

La Mama proudly presents  
the premiere season of

# MAKE ME A HOURI

Written by Emina Ashman  
Directed by Stephanie Ghajar

Two women meet in the afterlife. After experiencing grave punishment, Asmara wants nothing more than to purify herself and transform into a Houri - a Virgin of Paradise. Safia agrees to help...

Premiering this July at La Mama Courthouse, **Make Me A Houri** is a controversial and compelling story of two women seeking to defy the external forces governing their bodies. In a place where religion, liberation, and free will collide, is paradise attainable?

A personal, creative response to the symbol of Houris that's been derived from interpretations of sacred text, **Make Me A Houri** is an exploration of faith and feminism by Malaysia-born playwright Emina Ashman.

"**Make Me A Houri** is the result of my need to express how I felt about religious dogma, the patriarchal moral policing in Malaysia, and my own detachment from the Islamic cultural upbringing I was born into.", explains Writer and Performer Emina Ashman.

"The show sparked from there as I continued to question how interpretations of scripture affect my embodied experience and agency as a woman. What is the energy of tension that lies in between embodying spirituality and sensuality?"

A culmination of four years of creative development, with dramaturgical feedback from female artists and friends from diverse cultural backgrounds spanning Australia, South-East Asia, the Middle East and France, **Make Me A Houri** blends poetry, stylised physicality and unusual anecdotes to explore the relationship between the realms of the mystical and the material. It promises to be a powerful debut season for Emina Ashman, as both writer and performer of her own work.

Based in Melbourne, Emina Ashman is an actor, theatre-maker and writer from Malaysia. She holds an Honours in Independent Theatre Practice and a Bachelors in Acting and Performance Making from the Victorian College of the Arts. Most recently seen in Melbourne Theatre Company's season of *Hungry Ghosts* (2018), last year she also presented her solo-devised performance poetry piece, *Stardust*, in Kuala Lumpur at Kill the Radio's launch of their art exhibition In Defence of Poetry.



Written by **Emina Ashman**  
Directed by **Stephanie Ghajar**  
Performed by **Emina Ashman and Nisha Joseph**  
Set and Costume design by **Lara Week**  
Lighting Design by **Shane Grant**  
Sound Design by **Sidney Millar**

**DATE** 25 July - 4 August, 2019  
**TIME** Wed and Fri at 8.30pm,  
Thurs, Sat & Sun at 6.30pm  
**Q & A After Show on Wed 31 July**

**DURATION**  
**VENUE** La Mama Courthouse  
349 Drummond Street, Carlton

**TICKETS** \$30 Adult | \$20 Concession  
**BOOKINGS** 03 9347 6948 or [www.lamama.com.au](http://www.lamama.com.au)

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