



The Box

by Nathan Maynard and Rob Braslin



DIRECTOR: NATHAN MAYNARD
STARRING: COREY SAYLOR-BRUNSKILL, NELSON CLAY, HARRISON COLLIS OATES AND CARRIE MCLEAN

THEATRE
ROYAL

PROGRAM



“We acknowledge, with deep respect, the traditional custodians of Lutruwita. We pay our respects to the Palawa, who have created art and performance across this Island for 60,000 years”.

ABOUT MUDLARK

Based in Launceston on the banks of Kanamaluka (Tamar) River, Mudlark is an artist-led theatre company committed to the production of authentic new Australian theatre that will inspire and challenge audiences and the next generation of regional theatre-makers.

Mudlark is a proud incubator of new Tasmanian theatre.

Our annual artistic program produces theatre of local resonance and universal significance. We welcome the responsibility of ensuring a diversity of stories and experiences on our stages, providing a platform for important, timely and provocative conversations, and seek to break down the boundaries that keep people off the stage and out of the audience.

Annually, we aim to present 2, mainstage productions and support the development

and delivery of a suite of other projects, providing employment and development opportunities to over 90 artists of all career stages. Our creative model ensures vital time and capacity to innovate new work; creating a space for ideas, writing and theatre-making that supports bold artistic vision and risk.

Mudlark is a proud In-House Organisation of Assembly 197, a nationally significant live arts centre; providing our company with a venue, shared resources and collegial support, and exciting possibilities for multi art form collaboration with our fellow resident companies such as the award-winning 2023 production of Big Heat.

In 2024 Mudlark welcomed company co-founder Jane Johnson back to the role of Artistic Director.

We consider it a privilege to support artists and the theatre ecology of Tasmania by producing significant new work for the stage.

FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Creating new work is the heartbeat of Mudlark Theatre. In 2025 Mudlark will reach the milestone of 20 years of proudly regional theatre-making in Lutruwita/Tasmania.

The Box has been 3 years in the making and is a truly collaborative theatre work. Over this time, we've had the privilege of working with the exceptional talent and vision of Nathan and Rob, alongside a remarkable creative team, to realise the premiere production.

Thank you to Nathan and Rob for the deep passion, artistry, and collaboration that has driven the creation of this work, and for sharing a vital Australian story we're not currently seeing on our stages. Thank you to the actors, designers, and production team for their fearless artistry and their rigorous and generous work practise.

The Box is achingly human, fierce, funny, heartbreaking and unapologetically real; a voice and a story that are inherently true and theatrical, timely and political.

Stories like this have been marginalised from Tasmania's mainstream theatre experience. *The Box* seeks to address this profound imbalance of voices and galvanise action. It is, quite simply, unmissable theatre.

An incredible performance begins with an idea and an artist. It takes a united effort of many to realise it. My sincere thanks to our board, funding partners, presenting partners and venues, community sponsors, donors, supporters, and our fellow artists and arts companies for making art that inspires and fuels us.

And, our thanks to *you*. By being here tonight you are part of this collaboration and play a crucial role in ensuring the future of new Tasmanian theatre on our stages.

Now more than ever, Mudlark is compelled to be bold in our theatre making and to share stories that are vital, brave, provocative and empathetic; to create theatre that challenges entrenched power structures and helps us see the world and live in it differently. Theatre that may just help show us a different way forward.

I'd like to acknowledge Cheyne Mitchell, former AD, for his tireless work in guiding Mudlark and paving the way for this important story to be told. I am proud to lead Mudlark into our third decade of theatre making and excited for the stories yet to be told and the company we can live into. We hope you will join us on the journey ahead and that you continue to support the creation of new Tasmanian theatre and performance, and the extraordinary artists who call this island home.

Jane Johnson

CO-WRITERS NOTES



Writing *The Box* with Nathan has been a real education for me. We started nearly two years ago, building the initial framework of the story in a small shed in Launceston with theatre maker, Maeve MacGregor.

A lot has changed within the story since then, but many detailed moments have remained from that first week. I've learned a great deal from this process and felt a weight lifted off my shoulders as I was sharing some thoughts and feelings about my life in this story. There was a lot of love in those writing sessions as we tackled some difficult subjects. I want to give a shout out to Nathan for setting the standard with care and encouragement. If you grew up in a neighbourhood like the fictional Bowandale, perhaps you knew people like those in this story or see a bit of yourself in them. With *The Box*, we aimed to shine a light on the hardships many people face while living in housing and how they often become an afterthought for the government.

I want to acknowledge my family and community in my home suburb of Clarendon Vale. To those who have shown love, kindness, and respect over the years, thank you.

I'm grateful that people will see our story, set in a place that is not often seen and amplifying voices that are rarely heard.

Rob Braslin

THE BOX

DURATION: 90 MINUTES
NO INTERVAL

Set in a fictional housing commission suburb of Bowendale, the story of *The Box* draws us into the home and family of a single mother Mandy and her two hardened "Boweys" sons.

This story is a relentlessly real, daringly comic and profoundly moving theatre experience, uncovering the painful truths and actions that define one family's existence inside a government experiment.

A complex and compelling family drama, *The Box* rages at the fragility of our lives, lives balanced on a knife edge, revealing the courage it takes for many to persist and survive, let alone "dream outside the box".

PLAYWRIGHTS

NATHAN MAYNARD
and ROB BRASLIN

DIRECTOR

NATHAN MAYNARD

MARKUS

COREY SAYLOR-BRUNSKILL

JHYE

NELSON CLAY

HERMES

HARRISON COLLIS OATES

MANDY

CARRIE MCLEAN

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR / PRODUCER

JANE JOHNSON

PRODUCTION MANAGER / ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

CLARE SPILLMAN

GENERAL MANAGER

COREY ACKERLY

STAGE MANAGER

SAM TOLL



SET DESIGNERS

LAURA WATTS *with*
DARREN WILLMOTT

LIGHTING DESIGNER

GRACE ROBERTS

SOUND DESIGNER

CHRIS JACKSON

COSTUME DESIGNER

NATHAN MAYNARD *with*
THE COMPANY

SET: CUBE CONCEPT

NATHAN MAYNARD

SET: CUBE CONSTRUCTION

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MAEVE MHAIRI MACGREGOR
KAMARRA BELL-WYKES
TOM HOLLOWAY

LYRICS

COREY SAYLOR-BRUNSKILL

INTIMACY CO-ORDINATOR

ALISON STANTON-COOK

SECONDMENT / PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

DELIA BREEN

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

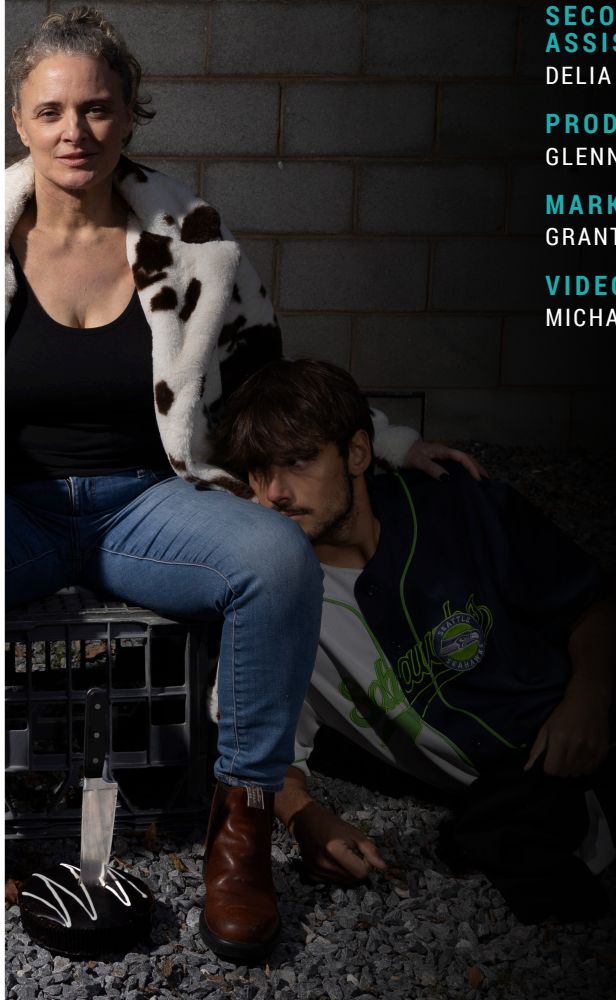
GLENN ASHWORTH

MARKETING IMAGE

GRANT WELLS

VIDEOGRAPHY

MICHAEL O'NEILL



by Nathan Maynard and Rob Braslin

The BOX



NATHAN MAYNARD

Nathan, a Trawlwoolway man from Larapuna country, Lutruwita/Tasmania, is a seasoned multidisciplinary artist with 25 years of experience. He has authored seven full-length plays, including *The Season*, *At What Cost*, *A Not So Traditional Story*, and *Hide The Dog* (co-written with Jamie Macaskill). Nathan's works have graced prestigious Australian stages such as the Sydney Opera House's *Drama Theatre*. Notably, he directed *Journey of The Free Words* at the 2019 Junction Festival, and helmed productions like *Crumbs* at Melbourne Art Play and *Back on Track* with Jute Theatre in 2022. He also assistant directed his play *At What Cost* at Belvoir Street Theatre the same year. Nathan's latest achievements include directing and co-writing *Moonbird* for SBS Digital Originals, and creating *Mathinna's Doll* for ABC's *Stuff The British Stole*.



ROB BRASLIN

A proud Wakka Wakka, Rob is a man with a passion for storytelling. Rob started performing stand up comedy back in 2013 and it opened many different doors and sometimes small side windows within the arts that a kid from Clarendon Vale normally wouldn't get through; from writing for stage and screen to developing walking tours and art installations, Rob's unique perspective and storytelling abilities will continue to prosper as he leans into projects that challenge, inspire and educate him.



COREY SAYLOR- BRUNSKILL

Corey is a Lutruwita/Tasmanian born Torres Strait Islander actor and is now based in Naarm/Melbourne. Corey spent the first 12 years of his acting journey in Tasmania, studying with Second Story Youth Theatre, Launceston College, and UTAS, but longed for the mainland. Since moving to Australia's Big Apple, Corey has performed in the main stage productions *Conversations with The Dead* and *Viral* (Ilbjerri Theatre Company) as well as *Whose Gonna' Love Em* at Malthouse Theatre (2023), and recently had his first directing debut with Ilbjerri Theatre Co.



NELSON CLAY

Nelson's spark for theatre started at College, performing in productions such as *'You Still Here?'* by Patricia Cornelius. In 2023, Nelson was in the IO Performance production of *'The Dark Room'* where he was nominated for a Tasmanian Theatre Award, for Youth Achievement in Community Theatre. He had the wonderful opportunity to work on the creative development for *'The Box'* in 2023 and is looking forward to returning to the character Jhye for the Tasmanian premier. Nelson's hobbies include football, playing guitar and drawing.



HARRISON COLLIS OATES

Harrison is thrilled to be returning to his home state to perform again. With a burning passion for theatre and having completed his Bachelor of Creative Industries (Acting) at Charles Sturt University, Harrison has performed in numerous productions of both classic and new work including *Kenny in The Removalists* (UTE) and the dual roles of Nick/Leon in *Speaking in Tongues* (Freeroam Theatre), with his most recent performances as Quick Lamb for *Cloudstreet* (Lane Cove Theatre) and Bobchinski in *The Government Inspector* (Fingerless Theatre). Harrison is excited to be working with Mudlark and be a part of such an exciting production.



CARRIE MCLEAN

A writer, actor, director and mother of four based in Nipaluna, Hobart. She is a founding member of Mudlark Theatre and the Radio Gothic collective, and has spent her artistic career creating new works. Since graduating from UTAS with a BPA (Theatre), Carrie's had numerous performing roles onstage and onscreen, with her debut in a feature role as Ann Solomon in *The First Fagin*. Most recently, she co-created *The Motherload* with never.the.less productions (2021-2023) and *A Mouthful of C Words* for Salamanca Arts Centre, led by Chris Mead (Best New Writing, TAS Theatre Awards 2023).



CLARE SPILLMAN

Clare is a seasoned Arts Manager and Producer with over two decades of experience in producing and production management. Since arriving in Tasmania, Clare has worked with organisations such as Ten Days on the Island, Big hART, Nevertheless Productions, MADE, as well as the biennial event Paper on Skin. Clare has also left an indelible mark on the cabaret scene, independently producing sell-out shows like *After Hours Cabaret* and *The Barn Door Cabaret*. Renowned for her meticulous attention to detail and strategic planning, Clare consistently delivers high-quality, transformative experiences to diverse audiences throughout Tasmania and across Australia.



SAM TOLL

A Nipaluna Stage Manager, who has worked in Brisbane, Sydney, throughout regional Australia and internationally. Most recently Sam was showing in the Middle East for Musician Faia Younan Eid al-Adha – Ithra Theatre and venue manager for the Saudi Film Festival. Other roles include SM: *An Evening Without Kate Bush* – Sarah – Louise Young, *The Riddle of Washpool Gully* – Terrapin & Dead Puppets Society. ASM: *L'HÔTEL* – Alfred & Sydney Opera House, *The Midnight Gang* – CDP, *Appleton Ladies Potato Race* – Ensemble Theatre. Festival work: Dark MOFO & Hobart Festival of Comedy – DARK LAB, FOV, Sydney Festival, Big Sound Festival.



DELIA GREEN

Delia is completing her second year of a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Theatre) at The Victorian College of the Arts. As a performer, she has danced for Stompin, ROOKE at MONA FOMA and TasDance, and acted in multiple shows for IO, Three River Theatre and Mudlark's One Day Project. Behind the scenes, she served on Stompin and Three River Theatre's boards for several years, toured with ROOKE across Lutruwita and Darwin, stage managed for IO Performance, site managed for Stompin at Junction Arts Festival, directed play readings for Three River Theatre, and assistant directed children's theatre for LYTE & Bakker Productions



LAURA WATTS

Laura Watts is an artist, designer and arts educator. She has over 20 years experience, creating artworks in her own practice, as well as producing work for others, including Production Design and Costume Design on Kutikina Productions film *"My Journey"*, hybrid set/costumes for Stompin's work *"Uncover This"* and the production of a mural for Launceston's Junction Arts Festival. Laura has also worked as an arts educator for 17 years, which has seen her curate exhibitions and installations of children's work, collaborate with other artists and guide our next generation of creatives.



DARREN WILLMOTT

Darren has worked extensively in theatre production as stage manager and operator, production and operations management, lighting, set and sound design. He now works in the Education sector and as a freelance Production Manager and Designer. Darren has been the Artistic Director for Mudlark Theatre and has had a long connection with Tasdance. Previous theatre roles include, Scotch Oakburn College's Performing Arts Centre Coordinator, Production Manager (UTAS School of Visual and Performing Arts), Head Technician/Operations Manager (DECC), and Lighting Design/Technical Direction (Slipstream Circus, Circus Risque, Three River Theatre, Launceston Youth Theatre Ensemble, Musical Society and Encore). Darren is a graduate of UTAS, Bachelor of Performing Arts.



GRACE ROBERTS

Multidisciplinary artist Grace Roberts finds her passion in the world of theatre and performance. Grace is a past graduate of the University of Tasmania Theatre course and completed her Honours and Masters of Fine Arts in post-dramatic theatrical design and scenography. Co-Artistic Director and Producer of her multi-award-winning Theatre and Performance Company, IO Performance, with Chris Jackson, she previously was employed as a lecturer at the University of Tasmania and Charles Sturt University. Grace takes part in theatrical productions in different capacities, from Lighting, Projection, Sound and Set Designing, Acting, Directing, Production Managing, Stage Managing, and Special Effects Makeup.



CHRIS JACKSON

Chris is Co-Artistic Director and co-founder of IO Performance, a multi-award winning multi/interdisciplinary artist with over 17 years of professional experience, holding a Bachelor of Contemporary Arts, Master of Contemporary Arts and Master of Fine Arts. He has worked in various capacities and his skills and talents are in demand across the Tasmanian arts sector including for: Directing, Writing, Acting, Performance Art, Production, Music and Design and his work has seen local, state, national and international stages and exhibitions. He has worked at several institutions as a lecturer in performing arts whilst maintaining an active presence in the rich cultural fabric of Lutruwita. He is interested in intermediality in performance - how the entire assemblance of 'things' create the art.



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mudlarktheatre.com.au/support

If you appreciated our work and want to support the future of professional theatre in Tasmania, we invite you to join Mudlark's monthly giving program. This program was created to be an accessible way for individuals to contribute to our future and make a lasting impact. You can join for as little as \$5 per month, and all donations are tax deductible.

YOUR SUPPORT HAS AN IMMEDIATE AND LASTING IMPACT:

- It allows us to plan ahead and commit to artists and projects.
- It supports the development of works like this in their early, seed stages when they are not yet developed enough to attract grant funding.
- It supports us to secure additional funding by demonstrating community support and a secure funding base.
- It provides employment and development opportunities for local artists.

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