

MARK  
DEANS

SIMON  
LAHERTY

SARAH  
MAINWARING

SCOTT  
PRICE

BACK TO BACK PICTURES PRESENTS

# SHADOW

THERE IS NOWHERE DARKER  
THAN THE FUTURE



BACK TO BACK PICTURES in association with BACK TO BACK THEATRE present SHADOW directed by BRUCE GLADWIN screenplay by MICHAEL CHAN MARK DEANS  
BRUCE GLADWIN SIMON LAHERTY SARAH MAINWARING SCOTT PRICE SONIA TEUBEN director of photography & editor RHIAN HINKLEY musical composition by LUKE  
HOWARD TRIO costume design SHIO OTANI producer ALICE FLEMING associate producer MERET HASSANEN assistant producer PIPPA WRIGHT executive producers BRUCE GLADWIN TIM STITZ



BACK  
TO  
BACK  
THEATRE



## SHADOW — PRESS KIT

# Shadow

Australia's internationally acclaimed Back to Back Theatre, a professional theatre company with an ensemble of actors with disabilities at its core, has produced its debut feature-length film, SHADOW.

Directed by Bruce Gladwin, SHADOW is a darkly humorous 56-minute film based on Back to Back Theatre's award-winning stage play THE SHADOW WHOSE PREY THE HUNTER BECOMES (2019), which was developed, in part, at the 2019 Sundance Theatre Lab at MASS MoCA, and was described by *The New York Times* as "extraordinary".

THE SHADOW WHOSE PREY THE HUNTER BECOMES was co-conceived and co-authored by Back to Back Theatre's professional ensemble: Michael Chan, Mark Deans, Sarah Mainwaring, Scott Price, Simon Laherty and Sonia Teuben, together with Gladwin.

The piece was adapted for film by the cast and director with script consultants Madeline Stuart, Louise Gough and Melissa Reeves. SHADOW was co-funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services, and the City of Greater Geelong through the Arts & Culture Department's Arts Industry Commissions Program in partnership with UNESCO Creative City of Design.

SHADOW stars Back to Back's professional ensemble, with Scott Price, Simon Laherty and Sarah Mainwaring in lead roles. The film also features new ensemble member Breanna Deleo, theatre veteran Brian Lipson as The Reporter and Belinda McClory (THE DOCTOR BLAKE MYSTERIES) as the voice of the sinister A.I.

## Director's statement

SHADOW uses a combination of dramatic and documentary-style elements to tell the story of a group of activists who hold a public meeting only to discover their own prejudices are their biggest obstacles to saving the world. Thematically, we wanted to understand individual and collective responsibility and question how we come together to make decisions that are in the best interests of society.

As artists we are seeking alternative models of story creation and screen production. Created over two and a half years through conversation and improvisation, the performers are also the co-authors, 95% of the people on screen are people with disabilities, and the majority of the crew roles are fulfilled by interns who identify as people with disabilities supported by professional mentors.

The narrative thematic and the film's philosophical approach to the process of creation are intrinsically linked. This is community filmmaking.



# Tagline

There is nowhere darker than the future.

# Logline

A group of activists hold a public meeting, desperate to save the world. As the meeting unravels, they discover the greatest threat to their future is already in the room.

# Synopsis

Simon, Scott and Sarah, a trio of activists with intellectual disabilities, hold a town hall meeting about the future impacts of artificial intelligence. Simon, considering himself a saviour for the community, quickly appoints himself the mayor, and Scott reluctantly steps into the role of facilitator, but soon becomes enamoured with his own power and begins to dismiss the experiences of others. Sarah, often overlooked and underestimated by her counterparts, explodes, confronting the self-appointed leaders on their inadequacies. What begins as a polite discussion quickly descends into bickering and chaos, seemingly provoked by a force within. Sarah acts to unite the group, only to realise the battle to get their message across may be lost already.

*“When artificial intelligence overtakes human intelligence,  
how will people be treated?”*



# Ensemble bios

## **MARK DEANS is Mark:**

Mark is a comic performer of rare talent and exquisite timing, and as the longest standing member of the Back to Back ensemble, he has devised and played some of the groups most memorable characters. Mark joined Back to Back Theatre in 1989 and has toured with the company extensively both nationally and internationally.

Mark's extensive catalogue with Back to Back includes the legendary MR. SEPTEMBER (1997), the flatty inventor in MINDS EYE (1998), the intellectually declining Tom in MENTAL (1999), the infernally frustrated magician in COW (2002) and the enigmatic man from the future in SOFT (2002). He has co-devised and performed in FOOD COURT (2008), GANESH VERSUS THE THIRD REICH (2013), SUPER DISCOUNT (2013), LADY EATS APPLE (2016) and THE SHADOW WHOSE PREY THE HUNTER BECOMES.



## **SIMON LAHERTY is Simon:**

Simon's involvement with Back to Back Theatre started in 1999 with his participation in its community performance-making group, Theatre of Speed. Apart from his incredible performances with Back to Back Theatre, he is recognised for his work in film and TV including Matthew Saville's feature film NOISE.

Since joining the ensemble in 2003, Simon has made an enormous contribution to the company's major works catalogue, particularly in SMALL METAL OBJECTS (2005), which has travelled to 36 cities around the world. Simon is also a co-devisor and performer in the critically acclaimed GANESH VERSUS THE THIRD REICH and LADY EATS APPLE, co-starred in Back to Back's first foray into film, ODDLANDS, and co-wrote & performed in THE SHADOW WHOSE PREY THE HUNTER BECOMES.



**SARAH MAINWARING is Sarah:**

Sarah has a Bachelor of Arts (Performing Arts) from Victoria University, and has a particular interest in avant-garde and physical theatre. She has developed a number of original solo performances including FOREIGN BODY (directed by John Bolton) and I'M ME and I'M OKAY and OUT ON A LIMB (directed by Lloyd Jones).

Sarah joined the Back to Back Theatre ensemble in 2007, played the lead role of Lesley in Back to Back Theatre's FOOD COURT and has toured both nationally and internationally with the DEMOCRATIC SET RESIDENCY and LADY EATS APPLE. Sarah has played a collaborative role in the creative development of GANESH VERSUS THE THIRD REICH, SUPER DISCOUNT and as creator and performer in the company's most recent major work, THE SHADOW WHOSE PREY THE HUNTER BECOMES.

**SCOTT PRICE is Scott:**

Scott began working with Back to Back's community performance—making group Theatre of Speed in 2005 and joined the Back to Back ensemble in 2007.

In 2015, Scott created PRICE, a video blog whereby Scott interviews nine Australian and international artists, performers, political leaders and activists. PRICE was a finalist in the 2016 Australian Multi-cultural Marketing Awards.

Scott's forte is in devised performance, improvising text and creating characters such as the young man in FOOD COURT and God in LADY EATS APPLE. Since joining the professional Ensemble, Scott has co-devised and performed in TOUR GUIDE (2009), which premiered in Linz, Austria, GANESH VERSUS THE THIRD REICH which has toured to 31 cities internationally, SUPER DISCOUNT and THE SHADOW WHOSE PREY THE HUNTER BECOMES.





**BREANNA DELEO is the Documentary Director:**

Breanna is eighteen years old. Born in Geelong, Breanna went to Grovedale West Primary School until Year 5 then transferred to Nelson Park School, a school for young people with intellectual disabilities, where she was school captain.

Breanna first connected with Back to Back during a residency at Nelson Park School, where she created and voiced the principal character in a radio play that was broadcast on local radio. Breanna then became an invaluable member of Back to Back's Theatre of Speed, an experimental laboratory for performance-making, before joining the ensemble in 2021. During this time, she has been an Assistant Producer for the company's RISING Festival retrospective, mentored Year 10 students at Nelson Park School during another residency that Back to Back undertook, assisted with auditioning new members for Back to Back projects, and starred in the company's first feature film, SHADOW.

## Other collaborators

**BELINDA MCCLORY is A.I.:**

A multi award-winning Australian actor, Belinda McClory has worked for over twenty years in theatre, film and television, with roles as diverse as the bleach-blonde shapeshifter Switch in THE MATRIX (1999) to performing opposite Cate Blanchett on stage in Paris and London. Belinda continues to work with Australia's major theatre companies, though she is best known for her screen portrayal of Dr. Alice Harvey across five series of THE BLAKE MYSTERIES. Recent work includes the role of Queen Gertrude in BECAUSE THE NIGHT, a year-long immersive theatrical event at the Malthouse Theatre in Melbourne. Belinda also contributed to Back to Back's debut short film, ODDLANDS, as the voice of corporate juggernaut, Civix.

**BRIAN LIPSON is The Reporter:**

A theatre veteran, Brian has been nominated for nine Green Room Awards and won four, and has been the recipient of an Australia Council Fellowship. He has toured widely and received acclaim at festivals in Australia and overseas. An accomplished writer, designer and performer, Brian performs regularly in film and TV, and works with independent companies including The Family, Hayloft, Eleventh Hour, Stuck Pigs Squealing, Chunky Move and Back to Back.

# The production

In 2020, Back to Back Theatre's intense international touring schedule was put on hold thanks to the global lockdown. When the Victorian lockdown was lifted in October, the company were able to prioritise the film production of SHADOW, one of the few positives to come out of the pandemic.

Filmed on location in and around Geelong across three weeks in December 2020, SHADOW ambitiously builds upon the success of Back to Back's debut short film, ODDLANDS, creating a feature film that is provocative and challenging, and opportunities for people with disabilities both in front of the camera and behind the scenes.

**Alice Fleming**, Producer of the SHADOW film: "SHADOW is an avenue to provide paid and meaningful opportunities for people with disabilities in the film industry. Even though we are making a compelling film, the priority is to provide an environment that is about learning, and to showcase an inclusive filmmaking practice and model."

The process of transforming the theatre work into a feature film was a highly collaborative process, with a creative team carefully structured around mentorships, and several departments featuring a mentor and a mentoree.

In mid-2020, Back to Back put out a call for people with disabilities who were interested in or had some kind of experience working on film. They received applications from 40 individuals from all over the country.

Fleming explained the first part of the process: "We had a conversation with each individual interested in a technical department about what they might be interested in and, if they'd had experience in film or TV, what were the barriers they might be able to identify, and what could we do to remove them. We didn't want to assume to know what is best for any one individual seeking this experience. It was a learning experience for us as well, and sometimes quite depressing to hear the barriers to entry and barriers to further pathways for those who'd had some significant experience on sets before.

"Sometimes it was about working out what someone might be interested in doing in a more general way; that person may have never deliberately considered something equivalent had existed on a film set, or would propose something adjacent to their existing interests and skills.

"The second part was forming the team around them to support that experience so the environment was one that nurtured those learning experiences. It's not just about those mentees though; we hope that everyone on set, including the mentors, will now consider new ways of working to create more inclusive film sets."



**Meret Hassanen**, Associate Producer of Back to Back Theatre/Pictures: “Since starting in the industry, I’ve become increasingly aware of how disability is approached and portrayed. The notion that we must present disability through a particular lens has severely impacted the way in which employment opportunities for people with disability are created. In order to achieve true inclusivity, stories should include characters with disability, rather than stories being about disability. Having key creatives in front of and behind the camera are crucial to breaking down current industry barriers.”

A crucial member of the SHADOW team was Production Supervisor and Internship Mentor, **John Cumming**, who supported the two camera teams — each with a camera operator and a camera assistant, working alongside Director of Photography **Rhian Hinkley** to give what Gladwin described as “a crash course in cinematography”.

Cumming explained his role as “helping the interns to get familiar with the particular camera we’re using and the rest of the production team, and the process of making a film... Very quickly it became apparent that we would just start using the cameras, that thing of learning through practice.”

**Liam White and Nikita Veitch**, Camera Interns: “We are learning from John. We have learned about focusing the camera on a particular person and the different views that we can get from different points of the studio. We’ve learned about the lenses, how to put them on and what ones we need for some of the shots. We’ve also been learning about the wide shots, angles, close-ups.”

Designer **Shio Otani** was the mentor for Wardrobe Intern **Aaron Lucas**. “A costume intern does all sorts of tasks related to costuming and wardrobe,” said Lucas, “dressing people, making sure that costumes are pressed appropriately, looking out for marks that shouldn’t be on the costumes, taking stuff from place to place and assisting with fittings... Having supportive people that you can talk to at virtually any time that you have an issue has been really helpful.”

**Eden Menta**, Make Up and Art Department Intern: “This is the first film set I have worked on. My mentor is Mandi [Dempster]. She’s extremely nice and patient, I call her ‘The Make-up Mother’. It’s important for people with disabilities to work behind the camera as well because we want a shot too, we have hopes and dreams as well, and if we can do something that we love then that’s our dream come true.”

### **Internships ‘Behind the Scenes’ featurette:**

Featurette: <https://vimeo.com/579715392/27c460cfb3>

Short version: <https://vimeo.com/579707873/91fc54f63c>

# Key creatives

## **BRUCE GLADWIN — Writer and Director**

Bruce specialises in the development of adventurous theatrical work, working as director, designer and writer. For Back to Back Theatre he has created MENTAL, DOG FARM (2000), SOFT, SMALL METAL OBJECTS, FOOD COURT, THE DEMOCRATIC SET, GANESH VERSUS THE THIRD REICH, SUPER DISCOUNT, LADY EATS APPLE and THE SHADOW WHOSE PREY THE HUNTER BECOMES. Gladwin's works with Back to Back Theatre have toured extensively, including presentations at the world's preeminent contemporary arts festivals and cultural venues.

He collaborated with Rosemary Myers at Arena Theatre Company to develop the Anthropop trilogy (AUTOPSY, MASS and PANACEA), which has been recognised for its dynamic integration of technology and theatre. In 1999, the trilogy garnered the prestigious ASSITEJ International Honorary President's Award for inspiring, provocative and experimental ways of expressing a new theatrical language. Bruce's other credits include THE ISLAND with Lano & Woodley, BLUE RINSE CLUB with MOMO (Museum of Modern Oddities) for the 2004 Melbourne International Arts Festival, ROAD MOVIE for Melbourne Workers Theatre and Act Director for Circus Oz's New York season at the New Victory. In 2015, Bruce was awarded the Australia Council for the Arts' Inaugural Award for Outstanding Achievement in Theatre.

## **ALICE FLEMING — Producer**

Alice Fleming is a creative producer in theatre and film. Her producing practice is focused primarily on community-engaged projects. She has extensive experience in touring performance work to international markets. More recently, for Australia's Back to Back Theatre, she produced their first feature film SHADOW. Currently, she is producing a 20-part animation series with a group of young people who identify as having a disability that will feature on ABC TV in early 2022. She is currently co-designing a project in Berlin for the Humboldt Forum which will work with a group of young people over a five-year period.

## **MERET HASSANEN — Associate Producer**

Meret Hassanen is an Egyptian Australian filmmaker with cerebral palsy. She has a Bachelor of Media in Screen Practice and Production from Macquarie University. Meret has Associate Producer credits for feature films RHAPSODY OF LOVE and GET A LIFE, ALRIGHT! In 2020, she was an Associate Producer for Back to Back Pictures' film adaptation SHADOW. Meret thoroughly enjoyed working on SHADOW and was inspired by its everyday yet futuristic portrayal of disability activism. Since SHADOW, Meret has been a researcher and producer for the ABC, and developing her own portfolio.

### **TIM STITZ — Executive Producer**

Tim's recent history within the arts sector include positions within the Australian Performing Arts Market (APAM) Office, Arts Centre Melbourne and Creative Partnerships Australia. Tim was Creative Director & CEO of Chamber Made (2013–2018), and was involved in raising \$3.2 million for the rebuild of Melbourne's iconic La Mama Theatre, following the devastating 2018 fire. Tim is an alumni of the Asialink Leaders Program and the Australia Council Emerging Leaders Development Program, and a passionate advocate for intersectional representation, inclusion and access across all parts of the arts sector.

### **RHIAN HINKLEY — Cinematographer and Editor**

Rhian is a theatremaker and new media artist based in Melbourne. In 2009, he formed Encyclopaedia of Animals with Christopher Brown and they co-directed URCHIN (Arts Centre, 2010). Rhian is currently the Artistic Director of Nebula, a portable studio/theatrical space run by Arts Access Victoria. Rhian has a longstanding relationship with Back to Back Theatre, in design, animation and devising; THE SHADOW WHOSE PREY THE HUNTER BECOMES, GANESH VERSUS THE THIRD REICH, FOOD COURT and SOFT. His film credits include Radial Residencies (2017–2019), PORNSTAR (2002), BUCKSTOP (1997), FACE OF THE WEST (2000) and BOZ'N'HOK vs THEATRE PF SPEED (2005). His dance production credits include work for Trevor Patrick, BalletLaB, Sandra Parker Dance and Chunky Move.

### **JOHN CUMMING — Production Supervisor and Internship Mentor**

John Cumming is a Senior Lecturer in Screen and Design at Deakin University. John's independent documentaries and experimental–narrative short films have screened internationally and he has worked in feature, community, corporate, educational and commercial film and video production, served on the editorial boards of local and international publications, and worked with a number of film festivals, film and community media organisations. He served as Vice President and President of the Australian Screen Production Education and Research Association (ASPERA) and until 2018, was the course director of Film, Television and Animation at Deakin. He is coordinator of the Deakin Film, Television and Animation Archive.

### **SHIO OTANI — Costume Designer**

Shio Otani is passionate about craft and all things handmade. Originally from Japan, Shio works in diverse platforms such as theatre, dance, jewellery and textiles. She has designed costumes for some of Australia's leading companies and artists such as Back to Back Theatre, Chamber Made, Chunky Move, Lucy Guerin Inc. and Speak Percussion.



### **TAO WEIS — Art Director**

With over twenty years' experience of working in film and TV, Tao Weis has an excellent knowledge of the industry and what an art department requires in every aspect. He has worked in construction, dressings, props, grfx, spfx, vfx, with vehicles and animals, and managing teams and budgets. Tao has worked on feature and short films, TV and commercials, notably: THE DRY, CUT SNAKE, BARRACUDA, UPPER MIDDLE BOGAN, NOWHERE BOYS, KATH & KIM, BOYTOWN, GHOST RIDER.

### **LUKE HOWARD TRIO — Musical Score**

Performing together for 13 years, The Luke Howard Trio are Australian Music Prize long-listed composer Luke Howard, bassist Jonathan Zion and drummer Daniel Farrugia. In 2020, their EP THE SHADOW, a collaboration with Back To Back Theatre, debuted at #2 on the ARIA Jazz & Blues charts. In 2021, they release their fourth album, THE SANCTUARY, which blends elements of improvised and popular music.

## **About Back to Back Theatre**

Over the last thirty years, Back to Back Theatre has made a body of work that questions the assumptions of what is possible in theatre, but also the assumptions we hold about ourselves and others.

As an ongoing dialogue with our audience, each new project is an investigation seeking answers to questions raised in previous works. Our attention lies with design, light, and sound. The stories we pursue weave the personal, the political and the cosmic. We work to curiosity and interest in the live moment, to what sits within and between.

Seeking to make a body of work that exists in repertoire across time, the company tours extensively locally, nationally and internationally to the world's leading festivals and cultural institutions. Over the last decade, Back to Back Theatre has presented 48 national and 74 international seasons of its theatre works, receiving 18 national and international awards including Performance Studies International's Artist-Scholar-Activist Award, a Helpmann Award for Best Australian Work, an Edinburgh International Festival Herald Angel Critics' Award and a Green Room Award for Best Ensemble.

Back to Back Theatre is based in Geelong, Australia.

# Credits

A Back to Back Pictures Production

Director: Bruce Gladwin

Screenplay: Michael Chan, Mark Deans, Bruce Gladwin, Simon Laherty, Sarah Mainwaring, Scott Price, Sonia Teuben

Based on the Back to Back Theatre stage production

THE SHADOW WHOSE PREY THE HUNTER BECOMES

Producer: Alice Fleming

Director of Photography and Editor: Rhian Hinkley

Musical Composition: Luke Howard Trio (Luke Howard, Daniel Farrugia, Jonathan Zion)

Art Director: Tao Weis

Costume Designer: Shio Otani

Associate Producer: Meret Hassanen

Assistant Producer: Pippa Wright

Executive Producers: Bruce Gladwin, Tim Stitz

Mark: Mark Deans

Sarah: Simon Laherty

Sarah: Sarah Mainwaring

Scott: Scott Price

A.I.: Belinda McClory

Reporter: Brian Lipson

Documentary Director: Breanna Deleo

Life Drawing Teacher: Iris Walshe-Howling

Life Drawing Model: Phillip Besancon

George: Allan V. Watt

Annette: Annette McGovern

Jazz: Ben Chapman

Chris: Ben Oakes

Life Drawing Student: Brian Tilley

Kira: Caitlin Syer

Greg: Chris Hansen

Lee: Dan Wei

Life Drawing Student: Douglas Farquhar

Janine: Erin Pocervina

Clancy: Francesca Neri

Boom Operator: Harry Schaller

Sita: Jamila Main

Life Drawing Student: Jeremy Lang

Life Drawing Student: Jessica Cochran

Jean: Jessica Walker

Life Drawing Student: Jordana Langridge

Camera Operator: Kinnon McDermott

Camera Operator: Liam White

Life Drawing Student: Melissa Bath

Dev: Michael Siu

Cal: Nathan Evans

Jean: Nicholas Walsh

Camera Operator: Nikita Veitch

Moses: Noah Zvekic

Tea drinker: Paul Summers

Kevin: Robbie Croft

Life Drawing Student: Ryan Schmidtke

Sonny: Sarah Tunn

Simone: Tamika Simpson

Life Drawing Student: Venna Reynolds

Set Dresser: Anthony Hamilton–Smith  
Art Department Illustrator: Eden Menta  
Art Department Runner: Eza Bakker–Graham  
Art Department Runner: Kate Mulqueen  
Construction: Mark Cuthbertson  
Wardrobe Supervisor: Elysa McInnes  
Costume Design Assistant: Anna Pontelandolfo  
Wardrobe Assistant: Aaron Lucas  
Head of Hair & Makeup: Mandi Dempster  
Makeup Artist: Lauren Wynd  
Makeup Artist: Eden Menta  
Head of Sound: Manel Lopez  
Boom Operator: Lloyd Pratt  
Sound Assistant: Timothy Smith  
Lighting Technicians: Wilson Huang, Stephen  
Loats, Tamika Simpson

1st Assistant Director: Chris Odgers  
2nd AD & Safety Officer: Dans Sheehan  
3rd Assistant Directors: Tamara Searle,  
Ingrid Vorrendt  
AI Operator/Filming Assistant: Alana Hoggart  
Production Manager: Bao Ngouansavanh  
Production Supervisor: John Cumming  
Unit Nurse: Nikki Watson  
Artist Support: Kirston Honey  
Camera Intern Mentor: John Cumming  
Continuity: Annelise Farrer  
Covid Safety Officer: Lisa Couper  
Covid Safety Support: Debbie Balfour  
Gaffer: George Husband



# SHADOW

Trailer:

<https://vimeo.com/600859004/93dbbc8581>

Publicity:

Miranda Brown Publicity  
[miranda@mbpublicity.com.au](mailto:miranda@mbpublicity.com.au)

<https://backtobacktheatre.com>

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