

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sunday 1 November, 2020

Sydney Theatre Company announces Act 1: the first five plays of 2021

Sydney Theatre Company Artistic Director Kip Williams today unveiled Act 1, the first five plays of the 2021 season with the remaining two thirds of the season to be announced in March. To celebrate the company's return to its newly renovated home at The Wharf, Williams will direct a new adaptation by Kate Mulvany of Ruth Park's classic Sydney story, *Playing Beatie Bow*. The 2021 season will also feature the Australian premiere of Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' dark comedy, *Appropriate* directed by Wesley Enoch at Roslyn Packer Theatre and three plays rescheduled from the 2020 season: *Home, I'm Darling*, *Fun Home* and *The Wharf Revue: Goodnight and Good Luck*.

Artistic Director Kip Williams said: *"To celebrate the exciting new creative possibilities of the theatres at The Wharf, I'm putting together a special collection of plays and I'm thrilled that the first of these is the beloved story Playing Beatie Bow - a favourite book from my own childhood. This will be a show for young and old and we're hoping that it will introduce a new generation of theatre-lovers to The Wharf. As we come home to The Wharf, I'm so excited to be telling a story set in our local area, The Rocks'.*

We're thrilled to welcome Wesley Enoch back to STC for the Australian premiere of Appropriate, a phenomenal piece of writing from one of the most exciting playwrights in America at the moment, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins.

I'm so happy to be bringing back some of the most anticipated shows of 2020 after they were heartbreakingly cancelled due to the pandemic. Home, I'm Darling is a witty and colourful take on hiding away from the world that seems more timely now than ever; Fun Home, bursting with wonderful music, is a chance for all of us to reflect on the things that really matter: our loved ones and being true to ourselves and; finally, it's wonderful to be able to remount the farewell iteration of The Wharf Revue because in times as difficult as these, laughter is more important than ever!

We've all been through a lot in the past few months and the generosity of our audience and supporters has been felt and appreciated deeply by every single member of this company. We can't wait to welcome our audiences back and share this exciting new chapter in STC's history."

The first production at The Wharf in 2021 will be an historic event in Australian theatre: a new

adaptation of Ruth Park's *Playing Beatie Bow* from playwright Kate Mulvany and Artistic Director Kip Williams, the team that created the epic, multi-award-winning world of *The Harp in the South: Part One and Part Two*. Starring **Catherine Văn-Davies** (*No Pay? No Way!*, *Hungry Ghosts*) as Abigail and **Sofia Nolan** (*The Wolves at Belvoir*) as Beatie Bow, this moving story, set in and around The Rocks, the real-life suburb that STC calls home, is full of history and humour and will be sure to delight audiences across generations.

Continuing the company's tradition of showcasing the best and most exciting international playwriting, the 2021 season will feature the Australian premiere of Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' *Appropriate* directed by **Wesley Enoch** at the Roslyn Packer Theatre. Twice nominated for the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, Jacobs-Jenkins is a master of the form who riffs on the work of classic writers to tell uncomfortable truths about contemporary America.

2021 will also see the triumphant return of some of the shows that were cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic. The Olivier Award-winning *Home, I'm Darling*, helmed by STC Resident Director **Jessica Arthur**, will play the Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House. With an ensemble including **Andrea Demetriades** (*Arms and the Man*) and **Anthony Taufa** (*How to Rule the World*), this witty, highly-original and thought-provoking comedy takes a look at the complexity of women's choices and the dangers of nostalgia through distinctly rose-coloured glasses.

Musical legend **Marina Prior** will star alongside **Maggie McKenna** (*Muriel's Wedding: The Musical*) in *Fun Home*, a musical adaptation of Alison Bechdel's memoir in a brand new production directed by Dean Bryant. Winner of three Tony Awards, including Best Musical and Best Original Score, and a finalist for the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, *Fun Home* is a heartfelt story about coming out and coming of age based on Alison Bechdel's pivotal graphic novel.

And finally, after more than two decades of hilarious irreverence, the comedy powerhouse that is *The Wharf Revue* is back to say goodbye. Taking over the Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House from February, the indefatigable trio of **Jonathan Biggins**, **Drew Forsythe** and **Phillip Scott** reunite with dazzling accomplice **Mandy Bishop** for one final victory lap for the comedy juggernaut that's been keeping the bastards honest since 2000.

For further information visit sydneytheatre.com.au/season-2021

Sydney Theatre Company 2021: Act 1

Playing Beatie Bow

BY RUTH PARK AND ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY KATE MULVANY
DIRECTED BY KIP WILLIAMS

WORLD PREMIERE

22 FEB - 1 MAY WHARF 1 THEATRE

This classic Sydney story is coming home

Sydney Theatre Company's long-awaited return home to The Wharf will be marked by this historic event in Australian theatre. From playwright Kate Mulvany and Artistic Director Kip Williams, the team that created the epic, multi-award-winning world of *The Harp in the South: Part One and Part Two*, comes a new adaptation of one of Ruth Park's most beloved Australian stories, *Playing Beatie Bow*, which is sure to delight audiences of all generations.

Abigail (Catherine Văn-Davies), a teenager dealing with her parents' messy separation, follows the mysterious young girl Beatie Bow (Sofia Nolan) back through time – from the hustle and bustle of Sydney's The Rocks in the present day to the year 1873, when the suburb was full of struggling immigrant families, gangsters and a whole host of larger-than-life characters. With the help of Beatie, her wise grandmother, and the whole Bow family, Abigail goes on a wild adventure through twisting alleyways of history in a race to find her way home.

This moving human story is set in and around the real-life suburb that STC calls home and will overflow with history, song and sparkling humour. Grandparents, parents and teenagers will all find something to love in this family story – a combination of Mulvany's characteristic warmth and vivacity and Williams' monumental vision. Celebrate the reopening of The Wharf with a tale full of adventure, surprises and a little magic.

With Tony Cogin, Sofia Nolan, Guy Simon, Catherine Văn-Davies

Set Designer David Fleischer
Costume Designer Renée Mulder
Lighting Designer Nick Schlieper
Composer & Sound Designer Clemence Williams
Choral Director Natalie Goonaratne
Dramaturg Courtney Stewart
Assistant Director Kenneth Moraleda

Appropriate

BY BRANDEN JACOBS-JENKINS
DIRECTED BY WESLEY ENOCH

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

15 MAR - 10 APR ROSLYN PACKER THEATRE

When family reunions go wrong. Very wrong.

In the tradition of *August: Osage County*, this dark comedy looks at the US South's buried history through the wildly entertaining story of one dysfunctional family. In a crumbling plantation home somewhere in Arkansas, a family comes together to pick through their recently deceased father's hoard of possessions, a seemingly indiscriminate mix of junk and historical artefacts. With the house's imminent sale exerting pressure on everyone present, old tensions begin to rise up like ghosts while new dysfunctions are just starting to take shape. The discovery of an unexpected and troubling photo album forces a family to reconcile with a man they're desperate to remember and a history they'd rather forget.

Branden Jacobs-Jenkins is one of America's most exciting and lauded playwrights. Twice nominated for the Pulitzer Prize for Drama and a recipient of a prestigious MacArthur 'Genius' Fellowship, he is the master of thought-provoking and engaging pieces that shine new light on familiar stories.

This production, equal parts ghost story and family comedy, will be directed by giant of Australian theatre, Wesley Enoch. *Appropriate* is an edge-of-your-seat tour through contemporary America's troubled relationship with race, the truth and the things we leave behind.

With Lucy Bell, Mandy McElhinney

Designer Elizabeth Gadsby
Lighting Designer Trent Suidgeest
Composer & Sound Designer Steve Francis
Assistant Director Shari Sebbens

Home, I'm Darling

BY LAURA WADE

DIRECTED BY JESSICA ARTHUR

6 APR – 15 MAY DRAMA THEATRE, SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

Everything new is old again

Judy is a picture-perfect '50s housewife. She spends her days making the perfect devilled eggs, mixing the perfect Screwdrivers and being the perfect homemaker to her husband Johnny. They're totally happy with their pastel-hued life. The only problem is, it's not the 1950s, it's now, and Judy and Johnny's dream world is starting to come apart at the perfectly sewed seams.

Originally planned for our 2020 season, *Home, I'm Darling* is an Olivier Award-winning play full of big skirts and even bigger questions. How can we cope with the pressures of modern life? What do we lose in the present when we pine for the past? And can you get stains out of a shirt with just lemon juice and baking soda? In a post-lockdown world playwright Laura Wade's incisive and entertaining look at the reasons we shy away from the world feels all the more relevant.

Helmed by Resident Director Jessica Arthur (*Wonnangatta*) with an ensemble including Andrea Demetriades (*Arms and the Man*) and Anthony Taufa (*How to Rule the World*), this witty, highly-original and thought-provoking comedy takes a look at the complexity of women's choices and the dangers of nostalgia through distinctly rose-coloured glasses.

With Gareth Davies, Andrea Demetriades, Chantelle Jamieson, Kirsty Marillier, Tracy Mann, Anthony Taufa

Designer Genevieve Blanchett

Lighting Designer Verity Hampson

Composer & Sound Designer James Brown

Assistant Director Justice Jones

Fun Home

MUSIC BY JEANINE TESORI; BOOK AND LYRICS BY LISA KRON
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY ALISON BECHDEL
DIRECTED BY DEAN BRYANT

27 APR - 29 MAY ROSLYN PACKER THEATRE

A groundbreaking new musical

After smash-hit seasons on Broadway and in London, *Fun Home* comes to Sydney in a soaring brand-new production. Rescheduled from our 2020 season, we're thrilled to announce that musical legend Marina Prior will be appearing in 2021.

Winner of three Tony Awards including Best Musical and Best Original Score, and a finalist for the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, *Fun Home* has been hailed as a "beautiful, heartbreaker of a musical" (New York Times) and "one of the best new musicals of our era" (LA Times). *Fun Home* is a heartfelt story about coming out and coming of age based on Alison Bechdel's pivotal graphic novel.

After the unexpected death of her father, Alison is forced to confront his secrets that come to light. Shifting between past and present, we meet Alison, a successful graphic novelist; college-age Alison on the cusp of self-discovery; and precocious child Alison, who plays in coffins instead of sandboxes in the family's Bechdel Funeral Home.

Directed by Dean Bryant, *Fun Home* has laughs, drama and great tunes in spades. Don't miss this chance to see one of the hottest musicals to come out of the US in a decade.

With Ryan Gonzalez, Emily Havea, Lucy Maunder, Maggie McKenna, Adam Murphy, Marina Prior

The Wharf Revue: Good Night and Good Luck

BY JONATHAN BIGGINS, DREW FORSYTHE AND PHILLIP SCOTT CO-DIRECTED BY
JONATHAN BIGGINS AND DREW FORSYTHE

17 FEB - 20 MAR DRAMA THEATRE, SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

After more than two decades of hilarious irreverence and a little COVID-related hiccup, this comedy powerhouse is back to say goodbye.

Don't miss out on this one last hurrah as the indefatigable trio of Jonathan Biggins, Drew Forsythe and Phillip Scott reunite with dazzling accomplice Mandy Bishop for one final victory lap of *The Wharf Revue*. It's good night and good luck to the comedy juggernaut that's been keeping the bastards honest since 2000.

The bad news is that the planet is on fire and our world leaders are barely qualified to run a chook raffle. And the good? *The Wharf Revue* has fake news, fake hair and real laughs in abundance. No one is safe and no topic too taboo in this night of sketches, songs and side-splitting satire. You'll laugh! You'll cry! You'll want to move to New Zealand!

With Jonathan Biggins, Mandy Bishop, Drew Forsythe, Phillip Scott

Musical Director Phillip Scott
Designer Charles Davis
Lighting Designer Matt Cox

Notes to Editors:

- Download images for STC 2021 Act 1 [here](#)
- Act 2 of the STC 2021 season will be announced in March 2021. Overall, the full 2021 season will feature 15 productions, including a special collection of six plays to celebrate the new creative possibilities of The Wharf. The first show in this collection is *Playing Beatie Bow* and the remaining five shows will be announced as a part of Act 2.
- Tickets for the Sydney Theatre Company 2021: Act 1 go on sale to season ticket holders from Tuesday 10 November and general sale from Wednesday 2 December.

- STC is COVIDSafe and has implemented extensive safety and hygiene measures, and is strictly monitoring and following NSW Government guidelines and expert public health advice. [sydneytheatre.com.au/safety](https://www.sydneytheatre.com.au/safety)
- The Wharf Renewal Project is the first significant upgrade to Wharf 4-5 since 1983. Further information on the project can be found here <https://www.sydneytheatre.com.au/about/wharf-renewal-project/about>

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