

# KNACKZINE

VOL. 2 ISSUE 2

MAY 2023

## REAL PEOPLE, REAL TIME

by Jesse Donaldson-Jarrett

## ARTIST PROFILE

Marcey Papandrea

## ONE PLAY, TWO MEANINGS

Michael Olsen and  
Greg Gorton



Amelia Nemet as Dee Dee in  
"Hey, Is Dee Dee Home?"

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## CONTRIBUTORS

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Knack respectfully acknowledge that the Knackzine was created on the traditional lands of the Kulin Nation and pay our respects to the elders past, present, and emerging. Sovereignty was never ceded. This always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

# NOTES FROM THE KNACK

Wow! What an issue of The Knackzine we have in store this season! So much content from our upcoming shows that we didn't even have space for our creative endeavours or a particularly crazy rant from one of our directors (it may turn up on our blog).

Part of the reason for this action-packed issue, of course, is two different plays just around the corner. *The Way We Get By* is coming up at the end of May, and *The Jasmine Suite* is only a month later. Both productions are busy in rehearsals as this comes out, so keep an eye on social media for ticket specials, competitions, and some cool content from behind the scenes!

The Knack has two more shows later in the year, of course, and is adding more workshops, play-reads, and social events all the time. We are also taking expressions of interest for plays in 2024 as well as looking for people interested in some live advertising as part of our massive, never-seen-before, six-episode run of "Hey, is Dee Dee Home?".

If you are interested in getting involved with The Knack Theatre, contact us or come say hello at one of our shows!

In the meantime, enjoy this free zine, check out our back issues online, and go see some local theatre!

**Thomas Gregory, Editor**

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## Knack-Wise

### **Roundtable Reads @ The Last Jar**

8 June - **Happy Ever After** by Ros Lewis

*One woman's journey with love and intimate partner violence.*

### **The Way We Get By** by Neil Labute

23 May - 3 June 2023

Club Voltaire

*Nearing midnight, Doug finds himself awake in Beth's living room after a night neither of them saw coming. He flips through books in the lamp's light, making sure to not wake her. Beth wakes to an empty bed, wearing Doug's T-shirt. What follows is an intimate, emotionally charged journey in the early hours of Beth's apartment.*

### **The Jasmine Suite** by Michael Olsen

28 June - 8 July 2023

Club Voltaire

*Richard and Kathryn have come to Prague to play a real-time, real-life game of spies and intrigue. But are people really meant to die? When they find themselves holed up in 'The Jasmine Suite'—the targets of assassins with real guns and real bullets—they begin to question whether they're playing the game or the game is playing them...*

## Else-Wise

### **The Charade** by Emily Farrell

**Five by Five Theatre**

7 June - 10 June 2023

MC Showroom

*A story about the good, the bad and the ugly side of what goes on behind closed doors. The play explores the unhealthy power dynamic between parents and children as both attempt to mourn the loss of a loved one.*

# THE WAY WE GET BY - REAL PEOPLE, REAL TIME

by Jesse Donaldson-Jarrett

*"The Way We Get By" is one often overlooked when discussing Neil Labute, but for Jesse Donaldson-Jarrett, it stands out as a diversion for the playwright. We asked the director of The Knack's May 2023 production just what it was that drew him to this play, and why he wanted to see it put on in Melbourne.*



ROSIE  
OCHTMAN  
as Beth

My first experience with The Way We Get By, was kind of like getting an intense crush out of nowhere. I was put onto it by a friend of mine, so I spent the end of a 6 hour train ride reading it. It was like having an intense and interesting conversation with a beautiful stranger. My only mistake was not starting earlier. I didn't get to make it all the way to the end on my first read through, getting to my stop, wishing I could stay on the train for just another 30 minutes.

The play builds this beautiful relationship between its 2 characters and as an audience member/ reader you are given this rare opportunity to observe an intimate, true human experience.

When I finally finished my first read, gasping at the twists and turns, sharing tears for them. I could see them, you almost can't help yourself with this work. Labute takes the time to paint such a clear picture of these characters that everyone will build their own personal Beth and Doug. Its through what I have been calling a master class in exposition, that Labute seamlessly lets out a constant stream of information about their lives. Never once feeling unnecessary or heavy handed. I had originally wanted to only be a performer in this production not wanting to give up the opportunity to embody Doug. But it was after a discussion with Rosie (playing Beth) that we both came to the decision that I would also direct.

The Way We Get By differs from other Labute works I am familiar with (The Shape of things, Fat Pig, Reasons to be Pretty etc). Most Labute plays I've read usually have a high dramatic impetus, the reveal of a scheme, a long running embarrassing relationship or a heated, explosive breakup. The Way We Get By doesn't, the drama is created through a somewhat simple interaction, a long conversation in the loungeroom after a passionate hookup. Its difficult to discuss the play without giving things away. But I will say this, it is very rare to have a work that exists in real time, this is one of them, from lights up to lights down there is never a cut or a break, it is a real time interaction happening in front of you.

# THE WAY WE GET BY - REAL PEOPLE, REAL TIME

by Jesse Donaldson-Jarrett

'This is why I'm excited to bring this play to Melbourne. Because its real, shockingly real, the theatre environment here is rich, but I still rarely see work like this. That kinda also is what I want to achieve, I want to create a work that is theatre, but its real. I want people to be able to leave the show feeling like they have built a relationship with this pair, and that can only be achieved when they feel like the humans they are.

*Jesse first trained as an actor and a director at the University of New England doing there theatre and performance Bachelors. Where he was active in local student, amateur and professional productions. Since leaving UNE he also graduated from NIDA with a Diploma of musical theatre and has since been active in the Melbourne and Sydney scenes.*

*As well as this production Jesse is also trying to produce a staging of This is our Youth by Kenneth Lonergan and will be returning to Armidale for Empty Space Productions staging of Shakespeare's A Winters Tale. He hopes to be able to keep producing work in Melbourne in the future.*

the way  
we  
get  
by



Written by  
Neil Labute

Directed by  
Jesse Donaldson-Jarrett

23RD  
MAY  
-  
3RD  
JUNE

7PM

Starring

ROSIE OCHTMAN as Beth

JESSE DONALDSON-JARRETT as Doug

TICKETS AVAILABLE THROUGH

[HUMANITIX](#)

# ARTIST PROFILE

## Marcella Papandrea

### **How did you first get involved in performance art/theatre/the arts?**

From a young age, I was always drawn to performance arts, artistic expression and creative writing. After school, my interest in writing and drawing really took over, and I embraced learning and studying cinema. I started my own website and wrote reviews for films, tv shows and books. During this time, I also began a podcast (2009).

I was pulled back into the performing arts scene by forming a friendship with Steve and Lou. Their passion for theatre is unmatched, and I found my love for theatre again. Being exposed to the performing arts scene in Melbourne has been wonderful; there are so many people making fantastic things.

### **What do you think it means to rebel?**

For me, to rebel means to be yourself, not to conform to any one thing, to expand your mind to what is possible and embrace others. There really is no right or wrong way to create art, there are many ways to express art and I think part of being a rebel is not limiting yourself as well.

### **If you could have been a part of any artwork from the past, what would it be?**

My favourite film is Stand By Me. Something associated with that film is something I would be honoured to own. Does anyone have a contact for Rob Reiner? An original script used in the film would be amazing!

### **Where do you see the future of art going?**

The future is bright for the arts. The arts are what people turn to in the best of times and the worst of times. Art isn't going anywhere; humans have a need to express themselves. In this digital age, there is more access and knowledge about the arts than ever before.

### **What is wrong with the arts or entertainment industry today?**

Funding; the arts and entertainment industry needs funding to thrive. Bigger steps need to be taken to ensure the industry can continue to grow.

### **What upcoming project of yours are you most excited about?**

I am always keeping myself busy with all sorts of projects, I have many things in the works at the moment. One thing I am always excited about is a weekly podcast I co-host called The Tubi Tuesdays Podcast. We recently celebrated 100 episodes and the future of the podcast looks bright.

*Marcey is the Media and Marketing Coordinator for The Knack Theatre. They've been writing about film since the age of 16 and is the owner of The Super Network.*

Links: <https://linktr.ee/SuperMarcey>  
<https://www.SuperMarcey.com>

# OUR FRONT PAGE

Amelia Namet plays Dee Dee in the pilot episode of "Hey, Is Dee Dee Home?", which premiered at the Fitzroy Art Collective. A full 6-episode run will be performed in 2024, including a live band and advertisements. If you are interested in having your business given the live advertisement treatment, contact The Knack today!

## FRIENDS OF THE KNACK

THE LAST  
JAR

[616 Elizabeth St.,  
Melbourne](#)

ROSE  
CHONG  
*Costumiers*

[218 Gertrude St.,  
Fitzroy](#)

C L U B

Voltaire

[14 Raglan St.,  
North Melbourne](#)



[The Butterfly Club  
5 Carson Pl.,  
Melbourne](#)



[mysteryshackmusic.com](http://mysteryshackmusic.com)



[Plain English  
Theatre Co.,  
Melbourne](#)



# ONE PLAY, TWO MEANINGS

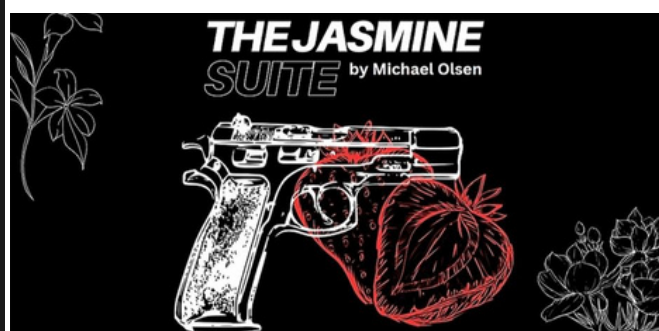
*On June 28, The Knack will be presenting the world debut of Michael Olsen's "The Jasmine Suite". Plays often go through transformative processes in the hands of directors, however, so we wanted to explore what the play means to the two creative minds behind this particular production.*

## Michael Olsen

Questions lie at the heart of the creative process, and *The Jasmine Suite* was no different. What if two people were playing a real-life, real-time computer game? What if they were involved with each other? What if they broke up? What if the game itself is broken? Wouldn't it be dangerous?

So many questions that needed answers. So many possibilities. So many dramatic implications. You hope audiences want the answers to those questions as well, being drawn into the world of the characters. The only true answers will be found in foyer whispers after the show, in the walk back to cars, or in trams caught in the chilly Melbourne air.

One hopes the audience feels the after-effects of the show, like the taste of wine in the mouth after drinking. Here's to something that lingers after the lights come up. The only thing I'm doing when I write is waving to strangers - you, the audience - and hoping, in some small way, you feel like waving back.



## Greg Gorton

At some point in our lives, we are tempted by the concept of living in the moment. This is often after watching "Dead Poets Society", but it might also simply occur.

For me, this is the hidden story behind *The Jasmine Suite*. Two people with different ideas of what "living in the moment means". Is it about living an exciting and abnormal life that makes for good stories? Or is it about really paying attention to the people you are with?

Role-playing games are a perfect context for such exploration. You are given permission to be someone else, and you can create stories you could never as a HR officer or IT programmer. But these are just games, and the interactions you have with other players isn't real. What happens when the game melts into real life? What happens if it won't let you quit? That is what *The Jasmine Suite* is to me.

**TICKETS AVAILABLE THROUGH**  
[HUMANITIX](#)



# A HALF-HOUR ROCK OPERA

In 2015, I watched a documentary about Dee Dee Ramone. It wasn't a biography, but an hour-long interview with Dee Dee about the early days of punk in New York City.

It was fun to watch because Dee Dee has this kind of playful innocence you don't normally associate with punk rockers. He's not tough, he's not rude. He's kind of fun, and a little mischievous.

At one point, between talking about, you know, how he helped revolutionize rock music in the late 70s, Dee Dee casually mentions that he had been living with Chris Stein and Debbie Harry of Blondie for a couple of weeks, sleeping on their couch.

Bells went off in my head. Lighting struck. Angels sang. I mean, Chris and Debbie were punk rockers themselves, but also a couple in their late 20s/early 30s. They weren't kids anymore but adults working in the music industry. Adding Dee Dee, this wild, often addled third wheel to the mix would be like setting a labrador loose in the middle of a wedding. I thought to myself, "This is a sitcom waiting to happen." And since nobody else was going to write it, I did. It was a tight 25 minutes, it amused me—I was done.

Then a friend read it and suggested I write more. Further, she challenged me to produce them weekly, like a TV sitcom, but for the stage. So I picked up the gauntlet, and conceived and wrote five more episodes and we were just

starting to put them together in 2020 when... the unpleasantness hit. So we regrouped and decided to perform the entire series via Zoom for The Knack's Lockdown Theatre program. It was, quite frankly, a shocking success.



On 18 May 2023, we were able to perform the pilot episode at the Fitzroy Arts Collective to a sold-out crowd. MysteryShack was there, performing the theme song they wrote for us, as well as all the transitional music between scenes. They really took the show to the next level.

The response was overwhelmingly positive and we got some great feedback that will help us develop it when we take the show further. In the future, we want to partner with local small businesses and run ads for them during the commercial breaks we have written into the show. Their support will help us to afford the set and lighting effects that will make 'Dee Dee' feel like a real TV sitcom--on the stage!

~SB

# WHATNOT

## LESSONS FROM THEATRE

"Tell the more intelligent playgoers that their plays have to be improved--that it's unwatchable--and they calmly reply: "Oh well, it's good enough for Augsburg." [...] Of course, the theatre manager can always shrug sorrowfully and say, "But nobody comes to see plays. The theatre's always half empty. I can't be expected to spend money under those conditions." And the thought never seems to occur to anyone that the theatre might be half empty precisely because he doesn't spend money on plays."

- *A Reckoning*, in which Bertolt Brecht laments "safe" theatre.

## GET CREATIVE

Do you have a creative piece that you'd like to share? Essay, comic, poem or art that reflects the spirit of individuality? Use the subject header "Getting Creative with The Knack" and send it to [theknacktheatre@gmail.com](mailto:theknacktheatre@gmail.com) and we might put it in our next issue!

All artists with work shown in the Knackzine receive a nominal payment.

## SUBMIT TO US

Do you have a play that you'd like feedback on? We can do that. Check it out:

### ROUNDTABLE READS

AU\$50

The Knack Theatre will cast and produce a live table read of your script, and will host a roundtable discussion afterward with industry professionals. Click [HERE](#) for more info and some fine print.

### SCRIPT NOTES

AU\$25

Get general feedback on your script in regard to story, character, plot, themes, and dialogue with one of The Knack's experienced writers.

### DEVELOPMENT SESSION

AU\$35/HR

Get a one-on-one session to discuss your work and ways to improve it with one of The Knack's writers.

### SCRIPT COVERAGE

AU\$55

Get detailed feedback on your script based on structure, characterisation, dialogue, and style.

Hit us up at [theknacktheatre@gmail.com](mailto:theknacktheatre@gmail.com) and let us know how we can help!

# NO FUN PAGE

## Adding and Subtracting 3 Square Roots

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Add and subtract the following square roots.

$$\sqrt{400} + \sqrt{144} + \sqrt{16} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{196} + \sqrt{529} + \sqrt{36} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{49} - \sqrt{121} - \sqrt{16} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{121} - \sqrt{25} - \sqrt{400} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{25} + \sqrt{1} + \sqrt{441} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{1} + \sqrt{25} + \sqrt{36} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{0} - \sqrt{36} - \sqrt{225} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{4} - \sqrt{25} - \sqrt{324} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{49} + \sqrt{400} + \sqrt{25} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{49} + \sqrt{121} + \sqrt{64} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{900} - \sqrt{81} - \sqrt{4} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{25} - \sqrt{49} - \sqrt{49} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{225} + \sqrt{25} + \sqrt{25} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{841} + \sqrt{144} + \sqrt{9} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{49} - \sqrt{400} - \sqrt{100} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{81} - \sqrt{25} - \sqrt{256} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{400} - \sqrt{121} - \sqrt{144} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{400} - \sqrt{36} - \sqrt{625} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{64} + \sqrt{9} + \sqrt{0} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{25} + \sqrt{9} + \sqrt{1} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{289} - \sqrt{4} - \sqrt{1} = \square$$

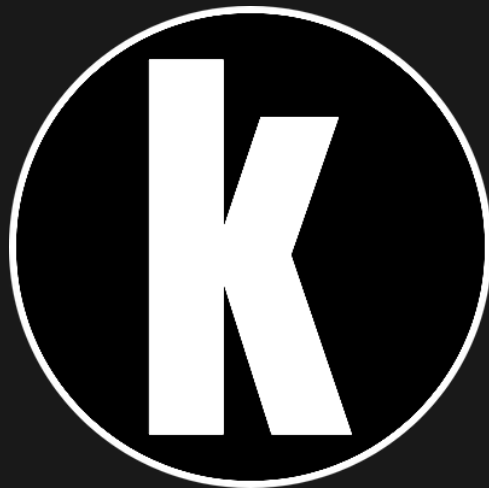
$$\sqrt{400} - \sqrt{16} - \sqrt{4} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{9} + \sqrt{81} + \sqrt{25} = \square$$

$$\sqrt{1} + \sqrt{36} + \sqrt{64} = \square$$

**"Questioning anything and everything,  
to me, is punk rock."**

**~ Henry Rollins**



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