**

**Tom Massey**

**Shane Bates**

**Glen Harman**

**Di Henderson, Jenny Jacobs,**

**Elizabeth MacGregor, Janet**

**Macauley, Melanie Robinson,**

**Elizabeth Munro**

## **Crew**

Stage Manager

Lighting and Sound Operation

**Hannah Dunwell**

**Ian Whalan**

## **Cast**

Anne Elliot

Frederick Wentworth

Louisa Musgrove

Mary Musgrove / Mrs Smith

Charles Musgrove

Elizabeth Elliot / Mrs Harville

Mr William Elliot / Mr Harville

Mr Benwick

Sir Walter Elliot

Lady Russell

Mrs Clay / Mrs Croft

Admiral Croft

**Rose Treloar**

**Kendall Drury**

**Charlotte Robertson**

**Angela Johnston**

**Nick Fitzsimmons**

**Natasha McDonald**

**Vitas Varnas**

**Elias Parker**

**Tom Massey**

**Jodie Sibley**

**Catherine Waters**

**Rod Stewart**

# About the Genesian Theatre

The Genesian Theatre Company celebrates our 75th year as a company in 2019! For 65 years we have been operating from our home at 420 Kent St in the Sydney CBD. We boast among our alumni numerous household names in Australian theatre and film such as Angela Punch, Bryan Brown, Baz Luhrmann, Coral Lansbury, Judi Farr, John Bell, Peter Carroll, and Nick Enright. We are also just as proud of the hundreds of other talented actors, directors, stage managers, set and costume designers, lighting and sound specialists, stage and production staff who have contributed to Sydney's unique little theatre. We are particularly proud of all our members who volunteer their time to work Front of House to help you enjoy your visit to the Genesian Theatre.

Over the years the company has developed into a theatre providing a training ground for young theatre professionals and a place where those who love the theatre can meet, share, and extend their knowledge of the performing arts. The Genesian Theatre Company is one of Sydney's most active theatre companies. In addition to six main stage productions each year we run classes, workshops, and many other activities.

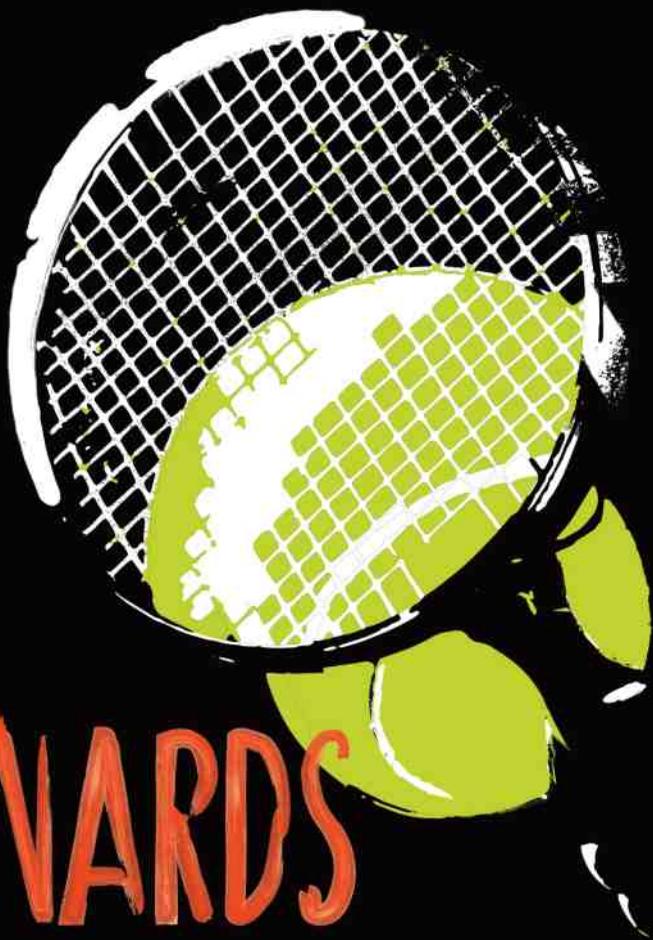
The building which houses the Genesian Theatre Company was originally St John's Church, and dates from 1868. It served as both a church and a poor school until 1932 when it became the Kursaal Theatre, housing the Sydney Repertory Company. In 1938 it became the first Matthew Talbot Hostel. Since 1954 it has been the home of the Genesian Theatre Company which was formed in 1944.

The Genesian Theatre Company acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation as the traditional custodians of the land our theatre stands on.

## Membership

If you're interested in acting, directing, stage management, sound, lights, publicity, admin, etc, or if you just want to experience being a member of the group, we would welcome you as a member. You don't need to be experienced, we can provide training and can cater to different levels of involvement. Please see our web site for further information.

Coming next...



# TOWARDS ZERO

By Agatha Christie

31 AUG - 12 OCT

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with ORiGiN™ Theatrical on behalf of Samuel French Ltd