

REPERTOIRE FEBRUARY 2025

Folk

**Opens
12 February!**



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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome again to all of our Hobart Rep members and supporters for 2025.

I hope everyone had a good holiday break and that you are all looking forward to 2025. We rounded out another successful year with our final show for 2024, the pantomime, *Princess and the Pea*. It was a great success and a fantastic start to the holiday season. Congratulations again to everyone involved.

I'm very excited by our selection of productions this year.

We kick off 2025 with our first production - *Folk* - directed by well-known director and actor Natalie Venettacci. I went along to a recent run through and it is a really delightful play centred around a nun called Winnie who likes a singalong and a Guinness (or two). It is very funny but also very poignant and is well worth coming to see. *Folk* runs from 12 to 22 February.



Folk rehearsal shot. (L-R) Tam Bloomfield as Winnie, Andrew Holmes as Stephen and Elise Bagorski as Kayleigh.

Our other 2025 shows are:

Stuart Little directed by Heather Heron running from 9 to 19 April

A Gentlemen's Guide to Love and Murder directed by Justin Turner running from 9 to 19 July

The Lord of the Flies directed by Ben Armitage running from 27 August to 6 September

The Murder of Roger Ackroyd running from 15 to 25 October.

Don't forget that we also have One Fest and our annual Pantomime to round out the year.

A reminder! Your last chance to buy 2025 season tickets ends when *Folk* starts!

Theatre Award Nominations

I would like to congratulate all of our Rep nominees in the 2025 Tasmanian Theatre Awards:

- ◆ Clare Pearson for *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*
- ◆ Emma Skalicky for *The Unexpected Guest*
- ◆ Meophy Smith-Williams for *Anne and Gilbert*
- ◆ Carolyn Whamond for *Last Cab to Darwin*
- ◆ Louise Stubs for *Last Cab to Darwin*
- ◆ Iestyn Parry for *The Unexpected Guest*.

To be nominated is a fantastic achievement and good luck to you all!

(More on our Nominees in the 2025 Tasmanian Theatre Awards later in this edition).

In other news ...

After more than two years of searching, we have finally been successful in purchasing some new premises! Our new space is located at 5 Orchard Road, Moonah (see photos below). These will mainly be used to house our costumes, props, library and some set pieces. We took possession a couple of weeks ago and had our first Board meeting there on 20 January. There is still a lot of planning and fit-out to be done and we will still need to hire a rehearsal space once we move out of Creek Road — potentially at the end of June. We will keep you updated on further developments. My thanks to all the people involved over this period who suggested sites, chased down real estate agents and handled the legal and financial procedures. It really has been a team effort. Great work all!

We have also commissioned the long, overdue installation of heating and air conditioning at the theatre. At this stage, work is scheduled for March and will include resurfacing the floor while the seating is out. This will make attendance at our shows much more comfortable and enjoyable. We have exciting times coming up as we head into our 100th year of existence in 2026!

WATCH THIS SPACE!



Donations welcome

A reminder we are now a fully-fledged charitable organisation and so any donations over \$2 are tax deductible. You can donate via our [website](#) and there is also an option to donate when you purchase tickets online or via our Box Office.

As always, I would like to thank the Board, the members of Rep's various committees and our many volunteers for their ongoing hard work and dedication. We had a successful year in 2024 and I'm confident we will continue that into 2025. On behalf of the Hobart Repertory Theatre Society Board, we thank you and wish you the best for the upcoming 2025 Season.



Before I sign off, I'd just like to note a personal milestone for one of our long-serving volunteers, Ray Quinn. Ray has been Repertoire Editor for many years. On 1 February, Ray and his wife, Wendy celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Here they are pictured on their wedding day in 1975. Congratulations from all of us at Rep Ray and Wendy!!

Yours in Theatre
David Clements
President HRTS
0417 059 002
david@playhouse.org.au



***Folk*: An hilarious, heartwarming play coming to The Playhouse Theatre**

12 – 22 February 2025

In a world turned upside down, three unlikely individuals find themselves bound together by the most unexpected of connections - folk music. *Folk*, a touching and often hilarious new play by Tom Wells, is set to bring an unforgettable story of friendship, redemption, and the power of music to The Playhouse Theatre.

At the heart of *Folk* is Sister Winnie, a far-from-ordinary Irish nun who swears, smokes, drinks Guinness, and loves a good sing-song with Stephen, a shy middle-aged folk singer who is reluctant to take the stage. When Kayleigh, a troubled and unsure teenager, crashes into their lives in a literal and figurative sense, things begin to change in unexpected ways.

Sister Winnie, ever the unlikely hero, invites Kayleigh into her fold with a forgiving heart, much to Stephen's dismay, as he finds it difficult to embrace this new addition. But when Kayleigh reveals her raw musical talent, the trio begins to form an unbreakable bond that transcends their differences and challenges their assumptions about themselves, and each other.

Directed by Natalie Venetacci, *Folk* is a funny, poignant, and at times irreverent story about finding hope, friendship, and belonging in the most unlikely places. The play delves into themes of self-discovery, the importance of second chances, and how music can bring people together, even in the most unexpected of circumstances. Our talented cast features:

- ◆ **Tam Bloomfield** as Sister Winnie: the irreverent Irish nun who swears, smokes, and surprises everyone with her wisdom and warmth.
- ◆ **Andrew Holmes** as Stephen: the socially awkward, middle-aged folk singer whose timidity holds him back from truly living.
- ◆ **Elise Bagorski** as Kayleigh: a troubled teenager struggling to find her place in the world.

Written by Tom Wells, known for his ability to combine humour with heart, *Folk* is set to captivate audiences with its rich blend of comedy and emotional depth. Get ready to laugh, sing, and perhaps shed a tear as this trio of misfits embarks on an unexpected journey of personal growth, friendship, and the music that brings them together.

Tickets are available now. Don't miss out on this unforgettable theatrical experience!!



For more information or
to book tickets, just visit
<https://playhouse.org.au/book-now/>
or call our friendly Box office team on
03 62341536

Rehearsal shots from *Folk*



Music is the heart of *Folk*

Folk is more than just a play - it's a celebration of the music that brings us all together! At the heart of this story is folk music and it's the glue that binds together three very different people (Sister Winnie, Stephen and Kayleigh) into an unlikely friendship. Expect powerful moments of song, laughter, and redemption when these three come together!

Tam Bloomfield's earlier Irish Role



Pictured with Tam are Aniela Grun and Meredith McQueen

We are all looking forward to Rep's upcoming production of the Irish play *Folk*, featuring the fabulous talent of Tam Bloomfield. But wait! This is not the first time Tam has played an Irish character. Some 25 years ago, Tam was in the cast of Brian Friel's *Dancing at Lughnasa*, directed by Graham Corry for Old Nick Company.

Thanks to Meredith McQueen (Rep archivist and historian for the info!)

SEASON LAUNCH FOR 2025



Top: President David with our new Patron, Meg Webb MLC.
Right: Photographer Wayne Wagg at work. (Wayne generously donates a huge amount to deliver the photographic needs of our productions.)
Left: David launching the 2025 Season.
Bottom Left: MC, and former Rep President, Peter West introduces the Directors and shows for 2025.
Bottom right: MC Westie is all ears!



People of the 2025 SEASON LAUNCH



Some of the Directors for the 2025 productions were on stage at the launch:

(L-R) Ann Harvey, Elise Bagorski, Ben Armitage.

Below left: Justin Turner & Heather Heron.



Right: Ian McQueen gives us a "clue" to an upcoming *whodunnit*.

Below left Meg Webb MLC mingles with Rep supporters.

And finally, SUPPER! (Special thanks to those who provided and served the food).



2025 Tasmanian Theatre Awards

Hobart Rep has enjoyed a great success in the Tasmanian Theatre Awards and when the 2025 nominations were announced at an event in Hobart on 16 January, we were delighted to see Rep productions taking out no fewer than SIX nominations in the Community Theatre and Community Musical Theatre categories.

Big congratulations to our six talented nominees:

- ◆ Best Female Leading Performance: Clare Pearson - Olive in *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*
- ◆ Best Female Leading Performance: Emma Skalicky - Laura in *The Unexpected Guest*
- ◆ Best Female Leading Performance in Musical Theatre: Meophy Smith-Williams - Anne in *Anne and Gilbert*
- ◆ Best Stage Design: Carolyn Whamond - *Last Cab to Darwin*
- ◆ Best Sound Design: Iestyn Parry - *The Unexpected Guest* and
- ◆ Best Lighting or Video/Film Design: Louise Stubs - *Last Cab to Darwin*.

The Awards event aims to celebrate Tasmania's creative theatre scene drawing 350 to 400 people from across the state with the first event being held in March 2015 at Wrest Point which has been its home for the past ten years. Now, going into its 11th year, the Theatre Council of Tasmania (TCT) decided it was time for a change and the Awards ceremony is moving north and will be held on Saturday, 22 February at the Princess Theatre in Launceston.



Catching up with Awards Nominee Louise

Rep is full of talented, creative and hardworking people. Recently, *Repertoire* Editor, Ray Quinn, chatted with one of the nominees in this year's Tasmanian Theatre Awards, Louise Stubs, to talk about her nomination experience. Along the way, he learnt a bit about how she approached the process of lighting design for *Last Cab to Darwin*.

Louise said that *Last Cab to Darwin* was a wonderful experience. She was very excited and honoured to receive the nomination and said that she was in the fortunate position to be involved in the initial stages of the production. Having Carolyn's set design early was also a big help in being able to communicate ideas and, as a team, to block scenes and implement ideas while we were still in the rehearsal room. Louise shared some of her thoughts on the design process:



"The script drew attention to shadows. I really liked the idea of the juxtaposition of the bright, endless expanse of the South Australian and Northern Territory desert which the character 'Max' was traveling through. I also got a feel for the comedic side to the play along with some of the personal challenges he was facing following his stomach cancer diagnosis and decision to take on such an epic journey to access voluntary Euthanasia."

Louise also commented on how cancer appears in scans as a shadow and noted her efforts to link into that by playing with shadows - making them intentionally darker with more focussed lighting for scenes where Max was facing his own internal battles.

"I was fortunate enough to be able to light Max's last moments of life with the lights from his trusty Cab that had taken him through that journey. Bright, warm washes also linked to the warmth of the landscape created on the Playhouse stage and even though the script tackles intense and emotional themes, I was able to highlight some of the comedic moments, bringing honest, human joy alongside the darker themes. There is hope in a situation that seems hopeless and I really wanted to show that."

"The play has three main acts: Max in Broken Hill in his day-to-day life; Max on his journey to Darwin; Max in Darwin fighting to get the respectful death he was promised; and, leaving after having lost that battle. The lighting was designed to reflect each stage of his personal journey through time, place and experience with brightness for moments of comedy or light heartedness and, shadows for isolation or danger."

Louise also found some unique challenges lighting a revolving stage, using practical lights on the set with Max's cab headlights in collaboration with other performers and technical aspects to raise the level of the show.

"I lit the political scene with a light box only so that the politicians' voices were heard without faces when on the bench. The main speaker at the time was lit only from below and I wanted to avoid having a flat scene of bland wash by connecting more strongly to the discussion that was happening on stage. I wanted to create the image of 'heartless gods' presiding over the affairs of others: having the final say on others with things they didn't understand. This is also reflected in the script which refers them being drunk and uncaring until toward the end. I loved that Director, Shauna-Lee let me light it that way!"

Louise also acknowledged Theatre Technician, David Szoka, for the effort and many hours he invested as the theatre technician.

"The work he put into the plot and in making sure the practical lights worked made the whole process work smoothly and really allowed the show to come to life!"

Congratulations Louise and all of the other Rep nominees in the 2025 Tasmanian Theatre Awards!

From the Archives

Leo Hargreaves

Recently exploring the Rep archives, we came upon a small box file containing photos and sketches by a Leo Hargreaves who was an active Hobart Rep member in the late 1950s. It soon became evident that Leo was a talented actor and designer!

Check out these sketches he made for the 1958 production of *Dark of the Moon*. We would welcome any more information about Leo Hargreaves' life if there are any members out there who can fill us in. (*Thanks to Meredith McQueen for the images.*)



More from the Archives

More Bits and Pieces to start 2025 - Donation from Jan Kuplis

The Hobart Rep library/archive recently received a lovely parcel of donated items from former Rep member Jan Kuplis, including a bundle of play scripts and many old Rep newsletters and programs. Jan was a director of several Rep pantomimes in the 1980s and also directed *Dear Charles* for Rep in 1990.

The donated scripts included an unfamiliar Agatha Christie play, *Love from a Stranger*, which we will be passing on to the Production committee! Also included is a copy of Somerset Maugham's *The Circle* which is a terrific 1930s comedy also worthy of our future consideration.

These donated items assist to fill the gaps in our archival records. If you would like to browse our play collection or donate anything of interest, please pop in to the Creek Road premises on the second or fourth Saturday of each month from 10am to 1pm.

Our thanks again to Meredith McQueen, Rep archivist and historian for the article

Hobart Rep would like to thank each and every one of our wonderful Sponsors for their generous support in 2025!

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