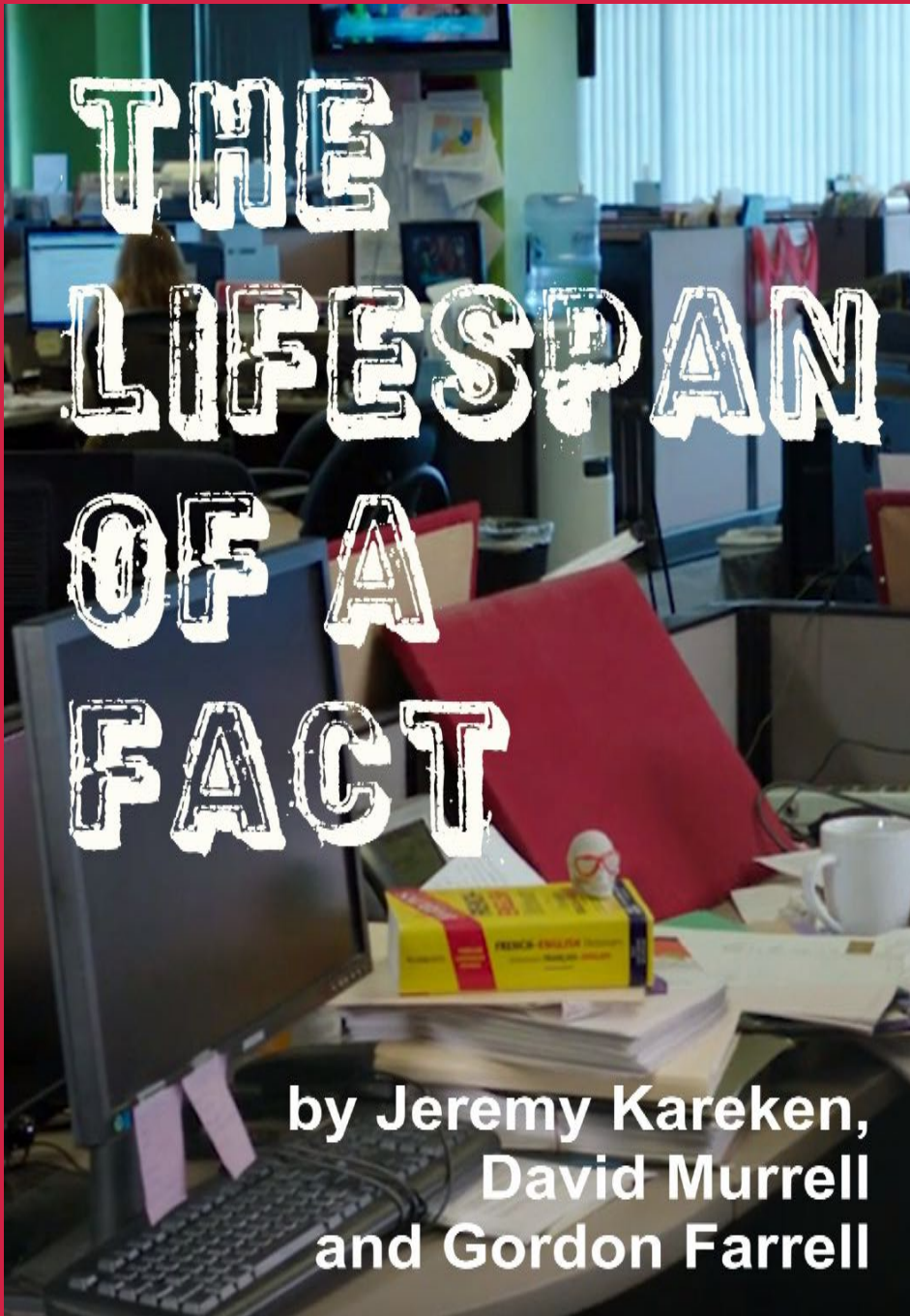


malverntheatre
company

is proud to present its 371st major production



16 February – 2 March 2024

Directed by Deborah Fabbro

By arrangement with **Dramatists Play Service, Inc**

The Cast

John D'Agata..... Tim Murphy
Emily Penrose..... Julie Arnold
Jim Fingal..... Broderick McDonald

Synopsis

Just how negotiable is a fact? Jim Fingal is a fresh-out-of-Harvard fact-checker for a prominent, but sinking New York magazine. John D'Agata is a promising writer with a transcendent story on the suicide of a teenage boy – an essay that could save the magazine from collapse.

When the demanding editor-in-chief assigns the pedantic Jim to fact-check the story, the lines between journalistic integrity and artistic license begin to blur and the three of them end up in an intense and funny high-stakes showdown. Based on the true story of John D'Agata's essay 'What Happened There?', this fast-paced comedy of deliberate errors asks an age-old question: Why let the truth get in the way of a good story?

Setting

The events take place in Emily's office in New York and John's home in Las Vegas.

The play will run for approximately 100 minutes, without an interval.

CONTENT WARNING

This play contains references to suicide which some audience members may find distressing. There is infrequent coarse language.

About the Playwrights

Jeremy Kareken & David Murrell and Gordon Farrell

Long-time collaborators Jeremy Kareken and David Murrell began writing the script in 2012, shortly after the book of the same title by John D'Agata and Jim Fingal was published. They were joined by Gordon Farrell in 2015. In 2019, the Outer Critics Circle awarded *The Lifespan of a Fact* the John Gassner Playwriting Award.

Jeremy Kareken lives in Baltimore and New York and teaches at the Acting Studio. He has written a number of short plays and received awards for *Farblondjet* and *The Sweet Sweet Motherhood*. His political satire *The Red Wool* was shortlisted by PlayPenn. He has also been a speech writer and policy analyst for two presidential campaigns.

David Murrell was born and raised in New York City and currently lives in Queens. He graduated from the University of Chicago and has written many television and film treatments and spec scripts. His play *Ductwork* was produced by Access Theatre (NYC) and Cleveland Public Theatre.

Gordon Farrell's first screenplay, *Girls Who Smoke* (2011) received official selection at over a dozen film festivals and won the Audience Choice Award at the Post Alley Film Festival, Seattle. He wrote the series of monologue plays *In the Red Room/ Every Woman Dances for Someone* and *Girls Who Walked on Glass*. His book *The Power of the Playwright's Vision* was published in 2001.



Deborah Fabbro – Director

Deborah is honoured to be working on this wonderfully witty and thematically topical play with such a talented and committed group of people.

Recent directing credits include *Agnes of God* (Williamstown Little Theatre), *Visitors* (Mordialloc Theatre Company) and *The Architect* (Brighton Theatre Company). Previously for Malvern she directed *Counting Sparrows*, *Halpern and Johnson*, *Man Alive* and *Scotland Road*. Some other credits include *Mr Bailey's Minder*, *The Return*, *The Female of the Species*, *Disposing of the*

Body, *The Shoe-Horn Sonata*, *All Things Considered*, *Hotel Sorrento*, *Face to Face*, *Table Manners* and *The Cemetery Club*.

Her production of the play *Second Sight*, by local playwright Alwyn Lewis, received numerous awards for her and her cast at several of the Victorian One Act Play Festivals. It then toured to Tasmania, at the invitation of the playwright, to present a short season in Hobart. She has also been honoured to receive awards from The Victorian Drama League, Encore Theatre and Brighton Theatre Company.



Tim Murphy – John D'Agata

This is Tim's second production with Malvern Theatre Company, having played 'Macaulay Connor' in *High Society* back in 2017.

Other stage credits include *Moon Over Buffalo* and *Blithe Spirit* (both with Heidelberg Theatre Company), *Leaving* (Theatre 451), *The Architect*, and *Fracked or Please Don't Use the F-Word* (all with Brighton Theatre Company), *Moonlight and Magnolias* and *The Deep Blue Sea* (with Lilydale Athenaeum Theatre) and the world premiere of the new Australian play *Penance* at La Mama Theatre.

His musical credits include *Cabaret*, *Chicago*, *A Man of No Importance*, *Singin' in the Rain* and most recently playing 'Jim Haller' in Babirra Music Theatre's 2023 production of *All Shook Up* for which he received a Music Theatre Guild nomination.

Other awards include Best Actor for *Bloody Murder* at Brighton Theatre Company, Best Supporting Actor for *A Doll's House* with Encore Theatre, Best Supporting Actor for *High Society* at Malvern Theatre Company and the Cordell Award for Best Performance in a leading role in *A Man of No Importance* with Williamstown Little Theatre.

Tim's voice over work is featured in a variety of short films and documentaries including audiobook podcasts of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and the soon to be released *Persuasion*.



Julie Arnold – Emily Penrose

Prior to her return to theatre in 2012, Julie had spent years as a comedic actress and singer working for a few Melbourne theatre restaurants such as Tikki & John's Crazyhouse and Witches in Britches. She also worked in theatre-in-education shows and in children's holiday pantomimes for Tivoli Theatre and Wonderland Theatre companies, playing all sorts of delightfully comedic characters. In 2022, her love of comedy took her to the Melbourne International Comedy festival in a sold-out season of a new play, *Empathy Training* at La Mama Theatre.

Whilst comedy is in her blood, her return to 'straight' theatre has given her the chance to play some great roles, some of which have won her the odd acting award, such as 'Martha' in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* and 'Joan Crawford' in *Bette & Joan*.

Julie's last performance at Malvern Theatre Company was in 2017 as the sassy and sharp-witted theatrical agent 'Ida Webb' in *Twentieth Century*. Julie is delighted to be back on the Malvern stage playing another strong, hard-nosed female character.



Broderick McDonald – *Jim Fingal*

The Lifespan of a Fact marks Broderick's debut performance at Malvern Theatre Company.

Prior to this production, Broderick has performed in various dramatic and comedic roles, including 'Nick'/'Zac' in *Cosi* (Swinburne Senior Secondary College), 'Frederick'/'Philip' in *Noises Off* (Swinburne Senior Secondary College), 'Nathan Leopold Jr' in *Never The Sinner* (The 1812 Theatre), 'Damis' in *Tartuffe* (Heidelberg Theatre Company), 'Berdine' in *Psycho Beach Party* (Essendon Theatre Company) and 'Gerald' in *Just The Ticket* (Mooroolbark Theatre Company).

His performance as 'Nathan Leopold Jr' in *Never The Sinner* landed him a Lyrebird Award nomination and his portrayal of 'Berdine' in *Psycho Beach Party* was met with a Victorian Drama League Award nomination.

Broderick has also performed a *Children of the Black Skirt* monologue as 'Harrold Horrocks' for the VCE Season of Excellence, participating in Top Class Theatre Studies 2017 and Top Acts 2017. He wishes you a wonderful evening ahead.

Thanks to our Sponsors



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 Road 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 sales services being offered, they can meet all your needs, no matter the enquiry. Further details at auvrealstate.com.au.

Menzies Malvern

For over 20 years Menzies Malvern, a contemporary retirement village, has provided an exceptional lifestyle in the heart 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 first read this play in 2019 and was struck, in these times of 'disinformation' and 'fake news', not only by the resonance of the story but also the delightfully literate dialogue that makes this such an entertaining piece.

The play is based, with a few tweaks, on the book of the same name co-written by John D'Agata and Jim Fingal published in 2012 which traces the real-life fact checking journey of the essay, "What Happens There", written by John D'Agata in 2005. The exploration of the importance of balancing good narrative flow, while still maintaining the truth when writing a creative article, oops essay, results in a comedic yet gripping battle over facts versus truth.

The Lifespan of a Fact is an entertaining and thought-provoking play and I have been very fortunate to have worked with the three performers you will see in this performance. I thank them all very much for their commitment to this production, the insight they have brought to their respective characters and exploration of the layers in the play.

No production can come together without wonderful Creatives, Production Team and Staging Crew. I thank them all for their dedication, input and assistance on the production.

We hope that you will go away after the performance talking about it, debating it, discussing it. That is what makes a great theatrical experience.

Production Team

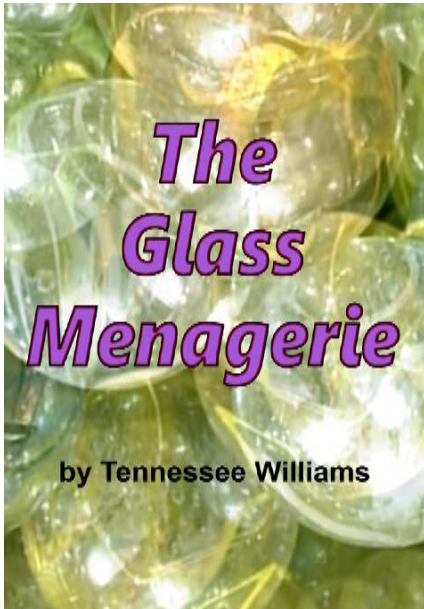
Director	Deborah Fabbro
Stage Manager	Barry James
Set Designer	Ewen Crockett
Lighting Designer.....	Michael Birkett
Sound Designer.....	Nelson Clemente
Visual Designer.....	Nelson Clemente
Lighting, Sound and Visual Operator.....	Amber Hemmes
Costume Designer	Barbara Murray, Sue Halls
Props Designer	Annie Grant
Technical Director	Michael Birkett
Rehearsal Prompt.....	Annie Grant
Set Construction.....	David Allen, Noel Ellis, Peter Erlanger, John James, Max Murray
Production Coordinator.....	Annie Grant
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



The Glass Menagerie

Acknowledged as one of the great classic plays of our time, this work catapulted Tennessee Williams to international success. Set in the harsh world of tenement apartment living in St Louis, Missouri during the Great Depression, the story is steeped in the hopes and pain of the Wingfield family.

Matriarch Amanda Wingfield struggles with the reality of her life, joyfully re-imagining her youth as a Southern belle, while nurturing her emotionally fragile and painfully shy daughter, Laura. Her son, Tom, yearns to escape the confines of his home but remains trapped by his devotion to his sister. Williams' semi-autobiographical play examines the dreams and disappointments that ebb and flow in this bittersweet, sensitive portrayal of a family at odds with itself and reality.

Directed by Barry O'Neill

26 April – 11 May 2024

To book tickets, visit our website at malverntheatre.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 both past, present and emerging.

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

We would like to extend a special thank you to Tracey Webb and Justin Crockett, as well as Starbucks Galleria, for the loan and use of personal properties.

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:

- Ashburton Baptist Church;
- RSPCA;
- The Compassionate Friends Victoria.

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 malverntheatrecompany@gmail.com.