malvern theatre company

is proud to present its 382nd major production

THE BREADBOX



NEXT GEN

13 – 15 March 2026

Directed by Rory McGrath

About the Play

A young couple is drawn into the past through exploring the wares at an elderly widow's garage sale. Unbeknown to them, each seemingly unassuming item holds echoes of the intergenerational struggles of women throughout pivotal historical periods. The well-loved, handmade breadbox has witnessed love, tragedy, courage, humour and change, and just like the loaves it once contained, each story has been kneaded and baked to perfection.

About the Playwrights

The script for *The Breadbox* was created as a collaborative project of the Malvern Theatre Company's NEXT GEN 2025 Emerging Writers team consisting of Wesley Chamberlain, Imogen Linton, Rory McGrath, Zoe O'Neill, Amy Penning. Given a story frame by the Production Coordinator Danny Gibbins, this talented group of young people designed the characters as a team and as individuals and in pairs, focused on researching and writing the scenes for the various time periods in which the story is set. The team assisted each other to review, edit and improve their scenes, as well as working on the garage sale scenes as a collective.



Director

Rory McGrath

Rory has been a prolific member of Melbourne's community theatre scene since first performing in Melbourne in 2023. Having completed a film degree, he has numerous directing credits for film, but this marks his directorial debut for theatre.

In the past year, he has worked with Malvern Theatre Company, Mordialloc Theatre Company, and Brighton Theatre Company, having performed in *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*, Agatha Christie's *The Rats*, and *Temporal Snaps*, where he was also the lead writer. He was Assistant Director for *Holmes and Watson*, which received five VDL nominations and won the Silver Award for Best Lighting Design.

Director's Notes

Do we truly move on from the past, or do scars only fade? At its core, *The Breadbox* is about the lessons passed down generation after generation, but what drew me to the play was how pivotal political moments in history were portrayed through an intimate, family portrait - how the world impacts the home, how our parents impact our lives, the political and personal cycles we break, all for better or worse.

Setting

Modern day: Garage sale.

Past scenes: 1900's shoe factory, 1940's living room, 1950's living room, 1960's school gymnasium, 1970's living room, 1990's bedroom.

The performance runs for approximately 90 minutes, with no interval.

Complimentary tea, coffee and biscuits will be available after the performance. Wine will also be available for purchase.

TRIGGER WARNING: This performance contains depictions of PTSD, domestic violence, misogyny and references to homophobia and death.

The Cast

Elizabeth (Older) ..... Carol Shelbourn

Elizabeth (Younger) ..... Imogen Linton

Sue ..... Silvana Vaxelaire

Reyansh ..... Yagnesh Naidu

Eleni ..... Elise Zolis

Jeff (Older) ..... Anthony Staunton

Jeff (Younger) ..... Lochlan Eker

Merilyn ..... Rebecca Rose

Miles ..... Mason Frost

Grace ..... Justine Garnes

Clara ..... Zoe O'Neill

The Cast



Carol Shelbourn

Elizabeth (Older)

Carol is delighted to be back at Malvern Theatre Company. You may have seen her as the very unpleasant 'Miss Siss' in *A Happy and Holy Occasion* last year. Fortunately the character of 'Elizabeth' is much easier to love and Carol has very much enjoyed being part of the production of this delightful play, written, produced and directed by Malvern Theatre Company's NEXT GEN. Young people are the life blood of community theatre and it has been a privilege to be able to work with, and hopefully pass on a few tips to these lovely young things!



Imogen Linton

Elizabeth (Younger)

Imogen is currently training at the Victorian College of the Arts, where she's completing a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Theatre). While she mainly focuses on screen acting, she's enjoyed performing on stage too, including with the Western Australian Youth Theatre Ensemble. A favourite role was playing 'Sally' in *Salem Sisters*, directed by Alex Steffensen. She also performed with the Ensemble in Perth Festival, and has been part of a few university productions, including a show at Melbourne Fringe. She's thrilled to play 'Elizabeth (Younger)' in *The Breadbox*.



Silvana Vaxelaire

Sue

An actor, drama teacher and presenter, Silvana has starred in film, TV and theatre over the past 25 years. On stage, she's performed at Arts Centre Melbourne, Cracked Actors Theatre, La Mama, Carlton Courthouse, The Sydney Exhibition Centre, and Phoenix Theatre. She also fronted a nationwide advertising campaign for Optus. Recently, she's appeared in the film *Pasa Faho.* Born in Uruguay, Silvana is a native Spanish speaker and proudly celebrates her South American heritage with her love of dancing, singing and spirituality. She has studied at Deakin University and under Hayes Gordon at Sydney's Ensemble Theatre. Silvana has worked extensively in children's theatre and taught acting for numerous drama schools.



Yagnesh Naidu

Reyansh

Yagnesh is an emerging actor with experience across short film and screen performance. He is drawn to character-driven storytelling and enjoys exploring emotional nuance and authenticity in performance. This production marks an exciting step in his theatrical journey and his first appearance with Malvern Theatre Company. Yagnesh is keen to continue developing his craft on stage and looks forward to further opportunities in theatre and live performance.



Elise Zolis

Eleni

Elise is delighted to be playing the fun and lively 'Eleni' in her first production with Malvern Theatre Company. She has previously appeared in community theatre, including 'Molly' in *Love Song* with Brighton Theatre Company and 'Lucy' in *Cosi* with Beaumaris Theatre Company. Throughout school, Elise was heavily involved in musical theatre training and productions, with favourite roles including 'Babe' in *The Pajama Game* and 'Gertrude McFuzz' in *Seussical*.



Anthony Staunton

Jeff (Older)

Anthony has been involved in community theatre for over 30 years and has appeared in more than 40 productions across Melbourne's south-east. He has performed with companies including Southern Peninsula Players, Frankston Theatre Group, Mordialloc Theatre Company and Dionysus Theatre, in a wide range of comedies and dramas. While comedy remains his great love, Anthony especially enjoys roles that explore relationships and everyday humanity. He is delighted to be part of this thoughtful, ensemble-driven production and to work with such a talented cast and creative team on this beautiful new Australian work. Anthony hopes audiences enjoy stepping into the rich, interwoven stories of *The Breadbox* as much as he has enjoyed bringing them to life.



Lochlan Eker

Jeff (Younger)

Lochlan Eker is thrilled to be making his Malvern Theatre Company debut as 'Jeffrey (Younger)'. Although Lochlan has not been involved in a Malvern Theatre Company production in the past, this has been such an honour and privilege to be involved alongside such an amazing cast in this amazing show *The Breadbox*. Lochlan has recently performed as 'Tony Lumpkin' in *She Stoops to Conquer* at Mornington Peninsula Theatre Company.



Rebecca Rose

Merliyn

Rebecca is a stage and screen actor. Her most recent stage role was 'Hermione' in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* at Strathmore Theatrical Arts Group. Other stage roles have included 'Officer Thalia' in *Under the Table* (Warrandyte Theatre Company), 'Young Louise' in *It's Your Fault* (The 1812 Theatre), and 'Teagan' in *Consideration* (Warrandyte Theatre Company). She received the Best Actress Award at the Salt-House Creative International Film Festival (2025) for her role in *Need*; one of the two short films she wrote and acted in.



Mason Frost
Miles

Mason is honoured to have performed in a variety of shows across many companies over the years. He is a seasoned actor and has performed with numerous community theatres including, Beaumaris Theatre Company, Eltham Little Theatre, Playhouse Players and The 1812 Theatre. He was last seen at Malvern Theatre Company in *Perfect Wedding* in 2025 where he played *Tom*. He is so happy to be back here, and hopes you all enjoy this lovely show!



Justine Garnes
Grace

Justine is delighted to be returning to Malvern Theatre Company, having previously appeared in *The Scottish Play*. A lifelong lover of community theatre, she first stepped on stage in *Hello, Dolly!* alongside her grandfather at 8 years old. Since then, her favourite roles include the Baker's Wife in *Into the Woods*, Sorel in *Hay Fever*, and Audrey in *Little Shop of Horrors*. She is absolutely thrilled to be bringing 'Grace' to life in *The Breadbox* and can't wait to share this production with you.



Zoe O'Neill
Clara

Zoe was most recently cast in the production of *Lord Arthur Savile's Crimes* at Mordialloc Theatre Company in the role of 'Nelly'. Zoe has also been involved in the Emerging Playwrights program at Malvern Theatre Company to help develop *The Breadbox* script under mentorship. Zoe has been attending classes at Beaumaris Theatre Company for years and written monologues, performed improvisation performances and abridged interpretations of plays such as *Ladies in Black* and *Steel Magnolias*.

Production Team



Danny Gibbins
Production Coordinator & Assistant Director

Danny is an experienced writer, director, actor, teacher and producer. Her work has been featured in numerous festivals and community theatres for several decades. She has been involved in the coordination of the Malvern Theatre Company's NEXT GEN program since its inception, and has thoroughly enjoyed mentoring talented young people to reach their theatre goals.



Sienna Russell
Stage Manager & Props Designer

Sienna Russell is an emerging actor and creative from Melbourne. Sienna first appeared at Malvern Theatre Company playing 'Amy' in their performance *Temporal Snaps* (2025) at Chapel off Chapel. This is Sienna's Stage Manager debut and she is beyond excited to finally put into practice all she has learnt over the years in a new way.



Bethany Oliver
Assistant Stage Manager

This is Bethany's first time working with the Malvern Theatre Company. Her involvement in the University of Melbourne student theatre community includes roles in cast, stage management, equity, and producing, with companies such as the University of Melbourne Musical Theatre Association and the Melbourne University Shakespeare Company. She is the current treasurer of Cipta Theatre Company.

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L'Olivo is a small, family-owned restaurant located at 171 Waverley Rd in Malvern East. Visit lolivo.com.au for further details or to book. Show your ticket for a 10% discount on your total bill.

Fletchers is a proud, fourth-generation family-based real estate agency, with a 100+ year history. Visit fletchers.net.au.

Menzies Malvern is a contemporary retirement village, providing an exceptional lifestyle in the heart of cosmopolitan Melbourne. Further details at menziesmalvern.com.au.

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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.

Production Team

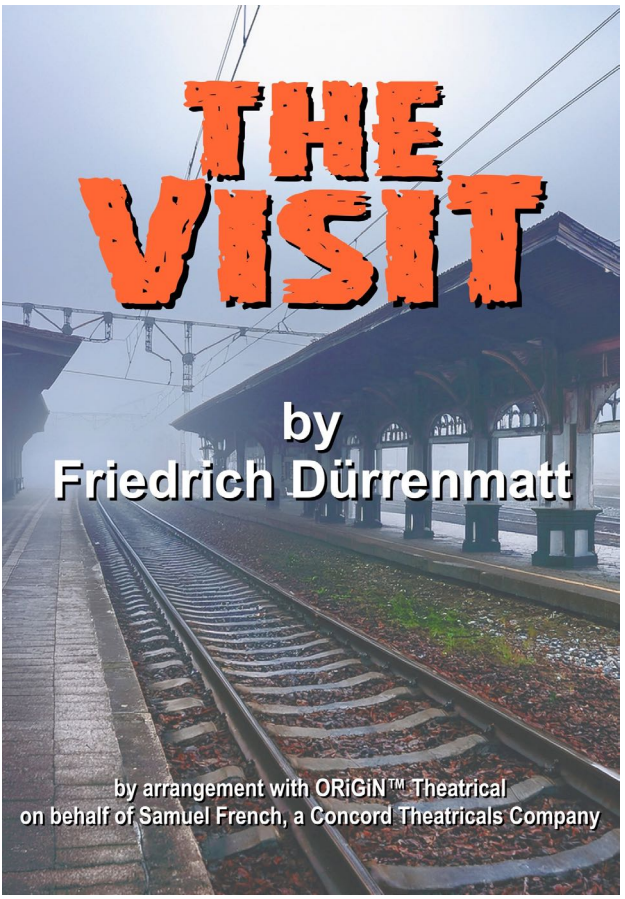
Director	Rory McGrath
Assistant Director	Danny Gibbins
Stage Manager	Sienna Russell
Backstage Assistant	Bethany Oliver
Set Designer	Rory McGrath
Lighting Designer	Michael Birkett
Sound Designer	Rory McGrath
Costume Designer	The Cast
Props Designer	Sienna Russell
Lighting and Sound Operator	Wesley Chamberlain, Phoebe Wong
Rehearsal Prompt	Sienna Russell
Technical Director	Michael Birkett
Set Construction	David Allen, Peter Erlanger
Production Coordinator	Danny Gibbins
Production Liaison	Andrew Ferguson
Programme Designer	Janine Evans
Programme Coordinator	Jade Colletti
Photography	Rory McGrath
Publicity	Blake Stringer
FOH Manager	Judy Clues
Ticketbox Manager	David Gordon
Ticket Secretary	Kerry Carr

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Proud member of THE VICTORIAN DRAMA LEAGUE 2026

Next at Malvern Theatre Company



THE VISIT

by Friedrich Dürrenmatt
Directed by Andrew Ferguson

17 April – 2 May 2026

The Visit' is a darkly satirical and tragic comedy that explores justice, vengeance and moral decay. When billionaire Claire Zachanassian returns to her impoverished hometown of Güllen, she offers the citizens a fortune – on one chilling condition: they must kill the man who once betrayed her. Initially appalled, the townspeople slowly rationalise the murder.

Dürrenmatt masterfully exposes the fragility of ethics under financial desperation, weaving absurdity and irony into a haunting critique of collective guilt. As Claire's grotesque entourage and surreal demands unfold, the play explores the dark side of human nature, especially societal compromise. 'The Visit' is a masterpiece of 20th Century European theatre – we are proud to bring this seldom-performed work to the Malvern stage.

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

This production has been made possible through the very generous financial support provided by one of our long-term patrons, Val Johnstone. She is passionate about keeping the Performing Arts alive, especially through giving young people opportunities to be involved.

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