



The Last Train to Freo

Written and Directed by Reg Cribb

Acknowledgement of country

In the spirit of reconciliation, the Fremantle Theatre Company acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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Chair's Notes

Welcome to Fremantle Theatre Company's Last Train to Freo.

We are extremely proud to present *Last Train to Freo*, which was originally produced in Perth in 2001 as *The Return*. This 20th anniversary restaging is being directed by the author, Reg Cribb in his directing debut. As is our philosophy of being nurturing & supportive, we continue to provide opportunities and it is an honour and a privilege to have Reg here with us, along with the wonderful cast that is bringing his story to life.

Founded in the midst of a global pandemic FTC, has produced works that have challenged and entertained over 6500 people in the past year. This is the first production in our Wind in our Sails 2022/23 season and we hope it sparks many a lively conversation.

Such an event wouldn't be possible without the support of our amazing sponsors and donors who have shared the journey with us, giving us the financial ability to keep creating theatre and sharing stories with Perth and the regions. They literally are the 'wind in our sails'!

We thank them sincerely and invite you to join us for a thrilling train ride through the suburbs of Perth.

Michelle Prater



Chair

Writer and Director's Notes

At the heart of every artistic process lies something unspoken and profound, something dark and frightening. Whether it is a story, a poem, a song or an acting performance, the end result that is thrown up for our consumption is only one aspect of its odyssey. *Last Train To Freo* came out of a real life event on a train, witnessed by myself at the darkest period of my life following the death of my brother. And like the character of The Writer in the play, the writing of it becomes an act of catharsis, a way to deal with grief and ward off madness.

This play takes us into the unpalatable dark heart of the city of lights and lifts the cover on our middle class, safe, shiny veneer.

It is a thriller that has all the elements of classic Greek drama – unity of time, place and action bringing together five very different people from five very different worlds, in a stifling hot carriage on a late night train journey from Midland to Fremantle. In the fifty five minutes it takes the train to travel it's inevitable journey, with the mantra of suburb names to build the tension (Claisebrook, Shenton Park, Karrakatta....), the interaction between the occupants reveals a story of violence, love and lost family that is destined to be resolved right here, right now. The claustrophobia of the carriage intensifies as the characters reveal their hidden motives and hostilities, only to be released by the memory of a brother that refuses to die. In the end, the most important question is, as Steve says, "Who are my People?"

It has been performed all around the world over the last 23 years and a production of it is usually taking place somewhere on the planet at any given time but I am so beyond excited at the challenge of directing my first production of it at its spiritual home, Fremantle. Its themes and palpable energy and rage, as we have discovered this time around, continue to resonate and be more relevant than ever. We have emerged into this Covid addled world, with a more divided society than ever.

I want to express my gratitude to AD Renato Fabretti and the Fremantle Theatre Co for having faith in the enduring potency and zeitgeist of the piece

and being fierce true believers in a revitalized Australian voice. To all my friends for their humour and irreverence which helped so much with the tone of this play and to my children and family for their love and support.

This production is dedicated to the memory of Alan Peter Cribb.



Reg Cribb

Reg Cribb is a multi award-winning writer for stage/screen.

Last Cab to Darwin opened at Black Swan Theatre and the Sydney Opera House in 2003 and had a major national tour. The film adaptation starred Michael Caton and Jackie Weaver.

Other plays include *Country Song* for QTC; *Krakouer!* for Deckchair Theatre; *Thomas Murray and the Upside Down River* - Griffin Theatre in 2016. *Chatroom* - Perth Theatre Co. *Gulpilil*- Adelaide Festival and Company B Belvoir St - Director Neil Armfield. *The Haunting of Daniel Gartrell* - Perth Theatre Co. *Ruby's Last Dollar* - Black Swan and Sydney Opera House. *UnAustralia* - WAAPA Graduation play.

His first play *The Return* became *Last Train to Freo* for the feature film directed by Jeremy Sims. Reg's true-crime screenplay, *The Great Mint Swindle* aired on Channel Nine in 2012. Reg adapted stage musical *Bran Nue Dae* for the screen directed by Rachel Perkins.

Reg has won an AACTA for Best Adapted Screenplay and been nominated for another two, two Patrick White Playwright's Awards, two WA Premier's Literary Awards, the major WA Premier's award, a NSW Premier's Literary Award, a QLD Literary Premier's Award, nominated for six AWGIES.



Michael Abercromby

Steve

Michael Abercromby was born and raised in Perth, where he spent time working as a musician before graduating from the WAAPA Acting course in 2013. After moving to Sydney, Michael co-founded independent theatre company JackRabbit Theatre where he produced, wrote and directed multiple productions including his plays *Lucidity* (2016) and *FRONT* (2019), which both toured to Perth for Summer Nights Program at The Blue Room Theatre after successful Sydney seasons. In addition to his work with JackRabbit, Michael was immersed in the Sydney Independent theatre scene, performing in *The Sugar Syndrome* By Lucy Prebble, (dir. Jess Arthur 2015) and *The Wind in the Underground*, by Sam O'Sullivan (dir. Lucy Clements 2017/18) as well as directing *After the End* by Dennis Kelly and *Tonsils and Tweezers* by Will O'Mahony. Michael relocated back to his hometown of Perth in 2018 to start a family and complete his Masters of Performing Arts at WAAPA. Since returning, Michael has performed in Theatre 180's ongoing smash hit *A Fortunate Life* (dir. Stuart Halusz 2020/21/22), *The Last Great Hunt's Bite the Hand* (dir. Matt Edgerton 2021) and will soon begin rehearsals for *Barracking for the Umpire* at Black Swan State Theatre Company. Michael is also a passionate educator; lecturing at WAAPA and working with John Curtin College of the Arts as a guest director.



Sandra Eldridge

Maureen

An actor, director and writer, Sandie is a WAAPA acting graduate and has a Master of Arts (Practice) for Directing CSU. She is one of the co-founders of Monkey Baa where she has co-adapted over 20 works for the stage and directed, acted, and facilitated workshops around Australia and overseas. Her credits as a director for MB include *Possum Magic*, *Goodbye Jamie Boyd*, *The Prospector's*, *I am Jack*, *Hitler's Daughter* 2007 Helpmann Award for Best Children's Presentation, and *Thursday's Child* 2009 Helpmann Award for Best Children's Presentation. *Kindertransport and Maggie Stone*; Darlinghurst Theatre Company and 2022 Sydney Theatre award winning, *Wilfrid, Gordon, McDonald, Partridge* for The Australian Chamber Orchestra.

As an actor she has performed for Playhouse, Regal Theatre, SWY, Deckchair, Belvoir, SOH, Wharf 2, Griffin, Marian Street, Railway Street, Pascal, TOI and SFJ. In 2017 she toured USA with her own play *The Unknown Soldier*. Her Film, TV, credits include, *A Fortunate Life*, *Sisterly Love*, *Spellbinder*, *Children's Hospital*, *Rescue Special Op's*, *All Saints*, *Rake* and *Footy Legends*.

Sandie recently directed *Caress Ache* for WAAPA, is currently appearing in *The Secrets She Keeps 2*, Paramount+ and adapting *How to Catch a Star* for the ACO.

She has been a proud member of MEAA since 1983.



Chloe Hurst

Lisa

Chloe is thrilled to return home for her Perth theatrical debut.

After completing her studies at New York's Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute, Chloe has remained in the U.S. establishing an extensive acting career. Her U.S. theatrical credits include *A Chorus Line*, *Miracle on 34th Street*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Can Can The Musical*, *Into The Woods* and *Kiss Me, Kate*. Chloe can be seen in two seasons of Disney Channel's *Andi Mack*, opposite Ryan Gosling and Russell Crowe in *The Nice Guys*, and alongside Amy Schumer in *I Feel Pretty*. Chloe's list of U.S. independent films continues to grow with credits including *Scarlett*, *Welcome Home* and *We Are Boats*, in addition to Australian-made *A Few Less Men*, and multiple award-winning WA-based film, *Edward and Isabella*. Chloe is currently in development for her first feature film as a creator/producer.

Chloe couldn't be happier to board the *Last Train to Freo*, saving seats for her family for the first time in more than a decade. Thanks FTC!



Kazimir Sas

Trev

Kazimir Sas has performed across stage, screen, and radio on both coasts and abroad. He received an Equity Guild nomination for Best Supporting Actor in Black Swan State Theatre Company's, *Pool, No Water* and most recently stars as series lead in the highly anticipated Audible mini-series *The Missed*.



Josh Virgona

Writer

In 2020 while still at drama school Josh was also filming as the lead title-role of Ace in the SBS television series *Iggy & Ace 5eva*. The series explores friendship, addiction and recovery through a queer lens. Prior to this Josh also starred in the lead role of Hayden in the short film, *Shattered*. Josh graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Acting) from WAAPA in 2020.



Renato Fabretti

Designer

Renato is FTC's Artistic Director and is very proud to have seen the company build from the midst of a pandemic panic. FTC kicked off with a wonderful debut show in *The Other Place* with the incomparable Kate Walsh and a stellar cast and crew of Fremantle's finest. And then on to the savagely political and funny Australian and International debut of *Meat* by Gillian Greer.

Renato directed the highly successful season of the rebooted Bankwest Shakespeare in the Park with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* that toured to Leeuwin Estate, Bunbury and Albany before doing 2 weeks in Kings Park. Audiences were treated to a wonderful cast who really brought the play, with all its absurdity, to life.

A graduate of WAAPA and NIDA, Renato has consistently worked as an Actor, Producer and Director - never knowing a time cushy enough to enjoy just the one role. As actor, he has appeared in theatre for companies like STCSA and Deckchair, in TV on shows like *Underbelly* and *All-Saints MVU*, on the web in *Single Ladies* and *Zac & Me*, and on the cinema screen, as most recently as 2021's *Greenfield* and the award-winning *Edward & Isabelle*. As director & producer, he's most enjoyed delivering killer shows to Perth like the best production winner *Motortown*, *Punk Rock*, *DNA*, *October* and new Aussie work *The Dreaming Hill*.

Renato believes WA is full of talent and has spent a great deal of his time supporting local artists, proving that notion - as a mentor for sky-rocketing stand-out local actors, and as the previous Artistic Director of vital youth arts organisation WAYTCO. This is something he hopes to continue at FTC. Providing real jobs, for real artists, in their hometown. And real access to top quality live performance throughout WA.



Peter Young

Lighting Designer

Born and based in Western Australia, Peter is an experienced and versatile creative professional who specialises in lighting design and creative projects. Since graduating from the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts in 2019, Peter's presence in the field has quickly grown with a comprehensive and diverse list of credits to his name. Theatre design highlights include world premiere productions such as Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company's *FIFO* (2020) & *Dating Black* (2021) as well as Fremantle Theatre Company's production of *Meat* (2021) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2021-22).. In addition to his theatre design credits, Peter has worked extensively, in both creative and technical capacities, at many of the major venues and cultural organisations in Western Australia including His Majesty's Theatre, WA Museum Boola Bardip, State Theatre Centre of WA, Regal Theatre and Subiaco Arts Centre.

Kat Shaw

Musician and Sound Design



Kat Shaw is a performer and theatre-maker. She has a Cert IV Jazz (WAAPA), a BA Performance Studies (Curtin), and completed an Internship Program with Zen Zen Zo Physical Theatre, 2014. She was a founding member of The Open Lid Ensemble (*Helena; Risscht! The Little Match Girl* Theatre Award Finalist, FRINGE WORLD 2017; *Hypatia* nominated Best Independent Production, WA Performing Arts Awards 2018; *Further to Fall*) and was nominated for Best Newcomer, 2018 WA Performing Arts Awards, for her performance in *Hypatia* at The Blue Room Theatre. She has recently returned from the UK after completing an MA Collaborative Theatre Making in association with Frantic Assembly (Coventry). As a musician, she performs with local post-punk band MK ULTRASOUND.



Steven McCall

Musician and Sound Design

Steven McCall originally hails from Glasgow, Scotland, but spent his formative years in Perth, Western Australia. He began his performance studies at the Hayman Theatre, is a graduate of the WA Screen Academy (Screenwriting) and completed post-graduate studies at NIDA (Writing for Performance). He has composed music for film, theatre, dance productions and installations since 2008 under the moniker, *The Men From Another Place*, alongside David Richardson. Film credits include *Tartan* (for ABC2/ABC View), *Perished* (selected for 2012 SXSW Film Festival). Theatre credits include *The Other Place and Meat* (Fremantle Theatre Company), *The Blind Giant Is Dancing* (WAAPA), *10000* (National Arts Festival Fringe, South Africa), *DNA* (WA Youth Theatre Company). He was also nominated at the 2012 Museum and Galleries National Awards (MAGNA) for the creation of an audio tour of the Subiaco Museum's exhibition *Saving Face*. Alongside both Kat, David and Locky Wood, Steven also plays music in local band MK ULTRASOUND.



Jessie Atkins

Stage Manager

Jessie has been working as a Stage Manager since graduating from the WA Academy of Performing Arts in 2015. She has worked on a wide variety of projects including the creative developments and eventual show season of *With Fire in her Heart* at the 2021 Perth Fringe Festival supporting Dr Gabrielle Metcalf, and the devised production of *Let Me Finish* for its Blue Room season in 2018 and return season to the Perth Fringe Festival 2019. Jessie worked on *Slap and Tickle* with iOTA for its Perth Fringe season and touring season to the Adelaide Cabaret Festival. Jessie worked as the Deputy Stage Manager for the Perth Fringe season of *A Midnight Visit*, the Immersive spectacular based of the works of Edgar Allen Poe.

Fremantle Theatre Company

Board - Michelle Prater (Chair), Rikki Burns, Al Donald, Michela Fini, Lindsay Loving, John Prevost

Staff

Renato Fabretti (Artistic Director)
Pippa Davis (General Manager)
Tayah Lee-Traub (Production Assistant)

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Taylor Stevens of FunctionLabs