



**SLINGSBY AND STATE
THEATRE COMPANY
SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

THE BOY WHO TALKED TO DOGS

**Adapted for the stage by Amy Conroy
From the book by Martin McKenna**

📍 Studio Theatre, Darwin Entertainment Centre



Thu 11 & Fri 12 Aug 7pm Sat 13 Aug 2.30pm & 7pm

Duration 1hr 10mins

NOTE Contains themes of domestic violence, theatrical smoke effects and loud noises

**DARWIN
FESTIVAL**

Darwin Festival takes place on the land of the Larrakia people.

We wish to pay our respects to the traditional owners of this Country and to their ancestors. As the Festival welcomes contemporary artists and art from around Australia, we also celebrate the continuing culture of the Larrakia.

Scroll through to read more about this performance of *The Boy Who Talked To Dogs*.

Enjoy the show!

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WRITER'S NOTE

Initially when approaching this play I thought I was writing a story about 'a boy and his dogs and all their adventures'. That would have been the sensible story, the popular story, the heartwarming story that sells.

But it wouldn't have been an honest story. To honour this boy's incredible journey, I had to start in the difficult places, the places we don't like to look. It's a lot easier, and infinitely more palatable, to turn away from all that messy stuff.

I am a playwright, actor and theatre maker based in Dublin, Ireland. I believe that theatre should provoke, enflame, move and delight in equal measures. I am compelled by a drive to shine a light on people, places or circumstances that are rarely seen, or rarely given much consideration. I am fascinated by what we

understand on an intellectual level, but disregard on a human level. I also like to allow the story to inform how it should be told. I am of the opinion that theatre can change the world. It is a firm opinion, maybe uncool, maybe romantic, but firm. You can, however, only do that when you tell the whole story.

This is a story of survival.

Martin is the kid that is hard to like, he's the kid that makes people uncomfortable, even though they should know better. Those people defined Martin's narrative, telling him he was stupid, damaged, troublesome and awkward. They told him so often and so viciously that he believed them. Why wouldn't he?

They didn't ask why he made them uncomfortable, or why he was troublesome, it was easier not to.

But Martin found his own way through; he survived in spite of everything. I wanted to honour his journey. I wanted to give this gloriously awkward, broken, brilliant and radiant boy authorship of his own story – in his own way. Ultimately it's a very simple one, it's a story of a boy who wants to be loved. And I do. I hope you do too.

Amy Conroy, Playwright



BIOGRAPHIES

Amy Conroy

Playwright

Amy is an actor, playwright and Artistic Director of HotForTheatre. Her first radio play, Hold This, was broadcast on RTÉ Radio One in 2010. Her first stage play, I ♥ Alice ♥ I, won the Fishamble Award for New Writing in the 2010 Dublin Fringe Festival and had sold-out runs around the world. It has been translated and performed in Poland, Italy and Iceland.

Amy's acting credits include the critically-acclaimed production of The Taming of the Shrew at the Globe Theatre, London, Futureproof, A Day In May, A Midsummers Night's Dream, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man and Citysong (Abbey Theatre

and Soho Theatre, London), for which she was nominated Best Supporting Actress in the 2019 Irish Times Theatre Awards. She is a Six in the Attic Alumni, Writer in Residence with Rough Magic Theatre Company and Associate Playwright with The Abbey Theatre.

BIOGRAPHIES

Andy Packer

Director

Andy is a director of theatre, music theatre and opera. He has also worked as creative producer of multidisciplinary arts programs, producer of large-scale events and festival director. In 2007 Andy co-founded Adelaide-based theatre company Slingsby. The company's productions have received 16 industry awards and toured more than 70 cities and towns across 12 countries.

Andy is renowned for creating original live performance moments that are emotionally powerful and visually bold. His work across theatre for young audiences, opera, cabaret, music theatre and symphonic concerts has pushed him to develop a distinctive theatrical form that is at once personal and epic.

BIOGRAPHIES

Clara Solly-Slade

Assistant Director & Director of Puppetry

Clara studied acting at Adelaide College of the Arts and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (London). She has worked as an artist with Sport for Jove Theatre, Pinchgut Opera, The H.E.A.T Collective (New York), Working Classroom (New Mexico), and the La Mama Experimental Theatre Company (New York). She has directed and facilitated with young people for SAYart's, Working Classroom, Urban Myth, Camp Quality, Australian Theatre for Young People, Australian Refugee Volunteers and Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre.

BIOGRAPHIES

Lisa O'Neill

Songwriter

Lisa has quietly built a reputation for herself on the Irish and international scenes and now has a growing following with her unique folk sound, strong songwriting and distinctive voice. Her debut release *Has an Album* was followed in 2013 by Choice-nominated *Same Cloth Or Not*, her third album *Pothole in the Sky* and her last release on the Rough Trade imprint *River Lea, Heard A Long Gone Song*, which garnered huge acclaim both at home and abroad. It was Choice Nominated, had a 5/5 star review from *The Guardian* on release and a coveted 'Best Folk Album of 2019' from the same publication. She was also nominated in

four categories at the 2019 UK Folk awards and five categories at the 2019 Irish Folk awards, winning one for best original folk song.

BIOGRAPHIES

Bryan Burroughs

Performer

Bryan trained at Trinity College Dublin. Noteworthy performances include My Foot/My Tutor (Dublin Fringe Festival, winner of Best Male Performance), Johnny Patterson: The Singing Irish Clown (Irish Times Theatre Award Best Supporting Actor 2009) and his solo show Beowulf: The Blockbuster, which won the STAGE Award for Acting Excellence at the Edinburgh Fringe 2014 and toured to Adelaide Festival in 2015.

Recently he played Lenehan in James Joyce's Ulysses and James Matthews in 14 Voices From The Bloodied Field at The Abbey Theatre for the 100 year Anniversary of Bloody Sunday.

BIOGRAPHIES

Victoria Falconer

Performer

Victoria is an award-winning cabaret artist, theatre-maker, multi-instrumentalist and musical director. As writer/performer she has played at Southbank Centre (London), Griffin Theatre (Sydney), Darwin Festival and Edinburgh Fringe (with Fringe Wives Club, winning Spirit of the Fringe 2018).

Victoria's shows have twice won the overall Best Cabaret Award at Adelaide Fringe (2018/2011). In 2020 she was nominated for a Sydney Theatre Award (Once, Darlinghurst Theatre Company) and a Green Room Award (Glittergrass, Malthouse) for musical direction. Other MD credits include Oklahoma! (Black Swan State Theatre Co.), Insane Animals (HOME

Manchester), Courtney Act (London) and Sasquatch The Opera (Summerhall, Edinburgh).

Victoria is a founding member of The People of Cabaret, an initiative amplifying and advocating for BIPOC-identifying people in the performing arts.

BIOGRAPHIES

Emma Luker

Performer

Emma is a fiddle player, violinist, performer, teacher and session player based in Adelaide, South Australia. She has performed interstate and internationally as a band member and theatre performer. Acclaimed as a violinist of “sensitivity and versatility”, Emma is a member of original folk duo The Fiddle Chicks and several other bands in Adelaide. She also performs regularly with folk singer Eric Bogle.

BIOGRAPHIES

Slingsby

Founded in 2007 and based in Adelaide, South Australia, Slingsby presents emotionally challenging and engaging storytelling in rich live theatrical realms for family audiences and young people aged eight years and over.

Artistic Director Andy Packer and General Manager Stacey Baldwin are passionate about creating memorable experiences for audiences of all ages. They collaborate with some of Australia's finest artists across many disciplines and foster international theatrical alliances. Slingsby's productions have been presented around Australia and in New Zealand, USA, Canada, UK, Ireland, Scotland, Spain, Singapore, Norway, China and India, earning the company a

reputation for excellence in the creation of work for young audiences. The company has garnered many coveted awards for its work including three Ruby Awards, a prestigious Victor Award (People's Choice) – International Performing Arts for Youth Showcase 2017 for The Young King and a Helpmann Award (Best Presentation for Children) for Emil and the Detectives in 2018.

Slingsby produces and tours original theatre productions that captivate, challenge and inspire hope through memorable theatre experiences that evoke a sense of renewed wonder in the world we live in, and the role we each can play in building a happy and harmonious global society.

Slingsby's theatre making has explored a variety of theatrical forms, ranging from original text-based plays (The Tragical Life of Cheeseboy, Man Covets Bird, The Young King), dance theatre (Wolf), opera (Ode to

Nonsense), concept album concert (Songs for Those Who've Come Across the Seas) and hybrid image / text based work (Emil and the Detectives). These works have been built on both original concepts and book adaptations.



CREDITS

Playwright

Amy Conroy

Director & Artistic Director, Slingsby

Andy Packer

Assistant Director & Director of Puppetry

Clara Solly-Slade

Executive Producer

Stacey Baldwin

Songwriter

Lisa O'Neill

Composer

Quincy Grant

Designers

Wendy Todd & Ailsa Paterson

Lighting Designer

Chris Petridis

Performers

Martin Bryan Burroughs

Musician Victoria Falconer

Musician Emma Luker

CREDITS

Costumes made by State Theatre
Company South Australia Wardrobe

Set constructed by State Theatre
Company South Australia Workshop



Australian Government

RISE Fund

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Draíocht Arts Centre

DARWIN FESTIVAL

Darwin Festival is the centre piece of what makes August in Darwin the best time of year. Loved by locals and adored by visitors, this tropical winter festival invites you to experience the very best in First Nations, Territory, Australian and international art, culture and music – not just as a spectator but to be one with it.

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