



'The Theory of Relativity' opens next month 18-27 March!

Our creative team shared their experience of rehearsing a show during COVID-19 lockdown.

Whimsical Productions has been rehearsing for *The Theory of Relativity* opening next month, 18-27 March, at the PACT Centre for Emerging Artists, Erskineville.

The Theory of Relativity was written over five years ago by Neil Bartram (music, lyrics) and Brian Hill (book) as part of the Canadian Music Theatre project and presented at the National Alliance for Music Theatre's Festival of New Musicals in 2015.

Since then, the show became licensed globally by Music Theatre International (MTI) and has steadily been building via the original cast soundtrack.

The show has also proved popular in schools and universities around the world because of its focus on young people, the flexible casting choices and the themes surrounding this unconventional song-cycle musical.

At the time of writing, *The Theory of Relativity* has become the #1 top trending musical on the Music Theatre International website, which is quite an achievement for a show in a year where COVID-19 has had such a devastating impact on the arts and live performance industries.

But to audiences here in Sydney, the show remains largely unknown. This presented an opportunity for Whimsical Productions to produce this new musical and build their own artistic vision of the piece.

Co-Director/Choreographer Michael Osborne was the person to originally pitch the show:

"I came across the show via a simple search into available Musical theatre license rights. I was looking for a show that would fit within the core values of Whimsical Productions which are creativity, diversity and growth."

"It needed to be new, fresh, adaptable and something already written because we had been working with local writers to develop their shows and I thought it would also be good to try an international licensed work to test ourselves, continue to champion our diverse talent and plan for future growth"

The creative team of Helen Kim (Co-Director) and Gianna (Music Director) were appointed back in 2019, auditions were held in February 2020 and rehearsals initially commenced in March 2020 for one week before COVID-19 lockdowns came into effect.

Musical Director Gianna Cheung explains the sudden impact of COVID-19 in rehearsals:

"At the beginning of the lockdown we did try to do a couple of rehearsals over Zoom, but obviously as an ensemble that was really difficult."

"So we decided to work individually with each cast member and I could work with them on their song and vocal technique, while Helen and Michael would work on their initial character development and so on.

"We did that for about three weeks because it might have reopened in three weeks but who knew it was going to be nearly a year of restrictions!"

"It was quite scary. We almost didn't put it back on."

"Unfortunately, because of all the changes we had to re-cast almost half of our cast. We started again in the first week of December, took a break over Christmas and then the restrictions got tighter when we returned in 2021. So, we have been very flexible working our rehearsals around the COVID-safe requirements and we are 4 weeks from opening now!"

Co-Director Helen Kim also shared her experience of what connected her to this musical:

"I love musicals. Growing up, my mum and I would catch iconic shows in Sydney like The Lion King and Wicked though I never imagined that I could also be on stage. Firstly, I wasn't a 'triple threat' – I was only comfortable singing in the Karaoke room and secondly, I hadn't seen an Asian-Australian on a musical stage.

"I was fortunate to meet Melody Duan, the founder of Whimsical Productions, who offered me the chance to take on a co-director role for The Theory of Relativity.

When I read the script, I fell in love with it immediately. I'm thrilled yet nervous for my first time directing a musical. But, I'm mostly excited about this new adventure and the chance to promote diversity in the arts industry.

The Theory of Relativity is a coming-of-age story about a group of university students searching for answers on the nature of love, life and loss. There will be a combination of songs, monologues and storytelling.

This musical celebrates the students' very own voices, very real with #nofilter. Think of a blend of sounds from 'Glee' and 'The Book of Mormon' with 'The Big Bang Theory' references and a dash of 'Chicago' and 'Mean Girls' in it.

Audiences can expect a stripped back musical theatre, a simple black box set with the entire ensemble on stage for the duration of the performance to reflect all of the characters searching for the unknown."

The Theory of Relativity is a 1 Act musical (approximately 80-90 minutes) and recommended for a mature audience.

PERFORMANCE DATES

THURSDAY 18 MARCH 2021 7:30pm (Preview)

FRIDAY 19 MARCH 2021 7:30pm (Opening)

SATURDAY 20 MARCH 2021 2pm & 7:30pm

WEDNESDAY 24 MARCH 2021 7:30pm

THURSDAY 25 MARCH 2021 7:30pm

FRIDAY 16 MARCH 2021 7:30pm

SATURDAY 27 MARCH 2021 2pm & 7:30pm

*We recommend you arrive at the theatre at least 30 minutes prior to allow for QR barcode scanning and COVID-safe screening.

CAST

ADAM: Paul Mai
AMY: Claire Broderick
CAROLINE: Nicole De Villa
CATHERINE: Grace Chim
JENNY: Rosanna Lam
JULIE: Anne-Marie Cavaco
MIKE: Ethan Taylor
MIRA: Lisa-Marie Long
OLIVER: Matthew Yuen
PAUL: Jeremy Kindl
RYAN: Konrad Ryzak
SARA: Olivia McNamara

PRODUCTION TEAM CO-DIRECTOR: Helen Kim CO-DIRECTOR/CHOREOGRAPHER: Michael Osborne MUSIC DIRECTOR: Gianna Cheung
PRODUCER: Melody Duan STAGE MANAGER: Mellita Kang LIGHTING DESIGNER: Mehran Mortezaei LIGHTING OPERATOR: Emma Johnston
SOUND OPERATOR: Jacob Lawler RADIO MICROPHONE TECHNICIAN: Oliver Agbisit PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS: Veronica Clavijo, Edwin Tay,
Lisa-Marie Long, Ethan Taylor, Matthew Yuen, Nicole de Villa DANCE CAPTAIN: Olivia McNamara VOICE CAPTAIN: Jeremy Kindl SWINGS: Michael
Osborne & Melody Duan

CREDITS

Music & Lyrics by NEIL BARTRAM
Book by BRIAN HILL

The Theory of Relativity was developed at the Canadian Music Theatre Project, Sheridan College in Oakville, Ontario, Canada. Originally Produced by
Goodspeed Musicals, East Haddam, CT. The Musical was presented at the National Alliance for Musical Theatre's Festival of New Musicals in 2015.

The Theory of Relativity is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI)
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by Hal Leonard Australia.

GETTING TO THE THEATRE

PACT Centre for Emerging Artists is situated at 107 Railway Parade, Erskineville, NSW. Limited street parking available on site. The venue is
walking distance from Erskineville (250m), Newtown (900m) & Macdonaldtown (1km) train stations and there are a range of bus services and taxi
stand on Erskineville Road.

COVID-SAFE GUIDELINES

Whimsical Productions will ensure it follows the COVID safe plan to ensure all cast, crew and patrons are safe with hand sanitiser available and
regular cleaning of surfaces. We ask that patrons please wear a mask indoors and maintain a safe distance from each other. The venue capacity will
be 50% to maintain social distancing and will be monitored closely.

Please refer to the latest COVID guidelines on the PACT website <http://www.pact.net.au/>

Contacts

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