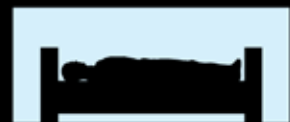


STATE EDUCATE 2021

# HIBERNATION STUDY GUIDE



State Theatre Company South Australia presents

## HIBERNATION

By Finegan Kruckemeyer

### SYNOPSIS

It's the year 2030 and there is an immediate climate crisis. With little choice remaining, world leaders make a collective, pragmatic decision to save the planet. For an entire year, all 8.5 billion humans on Earth will hibernate.

Gas will be launched into the atmosphere and the human population will be immediately plunged into a deep sleep, leaving the natural world to reset. The reset of the human world is not what was expected.

A world premiere from South Australia's Finegan Kruckemeyer and directed by Artistic Director Mitchell Butel, Hibernation takes audiences all over the world as citizens forge their lives in a new wilderness.

An utterly original and transformative theatrical event, Hibernation brings together some of the state's finest artists to tackle one of the most urgent issues of our time in a brave, unexpected and peculiarly Australian way.

*For more, watch the trailer for the show online: [statetheatrecompany.com.au/shows/hibernation](http://statetheatrecompany.com.au/shows/hibernation)*

DUNSTAN PLAYHOUSE / 13 - 28 AUGUST 2021

#### RUNNING TIME

Approximately 2 hours & 50 minutes, including interval. The show will be followed by a 20-30 minute Q&A.

#### SHOW WARNINGS

Contains coarse language and adult themes. Age guide – 15+.

Resource created by State Educate. Support for State Educate comes from the State Theatre Company South Australia Education Giving Circle.

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# CREATIVE TEAM & CAST



Playwright

**Finegan Kruckemeyer**



Director

**Mitchell Butel**



Assistant Director

**Clement Rukundo**



Designer

**Jonathon Oxlade**



Assistant Costume Designer

**Ailsa Paterson**



Lighting Designer

**Gavin Norris**



Video Designer

**Matt Byrne**



Sound Designer & Composer

**Andrew Howard**



Stage Manager

**Bridget Samuel**



Assistant Stage Manager

**Isabella Strada**

Additional Composition: Nate Edmondson // Accent Coach: Jennifer Innes //  
Production Manager: Gabrielle Hornhardt // Wigs/Dresser: Jana DeBiasi //  
Flinders Drama Centre Directorial Secondment: Connor Reidy



Damian Accuardi/Luis Flores/Customs Official

**Chris Asimos**



Alex Hall/Cassandra Flores

**Rosalba Clemente**



Azubuike Okoye/Nigel

**Rashidi Edward**



Maggie

**Elizabeth Hay**



Mark Obrecht/Ernesto Flores/Customs Official

**Ezra Juanta**



Emily Metcalfe

**Ansuya Nathan**



Warwick Joyce

**Mark Saturno**



Pete/Sang

**James Smith**



Kelly Knowles/Chidera Okoye

**Kialea-Nadine Williams**



Jeong

**Poppy Kelly**



Jeong

**Eva Hinde**

Costumes made by State Theatre Company South Australia Wardrobe.  
Set made by State Theatre Company South Australia Workshop.  
Staff listed online: [statetheatrecompany.com.au/board-staff](http://statetheatrecompany.com.au/board-staff)



## WRITER'S NOTE FROM FINEGAN KRUCKEMEYER

PHOTO: SIA DUFF.

While I usually sit down at a computer and consciously (sometimes laboriously) imagine a new play into being, one night in late 2019, I woke with a concept fully mapped in my mind. The idea that had roused me from dreams was about a world falling into them. And the writing of that world, strangely, became the witnessing of it, as 2020 slowly mutated into what we now know it to be – something both epic and intimate, conceptually foreign and definitively local.

Quickly, I typed up two pages of notes and the next day sent these off to Mitchell at State Theatre, a surprise offering as answer to a generous invitation.

The idea was large and unwieldy, its landscape a globe, its citizens stalking the halls of power, or fighting in suburban pubs, or cuddling in a bed, or floundering in a deluge. Water ran over everything, species repopulated, the Adelaide buildings we know and love crumbled around these characters, and were rebuilt.

Where I feared my excesses, Mitchell offered only permission, daring me to find solutions by fleshing out narratives, rather than redacting them. Where the play in my mind was one of binaries – a world seen before and after – he proposed I add a during. A place devoid of people, and yet strangely inhabited.

Since then, many talented creatives have lent their voice, their sewing machine, their sander, their score to lift this story off a page and realise it anew, and I'm ridiculously thankful to all.

Ultimately, this tale of environmental crisis, of climate, of big populations and small resources, has ended up (as arguably all stories end up) being a story about people – about lives lived and loved and squandered, about good acts and bad, about the precipice, about redemption.

It contains absolutely no answers – just one long night, and the invitation to imagine for ourselves where we might yet wake up.



## AN INTERVIEW WITH FINEGAN KRUCKEMEYER

### **What sparked the central idea behind *Hibernation*?**

This one came to be in a really different way for most of my shows, where I sit down and deliberate on what I might write about. This was literally one of those epiphanous moments of waking up from bed in the middle of the night with a sense of a fairly well mapped-out story, and quickly trying to capture that in some way. Then the next morning, sending it off to Mitchell. It became a chat with State Theatre Company South Australia pretty quickly. But yeah, that moment, that first spark was ridiculous. It just fell into my head.

I think there's a symmetry in terms of the things that I have been thinking about – thoughts about the planet, about the world and about being a father. I find myself thinking about what my kid will bear witness to or inherit in the future. I think those are ideas and concepts that we're all ruminating on in different ways at the moment. For me, it felt like it was the right time to tell this story.

### **What do you see as the central themes of the play?**

Initially, the themes and the impetus behind the work were environmental, they were about sustainability. I was interested in how the planet can continue and in what state that occurs. I wanted to explore ideas about equivalence and fairness, in terms of what people in different parts of the world inherit. But it quickly became about people – as I find often happens with art, in whatever medium. Really, this play is a study of humans. While I started with these themes and things that I believe in strongly, it became an exercise in studying how different people respond to a problem. Do they choose to throw themselves back into what they knew? Or do they choose to create something – a new version of themselves, their world or their community? That became, for me, the more honest study – a study of people and the way that we navigate our lives.





**You wrote *Hibernation* prior to the start of the COVID-19 crisis. Has the pandemic been integrated into the work or changed the way you think about the play?**

I am reticent to do zeitgeisty work or to tell a story that feels too wedded to the particular moment in which I'm creating it. My hope is always that the story will endure beyond that moment; even that it will feel like it has existed previously. A story is only a story for as long as people care about it.

The kernel of thought that led to *Hibernation* obviously came from things I was thinking about at the time – and then that time changed. Strangely, the world started to seem like it was mirroring aspects of the story. When this happened, Director Mitchell Butel and I talked about it. Dramaturgically, it felt like it would be it would be flippant not to acknowledge, in some small way, this thing that's that has occurred and that we're still living with. But I also wanted to show that the themes are bigger than this moment, and that humans have more resilience than this moment. I want this story to be one that could be told at a point in the future, or in the past, and might still have another relevance or have another type of relevance. We work in metaphor a lot in theatre. We often allude to things that exist in the world without naming them too heavily, and this play is a continuation of that exercise.

**Within the play, we hear people speak about the 'rules' or the world and we see how they fit with the laws of nature. Could you talk about how these two elements are at work within the play?**

The play is about power dynamics. It's about policy at a political level and actions at an individual or communal level. My character studies and plays are about how we adhere to the moment and place we exist in, where we come from or how we choose to chart our own course. For me, that conundrum sits





at the centre of a lot of lives; it sits at the core of what it means to be human. It's this sense of the past, present and future. We've all been shaped by a particular environment and community and family, each trying to instill their values systems in us. We take these things on, for better or worse. Eventually, one reaches a point – probably at about the age of a lot of students who will see this show – where you start acknowledging the importance and influence of these values. But at the same time, you also acknowledge the person you are becoming – the values that you deem important and the places you want these values to take you in life. I find this cusp really interesting – it's so potent and powerful. That's why I often write plays for young people or with them in mind.

*Hibernation* speaks about that moment between being shaped and shaping oneself. The play draws a line where characters think of themselves in terms of 'before' and 'after' hibernation. Even if the characters in this play aren't teenagers, they're assessing who they are within society, who they want to be, and how to navigate the space in between.

**The play looks at the individual sacrifices that people are asked to make for the 'greater good' and how sacrifices are managed personally, politically and globally. Could you talk about the idea of sacrifice within the play?**

It's about how we triage that level of sacrifice. How do we decide what will fall by the wayside and what we will commit to for a better world, a better self, a better relationship, a better environment or a better future? I think every character is scrutinising that decision. I like that there's no definitive answer in that.



The play draws an equivalency between a global population of a few billion choosing to sacrifice one year, and a man and a woman choosing to sacrifice a previous relationship so they can fall in love. Each of these sacrifices can feel as relevant as the other. I think that's how we exist as humans, too. On one hand, we exist on this macro scale: we are buffeted by everything happening in the world and we make choices about what we sacrifice ourselves to and what we push back against. Then, as individuals, we make intimate, personal decisions about what we're going to honor and what we're going to say goodbye to.

### **What do you want the experience of *Hibernation* to be for an audience?**

I hope audiences feel empowered, particularly the young audiences. This play is written about the future – something that arguably belongs to young people more than it does to me. I'm very interested in how young audiences take ownership of that.

If students are coming from a theatre background or are interested in theatre-making, I hope they feel empowered to tell their own stories, to think about the themes, to determine what drives them to tell stories, or to enact stories in whatever method they see fit. For me, it's about empowering every individual to take something from the show – whether it's pushing back against what they see, choosing to go their own way, or leaning into what they see. I think any of these reactions are right.

While it's about the audience sitting there in a particular moment of time, it's also about whatever they do next.

THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM ON THE FIRST DAY OF REHEARSALS. PHOTO: JESSICA ZENG.

## What is your process for writing a play?

I love the sense of a writing system that's known and familiar. My son goes off to school, my wife goes to work, so I write in those same hours. I'm literally a clock-on, clock-off, 9am-3pm, kind of person. I drop my son to school, I write, I do the school pick-up and I live my bigger life around that.

In my writing hours, I think it's important to start in a place that feels comfortable and familiar. I like to be in an office I know, sitting at a desk I know, with a timeline that I know. Then I wait for that lovely moment of forgetting. You start with what you know, and then it disappears, and you wake up minutes or hours later and a monologue has come into existence. I know it sounds a bit silly but it's the magic trick that I engage with every time – and I've never found out how that magic trick works. I never want to find out how it works. I just love that sense of a story coming into being because the time feels right to write it or because that character feels they need to say that thing.

## Why do you choose to tell stories through theatre?

As an audience member and as a worker in theatre, I have always loved the potential for connection that theatre provides. Theatre has an unapologetic intimacy and closeness; this sense of it being a conversation between those who are presenting the artwork and those who are receiving it. I love that.

I also love reading books and feeling like I'm being told a story. But for me, there's no way to convey back the excitement I'm feeling in a particular moment when I'm reading a book. With theatre, although you're sitting in the darkness, you can feel the energy in a room, and you can feel when the audience is giving just as much as the performers are. It feels like a very democratic and respectful art form in that way. It's this acknowledgement that we're all humans – whether we're choosing to sit in the audience on this day, or to stand on the stage. In the theatre, we are all interested and invested in the exercise of what makes people tick. I find that to be quite a beautiful thing.

*“Every window has a curtain. Every light on every grid on every shore, switches off. Every fire is extinguished. Every plane is grounded. Every factory sighs.*

*“Every zoo is unlocked. Every tiger walks, where every tiger chooses.*

*“Every wave still rolls. Every cloud still breaks.”*

- Pete/Sang, speaking about the beginning of hibernation



## DIRECTOR'S NOTE FROM MITCHELL BUTEL

Can theatre effect social change? Maybe, maybe not – but I reckon it helps. Theatre can offer a fresh perspective and imagination can activate a part of our brain that data cannot.

The data and science on climate change are clear. Over the next few years, according to the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, we need strong participation from all major world regions in taking action to combat climate change. Without this participation, we will see global warming continue to rise and have a huge impact on both human civilisation and our environment.

In his book *The Future Earth*, meteorologist Eric Holthaus writes:

“Our futures are simultaneously dependent on the actions of others and defined by our personal daily choices. This reality demands that we interact with one another, that we come together – for our own survival and the survival of life as we know it on our planet.”

Although personal actions are important, they should not detract from the need to push for governmental policy change. This is a problem for all of us, individuals and governments alike.

We need change. We also need to question what has led us to this problem. Finegan Kruckemeyer's bold and brilliant play began as a captivating idea. It questions the very nature of our industrialised world and the need to consume at all costs. What happens when industry and consumption are put on pause? Months before anyone had heard of COVID-19, Finegan wondered what impact a government-sanctioned global shutdown would have. He wondered how we would connect with ourselves and others in the midst of such great change.

I'm grateful to Fin for this idea, the play that has evolved and his collaboration on this production. *Hibernation* has given this cast and creative team a chance to unleash their breathtaking talents to bring this idea to life. With this fresh and imaginative perspective, I am sure audiences will leave the theatre inspired to reflect and take action.





## AN INTERVIEW WITH MITCHELL BUTEL

### **What first drew you to this play?**

Fantastic South Australian playwright Finegan Kruckemeyer initially approached me with a two-page pitch for this play. The idea was that world leaders had adopted a scientist's suggestion to anaesthetise the entire human population for an entire year as a response to climate change, allowing the earth to naturally regenerate. I thought it was a great idea for a play.

Climate change and the action we take in response is a fundamental issue we are all facing now. As a theatre company, it's our responsibility to deal with issues like these. There have been many great plays about climate change and the environment, such as Lucy Kirkwood's *The Children*, Ian Meadows' *Between Two Waves* and Andrew Bovell's *When the Rain Stops Falling*. I'd been looking for a play that dealt with climate change and the idea for *Hibernation* struck me as an incredibly interesting and imaginative response to that theme.

### **What is the central theme or message of *Hibernation*?**

The play talks about the need to reduce carbon in a large scale and quick way. As a planet, we are using 90 billion metric tonnes of natural resources every year; a sustainable level is 50 billion tonnes. It is predicted that we'll be using 180 billion tonnes a year by 2050. It's not sustainable and it's a huge problem. We've seen the topic get set aside a bit over the past year, with COVID-19 and other issues becoming more prominent, but I think it's the most fundamental issue we're facing.

This play makes us look at this issue. If we stopped humanity for a year, what effect would that have on nature and animals? The play suggests this could have a huge impact. This play was already well underway when COVID hit, but it has demonstrated the effect action like this could have. Research suggests that global carbon dioxide emissions dropped 6.4% in 2020. That's a result of



people staying home more, not flying or driving as much or as far. Even though the idea for this play predates COVID, it kind of builds upon what happened last year. It asks us to think about what effect the actions we take to reduce our carbon footprint on a micro level might have on the wider environment at a macro level. I think this is a really zeitgeist kind of issue.

## **What is your vision for the play?**

My vision as director is to serve the intent of the playwright. I must say, the breadth of Finegan's imagination and the points he makes in this play make it easy for a director. To a large degree, the work is already done.

I think the vision is to make the play resonate for as many audiences as possible. It's a play that crosses the globe – from Adelaide to Los Angeles, Korea to Colombia, Nigeria to Canberra. My vision is to hopefully make audience feel connected on a South Australian level and a global level. In concert with Jonathon Oxlade, our wonderful set and costume designer, lighting designer Gavin Norris and sound designer Andrew Howard, we really want to make something that is exciting and suspenseful as it moves between those worlds and locations.

We also want to focus in on individuals and their choices. While leaders are making decisions on the world stage, this play is ultimately about the way individual people respond to these decisions.

## **What do you want the experience of *Hibernation* to be for an audience?**

I hope it will be galvanising, sobering and shocking, but with sense of hope and a strong call to action. The play starts off in 2030, later shifting to 2039-2040, so it's kind of in the sci fi, dystopian fiction category. Many of our responses to climate change are about guilt, denial and shame, but I think looking at it through a sci fi lens lets you get some distance from the problem and think



about different responses. Damon Gateau's amazing documentary, *2040*, asks audiences to use the facts they know about the present to dream about the future in a realistic way. I think *Hibernation* does that, too.

I really hope audiences have a wonderful night in the theatre. I hope they are challenged, provoked and dazzled by the story and the decisions made by individual characters. I hope they leave the theatre realising they need to think imaginatively about their responses to climate change and the actions they can take as individuals.

### **Science fiction is more often associated with film or TV than theatre. Can you talk about how sci fi works in theatre, particularly in *Hibernation*?**

Early Western playwrights, like Pirandello or August Strindberg in *A Dream Play*, had interesting ways of transcending reality and entering imaginative realms. That's the kind of antecedent for sci fi or dystopian narratives in theatre. State Theatre Company South Australia has its own history with these kinds of works, with *Terrestrial*, *Mr Burns* and *Limit*, a Stateside show by Sophia Simmons, as good examples of how theatre can look at the future possibilities.

In many ways, this play harks back to films like *I Am Legend*, *A Quiet Place* and *Gattaca*, but I think the theatre is a unique place to tell a story like this because it's a real place of imagination. Audiences in a theatre can be more willing to follow possibilities. *Hibernation* is imaginatively forward but realistic. It's all very believable – you can easily picture these discussions happening in Canberra or encountering these individual problems yourself over the next 10 years. It's sci fi that is grounded in reality, and I think the theatre is a powerful place for a story like this to exist.



## What next?

*Our “What next?” sections include questions and activities based on previous pages. These can be used for individual reflection or as class exercises.*

Playwright Finegan Kruckemeyer and Director Mitchell Butel both use the word “zeitgeist” when discussing *Hibernation*, its themes and COVID-19.

On page 8, Finegan says he doesn’t like to make work that is too “zeitgeisty” - he wants to make work with themes and ideas that will remain relevant or have a timeless feeling.

On page 14, Mitchell speaks about how the play mirrors aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly with people staying home more often and the effect this has had on the environment. He says this is “a zeitgeist kind of issue”.

In the Oxford English Dictionary, zeitgeist is defined as “the defining spirit or mood of a particular period of history as shown by the ideas and beliefs of the time.”

Less formally, the term is often used to reference topics, fashions or trends related to a particular moment in time.

As a class, discuss the following questions:

- Do you think there are things within this play that directly tie it to 2021 and the things that have happened over the past year or two?
- If so, what are those things? Do you think these are things that will make the play less relevant in future? Why or why not?
- If not, do you think directly addressing current issues more directly would make the play feel more relevant to you?
- What are the issues or ideas in the play that you think will continue to be relevant in 5-10 years’ time?
- What would be the benefits of writing a play that is “zeitgeisty”? What would be the disadvantages?

## Supporting materials

Video interviews with Mitchell Butel & Finegan Kruckemeyer

*Link under the drop-down menu for *Hibernation* at:*

*[statetheatrecompany.com.au/state-educate-resources](http://statetheatrecompany.com.au/state-educate-resources)*



## CAST Q&A

with Ansuya Nathan  
(Emily Metcalfe)

### How would you describe Emily?

Emily is the instigator. She comes up with the idea of putting the entire world to sleep for a year as a way of allowing the planet to reset - a radical solution to the dire climate emergency in the world of the play. She is a big picture thinker and incredibly ambitious. With a script this good, a great part of my process is text based. Looking for clues within the play about Emily and how she sees the world. I start with the basics - given circumstances, what she says about others and herself and what is said about her. And then use the text to figure out how she thinks. If I can think like Emily moment to moment then I will feel what she feels and also serve the story.

### What do you see as the main themes or message of the play? How does your character connect with these ideas?

One of the main themes is 'the individual versus the greater good' and this moral and ethical struggle is embodied in Emily's journey and motivations throughout the play. She posits hibernation as an extreme solution that will serve a greater good and is willing to overlook the tragic effects it might have on individuals. However, towards the end of the play she reveals a very personal motivation too.

*"Instead of doing everything we can to make this a reality, I propose... we do nothing we can."*

- Emily Metcalfe, proposing her idea to Warwick Joyce



## CAST Q&A

with James Smith (Pete/Sang) & Elizabeth Hay (Maggie)

### How would you describe your characters in *Hibernation*?

**JAMES:** My character, Pete, has trauma that he carries with him after a serious car accident. Physically, Pete is affected by this past trauma. Emotionally, he is numb and unable to access the vulnerability and love he was once capable of. He's alone and introspective - funny, frosty, searching. Pete finds feeling through Maggie in Act 2. Later, as Sang in Korea, he expresses care for his daughter, Jeong.

**ELIZABETH:** My character, Maggie, appears for the first time in Act 2 of *Hibernation*. She is an interesting character to bring to life because the audience don't meet her before hibernation happens. We first meet her during hibernation, which for me means I am already playing her under exceptional circumstances. In the play, Maggie describes herself as "solitary"; someone who keeps to herself in the "normal world". Later in the play, Emily says Maggie is someone "you could almost forget was there", who could disappear into a crowd. These are really useful lines of text, and strong directives for me to follow. They indicate to me that Maggie's life has been pretty lonely and that she doesn't have many friends or a partner. This makes her meeting with Pete even more profound.

Maggie is headstrong and direct. She is quite in control but goes about her business quietly. Maggie also has a history of ill health, so there are vulnerabilities to her too. She was a smoker and has tendencies toward addiction and compulsion.

To bring Maggie to life, I have relied on techniques developed by a practitioner called Rudolf Laban, particularly what's known as 'efforts'. I have been using these to physically identify what Maggie is feeling on the inside and what she is doing on the outside. There are eight efforts listed in Laban Movement

JAMES SMITH AS PETE AND ELIZABETH HAY AS MAGGIE. PHOTO: SIA DUFF.

Analysis, all of which are dictated by a combination of weight, space and time – light/strong, direct/indirect, quick/sustained. The efforts are: *press*, *punch*, *wring*, *dab*, *flick*, *glide*, *slash* and *float*. For instance, in the first moments of her encounter with Pete, I have decided that Maggie has an inner *press* and an outer *dab*. This means that I manifest a feeling of a *press*, which is a strong, sustained effort, on the inside while my voice and way of speaking is light and quick.

I have used these techniques before but not to the level I am in this performance. Normally, I might make more intellectual or emotional choices. While my work is still informed by these choices, I think I am putting in more effort to a physical performance for this role.

## **What do you see as the main themes or message of the play? How do your characters connect with these ideas?**

**JAMES:** The main themes in the play for me are obviously mostly related to climate change but more specifically how future governments are going to keep the population safe from the effects of climate change. How will they mobilise entire populations? There is a moment in the play between Mark and Emily where Mark says, “too many people will die” and Emily replies “too many have”. I feel this moment strikes at the core of the play.

**ELIZABETH:** I think the strongest, clearest message of the play speaks to the seriousness of our earth’s climate crisis. The play is set in a future where things have become incredibly desperate; however, the future it presents is only eight years from now. There are scenes and characters from many different places across the world. This is important because it illuminates how some countries will be more severely affected by drastic action and highlights the need to consider the whole world in our efforts to combatting climate change. One size does not fit all: the earth needs thoughtful and unified leadership to enact sophisticated, widespread and immediate change. In reality, the solution is perhaps not as simple as a worldwide hibernation, but it certainly needs to be as drastic. Mitchell Butel, our director, made reference to a quote that says something like: “we either do something drastic, or nothing; either way our future is going to be drastic.”

At a more detailed level, there is a theme within the play that suggests that perhaps we don’t need to listen to the loudest voices, rather take pause and hear what the quieter ones say. Maggie is an example of this as Emily points out in the third act. She goes about quietly and without being noticed. Again, the solution is not as simple as just being like Maggie or doing nothing, but it is an idea that the play offers as part of the solution.





## CAST Q&A

with Kialea-Nadine Williams (Chidera Okoye/Kelly Knowles)  
& Rashidi Edward (Azubuike Okoye/Nigel)

### How would you describe your characters in *Hibernation*?

**RASHIDI:** Azubuike is a responsible, caring, loving husband and father whose life is all about the safety and health of his family. He is affectionate, outgoing and humourous. With this role, the characterisation work was made easier in many ways because Fin's writing is superb - it's all there! I didn't have to do much imaginative work beyond some background into the history of the character and his wife. Finding the tone and the physicality came from people I know or have seen who I think are in the same calibre as Azubuike. His relationship with his wife and kids was also a major starting point for characterisation.

**KIALEA:** Chidera is a loving mother, devoted wife and protector of the family. She's emotionally intelligent, intellectual, and becomes versed in global politics- she's vocal on many issues around the globe.

Her family drives her, especially her loving husband, he is the breadwinner, the protector of the family she supports him and guards him. They have a loving, playful relationship that is transferred to their sons. She also had a daughter, Ayesha, who passed away through unclear circumstances. Chidera is driven by educating her children, protecting them from every situation, even ones she can't control. She has a beautiful emotional strength and is an activist who wants to connect with her community and the world. She patient and listens to each person's experience, offering them support and sharing her story.

I've discussed my character Chidera and backstory with Rashidi Edward who plays her husband, Azubuike. Our eldest son, Ohon, protects and teaches Obuya, his younger brother. Our family lives in Makoko, Lagos, a water city, and we've viewed many images that we can draw on, including photos of a floating school project, neighbourhoods and communities. During our research, we

RASHIDI EDWARD & KIALEA-NADINE WILLIAMS. PHOTO: SIA DUFF.

learned that Lagos endured many floods in July 2021. This led us to look into the city structures and how they are affected by the floods.

My other character, Kelly, is a fun-loving, intelligent news reader. She's factual, ambitious and knows her audience. She is career driven and has been slightly sheltered throughout her life. I think she's quite privileged and sometimes has a lack of understanding of the emotional views of others.

She is extremely close with her co-anchor, Alex, and has a loving relationship with her. Alex has taken Kelly under her wing, pushing her to be more in the industry.

In the play, Kelly has a traumatic experience that makes her realise that her way of life, who she is and what she stands for, might not be what she has wanted. This revelation leads her to become more empathetic and sympathetic with others. The experience also leads her to help amplify the message of hibernation.

I've discussed my character's traits and journey with Rosalba Clemente who plays Alex, and we've used videos and images to assist us with developing their on-camera lives. I've watched YouTube clips of LA news shows, focussing on the personas, articulation and on-camera presentation of anchorwomen and how they connect to their viewers. I've also observed women like Gail King, Oprah and Ellen who have an amazing way of connecting with people sharing their story and prompting change.

## **What do you see as the main themes or message of the play? How do your characters connect with these ideas?**

**KIALEA:** Climate change, our environment, global responses, understanding peoples' experiences across the world and human connections are all important themes within the play.

Chidera connects with the themes of the play through global connections. She wants to do the right thing by humankind. She is aware of her own circumstances and the circumstances of others she connects with globally. She is a small activist who does not agree with the world decisions that are being made due to her situation in Lagos. She sees the devastation of her own country, and other countries, due to poverty, government structures and infrastructures. By connecting with others globally she is able to share and listen to others' stories with empathy and sympathy and hopefully make a change.

Kelly's circumstances and views are opposite to Chidera's. She is an advocate for hibernation and promotes the movement. She is lucky that the country she resides in has a positive experience of hibernation. Kelly sees the environmental impacts of hibernation as huge positive changes, she's an advocate for change in the climate, the environment and the future.



## CAST Q&A

with Mark Saturno  
(Warwick Joyce)

### How would you describe Warwick?

Warwick Joyce is a senior politician within a conservative government. Originally the shadow minister for agriculture, he was catapulted to the newly created “Space Exploration” department when the Liberals were elected to parliament in 2025. Originally hailing from country SA, with rather humble beginnings, his ambitions have grown exponentially since graduating from law school, becoming the head of the Young Liberals and being the youngest ever elected member of his very conservative electorate. He is now eyeing off the top job of PM if his joint Space Exploration plan comes off.

Warwick is cunning, whip-smart, has a quick tongue and doesn’t suffer fools. But behind his drive for personal success and super-confident persona is a man who values the land and the family unit, making the 54E policy not much of a far cry from his core beliefs.

### What is your process for bringing this character to life?

Doing my least favourite thing: watching a lot of politicians giving press conferences and speeches in question time! I also think about how it physically and emotionally affects a man who is at the top of game to fall from such heights. When we see Warwick at the end of the play, we see the shadow of someone who truly believed he was destined to be among the world’s leaders. Without trying to mimic anyone, I look at prominent figures who have experienced being both an inspiration and then a pariah in a very public forum. What does that do to their body, their voice or their carriage? I think about how that translates to how I would be in similar circumstances.

LEFT TO RIGHT: CHRIS ASIMOS, ANSUYA NATHAN AND MARK SATURNO. PHOTO: SIA DUFF.



# CAST ON CHARACTER

with Chris Asimos (Damian Accuardi/Luis Flores/Customs Official)

## How would you describe your characters in *Hibernation*?

I play two characters in *Hibernation*: Damian Accuardi, the senior advisor and main policy man to Warwick Joyce (minister of Space Exploration) member of the conservative party, and Luis Flores, a dedicated Colombian police officer and loving husband to Ernesto Flores.

My characters have contrasting journeys through the play. Damian starts off as the ambitious right-hand man who will do anything to see his boss rise to power no matter how ruthless it may be. His push for hibernation is purely to gain political clout. He'll step on toes (especially Emily's) to get to the top. However, by the third act we see a more human side to the character as he begins to have second thoughts about his actions and motivations. The character's moral code definitely takes over.

Luis, on the other hand, starts off as a sympathetic character. We know he works for the police but it's not his life. He is jovial and caring, which is evident in his first scene where we see him concerned about the wellbeing of his husband and mother-in-law. By the third act, Luis has changed, *Hibernation* has hardened him. Lawlessness is abundant and Luis becomes more dedicated to his role as a police officer. He insists they must "keep what's good and... clean up the other stuff".

Both characters are exciting to play because of this complexity. Switching between the two characters is quite easy as I play Luis with a Colombian accent and Damian with my natural accent. Their physicality is also quite different.

Damian is a politician so his physicality is quite proper – standing up straight with his shoulders back. He is confident and cocky but in a subtle corporate way. By the third act, when he starts to have second thoughts about his role, Damian loosens up and presents himself differently. He no longer wears a sharp suit by the end of the play.

Luis starts off loving and tactile, quite loose and fluid physically, but by the third act he is a lot more regimented in his attitude and physicality.

Every character experiences hibernation differently and the two characters I play have contrasting views on it. Although Damian was one of the first advocates for hibernation, he has doubts, is worried about the human impact and begins questioning the political experiment. Luis, on the other hand, is all for hibernation. He can see the good that's come from it, not necessarily the environmental impact but the new order that exists. Through hibernation, Luis is given a new sense of purpose and responsibility.



## CAST ON CHARACTER

with Ezra Juanta (Mark Obrecht/ Ernesto Flores/Customs Official)  
& Rosalba Clemente (Alex Hall/Cassandra Flores)

### How would you describe your characters in *Hibernation*?

**ROSALBA:** I have two characters within the play. Alex is a strong primetime breakfast show journalist in Los Angeles. She loves her job and deplores journalism's move towards entertainment news. She is driven, entitled and enjoys her power. She values her viewers and seeks to get the highest ratings. She wants respect and truth. One of her functions within the play is to provide unflattering commentary on Australia. Alex also presents the idea of hibernation to her viewers, supporting the need and science behind it.

I put a great deal of work into learning the accent for this character and researched popular contemporary newsreaders in the United States, such as Rachel Madden and Taylor Holland, as well as Hillary Clinton.

My other character, Cassandra, is an older Colombian woman aged 71 and living in a retirement home. She comes from a poorer background, originally rooted in agricultural life before moving to Bogota to work in a series of menial jobs. She is strong, emotionally intelligent and feels things deeply. She loves her son and his partner, Luis. As an older woman, Cassandra does not want to lose a year of her life to hibernation. Her objective is to survive and live her life. Tragically, Cassandra starts to lose her mind and retreat into herself shortly after coming out of hibernation. I believe this is a choice Cassandra makes for herself. The new world is too disorienting so she looks within to find beauty. Ultimately, she would rather die than live in this new reality.

The accent work for this character was also quite extensive. I based her on my mother and my zias (aunties) – all strong, stoic and feeling women, like Cassandra, who immigrated to Australia from Southern Italy due to poverty. Cassandra is my tribute to them.

ABOVE (LEFT TO RIGHT): CHRIS ASIMOS, ROSALBA CLEMENTE & EZRA JUANTA. LEFT: ROSALBA AS CASSANDRA & EZRA AS ERNESTO. PHOTOS: SIA DUFF.



In my preparation, I do a lot of thinking about what my characters want in each scene. I also utilise other methods to flesh out my characters. This includes the psychological gesture work of Michael Chekhov, which I use for the physical and inner life of my characters, and the mind printing work of Sam Kogan, which helps with the characters' full psychological make-up.

**EZRA:** I play two characters, Mark and Ernesto. Mark is a young ambitious Australian journalist. He writes for a newspaper and want to be a voice that the Australian people can trust. He is one of the journalists that breaks the story of hibernation. To prepare for this role, I have been watching a lot of press conferences and episodes of TV show *The West Wing*. Mark shows fear and concern prior to hibernation, but later subscribes to the idea of it.

Ernesto is a man in Bogotá, Colombia, who struggles with the effects of hibernation. For Ernesto, the world becomes a more dangerous place after hibernation. He fears for his family's safety, especially for his husband who is a police officer and for his mother, whose health plummets after hibernation. Ernesto wrestles with these issues and his new reality.

*"I really think water might be everything. That's what it feels like, in this city and all the other ones. Maybe evolution is playing a game, spinning the clock backwards, slowly returning us all to the water. Our legs might go. Our toes might web. Our gills might form once more. We might breathe again, without breathing. This is a year."*

- Cassandra Flores, reflecting on what happened in the year of hibernation



ACTORS ANSUYA NATHAN, ROSALBA CLEMENTE AND MARK SATURNO IN REHEARSALS AT THE STATE THEATRE COMPANY SOUTH AUSTRALIA WORKSHOP. PHOTO: JESSICA ZENG.

## What next?

Pick a character from *Hibernation*. What are the key differences between the chosen character and the other characters in the story? List any important physical features and accent, their emotions and their key motivations or desires. Come up with ideas about their speech, posture, mannerisms and gestures. Why do you think these work for the character? For example, if you think the character should walk or move slowly, what does that mean? Are they being purposeful? Or is there a physical reason, such as age or injury?

All of the characters in the play have their own ideas and opinions about hibernation. Some of these are clearly expressed and others are hidden.

Write a letter from your chosen character to someone they trust – this may be another character in the play, it could be someone mentioned, such as Warwick's wife, or could be someone made up, like a childhood best friend or sibling. Have them reveal their true feelings about hibernation and the reasons they feel that way.

Perform the letter as a monologue. Remember to keep the list of their physical characteristics, emotions and other mannerisms in mind in your performance.



A portrait of Jonathon Oxlade, a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a red beanie and a white t-shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile.

## DESIGN ELEMENTS

AN INTERVIEW WITH  
JONATHON OXLADE

### **How would you describe the set & costume design for *Hibernation*?**

The set and costume design for *Hibernation* is very pared back. For the set, Mitchell [Butel, Director] and I wanted to create a very simple space that gave room for Finegan [Kruckemeyer]'s script as it is very detailed and descriptive. The space is white, like an art gallery. The hope is that everything we place within the space has meaning, without clutter or decoration. Colour will be used in the design to provide a sense of location.

The costume design draws inspiration from the past but with small tweaks, such as different necklines or waistlines. The clothes should feel familiar but slightly off, helping to create a sense that we are in a time slightly in the future. In a sense, it's very contemporary, but hopefully we have integrated enough of our real world to create a feeling of warmth and humanity.

Finegan's script is so delicious and moving. It speaks to the moment we are in, and the future that we are moving into. It feels like a classical piece for a contemporary audience. It's very exciting to design such an epic piece – it almost designed itself, in a way, the script is so powerful.

### **How does the design connect with the themes of the show?**

The themes in *Hibernation* are varied. For me, it's about our innate connection to time and how we, as a species, shift and move through the challenges that we are up against; a tiny orb in a vast galaxy. Visually, we have tried to create an aperture or a viewpoint that we can see throughout the work. Through this hole, we can look in at ourselves.



THE SET MODEL FOR *HIBERNATION*. PHOTO: JESSICA ZENG.

## **What process or techniques did you use to create the design for this show?**

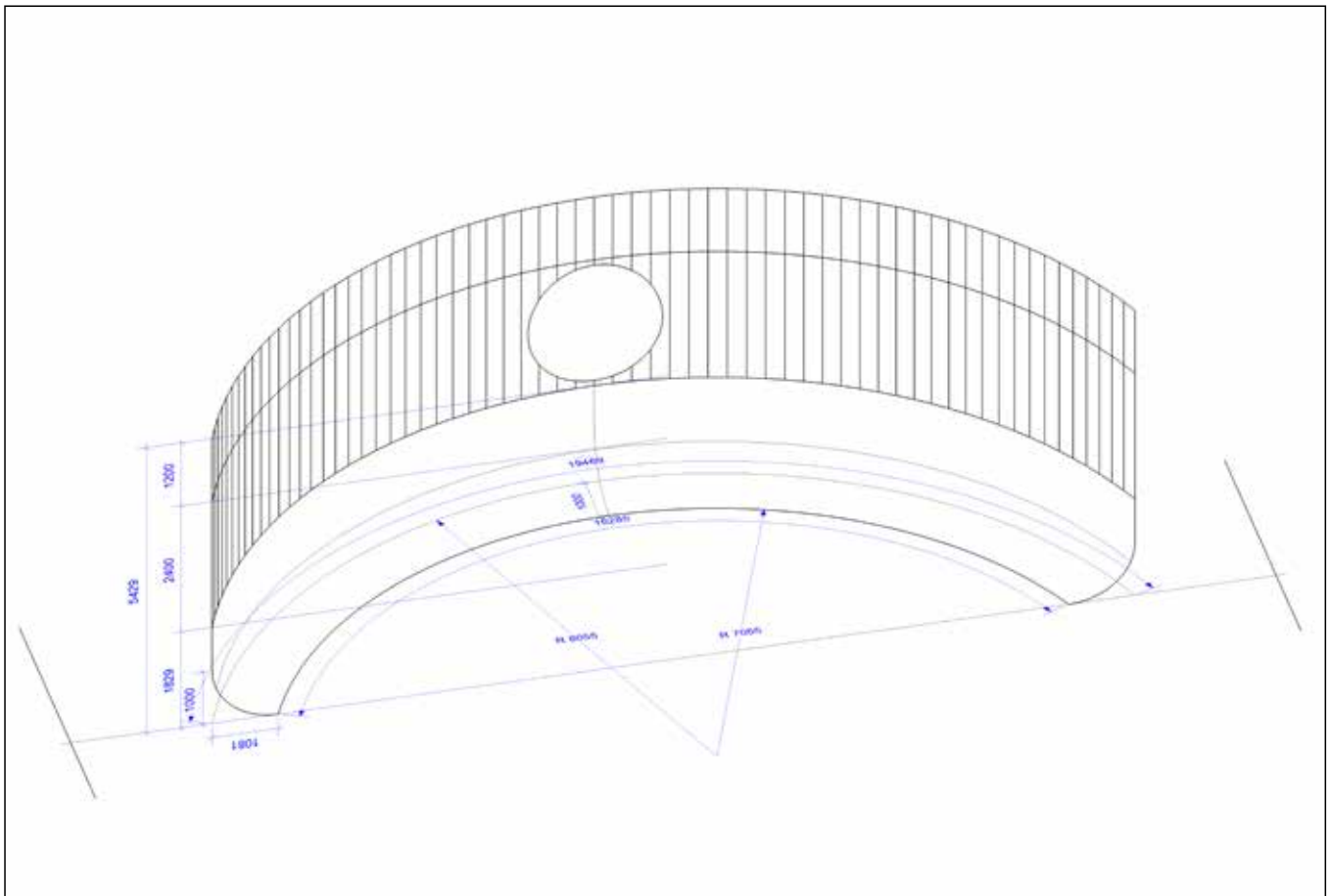
Approaching a design like this takes a bit of time. There are conversations with the director and lighting designer. Then you need to make draft models, which we call 'white card' models because they aren't coloured in yet. These models give the workshop and production department an idea of where the design is headed so they can work on the time, materials and budget needed for the build. Then I make a model, draw up the plans and costumes and present it to the team. Things shift along the way, but my job is to give everyone a good blueprint for the look of the show. I include lots of research images to make sure everyone understands the 'feeling' that the director and I are heading towards. All of these were important steps in creating the set and costume design for *Hibernation*.

## **What do you see as the role of a designer in theatre?**

My role as set and costume designer is to oversee the entire look of the show, that means everything that goes in front of the audience. I work very closely with the director to make sure that all items link to the dramaturgy of the piece. I also work very closely with the lighting designer to make sure that everything we put on stage works in their lighting states. My role also needs to be flexible; things change during rehearsals so the ability to take on new ideas that were not in the original design is paramount.

## **What advice would you give to aspiring theatre designers?**

My advice for anyone that is heading towards scenography is to look at things other than theatre design. Go to art galleries, read comic books and children's books, look at people and study what they wear, read about archetypes, study philosophy and sociology, be in nature... all of these things feed the hungry artist. It's how you synthesise those feelings and ideas that makes good design.



TOP: A SET DESIGN PLAN FOR *HIBERNATION*. OTHER IMAGES: COSTUME DESIGN DRAWINGS FOR THE PLAY, INCLUDING COLOUR PALETTES TO IDENTIFY LOCATIONS. PROVIDED BY JONATHAN OXLADE.





## MUSIC & SOUND

AN INTERVIEW WITH ANDREW HOWARD,  
COMPOSER & SOUND DESIGNER

### **How would you describe the sound design and composition for *Hibernation*?**

The music for *Hibernation* is sitting in a non-naturalistic oeuvre at the moment. It is very low key and sits in the juncture between Steve Reich and Trent Reznor, two composers I am influenced by on a regular basis. Lots of the time I will watch and listen to film scores and draw inspiration from them when writing for shows, but I am also influenced by all the music I listen to.

The soundtrack really highlights the dystopian reality of the play. Lots of it is low and rumby but at the same time has an optimism in the high register melodic components. It pushes and pulls against itself much in the way the play does with the disparate views of the characters and their relationships to the politics and the reality in which their world is dealing with. There is not a lot of sound effect-based work in this show, which is very unusual for me. There will still be many elements but not as full and rich in the world-building that I usually do. *Hibernation* calls for a more sparse world due to both the writing and the content with which it deals.

### **What is the role of a sound designer? How does this differ from the role of a composer?**

The role of a sound designer is two-fold. These two parts are the technical design and the artistic design.

The technical design consists of choosing of all the speakers, microphones and all other equipment that will be used for a production. This includes doing technical drawings for where the speakers are in the theatre, measuring all cabling lengths, supplying the weight of any equipment that is flown, and all other speaker information data, such as where the speakers are pointing and their time relationship to other speakers within the system.



The artistic design is sourcing or creating sound effects, atmospheres, pads and drones that will be part of the aural environment, along with any music that is composed by a composer or licensed from a pre-existing source. The designer is responsible for the entire aural environment for a show.

The composer writes and records the music for a show and sometimes also creates the pads and drones as well.

## **DIEGETIC & NON-DIEGETIC SOUND**

*Hibernation* features both diegetic and non-diegetic sound.

Diegetic sound is noise where the source is found on the stage or in the action of the play. Diegetic sound relates to the world the actors inhabit. Examples of diegetic sounds could be bird calls, sounds made by a toy train or a splash of water. Some of these sounds are made by the actors and actions on the stage, while others are part of the sound design and are transmitted over the PA system.

Non-diegetic sound is added in and is not drawn from the action on stage; this is the sound present in the world the audience inhabits. Non-diegetic sounds are used to create a feeling or mood for the audience - they might be atmospheric sounds or music.



## **LIGHTING DESIGN**

AN INTERVIEW WITH GAVIN NORRIS,  
LIGHTING DESIGNER

### **How would you describe the lighting design for *Hibernation*?**

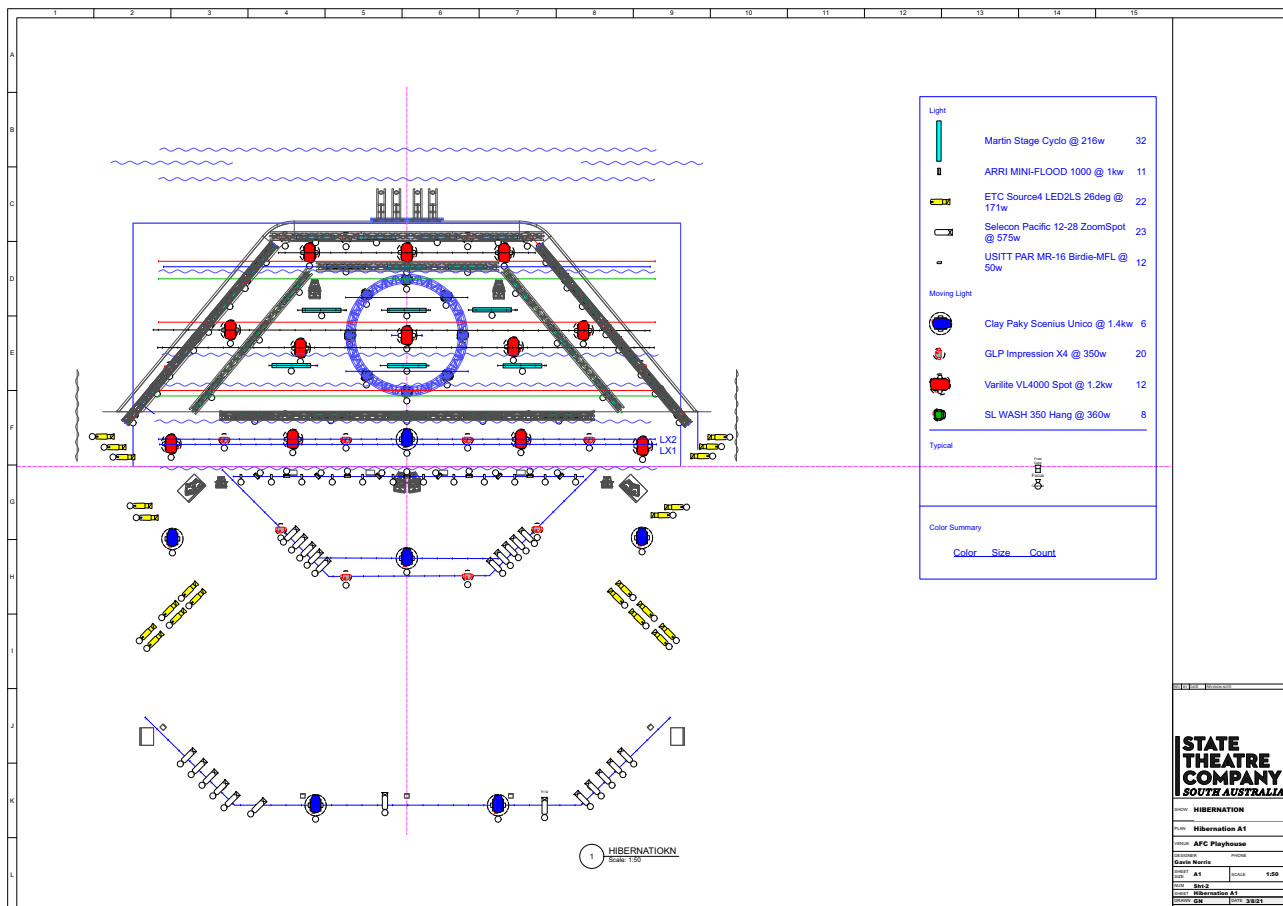
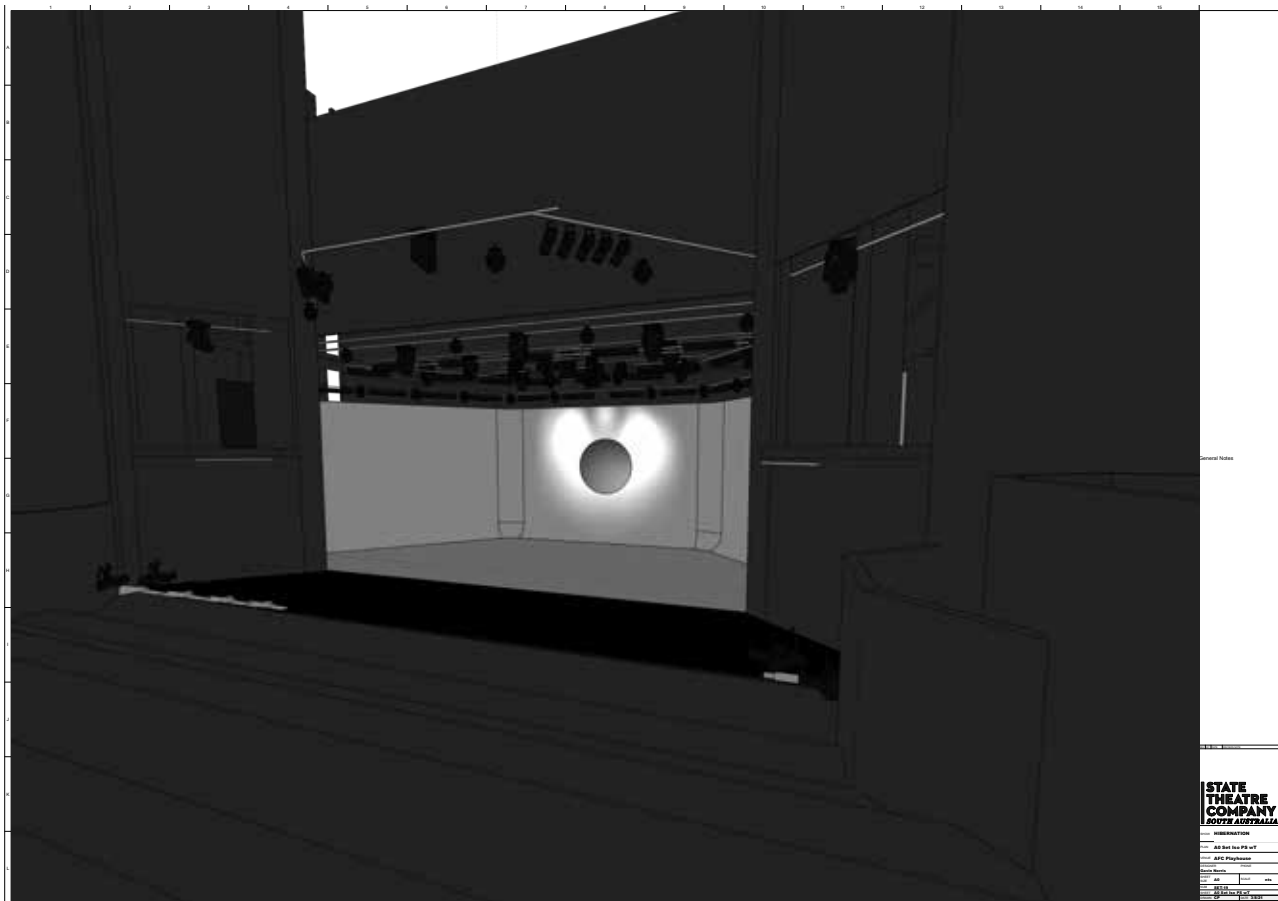
The lighting design for this production has a mix of naturalistic and non-naturalistic elements. At times, we are trying to portray quite naturalistic images, and the lighting assists with this, but the play is set within a quite non-naturalistic world so there are those elements, too. The set the actors perform within has a sort of gallery feel and that forms the base for the lighting. It's quite futuristic and filmic in some senses.

Each act of the play has a different feel and will be uniquely lit, allowing us to build the image we want to get to towards the play's conclusion.

### **What is your process for designing the lighting for a play?**

The design is very much a creative collaboration - the set, the way the show is blocked by the director and the music drive the style of the lighting design.

I also try to ensure that I create a visual experience for an audience. This can be achieved through the way the lights look within the space, the shape that we create visually, and how that ties into the set and the script. For example, I might look at whether using a fine haze to enhance the beams from the lights can help 'dress' the scenes on the stage to create a certain feeling or experience.



A LIGHTING DESIGN DRAWING AND DRAFT LIGHTING PLOT FOR *HIBERNATION*. PROVIDED BY GAVIN NORRIS.





COSTUME MAKER MARTINE MICKLEM WORKS ON A COSTUME FOR *HIBERNATION*.  
PHOTO: JESSICA ZENG.

## What next?

Choose a type of design on which to focus - set, costume, lighting or sound. Think about what sort of direction you might take with your design. Would you use a naturalistic feel or choose something minimal or abstract?

Think about the feeling you are trying to create with your design. List how the elements you have chosen might reinforce this feeling. Ensure each element of your design has purpose and thought behind it. How might you change the elements as the play progresses?

Create a mood board for your design - focus on a particular scene or moment, if that is helpful. For set, costume and lighting design, find or draw images and diagrams related to your vision. For sound design, find sounds or songs to get the feel you are looking for and create a playlist.

In writing or in a presentation, explain why you have made these choices and how your design connects with the story and themes of *Hibernation*.



## THEMES & CONCEPTS

IN *HIBERNATION*

BY FINEGAN KRUCKEMEYER

### Relationships, families & connection

**Ernesto, speaking about Cassandra in Act 3:**

*Hibernation... It took years off her. Like, yes she lived a life. But she could have lived a longer one. Another ten, maybe 15 years of my mum existing. And everyone says: 'well that's the price to pay'. But they didn't pay it, the ones who say that. She paid it – an old woman, in a poor Latin-American country. These are the ones who pay it.*

While the characters in *Hibernation* are taking action to assist with climate change and sustainability, their concerns are much more personal. The play's true focus is on human connections and relationships.

Many of the characters in *Hibernation* are seeking to make or keep a connection: Ernesto wishes to remain connected to his mother, Cassandra, by talking and joking with her; Chidera and Azubuike want to preserve their family connections and keep their children safe, and during hibernation, Maggie seeks to make a connection with Pete in hopes of keeping her loneliness at bay. Finally, Emily seeks to reconnect with her sister, Maggie. *Hibernation* destroys or changes many of these relationships and connections, but also sees new ones form through shared experiences.

Families are given particular emphasis. Maggie speaks about “all the new families” caused by hibernation. While she is speaking about animal families and packs, this could easily refer to the changes made in each of the characters' families. Maggie changes the way her own family looks, connecting with Pete and disappearing from Emily's life. Other characters see their families or personal relationships change through illness or death.

These human relationships are often valued more than anything else. The environment and the future of humanity are concerns for many of the characters, but they are rarely prized over these personal relationships.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CLEMENT RUKUNDO & ACTOR RASHIDI EDWARD. PHOTO: JESSICA ZENG.



## Equivalence & fairness

**Chidera, speaking to Ernesto in Act 3:**

*They called hibernation a... global decision, yes? An agreement made by the world. But... the world feels things differently. We didn't all agree to the same thing. Our deal was a lot worse than the one for many others ...*

*The rules for hibernation were made in Washington, in... Shanghai. In Berlin. And we can point to them on a map. But the price for Hibernation... It was paid in Lagos. And no one knows where to find me. To find me and to say sorry to me.*

Each of the characters in *Hibernation* grapples differently with hibernation, in part because of their differences in circumstance – particularly, their varying ages and the countries they are living in when hibernation occurs.

Through the child, Jeong, and the elderly Cassandra, we are given two extreme points of view on the difference a year of hibernation can make. While Jeong reflects with excitement on being a year older and the potential of walking to school with a friend, Cassandra laments that a year is a long time for someone without many years of life left.

We also see how the environmental effects of hibernation impact characters in different countries in different ways. While all have dealt with elements of tragedy, less wealthy nations or those closer to coastal areas or waterways seem to have been affected more strongly. In Lagos, waterways have arisen in the middle of the city and there is a lack of food. Countries or communities with higher crime rates or greater levels of government corruption may be facing other difficulties. In Colombia, Ernesto becomes scared for his family's safety after a rise in gun violence and crime. Hibernation has exacerbated existing situations and inequalities between nations, as well as causing new problems.

ABOVE AND RIGHT: THE CAST IN REHEARSALS. PHOTOS: JESSICA ZENG.





These problems, however, may also have been exacerbated by the continuing decline in the natural environment, which also impacts less wealthy countries to a greater degree (see more in the section on climate change and global warming).

By contrast, most of the Australian characters seem to have felt relatively little impact on the way they live. While Warwick has lost his mother, and we hear of many more deaths in Australia, the other characters appear to live in a similar way to they did before hibernation – although their mindsets may have changed.

This raises questions about the unequal impact of hibernation. Ernesto and Chidera talk about the way governments who have not felt the real, personal impact of hibernation on their lives – or at least, not to the same degree as members of the general population in their cities – are making decisions for everyone. They point out that many of the people making these decisions have not had to make the same levels or kinds of sacrifices.

## Sacrifice, responsibility & decision-making

**Warwick and Mark at a press conference in Act 3:**

**Warwick:** We are saying/

**Mark:** /Because early reports are proposing 80,000 deat/

**Warwick:** /We are saying – if you'll let me finish please, Mark – that every death is a tragedy. The ideal number of victims in 2030 was of course zero.

**Mark:** So you were expecting zero deaths? That's what your estimates were suggesting?

**Warwick:** I didn't say that. I said that was the wish. The reality – as with every reality – is of course different. If you really want to know about our modelling/

**Mark:** /We do, Minister. Australia does.

**Warwick:** Well then Australia will be happy to know, Mark, that projections were higher. Far higher.

**Mark:** And yet despite these 'far higher' projections, you persisted with hibernation?/

**Warwick:** /But if you hold those figures up against our other set of projections! Which was doing nothing! Which was doing what some people, on some other sides of the aisle, and some people in the media, would have had us do... Well then you're really looking at a scary number. Then we are talking deaths edging close to a million. And that's here – in Australia. Globally, the price of doing nothing in 2030 – of expecting nothing, and being ready for nothing when it did come... would have been catastrophic.

*Hibernation* examines the balance between personal and global spheres. How do we make a decision? Do we base it on what is best for us personally? Or do we base it on what is better for society, the environment or our planet's future? What is the more moral choice?

The aim of hibernation is ostensibly to allow time for the environment to recover and refresh without the impact of human activity. If it works, this act should benefit future populations and the health of the planet. The argument could be made that hibernation is the socially and environmentally responsible decision. The effect of hibernation on an individual level is much more complicated.

As Warwick notes, a certain number of deaths are predicted because of this action. This is deemed a worthwhile price for the greater good but ignores the personal loss many end up facing as a result. What do we owe to our families or loved ones? Are we also responsible to these people? Is that less or more important than what we owe to the global community and our natural environment?

Maggie also grapples with the idea of her responsibility to others during hibernation. She openly wonders whether saving some lives – or at least, trying to save some lives – makes it okay for her to steal art, vases, even a husband.

Many of the characters in the play must make personal sacrifices for the greater good. Some do so willingly or knowingly; others do not have the knowledge or the power to make their own decision.



## Climate change & global warming

*Emily and Mark speaking in Act 1:*

*Emily:* So... well the department I work in is Space Exploration. And yeah we're federally funded, but also internationally 'cause of this... consortium thing Australia's in – the G14. To find habitable places beyond Earth.

*Mark:* 'Cause we f\*\*\*ed it up?

*Emily:* Basically. Except – and this is what I was thinking about, one night, last week, for... no real reason – we haven't.

*Mark:* We haven't f\*\*\*ed it up?

*Emily:* Not completely.

### BACKGROUND & CAUSES

The action of this play is propelled by the need for humans to respond to the worsening condition of the climate and environment on Earth. Climate change and human response to the issues it raises are the central ideas or themes behind this work.

The Australian Academy of Science defines climate change as “a change in the pattern of weather, and related changes in oceans, land surfaces and ice sheets, occurring over time scales of decades or longer”. There are natural and human-induced causes of global climate change. Natural causes include internal fluctuations (variations in the exchange of energy, water and carbon between the atmosphere, oceans, land and ice) and external influences (variations in energy received from the sun or volcanic eruptions). The climate system experiences natural cycles which can last for years, decades or even centuries. Human activities that influence climate change are related to the emission of greenhouse gases, the use of aerosols and changes to land cover through activities like deforestation, farming and mining.

Global warming or global heating is one aspect of climate change and refers to the long-term rise of the Earth's temperature. Global warming is mainly driven



ABOVE AND RIGHT: THE CAST IN REHEARSALS. PHOTOS: JESSICA ZENG.

by increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide and methane, in Earth's atmosphere. Fossil fuel burning (the use of coal, oil or gas for things like creating electricity and powering cars) is the main source of greenhouse gas emission. Agriculture, deforestation and manufacturing also contribute to global warming and greenhouse gas emissions.

## EFFECTS

Since the Industrial Revolution (1760-1840), the Earth's temperature is believed to have risen by 1° Celsius. While this may seem small, the increase in global surface temperatures has already had an environmental impact. The Earth is experiencing more frequent severe weather events, rising sea levels, ocean warming and acidification, habitat destruction and greater risk of species extinction, arctic warming and much more. People are also being confronted with the effects of global warming and climate change, particularly in less-developed countries or communities and in coastal locations. Changes in weather can have a huge impact on people's health. Severe weather events, coastal erosion, tidal flooding, rising sea levels and desertification can all displace people from their homes. There is less food security as crops fail as a result of droughts, flooding or changing temperatures. These issues are likely to worsen with increasing carbon emissions and global surface temperature.

## RESPONSES

Most climate scientists agree that human activities are the main driver of increased global surface temperature and global warming. Politicians and the general public have increasingly identified climate change and global warming as a significant threat to the current and future wellbeing of the planet and its inhabitants. Many refer to this issue as the 'climate crisis' or 'climate emergency'. However, there are also many people who dispute effect human activity has on the climate – these people are often referred to as 'climate deniers' or 'climate sceptics'.

There is no easy or clear-cut solution to the climate crisis. The impact of climate change can be lessened by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing





carbon sinks, such as oceans and vegetation, which absorb more carbon than they produce. Emissions can be reduced through increased use of clean energy, reducing energy demand or use, preventing further deforestation, changing our approach to agriculture and farming, reforestation and tree planting. Global warming is a global issue: it requires change and commitment from every country, particularly those who are currently producing the most greenhouse gas emissions and burning the most fossil fuel.

### **WITHIN THE PLAY**

*Hibernation* begins in the year 2030: the effects of climate change have worsened and there is a huge strain on the Earth's natural resources. Characters mention water shortages, famines and forests that have been killed from "smog-rot". Politicians from countries across the world are turning to space exploration in hopes of finding another planet humans could live on. The suggestion is that people have not been able to effectively curb the activities that contribute to global warming.

Having humans hibernate for a year is seen as a drastic but necessary solution to the climate crisis. With humans asleep, there will be fewer greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation will grind to a halt, agriculture and farming activities will be put on pause, and plant and animal life will be given a chance to recover. In the play's third act, characters grapple with the effects of hibernation on the environment and on people – the good outcomes, the negative consequences and the unexpected events. As with global warming, the effects of hibernation are felt most by people in less developed countries.

**Please note:** This is a very basic run-down on the causes and impact of climate change and global warming. There is a lot more information about this topic available as articles, on websites, in documentaries and on TV shows. There is also a lot of misinformation out there. Make sure the things you read and/or watch are reputable, backed by scientific research and multiple sources.

Conservation Council SA have offered support for this production and have resources available online: [conservationsa.org.au](http://conservationsa.org.au)





## Sustainability

*Emily, speaking to Damian in Act 3:*

*Not just again – not once. Lots of times. It’s a cycle now, Damian. And all the shit that all the wrong heads of government do... ‘Cause honestly pretty much every government is led by the wrong person – I’ve met them and... it’s not even a joke...*

*But now everything those guys do in nine years – ‘cause of incompetence or malice or greed... It gets undone in the tenth. It gets judged by the planet – with all of us f\*\*\*\*d off to bed. And that thing takes no prisoners. It doesn’t buy into spin. It can’t be lied to. If your systems are strong, fine. If they’re weak...*

*Then buildings fall. Then people die. And the survivors will be angry. And they’ll exert real pressure. And systems... fundamentally f\*\*\*\*d systems... will topple. Not after the last Hibernation. Maybe not after this one.*

*But eventually.*

Sustainability is a word heard often in discussions about climate change and protecting the environment. When used in reference to the environment, the term is defined as “avoidance of the depletion of natural resources in order to maintain an ecological balance” (Oxford English Dictionary). Sustainability is about balancing the needs of human civilisation with the long-term viability of the Earth’s natural resources.

*Hibernation* demonstrates what happens when human activity can no longer be sustained by natural resources. Through the act of hibernation, humans hope to regain a better sense of balance between their needs and the needs of the Earth.

DIRECTOR MITCHELL BUTEL AND PLAYWRIGHT FINEGAN KRUCKEMEYER. PHOTO: SIA DUFF.



Sustainability also has another meaning: “the ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level” (Oxford English Dictionary). *Hibernation* poses many questions related to this kind of sustainability, too. Are repeated hibernations sustainable – in terms of the resources required to achieve and recover from hibernation, but also for humans on a personal level? Can humans really manage sleeping for a whole year on a regular basis? Is hibernation the only way for the Earth to be sustainable?

The sustainability of current government systems is also questioned within the play, particularly by Emily towards the end of Act 3. While she admits a personal motivation for pushing for a second hibernation, she also believes that multiple hibernations might force leadership and government structures to change for the better.

TOP: JAMES SMITH SHOOTS THE TRAILER FOR HIBERNATION. PHOTO: RACHEL BELL & MATT BYRNE.  
 BOTTOM: THE CAST IN REHEARSALS. PHOTOS: JESSICA ZENG.



## A SCENE FROM THE SCRIPT

### Act 1, Scene 21: Emily Metcalfe Monologue

*Emily Metcalfe gives the following speech to a small audience gathered by American journalist Kelly Knowles four years after the first hibernation.*

There's an irony in who we are. Who this group is, and who its sibling groups are – its brothers and sisters in every city, every town, across the globe – I hear about more and more every day. And the irony's this:

When the push for civil rights here, in your country, began – and I mean when it really... grabbed the minds and hearts of people, even the white people – its voice was Martin Luther King. Eloquent and loud and sure, a reverend's voice.

But its body – its heart – was Rosa Parks. Quiet. And normal. And acting... only because there was no choice. And the people saw that. And they realised they had no choice either.

When the Raj was toppled, it was this... small bald man – this smiling patient man, the exact opposite of any general we can imagine – who told people to hold on. To wait it out. To know that a better thing was coming. A better way of being.

When the hippies needed symbols, for the peace they were... trying to express but couldn't, they chose two lovers – a famous musician, an infamous artist – and that couple stayed in bed. They didn't go off to any fight. They stayed where they were and demanded, quietly, that the world change. That it be better than it was.

When the tanks had to be stopped in Tiananmen... The people lay down.

*Beat.*

And the tanks didn't stop... But the cameras didn't either.

ANSUYA NATHAN AS EMILY METCALFE (CENTRE) WITH ACTORS MARK SATURNO AND RASHIDI EDWARD. PHOTO: SIA DUFF.

When a famous man had to show the injustice he felt about the Vietnam War, he didn't raise his fists – and how paradoxical is that? He was a boxer! Raising fists was what he did. It was why the people loved him. [Beat] But he set aside those fists. He set aside that love. He was hated. And unarmed. And he sat in jail.

And that is it! That's the line, the one same line, that runs through last century's great upheavals. Muhammad Ali sat. Gandhi and his followers sat. Rosa Parks sat. John and Yoko lay down – and they became symbols. The students in Tiananmen Square lay down... And they became martyrs.

All of them – all these acts which... ripple. Which happened then, but which we know about now. And understand now, as... as re-imaginings of the world. As schisms which in some small way shifted the world...

Their key ingredient... was stillness. They did nothing. And it meant everything. Because stillness is potent. Stillness is powerful. Stillness – and this is the simple, perfect irony in our language – stillness is a movement.

And there's nothing as still... There's no time when we're more defenceless – or when we're more brave...

*She smiles.*

...than sleep.

Hibernation is the greatest act, the greatest f\*\*k you. Hibernation is our movement – the twenty-first century's movement. We will lie down for this. We will proselytise ourselves for this.

Because... to become a knight, you don't rush towards great armies. You kneel... in front of a single sword.

To pledge eternal love... You do not cross the world for someone. You wait... at an altar for them.

Four years ago, brothers and sisters, we pledged our love for a planet. By bowing to it. By telling it, it was bigger and we were smaller. We put our life in its hands.

And we were repaid! We were repaid a thousand times over. The skies tell us that! The seas tell us that! The fact we're here – so many of us still alive when really we shouldn't be... It tells us that! And that is why...

Hibernation must return. Nine years of us doing as we please can only be balanced... by one year of submission. One in ten must not be for us.

'Cause since the Industrial Revolution, brothers and sisters... Since the first factory roared into life... Since the first smokestack coughed, the first car rolled off the first conveyor belt...

We have been making our beds. And now...

Now we must sleep in them.

*Finished, Emily sits and Kelly emphatically shakes her hand, as the listeners cheer, a chant of 'one in ten' building.*





## FURTHER ACTIVITIES

KIALEA-NADINE WILLIAMS IN REHEARSALS. PHOTO: JESSICA ZENG.

### ACTIVITY, WRITTEN RESPONSE & DISCUSSION

Read through Emily's monologue on the previous two pages. Emily lists a series of examples of people who took a stand against a situation by sitting or lying down. What do you know about these instances or people?

Choose one of the following people or incidents mentioned by Emily:

- Rose Parks and her role in the civil rights movement in the United States
- Mahatma Gandhi and the toppling of the British Raj and rule in India
- John Lennon and Yoko Ono and protest of the Vietnam War
- Mohammad Ali and resistance to the Vietnam War draft
- Tiananmen Square student-led protests in China

Research your chosen incident and answer the following questions:

- What was the situation the person or people were protesting against?
- What action did they take and why?
- Do you think this action was effective? Why or why not?
- Who else supported this action ( specific community, general public, government, etc.)? What was the response from the government? And the general public?
- What are the similarities between this action and the act of hibernation?
- What are the differences?

Write down your responses. Discuss as a class or in a small group.

### WRITTEN RESPONSE

Write a review of this production of *Hibernation*, taking into account direction, acting, design elements, audience response and themes. A list of acts, characters and locations can be found on page 51 of this study guide.

For guidelines on how to write a review, see our review writing resources linked in the dropdown menu for *Hibernation* at [statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program](http://statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program)

## ACTIVITY

Design a front of house experience or poster for this production of *Hibernation*. Think about the themes and messages of the production. How might you emphasise these in your design? Think about the audience you think will be interested in attending - their age, level of education, interests, etc. What sort of experience or poster would appeal most to them? Come up with colours and concepts, list your ideas and sketch them out. Create a final product (a poster, model or final design sketch). Ensure everything that is included is there for a reason.

## DISCUSSION

On the surface, Warwick Joyce and Emily Metcalfe seem like very different characters at the beginning of *Hibernation*. As the play progresses, the audience may be able to see more similarities emerge. Think about these two characters in Act 1. How are they different? How are they similar? What are their motivations? What kind of language do they use when they're trying to convince people of something?

Think about these two characters in Act 3 and ask those same three questions. Have the characters changed? If so, how? Have they become less or more similar? Have their motivations changed? Or do you think their original motivations were hidden in Act 1? Do you think either of them is a likeable character? Why? Which one do you like more?

Discuss these questions in pairs, small groups or as a class.

## WRITTEN RESPONSE & ACTIVITY

Pick one or two of the characters from *Hibernation*. When they wake up from the second hibernation, what is the first thing you think they will say or do? Write a scene based on what they might do or say when they wake up. This could be a monologue or could be a dialogue. Set the scene during the first week after the second hibernation has ended. Remember to think about the way the character/s speak, what they might be feeling and what they care about most. Ensure you include any necessary stage directions, such as movements, pauses or facial expressions.

Optional: Perform the scene in front of the class, keeping in mind the stage directions and the characteristics of your chosen character/s.

*"In seven days, an anaesthetic gas will land upon you – wherever you are in the world ... This gas will be combined with the other elements of 54E-501E. And it will send you to sleep ... It is a miracle. It is science. And it does work."*

- Alex Hall, presenting the idea of hibernation on television in Act 1



### WRITTEN RESPONSE & ACTIVITY

Imagine that you have been asked to promote hibernation as a response to climate change and global warming. You've been asked to give a speech on national television to advise people that hibernation is going to happen, to explain how it will work and describe how it will be beneficial.

Write your speech. Ensure you keep the feelings of your audience in mind. How do you think they might be feeling? How can you reassure or persuade them that this is the correct path forward? Use information provided in the play and take inspiration from speeches made by Emily and Warwick, as well as the news announcement made by Alex. Use your own words rather than copying directly.

Optional: Perform the speech for your class. Ensure your voice and body language help to reassure or persuade your audience.

### ACTIVITY

In a group, choose a scene from *Hibernation*. Discuss how you would want this to be represented on stage. Make sure you consider all design elements – set, props, sound, lighting, etc. Write down your ideas or create a mood board. Next, think about the characters involved in your chosen scene. Think about what each of the characters might be feeling in that moment, how their feelings might change as the scene progresses, what they are trying to achieve in the scene and what might have changed in the character's life after the action or conversation involved in the scene. Think about the expressions and physicality that might accompany the emotions and actions of the characters.

If possible, create a minimal version of your chosen design and act out the scene. If there are important design elements that are difficult to simplify, describe these ideas to the rest of the class or your teacher before the group acts out the scene.



LEFT & ABOVE: THE CAST IN REHEARSALS. PHOTOS: JESSICA ZENG.

### ACTIVITY & WRITTEN RESPONSE

Imagine one of your favourite places in South Australia. What do you think would happen to this place during a year of hibernation? If it's an outdoor area, consider how it might change without human activity. If it's an indoor location, imagine a window has broken or a door has swung open - what would happen if nature entered this place?

Try to build a very clear picture of what this place would look like, sound like and smell like. Research the animals, birds and vegetation natural to the area and think about how they might encroach on the space.

Find images that are good representations of the before and after of this place and create a mood board or collage.

What do you think your response would be upon waking up and visiting this place? Write a diary entry or an imagine scene between you and a friend based on your response to visiting this place.

### ACTIVITY & DISCUSSION

Warwick Joyce presents the idea for hibernation during parliamentary Question Time. What do you know about Question Time? Share what you know with the class and look up some of the following memorable clips:

- The 'best of' or 'greatest hits' of Paul Keating during Question Time
- Scott Morrison bringing a lump of coal to parliament as Treasurer
- Julia Gillard's misogyny speech

How does Warwick's speech compare to these moments? What about Warwick's later speech or press conference about hibernation? How is his use of language similar or different? What about the responses of other politicians and the media? Discuss as a class or small group.



## DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN RESPONSE

Choose any of the following questions to discuss as a class or small group, or write a response.

**Before the first hibernation, Chidera says “it feels like a trip”.** What sorts of feelings do you get before going on a holiday? What are your hope or your worries? Can you understand why Chidera feels like they are going away on a trip even though they will remain in their beds?

**How do you think people would respond if they were told they had to hibernate for a year?** Think about the way people have responded to other decisions governments have made for the ‘greater good’, particularly in response to COVID-19 vaccinations and mask wearing. Do you think people would respond in a similar way to being forced to hibernate? How would you respond? How do you think your parents would respond?

**Do you think of a year as a long time or a short time?** What sorts of preparations would you make if you knew you were going into hibernation for a year? What would you do if, like Maggie and Pete, you didn’t go to sleep like everyone else?

**What’s the difference between the way each character approaches the first hibernation and the second?** What are they worried about? How hopeful are they and what are they hopeful for?

**Which character do you feel most sympathy towards in *Hibernation*?** Why do you think you feel most warmly about that character? Is it because of their personality, an action they take, something that happens to them or something else? Who do you think is the most selfish character in *Hibernation*? Why do you think this character is selfish? Do you still like this character?

**Could hibernation be considered ‘atonement’ for the hurt humans have caused the environment?** Could it be an act of ‘submission’ to the environment, as Emily suggests? Which do you think is a more accurate description - or do you think there’s a better way to describe it? Talk about these ideas and look up the definitions of these terms if you are unsure.

***Hibernation* takes place over three acts - before, during and after hibernation.** Why do you think Finegan Kruckemeyer chose to structure the play this way? What would the play be like if it just focussed on one of these time frames?

***Hibernation* is set from 2030-2040.** Why do you think the playwright chose to set the play in the future? How does the design of the play work to emphasise the future setting?

**The play has elements of science fiction (‘sci fi’), climate fiction (‘cli fi’) and dystopian fiction.** What do you think of when you hear the names of these genres? How does the play fit with other films or TV shows you have watched in these genres? What are the similarities and differences? What are some of the things that make putting sci fi on a theatre stage more difficult?

## The Short List

*A few useful bits of information for writing your review.*

### Structure

The play is told over three acts:

Act 1: The events in this part of the play mostly take place prior to hibernation in approximately 2030. The scenes jump back and forth in time. For example, when Emily talks with Mark about the idea behind hibernation she says she is going to present it to her bosses the following day; however, the scene where Emily presents the idea to Warwick is actually shown to the audience first.

Act 2: This act takes place towards the end of the year of hibernation.

Act 3: The scenes in this act take place in the days, months and years after hibernation and in the lead-up to a second hibernation 10 years after the first one. The final scene in Act 3 also reveals that an earlier scene in Act 1 actually took place after the first hibernation.

### Locations & Character List

The following are the locations and characters featured in the play. A couple of the characters travel to other locations, but are listed in their main location. Side characters, such as politicians and customs officials, have not been listed.

#### *Canberra, Australia*

Warwick Joyce  
Damian Accuardi  
Emily Metcalfe  
Mark Obrecht  
Nigel, publican

#### *Los Angeles, USA*

Kelly Knowles  
Alec Hall

#### *Lagos, Nigeria*

Chidera Okoye  
Azubuike Okoye

#### *Seoul, South Korea*

Jeong  
Sang (Pete)

#### *Bogota, Colombia*

Cassandra Flores  
Ernesto Flores  
Luis Flores

#### *Adelaide, Australia*

Pete (Sang)  
Maggie

### Hibernating with 54-E

54E-501E, often referred to as 54-E, is the drug that allows humans to hibernate within the play.

54-E was created by scientists as a way to help with the long travel between Earth and another planet, such as Mars. The drug slows human metabolism, regulates body temperature, halts the body's needs, puts a pause on pregnancies and includes a mental stimulant. It's a gas that affects humans, while animals and plants are unaffected.



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