La Boite presents

1

SINGLE ASIAN FEMALE





By Michelle Law

PRESENTED BY LA BOITE THEATRE COMPANY 11 FEBRUARY - 4 MARCH 2017 AT THE ROUNDHOUSE THEATRE

CAST

KATIE	
PAUL	PATRICK JHANUR
ZOE	
MEI	
PEARL	HSIAO-LING TANG
LANA	EMILY VASCOTTO

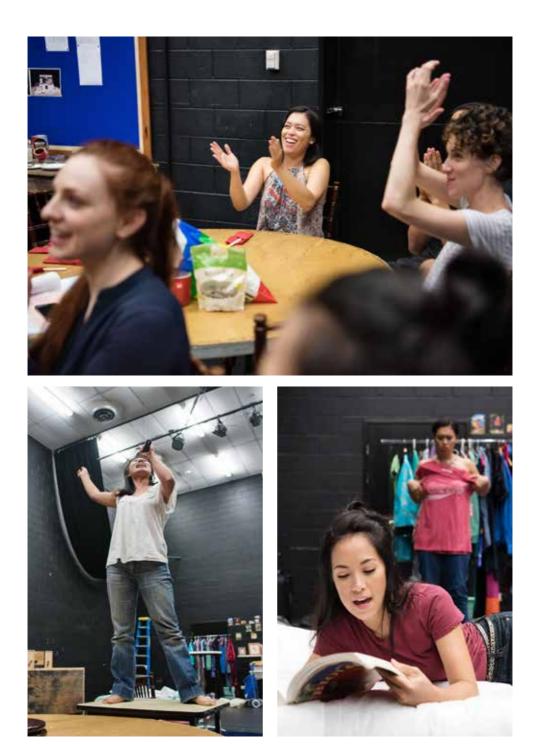
PRODUCTION TEAM

WRITER	
DIRECTOR	
SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER	MOE ASSAAD
LIGHTING DESIGNER	KEITH CLARK
SOUND DESIGN AND COMPOSER	
FIGHT DIRECTOR	N-J PRICE
STAGE MANAGER	PETER SUTHERLAND
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER	KATIE HURST
PRODUCTION MANAGER	DON MACKENZIE
SYSTEMS PROGRAMMER, HEAD ELECTRICIAN,	
SYSTEMS OPERATOR	MATT ALLAN
SET CONSTRUCTION	ANDREW MILLS
SCENIC PAINTING	SHAUN CAULFIELD

COVER IMAGE & REHEARSAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY......DYLAN EVANS

SPECIAL THANKS





PROGRAM SINGLE ASIAN FEMALE





Image by Tammy Law

Whenever I see theatre in Australia I like to watch the people in the audience. They sigh, laugh and cry with recognition as the story unfolding on stage touches them, connects them, and validates their existence — something I rarely experience and makes me deeply envious. Who knew that being made to feel unwelcome and invisible in my own country was something that also extended to the art I consumed. I would leave shows feeling very alone.

I want *Single Asian Female* to play a small role in changing that for people like me. People of colour. Women. Migrants. Outliers. The Other. This show is a love letter to them. And I want those in positions of privilege to gain some new insights: namely that we are here, we have been listening, and that now it is our turn to speak. But above all, I want audiences to be entertained. These are difficult issues to dissect, but that doesn't mean we can't have a lot of fun unpacking them along the way.

Single Asian Female is full of the things I love: Doraemon, '90s hits, and social politics. It shines a spotlight on labels; those we assign ourselves and others, and how we struggle against the limitations imposed by those labels in order to lead authentic lives. The Wong family women are real to me because they were inspired by people I know: generous, assertive, resilient women who hold the world on their shoulders. And I have been blessed to meet more of these incredible women in the process of making this show.

Collaborating with director Claire Christian has been a pure joy. From day one she knew instinctively how to realise the characters and world I'd created with attention and care. Working with Claire to assemble a team of extremely gifted cast and creatives who gel together so beautifully, like a real family,

LA BOITE THEATRE COMPANY

has been a surreal experience that fills me with gratitude. (Also disgust, because everyone who's worked on this production is offensively attractive.)

This play would not have been possible without them, nor would it have been possible without Lotus, the series of workshops led by Contemporary Asian Australian Performance (CAAP) and Playwriting Australia that fosters Asian Australian playwrights and helped me realise I had a story to tell. *Single Asian Female* also wouldn't exist without the encouragement and support of mentors and cheerleaders like Maxine Mellor, Glyn Roberts and my fellow Lotus Brisbane girls.

Thank you for seeing *Single Asian Female.* Whether you're single, Asian or female, or none of those things, you've made a choice to see work from a new and challenging perspective. It's exciting. It's also exciting that you'll be joining us for karaoke during the show.

It's too late. The doors are already locked.

"But above all, I want audiences to be entertained. These are difficult issues to dissect, but that doesn't mean we can't have a lot of fun unpacking them along the way."





"Single Asian Female gives a voice to the voiceless and talks about race and gender in ways that we often don't."

DIRECTOR'S NOTES CLAIRE CHRISTIAN

I love Michelle Law. I love this play. I love this cast. I love these creatives.

From the first time I heard *Single Asian Female* read aloud, to the first date Michelle and I had to discuss the project, to the last three months where it has wholly and solely consumed my brain, time and affection I have known that this play is special.

It feels special because it's real. The *Golden Phoenix* could very well be any suburban Chinese restaurant and the Wong women could reflect any migrant Australian experience. It feels special because it's important. It's important that we tell stories that privilege the other, that reflect the actual Australian society we live in. It's important that we see people of colour on posters and giant billboards, on our screens and especially on our stages, because sadly this is not the reality of the arts sector that we work in and all enjoy. I get to say this from a point of safety as a privileged white woman who has never felt othered because of the colour of my skin, my cultural heritage or ancestry.



I say it because I can, because I've been afforded opportunities and a platform and if we don't use our voice to talk about the things that are wrong, well, things will never change. And things have to change.

Single Asian Female gives a voice to the voiceless and talks about race and gender in ways that we often don't. In ways that we should; in honest, vulnerable and angry ways that reflect what's really going on. But, most importantly, this play is special because it's about women, it's written by a woman, and it is masterfully performed by women. Funny women. I know right? Who knew that women could be funny.

It has been an absolute JOY to play in this space and bring this project to life with this team. My hope is that you, our audiences, will have as much fun and feel as many complex feelings as we have these last few weeks.

Welcome to the *Golden Phoenix...* you can sing along if you like.







MICHELLE LAW

Writer

Michelle Law is a writer working across several mediums including fiction, non-fiction and film. She is the co-author of the comedy book *Sh*t Asian Mothers Say* and has had her writing anthologised in books like *Best Australian Comedy Writing, Women of Letters* and *Destroying the Joint*.

Some of the places she's written for include the *Sydney Morning Herald, Frankie magazine, Daily Life* and the *Griffith Review*. She has won an Australian Writers' Guild AWGIE award for her screen-writing work, and her films have screened on the ABC as well as at festivals locally and abroad (St Kilda Film Festival, BAPFF, Flickerfest, LA Shorts Fest, INPUT). Some of the television shows she's worked on include The Family Law and Slide.

In 2016, she was a recipient of the Queensland Premier's Young Publishers and Writers Award. Previously, she was a runner up in the Qantas SOYA Written Word category. Michelle graduated with a Bachelor of Creative Industries (majoring in Creative Writing) from the Queensland University of Technology, and has also studied at The Second City in Chicago and the Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre in New York. She is a prolific speaker and has presented at events such as TEDxSouthBank, Sydney Writers Festival and Vivid Festival. *Single Asian Female* is her debut play. Find out more: michelle-law.com



CLAIRE CHRISTIAN

Director

Claire Christian is a writer, youth arts facilitator and theatre maker. In 2016 she won the Text Publishing Text Prize for her debut Young Adult Novel *Beautiful Mess* which will be released later this year. In 2013 she was selected as one of the YWCA Queensland's 125 Leading Women. Claire is currently the part-time Youth and Participation Producer

at La Boite Theatre Company as well as the Lead Artist on Queensland Theatre's Logan Youth Ensemble project TRACTION, which she has lead for three years. Claire was previously the Youth Program coordinator at Queensland Theatre (2013-2014) and the Youth Arts Director at the Empire Theatre in Toowoomba (2011-2013).

Claire is a passionate youth arts and community cultural development facilitator who has written, directed, produced and project managed numerous acclaimed projects and productions with adolescents from a variety of different contexts across Australia in the last six years.

Her plays *Hedonism's Second Album, The Landmine is Me* (both with David Burton) and *Talking to Brick Walls* are available through Playlab. As a playwright Claire has been recognised both nationally and internationally including being short-listed for the Griffin Theatre Award (2009) and studying at the Royal Court Theatre Young Writers Program (2009). She co-created, co-produced and presented *Escape from the Breakup Forest* and *Bad Friend* with her theatre collective Mixtape in 2012 and 2013.

Claire has over seven years' experience in the Education sector as a high school teacher in both Australia and the United Kingdom. In 2013 she completed an Australia Council of the Arts JUMP Mentorship with Windmill Theatre's Artistic Director Rosemary Myers. She has a Graduate Certificate in Creative Writing [QUT], a Graduate Diploma in Experiential Arts Therapy [MIECAT] and a Bachelor of Education [Griffith University].

Claire currently co-pilots Ask Pew!Pew! a podcast and online platform with her creative best Dave Burton and you can read about her (mis)adventures on most social media platforms or on her blog: www.claireandpearl.com.



MOE ASSAAD

Set and Costume Designer

Moe Assaad is a passionate Scenographer and Interior Architect. He was born in Beirut during the civil war period, which had a lasting impact on his career trajectory. Spending hours on end in underground shelters, the sounds of bombing and shelling has ignited his imagination and creativity to an imagined reality that is different from

the one outside the shelter.

During his teenage years, he strengthened this creativity by volunteering his Scenography ideas and design sketches to various social and cultural institutions during special events while constructing sets himself during exhibitions. Although scenography was not available as a separate field of study during his undergraduate school years, a strong foundation in Architecture is needed for every Scenographer.

Moe Assaad graduated with a Bachelors and Masters degree in Interior Architecture from the Lebanese University before pursuing his second Masters in Scenography when the program first opened in 2009. He was one of ten graduates representing the first cohort of Scenographers in Lebanon. He then moved to the United States where he designed sets for classic and contemporary plays for proscenium, thrust and theatre-in-the-round stages. Some of the productions he worked on for the 2nd Story Theatre and Brown University Theatre Department include, *Twelfth Night, Amadeus, Le Dindon or the Dupe*, and *Sons of the Prophet* among others.

In August 2015 Moe moved to Australia and started working for La Boite Theatre Company shortly thereafter. He is the Scenographer for *The Village* and *Single Asian Female* 2017 productions. Beyond theatre, Moe Assaad is interested in TV, Opera and Film productions.



KEITH CLARK Lighting Designer

Keith Clark's lighting design work includes *The Wind in the Willows* (La Boite Theatre Company), *Boy Girl Wall, Packed* (The Escapists), *Handle with Care* (Joymas Creative), *De-Generator, Opposite of Prompt, Angel-Monster, The Machine that Carries the Soul* (Phluxus2 Dance Collective), *Moon Spirit Feasting* (Elision Music Ensemble), *Juice* (The

Crash Collective), Laramie Project (Forward Movement), Kazka (Lehenda Dance Company) and Tarnished (La La Palour).

His designs for various productions have toured nationally and internationally to Europe and America. Keith Clark is also a member of the award winning independent theatre group The Escapists.



WIL HUGHES

Sound Design and Composer

Wil's credits as a composer, songwriter and sound designer for theatre have ranged from contemporary ballet to musicals, and include *The Theory of Everything* (Brisbane Festival/Metro Arts); *Dust Covered Butterfly* (Metro Arts); *A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Wind in the Willows* (La Boite Theatre Company); *Tiptoe* (Pentimento Productions);

Sweet Meniscus (Anywhere Theatre Festival); *Legends* (Storyshare International Ltd.); *Unnatural Selection, Allan* (The Arts Centre Gold Coast/Awkward Productions); *Blak Electric* (Aboriginal Centre of Performing Arts) and *Caligula* (The Danger Ensemble/Judith Wright Centre).

His compositional work for film includes *Viral* (dir. Sam Van Grinsven), an official selection for the Cinequest Film Festival in California and the Down Under Film Festival in Berlin, as well as the upcoming feature, *Hold On*.

As a freelance theatre professional he has worked extensively with companies including La Boite Theatre Company, Queensland Ballet, Queensland Theatre and the Queensland Performing Arts Centre. Companies who have utilised Wil's facilities as an audio engineer, music editor and QLab programmer include Global Creatures, Queensland Ballet, Expressions Dance Company, Bay Street Productions, La Boite Theatre Company and more.

In 2016 he was honoured with a nomination at the Australian Songwriting Awards for his work with choral writer, Donna Dyson.



EMILY BURTON

Katie

Emily Burton is an actress, theatre-maker, and teaching artist. Her past main stage productions include: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at La Boite Theatre Company; and *The Seagull, Oedipus Doesn't Live Here Anymore, A Tribute of Sorts* at Queensland Theatre.

Since graduating from University of Southern Queensland in 2010, Emily has collaborated on numerous independent theatre projects including the multi award-winning *A Tribute of Sorts*, for which she won a Matilda Award for Best Actress in a Leading Role. Premiering at La Boite Theatre Company, *A Tribute of Sorts* was then awarded a return season at the Queensland Theatre Company in 2014 which boasted a second sell-out season.

Emily has toured nationally with acclaimed theatre companies, Dead Puppets Society on *The Harbinger*, and Grin and Tonic Theatre Troupe. Emily has worked as a teaching artist across Australia with numerous companies and organisations and has a particular passion for bringing the arts to isolated, regional areas of Australia.



PATRICK JHANUR

Paul

Patrick Jhanur is an up and coming professional Actor based in Sydney. Born and raised in Brisbane, he is a 2015 Bachelor of Fine Arts (Acting) graduate from QUT under the guidance of Dianne Eden. Prior to studying at QUT, Patrick's TV credits include: *Sea Patrol Series 2* (Channel 9), *Magic Garden* (Singapore).

Patrick's theatre credits include: *Survival, The Cherry Orchard, Romeo and Juliet, The Man Who Came to Dinner, The Coast of Utopia: Voyage, The Hot L Baltimore* (QUT) and *STEMania* (Echelon Productions). *Single Asian Female* is Patrick's La Boite Theatre Company and professional main stage theatre debut. For what Patrick lacks in credits, he makes up for in charisma and charm.



ALEX LEE

Zoe

Alex Lee is an actor, comedian and television presenter with a background in journalism. She is a writer/presenter on ABC TV's *The Checkout*. Her other television credits include *The Chaser's Election Desk, The Roast, Media Circus, Story Club,* and *The Feed.* After graduating from the University of Sydney. Alex worked as a journalist, producer and

newsreader on ABC News 24, and was a member of the Federal Parliamentary Press Gallery as political reporter for BuzzFeed Australia.

She is a regular comedy guest on the Triple J Drive program, and the *Free To A Good Home* podcast. Alex has written and starred in sketch, stand-up, and improvisation shows in the Sydney and Melbourne International Comedy Festivals, including her solo show *I'm Eating Peanut Butter In The Shower Because I'm Sad And You're Not The Boss Of Me*.

She is a member of the Improv Theatre Sydney ensemble, and has performed in Soap Opera, Celebrity Theatresports and the Cranston Cup at Sydney's Enmore Theatre. Alex can be seen onstage several nights a week at The Chaser's Giant Dwarf Theatre, where she plays Dungeons and Dragons live on stage as the half-orc Philge in the hit comedy podcast *Dragon Friends*.



COURTNEY STEWART

Courtney Stewart is an Actor, Dancer, Singer, Director and Teaching Artist. She currently features in Jay's Jungle for Channel 7 with Ambience Entertainment. In 2016, she was part of the creative developments for new Australian works; *Single Asian Female* for La Boite Theatre Company, and *Soi Cowboy* for Brisbane Powerhouse.

Courtney performed as one the Witches in Queensland Theatre's 2014 production of *Macbeth*, directed by Michael Attenborough CBE. She has spent over 7 years touring Australia and South Korea appearing in *The Tashi Stories* for Imaginary Theatre, *Three Endangered Animals* for Artslink and *Twelve Singing Animals* for LATT Children's Theatre Company. Courtney was the Assistant Performance Director for the City of Sydney 2016 Chinese New Year Lunar Lantern Festival.

As a dedicated Teaching Artist, Courtney currently works with Sydney Theatre Company, NIDA and the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, specializing in producing and facilitating creative, EdTech and special access workshops in the areas of drama, film-making, editing, music, coding, robots for space exploration and physical computing.

Later this year she will work as the Assistant Director on Sydney Theatre Company's *Australian Graffiti* with Director, Paige Rattray. Courtney is a proud member of MEAA and the Equity Diversity Committee.



HSIAO-LING TANG

Pearl

Hsiao-Ling has been a professional actor since graduating from QUT 's BA Drama course in 1997. After her award winning portrayal of Anita in West Side Story at QUT, her first professional production was in *First Asylum* for La Boite Theatre Company in 1998. She is very happy to be back on the La Boite stage nearly 20 years later.

Hsiao-Ling has had multiple theatre credits including *Professor Burton's Travelling Federation Show* which toured with the QLD Arts Council. *After China* at Sydney's Belvoir St Theatre and *Shattered Jade* at Sydney's Seymour Centre.

She has also voiced an ABC radio play and presented numerous corporate videos. In TV she has guested on *All Saints, H2O Just Add Water,* and *Sea Patrol.* She's performed roles in the film *Postcard Bandit* and U.S. produced *Tempted* co-starring with Virginia Madsen and Jason Mamoa of Game of Thrones fame.

Since moving back to Brisbane Hsiao-Ling has performed featured roles in QMT's *Cabaret* and St Ignatians production of *Rent*, voiced multiple characters in the animated web series *Varieti Heights*. She was involved in the inaugural Lotus playwriting workshops and performed play reading, from which she has continued to further develop and perform in *Squint Witch* through Playlab and, of course, *Single Asian Female* in the La Boite HWY series.

In mid-2017, she will feature in the co-production of Queensland Theatre and Griffin Theatre's world premiere of *Rice* which won the QLD premier's 2016 drama award.



EMILY VASCOTTO

Lana

Emily Vascotto is an actor, writer and comedian based in Brisbane. In 2016, Emily was the Queensland winner for the RAW Comedy competition, and her grand final performance was televised at Melbourne's Town Hall as part of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival.

Emily won Best Cabaret and Best Cabaret Artist at Queensland's Short + Sweet Festival in 2015 with her show *The Confession*. She has since debuted the full length version of the production (renamed *Screw Loose*) at The Butterfly Club in Melbourne. Emily has received a Del Arte Charts award (Favourite Leading Female Performance, 2016) for her role of 'Billie' in *Nice Work if You Can Get It*, which premiered in Queensland with Savoyards Theatre Company.

Emily has also written and produced two plays with Flowers Theatre Company; *The Mayne Effect* in 2015, which broke records with its rapid sell out season, and her second production *The Train Tea Society* (2016, Anywhere Festival Award Winner) which featured a live steam train in the show (a first for Queensland). Emily is currently working on a comedy web series called *Screw Loose*, based on the character from her cabaret of the same name.





PETER SUTHERLAND

Stage Manager

Pete Sutherland has had a career in Stage Management that spans over two decades. He has stage managed for most of the significant theatre companies in Australia and he has also worked internationally.

Single Asian Female is Pete's first show with La Boite Theatre Company.

The directors Pete has stage managed for include Todd MacDonald, Kate Cherry, John Bell, Wesley Enoch, Robyn Nevin, Neil Armfield, Michael Gow, Stephen Page, Andrea Moor, Jason Klarwein, Judy Davis, Simon Phillips, Richard Wherrett, Peter Evans, Debbie Allan and Garry McDonald.

Some highlights of Pete's career include stage managing John Bell's final show as Artistic Director of the Bell Shakespeare Company *The Tempest* 2015 and the tenth anniversary revival of David Page's award winning one-man-show *Page 8* for Bangarra Dance Theatre.



KATIE HURST

Assistant Stage Manager

Graduating from the Queensland University of Technology with a Bachelor of Fine Arts Technical Production in 2015, Katie is excited to be undertaking her first production with La Boite Theatre Company in the role of Assistant Stage Manager. Katie's most recent production credits include: as Assistant Stage Manager; Queensland Ballet's

2016 productions of *Nutcracker, Strictly Gershwin & A Midsummer Night's Dream,* Bleach* Festival's production of *Shifting Sands*, Melbourne's Moomba Festival Parade 2015.

As Stage Manager; Caxton Street Festival Local Stage 2016. Katie has also undertaken a variety of roles in the Arts Industry including; Signage Coordinator at Brisbane Festival 2016, Crowd Marshal for *Les Tambours De Feu* at Melbourne Festival 2016 and crew for The Entertainment Store and Show Time Attractions in both Melbourne and Brisbane.

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La Boite Theatre Company is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland Australian Government



La Boite Theatre Company is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its funding and advisory body

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LA BOITE THEATRE COMPANY







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