



THE DISAPPEARING TRILOGY

Created by **Suzie Hardgrave**

'Why is it a bad show for a woman to act like herself?'
- (*The Disappearing Trilogy*, 2019)

Set in the magical world of theatre, the actress, career fading and hung-over suffers the 'post-show blues' of her one-star show.

She is disappearing.

Out-of-control and out-of-work, the actress spirals into a life-changing decision. She must avoid her disappearance from the stage catapulting her on a path of self-destruction. As her make-believe world collapses, the actress faces her greatest illusion - the one she has created of herself.

Warning: This story has a serrated moral edge.

This work is the amalgamation of **Suzie Hardgrave's** doctorate research on actors disappearing into characters. This is following on from the successful La Mama season of *Elizabeth Taylor is My Mother* (2015), an award-winning Masters investigation of identity in performance. This doctorate study specifically focuses on the actress and her performance of gender, its pitfalls, its illusions, and its power. The actress explores oppressive behavioural constructs of femininity in Western culture. Questioning how an actress navigates stages of life in gaining control of her disappearance, *The Disappearing Trilogy* intersects with the outskirts of the #MeToo movement. The work explores what it is we do when we act according to patriarchal and peer expectations. It offers the hypothesis that if we choose to go beyond these expectations making our own choices as women, we can stop imitating life and start living it.

The Disappearing Trilogy unpacks, over three episodes, the various aspects of the actress in her performance of roles on and offstage. It has a minimalistic aesthetic designed by Bronwyn Pringle with sound design by Chris Wenn. The genre combines elements of magic and poetic realism with physical theatre influences in a metatheatrical frame. It is a brand new work in collaboration with the Centre for Theatre and Performance (Monash University), Monash Academy of Performing Arts and proudly presented by La Mama Theatre (VIC). Dedicated sponsors of the work include The Space Dance and Arts Centre (VIC) and The Alex Theatre in St Kilda (VIC).

The Disappearing Trilogy and doctorate project is both personal and professional. Hardgrave disappeared into the character of the actress in 1993 graduating from acting school with an eating disorder, lasting longer than *The Lion King* on Broadway. Hardgrave is a theatre artist, practice-based researcher and acting teacher specialising in theatre. She has performed, directed and taught in both Australia and the UK since 1993. Career highlights include *The Library* at Traverse Theatre and The Arches supported by the National Theatre of Scotland, *Helicopter* by Angela Betzien (dir. Leticia Caceres) at Melbourne Theatre Company and *Air SplaioD*, an animated web series for BBC Scotland. Suzie teaches regularly with Victorian College of the Arts (AUS) and NIDA Open (AUS).

'Drawing loosely on her own experiences of adoption, Hardgrave has created a visceral and sharply realised take on the trauma of identity. The desire for celebrity is a desire for reinvention, longing for the power to start again and again'

- for *Elizabeth Taylor is My Mother*,
Rebecca Harkins-Cross, Sydney Morning Herald, 2015

Creator and Performer: **Suzie Hardgrave**
Lighting and Set Design: **Bronwyn Pringle**
Sound Design: **Chris Wenn**
Directorial and Dramaturgical Consultant: **Alister Smith**
Movement Advisor: **Sarah Cathcart**
Assistant Director Internship: **Greta Doell**
Image by **Darren Gill**

Special thanks to Professor Jane Montgomery Griffiths, Dr Fiona Gregory, Professor Stacy Holman Jones, Karl Willebrant and the Centre for Theatre and Performance, Monash University.



DATE October 16 - 27
TIME Wed & Fri at 6.30pm, Thurs & Sat at 8.30pm
Sun at 4.30pm. Approx. 75 minutes
VENUE La Mama Courthouse
349 Drummond Street, Carlton
TICKETS \$30 Adult | \$20 Concession
BOOKINGS 03 9347 6948 or www.lamama.com.au

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