

BLOODY MURDER

by Ed Sala



Director's Note

When I first read *Bloody Murder*, I was intrigued. Having directed a murder mystery for Genesian Theatre a couple of years ago, I was interested to see how a modern example would stand up against the classic productions that Genesian audiences love.

Bloody Murder is a comedy directed at lovers of Agatha Christie-style murder mysteries, and taps into the joy that this genre elicits. There is something magical about a good murder mystery that has entertained audiences for generations. *Bloody Murder* uses all the conventions that we love – an upper-class older woman (and her views on English society), secret pasts, unlikely relationships, and of course a valuable object that holds the key to the murder. As the genre has been around for generations, however, the play uses a contemporary twist to bring it to a modern audience, and invites us to laugh at the inherent shortcomings that have been exposed over the last 100-odd years while still presenting an engaging mystery to be solved.

Design inspiration for the show came from several different avenues. One strong influence was the idea of being trapped – both in the estate itself and by the events of the show. Despite, or perhaps because of, where the show takes place, no-one is able to leave. Inspiration was also found in another icon of murder mystery, and you will note the influence of Cluedo on the costuming of the suspects (as well as various other elements of the show).

Bloody Murder also ties in to all three shows I have previously directed for Genesian Theatre, with references in the script to Sherlock Holmes, vampires (*Dracula*), and of course murder mysteries (*Go Back For Murder*).

Like all good murder mysteries, *Bloody Murder* is full of twists and turns to keep you guessing. Can you solve the mystery before all is revealed?

Michael Heming
Director

MICHAEL HEMING – Director Michael is a director, writer and performer. He has directed *Dracula*, *Go Back For Murder*, and *Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure* for the Genesian Theatre Company, *Jack and the Beanstalk: The Pantomime* for St George Theatre Company, and wrote and co-directed *Dr. McCarb's Independent Surgical Hospital on the Hill* for Ostribian Theatre for the Sydney Fringe Festival (2015). Michael has completed the Directing For The Stage and NIDA Director's Studio (Stage and Screen) courses through the NIDA Open program.

TRUDY RITCHIE – Assistant Director Trudy found her love for the theatre at a very early age, appearing as Alice in *Alice in Wonderland* (New Zealand Drama School). Moving on from musicals some of her roles include *Bittersweet* (SPAT), *Polar Bears*, *Mountain Language*, *Blue Window*, *Baby with the Bathwater*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan* (all Darlo Drama), and *Pride and Prejudice* (Genesian Theatre). More recently, Trudy has pursued her interest in Directing, previously working as Assistant Director for the Genesian Theatre's production of *Emma* (July 2017), and now *Bloody Murder* (October 2017).

ALISON WINSHIP – Costume Design After pursuing the Arts for many years, *Bloody Murder* is the first publicly recognised show Alison Winship has had the pleasure to work on as Costume Designer. Alison has enjoyed many diverse theatrical experiences, from creating specialised set pieces and stylised makeup, to scriptwriting, and stage performance - most of which came from her time studying at RIPA and Excelsia College in Sydney. Alison hopes to continue her work in the Performing Arts and gain more experience for the future.

MARTIN SEARLES – Set Design Martin is delighted to be designing the set for another Genesian production, having previously completed the designs for *Under Milk Wood* (March 2017) and *Dracula* (October 2016). Martin has previously studied stage design via short courses at the Australian National University ('ANU') & NIDA. When not designing sets, Martin enjoys working as an actor, having appeared on stage in several productions in Canberra and Sydney since 2001. Martin is very grateful to have had one last opportunity to work in the beautiful theatre space at 420 Kent Street before the building is sold next year. Martin would like to thank Debbie Smith and Michael Heming for their generous assistance with set construction and design.

LIAM O'KEEFE – Lighting Design Liam is a freelance Lighting Designer and technician based in Sydney. Recent design work includes *Transcience* (leftcentre theatre co.), *Smudge* (The King's Fools), *The Tragedy of Antigone* (Ninefold), *Contrite Spirit* (Edgware Forum), *Shut up and Drive* (subtlenuance), *Year of the Family* (Tooth and Sinew), *The Poor Kitchen* (subtlenuance), and *Femme Fatale* (leftofcentre theatre co.). As a technician, he has been part of the lighting team for five national tours, the Sydney Festival, and The Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour's *Carmen*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Aida*, and *Turandot*.

MICHAEL SCHELL – Sound Design Michael has been a member of the Genesian Theatre for over 40 years. A professional Sound and Lighting Designer, his Genesian credits include *Great Expectations*, *St Joan*, *The 39 Steps*, *Terra Nova*, *Frankenstein*, and *Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure*. Other recent Genesian sound design credits include *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Mousetrap*, *Crown Matrimonial*, *Spider's Web*, *Three Sisters*, *Our House*, and *Dracula*.



STEPHEN HOLLAND – The Major Stephen Holland trained at the Sydney Acting School and Darlinghurst Theatre. Stage credits include *The Recruit* and *The Luger* for Short'n'Sweet, *Charleys Aunt* and *The 39 Steps* for the Genesian, and *Under Milk Wood* and *The Killing Game* for Darlinghurst Theatre. Stephen has worked in community radio, reading the evening news

and narrating children's books on 2RPH, Sydney's news reading service. A comedy writer (credits include *Comedy Inc* for Crackerjack Productions, Channel 9), Stephen also performs stand-up comedy in Sydney. He has appeared in TVCs, corporate videos, and short films.

EMMA WRIGHT – Emma Reese, The Countess

Emma Wright, a Bond University graduate, played Hannah in *Mako Mermaids* and is soon to appear as Lena Penn in ABC's *Harrow*. Theatre credits include: Genesian Theatre 2017 - Emma/The Countess in *Bloody Murder*, Emma in *Emma*, Phillipa in *A Murder is Announced*, Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*, New Theatre - Amanda in *Consensual* (2017), Tegwyn in *That Eye The Sky* (2016), Depot Theatre - Emilia/Time in *The Winters Tale* (2017), Other - Emma in *Orbit* (QTC/Grin and Tonic), Fiona in *Eyes to the Floor*. Training includes: ACA, The Hub, ATYP, 16th Street, The Warehouse Workshop.



DAVID LUKE – Devon Tremaine, Mr. Woo, El Gato

David has been acting since 2013. He has performed as Xavier Cassidy in *Bog of Cats* at 505 Theatre, Dr Russell in *Is it Time* at King Street Theatre, Phys Ed teacher in *The Life Cycle of Refrigerators*, Short and Sweet 2017 and performed in *Script in Hand*. He is acting in and producing two plays in 2018 at Blood

Moon Theatre. David is a Psychologist and Psychotherapist in Private Practice and holds a PhD in Medicine.



NARELLE JAEGER – Lady Somerset Narelle originally trained with the Ensemble Theatre and has been stage acting for over 30 years. She performed originally at the Illawarra Little Theatre in *The Taming of the Shrew* (Bianca), *Androcles and the Lion* (Lavinia), and *The Removalists* (Kate). Narelle has been a member of the Arts Theatre Cronulla since 1988,

performing regularly in such productions as *Steel Magnolias* (Ouiser), *Calender Girls* (Annie), *Away* (Coral), and *Sylvia* (Kate). Her most recent production was her reprisal this year of Bridie in *The Shoehorn Sonata* for Squeaky Dog Productions.

LOIS MARSH - Jane, Motorist, Nun Lois Marsh is very familiar with the traditional murder mystery genre having in recent years appeared in the Agatha Christie plays *A Murder is Announced* and *Appointment with Death* at the Genesian Theatre, and *Black Coffee* at Pymble Players. At the Genesian Theatre she has also been in *The Winslow Boy*, *Pride & Prejudice*, *Coward at Christmas*, and *Great Expectations* and at the New Theatre, *Dinkum Assorted*. Lois began her acting training at the Independent Drama School in North Sydney.



BRENDAN KELLY – Charles Pomeroy, Chief Inspector Phelps Graduated from CADA in 2011, Brendan moved to Sydney just this year. He has appeared in film, on stage, and on television during his years studying the acting profession. He's utilised his experience to produce his own film projects, his most recent film, *Care*, winning a Best Film award at the

Canberra Short Film Festival. Recent theatre roles include: Tim Allgood in *Noises Off* (Canberra Rep, 2016), *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* (Honest Puck, 2015). He's very excited for his first show with Genesian Theatre.

Production

Director

Michael Heming

Assistant Director

Trudy Ritchie

Set Design

Martin Searles

Costume Design

Alison Winship

Lighting Design

Liam O'Keefe

Sound Design

Michael Schell

Production Manager

Debbie Smith

Set Construction

Debbie Smith, Members of the Company

Photography

Anthony Burns - HomePix

Graphic Design

Patrick Magee, Tom Massey

Ticketing

Shane Bates

Transport

Debbie Smith

Acknowledgements

2017 NIDA Open Directing Studio

Crew

Stage Manager

Danielle Brown

Lighting & Sound Operation

Emmanuel Said, Patricia Sharpe

Cast

Lady Somerset

Narelle Jaeger

Jane

Lois Marsh

Major Quimby

Stephen Holland

Devon Tremaine

David Luke

Emma Reese

Emma Wright

Charles Pomeroy

Brendan Kelly

The Countess

Emma Wright

Chief Inspector Phelps

Brendan Kelly

El Gato

David Luke

Motorist

Lois Marsh

Mr. Woo

David Luke

Nun

Lois Marsh

About the Genesian Theatre

The Genesian Theatre Company celebrated our 70th year as a company in 2014. For over 60 years we have been operating from our home at 420 Kent St in the Sydney CBD. We boast among our alumni numerous household names in Australian theatre and film such as Bryan Brown, Baz Luhrmann, Judi Farr, and John Bell. We are also just as proud of the hundreds of other talented actors, directors, stage managers, set and costume designers, lighting and sound specialists, stage and production staff who have contributed to Sydney's unique little theatre. We are particularly proud of all our members who volunteer their time to work Front of House to help you enjoy your visit to the Genesian Theatre.

Over the years the company has developed into a theatre providing a training ground for young theatre professionals and a place where those who love the theatre can meet, share, and extend their knowledge of the performing arts. The Genesian Theatre Company is one of Sydney's most active theatre companies. In addition to six main stage productions each year we run classes, workshops, and many other activities.

The building which houses the Genesian Theatre Company was originally St John's Church, and dates from 1868. It served as both a church and a poor school until 1932 when it became the Kursaal Theatre, housing the Sydney Repertory Company. In 1938 it became the first Matthew Talbot Hostel. Since 1954 it has been the home of the Genesian Theatre Company which was formed in 1944.

The Genesian Theatre Company acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation as the traditional custodians of the land our theatre stands on.

Membership

If you're interested in acting, directing, stage management, sound, lights, publicity, admin, etc, or if you just want to experience being a member of the group, we would welcome you as a member. You don't need to be experienced, we can provide training and can cater to different levels of involvement. Please see our web site for further information.

Coming next to the Genesian...

TRAVELLING NORTH

by David Williamson



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