

Multi-award-winning director brings another dramatic masterpiece to the Garrick

Director Barry Park is once again bringing his plethora of experience to Garrick Theatre from 11 to 27 April.

Following a highly successful run of *The York Realist* at the Garrick Theatre last year, Barry is returning to stage the witty, dramatic comedy *The Lisbon Traviata* by master playwright Terrence McNally.

The play depicts long-time friends Mendy and Stephen, who are ferociously dedicated and competitive opera buffs. Stephen is trying to distract Mendy from his crumbling relationship with his partner Mike, eventually leading to a confrontation where the characters' larger-than-life passions explode on the scale of grand opera.

The very successful off-Broadway production is initially reminiscent of an Oscar Wilde drawing room comedy with witty dialogue crackling crisply, but it veers suddenly from high comedy to stark tragedy, using an obsession with grand opera as a metaphor to bring the play to an explosive conclusion.

The Lisbon Traviata is the latest of several significant plays by renowned playwrights that Barry has directed, such as *The Normal Heart*, *The York Realist*, *The Boys in the Band*, *M. Butterfly*, *Beautiful Thing* and *Design for Living*.

"I know audiences are going to love this very funny, dramatic and, at times, risqué production," Barry says.

"There are snatches of mock-operatic operas and superbly dramatic re-enactments of death scenes from famous operas. But there are also deep emotional truths, jealous outbreaks, and moments of real longing and despair that crescendo into a devastating dramatic finale.

"Playing the larger-than-life gay characters are four seasoned and passionate actors who are bringing this show to life: Adam Poole as the jealous Steven, Martin Churcher as the obsessive Mendy, Patrick Downes as Mendy's wandering lover Mike, and Alex Comstock as the guileless Paul.

"It's a fascinating play with a curious mixture of comedy and tragedy, and many interesting operatic allusions. I am delighted to bring a play of this calibre by the master playwright Terrence McNally to the Garrick Theatre's stage.

"This amusing, extremely dramatic play will particularly appeal to lovers of good theatre, opera buffs and also to the LGBTQI+ community."

Warning: This show contains adult themes, coarse language, violence and brief nudity.

Book your tickets now at www.taztix.com.au/garricktheatre or call 9255 3336.

Performance Dates:

April 11, 12, 13, 14*, 18, 19, 20*, 20, 21*, 25, 26, 27

All evening shows at 7.30pm

*denotes matinee show at 2pm

Ticket Prices: Full \$28, Conc \$23, Members \$22 plus processing fee.

Opening night tickets are \$10.

"A highly entertaining, amusing, touching, compelling play." — New York Observer

"Bitchy and brilliant... Jealousy was never so juicy." — Stage and Cinema

About Barry Park

Barry has been teaching, acting and directing since the 1980s, winning many awards, including two Finley Best Director Awards, and most recently, Best Director 2023 at both the Old Mill Theatre and the Garrick Theatre.

In Perth, he has directed *The Normal Heart*, *French Without Tears*, *The Boys in the Band*, *A View from the Bridge*, *The Real Thing*, *Broken Glass*, *M. Butterfly*, *All My Sons* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (GRADS); *Private Lives*, *Beautiful Thing*, *Hay Fever*, *Present Laughter* and *Design for Living*, (Old Mill Theatre); *The York Realist* (Garrick Theatre), *August: Osage County* and *Other Desert Cities* (Playlovers); and *Arcadia* (Harbour Theatre).

He has directed many other productions overseas and has performed at The Edinburgh Festival Fringe, the Grahamstown Festival, and in Perth, London, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, in plays, musicals, pantomimes, films, and radio and television productions and commercials.