

NEW MUSICAL CELEBRATES BEAUTY AND B*TCH OF BEING A WOMAN

Judith Wright Centre and Joymas Creative present
HANDLE WITH CARE
BY MEGAN SHOREY

"Megan's work is charming, but also gutsy and heart-felt. A highly creative, polished performer...."
Mark Yeoman – Director Noorderzon Festival, The Netherlands

Audiences will be offered a "first-class ticket to the world inside a woman's head" with the premiere of **Handle with Care** at the Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Arts in Brisbane from Thursday 19 to Saturday 21 November 2009.

Acclaimed composer and performer Megan Shorey says **Handle with Care** comprises four mini musicals, **Girlfriend**, **Three Kilos**, **In My Arms** and **Silk Powersuit**, which reveal the "beauty and bitch" of being a woman.

"**Handle with Care** combines four mini-musicals that rejoice in the beauty and bitch of being a woman, delving into issues of love and relationships, body image, motherhood and gender rivalry in the workplace," Shorey said.

"You could say that **Handle with Care** is a first-class ticket to the world inside a woman's head; it's a piece that appeals to both men and women, and is the perfect opportunity to open discussion between the genders," she said.

Directed by award-winning director Lewis Jones, **Handle with Care** stars Leisa Barry-Smith, Penny Farrow, Sarah Knight, Judy Hainsworth, Liz Buchanan, Kathy Burns, Airlie McCormack and Kathryn McIntyre.

The first of the four mini-musicals is **Three Kilos**, a personal look at the pressures women place on themselves in the quest to attain the physically impossible: airbrushed skin, 'photo-shopped' angles and that ever-elusive size 0.

Girlfriend questions the notion of the perfect man and soul-mate as, on the eve of a wedding, three friends ponder their misspent youth over a few too many glasses of bubbly.

The corporate world has a place for young successful women, and that will always be one step behind her closest male rival according to **The Silk Powersuit**, which examines gender rivalry in the workplace.

Handle with Care ends with the powerful work **In my Arms**, written by Megan Shorey in just a week and selected from hundreds of national and international works for the world renowned *Short, Sweet and Song* theatre festival.

Exploring the joys and pains of motherhood, **In My Arms** tips its hat to *Sliding Doors* as the stage is split into two identical nurseries with a woman in each room; in the first room she holds a baby, in the other she holds nothing.

Complete with exquisite design, set and staging, the world premiere of **Handle with Care** will play at the Judith Wright Centre from Thursday 19 to Saturday 21 November 2009.

-ENDS-

Date	Thursday 19 – Saturday 21 November 2009
Time	Thu – Sat 7.30pm + Fri 9.30pm
Venue	Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Arts
Tickets	Full \$35, Concession \$30
Bookings	07 3872 9000

JUDITH WRIGHT CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS

HANDLE WITH CARE - BIOGRAPHIES

JOYMAS CREATIVE is an exciting new Brisbane production company committed to bringing original, contemporary Musical Theatre to Queensland. Works include *In My Arms* (Short Sweet & Song Musical Theatre Festival, Sydney 2008), *Us* (Melbourne Fringe Festival 2006 and *Brisbane Cabaret Festival* 2005), *Us* (excerpts at AIMM, Brisbane 2005 and APAM, Adelaide 2006), *The Look of song* (Cairns Civic Theatre 2004 and *Brisbane Cabaret Festival* 2004).

MEGAN SHOREY is a composer and lyricist well known to audiences for her portrayals of some of the finest musical theatre roles in Brisbane and her original works, which have toured her both nationally and internationally as a solo artist. The fourth piece in this collection, *In My Arms*, debuted in Sydney to audience acclaim, as part of the internationally renowned theatre festival *Short Sweet & Song*. Invited to perform excerpts from original productions *Us* and *The Look of Song* nationally (spanning the East Coast), Megan Shorey's contemporary approach to Musical Theatre & Cabaret writing has won her audiences and critical acclaim from some of the countries leading festivals, production houses and industry professionals with appearances of her works in Adelaide (APAM), Melbourne (Fringe Festival), Sydney (Short Sweet & Song), Brisbane (Cabaret Festival, Brisbane Festival & Queensland Music Festival) and Cairns (Regional Tour). Dutch producer Hans de Visser (HDV Productions) brought Megan's work to the international stage, and in 2006 invited her to headline the Noorderzon Festival (Holland) alongside the likes of Martha Wainwright. Subsequent Megan was invited to perform at the *Edinburgh Festival*.

LEWIS JONES has worked for over ten years as a freelance director and producer. His work as a director began in 1996 with his production of Frank McGuinness's *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* for Matrix Theatre, for which he received a Matilda Award. Later that year, he directed *Bouncers* for his own company, someone. There have been numerous successful productions under the someone banner, including *Two by Jim Cartwright*, *Sweet Phoebe* by Michael Gow, *Dark Heart at the Tap Gallery Sydney* and four seasons of *He Died With A Felafel In His Hand*. For LaBoite, Jones has directed *The John Wayne Principle*, *First Asylum*, *After January*, *The Removalists* and *Secret Bridesmaids' Business*. Other directing credits include *Sid the Serpent Who Wanted to Sing* (Opera Queensland), *Acis and Galatea* (USQ Opera School), *Gianni Schicchi* (Queensland Conservatorium) and *Hamlet* (Matrix Theatre/QPAC). In late 2005, he directed Queenie van der Zandt in her own-woman cabaret, *I Get the Music in You*, at Melbourne Fringe Festival and last year directed *Sweet Charity* for the Empire Theatre. In 2006 he played George in La Boite's production of *Perfect Skin* and directed *Mornings with Maryanne* and *Tom Waits for No Man*, both for the *Brisbane Cabaret Festival*. In 2007 and 2008, he worked as Executive Producer for Circa and also directed *Beauty and the Beast* and *Cabaret* for The Empire Theatre; a Matilda Award winning remount of *Tom Waits for No Man* for the *Brisbane Cabaret Festival*; *Women In Voice 17* at QPAC and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* for Oscar Theatre at The Roundhouse Theatre. In 2009, Lewis has directed *Dead Cats Don't Bounce* at QPAC for Hot Tin Roof Productions and Choice written by and featuring Amanda-Lyn Pearson, which toured regional Queensland. As part of his position as Artistic Director of the Empire Theatre, Toowoomba, he directed *Singin' in the Rain*.

PENNY FARROW began her professional performance career in theatre restaurant to help finance her university studies. After graduating, she appeared in *The Fantasticks* (Woodstock Players) and *Working! A Musical* (Urban Edge Productions) before embarking on a life at sea performing cabaret. Over the next five years she juggled life as lead vocalist on ships and the life of a land-based children's entertainer, working for Bilby Productions and Ginnivan Attractions. She also worked on a new Australian piece, *Captives of Care* (John L. Simpson Productions). Moving to Brisbane in 2000, Penny began teaching senior drama for The Fame Theatre Company, where she now teaches the full time course. Her Brisbane performance credits include *The Lord Mayor's Carols* (Channel 7/ Golden Casket), *Nightcap at the Studio* (Metro Arts/ Energex Festival), *Sweeney Todd* (Opera Queensland), *Assassins, Parade* (Warehaus Theatre), *Children of Eden* (Harvest Rain Theatre Co), *A Doll's House* (Starlight Co-Op), *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Oscar Theatre Co) and *Suddenly Single workshop* (Seymour Productions/QPAC).

JUDY HAINSWORTH trained at the University of Southern Queensland, earning a Bachelor of Theatre Arts (acting) with Distinction. Judy is best known for her role as the shrieking, brown-phobic Y'landah in *The Narcissist* (Sydney Theatre Company/La Boite) which enjoyed a sold-out season at the Sydney Opera House in 2008 and earned her a Matilda award nomination for Best Supporting Actress. In 2009, Judy made her debut at the *Adelaide Fringe Festival* in *Holy Guacamole* (The Good Room), which also had a Brisbane season at the Sue Benner Theatre. She was also part of a creative development for the new musical *Suddenly Single*, produced by QPAC. Judy's theatre credits include: *Small Mercies* (La Boite); *He Died with a Felafel in his Hand* (Someone Productions/La Boite); *The Reunion* (Metro Arts Independents); *Little Women, Into the Woods, The Best of Broadway* (Harvest Rain); *Assassins, Parade* (Warehaus Theatre), *Godspell* (Starlight Theatre); and *Shakespeare's Women: Double Double Toil and Trouble* (Toowoomba Shakespeare Festival). She received a Dell Arte Award for Best Supporting Actress (*Little Women*, 2007) and was nominated for a Matilda Award for Best Emerging Actor (2005). Judy was a featured vocalist at the *2008 Lord Mayor's Seniors Christmas Parties, Brisbane Musical Theatre United Charity Concerts* in 2007 and 2006, *Hats Off Briz Vegas '06*, the *Oscar Theatre Company launch* and *Moulin Beige* cabaret. She was also a finalist in the

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2006 Brisbane Musical Theatre Competition. Judy has appeared in the short films *Jump* (QPIX), *Summer Camp* (QUT), *The Ties That Bind* (QFT), *Xerox* (Film Headquarters) and *This is About Art* (Toowoomba Shoot Out Festival).

KATHY BURNS is a teacher for The Actors Workshop, currently teaching Acting Technique, Theatre and Shakespeare. Kathy has an Advanced Diploma in Film, Television and Theatre Acting, a Post Graduate in Directing Actors and a Diploma in Workplace Assessment and Training. For the past eight years Kathy has worked as an actor, director and singer in film, television and theatre, recently working in Brisbane Festivals *ALICE21* as Alice; a singing, dancing and multimedia rock show in the car park of the Judith Wright Centre and in QPIX's musical short film *You Tonight*. She has also worked as a cabaret performer in the troupe 'Charli'; created children's songs and video clips for primary school programs; directed, written and performed for Nicky Noo's Creative playtime company; worked as a female vocalist on various albums and acted in a 10-episode series for *Beyond Blue*. In 2006 Kathy's production company, A RoughCut production, created a number of dinner theatre shows called *A Month of WHITE SEX* which was a sold out season. She has directed shows in Sue Benner Theatre, Brisbane Arts Theatre, Schannel Theatre and Foresters hall. Kathy's other technical experience includes stage management, lighting design, set design, costume design, production management and 1st and 2nd Assistant Director. In 2008 Kathy spent two weeks in Prague and Berlin studying the theatre and film industry, which inspired her to create the production *Please Release Me*.

KATHRYN MCINTYRE has just completed the newly revised Brisbane season of Macbeth; The Contemporary Rock Opera for Diane Gough Productions at the Cremorne Theatre, QPAC, and is currently studying a diploma of performing arts in music theatre and commercial dance with the Davidia Lind Dance Company. Kathryn has been involved in Brisbane Arts Theatre's *Fame* (2004) and *Cinderella* (2005), *Starlight/Turkish Delight's* Queensland premiere of *Witches Of Eastwick* (2007), and Harvest Rain Theatre Company's *Little Shop Of Horrors* (2005) *Children Of Eden* (2007) and *The Wiz* (2004) in the role of 'Evilene' for which she won a Del'Arte Award for Best Supporting Actress. In 2008 Kathryn took on the role of a 'Cheerleader' in the premier of the award winning new musical *Scissors Paper Rock* with Underground Productions and made her Gold Coast debut as 'Sheena' one of Peter Allen's trio in the fully staged production of *Boy From Oz* with the Gold Coast Arts Centre. Earlier this year Kathryn took to the stage as Mrs Cheveley in Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband* with Starlight Theatre Company.

LIZ BUCHANAN is a graduate of QUT Academy of the Arts (BA Drama - Acting). She played Rae in the Premiere of *Long Gone Lonesomecowgirls* (La Boite Theatre Co) for which she received a Matilda Award Commendation, and recently reprised the role for a Western QLD touring version. Other theatre credits include *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Oscar TC), *The Year Nick McGowan Came To Stay* and David Williamson's *Operator* (La Boite), *Red Cap* (La Boite/QMF), *The Siren's Kiss* (Judith Wright Centre) and Caucasian Chalk Circle (HRTC at Gardens Theatre). Liz began performing professionally at 16 in musicals (*Sherwoodstock*, *Phantoad Of The Opera*), cabarets and extensively in cover and original bands. She later worked with a'capella vocal groups Seraphim and The Gritty Pearls. Recent band performances of her original music include QMF Spiegeltent and *Brisbane Cabaret Festival*, and she was MC and a performer in 2008's *Women In Voice 17* (QPAC). TV credits include Channel Nine's *Sea Patrol*, the role of Ms Palmer on *Mortified* and guest roles on *H2o-Just Add Water*, *Monarch Cove* (US series), *The Sleepover Club*, *Fat Cow Motel*, *Medivac*, *Pacific Drive* and *Paradise Beach*. Liz also works as a voiceover artist for radio and TV, and has appeared in numerous TV and print commercials, as well as voicing characters for the CGI animated *Farmkids* international children's TV series, seen on ABC Kids.

LEISA BARRY-SMITH is one of Queensland's best-loved cabaret and music theatre performers and has been performing professionally since the age of 15. Leisa's graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Drama from the QUT's Academy of the Arts majoring in acting and directing. During her study she played principal roles in *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, *Melba*, *The Killing of Sister George*, *Ubu Roi* and *Technique - The Mechanical Skill of Art*. Her directing credits include *Charlie the Chicken*, *The End of the Picnic* and *Inner Voices*.

ARLIE MCCORMICK is a singer/actor/musician with more than 15 years experience. In 2001 she completed a Bachelor of Music in Contemporary Voice at the QLD Conservatorium. For many years she has performed in bands ranging from corporate jazz groups to cabaret based entertainment, including TV work for Channel 7 as one of the Carols Quartet. Arlie is also an accomplished pianist and has performed for years in piano bars throughout Brisbane, but her true passion is Music Theatre. Her career spans various musical styles including rock, pop, jazz, country and musical theatre. Arlie has played the title role of 'Calamity Jane' in 2003 and then one of the ensemble in *I Love You, You're Perfect Now Change*.

SARAH KNIGHT at the Brisbane Conservatorium of music. This classically trained singer has the technique that has seen her portray everything from the sweetest girl-next-door, an Opera singing Circus Freak to a green haired Doris Day and a gracious and charming Torch Song chanteuse. Sarah's performances include roles in *The Mikado*, *The Magic Flute*, *Les Miserable* and *The Sound of Music*. She has appeared at *Brisbane Festival*, *Brisbane Cabaret Festival*, *Woodford Folk Festival*, The Brisbane Ekka, Channel 9's *Lighting of the Lord Mayors Christmas Tree*, Redcliffe Carols and Channel 7's *Picnic in the Park*.

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