



Sweet Bird andsoforth

by Laura Naumann // translated by Benjamin Winspear

Education Pack

www.sweetbirdandsoforth.com



Cast and Crew

Laura Naumann – Playwright

Born in 1989, Laura is currently studying Creative Writing, Culture and Journalism at the University of Hildesheim. She spent a year at Theater Junge Generation in Dresden, where she was commissioned to write a play, which premiered in Dec 2009. She was awarded the Meeting of Young Authors award in 2006 and in 2008 was invited to the stueckemarkt-workshop at the Berlin Theatertreffen with her play meerrauschenhören. Laura received a grant from the Goethe Institute and Interplay to attend the World Interplay Festival of Young Playwrights 2009 in Australia. She was also awarded the Munich Prize for Young German – Language Drama for her play Sweet Bird andsoforth. Most recently Laura has been invited to the Playwrights Festival at the Deutsches Theater in Berlin to workshop Sweet Bird andsoforth to critical acclaim. Laura is a member of the Author's Laboratory at the Düsseldorf Schauspielhaus for their 2009/2010 season.

Laura Scrivano - Director

Laura is a director, dramaturge, writer and theatre maker. Her recent directing credits include the site specific work Rapid Response; Arden, a hip hop theatre adaptation of As You Like It for Bell Shakespeare's Mind's Eye program (also co-adaptor); A View of Concrete (B Sharp), Stars by Anja Hilling (The German Arts Festival/Playwriting Australia); The Naked MC (Sista She/Tamarama Rock Surfers); September (Darlinghurst Theatre) and The Cronulla Project (also co-writer). In 2006/2007 Laura was the recipient of an Australia Council SPARK fellowship for emerging artists. In 2009 Laura was tutor/director at World Interplay, a finalist for the British Council Realise Your Dream Award and completed a directing residency with The Wooster Group in New York City.

Benjamin Winspear – Translator

Benjamin graduated from Acting at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) in 1997. Since 2002 he has held the position of Resident Director at the Sydney Theatre Company (STC). He has had vast experience as both actor and director. He has recently adapted a number of texts for the stage including works by Shakespeare and other classical writers.

Hanna Sandgren – Set Designer

Hanna is an avid lover of traditional art forms and the immediacy of live performance. She has a background in fine arts having studied at Gotland's School of Fine Arts in Sweden.

During her time overseas, she had the opportunity to participate in solo and group exhibitions including a live-action-painting exhibit for TUR, Gothenburg 2007. Completing a BDA (Design) at the National Institute of Dramatic Art, Hanna sought to combine her proficiency in fine art and her love of theatre. Her theatre design credits at NIDA include *Flight* (directed by Sergei Tcherkasski, 2010), *Twelfth Night* (directed by Tom Healey, 2010) and *Product* (directed by Karla Conway, 2009). In 2011 Hanna has worked as a design assistant to Gabriela Tylesova on the new Australian production of *Love Never Dies* (directed by Simon Phillips) and will be designing *Cunning Little Vixen* (directed by Kate Gaul) for the Sydney Chamber Opera, opening in August.

Teegan Lee – Lighting Designer

Teegan is a graduate of the Production course at the National Institute of Dramatic Art and studied Theatre and English at the University of NSW. Despite a very broad background Teegan has always been focused on lighting. Her design credits include *The Kiss* (Belvoir); *Trapture* (SandS Through the Hourglass & Tamarama Rock Surfers); *The Shape*

of Things (PantsGuys Productions & ATYP Under The Wharf); *The End* (Belvoir & Malthouse Theatre); *Anna Robi & the House of Dogs* (House of Dogs & Tamarama Rock Surfers); *tHe dYsFUUnCKshOnalZ* (Arts Radar & The Darlinghurst Theatre Company) *Yellow Moon* (White Blackbird Productions & B Sharp); *A Couple of Poor Polish Speaking Romanians* (Focus Theatre); *Crave, Lot's Wife* (AbitOnTheSide Productions); *The End* (Belvoir); *The Suicide, The Only Child* (The Hayloft Project & B Sharp). In 2011 Teegan will be travelling to Europe to attend the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space with the help of an ArtStart grant from The Australia Council.

Steve Toulmin – Video Artist

Steve is a video and sound artist based in Sydney. His credits include for Sydney Theatre Company: Video Playback Design: *Tot Mom*. Video – Filming and Edit: *God of Carnage*. As Assistant Sound Designer: *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Other theatre: As Sound Designer: For Company B: *Scorched, The Seed*. For QTC: *That Face*. For LaBoite: *Hamlet, Attack of the Attacking Attackers*. For The Restaged Histories Project: *The Greater Plague*. For B Sharp: *Bliss, Beyond The Neck*. For Griffin Stablemates: *Dealing with Clair, Hammerhead [is Dead], Arabian Night*. For Tamarama Rock Surfers: *Rommy, No Man's Island, Vincent River, Reasonable Doubt, The Age Of Consent*. For Jute Theatre Company: *Halfway There*. For Showtune Productions: *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. For Riverside Theatre: *Shakespeare's R&J*. For Tasmania Performs: *Beyond The Neck*. As Composer: credits include *Hamlet, Bliss, That Face, The Seed, Attack of the Attacking Attackers, The Greater Plague, Beyond The Neck, Bliss and Hammerhead [is Dead], Arabian Night, Vincent River, The Age Of Consent* and *Halfway There*. Film: Steve assisted Paul Charlier on the feature film *Last Ride*. Training: Steve graduated from NIDA (Technical Production) in 2006.

Richard Whitehouse – Video Artist

Richard is lucky enough to work as a theatre maker in Sydney. He has contributed as a lighting and AV designer / video artist, production manager, technical manager and in various production roles. He has filled the role of the Season Production Manager at the Performance Space and has done so since late 2009. In between that he has created and designed video works and systems for productions of *The Tempest, She Has Immortal Longings, Trace* and has contributed video works to other productions and artistic developments. He recently lit *Tooth of Crime* for Arts Radar, and is about to head to Darwin Festival in August. Richard has worked for Sydney Theatre Company, Bangarra, Coda, Griffin, Version 1.0, Force Majeure, Critical Stages, Tamarama Rock Surfers, Sydney Opera House, Belvoir St, and various arts festivals. Richard is a graduate of NIDA's production course.

Skye Kunstelj – Producer

Skye is a producer, publicist and performance maker. Skye is currently working at the National Institute of Dramatic Art, and is also producing *Sweet Bird andsoforth*, directed by Laura Scrivano for atyp's Under the Wharf Program, and *Inflection*, directed and developed by James Dalton. Skye recently completed an Honours thesis at UNSW examining performative nostalgia and Slovenian performance group NSK. Skye has been involved with various creative groups including PACT's ImPACT Ensemble, Short + Sweet, Squeaky Floor Productions, stagejuice performance collective, UNSW ArtsWeek and most recently Bambina Borracha Productions, producing their show *Words They Make with Their Mouths* which won the BankSA People's Choice at the Adelaide Fringe and was part of the atyp's Under the Wharf Program in 2010 and the 2010 Melbourne Fringe Festival.

Michael Cutrupi – Producer/Cute Stuff

Michael is an actor, producer and theatre maker. In 2009 he participated in World Interplay in Cairns; an international conference of young playwrights developing new work and also travelled to Berlin to study with clown master Philippe Gaulier and New York City to train under Anne Bogart and SITI Company (with help from the Ian Potter Cultural Trust). Michael has worked with both local and internationally renowned artists such as Baz Luhrman, Kate Gaul, Lynette Sheldon and many others. He was recently an ensemble member of atyp's Young Artists Program and is currently on the Youth Advisory Panel at Sydney Theatre Company. He recently travelled with Sydney Theatre Company and Zeal Theatre to rural NSW to run community and outreach workshops through The People of the Soil initiative.

Fleur Beaupert – Amanda

Fleur has trained in acting with the Actors Centre Australia, Kate Gaul and Natela Dzulashvili, in dance with Brent Street Studios and in singing with Natalie Gamsu. Her acting experience crosses theatre, television and film. Recent theatre credits include *Roadkill* by Rick Viede, *4Play* at Slide (Kate Gaul, Blancmange Productions), *Friends in Danger* (Maisie Dubosarsky, Newtown Theatre), *Short + Sweet* Sydney Theatre 2009 and 2010 and *The House of Bernarda Alba* (Soft Edges). She plays a lead in the feature film *Plagued* (Burnt Dog Productions), and had regular roles on *Home and Away* (Channel 7) and *Heartbreak High* (Gannon Television). Fleur recently completed the SITI Company's summer theatre workshop for theatre makers in New York.

Geraldine Hakewill – Tiny

Geraldine Hakewill graduated from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts in 2008. Upon graduation she received the Nigel Rideout award for Most Improved Female in the Acting course. Since then she has been working across film, television and theatre in Australia, including the feature films *Wasted on the Young*, *Uninhabited*, *Careless Love* and *Sellouts*, and *Rescue Special Ops*. for Channel 9. She recently performed in the Malthouse House and Sydney Theatre Company co-production of Bertolt Brecht's *Baal*, directed by Simon Stone. Geraldine has studied with Complicite Theatre Company in London, and has studied viewpoints with members of the SITI theatre company of New York. Geraldine is also an accomplished singer, having trained and performed professionally for over twelve years.

Fiona Pepper – Paulettastar

Fiona graduated from the Acting course at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts in 2008. Her stage credits include performing in *Don't Look Back* 2008 Perth International Arts Festival, Anya in *The Cherry Orchard*, the Friar Lawrence in *Romeo and Juliet*, Belinda in *Noise's Off* and Hattie Lamb in *Cloudstreet*. Since graduating she played Susannah Hall in *The Herbal Bed*, directed by Sarah Giles. She was also a member of the *Bell Shakespeare Actors at Work SAWA* team, performing scenes from *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet* directed by Wayne Blair and Matt Edgerton. She played Fiona in Perth Theatre Company's *The Removalists* directed by Melissa Cantwell and she has recently returned from studying at Ecole Philippe Gaulier in Paris.

Alex Millwood – The Bomb

Alex completed a drama degree at the University of Wollongong in 2009. While studying at university Alex chose to take a broad approach to his learning developing his skills as both a writer and an actor. Alex performed in several productions and has studied movement with

Steven Berkoff. Since graduating Alex has performed in several short films and has enjoyed being a part of the creative development for *Sweetbird andsoforth*.

Sonny Vrebac – Michael

Sonny Vrebac is a NIDA Acting Graduate. His list of feature acting credits include the festival hit *Black Balloon*, *Crime Follows Punishment* and *Sleeping Beauty* directed by the novelist Julia Leigh which was just recently accepted for competition at Cannes. With a string of short films under his belt he has also co-written and produced a short *The Pear*. Amongst his array of plays and musicals he is very much involved in transmedia and is the creator of an interactive digital project that's currently in pre-production, *Hunter n Hornet*, set for release to the app store late this year. www.sonnyvrebac.com www.hunterhornet.com

Stephanie Anna – Stage Manager

Stephanie is a graduate of Charles Sturt University's Bachelor of Arts – Communications (Theatre/Media) and works across Theatre, Television and Events. Memorable theatre credits include Stage Manager for *The Last Five Years* at the Seymour Centre; Production Manager for *For A Better World* at the Griffin Theatre; Stage and Tour Manager for *My Name is Sud* performed at, and in conjunction with, the Blacktown Arts Centre and the Woodford Folk Festival. Recent Television credits include Production Secretary for *COPS LAC*, Channel 9; and *Spirited Series Two*, W Channel. Special Events credits include Stage Manager for *The 2009 & 2010 Australian Wool Fashion Awards* and Event Manager for *Sydney's Inaugural Fringe Festival Launch Party*. Stephanie Anna travelled to New York City in October last year to work on *The CMJ Music Marathon and Film Festival*. Returning with a drive to see her career lead back to NYC, Stephanie embarked on two new projects; recently joining *AB Publicity* and Artist Managing *Fanny Lumsden* (Sydney based singer-songwriter).

About the Play

Synopsis

Mess Hall & atyp's Under the Wharf season present the world premiere of

Sweet Bird andsoforth

By Laura Naumann

In a new translation by Benjamin Winspear

Amanda is going away.

Her friends have gathered at their usual haunt, high on the hill at the very edge of town, to throw a farewell party. But is it really that easy to leave everything you've ever known?

Sweet Bird andsoforth follows six young adults at the party to end all parties in a unnamed country town we track the history, fears, joys and hang-ups of the six characters Paulettastar, Cutestuff, Tiny, Da Bomb, Amanda and Michael. Starting at about 2pm Saturday afternoon and continuing through to 5am the next morning the party begins with Tiny setting up the decorations and waiting for the woman of the moment Amanda to arrive,

but she doesn't, Da Bomb, Michael, Cutestuff and Paulettastar arrive and still no Amanda. Final she arrives with her suitcase in hand and so the party can commence.

Director's Notes

Sweet Bird andsoforth is a play about growing up. It's a play about the transition we all have to face - from childhood to adulthood; from the uncertainty of adolescence to finding where we fit in the world. At the heart of *Sweet Bird* is the question of what we have to sacrifice to make this transition. What do we lose? Who do we leave behind? And what risks do we have to take to get there? Being young is supposed to be the best time in your life...but according the six friends in *Sweet Bird* it's definitely "overrated".

Funny, energetic, original and authentic, Laura Naumann's text acts as a template to our production. We have used devising, composition, physical theatre and integrated sound, design and AV to create this intimate and theatrically imaginative production.



Exploring the intersection between live performance, film and sculptural design, this production of *Sweet Bird andsoforth* is an exciting collision of ideas and artistic disciplines resulting in a new theatrical language and an unconventional production. Lead by director Laura Scrivano, both the creative's and cast have collaborated to collectively build the world and story of this play. Using strong visual references such as the photographic work of Bill Henson, the video art of Bill Viola, the German film *The Edukators* and the energy of Ontroerend Goed's *Once and for all we're going to tell your who we are so shut up and listen* this production will be a rich tapestry of experiential storytelling that engages and entices audiences.

Sweet Bird andsoforth is a rare find, a play that possesses an authentic, original voice, a play that is surprising, innovative in its structure and form, evocative and begging to be produced. The chance to produce the world premiere of this play - in an Australian translation - with a group of Sydney's finest young theatre artists could not have been passed up. In addition to the quality of the work, the play has an unexpected resonance with Sydney and Australian audiences. The geographic and metaphoric isolation of growing up in a country as vast as Australia is a key idea in our collective cultural consciousness. This play, although originally written in Germany, perfectly captures this idea. In addition to the universal themes associated with youth, this renders the work relevant to contemporary Australian audiences. In casting this play, we looked for a wide cross-section of performers that represented the cultural diversity of Sydney, and helped contribute to the intercultural tapestry of the project.

We feel that this will have an effect on both the nature of the work and allows us to respond to the need for a cultural exchange of ideas. The key objectives of this project, in addition to presenting a piece of work relevant and engaging for Australian audiences, include allowing a group of young and diverse theatre artists to challenge themselves with a new text and explore a process of interdisciplinary practice; ideas of cultural diversity and interculturalism within the Sydney community and on our stages; facilitating international artistic connections; creating work of a high artistic standard and commercial viability; and

providing a space for new ideas, new ways and new collaborations.

The world premiere of Laura Naumann's unique new play *Sweet Bird andsoforth* is the culmination of over 12 months of research, exploration, experimentation and translation across two hemispheres. Weaving the universal experience of adolescence with a surreal landscape, Chekhovian characters and the anarchic energy of pubescent discovery, *Sweet Bird andsoforth* presents a defining time in our lives from a new perspective and with a new voice; a voice that deserves to be heard.

Background of the Play

In August 2009, Laura Scrivano (director) and Michael Cutrupi (producer/cutestuff) were invited to attend *World Interplay*; an international young playwrights conference held in Cairns, Queensland. The conference in association with *Playwriting Australia* is an opportunity for young playwrights from around the globe to develop, workshop and receive mentorship for their writing from directors, actors, playwrights and dramaturges at the top of their field. Laura Scrivano attended as one such mentor and Michael Cutrupi was invited as a resident performer and delegate from Sydney.



Laura Naumann was sponsored by Goethe Institute to take part in *World Interplay* with her script *Sweet Bird andsoforth*. Laura Scrivano and Naumann worked together for these two weeks that culminated in an excerpt being shown to the other groups, it was a great success. Upon Laura Scrivano's arrival back to Sydney, she contacted Michael Cutrupi and Benjamin Winspear and began to commission a new English translation of the work for a production.

After six months of writing and adapting Benjamin Winspear provided Laura and Michael with a rehearsal draft of the script and the two began initial casting process. Once the cast was confirmed, the company secured a three-week creative development slot at Fraser Studios, Sydney where they underwent a rigorous research and development period of the script.

A further three months had passed and the Australian Theatre for Young People invited Mess Hall to apply for a spot in the Under The Wharf Season of Independent Productions for 2011 and was accepted.

Themes

The play deals with many themes relevant to an audience of all ages including:

- Isolation
- Apathy
- Loss of Innocence
- Lost Youth
- Ageing
- Pretending to be someone who you are not



- Peer Pressure
- Love lost and discovered
- Individual vs. the Society

Interview with the Playwright

Laura Naumann will be joining the cast and crew of Sweet Bird andsoforth from August 11th – August 25th. She will also be running writing workshops as well as participating in Q&A sessions with the cast and director post show as listed below.

Activities

PRE-SHOW:

- **Investigative Task** – Review and respond to the promotional material for Sweet Bird andsoforth and discuss the relevance to the themes of the play.
- **Research Task** – Compile a geographic dossier on the city of Hildesheim, Germany and compare/contrast it to the City of Sydney, Australia.

PRE-VIEWING:

- How does the set relate to the promotional material?
- Discuss your initial reaction to the set.
- How is the theatre lit as you walk into the space?
- What assumptions can you make based on the set and lighting?

POST-VIEWING:

- **Review Task** – Write a critical review of the production making sure to mention costume, set, lighting, technical aspects and performances.
- **Discussion Task** – Discuss the use of colour or lack of in set, costume and lighting elements.
- How do these elements help create the mood of the play?
- **Performance Task 1** – Create scenes that could possibly occur before the group of friends arrive on the hill in the beginning of the play. Eg. Cutestuff and Paulettastar, where have they just come from and what have they been talking about?
- **Performance Task 2** – Workshop and devise an alternative final scene in the play. How does this scene change the dynamics of the relationships between the six friends?

FACILITATED ACTIVITES (IN THE THEATRE):

Writing workshop with playwright Laura Nauman & director Laura Scrivano (23 August only)

Join German playwright Laura Naumann and Sydney director Laura Scrivano is a writing workshop where students will crate their own mini-scenes and stories, gain professional feedback and be read at the end of the workshop. Learn how to turn your ideas into drama; and everyday stories into theatre. Unleash your imagination!

Duration: 1 hour

Physical theatre workshop with director Laura Scrivano & cast members (all school shows)

Create theatre from scratch using physical techniques, devising and group composition. Join director Laura Scrivano as she explains the basic of Viewpoints (the technique used to create the physical work in Sweet Bird andsoforth), and the craft of theatre making. The workshop will culminate in a showing of students' work, and group performance piece!

Duration: 1.5 hours

Forums available:

Q & A with the cast, director Laura Scrivano and writer Laura Naumann (23 August only).

Duration: 20mins

Q & A with the cast, director Laura Scrivano (all school shows).

Duration: 20mins

**ALL SCHOOL PERFORMANCES ARE \$15 PER STUDENT
(TEACHERS SEE IT FOR FREE) INCLUDING FREE POST SHOW Q&A AND
WORKSHOP FOR AN ADDITIONAL \$5 PER STUDENT.**

TO BOOK YOUR TICKETS OR FOR MORE INFO PLEASE CONTACT

SKYE KUNSTELJ

Ph: 0419 229 047

Email: skyelinda@gmail.com

Supplementary Materials

New York Times article on the new stages of Adolescence Development:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/22/magazine/22Adulthood-t.html>

The work of Russian playwright, author and poet Anton Chekhov:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anton_Chekhov

Heinrich Von Kleist's novella Michael Kohlhaas:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Kohlhaas

The photographic work of Bill Henson:

http://www.whatdigitalcamera.com/imageBank/b/Bill_Henson_rgb.jpg

http://www.eusal.es/libros/84-7800-708-3_g.jpg

<http://iconolo.gy/sites/default/files/henson7.jpg>

<http://hwww.iconolo.gy/sites/default/files/henson6.jpg>

<http://hwww.iconolo.gy/sites/default/files/henson2.jpg>

<http://img.aasd.com.au/69538130.jpg>

<http://hwww.iconolo.gy/sites/default/files/henson1.jpg>

The video work of artist Bill Viola:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Viola

Promotional Materials:

