

Melbourne Theatre Company and  
the Emerging Writers' Festival present

# FIRST STAGE



Readings of excerpts from works-in-development from five new voices in Australian theatre, directed by Isabella Vadivelloo with dramaturgy by Morgan Rose.

Friday 9 July 7.30pm  
Southbank Theatre,  
Lawler

*MYKEI*

By Roshelle Fong

*Nullung*

By Veronica Heritage-Gorrie

*Baby Hitler, a Time Machine  
and my Brother the Stoner*

By Jeremy Nguyen

*female disposition*

By Vivian Nguyen

*with me*

By Amarachi Okorom

These readings may contain mature themes, adult concepts and coarse language. Performance order of the excerpts will differ from this alphabetical list.

# MYKEI

by Roshelle Fong

Janelle Wong and Harry Burnett are desperately seeking a silver bullet for Harry's mysterious illness. But when they trial an AI therapy dog 'MYKEI' who seems to do more than he's designed for, the young couple must reckon with the uncomfortable truth underlying their love.

**Roshelle Fong** is a Hong Kong Australian multidisciplinary artist who wrote, directed and produced the Melbourne Fringe award-winning immersive show *nomnomnom* (2018) which she adapted in East Iceland, Shanghai and Sydney as part of Kings Cross Hotel's Vivid programming. In 2020 Roshelle wrote and performed in the live-streamed interactive show *Thirsty!* for Griffin Theatre's *Griffin Lock-in* and Google Creative Lab's Theatre, made for the internet. She was also in Democracy in Colour's Create Change Fellowship and co-created an anti-racism card game for schools 'Zoophobia'. In 2021 Roshelle's interactive theatre show *Poona* (Next Wave Festival) co-written with Keziah Warner premieres at the Museum of Chinese Australian History. She is also an alumni of Melbourne Theatre Company's Women in Theatre Program 2019 and Malthouse Theatre's Besen Family Artist's Program 2018.



# NULLUNG

by Veronica Heritage-Gorrie

*Nullung* is a true account of Linda Edith Turner, formerly Gorrie, who was stolen from Lake Tyers Aboriginal Mission (Bung Yarnda) in 1941.

This reading features the Gunai/Kurnai language, Nullung's language, my language.

Supported by Creative Victoria

**Veronica Heritage-Gorrie** is a proud Gunai/Kurnai woman and the author of *Black and Blue* published by Scribe Publications. Heritage-Gorrie is thrilled to extend her writing in film and screen play. Heritage-Gorrie has been involved with the Emerging Writers Festival and more recently the Sydney Writers Festival. She is also the recipient of the First Peoples Investment Program – Creative Victoria Grant for the writing of *Nullung*, the recipient of First Nation Writers Residency Australian Council for the Arts and Magabala Books for the writing of *Nullung* and the recipient of Varuna First Nation Writers Fellowship for the writing of *Teresa* 2021.



# BABY HITLER, A TIME MACHINE AND MY BROTHER THE STONER

By Jeremy Nguyen

It's the sort of question we all thought about once in undergrad after smoking a few bongos: if you could go back in time to when Hitler was a cute little baby – would you actually have the guts to pull the trigger and kill the baby? William Nguyen is an undergrad and he has just smoked a couple of bongos – on the night that he receives a distress call from the future. Does William have what it takes?

**Jeremy Nguyen** is a Vietnamese-Australian writer from Melbourne, Australia. An Australian Writers Guild Award nominee, he has written for Screen (NBC Universal, SBS Australia, Seven Australia), Stage (Melbourne Theatre Company, Malthouse Theatre), Radio (ABC) and Print (Black Inc, Australian Financial Review). He frequently co-writes with his brother, Alan Nguyen. By day, he is an academic who researches and lectures Machine Learning and Economics. He is also the joint custodian of a puppy, who always seems incredulous that he would want to press those buttons and look at that screen when he could be tickling the puppy.



# FEMALE DISPOSITION

By Vivian Nguyen

It's 2:30am at night. Two estranged friends, separated and dealing with their own difficult heartbreak, are forced to connect in their imaginary world they've built over the years. *female disposition* is a story about female friendships, violence and the toll it takes to forgive.

**Vivian Nguyen** is an actor and playwright. Credits include *THIS*. (dir. David Woods) for the Rising Festival, *Quite Drunk*, *Very Jesus* (dir. Peter Blackburn) for Melbourne Fringe, *WPRRH* (dir. Sarah Vickery) and *The Other Place* (dir. Jessica Dick) at Theatre Works. She co-founded Between The Buildings and performed in sold out show *Under the Skin* (dir. Caitlin Overton) which she co-wrote as part of LaMama's 2019 Exploration season. Her play *Thin Threads* was shortlisted for the STC's Patrick White Playwrights Award and was accepted into Playwriting Australia's Rapid Fire Program and Elbow Room Theatre's Development Program. She's in Theatre Works She Writes residency where *If The Penny Drops* is being developed and was selected for ATYP's National Studio with her piece *Bugged*. Vivian is one of the selected artists in Footscray Community Arts Centre RESIDENCE program. She has also written for screen which includes short film *Shifted* which is directed by Bethany Whitmore.



# WITH ME

by Amarachi Okorom

A young woman is faced with the unbearable task of coming to terms with the loss of someone close to her. A short play that explores grief and letting go.

**Amarachi Okorom** is a Nigerian born Igbo actor, spoken word poet and emerging playwright. She grew up in Auckland, New Zealand. Her recent acting credits include *Future Echoes: Edge Ensemble* at the Arts Centre Melbourne (October 2019), *The Watching* with Western Edge Youth Arts (November 2019), *Seers* (Playlist Live 2019), the audio play *WATCHING* by Morgan Rose and Vidya Rajan (2020), *A Disorganised Zoom Reading of Contagion* by the People (2020), *The Human Voice* (March 2021), *Burning Love* (Playlist Live 2021) and *THIS* (RISING Festival 2021).



## Cast includes

Monica Jasmine Caro  
Ruby Duncan  
Taylor Fong  
Carissa Lee  
Michael Logo  
Marcus McKenzie  
Jenny Zhou

## Director

Isabella Vadiveloo

## Dramaturg

Morgan Rose

## Literary Director

Chris Mead

## Programs Producer

Karin Farrell

## Stage Manager

Meg Richardson

Melbourne Theatre Company acknowledges the Yalukit Willam Peoples of the Boon Wurrung, the First Peoples of Country on which Southbank Theatre and MTC HQ stand.

We pay our respects to all of Melbourne's First Peoples, to their ancestors and Elders, and to our shared future.

In this programme, terms used to describe an individual's cultural identity when referencing a particular work or artist have been determined in consultation with the artists involved.

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Presented in partnership with the Emerging Writers' Festival

**EMERGING  
WRITERS'  
FESTIVAL**

MTC is a department of the University of Melbourne



CREATIVE VICTORIA

**MTC** MELBOURNE  
THEATRE  
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