



A Queensland Theatre Company production
Book by Carolyn Burns
Music and lyrics by Tim Finn
Based on Madeleine St John's novel, *The Women in Black*
Directed by Simon Phillips

***Ladies in Black* cast complete as Tamlyn Henderson signs on**

Sydney | Brisbane | Melbourne | Canberra 2017

Director: Simon Phillips
Musical Director: David Young Orchestrations: Guy Simpson
Designer: Gabriela Tylesova Lighting Designer: David Walters

The 2017 cast for the acclaimed and Helpmann-award winning *Ladies in Black* is now complete with the announcement today by Director **Simon Phillips** that WAAPA graduate and rising Australian star of the stage and screen **Tamlyn Henderson** will play the character of Frank.

Mr Henderson joins a stellar cast for the national tour of the Queensland Theatre production which opens in Sydney on January 3, 2017 for its premiere season in the city in which the story is based. The show will then return for an encore season to Brisbane from January 28, before another encore season in Melbourne from February 25, and to Canberra from March 27.

Featuring original music from legendary singer songwriter, **Tim Finn** OBE (Split Enz, Crowded House), the musical is based on **Madeleine St John's** 1993 novel, *The Women in Black*, and brought to life by Australian screenwriter **Carolyn Burns** together with Phillips and Finn.

Mr Henderson most recently played the role of Wild Bill Hickok in *Calamity Jane* (Neglected Musicals) and was in the Perth Season of *Sound of Music* for GFO. Throughout 2015 and 16 he has toured Australia and Asia with *Les Miserables* (Cameron Mackintosh). He is one half of the surreal comedy duo Allsopp & Henderson, whose shows have been performed widely around Australia - including the Sydney Opera House, Malthouse Theatre, and at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival - and overseas, at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and the Soho Theatre in London. His film and TV credits include *Careless Love* (John Duigen), *Cedar Boys*, *Redfern Now*, *All Saints*.

Revisiting the role of Lisa, the young starry eyed school-leaver, is Queensland-born rising star, **Sarah Morrison**. Sarah studied Opera at the Queensland Conservatorium after high school, and then moved to Victoria to follow her first love in musical theatre. In this her first pivotal role, she has won acclaim and ovation.

The brilliant **Bobby Fox**, who wowed audiences playing Frankie Valli in the smash hit, *Jersey Boys*, also returns as Rudi (otherwise known as the 'Continental') along with the multi-talented and award-winning artist **Carita Farrer Spencer** who will play Mrs Miles, and fellow Queensland graduate and music and stage star **Kathryn McIntyre** who will play Myra. Accomplished Melbourne-based actor **Greg Stone** (*Once*, *The Weir*, *The Glitch*) takes on the dual roles again as Mr Miles and Stefan, and joining him from the southern state **Kate Cole** again takes to the stage as the characters Miss Cartwright and Joy.

Also new to the cast for the Australian tour is the leading lady of stage and screen **Natalie Gamsu** (*Strictly Ballroom, Mary Poppins, Dr Zhivago, Neighbours*) who will play the character of Magda, as well as Sydney-based **Madeleine Jones** who was nominated for a Helpmann Award in 2015 for her work in *Once*. She will play Patty. Taking the role of Fay is leading singer and stage performer, **Ellen Simpson**, who was most recently seen as Renee Geyer on television screens in the blockbuster tele series, *Molly*. One of Australia's most acclaimed stars of the stage and screen, the multi-award winning actor **Trisha Noble**, will play the dual roles of Miss Jacobs and Mrs Crown.

The world premiere of *Ladies in Black*, the stylish story of fashion, friendship and 1950s Australia took place in Brisbane in November 2015 with the frock-fest signalling a stunning and triumphant return of musical theatre for the company. Just recently *Ladies in Black* won the coveted Helpmann Award for Best New Australian Work and was nominated for another five awards.

The show features over 20 original songs written by Tim Finn and a stunning range of some 30 custom-designed and created dresses and suits. The genesis of *Ladies in Black* actually happened at the Brisbane Airport – Tim Finn was famously looking for a book to read, bought *The Women in Black* and on reading it, was compelled to call Simon Phillips and plant the seed for a stage production. On the plane, he started writing the music. The rest is history.

The Story:

With a dash of delicate comedy, *Ladies in Black* is a magical modern-day fairytale set in a stylish department store - F.G. Goodes - in a city on the cusp of becoming cosmopolitan: Sydney is crossing the threshold between the stuffy repression of the 1950s and the glorious liberation of the 1960s. Donning a distinguished black dress, the bright-eyed, bookish school leaver Lisa is about to join the ranks on the sales floor of the city's most prestigious department store – temporarily, of course. Her domineering dad intends to railroad her into a career as a secretary, but Lisa has grander schemes in mind. In that summer of innocence, a world of possibilities opens up as she befriends the unlucky Fay and the frustrated Patty; and the exotic, compelling European refugee, Magda, mysterious mistress of the model gowns, who takes Lisa under her wing. From the Christmas rush to the chaos of the sales, these women stand shoulder to padded shoulder and together learn lessons in life, love and longing – and at the end, it's not just the fancy frocks that are forever altered.

***Ladies in Black* – national tour**

Cast Includes: Kate Cole, Carita Farrer Spencer, Bobby Fox, Natalie Gamsu, Madeleine Jones, Kathryn McIntyre, Trisha Noble, Ellen Simpson, Greg Stone, Tamlyn Henderson and Sarah Morrison as Lisa.

Website: ladiesinblack.com.au #ladiesinblack2017

Sydney – Sydney Lyric Theatre

3 – 22 January 2017

Phone: 1300 795 267

Ticketmaster.com.au or sydneyfestival.org.au

Brisbane – Playhouse, QPAC

28 January – 19 February 2017

Phone: 136 246 or queenslandtheatre.co.au

Melbourne – Regent Theatre

25 February – 18 March 2017

Phone: 1300 111

Canberra – Canberra Theatre Centre

27 March – 2 April 2017

Phone: (02) 6275 2700 or canberratheatrecentre.com.au

The best Aussie musical since Priscilla went global – *The Age*
An immensely engaging score filled with generous melodies – *The Australian*
A theatrical triumph – *The Courier-Mail*
This is an ensemble of world class quality – *Limelight Magazine*
Tim Finn is a musical genius – *The Courier-Mail*
Heart-warming, funny and charmingly Australian – *The Music*

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