



SAINTS

CREATED BY ELBOW ROOM

Written by Marcel Dorney
Directed by Emily Tomlins & Marcel Dorney



**DRAMATIC WRITING AND DIRECTION
THIS VIVID AND CLEVER IS RARE
THE AGE**

AT LA MAMA COURTHOUSE



6-27 FEBRUARY 2026
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LA MAMA PRESENTS

SAINTS

“We will not be accepting criticism at this time.”

CREATED BY ELBOW ROOM

Writer: Marcel Dorney

Co-Directors: Marcel Dorney and Emily Tomlins

Performers: Niamh Corcoran, Briony Farrell, Zak Giles Pidd,
Molly Holohan, Carissa Lee, Cait Spiker, Emily Tomlins

Producer: Greta Doell

Dramaturg: Brigid Gallacher

Stage Manager: Maisy Butchart

Production Designer: Rachel Nankin

Costume Designer: Miki Looker

Lighting Designer: Kris Chainey

Sound Designer: Chris Wenn

Music Composition: Marcel Dorney, Zak Giles Pidd, Chris
Wenn

Production Associate: Kayla King

Image by Darren Gill

Run Time: 130 mins, including interval

Auslan Interpreted: Thu 19 Feb, 7:30pm

GREENE, an Executioner
FRANCES, a Typesetter*
HELEN, a Scribe
ANNA, a Prophet
MAEVE, a Contractor
CARROW, a Medical Professional
ELIZABETH, a Spy
VALT, a Technology

Zak Giles Pidd
Briony Farrell
Niamh Corcoran
Cait Spiker
Molly Holohan
Carissa Lee
Emily Tomlins
Zak Giles Pidd

DIRECTOR'S NOTE | EMILY TOMLINS and MARCEL DORNEY

It's profoundly strange that we're here speaking English in a courthouse built on Wurundjeri country. This play is about where that strangeness comes from - and it's an immense privilege to grapple with it alongside this generous and talented group of collaborators, presented by the theatre that's been celebrating and interrogating the strangeness of our shared situation since 1967.

We don't choose our ancestors, but we ignore them at our peril; and, of course, they had the same problem. From 1641, across those rainy islands off the west coast of Eurasia from which originate the language, government, legal system, colonial project, and historical traumascapes of 'Australia', there was a civil war. And from 1649 to 1660, there was no English monarchy. There really were Levellers, and Diggers, and Ranters, and Fifth Monarchists. They did and said things that are incredibly strange to us, and also stunningly familiar;

Anna Trapnel was a real person, who wrote books you can read, including an account of her witchcraft trial in Cornwall. The Anna Trapnel that you see is fictional, like everyone else depicted. Again, all the strangest bits are true. A project about witch trials, for us, has become about a generation whose culture and politics have been ruptured by the radical accessibility of technology (in their case, e.g. printing, literacy, the Bible in English). What we've come to recognise, most of all, is their hunger, amidst these 'overturning days', for moral clarity; in the midst of atrocity, to stay on the right side of history's gaze.

We sincerely wish you all the best of luck with that. Thanks so much for being here with us.

WRITER'S NOTE | MARCEL DORNEY

The lies of history are anachronism more than falsehood. - Eric Hobsbawn, Communist and jazz geek.

This play was written on stolen land, to be performed in a courthouse older than the 'Commonwealth' it's in. It was built on the lands of the Kulin Nation, which has been here, by any reasonable definition, since the beginning of time. It was built, however, in ignorance of their culture, to enforce the laws of a British Empire that could not even manage to acknowledge the continuing sovereignty of these lands' First Peoples by treaty. We pay our respects to elders past and present; this always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

Every one of us on this team has our own relationship to the complicated history of several small, damp islands off the west coast

of Eurasia. For millennia, through invasion and migration, these islands have tried to stretch political ideas like 'kingdom' or 'commonwealth' over a volatile patchwork of complicated relationships between land and indigeneity. We don't choose our ancestors, but we ignore them at our peril; and, of course, our ancestors had the same problem.

At the very beginning of what we now call the European colonial project, there's a stretch of time - 1641 to 1660 - which we ignore more than most. A civil war spread throughout the islands, and in 1649 the English monarchy was abolished; when it was restored, it was never the same, and nor were the islands. This little more than a decade continues to be the subject of endless fascination to various 'progressives', from the American 'founders' to Marxist revolutionaries, both for its radical re-ordering of English social imagination, and the innovations of colonial conquest and, literally, plantation, that the Republic practised upon the people of Éire.

During the last grim defeat of socially progressive politics, at the turn of the 1970s, UK playwrights Caryl Churchill and Howard Barker wrote bookends to this period. *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire* eulogises the proto-socialist utopianism that swelled the ranks of the revolutionary armies; *Victory* depicts the vicious but ultimately hollow revenge of the restored monarchists on the Puritans who'd interrupted their party. But - perhaps because the theatres were, famously, *almost* all closed - the restless Republic of 1649 - 1660 has rarely been depicted on an English-speaking stage.

This period is also the climax of witch trials in Europe. This is not a coincidence, of course; and when we started exploring this a team in 2024, all of us felt instinctively on the side of the condemned. These

people, usually women, we have to imagine, as their words, like their bodies, were turned into gas and poured into the atmosphere; their only crime - just like ours! - to be different. However, as Diane Purkiss points out in *The Witch In History*, this can easily become an indulgence - just another way to imagine ourselves into sainthood, to grasp at a transcendent moral clarity which eludes us in our own finite, contingent place and time.

A project about witch trials, for us, has become about a generation whose culture and politics have been ruptured by a radical change in the accessibility of technology (in their case, printing, literacy, the Bible in English) within a generation. Anna Trapnel was a real person, who wrote books you can read, including an account of her witchcraft trial in Cornwall in 1654 and her subsequent imprisonment.

We have fictionalised her story, including her companions. There really were Levellers, and Diggers, and Ranters, and Fifth Monarchists. They did and said things that are incredibly strange to us, and also stunningly familiar, almost as if they could see us, looking back at them, each of us in terrified wonder that these strange people might understand what it is, to see a better future, just out of reach, and to feel that any force that would stand against it is an impossible, treacherous concession to barbarism.

What we've come to recognise, most of all, is their hunger, amidst these 'overturning days', for moral clarity; in the midst of atrocity, to stay on the right side of history's gaze.

Thank you, beyond words, for joining us now, and here.

A NOTE ON THE VOICES

Full disclosure – we don't really know what various people sounded like in 1654, and neither do you. Given the informed choice, we've taken narrative directness over strict historical accuracy. If you really want to argue about the Great Vowel Shift, you massive nerd, we already love you.

Cast

Cait Spiker



Cait (she/her) is a Green Room award winning actor. Her recent theatre credits include: "Dark Erotica Quartet" (fortyfivedownstairs), "Rhinoceros" (fortyfivedownstairs), "Away", (Theatre Works), "The Crocodile", (fortyfivedownstairs) and "Traps" (La Mama). Her recent film credits include: "The Cost" by Matthew Holmes and "Visitors" by Alex Badham.

Cait is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts ("14) and has trained with The Clowning Workshop, NIDA, 16th Street, Patsy Rodenberg, Mike Alfreds, Larry Moss and Ian Rickson.

Briony Farrell



Briony (she/her) is a performer and theatre-maker based in Melbourne. She holds a BFA in Theatre Practice from the Victorian College of the Arts (2015) and an MA in Classical Acting from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (2019). Her recent theatre credits include Annabella in *Sluts on Fire!* (an adaptation of *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, dir. Alexandra Aldrich), Briony in *da dink inter alia* (dir. Tim Wotherspoon), Imogen in *Cymbeline: King of Britain* (dir. Ben Naylor), and Dunyasha in *The Cherry Orchard* (dir. Dame Janet Suzman). At the centre of her artistic practice is her work with young audiences. She has worked with Polyglot since 2016 across numerous productions, both nationally and internationally. In 2025, she toured *When the World Turns* to Lincoln Center in New York and *Paper Planet* as part of Auckland Live in New Zealand. Her recent screen credits include *Apple Cider Vinegar* (Netflix).

Carissa Lee



Carissa Lee (she/her) is a Noongar actor and writer born on Wemba Wemba Country and based in Naarm. Carissa most recently performed in Keziah Warner's new work 'What's Yours' with Red Stitch Actors' Theatre. She has previously performed at La Mama in Nazaree Dickerson's Noongar family play 'Ngarngk', and Robert Reid's reimagining of 'The Bacchae'. Onscreen, Carissa has appeared in 'House Husband's, ABC's 'Planet Lulin' and 'SammyJ', miniseries 'Behind the Seams' and award-winning horror film 'The Dysphoria'. Since obtaining her PhD through the University of Melbourne, she also works as a researcher, examining cultural safety practices and cultural dramaturgy at the Moondani Toombadool Centre.

Niamh Corcoran



Born and raised in Mparntwe/Alice Springs, Niamh Corcoran (she/her) graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts with Bachelor of Fine Arts (Acting) in 2023. Most recently, Niamh has toured educational theatre in schools across Victoria and South Australia with Brainstorm Productions and performed in Polyglot's award-winning season 'Whirlwind', Melbourne Fringe 2025. Niamh is passionate about arts accessibility and continues to be inspired by the transformational power of cross-cultural storytelling. As the child of an English mother and Irish father, Niamh has enjoyed grappling with the questions that SAINTS poses around the lengths humans go to convince themselves they are on the 'right' side and is keen to engage audiences in this captivating and challenging story.

Emily Tomlins



Emily (she/her) is co-founder and co-artistic director of Elbow Room. She has worked as an actor, creator, and director with various companies and festivals including Elbow Room, Polyglot Theatre, Playable Streets, VIMH, JOF, Musica Viva, STC, QT, La Boite, SASTC, Malthouse, Terrapin Puppet Theatre, MTC's Neon Festival, the Melbourne, Brisbane, Darwin, Perth, Poppyseed and Flight Festivals, Fabricated Rooms, Everybody Dance, Collyer/Kerridge, Restaged Histories Project, Qld Arts Council, Bell Shakespeare, Four Larks, Daniel Schlusser Ensemble and The Hayloft Project. Emily was in QT's Emerging Artist Ensemble in 2006. She is a Sidney Myer Fellow and Associate Director at Polyglot Theatre.

Zac Giles Pidd



Zachary Giles Pidd (Zak) (they/them) is a non-binary performer, theatre-maker and sound designer based in Narrm (Melbourne). They completed VCA's Bachelor of Fine Arts Theatre Practice course in

2015. Some of Zachary's performance credits include the world premiere of Credentials by David Williamson which they also sound designed (La Mama 2017), Elbow Room's Prehistoric (Melbourne season and Edinburgh Fringe 2018), School Of Rock (Melbourne, China, Brisbane, Sydney), My Sister Jill (Melbourne Theatre Company, 2023) and Rhinoceros (Spinning Plates Co. 2024). Their film credits include Prasizzler Queen of the Dessert and the award winning Tasty. They work with Polyglot Theatre as a performer, sound-designer and deviser and have toured with them nationally and internationally. They created the company Nuclear Family

Theatre with Charles Purcell, co-directing and sound designing Apokalypsis (Next Wave 2018) which won three Green Room Awards (Design, Direction, Best Independent Production). Zachary is a frequent collaborator with theatre company The People co-creating Peacemongers (Darebin 2024). They are an associate artist/facilitator with House Of Muchness, a performance and art making youth organisation and Loom Arts and Management, a management agency focusing on artists with disabilities. They also perform weird pop music under the name Dogchild.

Molly Holohan



Originally from Boorloo, Perth and moved to Naarm, Melbourne to study acting at the Victorian college of the Arts, Molly (she/her) has worked in both theatre and film - with her first professional play 'Code of Conduct' directed by Mark Wilson at Gasworks Theatre, and appearing on screen in Channel Nine's new detective series 'Human Error'. She has worked with Melbourne Theatre Company, in developing scripts through their Cybec feminist readings. She recently performed at fortyfive downstairs in 'Recollection' directed by Cathy Hunt, Pummel Squad's annual Christmas pantomime 'How the King Learned to Live Forever' and at gasworks theatre with Victoria theatre company's 'St Kilda Tales'.

Crew

Marcel Dorney

Marcel Dorney (he/him) – Playwright/Co-director - An award-winning playwright, director, composer and lecturer, Marcel Dorney is a founding member and co-artistic director of Melbourne based theatre company, Elbow Room. Marcel's work as a writer has been commissioned, developed and produced by Queensland Theatre Company, Malthouse Theatre, Murrumbidgee Theatre Company, Hothouse Theatre, La Boite, Griffin theatre, Red Stitch Actors' Theatre, Brisbane

Powerhouse, Artslink, and the Next Wave Festival, and published by Playlab Press. Marcel is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne, and has worked extensively as a dramaturg and script consultant in theatre and film, including for Queensland Theatre Company and PWA (now Australian Plays Transform), as well as rehearsal director for *I Want to Know What Love Is* (the Good Room/Performing Lines) and *Legends* (of the Golden Arches) (Performing Lines/Melbourne theatre Company/Rising). Awards include: Best Director and Best Ensemble (Ind.), 2011 Green Room Awards (After All "is"); 2012 Gold Matilda (Fractions); Best Writing, 2014 GRA, (Prehistoric); Best Ensemble (Ind.), 2021 GRA (Enlightenment).

Maisy Butchart

Maisy (she/her) is a Stage and Production Manager working across Naarm. She brings with her a values first approach and strong focus on cultivating supportive places for creativity to thrive. Maisy works to center care and access within her practice and strives to empower the artists with whom she works with to feel heard and held. She has a particular interest in devised works, and art created for young audiences. Maisy is a regular Stage Manager for Polyglot Theatre and has been privileged to support the delivery of various touring repertoire works, as well as the development and premiere of new shows. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Art in Production from the Victorian College of the Arts. Some of her recent credits include 'The End Is Never The –' (VCA Theatre Graduate Cohort, 2025), 'Whirlwind' (dir. Cat Sewell), and 'An Uncertain Time' (dir. Dr Sarah Austin).

Greta Doell

Greta Doell (she/her) is a writer and producer based in Naarm/Melbourne. Having worked in performing arts venues across Melbourne for over 9 years, her work centres around accessible, safe theatre-making practices. A graduate of Monash University with a BA majoring in Theatre and Performance, she currently works full time at the Arts Centre Melbourne in ticketing Creative Learning education programs. Having written and produced theatre at venues such as Monash University, The Butterfly Club, Gasworks Arts Park and La Mama, her credits include *Vibe Check* (2022), *Stevie* (2022), *MUST CabFest* (2021), *In Your Dreams! Part 1 & 2* (2021), *Revisit.exe* (2020), *The Disappearing Trilogy* (2019.)

Brigid Gallacher

Brigid Gallacher (she/her) is an actor, director, musician and dramaturg. She has recently dramaturged the award winning Melbourne Fringe work *Is Anybody Even Watching* (Arts House) and the upcoming *Love Don't Live Here Anymore* (Brink). Her theatre credits as an actor include *Milk (Fortyfive Downstairs)* for which she won a Greenroom award for outstanding performance, *Looking for Alibrandi* (Brink), *Things I Know To Be True* (Theatre Works), *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom* (Little Ones Theatre), *In The Club* (Bullet Heart Club), *Lamb* (Red Stitch/Critical Stages), *Merciless Gods* (Little Ones Theatre/Griffin Theatre), *Prehistoric* (Elbow Room/Edinburgh Fringe Festival), *Dracula* (Little Ones

Theatre), Timeshare (Malthouse Theatre), Dangerous Liaisons (Little Ones Theatre) and Circle Mirror Transformation (MTC).

Kayla King

Kayla King (she/her) is an actor and emerging theatre producer from Tucson, Arizona. She's currently studying for her Masters in Art and Culture Management from the University of Melbourne. Previously, she performed in *In The Upper Room* (Denver Center for Performing Arts) and has appeared in various television commercials across Australia and New Zealand. She is very excited to be exploring the arts scene in Melbourne and what better way to kick off than with a theatre as iconic as La Mama and a company as innovative as Elbow Room. Coming up, she will be performing with Williamstown Theatre Company's production of *Company* this May.

Kris Chainey

Kris Chainey (he/him) is a Naarm based Lighting Designer. Notable credits include *The Absence of Knowing: Four Men and Dog Play* (2017) and *Julius Caesar* (2023) with Richard Murphet, *Point8Six* (2016/22) with Kirsten von Bibra, *Cactus* (2023) with Katie Cawthorne and Madeline Nunn, *Low* (2022) and *The Whale* (2024) with Jennifer Sarah Dean, *Dark Erotica Quartet* (2025) with Blake Barnard, *Footfalls* (2025) with Keith Brockett, the multiple award winning *Bighouse Dreaming* (2018-21) with Declan Furber Gillick, Mark Wilson and Susannah Day, and *The Motion of Light*

in Water (2014-15), We Get It (2015-16), Prehistoric (2018), Technique (2022) and Crocodiles (2023) with Elbow Room.

Miki Looker

Mikailah (she/her) is an emerging Designer and Costumier based in Naarm, Melbourne. She graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Production) from the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) in 2023 and has since then continued to develop her craft, being led by practices centering sustainability and ecoscenography. Mikailah has recently worked a lot with students from Prep to University and is motivated to cultivate secure, empowering and exciting environments during these jobs. Her special interest in Costume Design has led her to designing shows that range between historically accurate 18th century gowns, to magical fairytale quickchange dresses and finally, to 90's grunge. Other previous credits include: Set and Costume Design for 'Pride and Prejudice: An adaptation in words and music' at the Sydney Opera House, Set and Costume Design for 'Elegies: A song cycle" at 45 Downstairs, Costume Maker at the 'City Melbourne Moomba Parade' for 2024, 2025 and 2026, and Costume Assistant for 'Here You Come Again' at The Comedy Theatre. For further credits, visit her instagram; [goodlookerdesign](#).

Rachel Nankin

Rachel Nankin (she/her) is a production designer based in Naarm/Melbourne. Completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts (Design

and Production) at the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) in 2022. She has undertaken roles as a Designer and constructor for “Shrek the Musical” (Stars and the Moon 2025), American Psycho the Musical (See You Sunday Inc. 2025), “Illarun: The Cutting Comb” (45 Downstairs, 2024), “All The Things We’ve Done” (TheatreWorks 2024), “In The Trees’ (short film Dir. Andy LayClark, 2024), and “Crocodiles” (Elbow Room Prod. 2023). She has also worked in Set construction and scenic painting with designer Harry Gill on various shows including, “Addams Family Inclusical” (Stars and the Moon, 2024), Parade (Soundworks, 2024) and numerous JMC Academy productions (2023-2025) In working on these projects she has developed a deep commitment to sustainable work practices and to the creative exploration of new modes of modern performance design.

Chris Wenn

Chris Wenn is an award-winning sound designer for theatre, researcher, and educator based in UAE and Australia. He has developed and performed work extensively across Australia, in Indonesia, Singapore, the UK, and Europe. His sound design and compositions have featured in productions by Malthouse, Elbow Room, St Martins Youth Theatre, Red Stitch Actors Theatre, Sarah Austin & Collaborators, accessibility theatre company rollercoaster, and internationally at Esplanade – Theatres by the Bay, Singapore. Chris has received Green Room Award nominations for Sound for his work on The Trouble With Harry (2014) and Rust and Bone (2016), and was the recipient of the

Straits Times 'Life!' Theatre Award (Singapore) for the Sound Design of In The Silence of Your Heart (2018)

Special Thanks

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La Mama Theatre is on the traditional lands of the peoples of the Kulin nation, and we give our respect to the Elders and to all First Nations people past, present and future. We acknowledge all events take place on stolen lands and that sovereignty was never ceded.

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