

Cast & Crew Information Pack

“THE BELLY DANCER”

About the Production

Tripwire Theatre Inc. presents the world premiere production of 'The Belly Dancer', by Megan Riedl & Jacob Honeychurch. Performed at the Engine Room, Bendigo during Cultural Diversity Week in March 2019. Inspired by experiences of family violence and the 2015 anti-mosque protests in Bendigo, the play seeks to challenge society's assumptions about family violence. The play asserts that when your whole world is changing, you can love your neighbour or hate the world, and explores the choice we all have when responding to the fear of change - with violence or with tolerance.

Presenting Organisation

Tripwire Theatre Inc. is a not-for-profit incorporated association servicing Central Victoria. Our members are emerging professional theatre makers and arts managers, along with arts-loving allies from other sectors. We live and work in Central Victoria, and we make brand new theatrical works.

We work with emerging professional theatre makers and arts-loving allies from other sectors to create a professional theatrical production company, working across Central Victoria. We develop, present and represent our members and their original theatre work. We value audacity, reciprocity, creativity & sustainability.

Strategic Partnerships

Community Consultation Partners

Centre for Non Violence
Annie North Inc.
Bendigo Islamic Association
Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Service
Bendigo Police

Funding Partners

Ulumbarra Foundation
This project is the first ever recipient of the Performing Arts Power-up Grant.

City of Greater Bendigo
This project is funded through the City of Greater Bendigo Community Grants Program.

Creative Team

Alise Amarant - Director

A Science and Drama teacher, formerly Principal of Helen O'Grady Drama Academy Bendigo, Alise now runs her own drama education business Props Theatre. Alise took on a small on-stage role as well as managing backstage for Synchronicity's inaugural production of 'And the Big Men Fly' in 2014 and was Assistant

Director for their 2015 production. Alise performed in several plays as part of Bendigo Theatre Company's *Ten x 10* season in 2016, and has since directed for their 2017 and 2018 seasons. For Tripwire, Alise's work on *The Let-Down Reflex* was nominated for the Best Director at the 2016 Kyneton One Act Play Festival and she Stage Managed Tripwire's 2017 project *Hollow*.

Megan Riedl - Writer / Project Manager

Graduating from Deakin in 2008 with a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary), Megan went on to work in Arts Administration and achieved her Graduate Certificate in Arts Management in 2016. Megan's play *The Let Down Reflex* was nominated for two awards at the Kyneton One-Act Play Festival 2016, and *Travels with My Black Dog* toured to great acclaim throughout Central Victoria in 2017. Her first full-length play, *Hollow*, was performed for the 150th Anniversary of Daylesford's Three Lost children in July 2017. Megan's short plays have been included in Bendigo Theatre Company's *Ten x 10* season in 2016 and 2018.

Jake Honeychurch - Writer

Jacob is a passionate, hard working actor from Bendigo. He studied Theatre Arts at the University of Ballarat and Screen Acting in West Melbourne. Jacob has had lead and extra roles on television and commercials, recently focusing on a return to the stage with regional victorian theatre companies. Jacob played Dja Dja Wurrung ancestor Tommy Farmer in Tripwire Theatre Inc's production of *Hollow*, and the lead role of Jeff in *The Sum of Us* with Creswick Theatre Company.

Concept Notes

Tag Line

When your whole world is changing, you can love your neighbour or hate the world.

Detailed Synopsis

23 year old Sophie has just moved out of home and in with her boyfriend, David, after a long-distance relationship. While hanging out her washing, she meets next-door-neighbour Rubina, a 40 year old Muslim-Australian woman. Rubina is living alone after separating from her husband and her daughter moving away for marriage. The two women strike up a neighbourly friendship, based on their mutual longing for far-away family members.

David, a 32 year old factory worker, brings home the news about the proposed Mosque, which is planned to be erected near his work, and voices his concern for the changing face of his community. But Sophie's news eclipses the niggling fear of the "other" moving into his world. She is pregnant, and although she is unsure of the future as a mother, David embraces the idea of protecting his partner and child.

Rubina arrives to pick up Sophie and drop her into town on her way to work. It's an arrangement David is not comfortable with and he interrogates Rubina about where she has "come from" while Sophie gets ready. David makes it plain that Rubina's services will no longer be required.

Sophie & Rubina catch up again in the back yard - and they discuss the pregnancy; Sophie worrying about her future, and Rubina sharing stories of her past as a mother and wife.

Some months later, at a party at Rubina's house, David feels out of place among a community of muslim women - Rubina's friends. They introduce Sophie to Belly dancing as a great preparation for the birth of her child but David and Rubina have a disagreement about Sophie's potential involvement in a dancing class. Sophie and David argue about her budding friendship with the women, but reconcile after sharing their fears about the future.

Another few months go by, and Rubina gives Sophie a coin belt as a gift, and questions why she has been missing the Belly Dancing classes recently. Rubina knows that Sophie & David have been arguing a lot, but Sophie is increasingly internalising David's blame and cannot acknowledge his controlling behaviour.

Sophie practices a belly dancing routine at night, as David has prevented her from attending the classes. David returns home to find her dancing and watches her in the dark. Sophie is upset at this intrusion, and they argue. David becomes aggressive and violent after Sophie challenges his involvement in the anti-mosque movement. His increasing hatred of muslims is coupled with his jealousy over Sophie's friendship with Rubina and he becomes physically violent towards Sophie - warning her that he doesn't want "this muslim shit" in his house.

A few weeks later, Sophie implores Rubina to stop intervening by calling the police but Rubina wants to find out how to help Sophie. They talk about the difficult crossroads - Sophie's fear of leaving is equal to her fear of bringing a baby into the house. They agree that Rubina will come and pick Sophie up once David has gone to work, and go with her to a support service.

The morning of the plan, David reveals he is not going to work, but to the radio station to talk on-air about the anti-mosque movement. Rubina arrives while David is still home and he threatens Rubi, locking Sophie inside the house.

Finally, Sophie is in labour and Rubina is her support person. Sophie tells of a nightmare she had about dystopian future, where David's anti-mosque group are in power and her daughter is taken away from her. Rubina encourages Sophie to think of her belly dancing training as the labour progresses. Meanwhile, David is embroiled in the biggest anti-mosque rally to date.

Themes

The Belly Dancer asks what kind of community we want to be creating - one that is underpinned by the values of violence and shackled by fear or one that is open to difference and celebrates our capacity to embrace change with love. In both personal relationships and society as a whole, the choice is the same. Are we complicit in maintaining the power imbalance that allows violence to flourish?

The play holds up a mirror to our recent local history, when in 2015, Bendigo was the epicentre of anti-muslim protests, centred around the planning proposal for the city's first mosque.

The values of violence which are still upheld in many parts of our society are embodied in David, a young man full of fear. With the prospect of fatherhood, his girlfriend Sophie’s close friendship with the Muslim next door Rubina, and the perceived threat to his Aussie way of life with the building of a new mosque, David chooses to take the well-worn path of a perpetrator of violence.

Style

Dialogue driven, the play focuses on high quality performances and writing of calibre. The play will be minimalist and non-naturalistic in design.

Team Member Information

Tripwire Membership

All cast & crew will be required to join Tripwire as a member prior to the first meeting, in order to be covered under our insurance policy. Membership is \$25.

Contracts

You will be required to sign a cast & crew agreement which outlines your role, rights and responsibilities as part of the project.

Remuneration

Tripwire implements a profit-share system. Each team member will be entitled to receive a share of the production profit, after all expenses are paid, based on a points system.

Complimentary Tickets

Each team member will receive a total of 4 free complimentary tickets, which can be used across the season. Comps must be booked in advance.

Support

A training session run by a qualified Domestic Violence worker as well as ongoing support will be available to all cast & crew, when working with sensitive and emotional material.

Production Schedule

Rehearsals will run on Thursday and Sunday. Times to be negotiated by the cast & director. There will be 5 performances.

More detailed schedules will be provided to successful team members.

Friday 16 & 30 November 2018	Solo Auditions	Trades Hall
Friday 30 November 2018	Group Call-back Audition	Trades Hall
Week of 10th December	Cast Photo shoot	Bendigo
Thursday 17 January	Rehearsals Period Begins	Trades Hall
Thursday, March 14, 2019	Bump In & Tech Rehearsal	Engine Room
Friday, March 15, 2019	Dress Rehearsal	Engine Room

Friday, March 15, 2019	Opening Night + VIP After party	Engine Room
Saturday, March 16, 2019	Matinee + Evening Performance	Engine Room
Sunday, March 17, 2019	Matinee + Evening Performance	Engine Room
Monday, March 18, 2019	Bump out	Engine Room

Role Descriptions

Cast

Performers who have a professional and collaborative approach. Strong performers who can work collaboratively in an ensemble cast. Previous acting training and/or experience is required.

Sophie (age range 18-30)

A 23 year old Australian woman. Sophie is educated and comes from a loving family. She is open, positive and caring.

David (age range 22 - 35)

A 31 year old Australian man. David is a factory worker. He enjoys his own company and likes a laugh and a beer.

Rubina (age range 40 - 55)

Their neighbour, a 45 year old Muslim-Australian woman. She was born in Australia and is divorced. She is a University lecturer and a mother to an adult daughter. Friendly, confident and motherly.

Production Manager

Implements the Director's vision by gathering resources and people.

- Implements the Director's set, sound, lighting and costume design by gathering people and resources.
- Manages a production budget within guidelines given by the Project Manager, including reimbursements/payments to members or external clients.
- Creates and implements a production schedule, in liaison with the Director and coordinates production team meetings, and production needs in rehearsal (eg costume fittings)
- Appoints appropriate Stage Manager and crew members and allocates them tasks.
- Manages Front of House crew and volunteers during production week.
- Liaises with the venue and other external contractors (eg Lighting hire)

How To Apply

Cast

Please book your solo audition via <https://www.trybooking.com/ZGYW>

Audition Venue is Trades Hall, 34-36 View Street, Bendigo

The Solo Auditions will consist of:

- tell us a bit about yourself, your acting experience and why you want this opportunity.
- Show us a solo monologue or performance piece of your choosing which showcases your talents
- Do a cold reading from The Belly Dancer script with one of the assessors and take directions
- Provide a resume and/or showreel and/or portfolio to show us (optional)

Actors will be asked to return for the Group Audition on 30th November at 2.00pm. Please ensure you are available.

Group Auditions will consist of team-building and improvisational exercises and cold readings from the script with direction given.

Successful actors will be notified by phone on Monday 3 December and will be invited to accept a role upon consideration of the cast agreement document.

Production Manager

Please send an email cover letter, and attach your current resume, to Megan Riedl, director@tripwire.org.au

Interviews will take place at a mutually convenient time within 2 weeks of receipt of your application.