



Why can't women be like men?

BY GRAZIA MARIN

Directed by Olivia Staaf

'Dreamy Tea Drinker' by Alisha Redmond as incidental music

Contains sexual and medical references

CHAPEL OFF CHAPEL

Synopsis

Love. Loss. Religion. Sexuality. Pleasure. Pain.

At a pivotal point in all their lives, four women come together to celebrate a birthday. As the bubbly flows, the façades fall away and expose the many ways in which each woman's life is anything but 'normal'.

But should it have to be? And who defines what is normal? A fictionalisation of the culmination of over two decades in psychological practice, *Why Can't Women Be Like Men?* explores the sexuality and intimate relationships of cross-generational characters.

contains medical and sexual references



Creative Team

Amelia Dunn - Felicity



Amelia Dunn is a writer, performer and theatre maker from Melbourne. She is a graduate from 16th Street Actor's Studio and has a Bachelor of Arts from Monash University. She has gone on to perform at The Butterfly Club, in which she showcased a self-devised monologue, and The MC Showroom. Two of her most recent short films were finalists at The Tokyo Lift Off Festival and The Fantastic Film Festival. She is currently co-writing and starring in a one woman show that will be performed later this year.

Veronica Devlin – Prudence



Growing up along the beautiful and rugged coastline of lutruwita (Tasmania), Veronica found joy in music, dance, acting, and visual arts. This led to further studies in Printmaking and Photography at Utas, where she truly started her artistic journey. At FedUni, Veronica grew as an actor and performer, loving the process of developing and creating characters and performances full of depth and duality. A highlight was collaborating and devising theatre as part of Federation

University's Exquisite Corps: Neon District, directed by Laura Burzacott and musically directed by Ant Crowley, which married her performance skills with her creative knowledge as an artist. Veronica enjoys a diverse range of theatre and has been involved with Cabaret Festivals, Spiegeltent, Musical Theatre as well as productions of Realism and Shakespeare, performing as Titania in A Midsummer Night's Dream and Olga in an adaptation of Chekhov's Three Sisters.

Lisa Sharpe – Phyllis



Lisa Sharpe is an award winning comedian, writer and producer, who has created and performed three acclaimed solo stand-up comedy shows that have toured interstate festivals and regional Australia. She has a Bachelor Of Performing Arts/Comedy. She has performed in short films, feature films, television series, music videos, Audio Comedy and advertising campaigns. Lisa is also in the process of writing a dramedy television series that celebrates older women. This is her first performance in an ensemble play, and she is very excited about it.

Piera Dennerstein – Gioia



Piera Dennerstein is a seasoned crossover performer with a myriad of theatrical experiences in an array of dramatic contexts. Her acting training began with classes at the National Theatre Drama School and continued in numerous forms through her undergraduate and postgraduate operatic studies. She has spent the last 6 years touring with cabaret/variety company Finucane & Smith. Within these performances, in addition to singing everything from opera, to country, to rock, to 70s disco,

Piera now also MCs. In 2022, Piera sang and acted in performances to sold out crowds at the Palais Theatre with comedian Bill Bailey. Early this year, Piera debuted her solo show, Pursuing Pleasure, presented by Whitehorse City Council and The Round Midsumma Residency Program.

Olivia Staaf – Director



Olivia Staaf is a theatre maker based in Melbourne (Naarm), Australia. Her creative practice focusses on collaborative and inclusive forms of theatre and live art. Olivia graduated from Monash University's Centre for Theatre and Performance in 2019 and completed the Master of Theatre (Directing) degree at the Victorian College of the Arts in 2021.

Olivia creates performance works as a director, creative producer and collaborative devisor which encompass her passion for socially engaged and community-based arts practice. In 2020, she directed and produced A Recorded Companion, an audio work which was the

recipient of the Melbourne Fringe Access and Inclusion Award. In 2021, she completed an internship at Back to Back Theatre in Geelong where she conducted research in inclusive arts practice and worked with artists from underrepresented communities at Footscray Community Arts. In 2022, Olivia directed Blackrock by Nick Enright at Platform Arts; working with emerging artists from Geelong and Melbourne to address the play's themes of respectful relationships and toxic masculinity. In 2023 Olivia

founded flatpack, an interdisciplinary art collective dedicated to upholding care and creative sustainability in art-making. In 2024 she directed Dry Land by Ruby Rae Spiegel at Theatre Works, a play exploring the reproductive rights of young women. Olivia is currently producing Close to Home, an interactive performance work exploring the ecology of living spaces, as part of this year's Melbourne Fringe Festival.

Grazia Marin – Writer, Co-Producer, Set Designer.



Grazia Marin is a visual artist and creative writer whose artistic practice often focuses on activism. Her subject matter includes social and political issues and the position of women in societies. She has had numerous solo art exhibitions, exploring various mediums. Her writing includes fiction for children and adults and several of Grazia's nature and political poems have been published in anthologies. She was lyricist for Ensemble Volante's new work Regermination: Songs of Solace and Renewal in the Australian Landscape, which toured

Victoria in 2022. In recent years Grazia has incorporated play writing into her practice, including monologues. Why Can't Women Be Like Men? is Grazia's debut long form theatre work which draws on her many years as a counselling psychologist.



Acknowledgments

Emily Sheehan
Writer's Studio
Alex Theatre St Kilda
Tuesday Night Writers Group
Alisha Redmond
Banyule Council
Celia Wordsworth - Associate Producer

Leah Annetta
Alex Nitsikopoulos
Olivia Charalambous
Graeme Dennerstein
Piera Dennerstein
Chapel Off Chapel