

THANKS

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On Thursdays, Heracles enjoys heroic desserts with Pierre Roelofs at Rosamond in Fitzroy. www.pierreroelofs.com

A is for Atlas mentoring program proudly supported by the City of Maribyrnong.

ABOUT A IS FOR ATLAS

A is for Atlas is an independent, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to inter-artform exploration, and to the development of Australian artists. Our goal is to develop a community of individuals and organisations with whom we can collaborate to create a broader appreciation of the Arts in Australia. Fostering the evolution of this creative community is why A is for Atlas.

Our creative brief is unique in calling expressly for the collaboration of distinct and specific creative forms in the generation of performance subject matter. We believe that live performance must be the subject of continual experimentation in order to remain relevant and alive. We strive to create new performance works that invigorate the form, and invigorate audiences to seek out new foods for their creative consumption.

Creativity, collaboration, community, evolution... A is for Atlas

www.aisforatlas.org.au



ARTS HOUSE

www.artshouse.com.au
artshouse@melbourne.vic.gov.au

03 9322 3719 | 521 Queensberry Street North Melbourne VIC 3051

Arts House is a City of Melbourne contemporary arts initiative. Each year Arts House presents a curated program of contemporary art featuring performances, exhibitions, live art, installations and cultural events.

Arts House operates as a multi-dimensional resource hub for artists: producing, programming, devising, supporting and funding. Work is presented across two sites: Arts House, North Melbourne Town Hall and Arts House, Meat Market.

Arts House values arts and culture that help create a world where people are actively engaged, aware and empowered to participate, politically and culturally, to make positive change.



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HERACLES HIGH 5

A POST-PUNK
CABARET
DISRUPTION
INCORPORATING
HEINER MÜLLER'S
'HERACLES 5'

A IS FOR ATLAS

"(A IS FOR ATLAS IS)
FIRMLY... IN THE RANKS OF
COMPANIES TO WATCH."

Alison Croggan, theatre notes

ARTS HOUSE
MEAT MARKET
WED 23 - SAT 26 JUNE

ARTS HOUSE

DIRECTORS NOTE

Everyone loves a good hero. Someone to look up to, someone to cheer for. But how do we separate the myth from the reality?

Known knowns:

For those who come across the sea we've boundless plains to share.

Known unknowns:

Hercules (Roman: Hercules) was conceived by the mortal woman Alcmene. Sired not by her husband Amphytrion, but rather by the mischievous chief god of Olympus, Zeus, who snuck down to Earth and into her bed. Zeus had the boy named "glory to Hera" to appease the jealousy of his own – godly – wife. Yet Hera still raged enough to strike her stepchild with a madness that made him kill his (first) wife and children. Hera also forced him to serve the idiot king of Thebes Eurystheus for ten years, in which the Twelve Labours of Hercules were carried out (the fifth of these Labours required Hercules to wash clean the enormous stinking stables of Augias, king of Elis and supplier of meat to all of Greece). After his Labours, the man was made a god and given his stepsister Hebe as a prize.

Unknown unknowns:

Given his strength, wit and charms, and despite his flaws, Hercules is simply the greatest hero of all times...

Who are you cheering for, and who's cheering for you?

CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

'Hercules 5' text by: **Heiner Müller**

Translated from the German by: **Carl Weber**

Concept, disruption and original texts by:

Xan Colman and Gert Reifarth

Original music by: **Christopher Mildren**

Director: **Xan Colman**

Stage Design: **Dayna Morrissey**

Lighting Design: **Richard Vabre**

Costume Design: **Katherine Hamer**

Video Design: **Nicholas Verso**

Sound Design: **Matt Adair**

Co-director and Dramaturg: **Gert Reifarth**

Assistant Director: **Nicole Smith**

Performed by: **Jack Walters, Wes Snelling,**

Rebecca Ritters, Lee Mason, Moe

Hammoud, Tania Lentini, Andrew Gray and

Jim McDonagh

Band: **Christopher Mildren, Tom Hoskins**

and **Chloe Dempsey**

Fight Choreography: **Felicity Steel**

Movement Consultant: **Belle McDonagh**

Voiceovers: **Janine Watson and Tom Wren**

Stage Manager: **Rita Verrocchi**

Operators: **Kris Chainey, Lucas Silva-Myles**

and **Jeremy Smith**

Production Support: **Michelle Barnett**

Producers: **Xan Colman and Grant Cooper**

Image: **natasha blankfield**

Hercules High 5 has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its funding and advisory body, and by the Dennis Osborne Clarke Charitable Trust, managed by ANZ Trustees.

BIOGRAPHIES

Xan Colman is the Artistic Director of A is for Atlas. Recent directing credits include: *Quartet with the Razor* (2009), *Duets for Actor and Musician* (2008), *When We Fall* (2006) and *I Start Again* (2006) for A is for Atlas, *Kala Khun Nueng* (Bangkok 2007) for Makhampom Theatre, and *Green Wolf* (2007) for La Mama. Many of Xan's solo and collaborative stageplays have been produced including the acclaimed *Hand-Holding* series (Dancing With Strangers), the inter-artform colour interrogation *Blue Views* (City of Melbourne, 2006), and the short play *Plum*, (winner, 2003 Glen Eira Literary Awards national Short Stage Play Award). Recent honours include: Australian Postgraduate Award (2010-14, for PhD study, RMIT, Creative Media), International Artist Residency (Fundación Valparaíso, Spain), Asialink Performing Arts Residency (2007, Makhampom Theatre, Thailand), and Ian Potter Cultural Trust Grant (2007, CCD capacity-building projects in South East Asia).

Gert Reifarth has worked as a lecturer in German and Cultural Studies in Germany, Ireland and at the University of Melbourne in Australia. He has written and published extensively about German literature, poetry and theatre practice. His direction credits include the Goethe/Amalia opera *Erwin & Elmire* (iOpera 2008), Brecht's *Der Jasager und der Neinsager* (NUI Galway/UCD Dublin 1998), Friedrich Dürrenmatt's *Romulus der Große* (NUI Galway & European Tour 1996), Peter Hacks' *Noch einen Löffel Gift, Liebling?* (NUI Galway 1995), and his own radio-play-live-on-stage: *Who's Afraid of Harry Heine?* (Open Stage 2008).

Christopher Mildren has worked in the Melbourne music scene for 15 years, covering rock, metal, punk, jazz, pop, comedy and theatrical productions. A prolific composer and multi-instrumentalist in all genres, Christopher here relishes the opportunity to fuse two of his greatest loves, classic-era punk and the stage musical.

Dayna Morrissey completed a Postgraduate Diploma in theatre design at the VCA in 2007. Whilst studying her design credits include *Smashed* by Lally Katz directed by Adena Jacobs, and Union House Theatre's production of *White with Wire Wheels* directed by Susie Dee, which received a Greenroom nomination for set design. Amongst various independent productions, Dayna has designed for Red Stitch, St Martins Youth Arts Centre, La Mama, Monash University Honors Ensemble, SPARC and Platform Youth Theatre.

Richard Vabre is a freelance lighting designer who has lit productions for MTC, Malthouse Theatre, Arena Theatre Company, Stuck Pig's Squealing, Chambermade, Rawcus, Red Stitch, Polyglot, Melbourne Worker's Theatre, Union House Theatre, Platform Youth Theatre, Aphids, The Other Film Festival, Here Theatre, Theatre Tarquin, and Dancehouse. Awards: Green Room Award Association's John Truscott Prize for

Excellence in Design (2004). Green Room Award Association award for Outstanding Lighting Design in a Fringe or Independent production 2005 (*Smashed, Test Pattern, The Black Swan of Trespass*), Green Room Award Association award for Outstanding Lighting Design in a Fringe or Independent Production 2009 (*Progress and Melancholy*) Fringe Festival Awards: Excellence in Lighting Design (1998 & 2000) plus 3 more Green Room Award Nominations

Katherine Hamer has been making clothes since she was little little, but only starting taking it seriously when she needed an escape from history essays at university. She now studies fashion full time at RMIT and is preparing to launch her own label in the next few years. This is her first venture with A is for Atlas.

Nicholas Verso is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts and has directed numerous music videos, short films (including the award winning *Hugo*) and television (the ATOM award winning *Snake Tales* for Channel 9). Last year he was accepted into the prestigious Binger FilmLab in Amsterdam and Berlinale Talent Campus. As an AV designer, he has designed shows for the Malthouse, NICA, Melbourne International Festival and MU Union House Theatre.

Matt Adair has worked for several years in the fields of electronic music, theatre sound and multimedia production. He has released music through the Clan Analogue label under the name of Kaputnik, becoming one of the most downloaded Australian electro artists on iTunes Australia. He has also curated a sampler series of new Melbourne electronic music artists. Find him here: akm.net.au/cityfreqs/blog/

This is **Jack Walters's** first production with A is for Atlas. Most recently Jack has been involved with Scarab Productions working with directors Dom Allen and Joel Betts, performing in a series of short films. Prior to that he worked with director Timothy Melville in a solo performance, which became the film clip for up and coming Melbourne band Big Scary. Theatre work includes two showcase performances with Melbourne based Cariad Productions.

Melbourne's own award winning **Wes Snelling** has a "beautiful voice, and a wicked sense of comic timing" (The Age). He has been working within the arts industry for over a decade as an actor, singer, writer, comedian, director, production/stage/tour manager and facilitator. Wes is a celebrated Australian artiste whose work has seen him tour throughout Australia, Europe, the UK and most recently New York. "Fabulousness" The Age. "Super fabulous" Herald Sun. "I must apologise for my overuse of the word *fabulous*" Inpress Magazine.

Rebecca Ritters's career as an actor began when she landed a role in *Neighbours*, age 8, where she worked for the remainder of her childhood. After finishing school, Rebecca moved to the UK. Whilst in London she



worked with the British Shakespeare Company in their productions of *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as well as working on the long-running British classic *Coronation Street*. Other TV credits include: *Pig's Breakfast, Blue Heelers* and *All Saints*. She studied in New York at the Atlantic Theatre Company and currently lives in Los Angeles. She is delighted to be working with the glorious A is for Atlas team!

Lee Mason is currently filming the feature *The Caretaker* in Rutherglen due for release in early 2011. Recent credits include: Film: *The Independent, The Human Fog, GFC, Within Reach* and the award winning *Pontos* (Cannes 2008); T.V.: *Satisfaction, Thank God Your Here* and *Neighbours*; Theatre: *At the centre of Light, The Late Henry Moss, The Pigeon* and *Reading Beckett*. Next Lee will appear in *Blue Surge* for Harvest Theatre.

Tania Lentini has recently performed in the theatre productions of *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea* (Human Sacrifice Theatre) and *The Realm of Wasps* (Outcast Theatre). Film and TV work includes *Lake Mungo* and *City Homicide*. Current projects include the feature films *The Caretaker* and *The Fear Within*. This is Tania's first outing with A is for Atlas. She has also worked as a stage manager, director and producer of feature films.

Moe Hammoud has always entertained those around him, even when not on stage. Moe studied at the National Theatre, where he received a Certificate III in Screen and Theatre performance. He performed in a production of *Away*, playing Harry/Rick, and also played Borko in Melbourne feature film, *How Good Would It Be*.

Andrew Gray has recently directed *Three Dog Night* for the Adelaide Festival Centre and 45 Downstairs, *The Colour of Glass* for La Mama and *The Winterling* for Red Stitch Actors Theatre. Andrew has recently performed in Heiner Muller's *Quartet* (A is for Atlas), Marius Von Mayenburg's *Fireface* (VCA Master's Project) and Talya Chalef's *Eyton Road* (La Mama, Cape Town Arts Festival). Andrew is Artistic Director of Melbourne Playback Theatre Company and a member of physical theatre ensembles Company 13 and The Public Floor.

Jim McDonagh is excited to be performing for the first time with A is for Atlas after a long stint on the performance sidelines. After finishing Performance Studies at Victoria University with such terrific artists as Jude Walton and Margaret Trail, Jim wrote and performed *Crobbadonk* with Ian David at the Melbourne Fringe Festival. Most recently he has performed in Boobook Theatre's productions of *The Removalists* by David Williamson playing Simmonds and *We Won't Pay! We Won't Pay!* by Dario Fo.

Tom Hoskins is a Melbourne based musician whose tours of duty include the bands The Single Men's Drinking Club, 16 Millimetre and This Machine. He has composed for theatre and film and finds the ability to play guitar a convenient front for his rampant alcoholism.

Chloe Dempsey completed VCE Music Performance/VET Music Industry with a perfect study score, and now studies at Monash Conservatorium of Music under Tony Floyd, Allan Browne, Julien Wilson and others. Chloe performs with a number of bands, including funk/soul group The Collective and pop/rock cover band The Other Band. Chloe has played with

Australian Idol finalist Holly Weinert, and with Australian percussion icons, David Jones and Sergei Golovko.

Nicole Smith grew up in San Francisco, California and has studied theatre at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles as well as the British American Drama Academy in London. Relocating to Melbourne in January 2009, Nicole currently works with the Malthouse Theatre. Previous directing credits include Woody Allen's *Play It Again Sam*, *Roberto Zucco* by Bernard-Marie Koltès, Neil LaBute's *The Shape of Things* and *Loop* by Therese Cloonan as part of the 2009 Fringe Festival.

Rita Verrocchi is 2cm too short to be a RAAF pilot, so stage managing the *Green&GoldLive!* Hercules is as close to being in charge of a C-130 as she is going to get. Having clocked up thousands of theatre hours, she is once again happily stepping onto the flight deck.

Grant Cooper is a founding director and the current Chair of A is for Atlas. In over 25 years in the arts, Grant has worked with a variety of artists and companies as designer, director, artist, technician, producer and administrator. In recent years, in addition to A is for Atlas, Grant has worked with the likes of Theatre in Decay, Dancing With Strangers, violinist Sarah Curro and drummer David Jones.