

# STATE THEATRE COMPANY

# Season 2019

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## LET US TELL YOU A STORY

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UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL MON, SEP 10, 6PM

From an all-female version of an Australian classic to the return of a record-breaking hit comedy and a festival highlight starring one of Australia's brightest musical theatre personalities, State Theatre Company's 2019 season places audiences in the thrilling predicament of the present.

The eight-play program - announced by outgoing Artistic Director Geordie Brookman at the Dunstan Playhouse on Monday, 10 September - flaunts a mix of comedies, sweeping epics and reimagined Australian classics led by old and new faces both on and off the stage.

"The 2019 season brings together all the exciting elements that we've been working so hard on at State Theatre Company over the last few years," Brookman says. "The year bristles with the power and joy of pure storytelling and I hope it transports and delights thousands of South Australians throughout the year to come."

Brookman will mark the end of his seven-year tenure with a one man adaptation of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* created especially for Renato Musolino, who famously stepped in to save Brookman's production of *The Kreutzer Sonata* in 2013 after ill health forced actor Barry Otto to step down. The classic allegory about a group of farm animals that revolt against their oppressive human owners will have a strictly limited season at the Space Theatre before a regional and interstate tour. In the 70-minute play, Musolino will take on upwards of 20 characters, from the revolutionary pigs to the tyrannical Mr Jones.

In April, Adelaide-based theatre collective *isthisyours?* partners with State Theatre Company to take on one of Australian theatre's most infamous boys clubs in its all-female reimagining of David Williamson's 1977 classic, *The Club*. Directed by Tessa Leong and starring Louisa Mignone and Ellen Steele, this razor-sharp reinterpretation adds a whole new layer to Williamson's acridly funny look at footy culture. While *isthisyours?* will present an initial small-scale version of *The Club* in Sydney in December this year, the Adelaide season will be a brand new, supercharged version with designer Renate Henschke and composer/sound designer Catherine Oates working behind the scenes.

The production sees Williamson return to the State Theatre Company stage for the first time in more than a decade.



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Away from the sporting field and onto the Greek Islands comes *Hydra*, a sweeping literary romance from playwright Sue Smith (*Machu Picchu*, *Kryptonite*) in a co-production with Queensland Theatre.

Under the direction of Helpmann nominee, Sam Strong, and starring Adelaide favourite Nathan O'Keefe (*Macbeth*, *Sense and Sensibility*) alongside Anna McGahan (*Underbelly*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *The Doctor Blake Mysteries*), *Hydra* is a moving tale about the great Australian literary couple George Johnston and Charmian Clift, who leave post-World War II Australia for the Greek island of Hydra.

Told from the perspective of their son Martin, *Hydra* chronicles the couple's time as the figureheads of the island's bohemian expat community (which included Leonard Cohen), bringing a soaring tale of two extraordinary literary lives to the stage.

In June, musical theatre sensation Helen Dallimore (the original Glinda in West End hit *Wicked*; Paulette in *Legally Blonde: The Musical*) stars in Peter Quilter's worldwide smash *End of the Rainbow*, a sparkling study of Judy Garland's tragic final days. Threaded with nine of Garland's most famous songs, the production will be a highlight of the Adelaide Cabaret Festival and see State Theatre Company inhabit the historic Royalty Theatre for the first time since 2000.

*End of the Rainbow* also sees State Theatre Company resident artist Elena Carapetis (the writer behind *The Gods Of Strangers* and *A Doll's House*) make her directorial debut.

In July, State Theatre Company welcomes back director Kate Champion (*That Eye, The Sky*) with *A View from the Bridge*, Arthur Miller's timeless exploration of family and honour in 1950s Brooklyn. Starring Mark Saturno (*Vale*) as Eddie Carbone, this landmark drama from one of the world's greatest playwrights is as relevant as ever with its themes of immigration, home and belonging.

In August, *Jasper Jones* brings back director Nescha Jelk (*Terrestrial*) and puts Elijah Valadian-Wilson (*Long Tan*) in his first leading role. Award-winning Kate Mulvany's adaptation of Craig Silvey's 2009 novel has had sold-out seasons around the country, touching audiences with its poignant and funny exploration of small-town life in Australia.

Back by popular demand is farcical comedy *The 39 Steps*, which smashed box office records in 2016. Coming to Dunstan Playhouse for a strictly limited season in October, the mile-a-minute mystery brings back the original cast – Nathan Page (*Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, *After Dinner*), Anna Steen (State Theatre Company Ensemble), Charles Mayer (*The Popular Mechanicals*) and Tim Overton (*That Eye, The Sky*). The show will then tour to Mt Gambier, Renmark, Port Pirie and Canberra.

Closing the season is Nakkiah Lui's national tearaway hit, *Black Is The New White*. It sold out the Wharf Theatre with Sydney Theatre Company, demanded a transfer to the 900-seat Roslyn Packer Theatre and promptly sold out again, now Adelaide audiences will finally get to see the show that has left critics raving and audiences jumping out of their chairs with joy. Playing at Dunstan Playhouse in November, this rom-com from one of the most refreshing new voices in Australian theatre is guaranteed to end the year on a high.



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In addition, State Theatre Company will support the brand new work *Limit* as part of its State Umbrella program, which offers support to one independent theatre company each year. In *Limit*, which lands at the Bakehouse Theatre in October, two people are tasked with colonising Mars – all while being filmed for a reality TV show. Directed by Shannon Rush, the play comes from the pen of past Flinders University Young Playwrights Award winner, Sophia Simmons .

Brookman, who has been Artistic Director since 2013, will move to Berlin with his family in April.

“My time at State Theatre Company has been a dream come true. To lead and shape what I believe is the best theatre company in Australia has been a rare privilege. Over the last six years we have taken South Australian work all around the country and all around the world, while continuing to deliver year round, boundary-pushing theatre to Adelaide audiences. There is an exciting and courageous new generation of artists waiting to take the reins and I for one can’t wait to see what they might do.”

Season 2019 subscriptions are now on sale. Seats can be secured during this subscription-only priority period from Monday, September 10, before single tickets are released on Monday 3 December. Visit [statetheatrecompany.com.au](http://statetheatrecompany.com.au)



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