

Brooklyn Academy of Music

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The Second Woman

Created by Nat Randall and Anna Breckon

BAM Fishman Space

Oct 18 at 5pm

Running time: approx. 24 hours

Written and directed by **Anna Breckon** and **Nat Randall**

Performed by **Alia Shawkat**

Video direction by **EO Gill** & **Anna Breckon**

Lighting design by **Amber Silk** & **Kayla Burrett**

Sound design by **Nina Buchanan**

Set design by **FUTURE METHOD STUDIO**

Hair and makeup design by **Sophie Roberts**

Season Sponsor:

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Photo: Heidrun Lohr

The Second Woman takes as its starting point the idea that emotions and identities are culturally and historically specific, and that gender identities are defined by, and produced through, emotional cultures and norms. Taking gender, as a particular relation to cultural power and privilege, as its focus, *The Second Woman* explores the ways in which gender privilege and power expresses itself through feeling.

The Second Woman began as a small self-funded project. It was a high-risk endeavor as, although we could test the work with multiple participants, we couldn't test the durational aspect of the show. There is no way to rehearse a 24-hour production that relies on audience and participants. With so many variables and unknowns, we went into our second performance with an equal amount of dread. While the format had worked in a particular way once, we had no idea how a change in cultural context—in this case a different city and festival—would impact the work. This is because *The Second Woman* doesn't exist prior to its coming into being in the moment of its presentation. It is created each time by bringing together a series of contingent elements that can be curated and managed but never completely controlled. This is what makes the show vulnerable to failure; it is also what makes it dynamic, live, and full of possibility.

The Second Woman is made by a female-identifying and non-binary crew. Behind the scenes, we have four camera operators, two vision switchers, two sound operators, two stage managers, and two man wranglers. While we run training and offer guidelines prior to the show, this crew works to make representational decisions moment to moment. This ensures that female and non-binary ways of looking and modes of feeling hold the show together. The sourcing of local crew also means that the ways of looking that collectively structure the representation is of the place.

After three iterations of the show in Australia, we were invited to do a performance at the opening of Weiwuying: The National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts. This introduced an additional set of variables. It was unknown how Taiwanese participants would engage with the material and if the form of the show would hold up in this very different cultural context. For this first international iteration, we introduced the idea of finding a local performer for each international presentation. Zhu Zhi-Ying was the performer assisted by Hsu A-Wing as co-director of performance. We are immensely grateful to Weiwuying—in particular Emma Liao and Kathy Hong—and Zhi-Ying for taking the risk to create with us a specifically Taiwanese version of this project.

Our decision to find a local performer in predominantly English speaking countries is based on the fact that much of *The Second Woman's* political and emotional potency resides in the show's ability to demonstrate the subtle ways in which gender power hierarchies operate at the level of everyday emotional experience and ordinary social interaction. The capacity for *The Second Woman* to do this depends on the onstage dynamic accurately expressing local gender relations in their cultural specificity and complexity.

We thought of Alia Shawkat as the ideal performer for this premiere in New York. We feel she is a very open performer, a risk-taker, and has amazing comic timing. She is strong, resilient, smart and has a queer and feminist sensibility. For us, this was very important as it is Alia who will provide the primary anchoring look of the show. In *The Second Woman*, it is through the perception of the performer that we are able to make ideological and emotional sense of gendered interactions on stage.

We would like to thank David Binder for the invitation to present at BAM; Alia Shawkat for taking on the immense task of performing live for 24 hours; the local crew and participants for making this iteration of the show unique to New York City; a special thanks to Anne Davison; our core creative team from Australia; and our producers at Performing Lines.

—Anna Breckon & Nat Randall

American Stage Managers **Hannah Woodward, Jenna Lazar**

The Actor is appearing with the permission of Actors' Equity Association.
The American Stage Manager is a member of Actors' Equity Association.

Produced by Performing Lines



Next Wave,



Photo: Carlotta Guerreno

ALIA SHAWKAT stars in TBS' breakout hit genre-bending mystery comedy *Search Party*. *The LA Times* raved "It's Shawkat, with her non-standard corkscrew hair and glorious profusion of freckles, who drives the show, bringing an intensity into Dory's most unfocused, unsure moments." Well known for her role of "Maeby Fünke" on FOX's Emmy Award-winning cult comedy series *Arrested Development*, Shawkat recently reprised the role with all new episodes for Netflix. She played a prominent role in the fourth season of Jill Soloway's critically acclaimed Amazon series, *Transparent*, and will return for the show's two-hour series finale. Shawkat's film career began at the age of 11 with her feature debut as a young Iraqi child in *Three Kings* opposite George Clooney. She's been seen in a slew of anticipated film projects including *20th Century Women*, *Paint It Black*, Netflix's Original Film *Pee-Wee's Big Holiday*, *Green Room*, and *Whip It*. Shawkat most recently starred in the 2019 drama *Animals* and served as lead actress, co-writer, and executive producer in the independent drama *Duck Butter*, which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival where she was awarded Best Actress

in a US Narrative Feature Film. Additional TV credits include: the Emmy nominated show *Drunk History*, IFC's *Portlandia*, Comedy Central's *Broad City*, and HBO's *Getting On*.

NAT RANDALL (co-writer, co-director, performer) is an artist working at the intersection of performance, video, and film. Randall has presented work at major institutions, galleries, and festivals nationally and internationally. In 2019 Randall and collaborator Anna Breckon and Performing Lines were nominated for a Helpmann Award for Best Production of a Play for their critically acclaimed *The Second Woman*. Randall is also a founding member of art collective Hissy Fit and performance collective Team MESS. Through these collaborations she has presented work extensively across Australia. Randall studied at the University of Wollongong where she developed a breadth of performance practice including devised work, site-specific practice, and participatory work.

ANNA BRECKON (co-writer, co-director, video direction) is an independent artist, film studies scholar, and critic. In 2018 Breckon completed her PhD in queer and feminist film theory at the University of Sydney. Her thesis considered queer forms of happiness in a selection of contemporary auteur films. She has published on John Waters (2013) and Todd Solondz (2018) in *Screen* (Oxford University Press). In 2010, Breckon received a master of arts in film, TV and media studies on the films of John Waters from the University of Auckland. Over the last five years, she has worked as a director, editor, and writer for projects presented at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Performance Space, Dark Mofo, Perth Festival, Adelaide Festival, Weiwuying: National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts, Harbourfront Centre, and the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. In 2018, Breckon co-created, co-wrote, and directed a 90-minute video work *Rear View* for the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.

EO GILL (lead camera, video direction) is a Sydney-based artist whose moving-image practice interrogates gender, class-politics, and intimacy. Gill has installed and presented work extensively, most recently at Artspace, Alaska Projects, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Museum for Contemporary Art, and Performance Space and has completed residencies with Banff Centre for Creativity, Canada; National Film & Sound Archive in Canberra; NES Residency, Iceland; and Bundanon Trust, NSW. Gill graduated with a BA (Honours Class 1) from University of New South Wales in 2013 and an MFA at UNSW Art & Design in 2018 supported by an APA Scholarship. Gill was on the 2016—17 board of directors at Firstdraft and is a core and founding member of art collective Hissy Fit. In 2018 Gill was the recipient of the Create NSW Visual Arts (Emerging) Fellowship.

NINA BUCHANAN (music composition) is a musician and composer based in Melbourne, Australia. Her work spans synth and keyboard music, experimental dance music, and ambient electronic music for the club, screen, performance, dance, and theater works. She has collaborated with numerous artists on works which have traveled to festivals including Dark Mofo, Next Wave (Melbourne), Frameline San Francisco, MIX NYC Queer Experimental Film Festival, Xposed Berlin, and Outfest LA. Buchanan has released music on labels Nice Music and Paradise Daily Records and performs live as a solo artist, as well as with bands Video Ezy, UTI, and Hardata. She produces and hosts Sweet Dreams on 3CR Community Radio.

AMBER SILK (lighting design) is a lighting designer and production manager who has worked across many forms including small and large-scale outdoor events, site-specific work, and multidisciplinary projects. Until recently she was the venue and technical supervisor at

PACT Centre for Emerging Artists and has been employed by prominent organizations such as Urban Theatre Projects, Japan Foundation, Oxfam Australia, the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Official After Party, Island Vibe Festival, Share the Spirit Festival, Quandamooka Festival, Bankstown Arts Centre, and Blacktown Arts Centre. This year she was the lighting designer for *Black Birds* at The Joan, MCA Artbar, curated by Latai Taumoepeau and *The Second Woman* at Dark Mofo. Silk is most passionate about making and contributing to work that seeks to engage communities to interrogate existing cultural prejudices and affect positive social change.

KAYLA BURRETT (co-lighting designer/head electrician) is a Sydney-based lighting designer and head electrician. Her previous roles include for Sydney Theatre Company—production electrician, *The Real Thing*; head electrician, *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*. For Australian Ballet—head follow spot operator, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Dome A follow spot operator, China Tour 2018. For Performing Lines: co-lighting designer/head electrician, *The Second Woman* (Taiwan and Canada tours).

GENEVIEVE MURRAY // FUTURE METHOD STUDIO (set design)

Future Method is a research and design studio that actively questions and pushes the line between the practical and the abstract. Founded by Genevieve Murray in 2013, Future Method works collaboratively with creatives and academics who form their praxis in-between established notions of contemporary architecture and art—seeking to extend and enrich the field of interdisciplinarity and collective culture and push them into the public domain.



ONLINE



SOPHIE ROBERTS (hair and makeup design) is a Sydney-based hair and makeup design artist with over 20 years experience working across fashion, art, music, and celebrity. Collaborating with internationally renowned photographers including Lachlan Bailey, Bibi Cornejo Borthwick, Jackie Nickerson, and Emma Summerton, she regularly contributes to *Australian Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*, with her work also featuring in *Holiday*, *WSJ*, *RUSSH*, and *Porter* magazines. Her contributions extend to hair direction for London, New York, and Australian fashion weeks. Within the visual and performing arts, Roberts has collaborated on projects with artists including The Kingpins, Técha Noble, Barbara Cleveland with Mike Parr, and Hissy Fit. <https://artist-group.net/people/sophie-roberts>

HANNAH WOODWARD (stage manager)
 Broadway: *Be More Chill*. Off-Broadway: *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord* (WP/2ST), *Jersey Boys* (New World Stages), *Harry Clarke* (Minetta Lane), *The Government Inspector* (Red Bull Theater), *The Moors* (Playwright's Realm), *The Woodsman* (New World Stages), *Homos, or Everyone in America* and *Nice Girl* (Labyrinth), *The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey* (Westside Downstairs, National Tour), *Buyer & Cellar* (Rattlestick, Barrow Street, national tour).
 Regional: McCarter Theatre, Two River Theater, Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey.

JENNA R. LAZAR (stage manager)
 Productions include: *We Are the Tigers* (Theatre 80); *safeword*. (ATA); *Summer Shorts* (nine seasons—59E59); *The Mad Ones* (59E59); *The Drawer Boy* (Soho Playhouse); *Found* (The Cell); *Next to Normal—A Benefit Concert* (QOD); New Haven International Festival of Arts and Ideas; *Goodbody* (59E59); *Paint Made Flesh* (The Cell); *Halcyon Days* (Oberon Theatre Ensemble); *Order* (dir. Austin Pendleton); *American Rapture* (dir. Alexander Dinelaris); and *Hamlet*. Lazar is also the managing director of Planet Connections and a proud member of AEA.

PERFORMING LINES produces provocative contemporary performance by Australia's most audacious independent artists. It curates a portfolio of work that is propelled by pressing questions and new ways of seeing the world. Performing Lines champions the unconventional, the marginal, the rebellious, and the new. Its purpose is to champion risk and to ensure that the breadth and plurality of Australia's creative potential is represented and celebrated. Performing Lines is led by Executive Producer Marion Potts, with teams in Sydney, Perth, and Hobart and a network of producers and presenters around the country and the world. In everything it does, it acknowledges that it lives on Aboriginal land and constantly learns from the wisdom of its First Peoples. Where it is, and the history that precedes it, informs how the company works and moves forward. <http://performinglines.org.au>

Please Note

Warning The photographing, videotaping, or sound recording of any performance without written permission of the management, is prohibited by law. Violators may be punished by ejection and may be liable for money damages.

Fire Notice The exit indicated by a red light and sign nearest to the seat you occupy is the shortest route to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, please WALK TO THAT EXIT, FOLLOWING THE DIRECTIVES OF THE HOUSE STAFF. Thoughtless persons annoy patrons and endanger the safety of others by lighting matches or smoking in prohibited areas during the performances and intermissions. This violates a New York City ordinance and is punishable by law. —Fire Commissioner

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