

fresh works

AN AUSTRALIAN PLAY
ABOUT AN ANT-BASED RIP-OFF
OF AN AMERICAN MUSICAL

ANTHILTON

by oscar o'brien



2 - 12 APRIL | EXPLOSIVES FACTORY

📍 explosives factory, rear laneway 67 inkerman street, , st kilda

image by steven mitchell wright



ABOUT THEATRE WORKS

Theatre Works is an artist-first organisation and we exist to support emerging, established, local and national artists as they achieve their vision on stage with as little compromise as possible. We encourage risk-taking and live for new ideas.

MISSION

Theatre Works fills a vital niche in the Australian cultural landscape as an artistic home and destination for the ambitious, the new and the eminent.

VISION

To be the Australian epicentre of independent theatre and independent theatre makers by investing in, empowering and supporting artists of all experience, identity, background and aspiration to make ambitious works that reflect, redefine or reimagine contemporary Australia and contemporary Australian theatrical practice.

VALUES

ARTIST OVER ART

We believe in creating safe opportunities and environments for artistic and professional development in pursuit of individual artists and companies' own definitions of success.

EMPOWERING RISK

We believe that the future is defined by those who challenge the status quo. As such we partner with companies and artists that push the boundaries of content, form or scale.

CREATIVE FREEDOM

We get out of the artists' way.

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE

We value the longevity of our organisation, partnering artists and their careers, our planet and our art form. We prioritise the mental and fiscal health of our organisation and partnering artists.

DIVERSITY AND ANTIRACISM

We believe in a theatre and a theatre sector that is a true representation of the diverse world in which we live. We actively seek to create opportunities and pathways for marginalised communities.

THE TEAM

DIANNE TOULSON (she/her) Executive Director / Creative Producer

ADAM GARDNER (he/him) Marketing / Graphic Design / Box Office Manager

BELLE HANSEN (she/her) Company Producer

TOM RAY (he/him) Venue Operations Manager

STEVEN MITCHELL WRIGHT (he/him) Front of House Co-Ordinator

ANNE HENDERSON (she/her) Finance Administrator

ALANAH GUIRY (she/her) Access and Inclusion Coordinator

ANITA MEI LA TERRA Marketing and Producing Assistant

JOSHUA FERNANDEZ Venue Operations Assistant

Theatre Works and the Antilton team respectfully acknowledge First People's sovereignty and recognise the continuing connection to lands, waters and storytelling by Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia.

We pay our respects to the many clans and language groups in Victoria, to their elders past and present, and acknowledge the strength and resilience of all Aboriginal peoples.

Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.

ANTILTON



CREDITS

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

Oscar O'Brien

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR

Meg Richardson

COMPOSER

Finlay Rennie

PRODUCTION MANAGER & DESIGNER

Tristan Sicari

STAGE MANAGER

Jade Hibbert

CAST

Kyle McCallion as The Artist

Riley Street as The Skeptic

Jessica David as The Enabler

Jeremy Harland as The Roommate

Jacob Kuek as Nervous Noel

Madeleine Gosden as The Talent

PRODUCTION IMAGES

Izabella Procaccino

CONTENT WARNINGS

Loud noises, Flashing lights, swearing and yelling. Themes around depression. Performers standing above ground level.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

BY OSCAR O'BRIEN

Antilton has been my north star, my main project since its inception in 2023. It's my first fully written play and directorial debut, so it's been quite a surreal whirlwind, especially in these last few months as the show gets closer and closer to reality.

The most difficult thing about the entire process has been figuring out how to explain the show as clearly and concisely as possible. Antilton in concept, like in the play itself, began as nothing but a pun made with my roommates. Simply, what if the musical Hamilton had ants instead of people.

Much like the Artist, I was in the Odd Postgraduate Void after training as an actor; having the strange, but surely original idea, of Hamilton with ants gave me sudden drive and purpose. I could make my own work! Nobody but me got to decide that I was going to make Antilton, and the only thing standing in my way was a Microsoft 365 subscription. In a very meta fashion, as I was feeling this inspiration to create, I knew that feeling and this moment in my life was what I wanted to write about. The Artist's need for validation, fear of failure and shame around his life choices all comes from what I was battling at the time. The question of 'is Antilton the thing that can make me a true Artist?' existed simultaneously for Artie the character and myself at the time writing. My hope is that other young people with dreams to create can relate to these struggles.

Living in a sharehouse, there can be periods where your roommates become the biggest influences in your life, especially during times where earning money needs to be the main priority. For months at a time there's less room for family or other social connections, so your roommates become your whole world. These people,

who for me were once friends that only saw the best of me are now exposed to all the ugliness, the emptiness and the pain that comes with my full, human self. What happens when the whole house- your whole world- is experiencing a down period, a slow couple of weeks? I found the most beautiful thing was the way roommates can lift each other out of these holes, sometimes in big ways, but often in the smallest moments or conversations. The roommates in the show aren't directly pulled from specific people in my life, but rather manifestations of the ways the many friends I've lived with have helped me, and how I have strived to help them. Sometimes I've needed grounding, sometimes encouragement, and some days I've just needed someone to help out with the big pile of dishes.

So, why Hamilton? It made a lot of sense. There's clearly a theme in that work of writing 'like you're running out of time', writing 'your way out'. The idea that if you work hard enough with just a pen and paper, you can create a legacy. I'm playing with adding layers to that lineage that includes Alexander Hamilton and Lin Manuel Miranda. The character of The Artist longs to have that power, that skill and that legacy.

Why Ants? It seemed funny at the time, and I liked the idea of actors in cheaply made ant costumes. That was the initial draw, but slowly, ants became a powerful theme of their own. The humble ant is often portrayed as a hustler, like Lin or Hamilton. They are strong for their size, clever engineers and are viewed as hard workers. Ants also work together, for the good of the colony, which ties into the other important message of the play.

THANK YOU + ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Theatre Works for their support producing ANTILTON as part of Fresh Works

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Gippsland Performing Arts Centre for their support in developing ANTILTON.

**GIPPSLAND
PERFORMING
ARTS CENTRE**

Dutch Club Melbourne for providing use of their venue for rehearsals.

**Dutch Club
Melbourne**

We would also like to thank:

Chiara Affinita, Gianna Affinita, Emma Aquilina, Rohan Berghan-Carrick, Joshua Connell, Ant Crowley, Kate Culbertson, Flynn Davis, Ben Hockley, Kirby Hunt, Lucy Knight, Anita Mei La Terra, Stephanie Lee, Alfons Melenhorst, Lily O'Brien, Adam 'Gus' Powers, Kyle Robinson, Charlotte Rogers, Frank Sicari, Henry Stephensen, Adam White, & Lin Manuel Miranda





OSCAR O'BRIEN

PLAYWRIGHT + DIRECTOR

Oscar O'Brien (he/him) is a young Naarm based creator, brought up in Horsham, rural Western Victoria where he had a wealth of opportunities to act, sing and move on stage. This path led him to the pursuit of a career in performing arts, and his experiences at Federation University Arts Academy, where he has graduated from his Bachelor of Performing Arts. Oscar has dove head first into the industry since graduating, looking to write and devise his own works through collaboration with other young artists, as well as find work in as many avenues of performance as possible. Oscar has performed in new independent works in both the Melbourne Fringe festival and Melbourne International Comedy Festival, including A Zoom Group Project: The Musical in 2023, and Op Shop Til' You Drop in 2024, as well as working several times on Comedy On the Rocks. Oscar took part in La Mama Theatre's 'Emerge' program in 2024, building on skills and ultimately devising and performing an original collaborative work together with the other young artists selected. Oscar's biggest project to date has been writing and directing Antilton, which has been in the works since 2023.



FINLAY RENNIE

COMPOSER

Finlay Rennie is a 24-year-old musician with a passion for blending indie rock with electronic influences. Growing up with a deep love for music, Finlay started playing drums at a young age, performing in numerous school bands before teaching himself guitar and piano. He took every opportunity to be involved in music, from participating in school musicals to jamming with friends and writing his own songs. His dedication to exploring different sounds and styles helped shape his unique musical identity. After high school, Finlay enrolled at Box Hill Institute, where he refined his craft and collaborated with a wide range of talented artists. This experience broadened his perspective, allowing him to experiment with various genres and push his creative boundaries. In his free time, he enjoys researching and analysing different styles of music, constantly expanding his influences and artistic vision. Beyond his solo work, Finlay is also a key member of Split Soles, a band he formed with his best friend. The project allows him to fuse his love for indie rock and electronic music while performing alongside someone who shares his passion. Whether performing live or writing new material, Finlay remains committed to crafting music that resonates deeply with listeners.



MEG RICHARDSON

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR

Meg Richardson [she/her] is a 24-year-old triple threat based in Naarm (Melbourne), making her choreographing debut. Dancing since the age of nine, Meg has honed her craft through years of competing in dance competitions and exploring various styles, which has fueled her deep love for music and movement. This passion drives her to help others create compelling movement sequences, whether on stage or in workshops. Originally from rural Victoria, Meg is dedicated to inspiring young people from regional areas to pursue their creative passions. She recently served as the associate youth director for the Fairfax Youth Festival in Swan Hill, where she facilitated a week-long program of workshops, culminating in a unique, youth-devised theatre piece created by 12-18-year-olds. This experience reinforced her commitment to nurturing young talent and fostering creativity in her community. A 2022 and 2024 graduate of Federation University, Meg holds a Bachelor of Performing Arts and a Graduate Diploma of Theatre Production. She has also gained invaluable experience through a two-month stage management placement at Melbourne Theatre Company during their production of 'Cost of Living'. Meg's versatile skill set and passion for both performance and production position her for exciting future opportunities in the performing arts, both in front of and behind the curtain.



JADE HIBBERT

STAGE MANAGER

Jade is a South African Theatre Maker, Writer, Stage Manager, and award-winning Violinist, Dancer and Actor. Having been in the performing arts for most of her life, she came to Melbourne in April of 2023 to further her career, and is currently studying a bachelor of performing Arts [Stage Management] at Collarts. In South Africa, her work as an actor includes: 'Prins van die Towerfluit' (Dir. Yolandi Herbst,2021), 'Bloed-Nyl' (Dir. Yolandi Herbst,2019), 'Krop' (Dir. Bonita Fik,2022), and 'Boksie' (Dir. Yolandi Herbst,2022). As well as competing and winning awards in the South African Championships of Performing Arts in various genres. Since coming to Australia, she has embraced more work as a Stage Manager and lighting and sound operator. Recent works include: 'Prisoner At The World's End' (Dir. Rosemary Johns,2023), 'La Belle Epoque' (Dir. Budi Miller,2024), 'DREDGE' (Dir.Brandon Armstrong,2024), 'ILARUN: The Cutting Comb' (Dir. Effie Nkrumah,2024), and 'THREE SISTERS' (Dir. Greg Carroll). She also worked as an Assistant Stage Manager and operator on 'The Roof Is Caving In' (Dir. Belle Hansen,2024), and 'PIPER' (Dir. Belle Hansen,2024). Jade is also the Company Manager of Theatre of Others, an international theatre company with a weekly podcast, focusing on sustainable theatre, with monthly acting, directing and writing workshops.



TRISTAN SICARI
PRODUCTION MANAGER + DESIGNER

Tristan garnered a love for performing arts from a young age, studying theatre at the Singapore School of the Arts and performing in numerous youth theatre productions. Whilst studying a Bachelor of Performing Arts from Federation University Australia, he originated the character 'Shakespeare' in *Zoe Becomes A Comet*, a new musical by Anthony Crowley & Shanon D Whitelock; performed 'Rapunzel's Prince/Mysterious Man' in *Into the Woods* directed by Alister Smith; and wrote and performed material for *Exquisite Corpse 2.0: We, The Mariner*. Since graduating in 2022, Tristan's performance credits include *Henry – Way Too Cool!* (Echelon Productions), *Brian Brain – Filter Fun Park* (Filter Your Future), *Carl/Hartel – Fresno: In Concert* (Butterfly Club), & *Bernstein – Dogfight* (Theatrical.). Tristan has just finished a stint training dinosaurs at *Jurassic World: The Exhibition*.



JESSICA DAVID
PERFORMER - ENABLER

Jessica is a Sri Lankan performer based in Melbourne. From a young age, Jessica discovered her passion for creating and performing, and was involved in dance training, drama classes and school musicals that inspired her to pursue her passions professionally. She immersed herself in professional training at the Ballarat Arts Academy. While studying for her Bachelor of Performing Arts, Jessica took on a collaborative role as she devised music and movement for 'After Joan' (Joan & movement team) - written by Emma Hall and Company 2024. Other credits at university include 'A Girl's Guide to World War' (Nurse Higgins) - an Australian Musical, musically directed by Shanon D. Whitelock, and 'The Spirit Level' (Hermione Banks & movement team), an opera written by Richard Chew and Rufus Norris. Her graduating performance was in 'Crush: The Musical' (Brenda Smears), directed by Beng Oh & Daniel Tusjak. Most recently, Jessica has performed in the Melbourne One Act Play Festival at The Butterfly Club, in 'Dennis and the Dazzling Dentistry Facility' (Ruby Wire), and is excited to be apart of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival at Theatre Works in 'Antilton'.



KYLE MCCALLION
PERFORMER - ARTIST

Kyle has worked as an actor since 2013 after he graduated from QUT. He has worked predominantly in Brisbane film and theatre scene, eventually making the move to the big smoke of Melbourne in 2022. His most recent theatre work includes *Puffs & Brilliant Traces*. He has predominantly worked in film over the years, writing, acting and producing his own work and collaborating with others. On top of his performing roles he is currently writing on a few different projects, and with the Comedy festival under his belt he is hoping to bring his new show to the Melbourne Fringe Festival later this year.



RILEY STREET
PERFORMER - SKEPTIC

Riley is an exuberant, passionate actor, singer, cabaret artist, and musician/songwriter based in Naarm, Melbourne. Some of the many projects Riley has had the honour to take part in include; Sevenfold Theatre Company's, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Lysander), Melbourne Shakespeare Company's, *The Wacky Wombat!* (Grandma, Seal-Catcher & Puppeteer), *The White Rose* (Lead actor/vocalist) with Gasworks Theatre, *A Waitress Does a Cabaret* (writer, co-producer and lead) with Chapel Off Chapel, and *Mediocre – A Cabaret* (writer, producer and lead) with The Motley Bauhaus, and most recently, *Bearded* (Ensemble/swing) with Theatre Works.



JEREMY HARLAND

PERFORMER - ROOMMATE

Jeremy is a passionate Naarm based performer that has been involved in the world of theatre and performing from a young age, discovering a love for storytelling and music. He is an avid theatrical writer and composer and despite having a deep appreciation for the classics, Jeremy actively pursues the development of new works - having co-produced/directed the musical, Fresno at Chapel off Chapel in early 2025. He is also co-writing a new 'The Wayfarers', which was developed in residence with Gippsland Performing Arts Centre in January, 2024 and 2025. On-stage, Jeremy has premiered the roles of Lachlan Green in the Green Room nominated, 'A Zoom Group Project: The Musical', and Guido in 'Momo'. Since graduating he has performed as Dan Davies in 'You Can't Escape an Aussie Boy' at The Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Sam Beckett in 'Samuel Beckett & The Rainbow Girl' (Bloomsday in Melbourne) and most recently as Liam Neeson and others in Love Actually: The Musical Parody. Jeremy is so thrilled to see ANTILTON come to life at the Explosives Factory.



JACOB KUEK

PERFORMER - NERVOUS NOEL + OTHERS

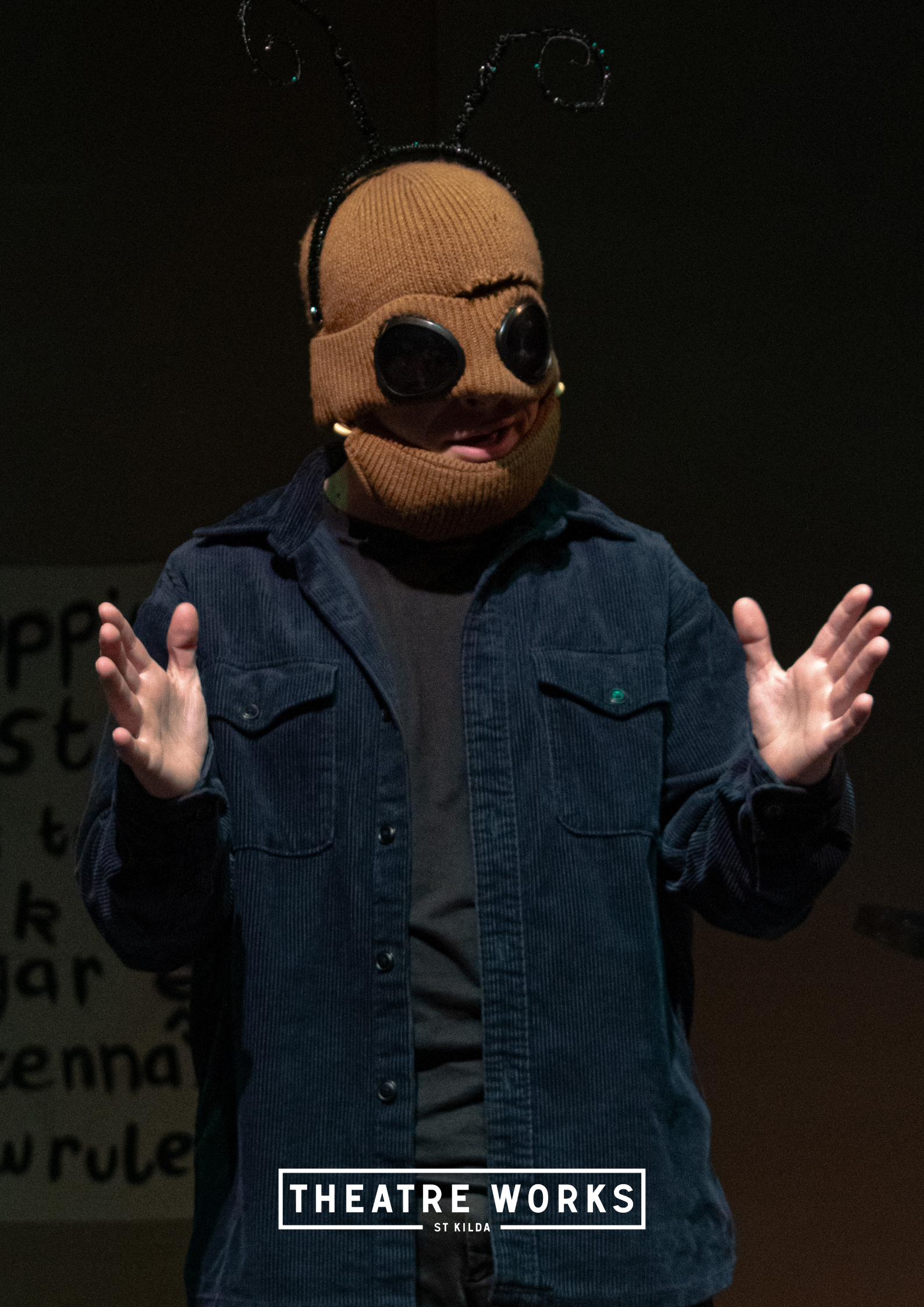
Jacob is an actor, singer, and improviser based in Naarm. He has trained at the Improv Conspiracy Theatre and at Associated Studios Australia. Jacob is no stranger to parody-type material, having played Katsuro in the Human Centipede Parody Musical (Synergy Production Co.). He has performed in most Melbourne Comedy and Fringe Festivals since 2021 with Impromptunes, including at Edinburgh Fringe 2024. In the 2025 Melbourne International Comedy Festival, he will be performing more improvised musicals with Impromptunes and with Story Soup. Jacob hopes that you enjoy the show, and if your name is Mrs Broadway or Mr Television, please get in contact ASAP @jacobkuek



MADELEINE GOSDEN

PERFORMER - TALENT + OTHERS

Madeleine, no stranger to the stage bug, is buzzing with excitement to bring her characters of Talent (and Others) to life! Ever since she was knee-high to a grasshopper, Madeleine's antennae have been fixed on performance. With ants in her pants, she developed her dance skills in the hives of Croydon School of Dance and Maison B. Flies on the wall may recognise Madeleine as a Jumping Jack of all trades, always crawling to get back on stage. Performance credits include Hansel and Gretel: A Pantomime (ACT), Addams Family (DPA), Back in the Day: A 90s Cabaret (WAT), but she's just as snug as a bug in a rug when hosting cabarets about town, and even playing in the occasional orchestra. Outside this swarm of activity, Madeleine enjoys being a social butterfly, tending her worm farm, and politely moving spiders out of the kitchen. Madeleine would like to thank the Antilton colony for being the bee's knees, and her lovebug Emerson, for always encouraging Madeleine to scuttle after her dreams.



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