

malverntheatre
company

is proud to present its 373rd major production

LOVESONG

by Abi Morgan



21 June – 6 July 2024

Directed by George Werther

By arrangement with **Nordiska Performing Rights Agency**

The Cast

Kate Bowers.....	Maggie
Phil Lambert.....	Billy
Katherine Williams.....	Margaret
Max Meaden.....	William

Synopsis

William and Margaret share thirty years of marriage, with moments of joy, but also much sadness. In this poignant and moving play we see them in both their optimistic and joyful younger years, as well as in their latter years, as they experience both happy memories and regrets.

BAFTA awardee Abi Morgan has created a play touching on "magical realism" as 'Billy' and 'Maggie' intertwine poetically and musically with their younger selves in the home and garden in which they have always lived. British Theatre Guide described *Lovesong* as "A really beautiful, tender work... an unforgettable, elegiac drama". This will be the premiere, non-professional staging of this very special play.

Setting

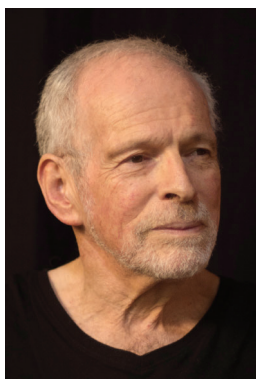
The events take place in the kitchen, bedroom and garden of the home of William/Billy and Margaret/Maggie over some 30 years, from the early 1970s to the early 2000s.

The play runs for approximately 90 minutes without an interval.

About the Playwright – Abi Morgan



Abi Morgan, born in Wales, is one of Britain's leading modern playwrights, having written some 14 plays, *Lovesong* being among the most widely acclaimed. In 2002, she was nominated as "most promising playwright" at the Laurence Olivier Awards. She has since won numerous awards and nominations, particularly for her screenwriting and television work. Her best known, and BAFTA-awarded screenplay, was for *The Iron Lady*, the 2011 movie based on the life of Margaret Thatcher. In 2018, her writing was recognised by her being awarded an OBE. Her works deal with the broad range of vicissitudes of life and love and the human condition, *Lovesong* being a wonderful example.



George Werther – Director

George has been directing plays in community theatre for some 10 years including directing *In the Garden* here at Malvern Theatre Company, winning best production and best set design. He has also performed here in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, winning an award for Best Actor. Other directorial highlights include *Stage Kiss* at Peridot Theatre Company, *Other Desert Cities* at Brighton Theatre Company and *4000 Miles* at Mordialloc Theatre Company. His acting ventures include performances in *33 Variations*, for which he was awarded a Victorian Drama League nomination for best actor and *Shadowlands* for which he won a Best Actor award. George is delighted that directing *Lovesong* is his sixth outing with Malvern Theatre Company.



Kate Bowers – Maggie

Kate is delighted to return to Malvern Theatre Company and is grateful for the opportunity to explore the challenges of another wonderful character in 'Maggie', after last season playing 'Amanda Wingfield' in *The Glass Menagerie*. Kate has previously performed here as 'Maureen' in *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, 'Clara' in *33 Variations*, 'Jeanne' in *The Touch of Silk* and a cheeky dog in *Sylvia*, playing opposite *Lovesong*'s director, George Werther. That delightful experience was revisited when George directed Kate as the character 'She' in *Stage Kiss*. Kate has been acknowledged for her acting work with awards from many theatre companies as well as from the Victorian Drama League and the Lyrebird awards.



Phil Lambert – Billy

Phil's last appearance at Malvern Theatre Company was as 'Stefan' in the musical *Ladies in Black*. Other recent roles elsewhere include as 'John' in *Still Alice* and as 'Roger' in *Family Values*, both with Lilydale Athenaeum Theatre and 'Donnie Kirshner' in *Beautiful* with Altona Civic Theatre. His musical credits include as 'Max Dettweiler' in *The Sound of Music* and 'Max von Mayerling' in *Sunset Boulevard*. For the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) Phil has written one-woman versions of Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*) and *The Marriage of Figaro*. He has also written and performed in a trilogy of monologues called the *Bach Diaries*.



Katherine Williams – Margaret

Katherine has been lucky enough to work with several theatre companies in recent years, and is now performing with Malvern Theatre Company for the first time. She most recently played 'Connie' in Mordialloc Theatre Company's award winning production of *The Effect*. Before that, she led the cast as 'Rosalind' in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* for Waterdale Theatre, for which she received her first Lyrebird nomination. Katherine completed her training at 16th Street Actor's Studio and has a background in dance and musical theatre. She is excited to bring this beautiful play to life for a new audience and hopes it will touch their hearts the way it has hers.



Max Meaden – William

Recently appearing as the doe-eyed 'Ray Gosling' in Williamstown Little Theatre's production of *Photograph 51*, Max has migrated to the other side of town for his debut on the Malvern Theatre Company stage for *Lovesong*. Prior to a COVID hiatus, Max's other favourite stage roles included playing 'William' in the hilarious Aussie-first production of *Ghosted* which premiered at Chapel Off Chapel. He also recently played 'Liam' in *Crash Pad*, an original play that featured as part of the Melbourne Fringe

Festival. What particularly excited Max about *Lovesong* and the character of 'William', was the opportunity to explore the different facets of self that a person embodies throughout a lifetime.

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Community Bank Malvern East is a local bank with 23 years history dedicated to servicing the community with personalised service and

great banking products. They are committed to remaining in the area with them recently purchasing their premises at 268 Waverley Rd, Malvern East. With more than \$5m given back to community groups, they have demonstrated they feed into the prosperity of their community, not off their community. Further details at

bendigobank.com.au/branch/vic/community-bank-malvern-east.



L'Olivo is a small, family-owned restaurant located at 171 Waverley Rd in Malvern East. In a warm, friendly atmosphere, L'Olivo serves up an array of tasty Mediterranean delicacies including

tapas, pastas, pizza and much more. Recommended for a pre- or post-show meal, coffee or drink!

Visit lolivo.com.au for further details or to book.



AUV Real Estate specialises in private sales and property management. They have achieved consistently strong results in the Malvern East area in 2022 and 2023. With both leasing and

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Menzies Malvern

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of cosmopolitan Melbourne. Live a short stroll from the delights of Malvern's cafes and boutiques while enjoying the peaceful retreat of your beautiful home. Menzies Malvern will enrich your wellbeing with a warm community of like-minded neighbours, resort-style luxuries and thoughtfully designed surrounds. It's your place to live well.

Further details at menziesmalvern.com.au.

Director's Notes

I came across the fascinating work of British theatre company, Frantic Assembly, who were exploring concepts of time passing, love, legacy, nostalgia and regret, inspired by T.S. Eliot's poem *The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock*. In a collaboration between Frantic Assembly and the playwright, Abi Morgan, the play *Lovesong* was born. Here, we are invited into the home of 'William'/ 'Billy' and 'Margaret'/ 'Maggie', as we share their life together over some 30 years. Inspired by the folklore of starlings, we experience their joy and tribulations, but moreover their enduring love. This is enhanced by the magic of us seeing them as both the younger and older couple. I hope you enjoy this poignant but uplifting work performed by my stellar cast and supported by Malvern Theatre Company alongside an outstanding creative and technical team.

Production Team

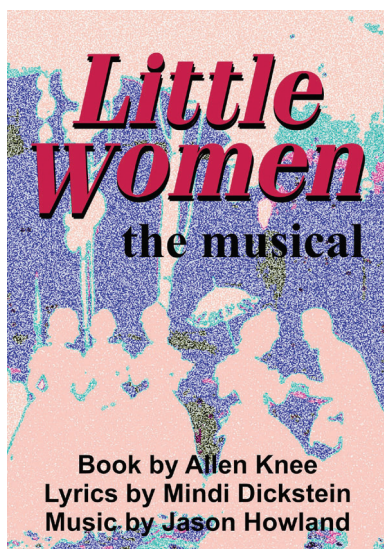
Director	George Werther
Stage Manager	Barry James
Set Designer	Mary Werther
Lighting Designer.....	Linda Corrin
Sound, Original Music and Video Designer.....	Blake Stringer
Lighting, Sound and Effects Operator.....	Linda Corrin
Costume Designers.....	Dina Mac Namara, Mary Werther
Props Designer	Nicholas Opolski
Choreography and Intimacy Coordinator	Natasha Bowers
Technical Director	Michael Birkett
Rehearsal Prompt.....	Barry James
Set Construction.....	David Allen, Noel Ellis, John James, ...Graeme Munro, Max Murray
Production Coordinator	Nicholas Opolski
Program Designer	Janine Evans
Program Coordinator.....	Monica Greenwood
Photography	Lorraine Bell
FOH Manager.....	Judy Clues
Ticketbox Manager.....	David Gordon
Ticket Secretary.....	Kerry Carr

Calling All Volunteers

Would you like to volunteer at Malvern Theatre? There are many opportunities to be involved. Please visit our website and click on the 'Volunteer' tab to express your interest.



Next at Malvern Theatre Company



Little Women

Louisa May Alcott's beloved story of the adventures of the four March sisters is brought to vivid musical life in *Little Women*. The Civil War is in full swing, and the March sisters - Meg, the oldest, a romantic; the spirited and tomboyish Jo; sweet and loving Beth; and irascible, playful Amy - live in Concord, Massachusetts with their Marmee while their father is on the battlefield.

Filled with adventure (both lived and imagined), heartbreak, and a deep sense of hope, their struggle to find their own voices mirrors the growing pains of a young America.

Directed by Alan Burrows

23 August – 7 September 2024

To book tickets, visit our website at malvernthatre.com.au/book-tickets or phone 1300 131 552.

Acknowledgements

Malvern Theatre Company acknowledges that we are performing on the traditional land of the Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri People and offer our respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

Malvern Theatre Company is very grateful for the support provided by the City of Stonnington.

Special thanks to Nick Goldwasser for transport assistance.

As an organisation, we take pride in supporting the local volunteer network in the community and the charitable organisations that underpin this important work. As such, we have donated all benefits of the Charity Night performance to the following organisations:

- Lions Club Ashwood-Mt Waverley
- Lions Club Carnegie.

If you are a member of a Volunteer group or a Charitable organisation and would like to raise funds by arranging a group to attend our Charity Night Preview Performance, please contact us at malvernthatrecompany@gmail.com.