

Director's Note:

A striking fact emerges when looking through the history of past adaptations of this play – many of them were failures. 1963's Cleopatra (Famously starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton) ran at such a loss that almost bankrupted its production studio. Charlton Heston's 1972 film adaptation received poor reviews and is, if I may be frank, fairly terrible. American composer Samuel Barber's 1966 operatic adaptation was so poorly received at its opening that it sent him into a deep depression from which he never fully recovered. A common theme seems to be too great an appetite for spectacle and tragedy, as evidenced in the staging of naval battles, or of great parades, or the restructuring of the text to allow for enormous funeral processions. To me this seems a gross misreading of the play – it doesn't concern itself with grand events, but with the people who live at the heart of them. It is, at its heart, surprisingly warm and funny. Many people have been kind enough to point out that this is something of an audacious, or even ill-conceived, choice of text for a first-time director, and as time has gone on I've begun to agree with them. This project has tested to the full, and exceeded, every one of my faculties. Without the support of many people, I, and this show, would be an absolute mess at the moment. The cast have shown enormous talent, gumption, and have approached any bizarre ideas I may have had with utter fearlessness. The production team and crew have worked tirelessly and brilliantly around a hopelessly inexperienced director. In particular, I must thank Nicholas Langford and Genevieve Cassin, who have boldly thrown themselves at characters that leading Shakespearean actors have called impossible and unrepresentable, and been a source of less than absolute pleasures to work with; Sarah Pemberton, who has risen to the challenge of managing such an enormous cast and crew with the utmost grace and enthusiasm; Emma Conley, who has seen every part of this process through with steadfast enthusiasm, and been a source of grounding when I have gotten too far inside my own head; Jai Leeworthy, whose manifold talents have buoyed up every single aspect of this production, all while working on literally nineteen other plays simultaneously; my fellow MUSC committee members, who have indulged and supported me in a way akin to setting a mad pyromaniac loose in a firework shop; the staff at Union House Theatre, who have, in a pretty all-encompassing way, enabled this whole production to happen; and the Creative Arts officers at UNSU, Isabella Vadeloo and Bonnie Leigh-Dodds, who are utter professionals as well as incredibly warm and supportive friends. Lastly, I must thank my dear friend Sasha Henris-Anderssen, who has probably heard more than she'd care to about this play already, suffered as much for it as myself, taught me ways of thinking I'd never have thought to think of, and without whom I really could never have done this. I hope you enjoy the show

Producer's Note:

For a woman who always shies away from being the banker in Monopoly, the fact I've taken on the role of producer for two consecutive MUSC productions seems a little bemusing. Yet, through my experiences over these productions, I have come to understand that the producer's role encompasses more than just devising and overseeing budgets. For me, liaising with each department as they work to realise their creative visions has provided utterly fascinating and thrilling experiences. With this production in particular I have had the pleasure of witnessing people new to the MUSC family, and those who have never had production roles before, blossom into production powerhouses (it doesn't hurt that they're all wonderfully individual, funny, and beautiful people as well: so if you're looking for prod team members you should totally try them up!) But it wouldn't have been possible without the help of the following people. Liam Bellman-Sharpe: for inviting me back into the fold and allowing me to have an active part in the process. Christian Sullivan: for being the greatest Publicity and Sponsorship Manager I could have ever hoped for – Christian, you are utterly invaluable. And Sarah Pemberton: for the chats, the coffees, the bonding over Emily Blunt movies, and being the most pleasant and competent Stage Manager I could've asked for. You are staggeringly good! But also to the cast: that lovely, TALENTED bunch of actors who have brought Shakespeare's words to life with finesse, humour, and sincerity. Watching each of you on your journey from auditions to now has been an absolute joy. Thanks for allowing me to be a part of it! And to you, the audience. Thank you for your continued support of the Melbourne University Shakespeare Company. May they continue to make exemplary work that you can enjoy and learn from.

Talent



Cast:

Antony: Nicholas Langford
Cleopatra: Genevieve Cassin
Octavius Caesar: Declan Mulcahy
Enobarbus: Rachel Shrives
Charmian: Summer Bowen
Agrippa: Jack Richardson
Lepidus/Clown: Josiah Lulham
Alexas: Remy Chadwick
Octavia/Iras: Scout Boxall
Pompey/Scarus: James Christensen
Messenger/Eros: Karl Richmond
Menas/Dolabella: Alexander Thom
Soothsayer/Thidias: Andy Roostenburg
Demetrius/Proculeius: Sarah Fitzgerald
Philo/Canidius: Kathryn White

Crew:

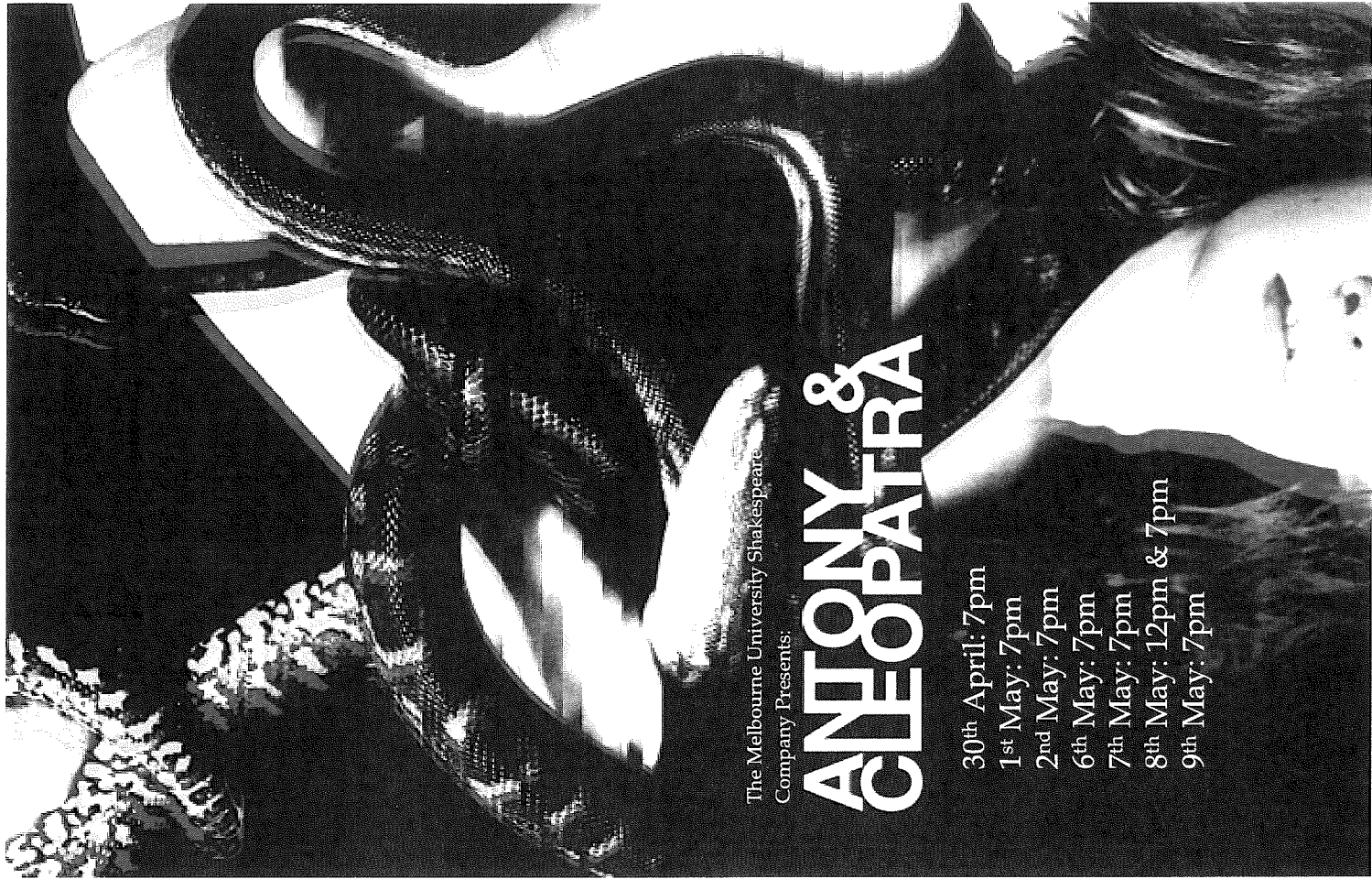
Director: Liam Bellman-Sharpe
Assistant Director/AV Designer: Jai Leeworthy
Dramaturg: Robert Mark Johnson
Production Manager: Alexandre Guerin
Producer/F.O.H Manager: Emma Conley
Stage Manager: Sarah Pemberton
Set Designer: Abbie-Lea Hough
Costume Designer: Vanna Paabor
Lighting Designer: James Lew
Sound Designer: Anatol Pitt
Sound Operator: Bella Mackey
Props Manager: Merlyn Gwyther-McCuskey
Head of Publicity and Sponsorship: Christian Sullivan



From the Company President:

I count myself incredibly lucky to be President of such a wonderful student theatre company. It's fantastic to be able to use the resources we have to support the creative, adventurous ideas of our students, and for us all to learn about performing and creating from one of the great figures of Western theatre. I can't wait to see what this semester's team has put together! I'd like to thank each and every one of you for coming and supporting our students, and to recognise all the hard work from our cast, crew, and creatives. Chookas to all!

-Maitlida Houlihan

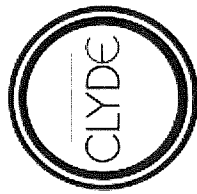


The Melbourne University Shakespeare Company Presents:

ANTONY & CLEOPATRA

30th April: 7pm
 1st May: 7pm
 2nd May: 7pm
 6th May: 7pm
 7th May: 7pm
 8th May: 12pm & 7pm
 9th May: 7pm

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Thanks to:

Raymond Hoser From Snakebusters
 UMSU Arts Officers Bonnie Leigh-Dodds and Bella Vadelveloo
 The Union House Theatre Staff
 Cella Langford
 Queen's College Music and Drama Society
 Lola Giuffre
 Cinema Nova
 Ben Fon