

# QUEENSLAND THEATRE

## Queensland Theatre delivers a thrilling interpretation of Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

**UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 09:00, FEBRUARY 8TH TUESDAY, 2022**

**8th February, 2022:** This month Queensland Theatre will bring new life to Edward Albee's classic *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* when the show opens on Saturday, February 12 at the Playhouse QPAC, with performances through to February 26.

*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* delivers a voyeuristic view of the seismic undoing of marriage. A young couple, Nick and Honey, are drawn into a boozy evening with the older, wiser, more sophisticated George and Martha. The conversation is wild, the barbs grow vicious, and by the time the sun rises, all secrets will be laid bare and none of them will ever be the same again.

One of the greatest leading men in the country, and proud Queenslander, Jimi Bani (*Our Town, My Name Is Jimi, Mabo, The Straits*) will take on the role of George, made famous by Richard Burton in the epic film.

"I'm so excited to step into the shoes of George for *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* The story is an exciting and brutally honest insight into the reality of all our hidden feelings and I can't wait to share that with everyone here in my home state," said Bani.

In a superb performance, "Bani has, in these early scenes, a light, mischievous style that would lull you into a false sense of security if you didn't know what was coming," John McCallum, *The Australian*

Bani will also grace Queensland stages in late 2022 as the lead for Queensland Theatre's uniquely Australian adaptation of Shakespeare's *Othello*, presented as part of Brisbane Festival.

Opposite Bani, in the titanic role of Martha is AACTA Award winning co-star Susan Prior (*Suddenly Last Summer, Rifle Mind* (in Australia and on the West End), *The Rover, Glitch, Puberty Blues*) as Martha. Her performance has been described as "enigmatic and coruscating", and together they deliver a moving night in the theatre that asks all of us to contemplate the question, 'When do we finally tell the truth?'

Playing the young couple embroiled in the sizzling drama will be Rashidi Edward as Nick and Juanita Navas-Nguyen as Honey.

Director Dr Margaret Harvey brings a fresh and unique vision to Albee's classic, updating the setting and cast from sixties era America to a diverse, modern Australia, delivering a pertinent commentary on culture and race relations in our country.

"What I've found really interesting in the casting for *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* was this incredible opportunity to bring this nearly 60-year-old play into a modern context," said Harvey.

"Albee never intended to write about race but by casting this play cross-racially, we explore deeper

# QUEENSLAND THEATRE

layers of the text, revealing a race-power dynamic which is incredibly relevant to conversations about the state of Australia today.”

Queensland Theatre Artistic Director, Lee Lewis, says it’s fitting to open the 2022 Season with a celebration of Queensland talent in an expertly retold classic.

“We are so proud to mark the start of the 2022 Season with this gripping production of *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* from State Theatre Company South Australia, and to welcome Queensland actor Jimi Bani home. Every time Jimi steps into a role, he brings it to life in a unique and deeply authentic way. He is a true master of his craft.” said Lewis.

Tickets are available now for performances throughout February via <https://queenslandtheatre.com.au/plays/whos-afraid-of-virginia-woolf>

*Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* is a State Theatre Company South Australia production.

**ENDS**

**For Media Enquiries or Requests Please Contact:**

Nicholas Price,  
[nprice@ivypr.com.au](mailto:nprice@ivypr.com.au)  
0432 482 003