



Laura  
Maitland





# Biography

Laura studied at The Victorian College of the Arts in 2005, before touring internationally as Lady Macbeth in White Whale Theatre's cult hit *Macbeth ReArisen*. In New York, she worked on the long-running Off-Broadway show *Going Once, Laughing Twice*, and on Lincoln Centre's development of Finnegan Kruckemeyer's award-winning *The Boy at the Edge of Everything*.

In Australia, Laura has guest starred on *The Doctor Blake Mysteries*, *Neighbours* and *Underbelly*, alongside Ashley Zukerman, and has played leading roles in Barking Gecko's *Wilbur Whittaker*; *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea*; *Lottie in the Late Afternoon* and *Romeo & Juliet*; as well as a two-year international tour of *Yes, Prime Minister*.



Laura trained with Larry Moss in 2011, and has since been a director and leading member of Melbourne's The KIN Collective alongside Australian acting royalty Noni Hazlehurst, Marg Downey and Michala Banas. Their productions have received outstanding critical acclaim, including Green Room nominations for best ensemble and best actor.

Her music theatre credits include leading roles in *Anne of Green Gables* and *Peter Pan*.

Laura studied in New York with Alan Savage, and is a proud member of MEAA (and SAG eligible).

**Call-backs/holds:** *The Twelve* (Foxtel), *Pray*, MTCs *Boston Marriage*, BSSTC's *Things I Know to Be True*

**Accents:** American (GenAm & Southern) French, Russian, English (R.P), Irish and Scottish

**Skills:** Improv comedy, scripted French, singing, jazz/contemporary dance, swimming, javelin/athletics, pilates, spin

# The Courier

ABC hit series The Doctor Blake Mysteries, starring Craig McLachlan, has been commissioned for a fifth season.

## THE AUSTRALIAN

### More Than a Knockout

The much-loved period crime show The Doctor Blake Mysteries, starring Craig McLachlan as maverick country town doctor Lucien Blake, returns

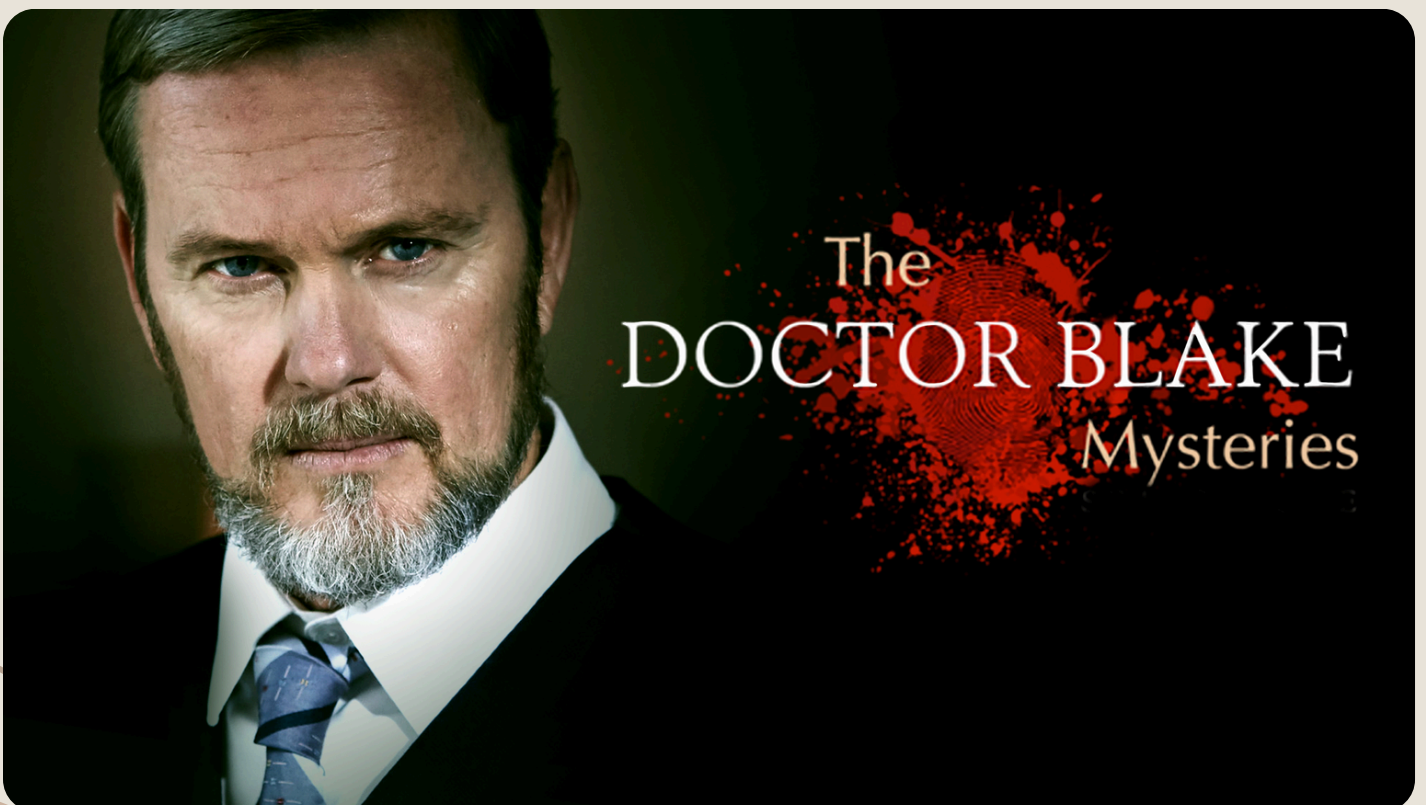


CRAIG McLachlan has two very good reasons to smile. The ABC has just announced that it has commissioned a fifth season of The Doctor Blake Mysteries.

As seen on...



# ABC







### Let's have a squizz at Nine's new drama **Underbelly: Squizzy**

IT'S been billed as the most anticipated Underbelly - perhaps Aussie series - ever. We charted Squizzy's impact on its Australian audience.



### **The Sydney Morning Herald**

Australia's most loved TV show of 37 years







Maitland's portrayal of The Seeing Star oracle is **hilarious and a bit intimidating**. [She and Hewitt] both thrive as administrators of the Bureau of Wonder with dry Aussie delivery.



## BARKING GECKO'S | THE GREAT UN-WONDERING OF WILBUR WHITTAKER | ENCOURAGING CHILDREN AND GROWN- UPS TO HOLD ONTO THEIR WONDER

REVIEWED BY LAURA MONEY

What would be in your box of wonder? Barking Gecko Theatre present intergenerational audiences with this very question in *The Great Un-Wondering of Wilbur Whittaker* – a charming tale of adventure and, well wonder! Writer Dan Giovannoni and long-time collaborator Artistic Director Luke Kerridge take a young boy's sense of wonder at the world and sees him grow up and forget to revel in the marvels of the world. Grown up Wilbur (Adriano Cappelletta) embarks on an epic quest into the far reaches of outer-space to explore his inner space and regain his sense of wonder before he loses it forever. It's an enduring tale of imagination and our capacity to dream.

As a boy, Wilbur Whittaker is a dreamer. He fills a bright red shoebox with his hopes and dreams and inventions to send him into space. You see, Wilbur wants to travel further in space than anyone else. Then he grows up and his shoebox of dreams is relegated to the dusty realm under his bed. In a cleverly depressing series of vignettes, Cappelletta as Wilbur is rendered boring. Trading his backpack for a bland tie he is buffeted into conformity by Jonathan Oxlade's phenomenal set. Sliding beige screens create a boring office cubicle, small dining table, ironing station, and train.

Kerridge's direction encourages dynamic movement that mimics Wilbur's descent into becoming a cog in the adult world. A production line of bodies jostle on the train, piles of paperwork creep higher and higher, and through Oxlade's clever sliding panels a mechanical calendar is set. But the beauty of the story is captured when Wilbur actually begins his journey. Following a path to his Guardian of Wonder set on a dimming star, the set and sense of adventure gets marvelously thrilling and surreal. Drawing on influences from eighties adventure movies and media, Giovannoni creates a sense of nostalgia for a lost

childhood – as Wilbur heads to fantastical lands the journey feels familiar with a tinge of a past worth recovering. Not only is the plot super tight and cleverly realised, but the characters are phenomenal – the stand out being Princess Fantastic (Grace Chow) a She-Ra inspired thousand year old badass who is incidentally Wilbur's Guardian of Wonder. Chow is perfect as the plucky and headstrong Princess, full of energy and sure in her convictions. She reacts as a child would, impulsively running headlong into danger but with such zest for life and wonder she is utterly compelling. With a customised theme tune and killer visuals by Tee Ken Ng she joyfully embeds herself into our hearts. Luke Hewitt and Laura Maitland comprise the ensemble cast and both absolutely nail a swathe of lovable and memorable characters. Hewitt's turn as the charismatically pompous fox Francis gets the kids giggling, and Maitland's portrayal of The Seeing Star oracle is hilarious and a bit intimidating. They both thrive as administrators of the Bureau of Wonder with dry Aussie delivery that hits a little too close to home to anyone who has ever been on hold in a customer service queue!

*The Great Un-Wondering of Wilbur Whittaker* is one of those plays that sparkles with life. It is an important work for children to watch with grown ups and encourages reflection and a sense of adventure. Not only is the work a nostalgic gem, it takes the essence of those eighties fantasy adventures and grounds them in an invitation to reinvigorate a sense of play. Princess Fantastic is one of the purest characters to ever grace our stages, and the endearing charm of Cappelletta's Wilbur has you rooting for him the whole time. So, what is in your own box of wonder, and is it with you at all times? Let's hope so as the message of this show is clear – always hold on to your wonder – but don't worry as there are always ways to get it back.



THE AGE - TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 18 2019

**"Maitland's Lottie ... brings a disturbing hilarity to the way people talk across or through each other without meaning to."**



# Holiday from Hell

## THEATRE

### LOTTIE IN THE LATE AFTERNOON

The KIN Collective  
fortyfivedownstairs  
Until September 30  
Reviewed by

**Cameron Woodhead**

The KIN Collective stands out on Melbourne's indie theatre scene. Actor-led ensembles are common enough, but few unite experienced, popular actors (Noni Hazlehurst, is a member, as is Marg Downey) with rising talent in the same way. It can be a riveting combination. Anyone who saw their 2014 production of Martin McDonagh's *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* trilogy could only marvel at the ambition and histrionic achievement, and no one who saw Hazlehurst's tour de force as Mag will ever forget it. This time, the company tackles Amelia Roper's *Lottie in the Late Afternoon*, where four old friends face disconnections on a holiday from hell. Thirty-somethings Lottie (Laura Maitland) and her partner Ryan (Linc Hasler) have booked a weekend away from the relentless grind of New York. They arrive to discover their cottage rests on the edge of a

terrifying cliff - a symbol of the disasters that lie in wait. Their guests bring awkward complications. Clara (Michala Banas), annoyed at being treated like a spiky lesbian third wheel by Lottie, is tricked into revealing she's having an affair with their friend, Anne (Ally Fowler). For her part, Anne appears late, fresh from an abortion clinic, as the play spirals into a comedy of excruciation where modern friendship is taken offline and dismantled through slightly whimsical, heightened but still recognisable characters, all battling self-absorption and toxic nostalgia to find moments of connection or even contentment in solitude. Roper's labile relationship comedy feels almost like a riposte to Joanna Murray-Smith's *Three Little Words* another recent play featuring a straight and queer couple. No lesbian paragons here: they're allowed to muddle through and be just as sad and awful as everyone else, and they get to vent more realistically- "I'm sick of you always getting drunk," says Clara of her straight female friends, "and kissing me when you're sad! It's Downey's directorial debut and it has plenty sharply tuned humour,

but it's laughter from the dark. Ridiculousness and wince-worthy situational comedy spring from a pool of tedium and profound disconsolation. Maitland's Lottie tries to rise above with a luminous and compelling otherworldliness that keeps falling in to little potholes of self-consciousness or narcissism. She's not a great listener and brings a disturbing hilarity to the way people talk across or through each other without meaning to. Banas bristles the cynical veneer of a lonely romantic clinging to delusion and abandoning herself to wine, while Fowler's earthy, hedonistic Anne causes chaos even as she tries to make the best of things. Hasler as the lone man brings a haplessness to the play's gender politics. This production gives the sense of a new comedy being wrestled into being. It's an unpredictable form that's never alive until it's in front of an audience and some of its humour falls flat. The pace could also do with a tune-up. These are minor quibbles. It's a slick production and a fresh comedy that speaks to thezeitgeist.

**Actor, Laura Maitland says** “It’s not often these kinds of scripts come across your desk. You don’t get to see much of this type of play and writing — a balance between comedy and drama — in this country.”

HERALD SUN - MAY 27 2014

## KIN COLLECTIVE TACKLES THEATRE MARATHON WITH LEENANE TRILOGY

THREE plays, back to back, will test the skills of the Kin Collective. The 10-member ensemble, including Noni Hazlehurst and Michala Banas, is performing the Leenane Trilogy.

MICHELLE POUNTNEY

THREE plays, back to back, will test the skills of independent theatre group the Kin Collective.

The 10-member group will tackle Irish playwright Martin McDonagh’s Leenane Trilogy over little more than two weeks, including three marathon Sundays when all the plays will all be performed on the same day.

The three plays, set in rural Ireland, are described as being “flamboyantly gruesome dark comedies” with murders, spite, and complicated relationships aplenty.

Each play — The Beauty Queen of Leenane, A Skull In Connemara, and The Lonesome West — will have its own short season as well as the triple-header Sunday performances.

Three directors lead three separate casts, including some big stage and television names who formed the Kin Collective after meeting at an acting masterclass with US acting coach Larry Moss.

Noni Hazlehurst, Michala Banas, Tom Barton, Keith Brockett, Jason Chatfield, Mark Diaco, Marg Downey, Dan Hamil, Linc Hasler and Laura Maitland form the group and just coordinating rehearsals for the busy players has been a challenge in itself.



Dylan Watson, Marg Downey and Laura Maitland will perform in the Leenane Trilogy.

“We’ve certainly taken on something bigger than we thought,” says Downey, who will appear in A Skull In Connemara .

“You read a trilogy and think it’s wonderful writing, yes we love it and yes we can do it, but the logistics are far more than we thought ... with each play somehow having to be quickly disassembled to move on to the next one.”

The Kin Collective settled on the dark comedy of McDonagh’s Leenane Trilogy after rehearsing a scene from one of his plays during the acting workshop where they met.

Soon after that workshop, Dylan Watson, who performs in The Beauty Queen Of Leenane, then read many of McDonagh’s plays. “I love how he doesn’t let the fact that it’s theatre stop him from where he wants to go — then going further than that,” Watson says.

The three stories stand alone, but tie into each other, which has allowed the cast to learn more about their characters.

Laura Maitland, who plays Girleen in The Lonesome West, said McDonagh’s characters were an extraordinary opportunity for an actor.

“It’s not often these kind of scripts come across your desk. You don’t get to see much of this type of play and writing — a balance between comedy and drama — in this country.”

The Beauty Queen Of Leenane sees manipulative mother Mag (Noni Hazlehurst) and her virginal daughter Maureen (Michala Banas) who loathe rather than love.

In A Skull In Connemara, Mick Dowd (Chris Bunworth) is hired by a parish priest to dig up the bones of his late wife in the church graveyard, and The Lonesome West sees brothers (Mark Diaco and James O’Connell) resume a vicious and trivial quarrel soon after they bury their father.



**Director Laura Maitland** says, "We all know what it's like to make a connection with someone unexpectedly, but it's so often we just don't have the time or the courage to explore it. *Glimpse* is a day in the life of a world where we do take the time, when we dare to stop and listen."

HERALD SUN - NOVEMBER 12 2012

## KINDRED SPIRITS ACT ON INSTINCT

THREE plays, back to back, will test the skills of the Kin Collective. The 10-member ensemble, including Noni Hazlehurst and Michala Banas, is performing the Leenane Trilogy.

MICHELLE POUNTNEY

What would happen if we were brave enough to follow through on a random connection? That glimpse when you meet the eyes of a stranger in a public place?

The seemingly endless possibilities of what life could be like if we acted on those connections are explored in a bold production from the newly formed KIN collective, an ensemble of some of Australian stage and screen's most well-known actors.

Noni Hazlehurst, Michala Banas, Marg Downey, Keith Brockett; independent theatre greats Laura Maitland, Mark Diaco, Linc Hasler; and acting graduates Tom Barton and Dan Hamill created The KIN Collective after meeting at a four-day acting workshop.

"It was such a profound experience for all of us - we made a real connection because it really made a difference to us as people," says Hazlehurst, who is co-director of *Glimpse*.

Participants continued to meet after the workshop and took other classes together before deciding they wanted to create their own company. "*Glimpse* is a series of vignettes of everyday life with different glimpses into the damage that's caused to people and how it manifests," Hazlehurst says.

*Glimpse* tells the story of eight strangers and what would happen if that glimpse is allowed to blossom into conversation, relationships and more. Director Laura Maitland says "we all know what it's like to make a connection with someone unexpectedly, but it's so often we just don't have the time or the courage to explore it. *Glimpse* is a day in the life of a world where we do take the time, when we dare to stop and listen. It's a no-holds barred journey into our own fears and assumptions... and chance to see what's left of them on the other side."

Some of the inspiration behind the stories in *Glimpse* have come from real -real incidents and observations. Hazlehurst says: "Everyone has a story to tell; everyone has reasons why they are the way they are. In these days where personal interaction is not at such a premium, we tend to not necessarily look at people very closely and we all pretend we are fine."

Jason Chatfield, the respected cartoonist behind iconic Australian comic strip, *Ginger Meggs*, has also joined The KIN Collective as set designer to create the worlds of *Glimpse*: live-sketching digital scenes around the actors as they work.



The Kin Collective - The 10-member ensemble, including Noni Hazlehurst and Michala Banas, is performing the Leenane Trilogy.



"I think anyone who knows Melbourne's theatre scene will be **rolling in the aisles.**"

THE AGE - FRIDAY NOVEMBER 2 2007

CULTURE

## Giving our city the high five

A new theatre production celebrates our laneways, writes Fiona Scott-Norman.

IF YOU were asked to nominate something quintessentially Melbourne, what would it be? Wearing of black? Kick-arse community radio? Sport? Local thespians at Nothcote's White Whale Theatre have plumped for laneways and the result is five short thematically linked plays presented under the title Melburnalia.

Artistic director and co-founder David Mence explains that he and managing director Kelly Farrow chose laneways as the binding agent because they didn't want to fence their writers in. "We felt that it wouldn't be too didactic. We wanted something that was common throughout Melbourne, in the suburbs and the inner city, and without saying, 'You've got to include the MCG or Flinders Street Station.'"

The impetus for the project came after Mence and Farrow returned from a long rip overseas and found themselves enjoying a drink overlooking Melbourne's skyline, catching up on the work of local novelists. Kate Holden and Alice Pung and musing something along the lines of "Gosh, isn't Melbourne fantastic?"

It's a very short step from thought to action for Mence and Farrow, who formed White Whale Theatre while studying at Melbourne University. They took 23 actors to the Edinburgh Fringe last year to mount *Macbeth Re-Arisen*, Mence's B-grade schlock-zombie sequel to *Macbeth* written in Elizabethan iambic pentameter and garnered five-star reviews.

With *Melburnalia*, the duo busied themselves approaching their favourite Melbourne writers, asking them to write a short play (about 20 minutes), set in a suburb that had resonance for them. They ended up with five writers - Lally Katz, Pung, Holden, Ross Mueller, Tee O'Neill - and five suburbs - Kew, Footscray, Ringwood, the central business district and St Kilda.

"We've ended up with five pieces that probably couldn't be any more different from each other," Mence says.

"The suburbs are culturally very different from each other. It shows Melbourne wearing so many different masks, five faces that we all don't know about each other."

The writers - three playwrights, two novelists - have all drawn on their personal responses to a particular suburb. Holden's play, based on her experiences working as a prostitute in St Kilda, is set in the iconic Galleon cafe on Carlisle Street, where four old friends meet for a long-overdue catch-up.



O'Neill, who grew up in Ringwood, has written a love story gone tragically wrong between a couple of hapless petty criminals. Pung's is set in her childhood suburb of Footscray where two Asian students struggle to connect when one of them has to leave and help her family who are sewing back at home. "Part of what we're about is promoting new writing," Mence says, "and another is cross-racial casting. We're very interested in cultural differences. That's why so many diverse localities and people are represented. In Alice's play, a relationship is torn apart because this private school boy just can't really understand the pressure his girlfriend is under. Why she has no time for him, why she has to work so hard."

The diversity of White Whale's latest project is certainly not restricted to the casting. Katz's play, inspired by her reaction to her new home suburb of Kew, is a two-hander about a gay schoolboy who comes home and finds a giant apocalypse bear in the room with him. "The apocalypse bear may or may not be a figment of his imagination," Mence says.

"But it keeps him company makes him a sandwich, acts like his mum, who is conspicuously absent."

The final play in the production, which is presented in traverse (with the audience seated facing one another) to evoke the sense of a laneway, is Mueller's playful swipe at Melbourne's theatrical world set in Degraffes Street in the city. Titled *Being Greg Stone*, after Being John Malkovich, a young actress is tutored by her agent in the art of how to be exactly like Greg Stone, a Melbourne actor who is always in work. "I think that anyone who knows Melbourne's theatre scene will be rolling in the aisles. We all know there's so little work for actors, and this is Ross' way of drawing attention to it, that this actress has to learn how to be a middle-aged male actor to become successful."

Inside knowledge might furnish an audience member with a few in-jokes but Mence says that you don't need to be a Melburnian to appreciate *Melburnalia*. "You don't need to intimate with the suburbs to travel into them. I think it appeals to both locals and tourists."

STM - OCTOBER 18 2004



## Laura's Dramatic Exit

Remember this face - she could be our next Cate Blanchett, Nicole Kidman or Naomi Watts. Wembley teenager Laura Maitland is moving to Melbourne on Wednesday to begin studying the drama course at the Victorian College of Arts. Having only recently turned 18, the porcelain-skinned beauty is one of the youngest people to be accepted into the prestigious acting course - which, alongside WAAPA and Sydney's NIDA, is among the top three drama courses in Australia. Only 25 places are offered each year Australia-wide and while selectors thought the former Methodist Ladies' College student was too young, her talent in auditions won them over.

"I was only 17 when I auditioned and because I was auditioning for all three of the drama schools I had to learn nine monologues between my exams so it was pretty frantic," she says.

"I got through to the final rounds in all three but your age is there on the application and WAAPA and NIDA told me I was too young and that I should come back next year."

Laura was in the top 1 per cent of students in WA for drama in the TEE and is a regular with Perth comedy club Cut Snake Theatre Company. She lists her favourite actors as Blanchett, Barry Otto, Jackie Weaver, Julianne Moore and Juliette Binoche.

"My heart seems to be on the stage - there's nothing like a live audience," she says. "But I would also like to do film."

"Maitland...is one of the youngest people to be accepted into the prestigious acting course [at the] Victorian College of the Arts."



"Smudged's audience is responsible for coming up with the show's plot each night; **its actors for the impressive task of improvising and performing it.**"

THE COURIER MAIL - SEPTEMBER 13 2011

## All a-Twitter as audience joins the act



**BLURRED LINES:** Laura Mitland performs in *Smudged* at the Brisbane Festival.

**Picture:** Sarah Marshall

### Margaret Wenham

*SMUDGED* is truly a child of the 21st century.

This one-hour theatrical production, presented as part of the Brisbane Festival, brings audience interaction with the players to a new level using Twitter.

It also examines – in its central theme – the impact of the other currently uber-popular social networking media, Facebook.

"The audience can SMS to a phone number and their SMS will come up on the two screens under randomly allocated, contemporary clown names and the characters can tweet to the audience as well," production director Richard Pettifer explained yesterday.

"So the audience can interact with the characters and with each other and make comments about the play as it

## BRISBANE FESTIVAL

happens." It was difficult, he agreed, for the actors to have the audience – which is seated in a circle around the performance area – using their mobiles to text and comment on the show.

"It's distracting and pulls the actors' focus away from the task at hand, but that's in much the same way as Facebook and tweeting pulls us from our every day lives," he said.

"That was part of our inspiration – you know, you're on a train talking to someone and they get a text message and say 'Hang on a second' and you

have this horrible dead moment, while you're waiting for them to finish their text message," Mr Pettifer said.

The central theme of *Smudged* is the life journey of the central character Paul, who has his life invaded and his identity controlled by three clowns who are metaphors for Facebook.

The clowns cause great confusion in his life and a sense of not knowing who he is any more.

*Smudged* is an intriguing creation written by Melbourne Megan Twycross.

Its performance in Brisbane for the festival followed a couple of preview productions in Melbourne that helped build the play.

The final performance of *Smudged*, one of the Under the Radar festival productions, is today at 6.30pm at the Metro Arts Centre in Edward St, the city.





## THE AUSTRALIAN

"With **skill verging on genius** (not a word I use lightly) Laura Maitland turns the jiving Capulet into a co-starring role."

- Chris Boyd on *Romeo & Juliet*



Maitland acts like Ali boxed, with **hypnotic beauty and brutal force.**"

- Chris Boyd on  
*Danny and the Deep Blue Sea*



## *Stage Whispers*

"**Ms Maitland is herself excellent:** febrile, aggressive, dangerously crazy-brave and provocative and yet with tiny, enticing glimpses of sweetness and humour... **It's a quicksilver performance.**"

- Michael Brindley on  
*Danny and the Deep Blue Sea*



## THE AGE

"Maitland's Lottie tries to rise above with a **luminous and compelling otherworldliness**"

- Cameron Woodhead on  
*Lottie in the Late Afternoon*

"**Maitland lights up the stage** as the too-knowing, and too-naïve, teenager you know her murderous hometown is fated to crush."

- Cameron Woodhead on  
*The Lonesome West*



## MILK BAR MAG

"An **outstanding performance** was carried out by Laura Maitland"

- Joshua Judson



17 JULY 2017

# Australian Arts Review

## ON THE COUCH WITH LAURA MAITLAND

### WHO IS LAURA MAITLAND?

Literally or figuratively?! A flawed, excitable, largely positive actor; theatre-maker; friend and family member, I hope?

### WHAT WOULD YOU DO DIFFERENTLY TO WHAT YOU DO NOW?

Within my profession, or within an alternate profession? I'm very interested in and passionate about psychology and mental health, which are important parts of my current profession... so perhaps I'd be working or studying something in that field.

### WHO INSPIRES YOU AND WHY?

I find Larry Moss to be incredibly inspiring on a creative level – and apart from that basically all the people I love inspire me no end.

### WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD?

Look, it's always a tough argument to make without sounding self interested, but I've been saved and inspired so many times by every type of art in the world. So I guess I'm just trying to offer some of my own energy to that artistic matrix.

### FAVOURITE HOLIDAY DESTINATION AND WHY?

Honestly? Home to Perth and down to Cottesloe for a swim with friends.

### WHEN FRIENDS COME TO TOWN, WHAT ATTRACTION WOULD YOU TAKE THEN TO, AND WHY?

The Comedy, Fringe or Arts Festivals when they're on... and usually to The Everleigh for a cocktail afterwards.

### WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY READING?

The Love Affairs of Nathaniel P. by Adelle Waldman

### WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY LISTENING TO?

I took a bit of a trip back to the 90s for a show recently, so a lot of Oasis and Blur!

### HAPPINESS IS?

Sun, sand, good people and good food.

### WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR YOU?

Health, happiness, and perspective, I hope.



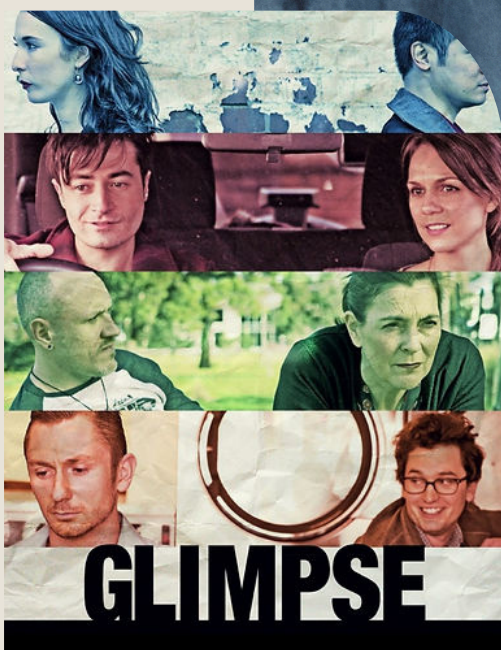


THE KIN COLLECTIVE PRESENTS AMELIA ROPE

# LOTTIE

IN THE LATE AFTERNOON

DIRECTED BY MARG DOWNEY





# Laura Maitland

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