

Gproductions
presents

William Shakespeare's

*Much Ado
About
Nothing*

JAN 24 - FEB 1

**Fairfield Amphitheatre
Fairfield Park**

BOOK TICKETS

gjproductions.net/tickets



Gproductions
presents

William Shakespeare's



Directed by
JACK WILKINSON

Gproductions

Co-Founders

Grace Maddern & Jack Wilkinson



Welcome to Much Ado About Nothing

2020 has begun with an intimidating momentum! Whilst producing our fourth season at the Fairfield Amphitheatre with a fantastic production of William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing, GJ Productions has found a new studio home in Airport West! It's been fantastic to move into our new premises with rehearsals for this show. An official launch of the studio will be held in February, where we will announce our 2020/21 season! Check out more information and exciting upcoming classes [here](#) in the program.

We don't know how we've done it, but once again we have gathered together a phenomenal cast and are so grateful they've come on board. Not only are they incredible talents on stage, but they are also such beautiful individuals. It makes us so happy to see our artists connect with each other to make a great ensemble.

We'd also like to take this moment to acknowledge the devastations our country has faced. It has been heartbreaking to see the impact these fires have made on the environment, the wildlife and to the communities. All tickets sales from our preview performance will be donated to the VIC Bushfire Disaster Appeal through Bendigo Bank's Community Enterprise Foundation, and we will continue to take donations at our box office throughout the season. Please give if you can and help our country bounce back!

We would like to thank the City of Yarra for once again supporting our production and Zoe McWhinney and the staff at the council for their help throughout the process. We hope that we can continue to build our relationship into the future! We would like to also thank Kerryn Donchi and Liz Coutinho at Nelson Alexander for again providing us with our fabulous promotional boards! We so appreciate your support!

Jack and I are truly blessed to have the unwavering and loving support of our parents. They invest so much in our dreams and we wouldn't be here without them. We thank Jack's parents – Kate & Shane Wilkinson – for their help with obtaining our new studio and thanks to Grace's parents – Chris and Geoff Maddern – for all of their help with front of house, the bar and the venue coordination. We love you so much!

Finally, we'd like to thank you, our audience! Thank you for attending tonight's performance and we hope you enjoy this summer night in the Fairfield Amphitheatre and our production of William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing!

CHARACTERS

Benedick	James Martin
Beatrice	Grace Maddern
Claudio	Daniel Agar
Hero.....	Marissa Ecomono
Leonato	Peter Hatherley
Margaret	Jessica Gadsden
Don Pedro	Samuel Anderson
Don John / Sexton.....	Jennifer Piper
Borachio.....	Joanna Bakker
Conrade / Messenger	Kyle Cuthbert
Dogberry.....	Richard Mealey
Verges / Friar Francis	Jonathon Shilling

SYNOPSIS

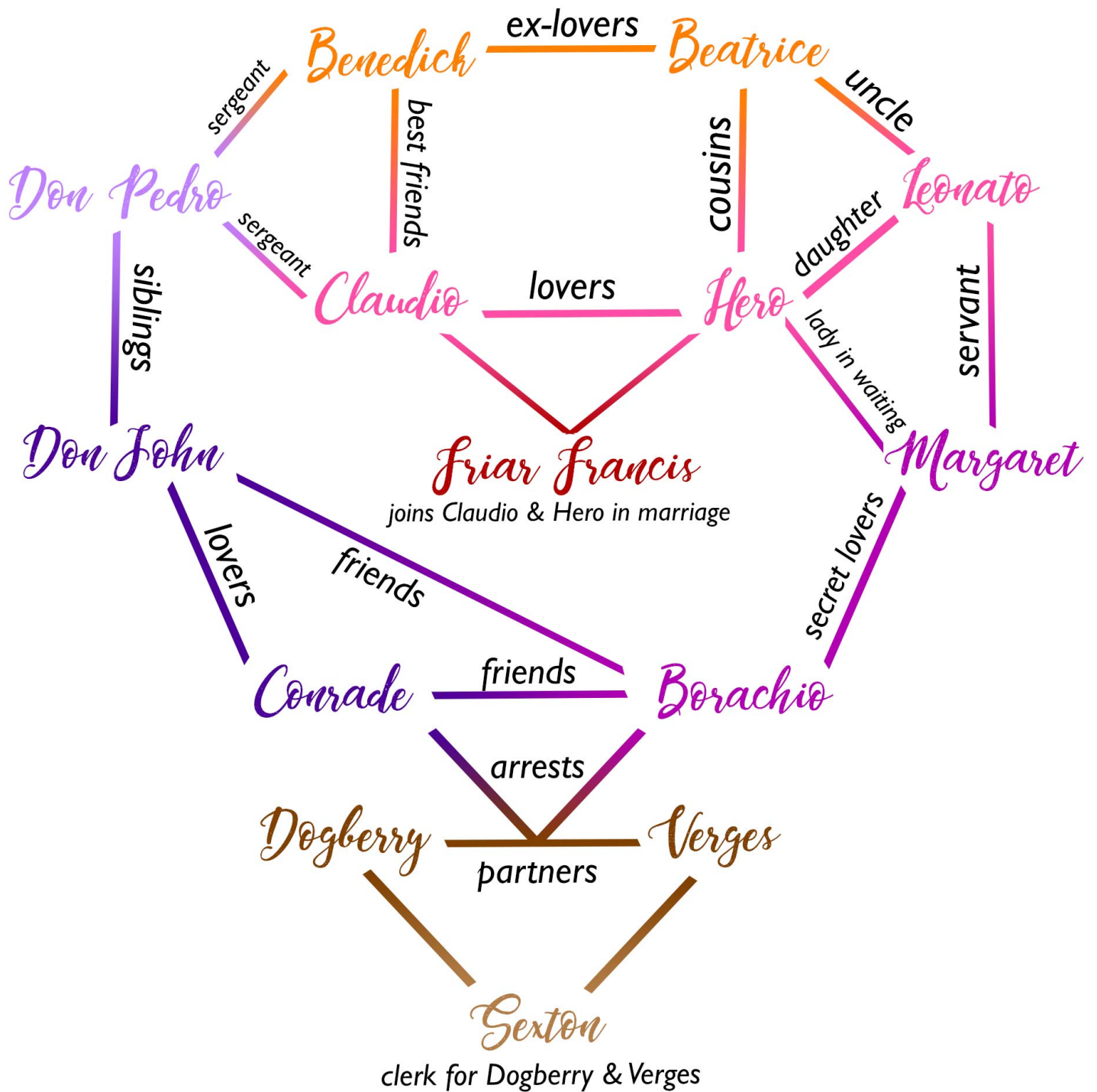
ACT I

Much Ado About Nothing is set in the fictitious Italian city of Messina, where Leonato lives with his daughter, Hero, and her cousin and companion, Beatrice. Leonato receives word from a Messenger that his close friend, Don Pedro has returned from war and plans to visit with some of his fellow soldiers. Among the party is Claudio, who quickly falls in love with Hero. Benedick, a bachelor who has sworn off love and marriage, also comes, and he enjoys speaking his mind in witty arguments with Beatrice. Leonato holds a masked ball to celebrate the end of the war. While at the ball, Don Pedro woos Hero on behalf of Claudio and the engagement of Claudio and Hero is arranged. At the same time, Don Pedro's bastard younger sister, Don John, overwhelmed with bitterness and resentment, seeks a way to spoil the general happiness of the party. Don John plots with her best friend, Borachio and her lover Conrade, to deceive Claudio into believing Hero has cheated on him. Meanwhile, Hero, Claudio, Leonato and Don Pedro decide Benedick and Beatrice are ideal partners, despite their feuding. They make a plot to allow Benedick to overhear them discussing Beatrice's love for him and vice versa. After a series of overheard conversations, Benedick and Beatrice realise they do indeed love one another. Later that night, Hero's maid, Margaret, talks with Borachio from Hero's bedroom window. Don John takes Claudio and the Don Pedro to watch secretly from a distance and think that the girl at the window is Hero. On parole during the night, the local constable, Dogberry, and his side kick, Verges, stumble upon an incriminating conversation between Borachio and Conrade discussing the trick they've played on Claudio and Don Pedro, and arrest them.

ACT 2

At the wedding, Claudio is still deceived into thinking Hero cheated on him. He denounces her and leaves her apparently dead from shock. With the help of the priest, Friar Francis, Leonato, Beatrice, and Benedick decide to pretend that Hero is actually dead until her name can be cleared. With their criminals apprehended, Dogberry and Verges go to the Sexton to interrogate them and have a report written for the nobles. Dogberry's report, after some difficulty, is given to Leonato and Don Pedro. News of Hero's death reaches Claudio and for penance for causing Hero's death, Claudio agrees to marry another of Leonato's "nieces", and visits Hero's tomb to grieve. The next day, everyone gathers to witness the marriage of Claudio to Leonato's "niece", who is revealed to be Hero. The play comes to a joyful conclusion as the lovers are reunited, and Benedick and Beatrice are revealed to the congregation to be in love and announce that they will share the wedding day. Don John has been captured while trying to escape and is left for future trial while the play ends with a merry dance.

CHARACTER MAP



Director's Notes

Here we are again, back at the Fairfield Amphitheatre. Working on these Shakespeare productions is consistently one of my biggest highlights each year. From the atmosphere of the space, to the wonderful audiences, to the brilliant actors that I have the privilege of working alongside, it is just an incredible experience every year.

This year's production was a little different for us at GJ Productions from a design aspect, as it is the first of our Shakespeare's that we have based the design off a particular time era, being the late 40s to early 50s. This started off as being just an aesthetic choice, something to base our costuming off, but began to really shape the direction and character choices of the production. It was interesting to look at the play through a particular lens and see the reasons for some of the interactions between characters when defined by a particular time frame. While this production is by no means an exact representation of the world in the wake of World War 2, we feel as a company that the characters in *Much Ado About Nothing* often reflect archetypes from that era; the young man with a dark side after the war; the young lady falling for the dashing soldier; the officer trying to return to some semblance of normality.

Hopefully these influences come through in this production and you can understand where we were trying to come from with this production. Regardless, I'm sure you will enjoy Shakespeare's witty language and our actors' brilliant performances.

Before I leave you to enjoy the show, I would like to thank a few people. First, my wonderful partner Grace Maddern for her incredible work as producer, costume designer, choreographer and performer for this show – you are amazing and I am always blown away by the work you do! Also, Geoffrey Weber, our amazing fight choreographer, for coming in and spending a day making sure that our actors were prepared for this production. And to our Front-of-House staff – Our manager Chris, Geoff and all the wonderful helpers – we couldn't put this show on without you, so thank you so much!

So take a load off, grab a cool drink and some snacks, enjoy the picnic that I'm sure you brought, and enjoy the fun of *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Jack Wilkinson

PRODUCTION TEAM



Jack Wilkinson
DIRECTOR

Jack is back again directing GJ Production's fourth summer Shakespeare season at the Fairfield Amphitheatre, having previously directed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night* and *Romeo & Juliet*. Some of Jack's other theatre credits include *Heathers: The Musical* (Director – GJ Productions), *The Last Five Years* (Assistant Director – GJ Productions), Melbourne Fringe Festival award-winning production *Have You Tried Yoga?* (Lighting Designer – Rachel Edmonds) and *Moments* (Lighting Designer – Madeline Pratt). Jack will be busy in 2020, continuing with *Moments* at the Adelaide Fringe Festival, and directing GJ School Productions musicals, and directing another GJ Productions' yet to be announced musical later this year.

Grace Maddern
PRODUCER

Grace is an actor, producer and choreographer, with a Bachelor of Arts (Acting) from Federation University Arts Academy. Grace's theatrical credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Helena - GJ Productions), *Twelfth Night* (Olivia - GJ Productions), *Romeo & Juliet* (Juliet – GJ Productions), *Heathers: The Musical* (Heather Chandler - GJ Productions) and *The Last Five Years* (Cathy Hiatt - GJ Productions). Grace has successfully produced all six of GJ Productions' shows since its inception in 2015. These include *The Last Five Years*, *Heathers: The Musical*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Twelfth Night*. Grace would like to thank her family and friends for all their continuous love and encouragement, and would like to send all her love to her true Romeo, Jack, for whom she is so proud to call her partner in love and business.

www.gracemaddern.com.au

Instagram: [@gracejmaddern](https://www.instagram.com/gracejmaddern)



Geoffrey Weber
FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER

Geoff is a performer and choreographer, and has previously been GJ Production's Fight Choreographer for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night* and *Romeo & Juliet*. With a passion for Shakespeare and stage combat, Geoffrey was excited to come on board again as Fight Choreographer for *Much Ado About Nothing*. With his love extending to his family and friends Geoff hopes you enjoy the show!

CAST



Daniel Agar

Daniel is an actor, musician and writer with a Bachelor of Arts (Music Theatre) from Federation University. There, some of his credits include Showtrain: A Musical (Marty), Bye Bye Birdie (Conrad Birdie), Rent! (Mark Cohen) and Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street (Judge Turpin Alternate/Guitarist). Since graduating; Daniel's Theatre credits include; The Helendale Nude Footy Calendar (Reef Tyson - Kissing Booth), Waiting On You (Sven - Majella Productions), The Wedding Singer (Robbie Hart - Mornington Players), Galapagos: A Musical (Jude - Julz Hay Proudly Presents), Spartacus (Soldier/Cover - The Australian Ballet), Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (Queens Court – The Australian Ballet), Spring Awakening (Thea/Guitarist - North by South), and Still Buried (Gustav - VCA). Daniel would like to thank

his Mum for all the support she has given him in his life and his career.

Facebook: [@DanielAgarMusic](https://www.facebook.com/DanielAgarMusic)

Instagram: [@daniel_l_agar](https://www.instagram.com/daniel_l_agar)

Sam Anderson

After graduating NIDA in 2006, Sam went on to tour the country with Bell Shakespeare's 'Actors at Work' Theatre in Education program. He landed a series regular role on Chanel 9 drama 'Canal Road', then enjoyed guest roles on 'Underbelly two: tale of two cities', 'All Saints', and 'Saddle Club'. Recently Sam wrote, performed and produced his one-man show 'Bi-Cycle' at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2019, performing at the Underbelly and then an encore season in London at The Kings Head Theatre, Islington to much acclaim. Sam is blessed to be part of such a happy, hard working, passionate ensemble of actors.

Instagram: [@Bicycletheplay](https://www.instagram.com/Bicycletheplay)
[@sammyando](https://www.instagram.com/sammyando)

Facebook: [@Samuelsammyando](https://www.facebook.com/Samuelsammyando)
Twitter: [@samuelsammyando](https://twitter.com/samuelsammyando)



Joanna Bakker

Joanna is a Melbourne based performer with a Diploma of Musical Theatre and Commercial Dance (ADPI, 2014), and Bachelor of Musical Theatre at Federation University (BAPA, 2017). Her university credits include Showtrain (Edna), Bye Bye Birdie (Maude/Ensemble), Rent (Roger's Mum/Ensemble), her self-devised cabaret Merry Swissmas, and Sweeney Todd (Pirelli Understudy/Ensemble). Since graduating university, her credits include Share: The Youth Issues Musical (Death – Glasswings Productions), 40's A Decade of Variety (Actor/Dancer – MBCTA), The Global Citizen (Taylor – Norbury Productions), Mocha Is Not Coffee (Ledah – Norbury Productions), T-Minus 1200 (Actor – Eclectic Theatre Co.), Coriolanus (Aufidius – The Hartwell Players) and Noah (The Bear/The Hunter – Candlelight Productions). She is

also the production assistant for the movement piece Moments, which after two successful runs in 2019 is travelling to Adelaide Fringe this year. Joanna has also appeared in music videos, online sketch comedies, TV commercials and short films.

StarNow: starnow.com.au/joannabakker/

Kyle Cuthbert

Kyle C Cuthbert is an actor with a Bachelor of Arts (Acting) degree from Federation University Arts Academy. His theatrical credits include A Midsummer Night's Dream (Theseus – Federation University Arts Academy), Blue Stockings (Holmes – Federation University Arts Academy), and Agamemnon (Watchman – Federation University Arts Academy). Kyle's move from Dubai to Australia meant that he has been able to broaden his opportunities in the industry and explore the many facets of performance and also meet some fabulously amazing people along the way.

StarNow: www.starnow.co.uk/kylecuthbert

Instagram: [@kyle_cuthbert](https://www.instagram.com/kyle_cuthbert)



Marissa Ecomono

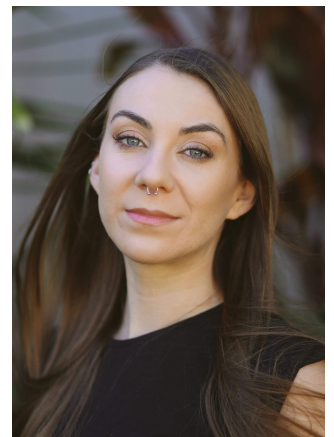
Marissa graduated in 2016 from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) with a Bachelor of Arts in Music Theatre. Whilst at WAAPA she performed in The World Goes Round directed by Nancye Hayes, Legally Blonde, The Drowsy Chaperone, Bring It On and The Beautiful Game. Upon graduating she was the recipient of the 2016 Hal Leonard and Music Theatre International Award. She was also a finalist in the Julie Michael Cabaret prize. Credits include Paris: A Rock Odyssey (Music Theatre Melbourne), William Finn's Elegies (Crying Wolf Productions), The Protectors and The Hurting Game (Brainstorm Productions), Galapagos The Musical (Melba Spiegeltent, MICF), Prince Orlovsky in GSOV's 2019 production of Die Fledermaus and will be part of the premiere of the new Australian

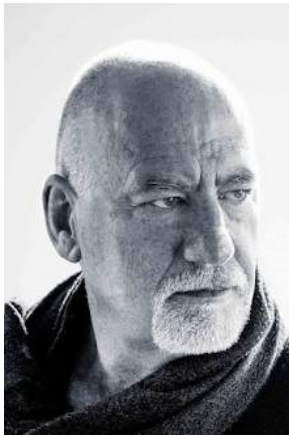
Musical Jack Frost, playing at St Martins Youth Theatre in March.

Instagram: [@marissahelene](https://www.instagram.com/marissahelene)

Jessica Gadsden

Jessica is an actor, dancer, and choreographer with a Bachelor of Arts (Acting) from Federation University Arts Academy. Her theatrical credits include The Measure of a Moment - Staged Reading (Bagman - Punch Buggy Theatre), Nightmare on Witch Street (Tracy - Witches in Britches Cabaret Restaurant), and she is currently in rehearsal for Women of Troy (Helen of Troy - Gemco Players). She has also competed professionally in the ASDAC Outback Crown in American Style Ballroom and Latin with River City Ballroom, and travelled interstate with Polkadot Entertainment performing children's stage shows. Jessica would like to thank GJ Productions for giving her the opportunity to bring the vivacious Margaret to life.





Peter Hatherley

Peter has studied with the VCA, NIDA and National Theatre. He continues his education with Q44 under the tutelage of Gabrielle Rose Carter and Suzanne Heywood. He has performed in a broad range of Melbourne and Sydney theatre companies. His television credits include 'Offspring' and the soon to be released Australian movie 'Promise Carved in Flesh'. Peter is active in voice over work and audio book narration and has been nominated for awards in that field as well the Lyrebird Awards and twice in the Victorian Drama League for Best Actor Drama.

James Martin

James is an actor, director, producer and graduate from the National Theatre Drama School. James' theatrical credits include; Metamorphoses (Midas/Narrator - National Theatre), The Freedom of the City (Michael - Eltham Theatre Company), 40's A Decade of Variety (Producer and Emcee - Melbourne Fringe Festival, MBCTA) Realism (Assistant/Movement Director and Glemov - Hartwell Theatre), Secret Bridesmaids Business (James - Sherbrooke Theatre), Romeo and Juliet (Paris/Sampson - GJ Productions) and The Toorak Rules (Douglas - St Martins). He's loved taking part in Different Every Night: Embodying Mike Alfreds' Rehearsal Process masterclass, led by Charlie Cousins, recently guest starred in AMC's 4th season of Preacher and in Ecclectic Theatre Company's Melbourne Fringe Festival season of T-Minus 1200 at The Alex Theatre. He's loved working with this incredibly talented and supportive cast and group of creatives and he'd also like to thank Jack and Grace for the incredible opportunity of taking on this fantastic role. He'll next be seen in Hearth Theatre's production of Marriage by Gogol at St Martins theatre for the Melbourne International Comedy Festival. He hopes you enjoy the performance and that he will see you afterwards to discuss the finer points of rhyming poetry.



Instagram: [@jamesmartin91](#)



Richard Mealey

Richard is an actor and writer from Chicago, Illinois, and a graduate of the American Musical and Dramatic Academy's Bachelor of Fine Arts program. His recent theatrical credits include One Flew Over the Cuckoos Nest (Martini - Eltham Little Theatre), Love/Sick (Various - Hartwell Players), Romeo & Juliet (Friar Laurant - GJ Productions), Babes & Beer (Aubrey Rogan - Lemon Legs) and Silent Sky (Peter Shaw - Williamstown Little Theatre). Richard recently wrapped on a feature film, The Party Bus (Chris - Ishoot Films) and is producing his first play, An Evening of Bad Theatre, which will premiere in April at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival.

Facebook: [@badtheatreplay](#)



Jennifer Piper

Trained at WAAPA and UWA Jennifer is an actor, writer and designer, and co-founder and Company Manager of Wit Incorporated theatre company. JP's work gazes adoringly at feminism, sexuality, gender and disability, as they rummage around in their pockets looking for their shared identity. Theatrical credits include That Time Everything Went Well And We Were Totally Fine (Frankie - Wit Incorporated), Love's Labour's Lost (Holofernes - Melbourne Shakespeare Company), Ophelia Thinks Harder (The Queen - Wit Incorporated), Bombshells (Tiggy, Teresa, Zoe - Wit Incorporated), Macbeth (Banquo - Wit Incorporated), The Martyrs (Chloe - Sly Rat Theatre Co.)

jenniferpiper.com

Facebook: [@therealjenniferpiper](https://www.facebook.com/therealjenniferpiper)

Instagram: [@therealjenniferpiper](https://www.instagram.com/therealjenniferpiper)

Jonathon Shilling

Born and raised in Adelaide, Jonathon has had a love for performing arts from a young age. He holds a Certificate IV in Dance from Gravity Dance Studios and a Bachelor of Music Theatre from Federation University Arts Academy, formally known as BAPA. His credits include RENT (Angel, u/s Mark – Federation University), Sweeney Todd (Tobias Ragg – Federation University), Post: A New Musical (Jonathan – Something Blue Productions), Kinky Boots (Referee Angel – CLOC), Kidding Around with Bethany Fisher (Dancer – Bethany Fisher Music). Most recently he toured South Australia with Perform! Education's 2019 Book Week Tour "BiG Dreams!" Jonathon would like to thank his family and friends for their constant love and support.

Instagram: [@jonathonshilling](https://www.instagram.com/jonathonshilling)



CREDITS

Grace Maddern
Producer / Choreographer

Jack Wilkinson
Director / Lighting Design

Geoffrey Weber
Fight Choreographer

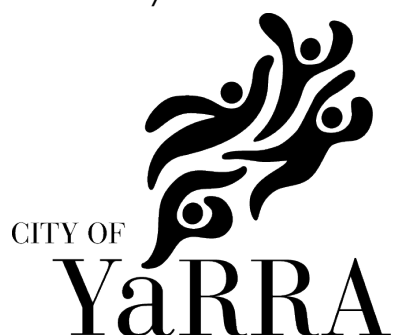
Sound Technician
Elizabeth Munro

Christine Maddern
Front of House Manager

Matthew Howat
Photography

Special Thanks to...

Zoe McWhinney
at City of Yarra



Tom Willis
at BRiC LX



Martin Bowman
at Clearlight Productions



Ashley Reeves
at Starlite Productions



Kerryn Donchi & Liz Coutinho
at Nelson Alexander

**Nelson
Alexander**

Introducing
Gproductions
Halsey Studios



GJ Productions' new space Halsey Studios is based in the north-western suburb of Airport West, just 12 km north-west of Melbourne. Our studio spaces are perfect for rehearsals, dance classes, conferences, band rehearsals, private and group voice/singing/acting lessons, meetings, workshops, filming and and so much more!

Available for casual or long term hire

For more information and registrations of interests click [here](#)

CLASSES

Beginning March 2020

TUESDAYS

7-8:30PM – Adult Beg/Int Musical Theatre
8:30-10PM – Adult Int/Adv Musical Theatre

SATURDAYS

10-11:30AM – Teens Musical Theatre
13-18 year-olds – All levels accepted!

PRIVATE AND GROUP SINGING LESSONS COMING SOON!

Register [HERE!](#)

VISIT US

www.gjproductions.net



[@gjproductionscompany](https://www.facebook.com/gjproductionscompany)



[@GJ.Productions](https://www.instagram.com/GJ.Productions)

Make a donation to

Gproductions

Your donation will contribute to the mounting of future productions!
For more information email gj.productions@outlook.com

Have an idea for a show? A script you'd like produced?

GJ Productions are looking for new, innovative works to produce!

Email [**gj.productions@outlook.com**](mailto:gj.productions@outlook.com)

Send through your script or an email outlining your concept for a show and we'll get back to you!

Brought to you by

Gproductions