

malverntheatre  
company

*is proud to present its 379<sup>th</sup> major production*



# THE HUMANS

by **Stephen Karam**

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**22 August – 6 September 2025**

Directed by Nicky Neville-Jones

# The Humans

## By Stephen Karam

The Original Broadway Production of *The Humans* was produced by Scott Rudin, Barry Diller, Roundabout Theatre Company, Fox Theatricals, James L. Nederlander, Terry Allen Kramer, Roy Furman, Daryl Roth, Jon B. Platt, Eli Bush, Scott M. Delman, Sonia Friedman, Amanda Lipitz, Peter May, Stephanie P. McClelland, Lauren Stein, and The Shubert Organization; Joey Parnes, Sue Wagner, and John Johnson, executive producers.

Commissioned and Originally Produced by Roundabout Theatre Company, New York, NY (Todd Haimes, Artistic Director; Harold Wolpert, Managing Director; Julia C. Levy, Executive Director; Sydney Beers, General Manager).

*The Humans* had its world premiere in November 2014 at American Theatre Company, Chicago, Illinois (PJ Paparelli, Artistic Director).

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## The Cast

Brigid Blake .....	Bridgette Kucher
Deirdre Blake .....	Alayne Wright
Erik Blake .....	Frank Schrever
Aimee Blake.....	Jessica Symonds
Richard Saad .....	Samuel Fung
Fiona 'Momo' Blake .....	Prani West

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## About the Play

*The Humans* is a poignant, award-winning drama (Tony Awards, Best Play) that, with humour and compassion explores the tensions and bonds in family life today. In Brigid's run-down New York apartment, with bad wi-fi and strange noises upstairs, the Blake family comes together to celebrate Thanksgiving, bringing with them their anxieties, fears, and hidden struggles. But as they cook and eat, bicker and joke, darkness begins to fall and long buried tensions and secrets start to emerge. Plus, the strange noises upstairs may not be as innocent as they thought!

*The Humans* is warm, funny, uplifting and unsettling. Malvern Theatre Company is proud to present the Victorian premiere of this modern masterpiece, dubbed "kind, rich and beautiful" (Chicago Tribune).

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## Setting

A dingy apartment in New York City's Chinatown, circa 2014.

The performance runs for approximately 95 minutes. There will be no interval.

Complimentary tea, coffee and biscuits will be available after the show.

Wine will also be available for purchase.

### CONTENT WARNING

This play contains some coarse language and the depiction of a person living with dementia.

## About the Playwright



### Stephen Karam

Stephen Karam is an acclaimed American playwright known for his poignant explorations of family dynamics, identity, and societal issues. He began writing plays as a teenager, channeling his upbringing and experiences into his work. His notable plays include *Sons of the Prophet*, which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 2012, and *The Humans* which won the 2016 Tony Award for Best Play. Karam is also a dedicated educator, teaching at various institutions. His contributions to theatre, particularly regarding the experiences of the LGBTQI+ community, have established him as a significant voice in contemporary American drama.

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## Production Team

Director .....	Nicky Neville-Jones
Stage Manager .....	Linda Corrin
Set Designer .....	Andrew McMillan
Lighting Designer.....	Michael Rowe
Sound Designer.....	Blake Stringer
Costume Designer .....	Grace Denney
Props Designers.....	Linda Corrin, Nicky Neville-Jones, Kayla King
Lighting and Sound Operators .....	Kate Deavin, Ryan Fahlbusch
Prompt, Rehearsal Assistant.....	Kayla King
Technical Director .....	Michael Birkett
Set Construction.....	David Allen, Harry Bell, Noel Ellis, Andrew McMillan, Graeme Munro, Max Murray, Nicholas Opolski
Production Coordinator.....	Nicholas Opolski
Program Designer .....	Janine Evans
Program Coordinator.....	Monica Greenwood
Photography .....	Lorraine Bell
Publicity.....	Blake Stringer
FOH Manager.....	Judy Clues
Ticketbox Manager.....	David Gordon
Ticket Secretary.....	Kerry Carr

### Featured Creative Team Member

#### Andrew McMillan – Set Designer



Andrew's set designs for Malvern Theatre Company include for *The Lady in the Van* (Victorian Drama League Gold Set Design Award), *Twentieth Century*, *Dead Man's Cell Phone* and *Life Goes On*. Other design work includes *Bloody Murder*, *Red*, *Echoes*, *Three Days of Rain*, *Morning Sacrifice* and *Dinkum Assorted*. He has directed *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (Malvern Theatre Company), *Act a Lady* (La Mama), *Camberwell House*, *Losing Your Marbles*, *Sure Thing*, *Popscars*, *The Gun in History*, *Away* and *Measure for Measure*.



**Bridgette Kucher – Brigid Blake**

Originally from Canberra, where she studied music at ANU, Bridgette trained at the Howard Fine Acting Studio. She has since been working with independent theatre companies such as Baggage Productions, Scary Goats Theatre and Plain English Theatre in productions such as *Madwomen Monologues*, *The Year of Our Lord*, *A Twist of Fate* and *To the Moon and Back* as part of the Melbourne Fringe Festival. She is delighted to be making her Malvern Theatre Company debut in *The Humans*.



**Alayne Wright – Deirdre Blake**

This is Alayne's second main season production and fourth project with Malvern Theatre Company. She has previously performed here in *The Vortex* in 2014, as well as the rehearsed play readings *Sense and Sensibility* and *Lady Windermere's Fan* in 2019. Select credits elsewhere include: *Time Stands Still*, *Dinner with Friends*, *Torch Song* (all with Brighton Theatre Company), *84 Charing Cross Road* (1812 Theatre), *Hamlet* (AVID Theatre), *God of Carnage*, *Easy Virtue* (Peridot Theatre Company) and *Stepping Out* (Sherbrooke Theatre).



**Frank Schrever – Erik Blake**

Frank has performed in plays since secondary school, then continued performing at University of Melbourne and in a Midlands (UK) group during the mid 70s. He has performed with a number of theatre groups around Melbourne including several productions with Malvern Theatre Company - *The Coward Double*, *Strangers on a Train*, *The Whales of August*, the award winning *The Witness for the Prosecution*, and last year, *True Minds*. Frank is married with two children and five grandchildren.



**Jessica Symonds – Aimee Blake**

Jessica is happy to be returning to Malvern Theatre Company for the first time since the 2017 production of Noël Coward's *Brief Encounter*. In the meantime, she has performed in several Bottled Snail productions including *Into the Woods* (2018), *The Laramie Project* (2019) and *Consent* (2024), as well as in Brighton Theatre Company's productions of *The Revlon Girl* (2023) and *Here I Belong* (2023), the former earning her a Victorian Drama League Award nomination.



**Samuel Fung – Richard Saad**

Samuel has previously performed under the direction of Nicky Neville-Jones in *The Laramie Project*. He has performed in other productions, including recently *Maple and Vine*. He has also performed in musicals including *Songs for a New World*, *Miss Saigon*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Samuel is a newcomer to Malvern Theatre Company and has thoroughly enjoyed stepping into Richard's shoes. He is humbled to be part of this production of *The Humans*.



**Prani West – Fiona 'Momo' Blake**

Prani is delighted to be making her first appearance with Malvern Theatre Company. She is no stranger to the stage, having performed in numerous dramatic and musical productions in recent years, including *The Laramie Project* (at Chapel off Chapel), *The Witness for the Prosecution* (in the Melbourne Magistrates' Court) and numerous Shakespeare performances at venues around Victoria. She is also a keen singer, performing regularly with fellow lawyers in the choir *Habeas Chorus*.

## Director

### Nicky Neville-Jones



Nicky has been lucky to have performed in many Malvern Theatre Company productions in the past, most recently in *Absurd Person Singular*. Nicky's directing credits include an ongoing Shakespeare project performed in the Supreme Court Library *Shakespeare in the Supreme* and *The Witness for the Prosecution* performed in the Old Magistrates Court as part of Law Week. She has also directed *Consent* and Moises Kaufman's *The Laramie Project*. Nicky is currently the President of Bottled Snail Productions and was formerly its Artistic Director.

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## Director's Notes

I am grateful to Malvern Theatre Company for agreeing to produce the Melbourne premiere of this amazing Tony award-winning play. The beauty of Karam's writing is that it delves deep into human frailty, the impact of family secrets and the problems that having money (or not) can cause for a typical American working-class family - indeed all "humans" throughout the world. The audience's experience of the play is enhanced by the intricate set that has been built from Karam's vision as described in the script and the talented cast and crew who have worked so hard to bring this play to life.

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Community Bank Malvern East is a local bank with 23 years history dedicated to servicing the community. Further details at [bendigobank.com.au/branch/vic/community-bank-malvern-east](http://bendigobank.com.au/branch/vic/community-bank-malvern-east).

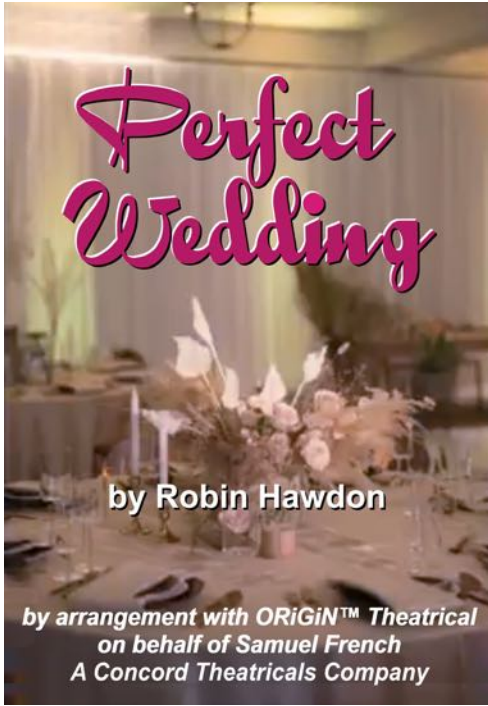
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## The Victorian Drama League

Share your opinions about community theatre, in our efforts to gather data to support advocacy with governments at all levels, for our very important voluntary work.



## Next at Malvern Theatre Company



### Perfect Wedding

by Robin Hawdon

The big day has finally arrived! In a few short hours, Bill and Rachel will be happily married. But when Bill wakes up in the bridal suite with a hangover, no memory of the night before, and a strange woman in bed beside him, he will have to think fast to save himself from disaster. When the best man arrives early, along with the chambermaid, and the mother-in-law, the only thing that could possibly make it worse would be for Rachel herself to ... well, your wedding day is a day you'll always remember!

With wild misunderstandings, hilarious mishaps, and loads of laughs, this frantic farce has delighted audiences in over 30 countries. You're invited to this 'Perfect' Wedding!

**Directed by Pip Le Blond**

24 October – 8 November 2025

To book tickets, visit our website at [malverntheatre.com.au/book-tickets](http://malverntheatre.com.au/book-tickets) or phone 1300 131 552.

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## 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.

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
- Caritas St John's Anglican Church, Malvern East
- Freemasons, Mt Scopus and Collegians Lodge No. 689
- 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](mailto:malverntheatrecompany@gmail.com).

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## 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.