

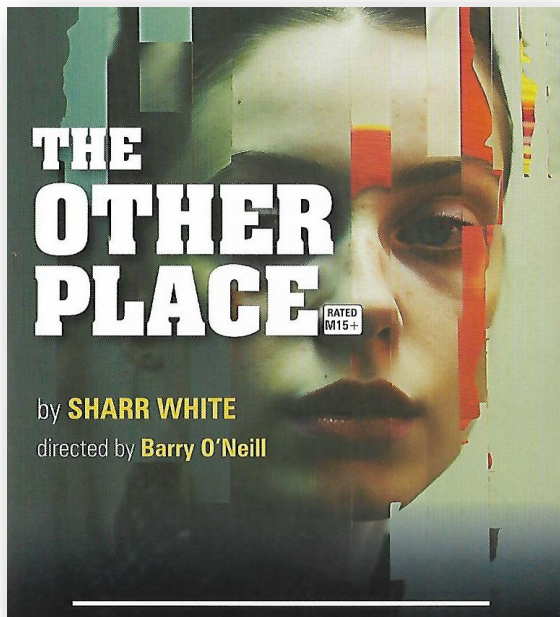
The Q Sheet

March 2026



Newsletter of
Mordialloc Theatre Company Inc
mordialloctheatre@gmail.com
PO Box 80, Mentone, 3194
Bookings 9566 4440

OUR NEXT PRODUCTION



Brilliant neurologist, Juliana Smithton, is delivering a lecture promoting a blockbuster drug she has researched and developed, when she glimpses an unexpected guest in the audience who becomes a nervous distraction.

Humour is her defence mechanism as she faces a potential health crisis at a time when she suspects her husband, Ian, is having an affair.

Juliana reaches out to her estranged daughter, Laurel, but Ian's wariness and scepticism clashes with Juliana's desperate need for reconciliation.

As her marriage heads to a crisis point, Juliana is drawn to revisit "the other place", a house full of memories which reveal intriguing insights that help her to come to terms with her present challenges.

This beautiful play mixes pathos and humour as it invites us to unravel a mystery of blurred truths and memories, in an intriguing fast-paced drama.

Season Dates: MAY 7, 8, 9, ** 10, *, 13, 14, 15, & 16**

Bookings now open: <https://mordialloctheatre.com.au/> or call 9566 4440.

We are delighted to announce the cast of "The Other Place".

Kate Bowers as JULIANA
Stephen Shinkfield as IAN
Jessica Symonds as THE WOMAN
Nicholas Bowers as THE MAN

The Technical Crew
Matt Ahlgren – Stage Manager
Eli Bacher – Assistant Stage Manager
Darren Burgess – Lighting Design
Tim Long – Sound Design
Sheila Balis – Production Co-Ordinator
Rachel Negus – Assistant Production Co-Ordinator

Congratulations to all!



Proud supporter of
The Victorian Drama League.

"The Great Divide"

Victorian Drama League Review by Deborah Fabbro, 7 Mar 2026

Author: David Williamson

Director: Damian Jones

Drawing Australia's most prolific playwright, David Williamson, out from his previously announced retirement to make specific comment on the inequality in Australian society in present times and human greed, 'The Great Divide' premiered in 2024.

In typical Williamson style, it offers a keen insight into money, power and privilege in Australian society today and the economic divide and loss of values our communities are experiencing.

Set in the fictional coastal town of Wallis Heads, ruthless property developer Alex Whittle is plotting to develop land, that was reserved by the local Council for social housing, to create a golf course and country club, as well as luxury residences. She has the council "in her pocket" with the promise of money to create new council chambers but had not factored in having local resident Penny Poulter, a supermarket "shelf-stacker" and activist challenging her.

Like many modern plays, it is written with short scenes in multiple locations, which can present staging challenges; however this production overcame these well under Damian Jones' direction. His set concept, realised by Martin Gibbs, and the efficient stage management by Leigh Thompson and assistant, Jude Dillon, in resetting each scene kept the play moving along at a strong pace which befitted the delivery of the sharp, often humorous one-liners.

Linda Corrin's lighting design perfectly delineated the various acting spaces. She was also responsible for the excellent videography used at different points of the play and Tim Long's soundscape intimated the coastal location and used evocative music effectively. Clare Hutton coordinated appropriate costumes for the characters especially Alex's "power dressing" corporate outfits. She also, along with Jacqui Westwood, provided the minimal but relevant properties required.

Katherine Crouch gave a most believable performance as Penny, showing the passion and conviction the character felt for her community. I don't know whether it's in the writing, direction or the playing but, for me, Alex is perhaps a little too much of a parody, however Kate Lawson strutted the stage with suitable arrogance and made the most of the rants afforded this character though at times became just a little too shrill in her delivery.

Milla Pearl Sievers conveyed all the emotions of Penny's conflicted teenaged daughter Rachel well with good body language though, occasionally, her delivery of dialogue became a little stilted. Greg Barison portrayed Alan, the mayor of the town who is "in Alex's pocket" but does have just enough integrity to show some concerns over the planned development, in a nicely balanced performance.

As Grace, Alex's long-suffering PA of many years who becomes "the worm that turns", Alison Campbell Rate was a delight. Her timing and ability to be "acting" in the background without upstaging the main action was a lesson in flawless stagecraft. Completing the cast was Mick Miksad who played Brian, whose newspaper is close to folding, and also Joel, the moderator who chairs the television debate between Rachel and Alex. He was effectively different in both roles.

Overall, this was a strong production of a play that wrapped up just a little too neatly at the end but still provided an interesting observation of today's societal values, scruples, ethics and standards.

Congratulations



A heartfelt congratulations to this brilliant cast and crew of David Williamson's *The Great Divide*.

Word of mouth after the first week saw audience numbers swell to over 1,300!

Congratulations Damian Jones for stitching together a team whose success was a truly collaborative effort.

What The Audiences Said

CAROLE R. : Very topical play. Acting great and thoroughly enjoyed the production. Well done to all involved.

LINDSAY B. : I saw it on Saturday. Excellent play and very well acted and produced.

IRENE R. : I saw it last night, what a wonderful script and fantastic cast. Highly recommended!

TERRI B. : Intermission at the minute, and so far, it is great.

HELEN S. : Wonderful show.

ANNE H. : The comments from the audience, as I farewelled people were so positive and genuinely lovely to hear. Anyone involved in community theatre knows how much is involved behind the scenes and I'm very happy to have played a small part in this production. I'm really looking forward to coming back on Wednesday to enjoy it from the audience's seats with my family. Congratulations again to Damian Jones, Clare Hutton and all the cast and crew.

LOUISE B. : Wonderful play worth seeing.

TONY R. : Saw the stage show on Saturday night with my partner absolutely loved it.

KAREN B. : Fabulous production! Well done to all, very entertaining.

ANNE N. : Huge congratulations to Damian Jones and the team for a job well done! And of course Clare Hutton.

NOLA B. : It was wonderful. Great acting and a great script that everyone could relate to.

DAVID P. : I saw it on Sunday. Excellent. Highly recommended. Great acting. A play still very relevant today if not more so.

SUSAN R. : Congratulations.

CHERYL P. : What a star Miroslav Miksad!

HARRY K. : Great show. Well done to everyone involved

Stage Manager Required

Our third play of the year, "The Truth" will be presented in July and we're looking for a Stage Manager. If you're interested in getting involved in a play described as "a delicious comedy", please contact the production co-ordinator, Geoff Arnold- geoffarnold51@gmail.com

Thank You

The Mordialloc Theatre Company would not be able to operate without the invaluable contributions from our volunteers.

A big thank you to our hard-working set building team members for their time, effort and skills with another efficient bump out of a set, this time for The Great Divide.

Thank you, Martin Gibbs, Alan Rook, Hugh Bramwells, Jack Katzfey, Jean Johnson, Michael Tobin, Michael Kakogiannis, David Swalwell, Sheila Balis, Ivan Harris and Peter Le Breton.

If anyone is interested in being part of our set-building crew for our next production, please let us know. Contact- mordialloctheatre@gmail.com

A big thank you to our dedicated Front-of House volunteers who do such a great job and always with a smile!

Thanks to –

Helen Blandy, David Swalwell, Lorna Newham, Sheila Balis, Jeanne Eriwata, Annette Le Breton, Shona Smith, Irene Riemer, Lyn Laister, Barbara Crawford, Rob Coulson, Juliet Hayday, Carol Shelbourn, Lyn Semler, Christine Simmonds, Rachel Negus, Christine Bridge, Marjorie Winslade, Jane Thomas, Glenda McDonald, and many thanks to Anne Hutton, Andrew Alexander and Kirsten Jansen-McMaster for stepping in at the last minute.

A big thank you to Lyn Laister for organising the roster for The Great Divide.

If you're interested in organising the roster for upcoming productions or being part of the FOH crew, please contact us at- mordialloctheatre@gmail.com

A big thank you to our resigning Board member, Alan Rook for his efforts over the years. We are grateful that he has committed to continue his work with the set-building team. His contribution to the Mordialloc Theatre Company is greatly valued and appreciated.

Another big thank you to Barbara Crawford for her invaluable work maintaining and updating the Mordialloc Theatre Company website. For information on our remaining productions for 2026, upcoming auditions, ticket bookings and latest news, check out our website- <https://mordialloctheatre.com.au>

Digging Deeper

After the Bombing of Darwin in 1942, ARP groups were created throughout Australia. ARP stands for “Air Raid Precautions” and the groups were established to prepare civilians for air attacks and wartime emergencies. They were coordinated by local councils but supported by state and federal defence authorities.

Their responsibilities included:

- Air-raid wardens who patrolled neighbourhoods during alerts
- Enforcing blackout regulations so enemy aircraft could not identify targets
- First aid and casualty services
- Fire-fighting units trained to deal with incendiary bombs
- Rescue and demolition teams to clear rubble and free trapped people
- Public warning systems, including sirens and communication networks

Volunteers were mostly ordinary civilians: shopkeepers, teachers, factory workers, and retirees. Many women participated, particularly in medical and communications roles.

Melbourne was divided into ARP sectors, each managed locally by councils. Suburbs such as Mordialloc, Mentone, Parkdale, and Cheltenham had their own units and typical arrangements included:

- Local ARP headquarters in council buildings or halls
- Observation posts and watch points
- Air-raid shelters constructed in parks, near railway stations, and in industrial areas
- Training drills where volunteers practised evacuation and rescue procedures
- The city also conducted large public blackout exercises, where street lighting and house lights were extinguished to simulate wartime conditions.

ARP units became an important part of community organisation during the war. Because volunteers often had long waiting periods between alerts or drills, many groups organised social and fundraising activities, including:

- dances
- concerts
- variety nights
- amateur theatre performances

These events helped maintain morale, raise funds for wartime charities, and strengthen neighbourhood bonds. This is where many local theatre groups emerged.

The Mordialloc Theatre Company started in exactly this fashion. Founded in 1945, the company first operated as the Mordialloc Theatre Group, soon becoming known locally as the Mordialloc Players.

By the late 1960s the organisation adopted the more formal title of Mordialloc Theatre Company, under which it continues to produce plays today.

How did it start?

During the war, a group of local businessmen from Mordialloc had performed together as part of an ARP entertainment unit. After the war, they decided to create a theatre company.

They wanted to bring theatre to their community. Among them were pharmacist Jock McLorinan, delicatessen owner Harry Dunbar, dentist Barney Cohen, and solicitor Stan Payne. The first president of the new company was Ed Trait, the editor of the local newspaper.

Meetings were held in local halls. Actors were recruited from friends and neighbours.

And a movement was born.

By the mid-1940s, organised theatre became part of Mordialloc's cultural identity.

81 years and hundreds of plays later, we're still here. Volunteers still strengthening community bonds, still providing a social network and still delivering theatre to entertain, engage, inform and spark discussion.

Socrates said, “An unexamined life is not worth living”. All our plays invite you to examine the human condition; to question, to reflect, to empathise, to assess and to understand. That's why we believe that community theatre is important.

Creative Network

There have been some discussions about opportunities for community members to connect through creative activities, specifically in theatre and the performing arts.

We are currently exploring the possibility of establishing a creative hub where people with an interest in acting, writing or directing could come together in a supportive and collaborative environment. The idea is to create a space where individuals—whether beginners or those with experience—can meet, network, exchange ideas and develop their skills through shared learning and practical activities.

Such a hub could provide a valuable platform for creative expression while also strengthening community connections. Through informal workshops, script readings, collaborative projects and mentoring opportunities, participants could build confidence, refine their craft and form lasting creative partnerships.

It could be a network for actors who want to present scenes or work on scenes with other actors for an upcoming audition or screentest. Or just an opportunity to hone their acting skills.

It could be a place for writers to meet and seek feedback on their work from other writers.

It could include a network where writers want to hear their scenes delivered by actors and get essential feedback from the people delivering the lines.

It may even develop into a scenario where a writer working on a new piece can work in tandem with a director and actors to rehearse/

workshop the scene/s.

At this stage, we are simply seeking to gauge the level of interest within the community to see whether there is sufficient enthusiasm to bring this idea to life.

If you, or anyone you know, would be interested in participating, contributing ideas or helping shape this initiative, we encourage you to express your interest by sending an email to—breakingdownallthewalls@gmail.com and outline the particular area of interest that this program may have for you.

Digital Programmes

We were heartened to see so many patrons who attended "The Great Divide" make use of the downloadable programmes.

As previously mentioned, it's a positive step we can take to lessen our environmental footprint by cutting down on paper use. Many of the professional and community theatre companies have aligned with this more sustainable practice.

For those who have never used a QR code before, it's easier to access than you might think.

You simply open the camera on your smartphone and aim it at the QR code, like the one below. It doesn't matter if the QR code is printed on a piece of paper or if it appears on a computer screen; if your camera can see it, then it can also read it.

Once you have your phone pointed at the QR code, a small text box will appear on your screen and you simply touch it to activate it. Different phones have different worded messages pop up, but all you have to do is touch the message or icon as it appears on your phone's screen.

We've included the QR code icon below, so if you've never scanned one before, you can try now.



VOLUNTEERS ALWAYS WELCOME



Have you ever wondered about working with a theatre company?

The Mordialloc Theatre Company is celebrating it's 80th year. That's 80 years of mounting plays for the community. Over that time we've had so many volunteers help with -

- *Building sets: skilled or unskilled.
- *Working Front-of-House: greeting patrons, preparing and offering refreshments.
- *Wardrobe: sourcing, adjusting or transporting.
- *Creating, modifying or transporting props- large or small.
- *Stage managing or assisting crew.
- *Sound and Lighting operation.
- *Marketing skills.
- *Distributing flyers.

If you think you might be able to assist as a volunteer in any of these roles, or if you have other skills that you could contribute, or if you would just like more information, contact us at mordialloctheatre@gmail.com

WHAT'S ON

Malvern Theatre Co. Inc.

The Visit

17 April – 2 May 2026

www.malvernthatre.com.au

Lilydale Athenaeum Theatre Co. Inc.

The Female Of The Species

23 April – 9 May 2026

www.lilydalesathenaem.com.au

Heidelberg Theatre Company

The Girl On The Train

25 April – 9 May 2026

www.heidelbergtc.org.au

Eltham Little Theatre Inc.

A Tomb With A View

1–16 May 2026

www.elthamlittletheatre.org.au

The Basin Theatre Group Inc.

Switzerland

16–26 April 2026

www.basinthatre.au

The 1812 Theatre Ltd.

Summer Of The Aliens

9 April—2 May 2026

www.1812theatre.com.au

Beaumaris Theatre Inc

Chalkface

6– 21 March 2026

www.beaumaristheatre.com.au

Brighton Theatre Company

Wicked Sisters

15– 30 May 2026

www.brightontheatre.com.au