

Sunnybank Theatre Group  
in association with ORiGiN Theatrical presents

Neil Simon's  
**Chapter Two**



Directed by Pam Cooper

14 - 29 June 2019



Sunnybank Theatre Group is a participant in the 2019 Gold Palm Theatre Awards

Chapter Two is Neil Simon's hit Broadway play which opened in 1977 and ran for 857 performances. It starred Judd Hirsch as George and Anita Gillette as Jennie.

It was no secret that Simon had based the story on his own life. Simon had lost his wife of 20 years, Joan, to cancer in 1973.

Without giving himself time to fully grieve the loss, Simon met and fell in love with actress Marsha Mason later that same year. After knowing each other only three weeks, the two married. Although their professional collaboration during their years together yielded several hit films including *The Goodbye Girl* (1977), *The Cheap Detective* (1978) and *Only When I Laugh* (1981), it became clear early on that there were serious problems in the marriage. Before he could write the play, Simon felt he had to go to Mason to get her consent. "If this was too personal to go public with, despite the fact that I would try to give the characters their own personalities separate from ours, I would still have to adhere to her wishes."

When he finally asked her, she said, 'It's fine with me because what you'd be telling is your story, not mine. You'd write about what was going on in your head and could only presume what was happening to me. If I want to tell my story, maybe I'll put it in my own book one day.' Simon was enormously grateful for her consent and encouragement, and although he knew he'd made no promises to her, he would have to treat the story as truthfully as he could.





## **PAM COOPER - DIRECTOR**

It never fails to amaze me how much we can do on our tiny stage! It's never easy but somehow we always seem to be able to pull it off. **The Sound Of Music, A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum, Noises Off, Brigadoon, Barefoot In The Park** and now **Chapter Two** which requires two rooms each from different apartments! It was Ashley's idea that we raised one side to make them completely different, but it was the expertise of John and Stuart who made it happen. It's wonderful how a plan comes together and it's my very talented cast, Brad, Nathaniel (Nate), Lesley and Mel, who have brought the whole project together with some remarkable stage craft. I consider myself extremely fortunate to be surrounded by such gifted thespians, so much so that I'm not sure what my input was, but I did attend every rehearsal and I've thoroughly enjoyed watching it evolve from four everyday hard working people to four amazing Neil Simon characters. This is a beautiful play covering many emotions and we hope you will enjoy it as much as we have enjoyed bringing it to you.



## **JENNIE - LESLEY DAVIS**

Lesley is no stranger to the theatre, having appeared on stage for the first time at the ripe old age of 6. She is undoubtedly a familiar face around STG, having been an active member for many years now, both on the stage and behind the scenes, including involvement on committees where she contributes to the future direction of Brisbane's friendliest theatre company. It is certainly a far cry from her 'day job', for which she rocks up every day to help keep the cogs of government in motion. She now looks forward to bringing the character of Jennie to life for you, in this beautiful comedy, one that in some ways the turning-point for the author, Neil Simon. Written as a tribute to Simon's second wife, and her tolerance with his long-lasting grief over the death of his first wife. So, sit back, relax, and enjoy what promises to be an emotionally charged journey into the lives of these four amazing characters.



## **GEORGE - BRAD OLIVER**

Brad became involved in Brisbane live theatre in 2015 quite by accident, when his wife Joanne asked him to fill in at a rehearsal for an actor who was ill at the time. He was then offered a role in that play and the rest "is history" as they say.

Since then he has performed in seven other plays and has become "hooked" on Community Theatre.

He has appeared in numerous productions at Sunnybank Theatre including **Are You Being Served**, **Twelve Angry Men**, **Keeping Up Appearances** and **God of Carnage**.

Brad says, "I have loved being a part of this wonderful Neil Simon Play. The audience will experience such a wide range of emotions from laughing to crying, and it has been a pleasure working with Pam and the cast".



## **FAYE - MELANIE PENNISI**

Mel has loved being a part of the STG family since 2016. Since then she's enjoyed performing in **Beyond Reasonable Doubt**, **Third Week in August**, **The 39 Steps**, **The Wedding Singer**, **Kindly Leave the Stage**, and earlier this year, **Done to Death**.

Mel is thrilled to have had the opportunity to work with Pam and the rest of the cast and crew to bring **Chapter Two** together. Playing Faye has allowed her to test out one of her childhood dreams of being an actress living a glitzy life in New York. But if Faye's life is anything to go by, maybe it's not as glossy as it seems!



## **LEO - NATHANIEL YOUNG**

Welcome, to Nathaniel's twentieth (count 'em!) production with Sunnybank Theatre Group since 2014, and his second Neil Simon production after **Barefoot in the Park** back in 2015. Among his numerous appearances are such performances as Juror 7 in **Twelve Angry Men**, Glen Guglia in **Wedding Singer**, a mass of characters in **The 39 Steps** and most recently Jason Summers in **Done to Death**. His directorial dabblings include **Beyond Reasonable Doubt** and **Keeping Up Appearances**, with a top secret project in October this year.



Outside STG, Nate has made the odd appearance with Centenary Theatre Group and Nash Theatre. He has written, produced and performed in shows as part of Brisbane Anywhere Festival and Short+Sweet.

Nate hopes you enjoy the show, and that you keep an eye out for the premiere of his new radio play **Tally Hall** at Sunnybank in August!

## **Crew**

Stage Manager	<b>Loretta Donnelly</b>
Lighting Design	<b>Joanne Sephton</b>
Lighting Operators	<b>Allan Hare</b>
	<b>Joanne Sephton</b>
Set Design	<b>Ashley Worsman</b>
Construction	<b>John Mordacz</b>
	<b>Stuart Sephton</b>
Set Dressing	<b>Lesley Davis</b>
	<b>Melanie Pennisi</b>
	<b>Loretta Donnelly</b>
Photography	<b>Kayleen Zoethout</b>
Program/Poster	<b>Chris O'Leary</b>

Special thanks to all of our wonderful volunteers who assist with many areas of the theatre - box office, ushering, greenroom and bar to name a few.





Like us on  
  
**Facebook**

If you love theatre like we do, come and join us.  
You'd be very welcome.

We're a great bunch of people who share a passion for the stage.

If acting isn't your thing, there are lots of other ways to be involved.

You could work back stage, or with sound and lighting.

You could help build sets, or make costumes.

Perhaps you could give a hand in the box office,  
or the bar, or show people to their seats.

You can be involved as much or as little as you want,  
but we would love you to be involved.

Talk to one of our volunteers, call us on 3345 3964,  
email us at [info@stg.org.au](mailto:info@stg.org.au),  
or chat to us on Facebook (search for @sunnybanktheatre).



# Tally Hall Radio Plays

by Nathaniel Young  
and Richard Williams

director **Chris O'Leary**  
**August 2 - 10**



# Shining Lights

director **Nerida Day**  
**August 16 - 24**