Presented by Acting Company 2015 and Production Students

A play by Dorothy Hewett

When: 15 - 21 May, 2015

Venue: Studio 45, 45 Sturt Street, Southbank

Running time: 95 mins (no interval)

Warnings: Contains nudity, course language, simulated violence
FROM THE DIRECTOR

I enjoy crafting plays that are anti 'the system', that have a complex female voice, that subvert or question hetronormative models, and that work outside the constraints of naturalism and embrace active manipulation of time, space and style. Dorothy Hewett's The Chapel Perilous is all this and more. It has been thrilling to work on this piece with a body of students who have robustly and imaginatively brought this work from the page into the theatrical world.

The Chapel Perilous written by Dorothy Hewett follows the protagonist Sally Banner's quest for selfhood; for freedom. Sally has been heralded as the first liberated feminist on the Australian stage. She reflects the time in which she was penned (1971), a time of both new found liberation and deep bigotry and repression.

I wanted to explore this under-produced Australian classic as I feel Sally Banner still speaks to us now, 44 years on she is still a heroine of liberation.

The question becomes how far have we come as a society? Do women still pay a high price for being heard? Do those who refuse to conform, who carve out an unconventional path, still suffer persecution?

Are we still at war? Are we still governed by hypocritical authority figures, do we still silence/shame/blame/abuse women?

Most interestingly, as we crafted the work, we wanted to interrogate how we can bring Sally to the 'now'. How could we render her in a way in a way that is provocative and meaningful, in a way that resonates with us as makers and connects with you, our audience? We were not interested in creating a 'museum' piece of theatre that the audience can distance themselves from. So we have reappropriated the setting and placed her in our time, our world - the 'now'.

Tanya Dickson
Director
The Chapel Perilous
PLAYWRIGHT
DOROTHY HEWETT
(1923 – 2002)

Now we are crossing the waterways of Cooks River and Botany Bay, all the places where we have wandered and driven, explored and swum, for the past nine years. The smoke from Bunnerong Power Station hangs in the wintry air and drifts across the bay. It’s over and I’m going back to Western Australia - tired, defeated, sadder, older, wiser perhaps, but miraculously still alive with my children beside me.1

Dorothy Hewett wrote these words at the end of Wild Card: An Autobiography 1923-1958 which traverses four decades of her life from her childhood on an isolated wheat farm in Wickepin, Western Australia to her separation from Les Flood (to whom she had three sons) in 1958.

Thirteen years after this moment, in 1971, The Chapel Perilous was first performed at the New Fortune Theatre in Perth. Sally Banner was without precedent. A year later, when the play was performed in a University of Melbourne student production, a young Kristin Williamson watched it and thought “Didn’t this author know that in the avant-garde theatre of Melbourne only five playwrights were ever performed. They were called the New Wave and they were all men?”2

Teaching at the University of Western Australia, Hewett created her own ‘salon’, making her home a meeting place for young West Australian writers. As Aarne Neeme notes, Hewett was three thousand miles from the developing pattern of Australian theatre. She stood outside that pattern yet she also embraced it.3

In Wild Card, that closing description of a crucial turning point for Hewett as she escaped her Sydney life seems to speak to a defining element of her positioning within the Australian theatre landscape; deeply understanding its detail but defining her own pattern. At once central within it and far removed.

Kate Prior
Master of Dramaturgy, Victorian College of the Arts

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Tanya Dickson is a theatre director and graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts; she works predominantly with new writing for the stage. In 2012 she was the Director in Residence for MKA: Theatre of New Writing, where she directed Glyn Robert’s Patrick White nominated play Triangle, receiving a Green Room nomination for Best Direction. Other recent work includes, I Still Call Australia Home (co-director Adelaide Fringe 2013, created by In & Out) Attempts on Her Life by Martin Crimp (National Theatre Drama School), Assistant Director to Sam Strong on Private Lives by Noel Coward (MTC), NSFW by Lucy Kirkwood (Red Stitch), Assistant Director to Mathew Lutton on Dance of Death (Malthouse Theatre) J.A.T.O by Vedrana Klepica (MKA: Theatre of New Writing) and Talon Salon by Michele Lee (Next Wave Festival 2012, You are Here Festival 2013 Festival and Darwin Festival 2013).

Tanya is a part of the Women Director’s Program at MTC for 2015.

Tanya Dickson

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CAST

Cariad Wallace.................. Sally Banner Prologue/ Vocals
Ashton Sly....................... Sally Banner Act One/ Vocals
Anna Rodway.................... Sally Banner Act Two/Vocals
Sarah Adams..................... Judith/ Chorus/Vocals
Rebekah Robertson.............. Headmistress & Mother/ Chorus/Vocals
Georgina Baveas................. Sister Rosa /Chorus / Vocals
Alex Rigney...................... Cannon & Father/ Chorus /Vocals
Danny Carroll.................... David /Chorus /Drums
Guillym Davenport............... Thomas /Chorus/Guitar & Bass
Joey Lai.......................... Saul / Chorus /Vocals
Zak Pidd......................... Michael/ Chorus/ Keyboard & Vocals

CREW

CREATIVES

Director
Tanya Dickson

Set Designer /
Graphic Designer
Daniel Maulds

Lighting Designer
Kelsey Watt

Costume Designer 
Jess Davie

Sound Designer
Rose Farbrother

Musical Director
Zak Pid

Assistant Director
Samuel Russo

Production Dramaturg
Domonic Mercer

Dramaturg Research
Saverio Minutolo

Dramaturg Research
Kate Prior

Fight Consultant
Lyndall Grant

Fight Assistant
Alice Cavanah

Fight Captain
Joey Lai

Dance Consultant
Sarah Adams

Dance Consultant
Georgina Baveas

PRODUCTION CREW

Production Coordinator
Paul Doyle

Stage Manager
Amelia O’Brien

Assistant Stage Manager
Liberty Gilbert

Assistant Stage Manager/ Crew
Will Barker

Head Electrician
Michelle Thorne

Board Operator
Linton Wilkinson

AV Designer
Ounie Withrow Artken

Costume Officer*
Karen Blanco

Costume Maker
Elin Soderlund

Costume Design Shadow
Pia Guillatt

Costume Manager
Zoe Atterbury

Assistant Costume Manager
Natalie Lim

Assistant Costume Manager
Christine Young

Head Of Audio
Celine Khong

Workshop Officer*
Colin Orchard

Scenery Construction* 
James Russell

Scenery Construction* 
Justin Green

Set Design Shadow
Alex Rothnie

Set Manager
Nicholas Sanders

Set Manager Shadow
Victoria Fatouros

Props Manager
Anastassia Poppenberg

Props Manager Shadow
Jacinda Hill

Crew
Caidan De Win

Audio Operator
Lachlan Ferguson

Crew
Adelaide Harney

Mic Technician
Ashleigh Barnett

Head Mechanist
Alice Pollard

Draftsperson
Neneh Owen Pozzan

Industry Professional 
Graduates

Performance Technology 
Mentor
Danny Pettingill
Sarah attended the VCA’s Foundation Year in 2012, performing as Snake in Michael Gow’s The Kid directed by Suzie Hardgrave. During her studies in the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Theatre Practice) Sarah appeared as Chrysothemis in John Barton’s The Greeks, and as Nina in Chekhov’s The Seagull directed by Melanie Beddie. She performed in Patricia Cornelius’ Slut, directed by Penny Harpham and earlier this year played the role of Ellen in Gary Abrahams’ reading for stage of Woody Allen’s Bullets over Broadway.

Georgina Baveas

Prior to the VCA, Georgina attended NIDA summer courses and trained with Queensland Actors Playhouse and ZenZenZo Physical Theatre, both in Brisbane. She also has a Bachelor of Film and Screen Media Production from Griffith University. At the VCA, she has performed in Slut by Patricia Cornelius directed by Penny Harpham and earlier this year played the role of Ellen in Gary Abrahams’ reading for stage of Woody Allen’s Bullets over Broadway.

Georgina Baveas

Daniel was born in Warrnambool, Victoria and has also lived in Brisbane and North Queensland. He completed a school based exchange in Zurich, Switzerland and speaks fluent German. During his time at the VCA, Daniel’s roles have included Medvedenko in Anton Chekhov’s The Seagull, an ensemble member in Sarah Kane’s 4.48 Psychosis directed by Justin Nott and Nick Valenti in Bullets Over Broadway directed by Gary Abrahams. Daniel has seven years of martial arts experience including Taekwondo and Kung Fu, and is an accomplished drummer.

Daniel Carroll

Guillym began acting in New Zealand, getting his start playing the role of Rob in Exchange, written and directed by Lauren Jackson as part of Auckland Theatre Company’s Young and Hungry Festival of New Theatre. While training at the VCA, Guillym’s roles include Konstantin in Chekhov’s The Seagull directed by Melanie Beddie, B in Sarah Kane’s Crave directed by Cathy Hunt and Jake Callahan in Roxie Hart, adapted for the stage and directed by Alister Smith.

Guillym Davenport

Joseph began his career in Queensland, training in a variety of physical forms and basic sword skills. He performed as an ensemble member in David Sleswick’s original version of Or Forever Hold Your Peace and toured to the This Is Not Art Festival with The Toilet Show as a devisor. At the VCA Joseph has played many roles including Medvedenko in Anton Chekov’s The Seagull, a Voice in Martin Crimp’s Fewer Emergencies and a chorus member for A Filibuster of Dreams at the Festival of Live Art. Joseph aspires to create art that highlights and addresses the issues of modern society.

Joseph Lai

A multi-instrumentalist, Zak Pidd has toured nationally and internationally with multiple bands including Sex On Toast and Circuits. His acting credits include The Endarkenment by Fregmonto Stokes, mentored by Max Gilles and Porcelain Punch, which toured to the Perth and Adelaide Fringe Festivals. Zak has worked as collaborator and performer with Polytropic Productions, working on HappyLand at Harvest Music Festival and Just Us at the Substation at the Melbourne Fringe Festival in 2014. During his time at the VCA he has played Trigorin in Checkov’s The Seagull and performed in Martin Crimp’s Fewer Emergencies among many devised experiments.

Zak Pidd
Alex has performed in a variety of roles whilst studying at the VCA including Menelaus in The Greeks, Dorn in The Seagull, Roo in Summer of the Seventeenth Doll, Oberon in A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Mr in The Prodigal Son and as Julian Marx in an adaptation of Woody Allen’s Bullets Over Broadway. He has also performed as Ridley in Hapgood and as The Anarchist in Accidental Death of an Anarchist for the University of Queensland’s Underground Productions. He will appear in the upcoming LateNite Films webseries Wizards of Aus directed by Michael Shanks.

Rebekah Robertson

Prior to coming to the VCA, Rebekah studied International Studies and was a commissioning editor on the student magazine. While at the VCA she has played Polina in The Seagull, Mrs in The Prodigal Son and as Julian Marx in an adaptation of Woody Allen’s Bullets Over Broadway. He has also performed as Ridley in Hapgood and as The Anarchist in Accidental Death of an Anarchist for the University of Queensland’s Underground Productions. He will appear in the upcoming LateNite Films webseries Wizards of Aus directed by Michael Shanks.

Rebekah Robertson

Prior to commencing her studies at the VCA, Anna was awarded a Premier’s Award for her achievements in Theatre Studies and the Dean’s Arts Scholarship to complete her Bachelor of Arts at Monash University where she majored in English and Creative Writing. During her time at the VCA, Anna has played roles including Polina in Anton Chekhov’s The Seagull directed by Melanie Beddie, Ensemble Member in Martin Crimp’s Fewer Emergencies directed by Lara Kerestes and most recently, Kaye Hamilton in Stage Door directed by Justine Campbell. Anna played violin for ten years and has enjoyed combining her writing skills with her theatre-making training.

Anna Rodway

Originally from Wardell, in New South Wales’ far north, Ashton is a classically trained ballet dancer. Whilst studying a Bachelor of Arts majoring in International and Global Studies at the University of Sydney, Ashton performed in SUDS productions and at PACT Theatre. She also starred in Nocturne, a dance/circus spectacular performed at the Seymour Centre. At the VCA, Ashton’s credits include Nina in Anton Chekhov’s The Seagull directed by Melanie Beddie and The Son in The Prodigal Son directed by Iris Galliard. In 2014 Ashton was part of the VCA Global Atelier Scholarship Program that allowed her to travel to Shanghai to perform at the 20th Performance Studies International Conference at the Shanghai Theatre Academy.

Ashton Sly

Cariad is originally from Wagga Wagga in New South Wales. Prior to the VCA, she trained in singing and pursued her love of musical theatre. Last year, she played the role of Arkadina in Anton Chekhov’s The Seagull directed by Melanie Beddie. She also performed the role of Lolita in Patricia Cornelius’ Slut directed by Penny Harpham. Cariad was selected as part of a troupe representing the VCA at the 2014 20th Performance Studies International Conference at the Shanghai Theatre Academy. In 2015, she has played the role of Terry Randall in a staged reading of Stage Door directed by Justine Campbell.
PRODUCTION TEAM

Amelia O’Brien
Stage Manager

Based in Melbourne Amelia is currently in her final year at the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) studying a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Production) majoring in Stage Management. Since starting at the VCA she has had many wonderful opportunities working as Principal Stage Manager at the Victorian State Schools Spectacular, Assistant Stage Manager World Music Stage - White Night and Vehicle Crew at Moomba Festival. Some of her VCA credits include: Assistant Stage Manager One Act Plays (2013), Stage Manager Showbies/ New Short Works (2014) and Assistant Stage Manager End of Year Dance Programs 1 and 2 (2014). This year she is also delighted to be Stage Managing The Chapel Perilous as part of the VCA’s Contemporary Plays Season.

Jessica Davie
Costume Designer

Hailing from the Byron Shire, creative heart of the north coast of NSW, Jessica found her passion for design early in making and entering wearable art costumes and props in the Shearwater W.A.V.E. (Wearable Arts Vision In Education). Her piece Bone Woman made it through the international judging of the prestigious W.O.W (World Of Wearable Art) in Nelson, New Zealand. Since her study at the Victorian College of the Arts Jessica’s credits include Costume Assistant for Something Similar and Conditioned Humans for Dance ON! (2014), Head Sculptor of the Horse and Rider statue in Li’l Abner (2014) and Costume Designer for The Chapel Perilous (2015). Jessica has a passion for creature design, puppet making and sculpting.

Rose Farbrother
Sound Designer

After taken time off last year to explore England and its theatres, Rose is happy to be back at the Victorian College of the Arts. A passionate audio designer with a mind both technical and creative, she tries to combine these to create innovative sound designs that reinforce and embrace the themes of the show.

Daniel Moulds
Set Designer

Having graduated from the Postgraduate Diploma of Performance Creation in 2014, Daniel is currently studying the Master of Design for Performance at the Victorian College of the Arts. He also holds a Bachelor of Visual Arts and Design and a Diploma in Transpersonal Art Therapy. Daniel is establishing himself as a bold and innovative performance designer, with a special interest in immersive interactive theatre. Recent credits include set and costume design for The Prodigal Son, directed by Iris Gaillard, as part of the VCA’s One Act Play season in 2014 and designer for The Alien Meteorites of Federation Square (That Probably Won’t Kill Us All), written by Georgia Symons, as part of Fresh Air Festival 2015.
Kelsey was raised around the world by persistently nomadic parents, but has settled (for now) in Melbourne to pursue an amorphous blob of a career; to make better art than you, or even just good-ish art. Kelsey is a student of light predominantly, often stopping mid-sentence to go “Woah!” at strange reflections of the sun. Her lighting design aspirations are also bolstered by a love of science, language and wonder. Kelsey has worked on performances spanning the fields of Dance, Theatre, and Musical Theatre, and is hungry for every exquisitely painful and gratifying facet of this wacky world.