

## BLACK SEQUIN PRODUCTIONS

Black Sequin Productions is a small cutting edge company that creates performance works, that investigate the human psyche and it's ability to function creatively in a contemporary world.

'...as you walk down the street you see the *real world* but feel aware of an *inner world*...'

Black Sequin Productions attempt a dialogue with this disjunction. Based on the premise that any ordinary action has extraordinary resonances, our intention is to liberate the audience from the usual constraints of linear time and provoke an imaginative and associative engagement with image, action, text and sound.

Previous Black Sequin Productions: *Kitten*, (Melbourne International Festival of the Arts), *Still Angela*, (Playbox Theatre & National Tour / Mobile States), *The Black Sequin Dress* (Adelaide Festival, Playbox, Belvoir St.), *Remember* (Gasworks), *Call of the Wild* (Spoleto Festival) and *Goodnight Sweet Dreams* (Anthill).

[www.blacksequin.com](http://www.blacksequin.com)

## THANK YOU

Greta.  
Victorian College of the Arts and Music,  
University of Melbourne.

**Madeleine** is supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, it's funding and advisory body; the Victorian Government through Arts Victoria and by the City of Melbourne.

**Madeleine** has been auspiced by Auspicious Arts.

## BLUEBOTTLE

Bluebottle specialises in lighting, set and installations from concept through design development to documentation and project management. Bluebottle has a strong theatrical background which it brings to all of its design projects, resulting in a diverse range of experience in dealing with client requirements, budgets, locations, materials and unusual situations.

Directors, Ben Cobham and Andrew Livingston established the company in Melbourne in 1991 and have designed in creative and unconventional ways in theatres, galleries and museums, for installations, music, exhibitions, dance and special events. Bluebottle now operates with a permanent staff of sixteen who draw from experience in a vast range of projects and working environments. Based in Melbourne, we have worked throughout Australia, including regional and remote areas, as well as overseas.

We are interested in extending the possibilities of design and the integration of light and the surrounding environment. We enjoy working closely with our clients to assist them in achieving their creative goals and consistently strive to set and meet new challenges. Alongside our expertise in lighting and design, Bluebottle offers project management services. Our keen attention to detail and our drive to push the boundaries of our work on every project has necessitated the need to be a self sufficient management team. We are capable of managing all aspects of any lighting project to achieve an excellent outcome.

Our fastidious approach has comfortably found success in both the public and private sectors with a broad client base ranging from architectural firms to government institutions and independent arts practitioners. For **Madeleine** our design and production team include Ben Cobham, Frog Peck, Tom Rogers and Blair Hart.

## ARTS HOUSE

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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.

# MADELEINE

## JENNY KEMP AND BLACK SEQUIN PRODUCTIONS

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## ARTS HOUSE

### FUTURE TENSE

ARTS HOUSE  
NORTH MELBOURNE TOWN HALL  
TUE 3 - SUN 8 AUGUST

"IT'S POETIC. SENSUOUS. ENVELOPING. FULL OF ALARMING LONGINGS AND INTENSE DESIRES. ... IT IS ALSO ONE OF THE MOST GRAPHIC AND REMARKABLE STUDIES OF MANIA I'VE SEEN ON THE STAGE."

Chris Boyd, Herald Sun (on *Kitten*)

ARTS HOUSE



Arts House is a City of Melbourne Contemporary Arts Initiative [www.artshouse.com.au](http://www.artshouse.com.au)



## WRITER/DIRECTOR'S NOTE

### The On the Edge Project

**Madeleine** is the second in a cycle of new works, by Black Sequin Productions, exploring mental illness.

The first was *Kitten* – a bi polar soap opera, seen at the Melbourne International Festival for the Arts 2008 Malthouse, explored Bi Polar disorder.

We all live with something unknown in ourselves and beyond our control. Mental illness is complex and multifaceted – those with mental illness are struggling to live within a world that is constructed by and for the ‘sane’. It is as if they are living at times in two worlds in collision. Yet the ‘sane’ too can feel ‘split’ at times fragmented and as if ‘in collision’. My interest lies in how experience and culture shape our notions of sanity. For the sane and the insane – where do the borderlines lie?

I am interested in how we can deal with mental illness, in a way that is positive and not one of denial. The relationship that we are offered through contact with the mentally ill is one that is potentially enlightening. Our hope in creating theatre from this material is to offer a way of bringing this world into presence for contemplation and providing a space within which these concerns can become a poetic reality.

The fascinating thing about the mentally ill is that they often live in a world that has complete and complex logic of its own. The logic may be lateral but it can sometimes make a lot of sense, creating an uncannily accurate look into the absurdity of our everyday world. By coming to know the world of the ‘insane’ more perhaps we can become more aware also of the ‘unknown’ within ourselves.

**Jenny Kemp**  
Writer/Director

## PRODUCTION DRAMATURG PROGRAM NOTE

*‘The important thing is never to reduce the unconscious, to interpret it or make it signify according to the tree model, but rather to produce the unconscious, and, along with it, new utterances and other desires.’*

In their attempt to scuttle once and for all the reductive model of interpreting the unconscious developed by psychoanalysis, Deleuze and Guattari sought to understand the unconscious as a productive force, and to find a style of writing that drew upon this force. In this production of **Madeleine**, Jenny Kemp is in her way attempting to do the same. **Madeleine** is not a play about schizophrenia or even about a schizophrenic. It does not tell a story in a biographic way. It uses the multi-languages of theatre to enter us onto the multiple lines along which a schizophrenic is travelling. We have to let go the familiar dramatic development of cause

and effect leading to a culminating point, and to follow instead the complex map of intense experiences that accumulate. The difficulty that the family has in knowing how to deal with Maddy is not only that she seems so unstable but that she seems so sure and that each encounter with her is completely unpredictable. This unpredictability operates in the production too, both in terms of its unfolding and its deliberate stylistic variety, ranging from the bizarrely comic to the familiarly ‘real’, to the fantastic. This is a show that surprises at each turn.

Deleuze and Guattari called their form of writing schizo-analysis and the reference to schizophrenia built into this term is due to their belief that a schizophrenic is *living*, in an unrepressed and uncontrollable way, the *unconscious* which cannot be mapped carefully like a tree with one main strong stem and branches leading off from it, but is more like couch grass with countless lines constantly leading off in different directions and connecting intermittently at unpredictable points.

Jenny Kemp has for many years layered the textual, visual, aural, physical, spatial and emotional registers of theatre in ways that have reflected the multiplicity of the layers of an individual’s psychic life. A theatre production is for her an opportunity to *produce* the unconscious in theatrical form. To experience one of her productions is not to be told a good story with a satisfying conclusion, but to place oneself on a fevered plane of *intensity* upon which anything might happen at any register and from any direction. It is an exhilarating if slightly unhinging experience.

In **Madeleine**, this effect is heightened and complicated by the presence, for the first time in Kemp’s work, of fully drawn family members in addition to the central female psyche. These other characters are as normal (or abnormal) as any of us. Yes they have their fairly defined social roles – as Father, Business Woman, Engaged Older Sister – but they have too their own inner lives, their secret desires and intentions that can lead to moments of crackup.

*‘A profession is a rigid segment, but what goes underneath? What connections, attractions, repulsions which don’t coincide with the segments, what secret follies nevertheless linked to public power!’* (Deleuze and Guattari)

In this, the family members are no different to Maddy, the schizophrenic: they are complex beings, dealing each in their own way with a destabilising situation. ‘We are all complex!’ cries Charley the older sister. This tracking of the interweaving of four complex individuals is, for Kemp, different to the embodiment in her other plays of the separate layers of the one. But there is another line making its way through Maddy that she alone traverses and that the play seeks to map. This line is, in Deleuze’s words, *‘even stranger still, as if something were carrying us away, through our segments but also across our thresholds, toward an unknown destination, neither foreseeable nor pre-existent.’*

Expressed in this way, Maddy’s line, as we follow it in the play, interconnects with the family and their attempts to deal with her, but it has its own force – a productive if tragic force that will carry Maddy along regardless of any interferences. It. is the line that leads inevitably towards *rupture*.

It should be said that **Madeleine** is not the application of philosophy to theatre. Kemp has written the scenes that make up the play as a series of distinct personal intuitive responses to an extreme psychic state, one with which she has had close if not direct contact. The scenes were not written as stages of a developing narrative. They impact upon one another in many combinations, with an unplanned though undeniable power. It has been the task in the process of dramaturgy and rehearsal of pushing and shoving these moments of intensity into some form of coherence for an audience, without losing what Jenny has called the ‘purity of their illogic’. This task, working alongside Jenny and Helen, and with a highly creative, articulate and vocal team of cast and designers, has been at times like entering Theseus’ labyrinth. I am reminded that after he finally made his way out of the labyrinth with the help of Ariadne, Theseus returned home and stood before his people and danced.

**Richard Murphet**

## CAST AND CREATIVE

Maddy: **Nikki Shiels**  
Alex / The King: **Ian Scott**  
Madeleine / The Queen: **Margaret Mills**  
Charley / The Princess: **Natasha Herbert**  
Voice: **Richard Murphet**  
Writer/Director: **Jenny Kemp**  
Script/Production Dramaturg: **Richard Murphet**  
Movement: **Helen Herbertson**  
Set/Lighting Design: **Bluebottle – Ben Cobham**  
Lighting Realisation: **Jenny Hector**  
Costume Design: **Harriet Oxley**  
Production/Operation: **Bluebottle – Frog Peck**

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Jenny Kemp** is Writer and Artistic Director of Black Sequin Productions. Over the last two decades she has created a distinctive body of work with Black Sequin Productions, including *Kitten*, (Melbourne International Festival of the Arts), *Still Angela*, (Playbox Theatre & National Tour / Mobile States), *The Black Sequin Dress* (Adelaide Festival, Playbox, Belvoir St.), *Remember* and *Call of the Wild* (Spoleto Festival). She has been the recipient of an Australia Council Theatre Fellowship, The Kenneth Myer Medallion for Performing Arts and Greenroom awards for both Direction and her collaborative work in Dance. Jenny has been an Honorary Research Associate at Monash University and frequently conducts workshops throughout Australia in writing. She lectures in Post Graduate Directing, at the Victorian College of the Arts and Music. And also works as a free-lance Director with such

companies as Malthouse, Playbox, MTC & SATC and the APG. ny also works as a Post Graduate lecturer in Directing at the Victorian College of the Arts and Music.

**Nikki Shiels** graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts in 2009.

In the short time since she has appeared in *Elizabeth: Almost By Chance a Woman* for Malthouse Theatre directed by Michael Kantor, and has worked on Fred Schepisi’s upcoming feature film *The Eye of the Storm*. Her VCA Credits include *Peer Gynt*, *The Bourgeois Gentleman*, *Invisible Stains*, *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*, *Vinegar Tom*, *Three Sisters* and *Julius Caesar*.

**Margaret Mills** other work with Jenny Kemp: *Call of the Wild*, *Remember*, *Still Angela*, *The Black Sequin Dress* and *Kitten*. For MTC includes: *Boston Marriage*, *Angels in America*, *A Cheery Soul*, *A Doll’s House*, *Away*; with Malthouse: *The Spook*, *The Odyssey*, *All Souls*, *The Conjurors*, *Like a Metaphor*, and For Griffin, the tour of *Speaking in Tongues*. For Melbourne International Festival: *Charitable Intent* and *As Time Goes By*. For BSTC: *Jandamarra*. With Hayloft: *BC*. With Ranters Theatre: *The Wall*. *NeverMore Shall We Part* at The Black Box.

She has developed work with Whistling in the Theatre including *Ship of Fools* and with Melissa Reeves and Maude Davey with *The Girl I Love* and *Never Let Me Go*.

Her TV credits include *MDA*, *A Country Practice*, *Blue Heelers*, *Kick*, *Marshall’s Law* and *Holly’s Heroes*. Radio plays for the ABC include *As Time Goes By*, *Beaming Jesus*, *Dark* and *Call of the Wild*.

**Natasha Herbert** has performed in Jenny Kemp Productions at both the Melbourne and Adelaide Arts festivals. She has been nominated for Greenroom Awards for *Progress and Melancholy*, *God of Carnage*, *Honour and Love Child*, and won Best Actress for *Portrait of Dora*. Natasha’s film credits include *X*, *Corroboree*, *Lake Mungo*, *Boytown* and *The Forest*. Her television credits include- *City Homicide*, *MDA*, *Blue Heelers*, *Stingers*, *All Saints*, *White Collar Blue*, *Backburner*, *Queen Kat*, *Carmel & St Jude*, *State Coroner*. Theatre credits include; *Small Metal Objects* (Back to Back), *Progress and Melancholy* (45 Downstairs), *God of Carnage*, *The Pillouman*, *Three Sisters*, *The Balcony*, *Hysteria* (MTC), *The Wall* (Ranters Theatre), *Kitten* (Black Sequin/MIAF), *The Country* ( B Sharp ), *Portrait of Dora* (La Mama), *Mum’s the Word* (Atheneum), *Still Angela*, *Rapture*, *Honour*, *The Black Sequin Dress*, *Love Child*, *Wolf* ( Playbox), *Skylight* (Hot House),*The Large Breast or The Upside Down Bell*, *Inconsolable* (Griffin).

**Ian Scott** graduated as an actor from NIDA in 1975. Previous plays with Jenny Kemp: *Black Sequin Dress* and Joanna Murray Smith’s *Nightfall*, for which he won a Best Actor Green Room Award; *The Last Yankee* by Arthur Miller and *Skylight* by David Hare for Hot House Theatre. From 1987 to 1994 he worked with Anthill Theatre performing in many plays including *Moliere*, *Beckett*, *Brecht* and *Chekhov*. He has also performed in plays at Malthouse,

MTC, Theatreworks and La Mama. As well he has written and directed his own plays and collaborated in the making of many others. In 2004/5 he toured with Verity Laughton’s *The Lightkeeper*: directed by Teresa Bell. Teaching: Ballarat Arts Academy; working with Castlemaine based Theatre Group: Punctum and Ballarat’s Yarrowee Productions. He is currently developing a theatre piece based on the travels of Captain Cook.

**Richard Murphet** has been working in theatre for three decades as writer, director and actor. He has written over ten plays, which include *Quick Death*, *Slow Love*, *Dolores in the Department Store*, *The Inhabited Woman* (co-writer with Leisa Shelton) and *The Inhabited Man*. He has directed theatre in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Toronto, New York, Utrecht and Ghent. His most recent work has been with the theatre ensemble Rear Windows, which he co-directs with Leisa Shelton. Richard is an Honorary Lecturer in Performing Arts at the Victorian College of the Arts and Music, University of Melbourne. He was Head of the Drama School at the VCA (2007-2009); Head of Postgraduate Studies (1996-2006); a member of the Australian Performing Group (1975 - 81); and the Artistic Director of the Mill Theatre Company (1985 - 87).

**Ben Cobham** is a Family man. Often building - conquered the square moving to angles may one day reach the curve.

As co-director of Bluebottle, Ben’s experience encompasses theatrical and commercial environments, local government and the business sector with work for galleries, museums, visitor centres and outdoor sites. Years of investigation, research and contribution within the realm of live theatre forms the foundation upon which he continues to build. Ben graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts with a Diploma of Dramatic Arts in 1991.

Since then has extensive experience with many of Australia’s leading arts companies and directors both nationally and internationally. The outstanding work of Bluebottle was honoured with the 2007 & 2008 Green Room John Truscott Award for Excellence in Design.

**Helen Herbertson** is the 2007 recipient of the Kenneth Myer Medallion for Outstanding and Distinguished Contribution to the Performing Arts, Herbertson has been crafting performance for over three decades - intimate non-theatre venues, traditional theatrical settings, large-scale outdoor sites, in theatre and opera performances, educational projects and touring programs. “My work has focused on the dynamic flow between people and place – the interaction of body and landscape or situation – interior life with light, form, place - person and place. The approach fuses an expressive, physical language with a detailed exploration of the performance site, emphasizing the integration of lighting and design while working collaboratively, from inception with performers and creative teams.”

**Jenny Hector** graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts, Drama School, Production Division in 1992. Jenny Hector has a keen interest in design particularly in physical performance and spatial design. Most recently, Jenny designed & curated seven works for Federation Squares Gift of Light Program, designed the lights for Walpole & Sister’s *Mathematical Models of the Sublime*, Back to Back’s Community ensemble The Theatre of Speed for their performance of *Frankenstein* and the premier of *Urchin* for the Arts Centre Full Tilts program. Jenny was lighting designer for The Black Arm Bands *Dirtsong* for Melbourne Festival, a co-design with Bluebottle3 for Balletlab’s *Miracle* (Green Room Award), Sandra Parker’s *Out of Light* at Gasworks Theatre (Green Room Nomination), and Richard Murphet and Leisa Shelton’s *Inhabited Man* (Green Room Nomination). Her experience as a designer and production manager has taken her round Australia and overseas.

**Harriet Oxley** graduated from Victorian College of Arts in 2004 where she was awarded the Fergus Chandler Award for Theatre Design. She also holds a BA in Fashion Design from RMIT.

Harriet’s designs include Victorian Opera’s *The Bear/Angelique* and Snow Queen, Dislocate’s *The Key*, circa NICA’s *Do Not Pass Go*, Sean Curham’s *Boxed Spring Picture* at the Australian Choreographic Centre and Red Stitch’s *Vincent in Brixton* and *I Am Yours*. She has designed costumes for several short films and for television series pilot *Pharaoh’s Leap*. In 2010 she will be designing costumes for Stephanie Lake’s *Mix Tape* for Chunky Move and Tamara Saulwick’s *Pin Drop*. Harriet designed installations for company x:machine’s *Senseless* and *Serial Blogger* which received a Green Room Nomination for design.

**Frog Peck** makes, supports & top notches with many folk in dance, theatre & fashion. He has set people on fire, choreographed furniture & danced naked in the wings. As part of the Bluebottle team Frog’s recent credits include; lighting design on Kate Neal’s composition development *Semaphore*, production for Helen Herbertson & Ben Cobham’s *Sunstruck*, & design implementation for The Australian National Academy of Music’s *Seven Words*. After graduating from the VCA he began working as a dance stage manager and has toured with the likes of Chunky Move, Circus Oz, Kage Physical Theatre, Meow Meow and Back To Back Theatre. Frog continues to collaborate with dance & performance artists including Michelle Heaven, Carlee Mellow, Tamara Saulwick, Gabrielle Rose, Rogue, and on Lucy Guerin’s ‘Pieces for Small Spaces’.