

THE FEMALE ♀ OF THE SPECIES

By Joanna Murray-Smith

Directed by Lars Jensen

NOV/DEC 2023



BACKGROUND TO THE PLAY

From the BBC News Homepage, April 2000

Thursday, 27 April, 2000, 04:51 GMT 05:51 UK

Germaine Greer 'held hostage'



Police said the academic was held hostage in her home

Academic and feminist icon Germaine Greer is recovering after being allegedly attacked and imprisoned by a teenage female student at her isolated country house.

Police were called to Ms Greer's home in Great Chesterford, near Saffron Walden, Essex, after she was assaulted and held captive for up to an hour on the evening of Bank Holiday Monday.

A police spokesman said the 61-year-old writer had not been seriously injured during the incident but was "badly shaken".

It is understood the alarm was raised after three friends, who had been invited for dinner, attended the £500,000 Georgian house and heard shouting.

An Essex police spokesman said officers were called to Ms Greer's home at about 2200BST on Monday following reports of an intruder.

A 19-year-old woman was arrested and charged with unlawful imprisonment and assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

She is due to appear before magistrates in Harlow on 4 May.

'Keep out'

In a column written for this Saturday's Weekend section of the Daily Telegraph after the alleged attack, Ms Greer talks of her feelings towards strangers.

She wrote: "I have no signs saying 'Private Property' or 'Keep Out' or 'Trespassers will be prosecuted', but the mad glint in my eyes is meant to speak volumes.

"I am as territorial as a robin, who will drill his beak into the skull of any interloper robin who wanders on to his patch."

Australian born Dr Greer is currently professor of comparative literature at Warwick university, but became a household name after writing the groundbreaking feminist text *The Female Eunuch*, which was published in 1970.

It has sold more than one million copies and been published in 13 languages.

Last year, the sequel - *The Whole Woman* was published - its introduction pronouncing, "The time has come to get angry again".

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I was on my way to Uluru, and in the middle of the Australian outback when I received an email from the president of Melville Theatre Company saying: "Would you consider directing *The Female of the Species*? I'm trying to think who could do a good job of it".

The director assigned to direct the play had recently withdrawn.

I read the play and was chuckling to my self while reading it. Good sign, right?

I knew that I was very busy for the rest of the year at work, but my lovely wife thought it would be a great creative outlet for me, and she promised to fill in at rehearsals that I couldn't do, and to be my Production Manager.

I would like to thank her for pushing me to do this and her support.

The Female of the Species is written by Joanne Murray-Smith with the background in a real life incident of a student invading the home of Germaine Greer.

This brings Margot Mason and all the other characters in *The Female of the Species* to life.

For the set I decided to try and build a box set without walls to make it appear as if Margot lives in a glass house as a comment on the play. Because what is the only thing you shouldn't do if you live in a glass house? You got it, throw stones, which is something that Margot has done all her life.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my wonderful cast and especially Rosalba for stepping in with only four weeks to go after our previous lead had to withdraw due to personal reasons.

I hope that Melville's outgoing president thinks that I did do a "good job of it"!

Lars Jensen—Director



Lars first started in theatre many, many years ago. 1979 to be precise. Lars' mum decided that because Lars was quite shy, enrolling him in an Easter Holiday activity with the local theatre company would be a great way of bringing Lars out of his shell.

She was right.

Lars loved acting. So much that it was all that he wanted to do since then. He went off to do 5 years of performing arts school which later brought him from Denmark to the hustle and bustle of London.

Getting an acting job in England was unfortunately very hard, so Lars ended up as a House Manager for the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Lars met his Australian wife in London, and arrived in Perth in 1998.

Here he became involved in community theatre and he has appeared in, and directed many plays. He has directed both musicals, including *Sweet Charity* for Stirling and *Blood Brothers* for MTC, and plays; *Equus* and *Death and the Maiden*, both for Melville.

CAST

Rosalba Jeffreys

Madelaine Page

Nikki Di Camillo

Tarek Jabado

Jake Lippo

Tom Rees

Margot Mason

Molly Rivers

Tess Thornton

Bryan Thornton

Frank

Theo Hanover

The play is set in 2004 in a not too remote rural town of Australia.



This show contains sudden, loud noises and some coarse language.

It runs without an interval.

Riches' Bar is open before the show and for one hour after the curtain.

CREW

Director	Lars Jensen
Production Manager	Vanessa Jensen
Stage Manager	Laura Mercer
Design - Set, Lighting, Sound	Lars Jensen
Bio Box Operation	Barbara Lovell
Costume Design	Michelle Sharp
Set construction & decorating	Cast and crew, MTC volunteers
Poster	Lars Jensen
Program, FOH photos	Vanessa Jensen
FOH and Bar	Natalie Burbage and MTC volunteers

SPECIAL THANKS

I would very much like to thank Norma Davis who has brought box after box of books for set dressing and everybody else who has also donated to Margot's library.

I would also like to thank all the people who turned up to the set building busy bee: Ross Bertinshaw, Barbara Lovell, Nikki Di Camillo, Laura Mercer, Vanessa Jensen, Sue Lynch and Peter Bloor.

At the conclusion of this production the desk, tall bookcases and many of the books are for sale.

Available for collection on Sunday 10th December.

Speak to FOH to express interest.



Rosalba Jeffreys as Margot Mason

Rosalba trained at NIDA and worked briefly as an actress, on both the stage - *The Rehearsal*, and TV - *No 96, Lane End*, before becoming a 'wife and a mother'. Most of her working life has been spent in the teaching of The Performing Arts. Rosalba has directed many productions for schools with forays into directing for Perth Theatre Company, The Blue Room and Lyons Productions, *Cox Four*, *Covert*, *The Messenger* and *The Simple Truth*. This return to the boards in *The Female of the Species* has been an immensely terrifying experience, due, unavoidably, in part, to a very short rehearsal period, but also an enjoyable challenge.

The role of Margot resonates with Rosalba, having grown up in the 'burn the bra' era and gone through many of Margot's tumultuous mind sets. She is, unfortunately, still confused about the state of feminism today: sometimes feeling that we're in a time of, as Margo puts, 'stagnation'. 'Is that Feminism, Post Feminism, or Post Post Feminism?' Or an even newer feminist state that is still to be given a title? Rosalba feels we still have a way to go before 'reaching our full potential'.



Madelaine Page as Molly Rivers

Madelaine's pronouns are she/her and she was born in Whadjuk Noongar Boodjar. She is an established performer represented by Loxton Management and dabbles in a range of creative pursuits including directing, writing and teaching. When she is not on stage, she loves going on bush walks with her husband and their lovable labradoodle. Madelaine studied at the Actors Centre London and completed an Advanced Acting Residency at the National Institute of Dramatic Arts, after graduating with an Honours in Performing Arts at Curtin University. Her most recent credits include Evan Rickman's *Where Water Once* Was performed at the Blue Room Theatre and Grad's *Richard III* performed at

The New Fortune Theatre earlier this year.

Madelaine hopes to strike a balance between Molly's deranged state and her sweet endearing qualities. She is enjoying Lars Jensen's playful interpretation of Joanna Murray-Smith's wonderfully wordy script.



Nikki Di Camillo as Tess Thornton

Nikki's first taste of the acting life was under the bright lights of the Cummins Theatre in Merredin in the early 90s. After reigniting her passion for performing in 2017, Nikki has been a regular in community theatre productions in Perth. Some of her favourite roles so far have been Kitty in *Old Love* at Melville Theatre and Bobbie in *The Railway Children* at Harbour Theatre. Against all logic, she is addicted to the exhilarating mix of sheer terror and overwhelming excitement she feels every time she steps on stage. This is her fourth show at Melville Theatre, following *Quiz* earlier this year.

Nikki has relished the process of developing the intense character of Tess, drawing on her experience of raising her new cat Douglas and hopes you enjoy this wickedly funny play.



Tarek Jabado as Bryan Thornton

Tarek started acting in 2019. He got into stage acting as he wanted to expand his acting skills, as well as wanting to do more than just film. He has appeared in various student films and had a small role in *Agatha Christie's: And Then There Were None* at Roxy Lane Theatre, Maylands in 2022. Tarek also loves retro gaming and is a massive nerd and gamer at heart. He also plays the euphonium.

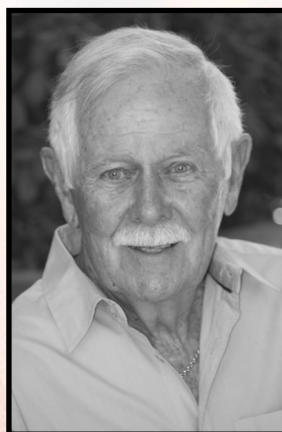
Tarek fell in love with the role of Bryan as it allowed him to play someone who's dumb whilst being quite intelligent himself.



Jake Lippo as Frank

Jake is an actor with a great passion for the performing arts. He has been involved with theatre for close to 4 years and has played a variety of characters in that time. Some favourites include playing Tarzan in *Disney's Tarzan, the Musical* and O'Malley in *Escape*. Jake has been involved with close to 50 productions (theatre, comedy and film) since graduating high school in 2020 with no looks of slowing down. He is currently studying a degree in Theatre at Curtin University where he has played around a dozen lead roles. And even directed a few shows.

Jake's character Frank is a taxi driver born in New York with a fascinating life story. He is a bit of a hot head and is bloody sick of modern day feminism. Jake hopes you are have an awesome time and enjoy this hilarious show!



Tom Rees as Theo Hanover

Tom has performed in several plays for Melville Theatre Company in the past and is therefore very pleased to be returning for the role of Theo Hanover in this production. Favourite roles for Melville include the award winning *Twelve Angry Men*, and also *Don Parties On*. Tom has been performing in community theatre productions in and around Perth for more than thirty years. He has done everything from comedy and drama to musicals, pantomime, reviews and variety. His all-time favourite role in a musical is as the king in *The King and I* while favourite comedies include *The Sunshine Boys* and *The Odd Couple*. Two of Tom's favourite dramatic roles were in *Taking Sides* and *Travelling*

North, both for Old Mill Theatre.

Tom has enjoyed working with the cast, crew and director to bring this production, and especially Theo, to life.

2024

MELVILLE
THEATRE
COMPANY

AT THE MAIN HALL

Melville Civic Centre
Almondbury Rd, Booragoon

A vibrant illustration of a summer landscape. A bright yellow sun with rays is in the upper left, partially obscured by a large white cloud. The sky is a clear blue. Below the sky are rolling green hills with a winding path. There are several stylized trees with green foliage and brown trunks. The overall scene is bright and cheerful, representing a summer setting.

SUMMER

SHORTS

A one act play season

8th — 17th March 2024

Directed by
Lis Hoffmann
and
Kerry Bowden

2024 Seasons

Sweet Road by Debra Oswald
Directed by Vanessa Jensen **May**

The Deep Blue Sea by Terrence Rattigan
Directed by Barry Park **July/August**

God of Carnage by Yasmina Reza
Directed by Thomas Dimmick **September**

Keep an eye on the website and our fb page for further details and audition notices.