



A **Stan.** ORIGINAL SERIES

# YEAR OF

**JUNE 10**

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## THE MAKING OF YEAR OF

### BRINGING A FRESH NEW CREATIVE TEAM TO YEAR OF

From the outset Roadshow Rough Diamond determined to work with fresh talent on *Year Of* - both in front of and behind the camera. They had, philosophically, chosen to work with new creatives teamed with old heads, but on *Year Of* the 'old heads', while experienced, were also enthusiastic in bringing that freshness to the show.

Jessica Tuckwell (Script Producer on the first two seasons of *Bump*) wrote three episodes; leading a team comprising of Kelsey Munro (creator of *Bump*) who wrote two episodes, Enoch Mailangi (AACTA Award winner *All My Friends are Racist*) who wrote two and a half episodes; and then young writers were teamed in pairs - Zoe Norton-Lodge with short film maker Eddie Diamandi, actor/director Emily Havea with Enoch Mailangi, and development exec Eleanor Kirk with Ayeesha Ash. The cultural and experiential range gave the story room energy and zest.

Dan describes the writers' rooms for *Year Of* as "big, young and raucous" and a place where non-conventional ideas were able to develop and flourish, to reflect the reality of the teenage experience.

"It's important that the show is grounded in some sort of truth and when a story is centred around 16 and 17-year-olds, it can feel pretty heightened and anarchic at times. What we've created feels honest - it could be happening at a school near to you. It's outlandish and crazy and whimsical and horny - and all those things at various times. I certainly learned a lot about modern terminology, even though high school is still quite fresh in my mind!"

Similarly with the directors. Fadia Aboud (*Australian Gangster, Way Out West*) teamed with Eddie Diamandi and Sydney Film Festival award winner Taylor Ferguson, with Jessica Tuckwell directing the final episodes.

Of course casting 16 and 17 year olds necessarily meant new comers, and Casting Director Kirsty McGregor workshopped her "finds" before starting formal work to create a team of best friends in reality as on screen. The adult cast were better known - Christian Byers (*Bump, Puberty Blues*), Danielle Cormack (*Wentworth*), Matt Nable (*Transfusion*), Sarah Armanious, (*Little Monsters*) Sam Johnson (*Secret Life of Us*), Ray Chong Lee (*Tomorrow When the War Began*) and Caroline Brazier (*Rake*) - formed a powerful connection with the kids.



## THE ORIGINS OF THE STORY

Roadshow Rough Diamond's Dan and John Edwards had long had an ambition to make a multi-generational high school series, even before they began producing their smash hit Stan Originals series *Bump*. Some of the elements from the early development of *Year Of*, such as the inner-city high school setting, made their way into *Bump*.

With the young characters in *Bump* moving into adulthood, Dan and John felt that *Year Of* presented a terrific opportunity to continue on at the same school – the fictional Jubilee High – in a unique way.

The series is grounded in lived experiences.

Dan Edwards, producer and series co-creator, with Jessica Tuckwell, says: "In the writers' rooms, everyone brought their own life experiences to the fore. For me, personally, in my final year at school we experienced a tragedy that had an unbelievably galvanising effect on everybody who went through it. We felt that using that hyperreal environment was a great way to explore a disparate group of teenagers, and the effect of the tragedy on each of them and on their teachers and parents.

"Roadshow Rough Diamond shows – and also John's earlier shows – have always been about the intergenerational rub and it's the driving intention behind *Year Of*."

Jessica Tuckwell, who co-created the show with Dan, and is script producer, directed two episodes and wrote three episodes, says: "*Year Of* is definitely a multigenerational drama as, while it's focused on a group of friends in their last couple of years of high school and that very intense time in their lives, it's also about the adults in their lives. By virtue of being a part of these young lives, it's an intense time for everyone around them as well.

"We often see coming of age stories where young people are trying to find out who they are – and that's true for the young people in our show – but all of our characters are trying to find out who they are, and I think that reflects real life. The journey of understanding yourself never ends. Things happen in life to make all of us reassess our relationships and who we are in the world. We are all affected by life's unexpected events.

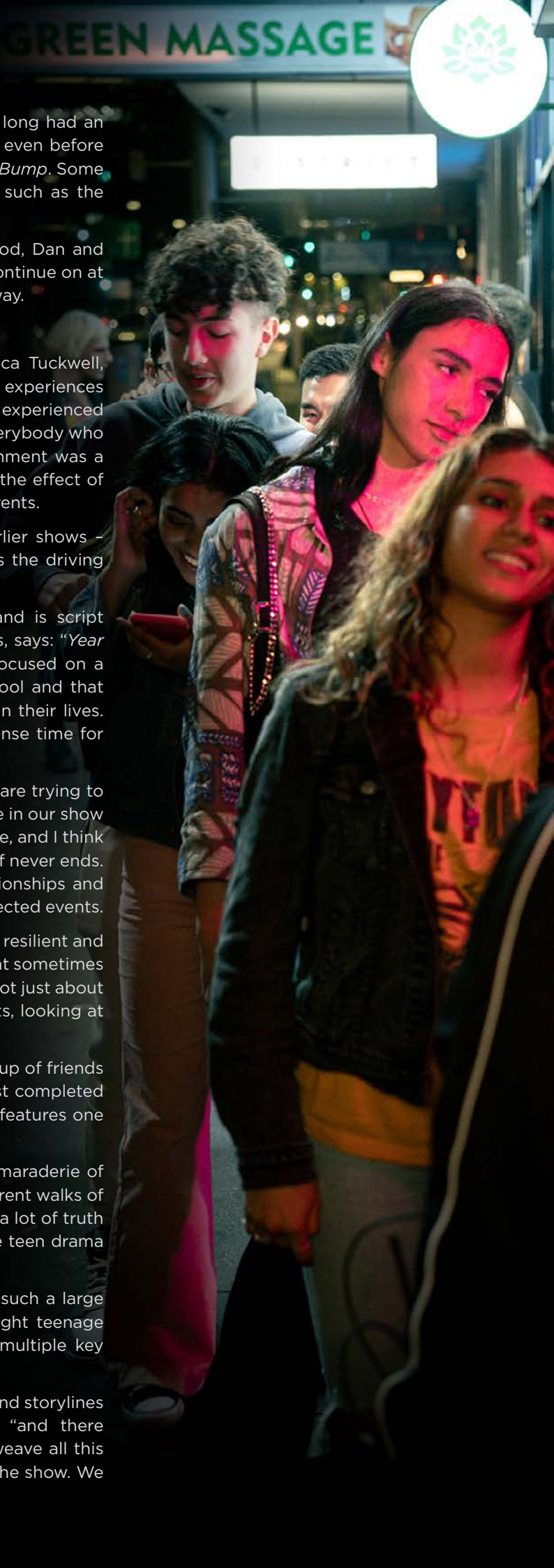
"We sometimes forget that young people can be incredibly resilient and incredibly hopeful and wise. What I love about *Year Of* is that sometimes it's the adults who are learning from the kids. Our show is not just about kids learning out how to be in the world, it's also the adults, looking at how the kids behave and taking a leaf out of their book."

Sophia Wright-Mendelsohn plays Kate, one of the core group of friends at the centre of the story. She came to *Year Of* having just completed her first major role in David Michôd's *Wizards*, which also features one of her *Year Of* co-stars, Joshua Hewson.

"I was immediately drawn to the relationships and the camaraderie of this group of friends in high school who all come from different walks of life but who are united by their passions and loves. There's a lot of truth to this series, including the teenage lingo. I think it's a rare teen drama as its nuanced and it's beautiful," Sophia says.

One of the challenges for the writers was grappling with such a large group of key characters. As well as the core group of eight teenage friends with deeply interconnected lives, the series has multiple key adult characters, with equally complex experiences.

"It's an ambitious story structure with so many characters and storylines across ten half-hour episodes," Jessica Tuckwell says, "and there were times where I was thinking, 'oh, my God, how do I weave all this together?', but that complexity is one of the strengths of the show. We just had to go for it. And the actors had to go for it."



## THE CASTING & THE CHARACTERS

The energy and enthusiasm of the young cast was infectious and, despite an intense shooting schedule made even more challenging by Covid restrictions, they brought joy to set every day.

“They are absolutely gorgeous!” Jessica says, who adored directing these young actors in roles she had helped create and write.

“Every day as a director, I would turn know up knowing I was going to be surprised by what they gave me. We were so lucky to find a group of actors who quickly began relating to each other similarly to how their characters related to each other. Of course, we were looking to cast actors who were very much like their character, but it was fascinating watching them being influenced by the scripts and seeing them bring their characters to life. It was an amazing experience.”

Alongside these new actors Roadshow Rough Diamond's ensemble of enormously experienced and respected older actors brought a depth to the adult story lines.

“The adult characters are half the story, and we were able to secure a stellar cast. We could easily have made an entirely different show just focusing on their characters' lives, which are as complicated and fascinating as the kids' lives,” Dan says.

Danielle Cormack plays the Jubilee High School principal and mother of one of the kids we come to know. Matt Nable plays her husband.

“One of the key themes in this series is grief and trauma and how do we process that within our own personal selves and in our friendships, but also within our interpersonal relationships. My character's relationship with her husband in the series is certainly put to the test. They process this traumatic event in their lives very differently which, of course, creates a disconnect. Their journey is about reconnecting again after an event that has irrevocably changed their lives,” Danielle says.

“At some point in everyone's life, there's going to be a moment where they butt heads with an event that throws them sideways. I love the way that this show investigates that. One moment you can be stumbling along this crazy path we call life and then just get knocked sideways... and then how do we find our way back onto that path? Whether that be for the group of young friends or, in my character's case, navigating it with her husband and with her students who are a constant reminder of what has happened in her world.”



## YEAR OF & THE CONNECTION TO BUMP

Fans of Roadshow Rough Diamond's hit series *Bump* will recognise both the setting of Jubilee High and the school's new teacher, Bowie Davis-Chalmers. Christian Byers reprises his role, although Bowie is older and, arguably, wiser.

Jessica Tuckwell directed Christian in *Bump* and loved both the character of Bowie and working with Christian. In bringing Bowie into *Year Of*, she was intrigued by the idea of giving him a responsible job, something he'd never had in *Bump*, while still keeping the essence of Bowie and his very individual soul.

Christian jumped at the chance to play Bowie again and to work with the *Bump* creative team of Dan Edwards, John Edwards, Kelsey Munro (who created *Bump* and also writes an episode of *Year Of*) and Jessica Tuckwell.

"We find Bowie about a year or so on from the end of season three of *Bump* and he's a more mature, reflective Bowie. He has made decisions in his life to settle down and to give something back and there's a nice connection there in that his mum in *Bump*, Angie, is a teacher. Teaching is actually kind of the dream job for someone like Bowie. I've realised while playing the character that he gets to sit around and read poetry all day. So, it makes total sense that he would become a teacher."

## THE LOOK AND TONE

"*Year Of* is funny, sad, hopeful. And it looks and sounds lush. The camera work, led by DOP Garry Phillips, and the music, scored by Richard Pike, is quite unique and emotive", says producer Dan Edwards.

As with the writers, the directors of *Year Of* are a mix of experienced and new creatives discovered by Roadshow Rough Diamond. This is the company's third series with set up director Fadia Abboud, while Jessica Tuckwell adds to her directing credits and both Eddie Diamond (who also wrote an episode) and Taylor Ferguson step up from impressive shorts to directing their first television.

Production Designer Natalie Beak describes her process of getting to know the story and characters as granular and almost scientific. She loved the idea of creating various teenage bedrooms.

"Those spaces were an absolute joy to dress. We see Kate's world, which is full of her beautiful artwork and a lovely painted mural on the wall. We see bespoke tarot card wallpaper, and we see Mo and his sneaker collection. Maya's world is as hectic as her mind, and Priya is our gorgeous boho princess. She's all about mood lighting. Gus' room is a temporary space as he shares a flat with his Nan and his brother, so it's a little bit more pared back but it's still a space that houses his urban treasures. And Tully's space is a room that is full of memories, and a room that offers a lot of healing for our characters," Natalie says.

"We didn't want to be a glossy show. We're somewhere between the lightness of *Bump* and the brutal honesty of *Euphoria*. And what is so important about *Year Of* was

to have the worlds we created speak to the environment in which we're filming in. We're desaturated in tone and very real and very honest. We decided to use a triadic colour palette with pops of reds and blues and yellow, but all grounded within a really honest sense of reality. Our incredible cinematographer Garry Phillips was key to bringing our visual world to life. He has the most amazing ability to use natural light in a really cinematic way."

Costume designer Pele Hehea grew up in Sydney's inner-west where the series is set. The slightly offbeat high school, where rules are not strictly enforced, including uniforms, is very familiar to her. To her, the key group of young characters are each, in their own way, a misfit and that's how they find each other. Their costumes reflect this.

Pele also has a background in the art department and worked closely with production designer Natalie Beak to build a cohesive look for the show. She worked especially hard at ensuring the costumes for the younger characters were authentic, researching via social media and in conversations with people of that age.

"It's been a lot of fun. When I went to high school, I remember once wearing my school skirt with a tie-dyed t shirt, a trench coat that I'd bought from Vinnies, a fedora and Doc Martin boots. And that's exactly the kind of look we've ended up with some of the kids - a bit of uniform put together with other bits of wardrobe. Everyone's experience of school is so exceptionally different, and we played with that. It says a lot about how the kids are brought up and what their background is like," Pele says.

"Mo and Maya, wear full school uniform because their single mum Adela works really hard to make sure they have uniforms, she's not going to take them running around in something else. They've got a level of respect for their mum that is slightly cultural, where they recognise how hard their mum works to provide for them.

"While Kate, who has had quite a privileged upbringing, meticulously plans what she wears and makes very strong stylistic decisions for herself that are not bound by what her parents or the school wants. She knows what she wants and who she is. And then Gus doesn't have the access to funds for proper school uniforms, so he interprets it in his own way. He picks up bits and pieces from here and there, including things that maybe his brother Jed had years ago when he was at school. And he wears it beautifully, because he's got that edge and he's got that level of creativity himself. There's one element in his costume that we really love, which is a beaded necklace, which is picking up references to his family and the hippie commune that he grew up in."

Pele continues: "For Priya, Dan really wanted a bohemian style character, but that's tricky to do in a contemporary setting, so I went with more of a festival vibe for her. Tharanya has a beautiful skin tone that requires stronger colours and more vibrant hues. I just love her look.

"And George is this incredibly elegant feline character and we had to dress them accordingly for their dancer-like limbs, so George's costume is quite streamlined and sleek."



## WHAT AUDIENCES WILL LOVE

Samson Alston says: “The series is about watching how people react in their own different ways to a traumatic experience and how their journeys progress. I just love the idea of how all the stupid, tiny dramas that happen in school completely dissipate when something so big happens and they see the real world for what it is. I really enjoyed that aspect and I think audiences will too.”

“Audiences will love *Year Of* because it’s just authentic and it’s true. There’s not a lot of bullshit in this,” Sophia Wright-Mendelsohn adds. “We’ve all tried really hard to create characters who are exactly who they say they are - and I think audiences will relate to that.”

## SERIES SYNOPSES

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**\*\*\* WE ASK THAT MEDIA DO NOT REVEAL THE DEATH OF TULLY, WHO IS ONE OF THE LEAD CHARACTERS, UNTIL AFTER EPISODE 1 OF YEAR OF HAS SCREENED ON STAN.\*\*\***

### ONE LINE SYNOPSIS

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*Year Of* follows a circle of friends and their community through their final two years at the harbour front Jubilee High School (introduced to audiences in *Bump*), as they navigate a shocking event that upturns each of their lives forever.

### ONE PARAGRAPH SYNOPSIS

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You can’t unring a bell.

*Year Of* is the story of a group of inner-city teens and their going ups and coming downs during the final two years of high school. The stuff you do, the stuff you don’t do, the stuff that happens, it all makes you who you are – so, when a single event threatens to shake the community, it sets each of our characters on a path of change and self-discovery. Old friendships break and make way for new, more surprising ones, as each of our characters is forced to reassess what matters most to them, and who they want to become. It’s the most intense time of their lives... so far, anyway.

## ONE PAGE SYNOPSIS

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*Year Of* follows a circle of friends and their community through their final two years at the harbour front Jubilee High School (introduced to audiences in *Bump*), as they navigate a tragic event that upturns each of their lives forever.

But this is a show where humour and energy rule, even when bad stuff happens, and hope is found in the most unexpected places. New love and sense of self flourish from under the rubble, and as the worlds of our characters implode around them, they find themselves set on new paths they'd never anticipated. Surprising allegiances are formed, football matches won, new romances tentatively embarked upon, and friendships built and broken. On the precipice of Year 12, these teens are forced to reckon with their futures, and while some are desperate to slow down or rewind, others are eager to speed ahead, skipping straight to 'the good part'. Through whatever outlets available to them – be it art, football, horoscopes, DIY tattoos or urban exploration – we see them experiment with self-expression, make mistakes, take risks, and fall in and out of love, with themselves and each other. Their stories are at once unique and universal: this is the quintessential coming-of-age experience, the liminal time between childhood and adulthood. Life is at its most intense, every experience is heightened, feelings are hyperreal and full of consequence.

An intergenerational dramedy, *Year Of* also follows the lives of the teachers and parents at Jubilee High. We watch school principal Lucinda take an indefinite sabbatical and reconnect with her comatose husband, the two of them slowly learning how to live again and channelling their grief into unconventional, occasionally humorous, impulses, while neighbour Adela watches on from across

the fence, inspired to make revolutionary changes within her own life. Meanwhile, football coach Eddie Ioane steps up as acting principal, proving his leadership to a school cohort in desperate need of guidance, as his own baggage threatens to unearth itself and destabilize him. At the same time, new English teacher Bowie (whom viewers will recognise from *Bump*) and art teacher Mae take on additional wellbeing support roles where they can, and find themselves grappling with complicated feelings for one another along the way.

This is a grittier world than we saw before in *Bump* – urban gentrified kids from wealthy, liberal families mingle with kids from social housing and rural mudhut communities. There is no shying away from discussions of the class divide, drug use, complex family dynamics and the nuances of privilege. At the same time, the series explores the many ways we can be surprised by hope, and the unexpected ways that tragedy can galvanise us; as well as delving into the theme of *sonder*: how every stranger we pass on the street has a complex inner world to which we are not privy, but which may be just as rich as our own.

*Year Of* is a funny, sharp and truthful series. Because of this, it can reach the demographic band that loved *Skins*, devoured *Puberty Blues* and laughed with *Sex Education*. It's a series that explores character as a priority and is always determined to come from a place of truth. When our characters are brought face to face with a shocking crisis, they meet it with energy and a love of life that's deepened by their experience of tragedy. We'll be drawn into becoming part of their group of friends and be hooked into following their lives well beyond the close of Season 1.



## EPISODE SYNOPSES

### EPISODE ONE

Written by Jessica Tuckwell

#### SHORT SYNOPSIS

A Year 12 house party is the social event of the year for the Year 11s at Jubilee High, until an unexpected disruption sends the whole evening awry.

#### LONG SYNOPSIS

Teen soccer star TULLY and his best friend MO help their new English teacher BOWIE (who we recognise from Bump) move into his new inner-city flat, under the instruction of their soccer coach IOANE. While Bowie and Ioane settle in with a spliff and a bottle of kombucha for a night of getting to know each other, the boys head home to get ready for a big night out – Tully first making an obligatory appearance with his parents LUCINDA and ALAN, who are beside themselves with excitement about his new contract with an A-League football team. Meanwhile, besties MAYA, KATE and PRIYA get ready at Kate's place, catching Kate up on what she's missed since being away and discussing Priya's plans to hook up with Tully, while OPHELIA (Kate's mum) provides unwelcome interruptions. The teens link up out on the streets of Glebe enroute to the party – hosted by their best friend GEORGE's hunk of a Year 12 boyfriend, BRENDAN – and Tully makes a detour to collect GUS, his rogue new friend from the public housing tower. Drugs and friendship have the teens in a state of euphoria at the party, until an unwelcome arrival sends the crowd scattering. When the boys decide to take a reckless detour, the night takes a turn with life-changing consequences.

### EPISODE TWO

Written by Kelsey Munro

#### SHORT SYNOPSIS

The school community pulls together in the wake of a tragic event, as friendships are threatened by competing perspectives on what happened.

#### LONG SYNOPSIS

In the aftermath of Friday night, a shell-shocked Lucinda climbs over her catatonic husband to get ready for work. At school, the staff fail to hide their surprise at seeing her while the students gather together at the gates and share in their grief, trying to assuage one another's guilt. The notable absence of Gus prompts a furious search mission from Mo, while at school, Kate organises a student-led art project to commemorate Tully. The project derails when Priya and Maya clash on who knew Tully best, and a conspiracy theory from Maya rubs the rest of the group up the wrong way. Later, an isolated Maya visits Lucinda and gets some clarity on her relationship with Tully, prompting her to make amends with Priya and Kate and get the art project back on track. At the memorial, heartfelt speeches are delivered and songs sung, while elsewhere, Gus wakes up from sleeping rough and has a strange, spiritual vision.

### EPISODE THREE

Written by Enoch Mailangi

#### SHORT SYNOPSIS

A shift in the cosmos blows a chaotic energy through the rest of the group, interfering with relationships and bringing tension to boiling point.

#### LONG SYNOPSIS

Brendan and George's morning routine is interrupted by an unexpected apparition, which sends George off on a guilt-driven bender. Meanwhile at the Haleem household, Maya tries out a brand-new look under ridicule from a sceptical Mo, and the twins bicker about their father MOSES, whose prolonged absence overseas has Maya judging him as a flop. Meanwhile, their mother ADELA grapples with feelings of helplessness to the needs of her grieving best friend Lucinda, who won't open the door. At school, acting principal Ioane appoints art teacher MAE PARK as an additional wellbeing teacher, while on the schoolyard, the girls discuss Mercury in Retrograde and its effects on the group. Mo's angst reaches boiling point when Gus shows his face for the first time since the accident, prompting an aggressive outburst. Observing the tension, Ioane organises a reconciliatory dinner for the boys, during which some incriminating information about Gus comes to light. At the same time, George visits Kate's place, where he receives a spiritual education from Ophelia.

### EPISODE FOUR

Written by Jessica Tuckwell

#### SHORT SYNOPSIS

Priya grapples with a potentially life-changing revelation before an art launch brings the gang together, reuniting Kate with an estranged member of her family.

#### LONG SYNOPSIS

When signs from the universe start convincing Priya that she's pregnant with Tully's baby, Maya and Kate accompany her to take a pregnancy test at a sexual health clinic, which yields unexpected results. Back at home, Kate makes the unwelcome discovery that her estranged father TRISTAN is staying in town for a prestigious launch of his new artwork, sending her mother into embarrassing old habits and unearthing some buried memories from her recent past. In an effort to assuage her anxiety, Kate invites the rest of the Jubilee group along to the launch as emotional support, including Gus, who brings along his loose unit ex-con brother JED. While Jed makes a surprisingly good impression on the corporate types, the rest of the group grapple with their own personal crises, spurred on by the free booze, and Kate's anxiety reaches new heights, prompting her to find solace in the last place she'd expect.



## EPISODE FIVE

Written by Eddie Diamandi and Zoe Norton-Lodge

### SHORT SYNOPSIS

As the Haleem household prepares for an eagerly awaited visitor, the Jubilee football team gears up for its first game back since the tragedy.

### LONG SYNOPSIS

Plans for an eagerly anticipated family visitor are abruptly put on hold when Adela receives a phone call that sends both Mo and Maya into foul moods. Even flirting with her hot new co-worker and encountering English teacher Bowie at the IGA attempting to buy condoms doesn't cool Maya's temper, and she unleashes on Priya, who misfires in her attempts to cheer her bestie up. Meanwhile, Bowie and Mae finally go on that date they've been planning, with unexpected results. At home, Adela learns to be open and honest with Lucinda in the comfort of an unconventional new setting, prompting new revelations about her marriage. The Jubilee High football team gear up for their first game under new captain Mo, who demonstrates just how seriously he's determined to take the responsibility - no holds barred.

## EPISODE SIX

Written by Emily Havea and Enoch Mailangi

### SHORT SYNOPSIS

An urban exploration brings two friends closer beneath the city, while a night out above ground prompts honest conversations between both teens and adults alike.

### LONG SYNOPSIS

Gus takes Kate on a surprise urban exploration through Sydney's train tunnels while Priya initiates a night out with the rest of the gang and a bottle of vodka. When some attempts to enter infamous Club 77 prove more successful than others, the group divides, sending Priya's insecurities about her friendships into overdrive - although Mo is not so disappointed in the outcome. While Maya discovers a new subculture with George inside the club, Lucinda takes Alan on a late-night drive and the pair finally reconnect, prompting the establishment of a new pact between them. Underground, Kate and Gus's expedition provokes new insights for both of them, while up on land, the rest of the group's dynamic builds towards eruption - in more ways than one.

## EPISODE SEVEN

Written by Ayesha Ash and Eleanor Kirk

### SHORT SYNOPSIS

Adela, Alan and Ioane each embark on big life milestones, while an English assignment forces Bowie's students to get more in touch with their poetic side.

### LONG SYNOPSIS

A free kick in a game prompts some unexpected progress between Mo and Gus... for a moment. Ioane grapples with a big life decision, made harder by a strange spiritual encounter, while Alan's return to work proves more difficult than anticipated. In the absence of Maya, who has started spending a lot of time with someone new, Adela breaks some big news to Mo and is left disappointed by his response. A milestone in George and Brendan's relationship leaves George floundering in unfamiliar territory, and an English assignment forces the whole group to get in touch with their more poetic side, inspiring Bowie to take control of his confusing relationship with Mae. Ioane finally comes to a decision about his future, which involves opening up about his past, bringing new truths to light.

## EPISODE EIGHT

Written by Enoch Mailangi

### SHORT SYNOPSIS

An unexpected fling prompts a furious reaction from Kate, before a change in circumstance quickly turns things sinister.

### LONG SYNOPSIS

A hook up between the unlikeliest of pairings is sexy and kinda cute - until Kate finds out about it and has a field day, driving a deeper rift between she and her mother. When Adela takes Mo driving, Mo forces her to confront the reality of her marriage and finally take action, which leads to new ground being broken in her relationship with Maya. Priya's reaction to Maya's new look causes an existential crisis of the highest order, while Gus's family issues start overflowing into his safe space at school, jeopardising his relationship with Kate - especially when she finds herself caught up in it. The reignition of the group chat at a crucial moment attracts the surprised attention of the gang - and an outsider

## EPISODE NINE

Written by Kelsey Munro

### SHORT SYNOPSIS

In the aftermath of a traumatic event, Kate pulls away from her family and reconnects with her friends – although some relationships are in the firing line.

### LONG SYNOPSIS

Mo and Gus's tentative new friendship finds its stride as George and Brendan's romance comes to a crashing and unexpected halt, causing a very public meltdown. In the aftermath of a traumatic event, Kate pulls away from her family, despite her mother's attempts to reconcile and her father's return to town. Mae's wellbeing session with George prompts revelations for both of them about the people in their lives, although Bowie's new clear boundaries leave confused. Maya and Kate reconnect over a night of shared trauma and secrets, while Mo learns a little more about his family history and makes a brave new decision – meeting unexpected resistance from those he cares most about.

## EPISODE TEN

Written by Jessica Tuckwell

### SHORT SYNOPSIS

A birthday celebration for Maya and Mo hides an inner tension as Mo grapples with a life decision that threatens to destabilise his friends and family.

### LONG SYNOPSIS

A dream about Tully prompts Maya to reconsider her reaction to Mo's news, although tensions in the Haleem household continue to mount. George and Priya trial their newfound independence with varying levels of success, while Ioane's regret over how he treated Mo is compounded by a surprise visit from Gus. Plagued by uncertainty, Mo embarks on an urban exploration adventure with Gus and is compelled by the adrenaline to confess his fears and come to a new resolution. Lucinda and Alan take their first steps back into the community with the help of Adela and her kids, and George receives a phone call that threatens to undo any progress he's made in his own self-actualisation. Ioane finally faces up to the past he's kept buried, prompting a last-minute career swivel, and Bowie and Mae make amends, while a group trip to the airport has each of the teens feeling bittersweet about what the future holds.

## ABOUT THE CHARACTERS

### **BOWIE CHALMERS-DAVIS** played by Christian Byers

Once a spiritual healing vol-cel who put his faith in the whims of the universe, the Bowie we meet is now a more evolved man from the one we knew in Bump. He might still believe the right feng shui of an apartment has the power to influence your fortune, but gone is the hippy haircut and the loose, open-necked shirts, replaced by crisp button-ups and a brand-new English teaching degree. His time spent caring for his mother as she battled cancer acquainted him closely with her reasons for going into a career in education, giving him fresh clarity on his own purpose in life. Shaping the minds of tomorrow's leaders: what could be more spiritually fulfilling than that?

As it turns out, however, teaching isn't all To Sir with Love and Dead Poets Society. Bowie's first official full-time gig just so happens to be at Jubilee High, his younger sister's old stomping ground, and he's quick to learn not everyone is as eager to nourish their brains as Oly was. Battling juvenile delinquents, truants, and constant classroom interruptions - not to mention a burgeoning crush on the unreasonably hot art teacher, Ms Mae Park - Bowie is in way out of his depth and struggling just to keep his head above water. Combine that with the shocking death of a student he hardly knew, but who was apparently the backbone of the entire school, and the poor guy doesn't stand a chance. But it's just as he starts to give up hope that a surprising connection with a troubled student makes him think it might all be worth it...

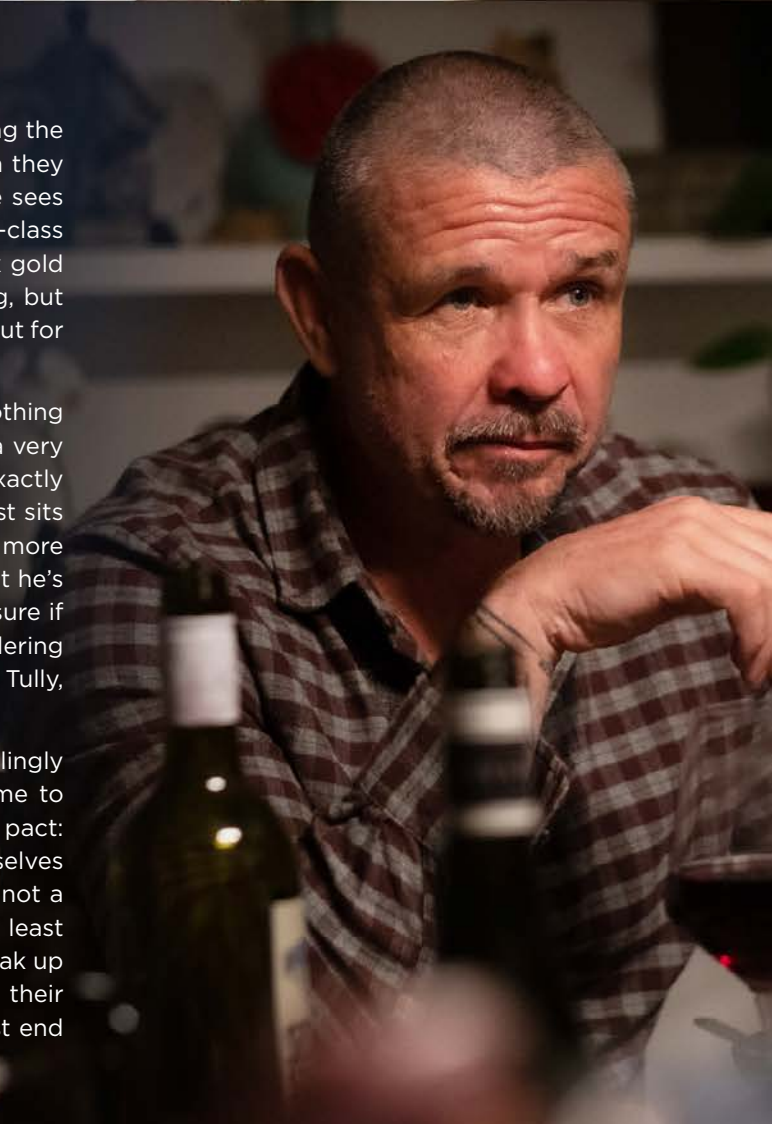


### **ALAN PRICHARD** played by Matt Nable

The good cop to Lucinda's bad cop, Alan prides himself on being the 'cool' dad - the one that knows where the kids really are when they say they're going to study group or turns a blind eye when he sees the six-pack of beer in their sports bag. Hailing from a working-class background and working as a builder, Alan reckons he's struck gold with Luc and Tully. It's not like the family is loaded or anything, but they do alright, and it's nice knowing that if soccer doesn't pan out for Tully, he has a whole alphabet of back-up plans to fall back on.

When Tully dies unexpectedly, Alan falls into a state of shock. Nothing in life prepares you for the loss of a son, and he's come from a very masculine environment, where the expression of emotion isn't exactly commonplace. For days - or maybe weeks, he can't tell - he just sits in his chair and stares at nothing, as if the more he ignores it, the more likely it might all just go away. He knows Lucinda needs him, but he's not sure if he can give her what she wants right now. He's not sure if he'll be able to ever again. Trapped in his thoughts, he's left wondering if it's his fault - if maybe he'd stepped in, been a little tougher on Tully, prevented him from going out, this might not have happened.

Over the course of the series, Alan is drawn out of his shell - willingly and unwillingly - by Lucinda, who forces him to help her come to a decision about what they should do. Together, they make a pact: instead of thinking of Tully as dead, they will convince themselves he's away for a year, and take it a day at a time until then. It's not a golden cure - but it might just be a bandaid for the wound, at least for a little bit. Alan knows the statistics around couples who break up after suffering a tragedy like this one, and the odds are not in their favour - but in the case of him and Luc, Tully's death might just end up having the opposite effect.



**LUCINDA PRICHARD**  
played by Danielle Cormack

From outward appearances, Lucinda really does have it all: the perfect son, perfect husband, the perfect house in Glebe and perfect job as principal of the local high school. She's smart, put-together, and pragmatic to a fault. The worst thing she has to deal with is her Type 1 diabetes. That is, until her son dies.

No words can describe the feeling of losing a child, especially when that child was Tully. The kind of kid who lit up a room with his smile and won the hearts of everyone who met him. The kind of kid who got drafted by the Wanderers at 16 but agreed to stay in school until he completed his HSC because his mother said so. Lucinda thinks she'll be able to carry on as normal in his absence, going through the motions of her job as principal, but it soon becomes apparent that any semblance of normal died when Tully did. After collapsing on her first day back at work, she takes an indefinite leave of absence and starts whiling away the days at home with her close-to-catatonic husband, oscillating between going completely off the rails

**TULLY PRICHARD**  
played by Samson Alston

Golden boy Tully Prichard has a way of making everyone he meets feel like the best version of themselves. Only child to mother (and school principal) Lucinda and builder father Alan, Tully has spent his whole life on a pedestal. It doesn't help that he's also a gun of a soccer player, drafted by the Western Sydney Wanderers to play for the A League club once he's finished school. In the meantime, he'll make do getting straight As and captaining the boys' soccer team, with his pick of the Jubilee High dating pool.

But there's a problem with life on the pedestal: beneath his ever-sunny exterior, Tully can feel himself starting to cave into the pressure. When everyone already sees you as brilliant, you have no room to fall, and the more people in Tully's life assure him of how beloved he is, the more terrified he secretly becomes that he'll let them all down. He's under no illusion about his privilege, so of course, he'd never air these concerns out loud - but the anxiety manifests itself in patterns of

(read: buying a jacuzzi and getting day-drunk) and feeling absolutely nothing. Most days, she just drives herself to the very edge of a cliff near the beach and sits looking over, eating takeaway and thinking about how it would feel to drive over.

The worst part is, nobody will look at her the same way - not even her best friend and next-door neighbour, Adela, whose eyes are filled with pity whenever she comes over with another casserole dish full of food. Feeling more isolated than ever, Lucinda shuts everyone out and turns back to Alan, forcing him out of his catatonic state so that they can reckon with this monster of grief together. And so, together, they come up with a pact: instead of thinking of Tully as dead, they will convince themselves he's away for a year, and take it a day at a time until then. It's a little nut, but actually quite practical - which pretty much sums Lucinda up. Once the burden of grief has been lifted slightly, she's able to refocus her friendships and welcome other people back into her life, although she'll still have a long way to go before she reaches acceptance.

reckless behaviour and strange glitches in his otherwise confident appearance. One example of this is his developing interest in the subculture of urban exploration - something that his best friend Gus introduced him to, which involves scaling half-finished building sites and travelling through abandoned train tunnels that run under the city.

Tully's fear of disappointing others means that he refuses to let others disappoint him - which is a large part of the reason why everyone is so drawn to him. He's the kind of guy you want to tell your secrets to, whether that's your sexuality, your biggest regret, or the sad truth about your fucked-up family - and there are a lot of those at Jubilee High.

Tully may die physically at the end of Episode 1, but his memory and spirit live on in all of those who were privileged enough to know and love him, and we see many glimpses of him throughout the series, in either flashback, vision or dream form, as those he leaves behind grapple with the reality of life without him.



## MAYA HALEEM

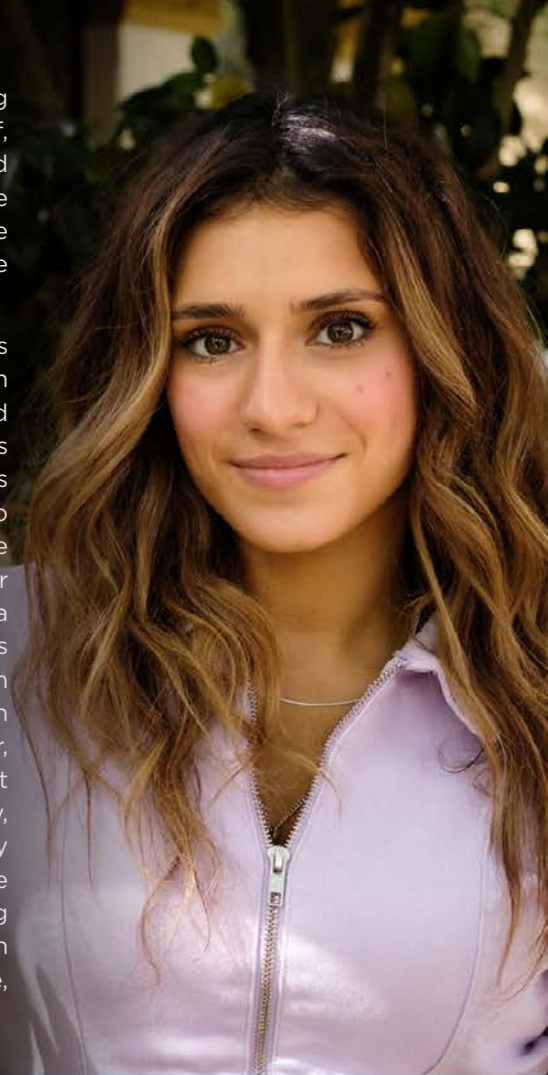
played by Isabella Graiche

Maya just wants to skip ahead to the good part – the part of life where you actually know what you want and what you’re doing. Right now, she’s stuck in Year 11, working at the local IGA for minimum wage, and fearing being smothered by her mother and spoken down to by her ten-minutes-older brother, both of whom are in denial about the fact that their father’s never coming back from overseas. And it certainly doesn’t help when her childhood best friend Tully – for whom she’s never really been sure if her love was more platonic or romantic – drops dead out of the blue in a freak car accident during a night out.

Maya has grown up wearing Tully’s hand-me-downs and playing soccer with him and the boys, always safe in his presence to be whoever she wanted to be that day – no frills, no pretences, no judgement. Now that he’s gone, she’s left wondering if she meant half as much to him as he always meant to her, and what she’s supposed to do and be now that she’s on her own. While some of

the others in their friendship group cling more tightly to each other in their grief, she finds herself pulling away, convinced that there was a side to Tully that none of them except her knew – maybe a side that even meant his death could have been deliberate.

As Maya finds her two best friends increasingly insufferable – Priya, with her endless rotation of new projects and obsessions, and Kate, with her obvious guardedness around conversations concerning her family and refusal to open up – she turns instead to Kris, the slightly older and more put-together manager at the IGA, who is in Year 12 at a different school. Kris’s comfortableness in her queer identity calls into question Maya’s understanding of her own sexuality, and as the two grow closer, she finds herself projecting a lot of what she had previously projected onto Tully, onto Kris. Maya’s journey will ultimately be one towards her realisation that she can’t rush the process of discovering who she is – and she can’t just dress in somebody else’s clothes to get there, either.



## MO HALEEM

played by Samuel El Rahi

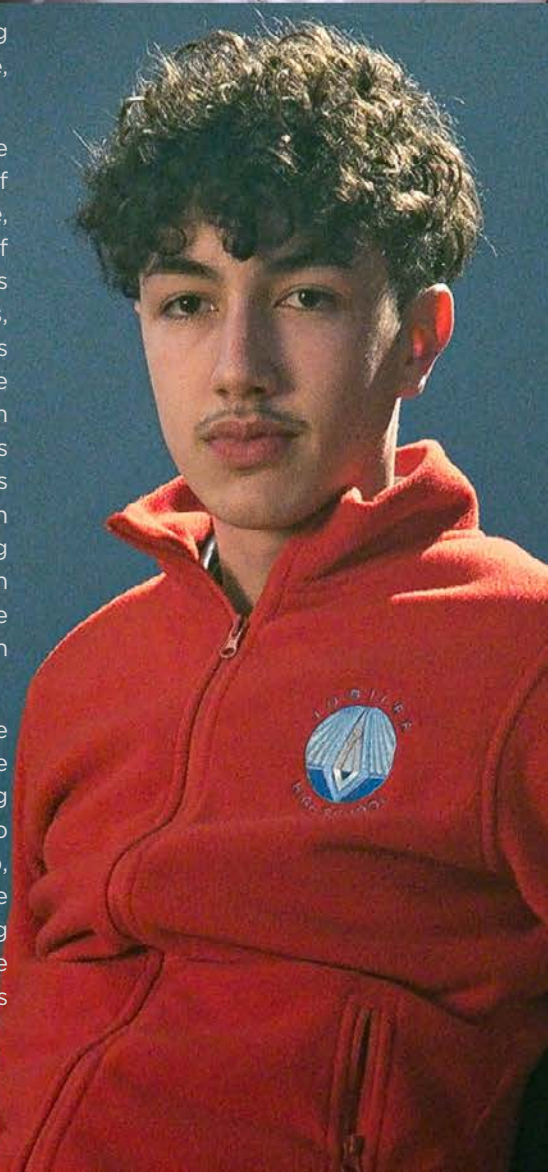
Mo Haleem is used to everyone assuming that he’s fine. The older twin by ten minutes and the self-appointed ‘man of the house’ in the absence of his father (who left several years ago to go back to Lebanon, and is yet to return), he’s good at looking out for other people and not so good at looking out for himself. Lovingly considered a bit of a cop by his group of friends, Mo isn’t really the type to join them on their dangerous urbex adventures. Mo doesn’t do anything without a safety net, and plus, he’s not great at climbing fences. The worst thing he’s ever done is show up to school with his laces undone, and even then, he’s the only one to discipline himself.

The suddenness of Tully’s death causes Mo to question a lot of things about himself and the way he sees the world. For someone who has always planned methodically, followed the rules, and avoided risk, he’s learnt the hard way that, no matter how hard you try, you can’t control everything, and sometimes shit happens – worse shit than you could possibly imagine. Unable to cry or process his emotions healthily, he finds himself charged with a lot of anger. He

wants someone to blame, and something to take the pain away – but of course, nothing does.

The void Tully leaves behind echoes the void of Mo’s father – and he finds himself once again having to step up to the plate, filling Tully’s shoes as the new captain of the school team. In his social life, he’s floundering; unsure how to relate to Gus, Tully’s other best friend, with whom he’s never had anything in common; or the girls in their group, like Priya, for whom he’s always held a candle, but who was always seen as Tully’s girl... until now. Plus there’s Ioane, the soccer coach, whom Mo finds himself leaning on, until the rug is pulled out from his feet once again with the revelation that Ioane might be taking a job at a different school. Can this kid not catch a break?

As he slowly finds his feet over the course of the season, Mo decides to make some big, brave changes to the way he’s living his life – go for the girl he wants, climb those buildings he never dared climb, and finally confront his father, in the flesh, by ditching school and climbing on a plane to go back to Lebanon, in the hopes he might find out who he really is away from everything.



**KATE KELLAWAY** played by  
Sophia Wright-Mendelsohn

The only child of a legendary-street-artist-cum-corporate-sellout and a cosmetic surgeon, Kate carries her fair share of weird rich person baggage. She lives with her mother in their bougie inner west mansion, funded off the back of her mother's successful mobile Botox clinic, although the two have never gotten on particularly well. Mainly because Kate's mother, who is always trying out some new bum lift or lip filler, can't understand Kate's indifference towards external appearance, and her seeming unwillingness to conform to conventional beauty standards. Not that Kate isn't beautiful – she just prefers to stick it to the man, dressing in a way that is deliberately countercultural and antiestablishment.

Out of her group of friends, Kate's always been considered one of the more worldly ones – artistic and deep, rebellious and intellectual, and self-assured in everything that she says and does. But deep down, she's nursing a dark secret – during a trip to the Blue Mountains to visit her father over the most recent summer, she was coerced into shooting a horse for the sake of her father's artwork. She returned to Sydney early, harrowed by trauma, and unable to speak about it with anyone other than Tully – who is the only person

she can think of who might understand the true weight of privilege and family expectations. So of course, when he's killed in a freak accident shortly after her return, she's left feeling more alone than ever.

As much as Kate has tried to distance herself from her father, art is in her blood, and she can't help but turn to it as her main form of self-expression in the aftermath of Tully's death, creating a beautiful hand-made memorial down on the school oval. It may not make sense to all who see it, but it makes sense to Kate, and those who knew and loved Tully, and that's all that matters.

When her father returns to Sydney, reigniting old family drama and unearthing buried memories, Kate starts experiencing panic attacks – and finds herself falling straight into the surprising (and surprisingly hot) arms of Gus, someone she's never really taken seriously until now. Living in public housing with a meth-head brother, Gus couldn't be farther from Kate's world – and yet, he seems to understand her in a way nobody else ever has. The two embark upon an unexpected romance – only to end in a devastating dumpster fire when they realise that some differences are just too great to overcome.



**PRIYA RAMACHANDRAN**  
played by Tharanya Tharan

Priya has so much love to give it's almost annoying. She's an obsessive personality type, always diving head-first into things, be them projects or people or theories, only to drop them just as quickly a week later. Her two best friends, Maya and Kate, are two of the rare steady constants in her life – the first sounding boards to all her wacky ideas and regular advice-givers for her many dilemmas. They may be long-suffering in their seemingly endless patience for her monologues, but deep down, we know (and she knows) that they love her. And, like, how could you not?

When Priya starts dating Tully Prichard, captain of the soccer team and coolest guy in school, she's pretty sure she's hit her peak, and she doesn't even care. But on the same night that the two of them have sex for the first time, he's killed in a freak car accident – leaving her forever plagued by questions of what might have been. Was he the one? Can someone be the one after just three weeks? Did they even really have sex? Is she now carrying

his child, and if not, why not? Is she allowed to date again, or is there a statute of limitations on the mourning period for girlfriends? Of course, every single one of these questions isn't just something that crosses her mind – they are externalised and deliberated over at length to anyone who will listen. Priya's never been very good at sitting alone with her thoughts – and if she's ever forced into that situation, she's at least going to do it to the soundtrack of a good true crime podcast or Stan series, so that she doesn't have to confront the silence of solitude.

The younger sister of a lowkey TikTok influencer, Priya's had to find different ways to claw some attention back for herself, and with two best friends she fears are far more interesting than her, some of her attempts get a little desperate. Her journey across the series will be to realise that sometimes, some things don't have to be shared, and that there can be peace found in the silence – which she will discover during a highly transformative and incredibly spiritual wanking session alone in the woods at the climax (pun intended) of the series.



## GUS WALLACE

played by Joshua Hewson

Gus has more life experience than most people twice or three times his age, and he's just getting started. Born to a heroin addict in the Northern Beaches, then raised by his violent father in a rural mud hut community, Gus is used to bouncing around from place to place, and, importantly, always bouncing back. Insults, injury and even trauma seem to roll off him, and he'll willingly cop it all with a wicked grin on his face – and then give it back to you twice as hard. Now living in a public housing block in Glebe with his beloved Nan and older brother Jed, who's just come out of jail for drug possession, Gus juggles his time between school, soccer, and urban exploration – a pastime he discovered with his best friend Tully. To Gus, the stakes aren't that high – when your entire life is one great big adrenaline rush, nothing is.

When Tully dies, Gus's first instinct is to do what he does best – run. He sleeps rough, hoping the whole thing might just turn out to be some bad dream – until he has an actual dream, in which he sees Tully, and realises he has to go back.

Gus is extraordinarily non-judgemental – he's met people from all walks of life and loved and hated them all indiscriminately. He'll be the first to take your side in a fight, even if you don't want him to – and even though he's got a bit of a rough tongue (and a slight tendency to make politically incorrect remarks), he's always well-intentioned. He's used to not being liked by everyone – but in the aftermath of Tully's death, people start to see that what they're missing in Tully (his ability to see the best in everyone), they might find in Gus. This is what enables him to eventually form an unlikely friendship with the ever judgemental and uptight Mo, and an even more unlikely romance with Kate, whose exorbitantly rich family make her as alien to him as he is to her. Their relationship is a whirlwind – maybe it's even Gus's first, despite his devilishly handsome looks and cocksure attitude – and what they feel is real love. But it might turn out that the class and experience divide between them proves just too difficult to cross. Nonetheless, rest assured that whether the pair of them survive as a couple or not, Gus will do what he always does – bounce right back.



## GEORGE PHILLIPS

played by Samuel Dawson

George is an entrepreneurial king. He loves a good hustle, whether it's dealing weed, Ritalin, vapes or school assignments, and is rarely seen without his backpack of goodies. He's a quick-witted truth-teller who's well versed in code-switching between the girls and the guys depending on circumstance. As Tully says, he's the glue – the bridge between the two halves of the same friendship group, able to get along easily with everyone and generally bring the vibes up. Plus, it certainly doesn't hurt that he's always plying the gang with party drugs and wine swiped from Kate's mum's liquor cabinet (did we mention he and Kate's mum are best friends?). George knows how to work a room and is often found having dinner at friends' houses rather than his own home, buttering up mums and dads in the hopes of free shit or favours – and successfully so.

Tully was the first person George ever came out to as gay, and his reaction couldn't have been more perfect. After politely rebuffing George's advances,

Tully introduced him to the new gay goalie on their soccer team, the unbelievably hot Year 12 international import known as Brendan – whom George has happily been dating ever since. Not that they don't have their ups and downs: George isn't great at confronting issues head-on, so whenever he and Brendan are having relationship problems, he has a tendency to pull away and go elsewhere for a casual hook-up or hearty bitch-sesh. He feels safe in the knowledge that Brendan will always love him no matter what – but he doesn't realise that there might be limits to that, which he keeps unwittingly pushing his boyfriend closer and closer towards.

When Tully dies, naturally George is devastated – but he's also plagued with guilt, convinced that it's his fault for giving Tully a pill that night that may have somehow sent him on a lethal bad trajectory (despite the findings in the police report that the death was definitely an accident). He grapples with this guilt and its lasting impact on his relationship with Brendan over the course of the series, as he and his friends come to terms with this horrific loss.



**OPHELIA KELLAWAY**  
played by Caroline Brazier

A successful Botox clinician, Ophelia (actually named Sharon, until she renamed herself) is steadfast in the belief that appearances are what matter most in life. It's probably why she fell so madly in love with the legendary street artist Tristan Kellaway, who, for the earlier parts of his career, had an obsession with painting her incessantly. It's all Ophelia's ever wanted to be a muse for someone, and to her, it doesn't matter that their relationship has always been an on-again, off-again rollercoaster of emotional abuse and manipulation: at least it's exciting. She lives for the drama and is in firm denial of the fact that her body is ageing - it's nothing a little Botox or lipo won't fix!

Given her penchant for cosmetics, you can only imagine Ophelia's disappointment when her only daughter, the product of her ongoing volatile relationship with Tristan, turned out to be so wholeheartedly different. Kate seems to take pleasure in rebelling against her mother's restrictive diets and fashion choices. Ophelia envies Kate's self-assuredness almost as much as she envies youth - which is ironic, given

that, in their relationship, it's often Kate who is the more mature one, forced to play mother whenever Ophelia finds herself in another post-Tristan downwards spiral. No matter how many times she's been hurt, Ophelia insists on wearing her heart on her sleeve - always putting her faith in the universe that whatever will be, will be for a reason - and at the very least, at least it will make a good story to tell (with her as the main character, of course).

When Ophelia isn't making up and breaking up with Kate's father or otherwise dating around, she's doing horoscope and Tarot readings - both skills she likes to whip out whenever Kate and her friends are around. As much as she resents her daughter, she loves Kate's friends - they make her feel young again. Her favourite is George, with whom she has a happy symbiotic arrangement - he brings her drugs, and she returns the favour with an unlimited supply of free (and quite fancy) wine, and occasionally a bit of Botox. Kate hates the friendship they have, but begrudgingly allows it - mostly because it keeps her mother off her back, if only for a little bit.



**TRISTAN KELLAWAY**  
played by Samuel Johnson

Tristan Kellaway is an acclaimed artist (known as Mooks1) who got famous off much of his earlier provocative street art around the city - before selling out to the corporate world for a fat cheque when a bank commissioned him to create a work for their lobby. And that pretty much sums up the kind of person Tristan is - edgy and artistic, keen to break the rules, until the money comes along and wins every time. The kind of guy who carries a skateboard and wears a backwards cap everywhere he goes, but you just know he spent five-hundred dollars on his shoes.

Tristan met Ophelia when he was just starting out as an artist, and she quickly became his muse. Their relationship has always been a volatile one, partly because Ophelia has a flair for the dramatic, and partly because Tristan has never really seen himself as the kind of guy to settle down. Despite giving her a baby, he takes off pretty quickly to live with the rest of the art world in the Blue Mountains, making self-indulgent work and drinking

far too much, only occasionally tending to his fatherly duties when and as required. When Kate comes to stay with him over the summer before Year 11, he decides to give her a baptism by fire into the world of his own mind - perhaps seeing a little bit of himself in her and wanting to push her to her limits to see if it's true. But it backfires when he makes her shoot a horse for a piece he's doing, and she has a breakdown, leaving the Mountains completely traumatised and ruining their relationship forever.

Tristan likes to pretend he speaks a number of different European languages and talk about things as if he knows more about them than others, whether he does or not. Some people fall for it and fawn over him, and those who don't, don't matter. He thinks he has a bigger, better life ahead of him, and that he's just getting started - but the truth is, no matter what happens or where he goes, he'll always come back to Ophelia and Kate, because although he doesn't know it, they are the only true loves of his life. For better or for worse.





## BRENDAN

played by Nicholas Cradock

Softly spoken and a gun in the goals on the football field, Brendan is a hot jock sport import in Year 12 with eyes for only one: George, his chaotic Year 11 on-again/off-again boyfriend. Despite his better interests – and the interests of his increasingly concerned migrant parents, who are witnessing firsthand the way that Brendan’s love-life is interfering with his HSC studies – Brendan keeps allowing George to spring back to him like an elastic band, too high on the highs of their relationship to be deterred by the many lows. And the highs, when they’re on them, are like nothing else – think swelling, romantic orchestras and mind-bending blowjobs, kissing in the rain and saying the ‘L’ word. Plus, he never plays football quite as well as when he’s just had a quickie in the locker rooms.

Hailing from a non-English speaking background, Brendan sometimes struggles to read the nuances between the lines of what his friends are saying, not quite getting the hang of this ‘sarcasm’ thing all the Aussies are so fond of. After George persuades him to host a small gatho at his enviable house while his rents are out of town, Brendan feels blindsided when what feels like the entire Jubilee High student body shows up – and when Tully dies in a tragic accident later that same night, he can’t help but feel personally responsible. Between his grief and guilt over losing his teammate, and the rollercoaster of his tumultuous love life, Brendan’s anxiety, while mostly suppressed, eventually reaches boiling point, forcing his parents to resort to drastic measures to keep his head above water.



## ADELA HALEEM

played by Sarah Armanious

Adela wants everything to just slow down – if she had it her way, she would have trapped her kids as toddlers and never even let them go to primary school. But life has other plans, and despite her best efforts, Mo and Aya are reaching their late teens, and showing no signs of slowing. If anything, they’re only picking up pace – and getting more and more resistant to her very hands-on parenting (or “smothering”, as they call it) as they do.

Adela is technically married, although her husband, Moses, left her and the kids to return to Lebanon several years ago, with the promise that it was only temporary. She’s managed to find a respectable job herself – working in aged care at a nursing home outside of the city – though she doesn’t love the hours, the lengthy train rides, or the occasionally perverted old men she has to tend to. Still, it’s worth it to keep a roof over her and her children’s heads and provide for them, even she is

painfully lonely and unfulfilled.

Adela’s one remaining joy in Sydney besides her children is her friendship with next-door neighbour Lucinda, whose son Tully grew up with the twins. When Tully dies, Adela finds herself plagued with guilt – mostly due to the fact that when she heard, her first thought was that thank God it wasn’t Mo. When Lucinda shuts her out, it’s as if she knows, and Adela finds herself feeling more isolated than ever – and therefore more desperate for Moses to return. It takes a rude wake-up call from her own children that prompts her to start considering that maybe Moses isn’t coming back, and it’s time for her to move onwards. Her journey over the course of the series is many fold – to rebuild her friendship with Lucinda, to come to terms with the fact that her marriage is over and file for divorce, and, most importantly, to accept the fact that time is moving forwards whether she likes it or not: and watching her children grow up might not be a plight, but a privilege.



## MAE PARK

played by Deborah An

Mae is an aspiring artist who paid too close attention to the old adage, those who can't do, teach. All it took was one negative comment in a university art class – as well as a couple of rejections here and there – for her to throw in the towel completely and study education instead. She thinks she might be better suited as a teacher anyway: perhaps she can live vicariously through the success of one of her students, like Kate Kellaway, for example, the daughter of the prolific artist Mooks<sup>1</sup>. The only problem is, despite her obvious skill and network of connections, Kate shows no signs of being ambitious about art as a career. For her, it's just a hobby, and she finds Mae's enthusiasm mildly irritating. To Mae, that's just a symptom of her obscene privilege – imagine having the choice of whether or not to pursue it! Some people aren't so lucky!

Mae's attitude to Kate is indicative of her broader approach to life – that

problems and obstacles are always outside of her control, that she has no choice in the matter, and that she is always the victim of circumstance. When she starts to observe patterns of chaos emerging in her life, she immediately tries to pinpoint the offender (because it obviously can't be her!) and comes to land on the well-meaning and unsuspecting Bowie – the new English teacher with whom she's engaged in a bit of a flirtationship (and a spot of casual sex here and there). It's only when Bowie confronts her with a harsh wake-up call after she tries to dump him – telling her that she's responsible for the problems in her own life, and that maybe the chaos is following her because she is the chaos – that she starts to re-evaluate things. Maybe some things are within her control – like her art career, which she decides to re-dedicate herself to, working on a piece that eventually finds its way into a small local gallery, as part of a group exhibition.



## EDDIE IOANE

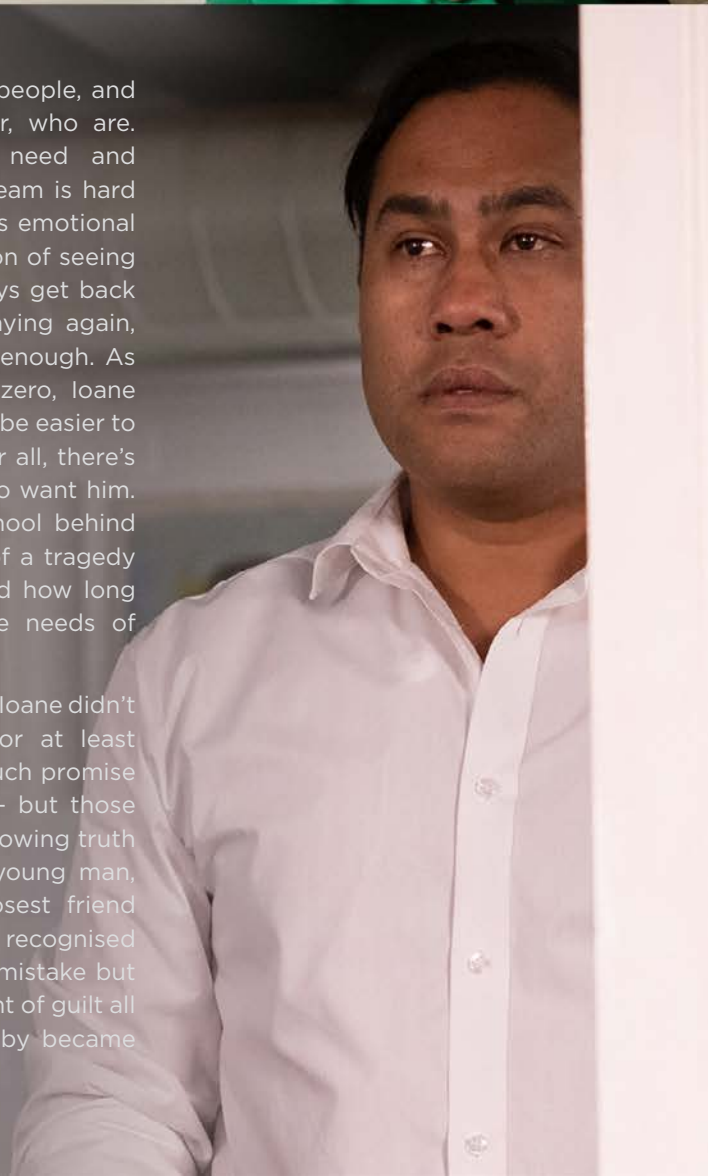
played by Ray Chong Nee

Wise beyond his years, sensitive and driven, Eddie Ioane is the coach and deputy principal at Jubilee High, a favourite among the students and staff alike for his patient, no-bullshit approach to everything that he does. He shines as a soccer coach, empowering his boys to be their best selves on and off the field. One of his specialties is conflict resolution: he can smell tension like a dog can smell a bone and knows exactly how to navigate it so that nobody leaves the conversation feeling worse off. But that all changes when Tully, his star player and captain of the soccer team, dies unexpectedly in a freak car accident.

In the absence of Tully, Ioane can see that his team is floundering, and he immediately kicks into gear as their emotional support, offering his services as more than just a coach: as a friend, as a mentor, as a counsellor. Compared to his colleagues, Ioane has a mature and honest approach to grief, and doesn't find himself trapped in states of repression or denial – but

he's working with a lot of people, and a lot of boys in particular, who are. Anticipating their every need and doing what's best of the team is hard work and drains a lot of his emotional energy. Even the satisfaction of seeing it working – seeing the boys get back on their feet and start playing again, start winning again – isn't enough. As he feels his battery near zero, Ioane starts wondering if it might be easier to start again elsewhere. After all, there's no shortage of schools who want him. But would leaving this school behind so soon in the aftermath of a tragedy be too big a betrayal? And how long must he keep putting the needs of others before his own?

Sometimes people ask why Ioane didn't become a rugby player, or at least coach, after showing so much promise at the sport in his youth – but those people don't know the harrowing truth about Ioane's past. As a young man, Ioane's teammate and closest friend committed suicide. Ioane recognised that it was just a dreadful mistake but carried an enormous amount of guilt all the same, and playing rugby became an unbearable trigger.



## JED WALLACE

played by MJ Kokolis

Fresh out of jail for drug possession, Jed has just moved back in with his Nan and younger brother Gus, ready to start afresh. Problem is, his old best mate Zippy keeps hanging around, keen to get him straight back on the scene. More soft-hearted than his tough exterior may have you believe, Jed sees the best in everyone, so it's easy enough for him to slip back into old patterns of behaviour when he falls in with the wrong crowd. Whether it's Zippy or the group of coke-snorting finance bros he gets acquainted with at an art show Gus drags him along to, Jed is highly impressionable, constantly teetering on the edge of reoffending. It's all his little brother can do just to keep him on the wagon.

Besides his family, Jed's two loves in life are woodwork – a skill he developed and mastered during his time on the inside – and his pellet-shitting chihuahua Jeff. That is, until he meets Ophelia – the mature and stunning Botox clinician who just so happens to be the mother of his little brother's new girlfriend. A one-night fling quickly escalates into a chaotic honeymoon period of mind-blowing sex and profound conversation, and the emotions Jed finds himself consumed by are so powerful they have the capacity to turn things from heaven to hell at the snap of a finger – bringing everything he's worked so hard towards crumbling down.

## THE YOUNG CAST TALK ABOUT THEIR ROLES

**Samson Alston** says his character, Tully, was very relatable: "He takes his friendships very seriously and he puts a lot of importance on having connections with others. At the start of the show Tully gets picked up by the Western Sydney Wanderers to play soccer and everything looks like it's on the up for him, but he does show signs of feeling pressured to be a certain person including his big role at the centre of the friendship group."

**Isabelle Graiche** plays Maya, in her first on screen role. Of Maya she says: "Maya doesn't really know who she is or who she wants to be. She doesn't know if she likes people romantically or if she just wants to be them. She copies people a lot. It's a common motif throughout the show. She takes people's clothes; she copies Kate's piercings. Maya just wants to be able to skip to the part where she knows who she is. She thinks her friends have themselves figured out - Priya's very 'extro' and girly, Kate's got her art and George is George, he's got it figured out from day dot ..."

Maya's brother Mo is played by **Samuel El Rahi**. Mo witnesses the event that rocks the world of our characters. "That experience shapes Mo's whole trajectory throughout the season. He finds it really hard to cope, which leads him down a spiral of anger and he begins to mistreat the people around him. But he gets to a point where he realises that he needs to find his own purpose and, to do that, he needs to reconnect with his dad...which is where we find him at the end of the show."

**Sophia Wright-Mendelsohn** describes Kate as: "Somewhat of a lost soul...she's trying to navigate how to separate herself from her family and her father's glamour and fame. She's trying to find her way into becoming her own person and realising that her art doesn't necessarily have to come from her father's art."

**Tharanya Tharan** plays Priya, the bright, confident, boho

of the group. "I feel like I'm a lot more reserved than Priya in terms of saying what's on my mind," Tharanya says. "I admire that a lot about her. I learned a lot from Priya. I love how she's the eternal optimist. And, while she can be a bit much at times, it always comes from a place of good intentions. She's so hectic, but also so lovable."

**Samuel Dawson** (also known as Ira Dawson) plays George who is described as the glue that binds the friendship group together. George cares for everyone but the events at the beginning of the series also see him question himself. "As the story goes on, we realise that George is much more sensitive than he lets on. He puts on this persona that makes him seem older and more experienced than the others but after the accident, his spiral is very real as he thinks it was his fault. At the start he's confident, he's strong. He can talk to his friends, he can talk to anyone really, and he has what he presents as a loving relationship. But it's not healthy and we come to see that his personality is one that he has created and he feels like everything's just going to shatter. That's really hard at 17."

**Joshua Hewson** plays Gus, who is new to the school and introduced to the group by Tully. "Gus is trying to make friends and he wants to find a way for Mo and him to have a friendship. They never clicked even though they were both close to Tully. And he's never liked a girl before but there are definitely sparks with Kate," Josh says.

Brendan, George's boyfriend, is played by **Nicholas Cradock**. "George makes Brendan feel like he matters. So when George breaks up with them, the world seems like it's coming to an end. But throughout the series, he finds this sense of belonging with George, and the deep connection and emotional relationship that he wants with George."



## ABOUT THE CAST

### CHRISTIAN BYERS as Bowie Chalmers-Davis

Christian Byers first attracted international attention starring as Spark in *December Boys* alongside Daniel Radcliffe.

At 12, he was nominated for the AFI Young Actor Award for his performance as Ashmol in *Opal Dream*. Christian's other film credits include Tim in *The Tree*, Jacob in *Hey Hey it's Esther Blueberger* and Brislee in Miro's Billbrough's *Being Venice*. His short film credits include Sofya Gollan's *Gimpsey*, *Kettle*, *Purple Flowers*, *Shiloh*, *Safety Driver*, *Snare* and *Laura*, which he also co-wrote.

Christian's television credits include Reece in *Ready for This* and Woody in *Puberty Blues: Series 2*. He has also featured as Elmo in *Panic at Rock Island*, James Cunneen in *Blood Brothers*, and as Jase Falconer in *Underbelly: Badness*. Christian starred as Australian music legend Stevie Wright in the ABC miniseries *Friday on my Mind*. He also made appearances in ABC's *Newton's Law*, *Riot* and *True Story with Hamish and Andy*.

Christian can most recently be seen in season 1 and 2 of STAN original, *Bump*. He also recently wrapped on his first feature; documentary-fiction hybrid *Death of an Undertaker*, set in a real funeral home in Sydney's Inner West, which he wrote, directed and starred in.

### MATT NABLE as Alan

Matt Nable is an actor, director and writer. He is the author of four critically acclaimed novels, three screenplays, and a four-time AACTA (Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts) nominated actor.

In 2007, Nable wrote and played the lead in Paramount Pictures' first Australian acquisition - the critically acclaimed *The Final Winter*. Following that success, he headed to the U.S. where he played the lead role in the television pilot *SIS*. Nable went on to star in such feature films as *The Killer Elite* with Jason Statham, Clive Owen and Robert De Niro; *33 Postcards* with Guy Pearce; *K-11* and *The Turning*, a chronicle of short films based on stories by Australian writer Tim Winton, with cast Hugo Weaving, Cate Blanchett and Rose Byrne. 2013 saw the release of *Riddick* with Matt in a lead role alongside Vin Diesel and in 2014 the revenge and redemption drama *Fell* and *Around the Block* with Christina Ricci. Also in 2014, he worked alongside Ewan McGregor in *Son of a Gun*. 2016 saw Matt in the Mel Gibson directed feature *Hacksaw Ridge* and *Incarnate* alongside Aaron Eckhart and in 2017 in *Jasper Jones* alongside Hugo Weaving and Toni Collette. 2018 saw the Australian release of *1%* in which he stars and wrote. Last year saw the release of the Robert Conolly directed drama *The Dry* to phenomenal success in the box office. His recent films include the Russell Crowe directed feature *Poker Face* and the Stan Original Film *Transfusion* which he wrote, directed and starred in.

### DANIELLE CORMACK as Lucinda

Danielle Cormack is an award-winning actress both in Australia and New Zealand. She has had an extensive career across film, theatre and television.

After working mostly in film and theatre in New Zealand, she came to prominence in Australia with her powerhouse performance in the leading role of 'Kate Leigh', in the acclaimed TV series *Underbelly: Razor*, and went on to play the iconic role of Bea Smith in prison drama *Wentworth* for which she has received numerous prestigious awards.

Other notable projects include *Rake*, *Deep Water*, *Secret City* and *Fresh Eggs* for which she received the Most Outstanding Lead Actress award at the NZ film and TV Awards. Although Danielle has carved a successful career as an actress, she is also one half of production company Four One One Productions and is about to co-direct and produce her first feature, *Who's Afraid* in 2023. Danielle is an active ambassador for several organisations, most of which centre around human rights and the protection and support of vulnerable youth.

She can currently be seen in SBS series *Life on the Outside*, a series that supports ex-incarcerated people reintegrating back into the community.

### SAMSON ALSTON as Tully

Samson Alston is an emerging actor who has had some incredible career highlights in the last three years. Samson has trained in New York and has become a permanent student of renowned acting coach Sheila Gray who has mentored him. Other training influences include Pippa Grandison and Steve le Marquand.

Samson has featured in national ad campaigns for Vodaphone, Hungry Jacks, Arnott's Shapes and Curtin Uni. Other film works include Hayden in Seven Network's *RFDS (Royal Flying Doctor Service)* and *Teenage Thor* for the major Marvel movie *Thor Love and Thunder*.

On stage Samson garnered enormous acclaim in the leading role of Winston in *The Credeaux Canvas* along with playing Adam in *The Shape of Things*. For his role in *The Shape of Things*, Samson was again nominated for best actor (Broadwayworld Awards Professional). Recently Samson had great success during dual seasons of the two hander *Fag/Stag* and garnered massive industry attention for his involvement in the one-night charity event for the Actors Benevolent Fund as 'Hughie' in the Australian classic *The One Day of the Year*.

### ISABELLA GRAICHE as Maya

Isabella Graiche plays the complex and multi-dimensional role of 'Maya' in *Year Of*. This marks her debut on screen performance. Isabella finished her school studies not long ago and while at school was a very active member of the drama community, receiving recognition and praise for her final year performance.

### **SAMUEL EL RAHI as Mo Haleem**

Samuel is of Australian Lebanese heritage. He can be seen in the short feature entitled *Flow*, starring opposite Osamah Sami *Ali's Wedding*.

He has trained with the Australian Theatre for Young People and Australian Film Television and Radio School. He plays proficient drums and percussion and is a freelance rap artist releasing his first single on Spotify and YouTube under the title name *Real Rahi*.

### **SOPHIA WRIGHT-MENDELSON as Kate**

Sophia's first on screen appearance was in the AACTA award winning ABC youth-focused series *Deadlock*, depicting the complex issues faced by a group of teenagers after a fatal car crash.

Sophia has recently completed shooting on director David Michôd's feature film *Wizards*, starring U.S. comedian Pete Davidson.

### **THARANYA THARAN as Priya**

Tharanya Tharan is an Australian actor of Eelam Tamil descent. She has trained in performing arts across Australia, New York and Los Angeles with many notable institutions such as NIDA and Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute.

She began her professional acting career at the age of 14 as a series regular on *Mustangs FC* (ABC), playing the role of Zee. She has since appeared in several notable TV shows including *Why Are You Like This* (ABC/Netflix) and *More Than This* (Paramount+). Tharanya will soon be seen as Sunita in the epic Paramount/Apple TV miniseries *Shantaram*.

### **JOSHUA HEWSON as Gus**

Joshua Hewson is an exciting emerging talent. In 2022, Joshua worked on a major Hollywood production before going on to be cast as series regular Gus in Stan's fantastic new series *Year Of*.

Joshua loves comedy and looks up to the careers of Adam Sandler and Jim Carrey, with a dream to one day work alongside them.

### **SAMUEL DAWSON as George**

New Zealand born Māori actor and dancer Samuel Dawson has been treading the boards of stage and screen since they were 5 years old. Samuel's early passion was dance, they've won several scholarships with one of Australia's leading dance companies, Brent Street performing Arts Academy where Samuel is enrolled for a 2-year Advanced Diploma of Professional Dance (Elite Performance) in 2023 and 2024.

In 2020 Samuel was cast in the highly acclaimed drama series *Shortland Street* playing the role of Sammy Hoskins for New Zealand's leading production company South Pacific Pictures. The Pandemic didn't hold Samuel back and in 2021 when New Zealand was open and clear they

were part of a group of dancers which performed to over 50,000 concert goers for the well-known New Zealand band Six 60.

### **CAROLINE BRAZIER as Ophelia**

Caroline is one of Australia's most accomplished actors working extensively across film, television and theatre since graduating from the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA). Caroline is most recognisable for her roles portraying Wendy Greene, the long-suffering ex-wife to Richard Roxburgh's Cleaver on ABC's *Rake*, to the quirky Chrissy Merchant on the Seven Network's *Packed to the Rafters*.

Caroline's TV roles extend across a wide range of high profiled television series including *Offspring*, *Water Rats*, *City Homicide*, *Legend of the Seeker*, *Parallax*, *Wild Boys*, *Terra Nova*, *Miss Fishers Murder Mysteries*, *Dripping in Chocolate*, *Tidelands*, *Home & Away*, *Reef Break*, *Diary of an Uber Driver*, *Wakefield* and most recently ABC's *Tropo*, ABC's *Mystery Road* and *Joe vs Carole* for NBC's streaming service Peacock.

Caroline is an award-winning theatre actress and has worked extensively across the country at Sydney Theatre Company, Melbourne Theatre Company, Belvoir St, La Mama, Bell Shakespeare, Black Swan, and Queensland Theatre Company to name a few. Caroline's recent theatre work includes Sydney Theatre Company's hit production *Death of an Anarchist*, *Dinner* for the STC, and most recently Sydney Theatre Company's critically acclaimed production, *Mary Stuart* as Mary Stuart, in the role of Mary which she reprised for Perth Festival in 2022 opposite Kate Walsh.

### **SAMUEL JOHNSON as Tristan**

Samuel Johnson OAM has been working in the entertainment industry for over 20 years as an actor, radio presenter, voiceover artist and philanthropist. Until recently, he was best known for his role in the cult hit *The Secret Life of Us*, for which he won the AFI Award for Best Actor in a Leading Role in a Television Drama Series. More recently he has become known for his portrayal of Ian Meldrum in Seven's ratings smash *Molly* for which he won the 2017 Gold Logie for Most Popular Personality on Television, Silver Logie Award for Best Actor and the 2016 AACTA Award for Best Lead Actor. In 2019 Samuel competed and won the 16th season of *Dancing with the Stars* and raised \$50,000 in prize money for his charity Love Your Sister.

Other television credits include *The Secret River*, *Paper Giants 2 Magazine Wars*, *Small Time Gangsters*, *Underbelly II*, *Rush*, the HBO mini-series *The Pacific*, *Wilfred* and *After the Deluge* which earned him his second AFI nomination, this time for Best Actor in a Supporting Role. Samuel has also appeared in several popular Australian films, including the lead role of Dave in *Crackerjack*. More recently, Samuel starred in the eight-part Stan Original series *Eden*.

### **NICHOLAS CRADOCK as Brendan**

Nicholas has achieved a lot for such a young performer with experience in television, film and theatre. His screen credits include a core cast role in *Hardball* (ABC/Northern Pictures), a lead role in the short film *Dreamweaver* (The Conti Bros), as well as series regular roles on *Wiggle, Wiggle, Wiggle* (TV Series) for The Wiggles and *Nay Nay's Bubble Pop* for ABC Kids Television.

An experienced stage actor, Nicholas has toured nationally from 2014-16 with Cameron Mackintosh's production of *Les Misérables*, where he played Gavroche inclusive of all opening and closing performances.

Nicholas' additional theatre credits include 'Bobbi Christina' in *The Bodybag* for Trevor Ashley Productions in 2017 and 2018, 'John Darling' in *The Adventures of Peter Pan and Tinker Bell* for Bonnie Lythgoe Productions in both the Sydney and Melbourne seasons. Prior to this he performed as 'Young Bobby/Dodd Darin' in Gordon Frost's World Premier of *Dream Lover*, as well as playing 'Michael Banks' in Willoughby Theatre Company's production of *Mary Poppins*.

### **SARAH ARMANIOUS as Adela**

With numerous credits to her name, Sarah Armanious is an actress and producer.

Sarah's recent credits include a role in *Nine Perfect Strangers* as well as leading roles in Foxtel's TV series *Fighting Season*, Nine Network's *Bite Club*, and the ABC's *Cleverman*.

Other television credits include a series regular in the long running *Headland, Wonderland, Home & Away* and *Me and My Monsters*. Sarah also starred in Kacie Anning's comedy web series, *Fragments of Fridays*.

Sarah has also appeared in the horror feature *The Marshes* written and directed by Roger Scott. With short film credits including *Pure Vida, All Blacks Don't Cry, Give Me A Moment* and *The Last Match*.

In 2014, Sarah produced and starred in the acclaimed short film *The Speaker*.

### **DEBORAH AN as Mae**

Deborah An is a Korean-Australian actor, best known for her starring role as 'Kaylee' in the feature film *The Legend of the Five* (Filmink).

In 2020 she worked with director Destin Daniel Cretton on the Marvel blockbuster action/fantasy feature *Shang-Chi: The Legend of the Ten Rings*. Deborah's TV credits include *Night Bloomers* (SBS), *Harrow* (ABC) and *Home and Away* (Seven Network).

Deborah is also an accomplished stage actor, she has performed with Sport for Jove in their acclaimed productions of *Macbeth, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Tempest* and *The Crucible*. Deborah was also a member of *The Players* for the Bell Shakespeare Company during 2018. She was part of the National Play Festival's first reading of *White Pearl* at Darlinghurst Theatre. She then went on a nationwide tour of this award-winning satire, playing the principal role 'Soo-Jin Park', co-produced by Sydney Theatre Company and the National Theatre of Parramatta.

### **RAY CHONG NEE as Eddie**

Ray's theatre credits include *How to Rule the World* (development Sydney Theatre Company); *Hamlet, Antony and Cleopatra, The Dream, Othello, Actors at Work: The Players* (Bell Shakespeare); *I Call My Brothers* (Melbourne Theatre Company); *Emerald City* and *Noises Off* (Queensland Theatre and MTC); *The Tempest* (Sport For Jove); *Hydra* (Queensland Theatre and STCSA); *The Motion of Light in Water* (Elbow Room/La Boite/HotHouse/Theatre Works) *Bare Witness* (Performing Lines); *Angels in America* (Theatre Ink/Parramatta Riverside), and *Andy X* (N.I.D.A).

Film credits include *Swimming for Gold; There's a Bluebird in My Heart; Amalia Lucia Gomez is Gluten Intolerant; The Bench; Savage Garden; and The Pool*. Television credits include *Home and Away, Pulse, Tomorrow When the War Began, Glitch, Party Tricks, Offspring, Rescue Special Ops*, and *Dance Academy*. Green Room nominated actor for Outstanding Performance in a Featured Role and Best Independent Male Performer, and recipient of Best Performance (Melbourne Fringe), Best Ensemble (Green Room) awards.

Proud member of Equity since 2004.

### **MJ KOKOLIS as Jed**

Over the past three years MJ has been putting together an impressive resume of work in both Australian and US productions. He booked a recurring role in the Netflix series *Sabrina* and a guest role in FX's *Mr Inbetween*.

He starred opposite *Stranger Things* Finn Wolfhard in the Canadian feature film *Rules for Werewolves*. He had a guest role in the Canadian television series *Radio Nowhere*, a lead role in episode 204 of CBS' *The Twilight Zone*, and the lead role of Shad in Golden Globe nominated Ken Mok's Amazon feature film *The Right One*.

Next up, MJ will star as Jimmy in the upcoming teen comedy feature film, *Finally Me*.



## ABOUT THE KEY CREATIVES

### DAN EDWARDS – Series Creator/Producer

Dan Edwards is a television executive with two decades of industry experience. In 2016 Dan joined forces with his father John Edwards and Roadshow Films to form Roadshow Rough Diamond.

Their productions include last year's *Les Norton* for the ABC, *Australian Gangster* for the Seven Network and *Romper Stomper*, which broke viewing records for Australian SVOD service Stan, winning two Logie awards. *Les Norton*, *Australian Gangster* and *Romper Stomper* were co-created and produced by Dan.

Prior to launching Roadshow Rough Diamond, Dan was Vice President (ANZ/Japan) at ITV Studios Global Entertainment. Also, in the Asian market, Dan spearheaded the 2009 set up of Endemol Worldwide Distribution's office in Hong Kong following the merger with Southern Star where Dan was a Sales Director for seven years across Canada, Middle East, Africa, Greece and Asia. He has created and developed fifteen projects in concert with Australian and international broadcasters.

### JOHN EDWARDS AM – Producer

John Edwards has produced more than 600 hours of television drama. His productions have won 31 Logie Awards, 40 AFI and AACTA Awards, 8 ASTRA Awards, and a number of international awards, as well as being the first Australian television producer nominated for the Golden Globe Awards.

His television credits include *Bump S1 and S2*, *Romper Stomper*, *Australian Gangster*, *The Beautiful Lie*, *Offspring*, *Gallipoli*, *Love My Way*, *The Secret Life of Us*, *Puberty Blues*, *Tangle*, *Howzat! Kerry Packer's War*, *Rush*, *Paper Giants: The Birth of Cleo*, *Spirited*, *Beaconsfield*, *Marking Time*, *The Surgeon*, *On the Beach*, *Police Rescue* and *Cyclone Tracy*.

In 2011, he was conferred an Honorary Masters degree by the Australian Film Television and Radio School. In 2016, he with Dan Edwards and Roadshow Films formed the production entity Roadshow Rough Diamond.

John was appointed as a member of the Order of Australia in 2017. He was recognised for his vast contribution to the Australian TV Industry through developing and telling great Australian stories.

### Jessica Tuckwell – Series Creator/Script Producer/Writer (Ep 1, 2, 4 & 10), Director (Ep 9 & 10)

Jessica wrote episodes and was script producer for seasons 1 and 2 of record-breaking Stan series *Bump*; she also directed on season 2 and wrote episodes of season 3. Jess was on the writing team for ABC series *Les Norton* and was Development Executive for John Edwards and Dan Edwards at Roadshow Rough Diamond, running a broad slate of drama projects. She has worked in development and production across various drama, entertainment, documentary and feature projects.

Originally training as a theatre director and dramaturg, Jess worked for mainstage, independent and youth companies across Australia and the UK and was the inaugural Director in Residence at Bell Shakespeare. Her directing work specialised in Australian plays, adaptations and the development of new plays including the award-winning *Words They Make with Their Mouths*. Her first full length play *Tiny Remarkable Bramble* is being adapted into a film. Her short stories have featured on Giant Dwarf's Story Club podcast and ABC's *Tall Tales* and *True* and her first, *No Strategy* was published in the Harper Collins anthology *Welcome to Story Club*.

Jess studied screenwriting at AFTRS, directing at NIDA and has a Philosophy degree and a Masters in Creative Writing from the University of Sydney.





### **FADIA ABBOUND - Director (Ep 1, 2 & 4)**

Fadia Abboud is a filmmaker based out of Sydney, Australia. In 2021, Fadia directed a segment of anthology film *Here Out West*, which opened the Sydney Film Festival. She directed the second episode of *Australian Gangster* for Roadshow Rough Diamond and the Seven Network, released in 2021. She then went on to direct *Hardball* for ABC Me which won the 2020 Prix Jeunesse International award for Outstanding Children's Television and the 2020 International Emmy Award for Best 'Kids: Live-Action' series. She teamed up again with Roadshow Rough Diamond on ABC drama starring Rebel Wilson, *Les Norton* which was nominated at SPA for Mini-Series Production of the Year.

Fadia has directed two short films for LGBTQI initiatives with ABC and SBS: *Concern for Welfare* (SBS Love Bites 2018), a 12-minute narrative fiction funded by Create NSW; and *Club Arak* (ABC Queer for Short 2018), a seven-minute documentary based on a queer Arab dance party (of the same name) of which she is a founder. Her web-series dramedy, *I Luv U But...* was nominated for Most Engaging YouTube Channel in Beirut. Fadia has just finished work on *After the Verdict*, for the Nine Network.

Fadia Abboud was the co-director of the Arab Film Festival Australia between 2007 and 2017.

### **EDDIE DIAMANDI - Director (Ep 3, & 8, Co-Director Ep 5)/Writer (Ep 5)**

Eddie is a writer, director and producer based between Melbourne and Sydney, Australia.

In 2018 Eddie made the Screen Australia funded short film, *The Wake*, while several of his screenplays were shortlisted by Sundance for their annual Screenwriters Lab. Recently, Eddie was selected by Film Victoria to complete a two-month directing attachment on the AMC and Point Grey Pictures US TV series *Preacher* (dir. Iain B. Macdonald, 2019).

Eddie has spent the past few years developing multiple long form projects independently and with support from Screen Australia. Both his television project, *Pierrot*, and feature project, *Svetlana*, have been shortlisted by Sundance in their Screenwriters Lab; *Pierrot* for two consecutive years (2017 & 2018) and *Svetlana* for three (2018, 2019, 2020) -

while the latter has also received Screen Australia funding.

### **TAYLOR FERGUSON - Director (Eps 6, 7 & Co-Director Ep 5)**

Taylor Ferguson is a writer, director and actor. Taylor's debut short film as a writer and director *Tough* premiered at Melbourne International Film Festival 2021 and went on to screen at Sydney Film Festival 2021, San Francisco International Film Festival 2022 and Flickerfest International Film Festival 2022. Taylor won the Rouben Mamoulian award for Best Director at Sydney Film Festival as well as Best Director at Flickerfest International Film Festival and most recently silver at Cannes Lion Young Director Award.

Taylor is also a commercial director and has directed two music videos: *State of Flight* and *3 Moons* for renowned Australian band: Boy & Bear. Taylor is currently writing her first feature film *Sebastian* which she will also direct with producer Nicole O'Donohue and development funding from Screen Australia. *Year Of* marks her television directing debut.

### **KELSEY MUNRO - Writer - (Ep 2 & 9)**

Kelsey Munro is a writer, researcher and journalist from Sydney, and the co-creator and writer of the original Stan comedy-drama *Bump*.

*Bump* received critical acclaim and was the most-watched debut on Stan at its release in January 2021. It has sold to international markets including the BBC (UK), the CW (US) and HBO Latin America, and was renewed for three seasons. It was nominated for three Logie Awards including Outstanding Drama Series at the 2022 Logies. Kelsey was shortlisted in the NSW Premier's Literary Awards 2022 for scriptwriting, for her season 1 *Bump* finale 'Matrescence'. Kelsey wrote the pilot and several episodes across the series and produced the second and third season.

She is currently working on several projects including the true-crime police investigative drama *Ironside*, also for Stan. As a journalist she was a news reporter covering state politics and education policy for the Sydney Morning Herald, where she was also a senior editor; and worked as a features writer for The Guardian and Rolling Stone, among others.







### ENOCH MAILANGI – Writer (Ep 3, 6 & 8)

Enoch Mailangi is a screenwriter and recent graduate of an MFA at the National Institute of Dramatic Arts.

Enoch is a 2019-2021 Sydney Theatre Company Emerging Playwright, and a 2020 Urban Theatre Project Resident Artist.

They created and wrote a five-part comedy series for ABC iView, *All My Friends are Racist*, which is being funded by Screen Australia and has just wrapped their debut short film with Noble Savage Pictures. They are currently developing *Shade* a new dramedy with series creator Wendy Mocke.

Enoch hopes to work in television development of new works which platform voices from emerging queer, black and pasifika writers.

### ZOË NORTON LODGE – Writer (Ep 5)

Zoë Norton Lodge is a writer and television presenter who also works as an actress, director and MC. Her writing has been published in various anthologies including *Best Australian Stories*. Her own titles include an autobiographical book of short stories *Almost Sincerely* (Giramondo 2015); kids series *Elizabella* (Walker Books, 2020) and a new anthology *Story Club* (Harper Collins, 2018).

She has worked as a writer and performer with *The Chaser* on various shows including *The Hamster Wheel*, *The Chaser's Election Desk* and *The Chaser's Media Circus*. Zoe has appeared as herself on various other shows including *Insiders* (ABC), *The Book Club* (ABC) and *SCREEN* (Foxtel Arts), and as an actress on series including *The Moodys* (ABC) and *The Letdown* (ABC, Netflix).

As a screenwriter, Zoë has written for *The Letdown* (ABC, Netflix) and co-created the web series *Ding Dong I'm Gay*. Zoë is co-creator of *Story Club*, a live storytelling night that has been running in Sydney for more than a decade.

*Story Club* was also adapted into a television series for the ABC (2014), as well as a podcast. Zoë is perhaps best known as a presenter on ABC's long running consumer affairs comedy program *The Checkout*.

Zoë has a number of projects in development.

### EMILY HAVEA – Writer (Ep 6)

Emily is a Sydney based artist who works as an actor, singer, dancer and writer. A 2014 NIDA acting grad, Emily has worked across theatre, music, film and TV.

Theatre credits include *Julius Caesar*, Bell Shakespeare; *Grounded*, National Theatre of Parramatta; *Wherever She Wanders*, Griffin Theatre; *Fun Home*, Sydney Theatre Co/ Melbourne Theatre Co and *Brown Skin Girls* (as a co-writer and performer) with BlackBirds at Griffin's BATCH festival 2018 which was then restaged for the Old Fitz 2019 season. Emily was awarded a writers grant from Griffin Theatre in 2018 and was on their programming panel for their 2020 BATCH festival.

Her TV (acting) credits include season 6, 7 and 8 *Wentworth* (Mon Alston) Fremantle Media/Showcase, *The Secrets She Keeps* (Detective Soussa) Channel 10 and *Harrow* (Turua Parata) ABC/Hoodlum Ent. Film credits include *A Perfect Pairing* with Netflix /Hoodlum and *Upgrade* (Nurse Henderson) with Goalpost Pictures.

### ELEANOR KIRK – Writer (Ep 7)

Eleanor Kirk joined the Rough Diamond development team in early 2022. Previously, she script-coordinated for ABC series *Born to Spy* and *Barons*, before which she worked as a freelance writer, note-taker and reader for a number of local production companies.

She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Screenwriting) from the Victorian College of Arts in Melbourne and has received an assortment of awards for her writing, both for the page and screen.





### **AYEESHA ASH - Writer (Ep 7)**

Ayeesha Ash was born in St. George's, Grenada to parents of Grenadian and Māori heritage.

Since graduating WAAPA Ayeesha has appeared in theatrical works in Queensland, Sydney and Melbourne including *Puss in Boots* (City Recital Hall), *The Players* (Bell Shakespeare), *Daisy Moon was Born this Way* (Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre), *The Seagull* (Now Look Here Theatre Co.), *Rent* (Highwayrun Productions and Hayes Theatre Co.), *Drift* (Two Peas) and *Ollie and the Minotaur* (Tatler Underground Theatre). She has performed her poetry at popular Sydney|Cadi events including The Oyster Club and Between Two Worlds (Downunder Space).

With Black Birds Ayeesha has devised, directed and performed in *Th(i)rd C(u)lture* (Community Reading Room), *Black Girl Magic* (Pan Afrikan Poets Cafe), *Brown Skin Girl* (Batch Festival and Festival Fatale), *Exhale* (Next Wave Festival), *Black Birds* (The Joan), *Pehe* (Bondi Feast and Transoceanic Visual Exchange) and *Counterface* (Footscray Community Arts Centre, aMBUSH and Transoceanic Visual Exchange) and performed in Tabu: Fijian Kali and Hair Rituals (Māngere Arts Centre - Ngā Tohu o Uenuku).

She has also co-curated two highly successful Black Birds events: Abantu x Black Birds and Lunar Sequence x Black Birds. In 2017 Ayeesha was a part of La Boite's Assistant Creatives program and worked as assistant director on *The Village*. She also appeared in her first Australian feature film, *We're Not Here to F\*\*\* Spiders*. Never one to sit still, Ayeesha is also studying a Bachelor of Communications (Social and Political Studies) at UTS.

### **GARRY PHILLIPS - Director of Photography (Ep 1-7)**

Garry Phillips studied at Queensland University, graduating first as a surveyor and then with an Arts degree in Communication.

He joined Filmworks, a production house in Brisbane, working various crew and camera roles before moving to Sydney to pursue opportunities as a freelance camera assistant.

In 1993 he became a freelance cinematographer and has since been director of photography on feature films including *Better Than Sex* (2000), *The Monkey's Mask* (2000), *Gettin' Square* (2003), *Candy* (2006), *Catch A Fire* (2006), *Burning Man* (2011), *The Railway Man* (2013).

Television credits include *Total Control* (2021), *Australian Gangster* (2021), *A Discovery of Witches* (2021), *Bump* (2021), *The End* (2020), *Jack Irish* (2018), *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (2018), *Squinters* (2018), *The Missing* (2016), *Secret City* (2016), *Australia: The Story of Us* (2015), *House of Hancock* (2015) and *Old School* (2014).

In 2015 Garry was awarded the Australian Cinematographers Society 'Cinematographer of the Year' - The Mill Award as well as the Golden Tripod - Features Award for *The Railway Man*. He won the AACTA for Best Cinematography in Television for *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (2018) and was nominated for the same award for *Bump* (2021), *The Railway Man* (2015) and *Burning Man* (2011).





## ALEX CARDY – DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY (EP 8-10)

Alex Cardy is an award-winning Australian director of photography who works across films, television, documentaries, moving-image installations and expanded online projects.

She has a passion for hybrid filmmaking and working between narrative and documentary projects. She was recently awarded the gold cinematography award for documentary at both the 2021 and 2020 Australian Cinematography Society Awards for Victoria and Tasmania as well as the bronze award for art, innovation and specialised cinematography in 2021.

Her short films have been selected at top-tier festivals including Toronto International Film Festival, Edinburgh International Film Festival and Melbourne International Film Festival and her work has premiered on Nowness and appeared at Outfest and RISING Festival.

Alex has moved to long-form and recently completed production on *The Defenders* (distributed on Amazon Prime 2023) and *Year Of* (Episodes 8, 9 & 10) (distributed on Stan 2023). She is attached on multiple long-form projects set to shoot in 2022/23 including award-winning filmmaker Rhys Graham's (*Galore*, *The Turning*) new feature film *Lover* and *Paradise Youth* produced by Lizzie Cater and directed by Jessica Barclay-Lawton developed through TIFF and Screen Australia.

Alex has worked on content and commercials for brands such as Nike, Google, Champion, Bonds, Jeanswest, Lee and Land Rover.

## NATALIE BEAK – PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Natalie Beak is a production designer and art director who has worked throughout Australia and the UK. Since completing her studies at the Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS) in 2006, Natalie has worked extensively in film, television, commercial and event production.

Natalie's credits include the art direction of large-scale reality television productions *The Voice* and *Australia's Next Top Model*, as well as the Design of Independent Film projects such as *Between Two Lines*, *Closed Doors* and the Berlinale Crystal Bear Award Winning Film *Franswa Sharl*. Natalie was the production designer on all four Series of ABC's Indigenous Comedy Sketch Show *Black Comedy*, and most recently designed the feature film *We Are Still Here*, an exciting collaboration between First Nations directors in Australia and New Zealand set to open Sydney Film Festival 2022.

Natalie has recently returned to AFTRS as the Senior Lecturer in Production Design and is very proud to be able to mentor emerging designers and continue to work collaboratively in her field. Natalie is particularly excited about the creative opportunities offered by virtual production technologies and is integrating these powerful new tools into her design practise.





## PELE HEHEA - COSTUME DESIGNER

Pele Hehea is a designer for film and television. Moving easily between costume design and production design, Pele enjoys collaborating with other passionate creatives to build amazing new worlds and rich, intriguing characters. Most recently, Pele designed the costumes for a Netflix romantic comedy feature set in tropical North Queensland.

Pele has also had the pleasure of working with Indigenous creatives on a number of productions, ranging from horror features, to TV sketch comedy and shiny floor quiz shows.

With a keen interest in diversity on screen, Pele is excited and optimistic about future endeavours in the industry.

## ROSE SAFFIOTI - HAIR AND MAKEUP DESIGNER

Rose Saffioti began her career as a qualified hairdresser, and with her natural creative flair and keen eye in fashion, studied makeup in pursuit of a career in television, film and editorial. Having achieved a role as Head of Makeup at *Home and Away* on Channel 7, Rose secured key hair and makeup roles on several other TV series and films including *Blaze*, *Frayed*, *The Dry*, *Underbelly Badness*, *Chopper*, *Love Child*, *Secret Daughter*, *Fighting Season*, *Partisan*, *Necromancer*, plus Hollywood films including *Pacific Rim* and *Wolverine*.

Rose has worked alongside amazing Australian and international talent over her 15-year career. Ada Nicodemou, Jonathan LaPaglia, Aaron Jeffery, Vincent Cassel, Kate Ritchie, Pia Miller, Ben O'toole, Caroline Ford,

Tess Haubrich, David Wenham, Tina Arena, Samantha Armytage, Emily Symons, Georgie Parker and Rebecca Gibney, to name a few.

Rose has also collaborated with many prominent brands including QV Skin Care, Priceline, Pacific Magazines, Bauer Media, Channel's 7, 9 & 10.

## GEOFF HITCHINS - EDITOR

Geoff Hitchins has been editing Australian television for over twenty years, on productions ranging from mini-series such as *Cloudstreet*, *The King and Picnic at Hanging Rock*, episodic drama including *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, *Jack Irish*, *Wentworth*, *Bump*, and *Puberty Blues*, comedies *Please Like Me*, *Lowdown*, and *Mr. Black*, and children's shows *Nowhere Boys* and *Itch*.

A three-time AACTA/AFI award nominee and winner of an IF Award and a Film Critics Circle Award, Geoff has also edited feature films including *Noise*, *Felony*, and *Storm Warning*.





## GABRIELLA MUIR - EDITOR

Gabriella Muir is one of the industry's most respected and experienced freelance editors with a career spanning over 25 years and an extensive and diverse body of work traversing film, television series, documentaries, web series, music videos and television commercials. During this time, she honed her craft, excelling in performance driven and narrative based work and as a result established ongoing creative partnerships with a number of celebrated Australian directors including Kriv Stenders and Justin Kurzel.

Most recently Gaby was one of the editors on *Bump S2* and was the lead editor on the acclaimed *The End 2020*, a 10-part drama series co-pro with Sky UK and Foxtel produced by See Saw which aired in both Australia and Britain to stellar reviews. She was nominated for best comedy editing by the Australian Screen Editors Guild.

Gaby is currently completing a TikTok Screen Australia funded drama series. She has numerous attachments to film and television projects in development.

## RICHARD PIKE - COMPOSER

Richard Pike is a London-based Australian composer and multi-instrumentalist. He is best known as singer and producer of Sydney pioneers PVT (aka Pivot) and ambient / experimental project Deep Learning.

Richard is founder of Salmon Universe, a tape label with a focus on ambient and electronic music.

As a screen composer he has scored Stan TV and BBC Three's *Romper Stomper* - the update of the iconic Australian 1992 film that launched the career of Russell Crowe. Richard has scored the 10-episode series *Les Norton* for the ABC, starring Rebel Wilson and David Wenham (2019). His latest score is an all-analog synth exploration for Channel 7's *Australian Gangster* (broadcasting in 2021).

Richard was nominated for Best Original Score in a Television Series at the 2018 AACTA Awards for *Romper Stomper*.

Richard studied composition at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, exploring orchestral music and 20th century avant garde.



## CAST CREDITS

Alan Prichard – Matt Nable  
Lucinda Prichard – Danielle Cormack  
Tully Prichard – Samson Alston  
Maya Haleem – Isabella Graiche  
Mo Haleem – Samuel El Rahi  
Kate Kellaway – Sophia Wright-Mendelsohn  
Priya Ramachandran – Tharanya Tharan  
Gus Wallace – Joshua Hewson  
George Phillips – Samuel Dawson  
Bowie Chalmers-Davis – Christian Byers  
Ophelia Kellaway – Caroline Brazier  
Tristan Kellaway – Samuel Johnson  
Brendan – Nicholas Cradock  
Adela Haleem – Sarah Armanious  
Mae Park – Deborah An  
Eddie Ione – Ray Chong Nee  
Jed – MJ Kokolis

## CREW CREDITS

Series Creator/Producer – Dan Edwards  
Producer – John Edwards  
Executive Producer – Cailah Scobie  
Executive Producer – Amanda Duthie  
Executive Producer – Joel Pearlman  
Series Creator/Script Producer/Writer (Ep 1, 2, 4 & 10),  
Director (Ep 9 & 10) – Jessica Tuckwell  
Director (Ep 1, 2 & 4) – Fadia Abboud  
Director (Ep 3, 5 & 6)/Writer (Ep 5) – Eddie Diamandi  
Director (Ep 6, 7 & 8) – Taylor Ferguson  
Writer (Ep 2, 9) – Kelsey Munro  
Writer (Ep 3, 6, 8) – Enoch Mailangi  
Writer (Ep 5) – Zoë Norton Lodge  
Writer (Ep 6) – Emily Havea  
Writer (Ep 7) – Eleanor Kirk  
Writer (Ep 7) – Ayesha Ash  
Director of Photography (Ep 1 - 7) – Garry Phillips  
Director of Photography (Ep 8 - 10) – Alex Cardy  
Production Designer – Natalie Beak  
Costume Designer – Pele Hehea  
Hair & Make-up Designer – Rose Saffioti  
Editor – Geoff Hitchins  
Editor – Gabriella Muir  
Composer – Richard Pike

# Stan.

## ORIGINALS

Stan is Australia's leading local streaming service and unrivalled home of original productions.

Stan's original production slate includes hit thriller series *BLACK SNOW* starring Travis Fimmel; *TRANSFUSION* starring Sam Worthington and Matt Nable; the Stan Original Dating series *LOVE TRIANGLE*, a modern take on the struggle for love; *BUMP*, a modern parenthood drama starring Claudia Karvan; *RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE DOWN UNDER*, hosted by RuPaul, Michelle Visage and Rhys Nicholson; *GOLD*, a taut thriller film starring Zac Efron in his first Australian production; *BAD BEHAVIOUR*, set in the unforgiving world of an exclusive girls boarding school; *WOLF LIKE ME*, a genre-bending drama series starring Isla Fisher and Josh Gad; and countless other acclaimed original series and films.

Stan's studio partnerships include NBCUniversal, Starz, Lionsgate, Showtime, Paramount, Sony, Warner Bros, Disney, all3media, BBC and more. Through these partnerships, Stan offers Australians unlimited access to thousands of hours of premium entertainment - with an outstanding lineup of blockbuster movies and exclusive premieres.

For more information, visit [stan.com.au](http://stan.com.au).



ROADSHOW ROUGH DIAMOND



# Stan.

ORIGINALS

For more information, contact  
[stan.publicity@stan.com.au](mailto:stan.publicity@stan.com.au)