

1996 Melbourne Fringe Festival

THE MEETING PLACE

Direction by Justin Conkey

Cast

Tim Constantine	...	Simon
Irene Guziwski	...	Kym
Paul Henderson	...	Adam Aitkin
Luke Jelleff	...	Booga
Simon Laidler	...	Craig Anderson / Red
Clare O'Sullivan	...	Michelle Anderson
Elizabeth Penny	...	Sheryl Anderson
Raphael Sammut	...	Rick Anderson
Adam Turnbull	...	David Anderson

Venue

East Melbourne Hotel
Corner Hotham & Hoddle Streets
East Melbourne, Victoria
Australia

Performances

October 1996

Wednesday 9th to Sunday 13th
Wednesday 16th to Sunday 20th

Award

Special Recommendation - Melbourne Fringe Performance Arts Awards

Crew

Sound	...	Darren Brealey
Technician	...	Nick Arnott
Front of House	...	Yulia Avetisova
Front of House	...	Vanda
Producer	...	Darren Brealey

1996

The Meeting Place

Darren Brealey wrote

his first script,

a full length play,

over a three year period,

then produced it in the

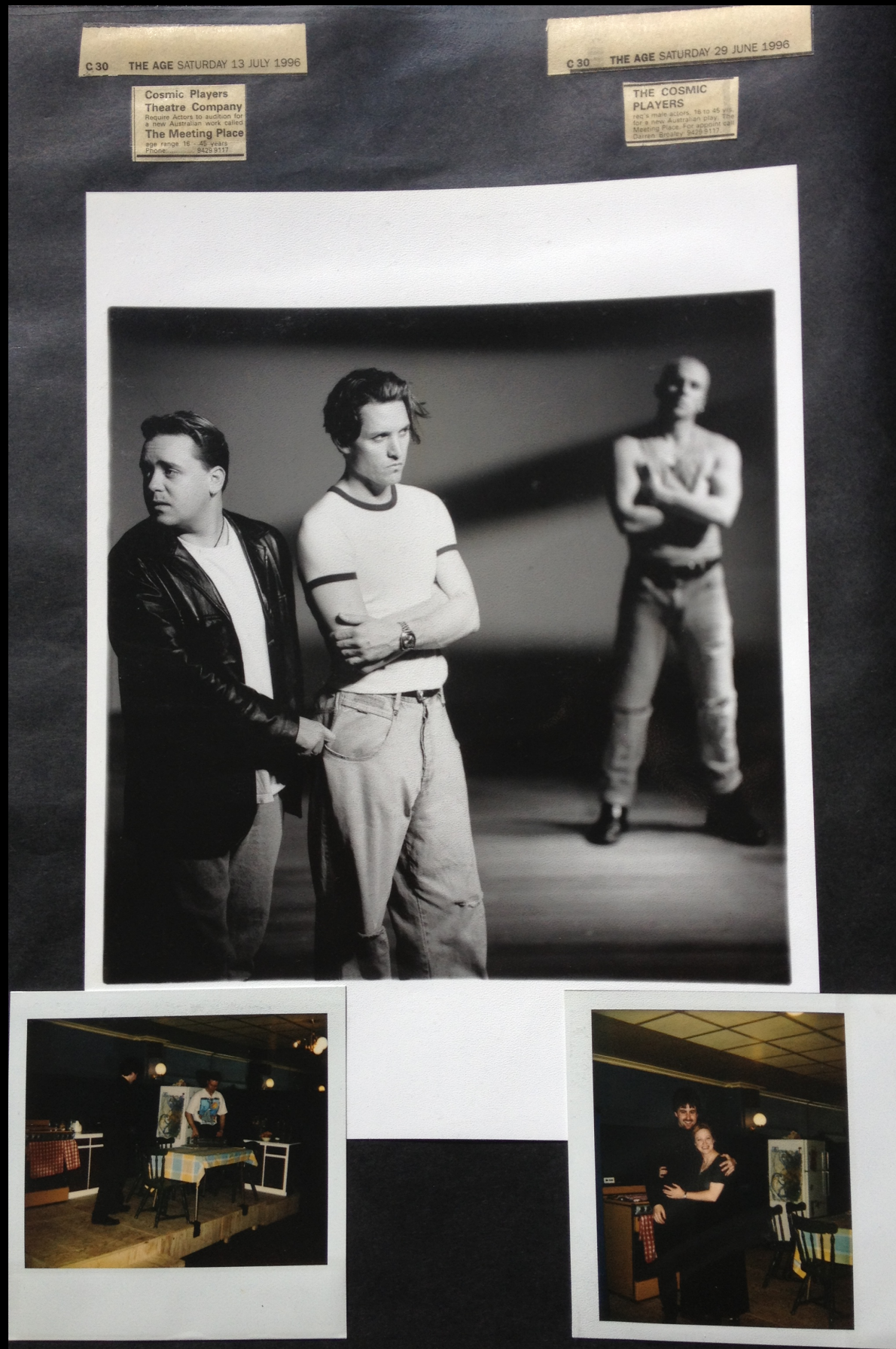
1996 Melbourne Fringe Festival, Australia

The Meeting Place

1996 Melbourne Fringe Festival

Directed by Justin Conkey.

Mr Conkey inspired
and educated a
new playwright in the art of
editing and producing.





The Meeting Place

1996 Melbourne Fringe Festival

The cast and crew collaborated to bring to fruition this new story with great professionalism and family passion.

The Meeting Place

1996 Melbourne Fringe Festival

As a Fringe Festival show,

no one was paid

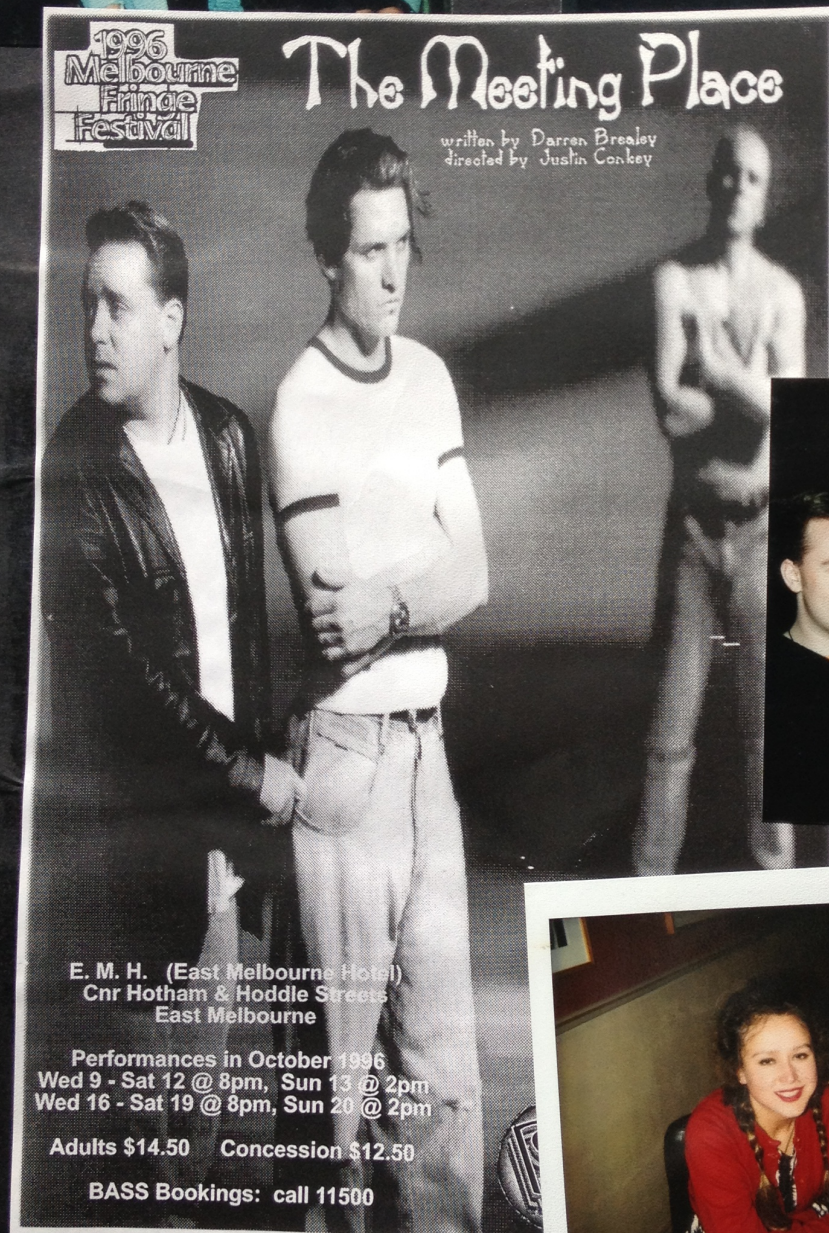
for their artistic services

although they were

financially compensated

at the completion

of the production.



The Meeting Place

1996 Melbourne Fringe Festival

Two original cast members were
fortunate to obtain paid acting
jobs during our production.

The only

logical decision was to allow
them to pursue their careers and
engage two new actors.

Darren Brealey



Darren has been passionate about the theatre since the age of four, attending classes with the Arena Theatre from 1977 - 1979. His first performance was at 11 years old at the Palais Theatre in St. Kilda with the 1980 *Gang Show*. With a strong influence in theatre, he has performed with Dandenong Light Opera Company and Cheltenham Light Opera Company from 1985 to 1994 in various musicals; *Carousel* - Enoch Snow Jr., *The Sound Of Music* - Ralph, *George M* and many others. Also with an exposure to television, including a few short character roles in *Neighbours*, *Flying Doctors*, and has been involved in short films, training videos and commercials. He has now turned his hand to script writing for the stage and has studied film script writing with the *Australian Film, Television & Radio School*. Darren's latest script has been written over a number of years, taking much care to portray his message carefully. Without seeming cliché or contrived. While travelling through Queensland and Adelaide this story was formed through experiences he had witnessed and became involved with. His new project you bare witness tonight.

Tonight's performance comes to you from life experiences and subtle drawings from my childhood. Many people, including my parents have asked if they will see themselves on stage. After laughing hard I answer them with a simple no. Art imitating life and truth (the now) is what I have written.

Justin recently graduated from the National Theatre Drama School, he has ostensibly been trained for the theatre, but has had some film and television experience. His stage credits from the National Theatre include, *Twelve Angry Men* - Juror Two, *Dons Party* - Evan and *Breath's Chalk Circle*. A first time Director, Justin found it a challenge to interpret *The Meeting Place* with its subject matter without risking or offending the audience with its truth and brutality.

Justin Conkey



Director



THE PLAYERS

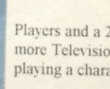
in alphabetical order

Tim Constantine



This is Tim's first theatre performance in Melbourne since moving here from a very dull place. (In his own words, Canberra.) In that dull place, Tim appeared in many shows, including *The Crucible* - Judge Hathorne; *Abelard and Heloise* - Peter Abelard; *Decadence* - Steve & Les; *Pericles* - Pericles and *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole* - Adrian. He has also worked in Television and Film. He has trained at the Phillip College gaining a double major in dramatic arts and media; a 10 week course in theatre and media presentation with Stagecoach; a 2 day theatre skills workshop with Phoenix Players and a 20 week drama skills course with Kate Peters. Tim would like to do more Television and Film work and his ambition is to win a Best Actor Oscar for playing a character without any physical or mental disabilities.

Simon



Hailing from the National Theatre Drama School, this is Irene's initiation into the Fringe Festival. Having worked in Film, Television and Theatre, Irene concedes that there's nothing quite like an audience to get the adrenalin pumping. Convinced that she's a drag queen trapped in a woman's body, Irene has found it easy to relate to the flamboyant character of *Kym*. Irene's goal is to simply keep working as much as she can, in roles that offer diversity and challenge. Her film credits include, *Eight Items or less* - entrant and runner-up in the St. Kilda Film Festival 1993, *La Femme De La Cocaine* - film festival entrant and *Doragore* - entrant for both National and International film festivals 1993.

Irene Guzowski



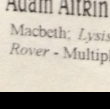
Kym

Paul Henderson



Since moving to Melbourne in 1995, Paul has performed in a number of productions including an outdoor season of *Robin Hood*, a theatre in education show called *Everything* and as *Budgie the Little Helicopter* for Knox City Shopping Centre children's holiday program. Including *The Meeting Place*, Paul is also currently involved in a poetry program for V.C.E. students and an outdoor production of *Camelot* for the Christmas holidays. Paul gained his Bachelor of Arts in Acting for Stage & Screen at Charles Sturt University (C.S.U.R.) Other credits for Paul are *A Macbeth* - Macbeth; *Lysistrata* - Cinesias; *Little Shop Of Horrors* - Plant (puppeteer); *The Rover* - Multiple characters.

Adam Aitkin



THE MELBOURNE TIMES
CITY & INNER SUBURBS MELBOURNE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPERS TEL 9666 3999

The theatres of caricature and confrontation



Every Night Something Awful!
By Stella Pulo
La Mama
Faraday Street
Carlton
Until October 20

LIVING in a cardboard box, Daisy Belle (Stella Pulo) is a bag lady who once entertained the allied troops of the Second World War. The risky title comes from the acronym ENSA. Our heroine recounts her finest moments of singing to the brave boys and her less fine moments scraping a living from the garbage cans of famous cities, and ultimately her rejection by humanity at large.

Director Jools Gardiner and Stella Pulo (also the writer) steer in and out of comic-tragic-comic using slides, recorded music and period songs to accompany this stream-of-consciousness monologue to the audience and to Daisy Belle's "friend" Reggie.

Although at times caricaturing a caricature, Stella Pulo's Daisy Belle is alive and kicking.

— John Ashton

The Meeting Place
By Darren Brealey
East Melbourne Hotel
Corner of Hotham and Hoddle streets
Until October 20

THIS drama places gay guy David (Adam Turnbull) fair and square in the middle of suburbia; in Neighbours land.

In denial of the fact are David's mum and dad (Elizabeth Penny and Simon Laidler). In disgust at the fact are his sister and brother (Clare O'Sullivan and Raphael Summut). Accepting of the fact is potential brother-in-law (Paul Henderson).

There's also the drinkin' lover (Tim Constantine), the night-clubbin' girlfriend (Irene Guzowski) and the homophobic (Luke Jelleff).

This could've been a safe family drama but Act Two tears us out of the bitchin' kitchen into the night streets and jungle parkland.

At times the dialogue in *The Meeting Place* is more discursive than dramatic.

However, the script never shies away from the fundamental issues confronting the homosexual in family and society.

Overall, it's a fine result for first timers, writer Darren Brealey and director Justin Conkey.

In expressing the wit and pain of the lead role, Adam Turnbull delivers an outstanding performance.

— John Ashton

SHORT STORIES

We've finally got a winner (12 of them, in fact) in the 1996 Melbourne Review Short Story Competition. All the details, including a copy of the story which won first prize, are in our special Short Story feature on page 32. Details of the 1997 competition will be announced very soon - in June.

LA MAMA
205 FARADAY ST, CARLTON
Bookings 9347 6142

THE RAPE OF LUCRECE
By William Shakespeare
Adapted by David Wicks
Oct 16, 19, 20 at 6 pm
Oct 17 at 8 pm

SLIDING
By Lloyd Jones & performers
Pt 1 Oct 16, 18 at 7.30 pm
Oct 19 at 2 pm
Pt 2 Oct 19 at 7.30 pm

EVERY NIGHT SOMETHING AWFUL!
By Stella Pulo
Oct 16 at 6 pm
Oct 19, 20 at 8 pm
Oct 17, 18 at 11 pm

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 16 1996 THE MELBOURNE TIMES PAGE 29

Not funny, mate: a scene from *The Meeting Place*, the first-time play from writer Darren Brealey and director Justin Conkey. *The Meeting Place* continues until Saturday night at the East Melbourne Hotel.

The Meeting Place

1996 Melbourne Fringe Festival

Theatre reviews for this first time Playwright were mixed from Melbourne's critical eye,

with an honest review from the late



Ralph McLean, Arts Journalist at

On Stage Melbourne (3RRR radio):

"Darren Brealey's first time writing piece in a makeshift bar theatre. His, *The Meeting Place* was a simple even old fashioned story of family and loss. I rarely cry in the theatre - at least for emotional reasons - but there I was bawling, with the joy of it and of the magic of a good yarn well put, the tears running down my cheeks like a bloody baby."

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Brother Sister

A nightly rendezvous
Cast of the Fringe Festival play *The Meeting Place* (photographed in rehearsal above) have now commenced their season at the East Melbourne Hotel. Performed nightly (until October 20) the play has been described as a modern Shakespearean tragedy about homosexuality within the family unit. For more gay and lesbian related Fringe Festival information see the *Encore* section (pages 14-17).

click when done

The Meeting Place

1996 Melbourne Fringe Festival

The Meeting Place

won an award

for this first

time Playwright...

Special Recommendation -

Melbourne Fringe Performance

Arts Award.

29- 10 - 96

Darren Brealey,
c/o The Meeting Place
5/17 - 19 Lambert St.,
Richmond
3121

fringe
Melbourne

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60 Fitzroy Street
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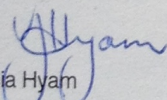
Dear Darren ,

On behalf of the Board and Staff of the Melbourne Fringe, and the awards judges I would like to congratulate you for being selected as a special recommendation in the 1996 Melbourne Fringe Performance Arts Awards, for your production of " the Meeting Place "

The recognition of your performance piece is a major achievement , considering the large number of works presented across the festival program and with only one overall winner in each category.

I thank you for your involvement in the Melbourne Fringe and wish you all the best in the future.

Yours Sincerely,


Virginia Hyam
Festival Director.

MELBOURNE FRINGE ACKNOWLEDGES THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OF ARTS VICTORIA, A DIVISION OF ARTS, SPORTS AND TOURISM. DONATIONS TO MELBOURNE FRINGE OF \$2 OR MORE ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE