

PRESS KIT



MEMBER

**IN THE 1980s, SYDNEY GANGS FOUND
A NEW BLOOD SPORT — HUNTING GAYS.**

A Fairly Lucid Production

Written by Ben Noble

Additional Words by Ro Bright, Meg Courtney, Björn Deigner,
Dan Giovannoni, Elise Hearst & Finegan Kruckemeyer

Based on true events

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2023
Theatre (LGBT+, drama)

Fairly Lucid Productions presents

MEMBER

Gilded Balloon Teviot, Wee Room

Dates: 2 - 27 Aug (not 15)

Time: 14:00 (60 mins)

First review date: 4 Aug

Everything is great for Corey. He loves his wife. He's learning to talk to his son. Things couldn't be better. Until his past resurfaces.



MEMBER tells the fictionalised tale of Corey - a man who, as a child, was forced to participate in horrific hate crimes against gay men in 70s Sydney, Australia. Burying the past, he grows up to lead as normal a life as he can, until his son winds up in hospital.

Based on the gay hate crime epidemic that blighted Sydney's coastline between the 1970's and 90's, resulting in as many as 80 murders and 30 unsolved cases to this day, this solo show presents a gruesome Australian history lesson.

Created and performed by **Ben Noble**, **MEMBER** features live cello accompaniment from performer and musician **Simone Seales** and direction from **David Wood** - all graduates of the **Royal Conservatoire Scotland**. The show premiered in Australia in 2016 and has toured to **Melbourne Midsumma Festival** and **Mardi Gras Festival in Sydney** where it received critical-acclaim and won the **Arch and Bruce Brown Award for Best Play**.

Previous Praise

2nd Prize WINNER **Best Play Arch & Bruce Brown Foundation Playwriting Award 2017**
NOMINATED **Melbourne Green Room Award 2015**

'Provocative, punchy and powerful. An incredibly important work'

★★★★★ - Weekend Notes

'Noble elevates this simplest of theatrical forms, the one man show, to an art that is hard to beat.'

★★★★ - Suzy Goes See

Ends.

For further information contact Storytelling PR:

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[Download press kit here](#)

Website: fairlylucidproductions.com

Instagram: [@fairlylucid](https://www.instagram.com/fairlylucid)

Twitter: [@fairlylucidprod](https://twitter.com/fairlylucidprod)

Facebook: [@fairlylucidproductions](https://www.facebook.com/fairlylucidproductions)

Creative Team

Writer: Ben Noble

Director: David Wood

Performers: Ben Noble and Simone Seales

Composer: Simone Seales

Lighting Designer: Katharine Williams

Set and Costume Designer: Kathryn Weaving

Stage Manager: Fin Dickens

Additional Words by Ro Bright, Meg Courtney, Björn Deigner, Dan Giovannoni, Elise Esther Hearst & Finegan Kruckemeyer

Listings

Gilded Balloon Teviot, Wee Room

Dates: 2 - 27 Aug (not 15)

Time: 14:00 (60 mins)

First review date: 4 Aug

Tickets: Preview £8 | Weekday £11 / £10 | Weekend £13 / £12

Age Recommendation and Content Warnings

16+

Distressing or potentially triggering themes, scenes of violence, strong language

About Ben Noble

Ben Noble is an actor, writer and the Creative Producer of Fairly Lucid Productions. As a producer, Ben was the co-curator for the **Melbourne Fringe Festival** at St Martins Youth Arts Centre in Australia and worked as Assistant Producer for **Melbourne International Comedy Festival**.

About Fairly Lucid Productions

Fairly Lucid Productions is an independent theatre company with giant ideas that invites their audiences to observe, think, discuss. They aim to push boundaries with their performances, presenting work that is courageous, compassionate and embraces humility, with a strong focus on new work.

BEN NOBLE (HE/HIM)
PERFORMER, WRITER, PRODUCER

Ben is a queer disabled Australian based actor, writer, creative producer and teacher. He is the founder of Fairly Lucid Productions.

Ben received his Masters from Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and studied at RADA (UK), Atlantic Theater Company Acting School (USA), Brave Studios & 16th Street Actors Studio (AUS).

Theatre highlights include: Playlist 21 (Red Stitch Actors Theatre) The Campaign (Gavin Roach Productions), Doctor Faustus, Little Light (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland), As You like It (Shakespeare's Globe) Two Gentlemen of Verona (RADA), Bed & Breakfast, MEMBER, Raton Laveur, Something From Nothing, interrogation (Fairly Lucid Productions), Wind in the Willows (Australian Shakespeare Company), The Subtle Art of Falling (Tunks Productions) Scrooge (Stage West Canada), Phaedra's Love (Abstract Chaos), One Last (SummerWorks).

Film & TV highlights: Underbelly (Screentime Australia), Quiz (Nobull Productions), BJ Fletcher Private Eye (Bee Charmer Productions).

As the writer, Ben received the Arch and Bruce Brown Foundation Playwriting Award for MEMBER and St Martins Best Play Award (Short Trip - Winner, Pick A Card - 3rd Prize, Go, Fish - Finalist).

[@BENNOBLEOFFICIAL](#)



SIMONE SEALES (THEY/THEM)
PERFORMER, COMPOSER

Originally from Florida, Simone Seales is a Glasgow-based cellist who completed their postgraduate studies at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in 2021. They focus on free improvisation (both tonal and atonal) and devising music for theatre. Simone is passionate about exploring sound, how sound can reflect emotional states of being and how emotions are embodied. Their creative influences come from Black feminist leaders such as Audre Lorde, Assata Shakur and bell hooks. Within Simone's creative work, they centre Blackness, sexuality, intersectional feminism and anti-racism. They believe Western Classical musicians are capable of making meaningful social change. Passionate about reaching new audiences and increasing access to arts education, Simone is a Mentor and Ambassador Programme Assistant for the Benedetti Foundation. They focus on trauma-informed teaching practices.

Simone is a recipient of the Sphinx MPower Artist Grant, former Young Artist in Residence for Chamber Music Scotland, and they are the co-artistic director of 'demo theatre collective'. Demo put on a show at the Fringe entitled 'we just need to get through this', which combined text and musical language to convey the inner worlds of the characters. Recently, Simone has received grants from Chamber Music Scotland and National Theatre Scotland in partnership with NEUROSTAGES.

[@SIMONE.CELLO](#)







DAVID WOOD (HE/HIM)
DIRECTOR

David is a director, facilitator and theatre-maker, and a graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. He has a particular focus on ensemble-driven work which is queer in both form and content and, as an Ayrshire-born, Glasgow-based artist, he is keen to make work that explores our place, both geographically and societally.

Most recently, he has been developing *I V Effigy*, a solo show exploring fertility, family and queerness.

Directing credits include: *Once a Catholic* (West College Scotland);

His recent projects include development of *I V Effigy*, a solo show exploring legacy, family and queerness, (Overlap Theatre Company); *A Ladder to the Stars* (Visible Fictions); and *Untitled 2009* (Queen Jesus Productions)

David is delighted to be back for his third Fringe, and his second in a row at Gilded Balloon.

[@DAVETHEMUSICAL](#)



FINLEY DICKINS (THEY/THEM)
STAGE MANAGER

Finley is a stage manager and technician based in Glasgow.

Credits include:

Technical Stage Manager, *Sex Education Xplorers* (Independent Arts Projects);

Technician, *Super Special Disability Roadshow*; Associate Production Manager, *Don't. Make. Tea.* (Birds of Paradise);

Technical Operator, *Raymond Briggs' Father Christmas* (Lyric Hammersmith);

Stage Manager, *God's Only Child* development;

Stage Manager, *Queen Jesus* mini-season (Queen Jesus Productions);

Company Stage Manager, *PUBLIC* (Ockham's Razor).



KATHERINE WILLIAMS (THEY/THEM)
LIGHTING DESIGNER

Katharine Williams is a lighting designer, writer, and leader of projects.

Their recent lighting designs for theatre include: The Doncastrian Chalk Circle for National Theatre Public Acts at CAST Doncaster; Hedwig and the Angry Inch at Leeds Playhouse and HOME, Manchester; Oh Mother, Look at Me, Don't Look at Me and Two Man Show for RashDash; Drag Me To Love for Bonnie and the Bonnettes, and The Enemy for the National Theatre of Scotland.

Projects include Love Letters to the Home Office, which used art, words, and theatre to campaign against the UK's immigration policy; Crew for Calais, which mobilised people in creative industries to work with refugees; and People Powered, which lent support to the NHS and frontline services during the early part of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Katharine Williams directed and lit These Hills Are Ours on UK tour. Their plays as a writer include Walk with Me at VAULT Festival; and These Are Our Neighbours in Glasgow Southside.

[@THE SAME SKY KATHARINE](#)



KATHRYN WEAVING (SHE/HER)
SET & COSTUMES

Kathryn is a graduate of Edinburgh College of Art and has worked with Royal Opera House London, National Theatre of Scotland and Pitlochry Festival Theatre.

Credits include The Brunch Club (Grid Iron Theatre Co), Spring Awakening and Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again. (Edinburgh University Theatre Company)

[@KATHRYNWEAVING](#)



RO BRIGHT (THEY/THEM)
CONTRIBUTOR

Ro is a kiwi writer based in Australia. After graduating with a Masters from Tisch (New York University), Ro returned to NZ to establish Bullet Heart Club with Kitan Petkovski. Their debut work, Daffodils has toured New Zealand and Australia, as well as seasons at the Salisbury International Arts Festival (UK) and Edinburgh Festival Fringe at the Traverse Theatre. Daffodils has received a Scotsman Fringe First and an Auckland Theatre Award and is now a Feature Film.



MEG COURTNEY (SHE/HER)
CONTRIBUTOR

Meg has a BA (Professional Writing/Media) and an Advanced Diploma Professional Screenwriting. She is currently a Script Assessor for Short+Sweet International Festival of short plays. She has interned as Script Editor on Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries, written a Neighbours episode and her play Pendulum was performed as a part of Explorations at La Mama (dir. Petra Kalive), and read in Adelaide by five.point.one. Her short plays include Blue (Short + Sweet Top 20 2008), Gopastami (Emerging Writers Festival 2008), Fine Lines (Concrete Cloud 2006), A Black Cat Kind of Day (Audience Choice Award Short + Sweet Top 30 2005) and Turn (WWIT 2001, RMIT Snatches 2002, Dancing with Strangers 2005).



BJÖRN DEIGNER (HE/HIM)
CONTRIBUTOR

Björn is a german writer, director and composer for theatre. Deigner studied at the Institute for Applied Theatre Studies (Gießen) and Interplay Europe in Athens (2004) and World interplay in Townsville/Australia (2005). His radio plays were played by different german radio stations. His last play sich abarbeiten was honored by Akademie der Darstellenden Künste and was also selected for ARD Hörspieltage. Deigners compositions for theatre have featured in many theaters throughout Germany (SchauspielFrankfurt and Deutsches Theater Berin). Deigner is also part of an off-theatre group, called huRRa!!, that holds a residency at the city theater in Leipzig.





DAN GIOVANNONI (HE/HIM)
CONTRIBUTOR

Dan Giovannoni writes plays for families, young people, and adults. Recent credits include *Loaded* (Malthouse Theatre) *Air Race* (Arena Theatre Company), *Merciless Gods* (Little Ones Theatre), *Bambert's Book of Lost Stories* (Barking Gecko Theatre Company), *Turbine* (Malthouse Theatre), *Jurassica* (Red Stitch Actors' Theatre), and with Amelia Chandos Evans, *Cut Snake and Mad as a Cute Snake*. Dan was an inaugural writer in residence at Melbourne Theatre Company as a part of the NEXT STAGE program, and is currently under commission from Barking Gecko, Malthouse Theatre, and Melbourne Theatre Company.



ELISE ESTHER HEARST (SHE/HER)
CONTRIBUTOR

Elise Esther Hearst is a Melbourne-based playwright and author, working and living on Boon Wurrung country. She studied Creative Arts at Melbourne University and playwriting at the Royal Court Theatre in London. Her work has appeared at Melbourne Theatre Company, Red Stitch Actor's Theatre, Arts Centre Melbourne, Griffin Theatre and Melbourne Jewish Book Week. In 2023, Elise's first novel, *One Day We're All Going to Die* will be published by Harper Collins Australia.



FINEGAN KRUCKE MEYR (HE/HIM)
CONTRIBUTOR

Finegan has had 104 plays performed on six continents, translated into eight languages and studied at many international universities.

His work has received 42 awards, including eight Australian Writers Guild Awards, the David Williamson Prize for Excellence in Australian Playwriting, and an inaugural Sidney Myer Fellowship. He has spoken at conferences in ten countries, with papers and plays published. His first novel will be published in 2024.



DID ANYTHING SURPRISE YOU IN YOUR RESEARCH?

What shocked me was the danger of language. One of the monologues we wrote in the last draft of the show is 95% verbatim quotes from articles and cases. They are the words of a gang member who had killed gay men by throwing them off cliffs. It was chilling to know that someone thought that way, spoke that way. That has now been woven into a new character in the new draft. The other surprise was the number of cases and the fact that more people weren't talking about them.

Just like me it also felt no one really knew about these stories, our history in Australia. That's what hit home for me. That people were surprised that it could happen here. And no one really has done anything about it.

I'm so excited that the stories are getting media attention thanks to SBS' new cross-media programming of Open Water's TV Mini-series, documentary and podcasts. Our community is strongest as a collection. And knowledge is power. The more we know about these crimes the better.

THE HISTORY OF THE PROJECT.

I have been working on this piece for many years. It has shifted many times and with any new work it evolves the more you discover it. In reality, the case has evolved over the years too. I wasn't sure what we were creating in the beginning. All I knew was that it was a story that needed to be told. In its initial form it was eight monologues and eight original songs. A whole world away from where it is now. The workshop showing at Adelaide fringe was another beast. Less songs and new monologues. What was unclear was whose story this was. It began as the victim's story, then as mine, now it's from a viewer of the crimes. I kept going back to the question I was asking when I read the original source material. If you were a part of this crime – how could you live with yourself? And so that's the story we have explored more.

The initial idea, which was titled The Reckoning, has now split into two shows. The first is a dramatic play about a former member of a gang and where they are now. The second is a story of love and family, which will feature the songs.

It has been exciting and terrifying to present each idea along the way to an audience. Some have worked and some have failed but we have learnt and shared that experience with our audience and that is always exciting.

Theatre only works with an audience, not on a page, so you can only see that work breathe in front of people. The only thing I would tackle differently would be my own expectations of each stage of the process.

WHAT WAS YOUR INSPIRATION FOR WRITING THIS STORY AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

In June 2013, when Russia announced their anti-LGBT propaganda law, my friend's social media feeds were full of anger, sadness and pain. The world took a step back in equality. I was shocked that if I lived there, my nephew would be taught that I am 'wrong', 'disgusting' and didn't really exist. I became angrily obsessed with the topic. In researching the issues that came out of this new law, I went down a rabbit hole and stumbled across stories cemented in our own History here, where not long ago, those views were in our backyard and still are today.

It was here I discovered the case of Scott Johnson. Scott Johnson's death in 1988 was dismissed by police as a suicide despite the fact that his wallet was missing and that he had everything to live for. His body was found below a spot above the cliffs at Manly where gay men were known to meet. Now after years of his family fighting for justice it's considered a potential gay hate crime.

It hit me. Again. The sadness. What if that was me? I needed to write about it. And I thought others may want to too. The number of deaths was staggering and sickening. And it wasn't just in NSW. Adelaide was notorious for throwing "poofs in the river".

I commissioned 10 writers to write a response to the material for the company's 10th anniversary. I was looking for something to create. Something meaningful to show the journey we have been on for the last 10 years. I wanted to work with friends and colleagues that we have watched grow over the past decade. And I knew they would want to discuss these crimes creatively too.

WHAT'S YOUR MESSAGE?

Theatre should be about sparking a discussion with its audience. Raising awareness. So all I ask is that the audience, come to listen and discuss after the show. Talk about it. Because if we don't talk about it - nothing changes. The perpetrators still get away with it.



REVIEWS

ARCH & BRUCE BROWN AWARD WINNER FOR BEST PLAY
NOMINATED FOR MELBOURNE GREEN ROOM AWARD

FROM PREVIOUS SEASONS OF MEMBER

★★★★★

ONE OF THE TOP SHOWS OF THE YEAR

"Staggeringly Brilliant"

THEATREPRESS

★★★★★

"Provocative, Punchy and Powerful... A real winner"

WEEKEND NOTES

★★★★★ 1/2

"powerful and moving"

THE BUZZ FROM SYDNEY

★★★★★

Noble "elevates this simplest of theatrical forms, the one man show, to an art that is hard to beat - powerful, dark and urgent"

SUZY GOES SEE

"the most confronting work of theatre you're likely to see this year - utterly gripping and hypnotic"

SYDNEY SCOOP

"Noble is exemplary. An important story that needs to be told"

THEATREPRESS

"a powerful, emotional, thought-provoking and stunningly performed piece of theatre".

THE MUSIC

"MEMBER is an... important part of the queer arts. Highly recommended."

THE PLUS ONES

"a gripping depiction of tribal behaviour and homophobic violence"

EIGHT DAYS A WEEK

"MEMBER might be a tough experience but it's an informed, well expressed superbly acted production - extraordinary work"

SYDNEY THEATRE GUIDE

"spellbinding and speechless and on the edge of my seat"

2SER.FM

MEMBER

A FAIRLY LUCID PRODUCTION



IN THE 1980s, SYDNEY GANGS FOUND
A NEW BLOOD SPORT — HUNTING GAYS.

BASED ON TRUE EVENTS

★★★★★ THEATREPRESS
★★★★★ WEEKEND NOTES
★★★★★ 1/2 THE BUZZ FROM SYDNEY
★★★★★ SUZY GOES SEE

MEMBER

A FAIRLY LUCID PRODUCTION

IN THE 1980s, AUSTRALIAN GANGS FOUND
A NEW BLOOD SPORT — HUNTING GAYS.

Conceived by Ben Noble / Music & Composition by Simone Seales / Directed by David Wood

**GILDED
BALLOON**
TEVIOT

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14:00
2 - 27 AUG 2023
(Not 15) (60 mins)



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A NEW BLOOD SPORT — HUNTING GAYS.

MEMBER

A FAIRLY LUCID PRODUCTION

★★★★★ THEATREPRESS ★★★★★ WEEKEND NOTES ★★★★★ 1/2 THE BUZZ SYDNEY

A Fairly Lucid Production

MEMBER UK Premiere

Based on true events

Everything is great for Corey. He loves his wife. He's learning to talk to his son. He got promoted at work. Life couldn't be better.
But when Corey finds himself sitting at his son's hospital bed everything he relies on might be taken away. Deeply buried secrets can bubble to the surface when no one's looking and history has a habit of repeating itself.

Based on the gay hate crime epidemic that blighted Australia's coastline from the 1970s through to the 1990s, and resulted in as many as 80 murders and 30 unsolved cases, this play is an unflinching look into a piece of LGBTQ+ history that we can't afford to forget.

Featuring Ben Noble & Simone Seales

Directed by David Wood / Written by Ben Noble

Additional words by Ro Bright, Meg Courtney, Bjorn Deigner, Dan Giovannoni, Elise Esther Hearst & Finegan Kruskemeyer

Live Score by Simone Seales

Lighting by Katharine Williams

Set & Costumes by Kathryn Weaving

Stage Managed by Finley Dickins

Graphic Design by Naomi Hawker

Image by Luke Cadden

Please note: This production contains distressing or potentially triggering themes, scenes of violence and strong language.

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