

# Neighbourhood Watch



23 JULY - 28 AUGUST 2011

**NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH**

**BELVOIR**



Belvoir presents

**NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH**

By **Lally Katz**  
Director **Simon Stone**

*Belvoir's production of Neighbourhood Watch opened at Belvoir St Theatre on Wednesday 27 July 2011.*

Set & Costume Designer **DALE FERGUSON**  
Lighting Designer **DAMIEN COOPER**  
Composer & Sound Designer **STEFAN GREGORY**  
Dramaturg **EAMON FLACK**  
Stage Manager **LUKE MCGETTIGAN**  
Assistant Stage Manager **MICHAEL MACLEAN**

With  
Ken and others **CHARLIE GARBER**  
Musician, Chemist and others **STEFAN GREGORY**  
Catherine **MEGAN HOLLOWAY**  
Milova and others **KRIS MCQUADE**  
Martin and others **IAN MEADOWS**  
Christina and others **HEATHER MITCHELL**  
Ana **ROBYN NEVIN**

*We acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation who are the traditional custodians of the land on which Belvoir St Theatre is built. We also pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging, and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.*

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# ABOUT BELVOIR



## **ONE BUILDING. SIX HUNDRED PEOPLE. THOUSANDS OF STORIES**

When the Nimrod Theatre building in Belvoir Street, Surry Hills, was threatened with redevelopment in 1984, more than 600 people – ardent theatre lovers together with arts, entertainment and media professionals – formed a syndicate to buy the building and save this unique performance space in inner city Sydney.

Thirty years later, under Artistic Director Eamon Flack and Executive Director Sue Donnelly, Belvoir engages Australia's most prominent and promising playwrights, directors, actors and designers to realise an annual season of work that is dynamic, challenging and visionary. As well as performing at home, Belvoir regularly takes to the road, touring both nationally and internationally.

## **BELVOIR EDUCATION**

Our Education Program provides students and teachers with insights into the work of Belvoir and first hand experiences of the theatre-making process.

Belvoir Education offers student workshops, teacher professional development workshops, work experience, archival viewings and a wealth of online resources designed to support work in the drama classroom. Our arts access programs assist schools in Regional NSW and Western Sydney to access the company's work.

Explore our education pages at [www.belvoir.com.au/education](http://www.belvoir.com.au/education)

# CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM



Lally Katz  
Writer



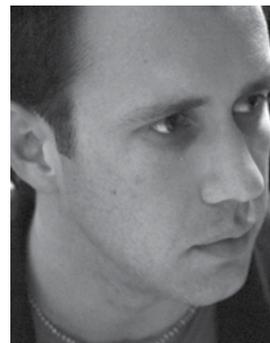
Simon Stone  
Director



Damien Cooper  
Lighting Designer



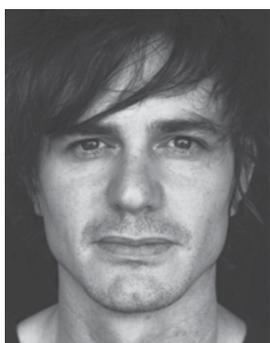
Dale Ferguson  
Set & Costume  
Designer



Eamon Flack  
Dramaturg



Charlie Garber  
Ken & others



Stephen Gregory  
Composer, Sound  
Designer, Musician &  
others



Megan Holloway  
Catherine



Michael Maclean  
Assistant  
Stage Manager



Luke McGettigan  
Stage Manager



Kris McQuade  
Milova & others



Ian Meadows  
Martin & others



Heather Mitchell  
Christina & others



Robyn Nevin  
Ana

# WRITER'S NOTE

## LALLY KATZ

In 2007 I had a brief conversation in a theatre foyer with Robyn Nevin, during which we discussed the possibility of my writing her a play. I asked her, 'What should the character be like?'

Robyn responded, 'Tough and funny.'

So that was it. My whole life became about finding a tough and funny character to write for Robyn. I was obsessed. But I wasn't having any luck.

One morning I went out on the street to see if the world looked more hopeful. Standing out there in my pyjamas, I heard a voice call across the road, 'You girl, come on my gate.' And there was Ana (pronounced Ah-nah). Within moments she was telling me, in her deep Hungarian accent, about her story. I thought to myself, 'Tough... and funny...'

The next two years I spent constantly with Anna. Often seven days a week, all day and into the night we would talk. We shared everything together. She showed me her memories and the world. I asked her advice on men. She weighed me. I washed her dog. We went on errands together. We talked constantly on the phone. Anna's world became bigger than my world. Her memories became more real than my present. But through it, she led me to becoming the adult woman that I was meant to be.

During these two years I didn't see or speak to Robyn. But she was on my mind constantly. I met with Belvoir, and through the B Sharp Creative Development program they commissioned me to write the first draft of the play.

From the beginning, Belvoir supported this play completely. I met regularly with Eamon Flack and Annette Madden. Through Belvoir, Julian Meyrick did initial dramaturgy on the script with me. I am very grateful for his insight and guidance during that time.

I finally decided it was time I let Robyn know that I had spent the last two years of my life working on writing a part for her. I really hoped she would want to do the play! We met for coffee and I brought her a first draft of the script. She read it, and thank goodness she was excited and wanted to do the role! Robyn has been an inspiration, a guiding hand and a great support through every stage of the writing of this play. We have met regularly; she has read every draft of the script and done several readings of it throughout its development.

When it was decided that there was a possibility that the play could be in Belvoir's 2011 season, Eamon Flack and Simon Stone came on board to work with me on developing the script; Eamon as dramaturg and Simon as director. They have been an integral part of the structure, the tone, the characters and the world of the play. I have loved working with them. They have worked so hard and for so long on this play with me. It would be so wonderful for Australian theatre if every new Australian play received this level of development.

Anna became one of my best friends and practically a family member. She is one of my favourite people in the world and her life and personality are the inspiration for this play. I hope you will love her like I do.

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

## SIMON STONE

*Neighbourhood Watch* takes place in the year between Kevin Rudd's election as Australian Prime Minister and Barack Obama's as US President. Everything was changing in the western world and for a brief while anything seemed possible. Against this backdrop we meet Catherine, a young woman stuck in suburbia, waiting for her life to change as monumentally as the world around her is. Into her life comes Ana, an elderly Hungarian immigrant carrying the weight of the twentieth century on her shoulders. As their unlikely relationship develops, Catherine's life is transformed by Ana's stories of an almost-forgotten world: through her new friend's eyes she witnesses the traumas of war, the desolation of the refugee experience, and the struggle of settling in a foreign land. It's a common tale in our country, but one that's all too foreign to middle-class Australians like Catherine.

In meeting Ana and hearing her stories, Catherine is given the rare opportunity of learning from someone who has survived the unthinkable. The courage this gives her in dealing with her own past is Ana's gift to her. In turn, Ana is granted one last great friendship at a time when the journey to her life's end was looking to be a lonely one.

The magic of this piece for me is how effortlessly it moves between memories, dreams and reality, and how each makes the other more poignant. The play bends time and explodes space. The past is resurrected and the present is spun around itself. Life pours into the afterlife. Lally has written a play for the modern age: a time-travelling mix of fantasy, hyperrealism, sitcom and epic theatre. The eclecticism of its form is not haphazard – it's a tribute to the myriad life we lead nowadays. It's a privilege to be delving into such rich and exciting material and I thank her for entrusting me with it.

At the end of *Neighbourhood Watch*, Rudd is nearing the end of his first year as Prime Minister and Obama has just been elected in America, and things are looking up. It's a hopeful note for the characters, but an ironic one for the audience.

Remember, the play seems to say, that not so long ago we were full of hope.



Simon Stone, in rehearsals for *Neighbourhood Watch* 2011

# IN CONVERSATION WITH: LALLY KATZ

## INTERVIEW WITH THE PLAYWRIGHT

BY KATE MCDOWELL, WED 20 JULY 2011

### **What inspired you to write *Neighbourhood Watch*?**

I had a conversation with Robyn Nevin, about four years ago [2007] in a foyer...it was just a brief conversation... and she said, "We should work together sometime" I said, "Really? Well why don't I write you a play?... Oh my gosh, well what do you want the part to be like?" and she said, "tough and funny!" So then I just got obsessed and all I thought about was, I've got to get Robyn Nevin a part that is tough and funny. I kind of had a character in my imagination but I needed to find someone from life... that I could drain - that I could steal their life.

One day, I remember it was after - I don't really know that much about politics or anything - but it was just after the Rudd government got voted in 2007, for years and years we'd had the Liberal government in, I thought, "I wonder if it will be different now we don't have the Liberal government". I was just hanging around [the street] one morning and I heard this, "You girl come on my gate"... and across the road was this little head behind a white picket fence, with her hair piled up high, wearing rose coloured glasses, and next to her this big German Shepherd-Doberman Pinscher barking and growling. She said, "You girl, what you stupid? Come on my gate!". I went over and she started talking to me. Then she went and got this photo of when she was young and she looked really handsome in the photo, and I was like, "Beautiful!" and she said, "Yes!" and she's Hungarian. She launched right into this story about her father being blown up in the street, mixed in with stuff about the street. We talked for about 20 minutes and at the end I thought, tough and funny - this is her! And I said, "Can I see you again?" and she said, "Yeah, yeah, yeah" and went inside.

Soon after I put a note in her letterbox saying... call me, but she didn't. So time when by and then... her dog had been in a fight in the street, and I went and helped her and then for about two years I lived with her in a way, all day, all night listening to her talk. So I guess the inspiration for it came because I wanted to write a play for Robyn and then I'd met Ana who was the life blood for the play.

### **So you had found the character of Ana. From what ideas did you start to construct a play - a form?**

I didn't find a form for some time. For a long time I was just writing down little stories that Ana had told me. I didn't actually start writing it properly for about three years. And also when I first started writing it there was this Apocalypse Bear - who I've had in a lot of my plays - and a Hope Dolphin. They're not in it anymore but they kind of created the structure of the play. It was like this Apocalypse Bear world, and this young woman a.k.a. me, meets this older woman who she believes is the keeper of the Hope Dolphin and is gonna lead her to hope. A lot of the play was structured around that. It was a really useful device when I was writing it. By the end of three years, it was a commission for Belvoir because I came in and met with Eamon Flack (Dramaturg) and Annette Madden, told them about Ana and they wanted to do it. I'd contacted Robyn - cause I thought, mmm... better tell Robyn, because Belvoir's being too nice, not that Robyn's not nice, but I thought if I tell Robyn that I'm gonna write it and then I don't then I'll be "forever in the shame". Although, I would be "forever in the shame" too if Belvoir commissioned me to write it and then I didn't!

It finally came time to write the first draft. So I printed out all of the scenes that I'd written

or little snippets which was about 300 pages... and then I read them all and I put them in order of where they would go. This is a trick I have, that I do all the time now. I printed out on Wikipedia... how to write a hero's journey and also how to write a three-act structure, and using those... I arrange and go, well this must be in Act 1 and this in Act 2, Act 3... and put them all in order... I find that really useful having that document... some things I'll just retype, or some things I'll have to add a scene or...and then you kinda know where you're going.

And then I just stayed awake for about four days writing it. The first draft was like 150 pages or so - it was way too long! It had everything in it. That was the original first draft I guess.

**It's interesting that you use the traditional three-act structure and hero journey structure to write contemporary plays. It is interesting for budding playwrights to wonder about the use of these traditional forms and new forms.**

I never used to, I used to make things up as I went along, and that was great. But now I actually find that it is really useful, because it just means that you're going to have a story... or hopefully it will. The weakness in my writing was always plot and story. I guess it was just something I didn't feel confident in. Eventually I didn't want to feel like I was writing a certain way because I didn't know how to write another way. I thought "I don't want to have one flat tyre all my life". And it is harder, I find, writing to try and have a story or plot because it's harder to make things just be alive. I guess it always comes down to why the characters are doing certain things. It has to be their desires that guide it. It shouldn't feel like they're just filling out plot. Which is the challenge in it, I guess. But now everything I write I do that, I go to Wikipedia and do that. When I was younger too, I was more interested in what my own mind was going to do. It's... not enough for me for [my writing] just to have voice anymore. It has to be pushed and pulled and challenged, otherwise I think you end up writing the same thing over and over again... or I would... I can't speak for other writers... some people will prefer sometimes my earlier stuff... just like a dream or crazy or whatever, just kind of alive, but I felt like, if I wanted to reach a bigger audience, and I do want to, that I had to learn how to let the world in a little bit more.

**How did the play evolve? When did you realise that you had a play? The original title was "The Hope Dolphin Rides Again" is that right?**

"The Hope Dolphin Rides Tonight". That was because it was originally, because I'd written a lot of Apocalypse Bear plays, and this was gonna be a Hope Dolphin play. In a way it is because it's about hope. When I was first hanging out with Ana in her house, it was kinda like magic. First of all her house - its all green and blue and... from about 3 'til almost 9 I lived in Miami. The sea is this turquoise aqua colour and there's palm trees everywhere so for some reason... its those things that always make me feel calm and at home, Ana's house... was those colours... it was almost like it was under water or something. So straight away that kind of spoke to this core element in me where I was going, "Oh my God... I'm here, I'm here."

And then add Ana to it, this person who you can't actually believe [is] real because she's like a witch. She's magic. Wild birds fly into her hands and she can talk to animals and... she changes the atmosphere around her. This is a street in suburban Kew in Melbourne, but she makes it magic. Like you walk on to the street and think, something's different here. This isn't like other streets and it's because there's a witch living on that street... that is what she is to me anyway.

So I was sitting in her house listening to her stories, which were kind of like in a Hollywood movie when someone starts telling a story, and then twinkly stuff happens on the screen and then you're in the story. I was sort of in all her stories. It was the first time I'd lived

someone else's life, more than I was living my own life...I was used to thinking about myself... and I suddenly I was thinking like Ana. I'd be riding my bike along the street, and I used to kind of sing songs about my own life and suddenly I was singing songs as Ana, about her life. I guess I'd learnt her...I fell in love with her. Not romantically but absolutely in love with her and learnt her life.

I knew her by the end of it probably better than I know anyone else because I'd studied her. With Ana I could kind of predict exactly what was going to happen in every situation in her life. I mean she always surprised me, and shocked me and excited me but... by the end I knew her probably better than I knew myself... the actual play though, it was translating Ana from life. The whole time I knew, whenever she'd be speaking I was like, "This is a play, this is a character." I couldn't believe it... that I found her. That I had asked a question and the world had given me Ana. I knew that she was special, I knew that she was a play... well she could be anything you know. So the first draft of the play, needed a lot of work because... a lot of the time it's like Ana talking at me or Ana talking to other people. And that wasn't that interesting on stage. Her stories are amazing but...it needed to be more theatrical. That was a big part of the process, of realising what the play needed next... to make it more theatrical and more dramatic.

[Hope Dolphin and the Apocalypse Bear] were trailing though it... the plot devices, from personal apocalypse to hope, global hopelessness to hope, like in the end Obama gets [elected] in, this thing of hope. I was working a whole lot on the texture and plot with Eamon Flack and Simon Stone. They were really involved in the drafting of the play... To make it more dramatic, and to get rid of a lot of superfluous stuff. In the end it had to be... made slightly untrue. Not untrue to the heart but untrue to life. I had to become a little bit



Lally Katz

removed from it and I had to take out things... everyone always says you have to kill your darlings... One of my inspirations for writing it initially was the Apocalypse Bear and the Hope Dolphin, and then in the end they had to be taken out in order to have room for Ana in it.

**When converting things from real life, how do you negotiate staying true to your aesthetic while at the same time using this raw material? And what do you personally do to make sure that when you're writing from real life, it's not too real for theatre?**

Our genetic memory, our soul or whatever makes up our mathematics and then add magic to that and you have imagination. Everything that you create is sort of a mixture between mathematics and magic a little bit.

Really, there's no short cut to it. I would advise to any young writers to follow their instincts. To do what they think is good, because you can't guess at something. You can teach yourself... but you have to write what you think is good. Follow your heart, but at the same time the only way your instincts are actually developed is through work, is through writing, writing, writing and through seeing theatre... My instincts have grown or been taught... because I've spent so much time in theatre, watching theatre, making theatre, just being around theatres... I spent as much time in theatres as I've spent anywhere else, so I know now when something from life will work in a theatre.

When I write a play I don't picture a stage and I don't picture actors... I just picture the real life thing and I write that. Which can be very frustrating for directors later - because then it'll have a swimming pool or the sea fills the stage - and it's a bit tedious but they can work out stuff for that. It's when I get into rehearsals and I start doing rewrites there and work with the actors - that's when I will write with the stage and theatrics in mind. Before that hopefully it's like a second nature, writing things theatrically, and then once I'm in the rehearsal room then I'm actually writing to the production.

**How was working with Simon Stone (director) and Eamon Flack (dramaturg) in the development of the play? How did they work with you to bring to the stage what we will see on opening night?**

I loved working with Simon and Eamon - I feel like we're creatively on the same page. I really love their work and I get where they're coming from, so straight away we had a really easy dialogue together. It wasn't like they read the first draft and went you've gotta totally change this, we came to changes together, we got on the same wavelength. We worked on the plot and cleaning things up and stuff.

I got on Simon's wavelength in a way and sometimes I was writing to his taste but I would do that with any director. That's when you start writing to the production and I don't think that's a bad thing - I think it's a good thing if you spark well with the director... because it means you go in slightly a different direction and you grow and learn. Working with Simon and Eamon... I feel like I learnt a lot... about structure and plot. I'd never worked with them before and, their working processes I found really good, really useful. I feel that without a doubt the play that it is now - If I hadn't worked with them it would be a completely different play. Not to say better or worse but I'm very happy with the result.

**How did the subplots of Milova, Christina, Ken, and others come about and work to complement the main through line? Were any subplots lost?**

I actually should mention a man named Julian Meyrick also initially worked on the play too. I had at first all these enemies of Ana in the play... Milova was one enemy. And he said, "Oh you should just make them all into one"... And that was really useful, that was a really good

tying up of things.

And Simon and Eamon had a lot to do with [the plotting]... we got all this butchers paper and we wrote down all the scenes. We worked out where things sat best with each other... originally the Ken character wasn't in love with the Catherine character and then we thought it's more dramatic if he is, much to the dismay of my real life friend Ben who Ken is based on who's disgusted by the fact that now his character's in love with mine.

A play is like a piece of music and different chords should fit together and form the song together.

**The play was originally set in Melbourne, where the real events in the play took place. How did you negotiate changes to suit a Sydney stage?**

Well there were really very few references to Melbourne... and its funny every time we had a reading of the play or any time I walked around Sydney impersonating Ana - not in a cruel way - but because for ages all I did was talk like Ana. Everyone would say, "Oh, I know women just like her in Bondi"... so I think she's quite a universal character, she could be in Sydney, she could be in Melbourne, she could even be in Brisbane - I feel like she could be in whatever city. I just think it's more enjoyable for the audience if the play is based in their city. And half the work I've done on this play was in Sydney... so why shouldn't it be in Sydney? Then if we do it in Melbourne... we can set it in Melbourne again. To be honest [it's] just a few name changes really.

**Do you think this play advocates for new types of female roles to emerge in theatre?**

I hope so! I write for men and women but I find it very hard to write something where there's not a central woman somewhere involved because you know, I'm a woman. And I like to write women. I hope that [Ana is] a good character for Robyn. In rehearsals, Robyn's been amazing and she's brought the character to life more than I could have dreamed.

I really want to advocate for interesting female roles on our stages and our screens... but... to be honest it's not something I think a lot about... It's not something I think: "I want to write this play because I want there to be good female roles." It's more like... "I just want to write this role! Oh this woman's amazing!" To be honest it's not coming from a political [position], it's just because I wanna do it. It's hard to do things because you feel like you should. In my mind I just go, "Why wouldn't you wanna write these great female roles? Wouldn't you want the best female actors doing big amazing roles? Why wouldn't people be striving to do that?" In a way, it seems ridiculous to me that it would be a political thing, because there's so much joy in it I think. If it needs to be a political thing to push things to happen and everything then sure, great, if that helps other people, but for me that's not where I'm coming from.

**If you were going to give advice to high school students wishing to pursue writing for theatre, what would you tell them?**

I'd say, you know, go for it! Put your heart and soul into it and see as much theatre as you can, volunteer... be around the theatre as much as you can. Put on your own work, get people together and put on a play anywhere that you can. The only way you learn is by being around the theatre, and by hearing your own words over and over again. If you have a play on, see it every night. Just be as involved as you can and just work as hard as you can.

# PRODUCTION ELEMENTS

The elements of production are the technical and visual elements used to manipulate the elements of drama in order to effectively tell a play's story.

In these notes we are going to look at *Neighbourhood Watch*

Costume renderings

Set model box

## SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER

### DALE FERGUSON

Dale has designed many Belvoir productions including *Counting & Cracking*, *Sami in Paradise*, *The Blind Giant is Dancing*, *Radiance*, *Brothers Wreck*, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, *Neighbourhood Watch*, *The Seagull*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Power of Yes*, *Antigone*, *Exit the King*, *Peribanez*, and *The Judas Kiss* (Toronto, West End and Brooklyn Academy of Music). Dale's other credits include *Away*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (STC), *An Ideal Husband*, *The Weir*, *The Speechmaker*, *The Crucible*, *Top Girls*, *The Drowsy Chaperone* (MTC); *Dance of Death*, *Night on Bald Mountain* (Malthouse Theatre). For opera, Dale designed *The Magic Flute* (Lyric Opera of Chicago), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Houston Grand Opera, Canadian Opera) *Otello* (Cape Town Opera), *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Welsh National Opera), *Anything Goes*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Eugene Onegin* (Opera Australia). Dale received a Helpmann Award for *Counting & Cracking* (2019) and *August: Osage County* (2010) and Tony and Drama Desk Award nominations for the Broadway Production of Belvoir's *Exit the King* (2009).

# COSTUME DESIGN

Costume design in *Neighbourhood Watch* (2011) plays a role in giving visual information about time and place. Costume Design was used to represent the present day and re-enactments of the past in a cohesive visual representation of the characters, as well as indicate when in time the action is taking place.

In Belvoir's production, there is a cast of seven, most of whom play several characters each. Doubling of specific actors for characters in 'the past' helps to reveal aspects of their characters in the present. One of the performers is a musician who plays all the live music throughout the play, mostly piano and also several minor characters. The role of costume provides a link to which character an actor is portraying and the time period they represent.

Below is a costume breakdown created by designer, Dale Ferguson. Dale lists each costume required for an actor, outlining the character name or reference, what year they are representing and an itemised list of what the character wears, noting colour or material where relevant.

## EXTRACT FROM COSTUME BREAKDOWN

### HEATHER MITCHELL

CHRISTINA	2007 - 2008	NURSE	1944
Top striped ¾ sleeve		Blue uniform	
Soft grey cardigan		Apron beige	
Cream linen trousers		Veil white	
Jacket anorak style		Tights black opaque	
Shoes slip on casual		Shoes black lace ups	
Beige handbag			
WIG - pull on - ash blonde		SOLDIERS MOTHER	1944
		Dress crepe	
NANCY	2007 - 2008	Shoes with heel	
Track suit grey trousers with pink jacket		Apron	
Runners slip on			
Soft shopping bag		WOMAN ON TRAM	LATE 1930s
		Grey jacket	
DR WALKER	2008	Brown skirt	
Chartreuse knit top		red hat	
Skirt business		brown gloves	
Hosiery		Scarf red	
Shoes heeled		Handbag (Robin Nevins)	
Glasses reading		Shoes with heel	
Watch and earrings			
SISTER	1944	MOVIE TICKET SALESPERSON	2008
floral skirt		Shirt sh sl white (sh sl = short sleeve)	
embroidered peasant top		Waistcoat blue	
cream socks		'Events' tag	
Shoes mary jane		Navy trousers	
WOMAN WITH PICCOLO DOG	2007	YOUNG WOMAN AT CHURCH	1944
Polo neck jumper		Pink Dress	
Sleeveless blue windbreaker		Red jacket	
Jeans		Socks and shoes	
Brown elastic sided boots			
Knit cap			

**IAN MEADOWS**

MARTIN 2008  
 T shirt light blue  
 Grey hoodie  
 Jeans grey  
 Runners converse

HUNGARIAN SOLDIER AT DOOR 1944  
 Great coat (Nida)  
 Boots  
 Helmut (Waricks)

ARTUR AXE MURDERER 1940s  
 Shirt beige linen  
 Wool dble brstd wool suit  
 Grey overcoat  
 Grey Tilbury hat  
 2 tone shoes

HUNGARIAN SOLDIER LEGLESS  
 Scene 1  
 Shirt beige linen  
 Knitted green vest (dale s)  
 Wool trousers  
 Olive green beret  
 boots

AMBULANCE DRIVER  
 blue shirt with badging  
 Trousers blue with flouro inserts  
 black shoes and belt

**STEFAN GREGORY**

MUSICIAN  
 Black t shirt x3 Hugo Boss  
 Black jeans  
 Black shoes

POSTMAN  
 Vest x 2  
 Hat x 2

CHEMIST  
 White coat x 2

WOOLWORTHS MAN  
 Peaked hat x 2

POLICEMAN 2007  
 NSW policeman uniform with hat (hire)  
 Boots

GYPSY  
 Light green knit vest  
 Brown suit  
 Neck scarf  
 Green shirt  
 Boots  
 Hat

**KRIS McQUADE**

MILOVA 2007  
 Floral dress  
 Cardigan blue  
 Stockings (niall or orthopedic)  
 Shoes lace up rubber sole  
 Head scarf

ANA'S MOTHER 1940s  
 Pale blue knit  
 Wool oliveish skirt  
 Red shoes with buckle  
 Stockings  
 Wig  
 Glasses

WOMAN AT N-WATCH MEETING 2007  
 White t Shirt  
 Jeans  
 Jacket Rabbitohs  
 Milova shoes  
 wig

SOLDIERS FATHER 1944  
 Suit 3 piece  
 Shirt  
 Tie  
 Shoes

WOMAN ON TRAM 1940s  
 Coat w fur collar  
 Beige felt hat/handbag / gloves  
 Shoes black suede

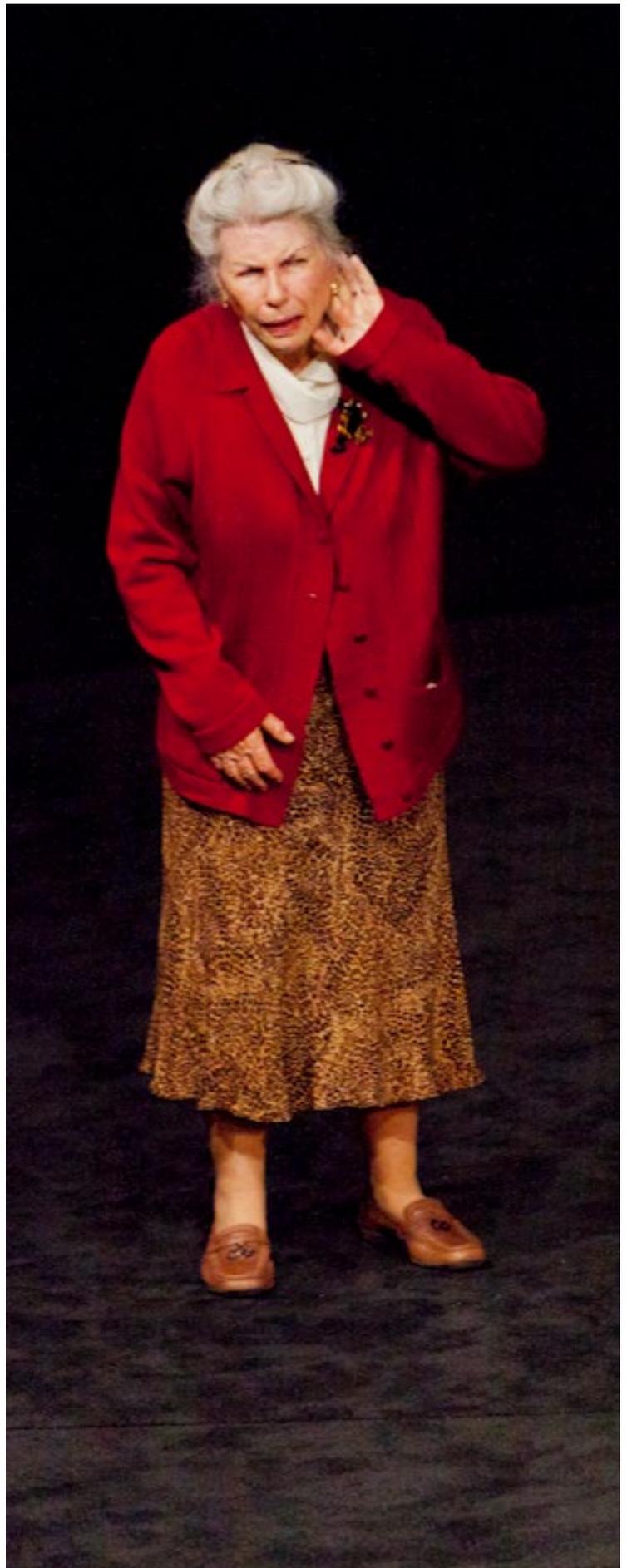
NURSE 1944  
 Blue uniform  
 Apron (beige)  
 Veil white  
 Black opaque  
 Shoes black lace up

YOUNG WOMAN AT CHURCH 1944  
 Dress summer  
 Socks  
 Shoes  
 Wig



ANA

Ana Costume Rendering by Dale Ferguson



Robyn Nevin as Ana

# CATHERINE

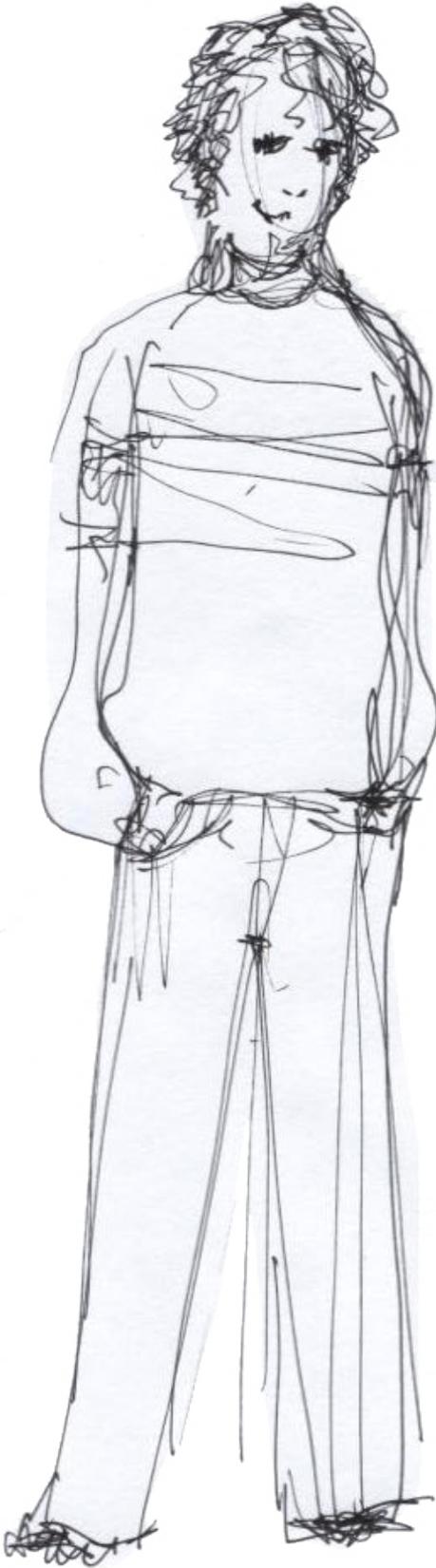


*Catherine Costume Rendering by Dale Ferguson*



*Megan Holloway as Catherine*

# KEN



KEN

*Ken Costume Rendering by Dale Ferguson*



*Charlie Gaber as Ken*

# MILOVA & CHRISTINE



Milova Costume Rendering by Dale Ferguson



Kris McQuade as Milova

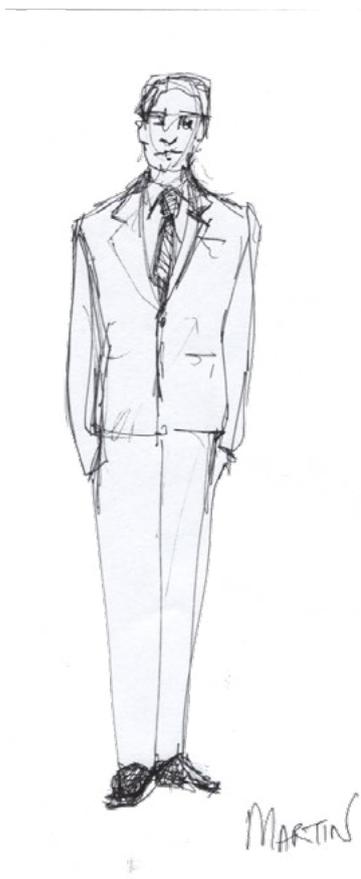


Christina Costume Rendering by Dale Ferguson



Heather Mitchell as Christina

# PRESENT & PAST: MARTIN & A HUNGARIAN SOLDIER



*Martin Costume Rendering by Dale Ferguson*



*Ian Meadows as Martin*



*Hungarian Soldier Costume Rendering by Dale Ferguson*



*Ian Meadows as Hungarian Soldier*

# WORLD WAR II: A RUSSIAN SOLDIER & A WAR-TIME NURSE



RUSSIAN  
SOLDIER

*Russian Soldier Costume Rendering by Dale Ferguson*



*Charlie Garber as Russian Soldier*



(CATHERINE  
AS ANA AS  
WW2 NURSE)

*World War II Nurse Costume Rendering by Dale Ferguson*



*Megan Holloway as  
Young Ana / Catherine World War II Nurse*

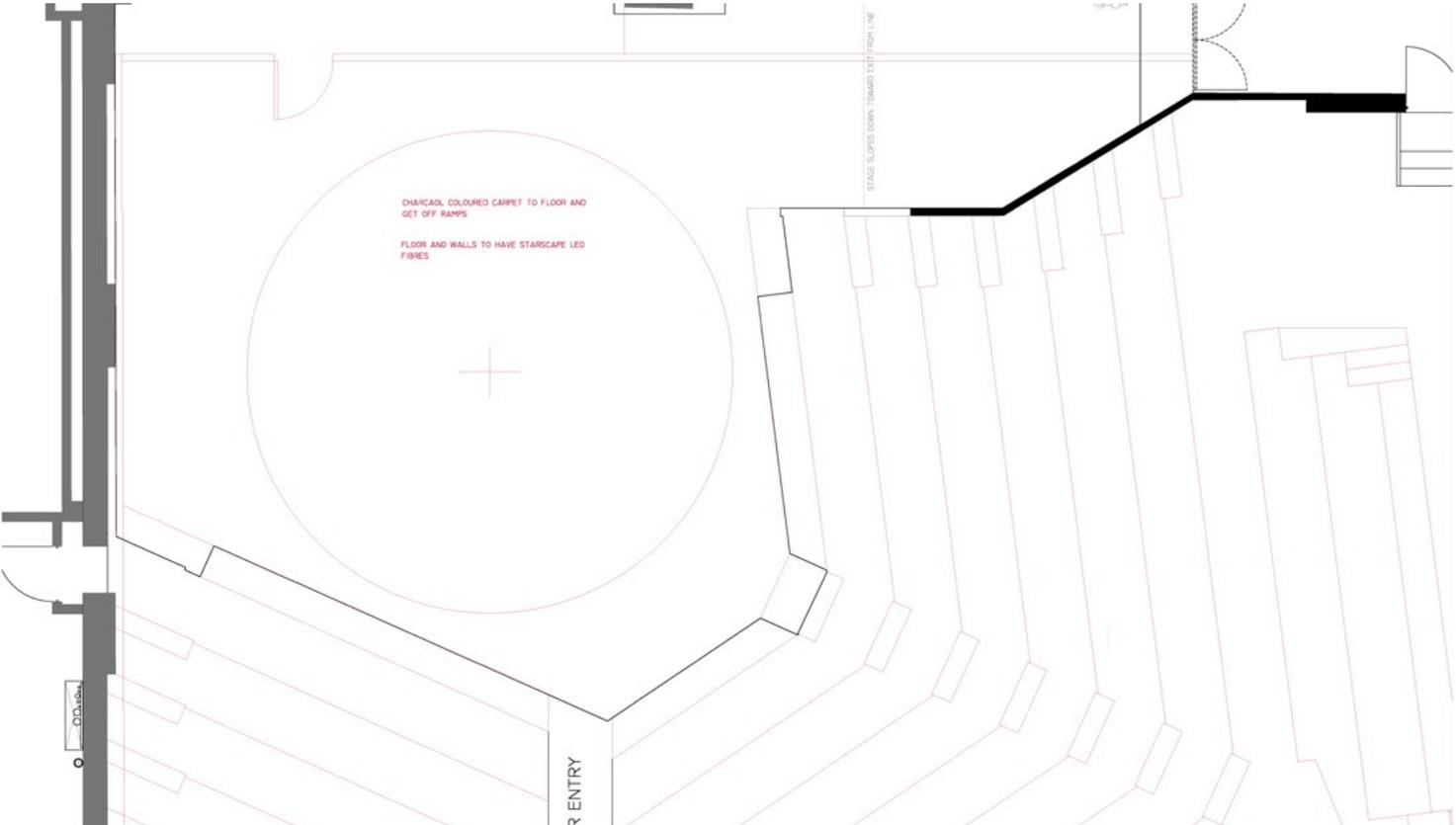


*Robyn Nevin*

*Megan Holloway*

# SET DESIGN

## REVOLVE DESIGN



Stage Plan - Upstairs Theatre with Revolve by Dale Ferguson



Model Box Neighbourhood Watch design by Dale Ferguson

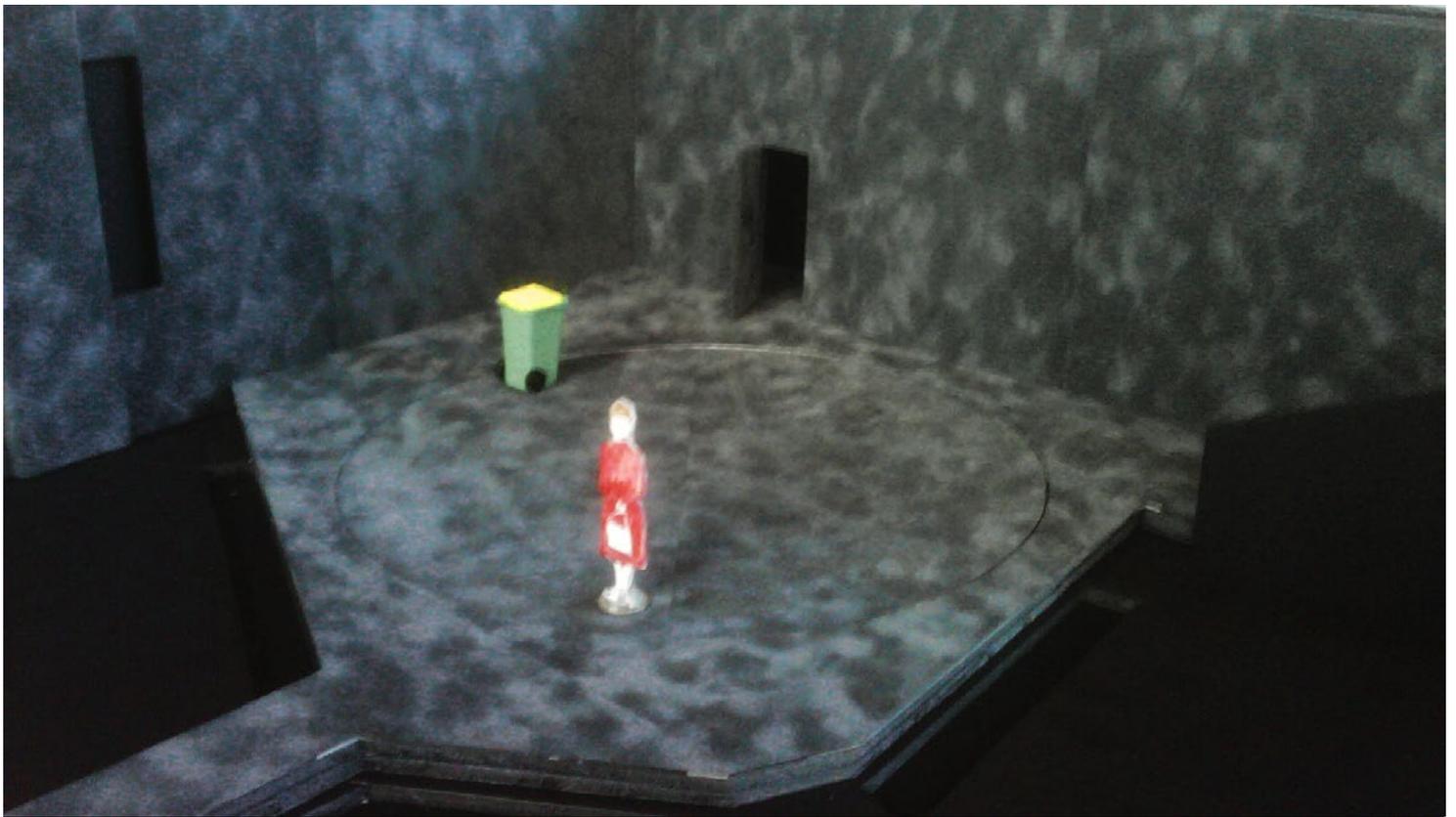
## SET DESIGN



*Set Neighbourhood Watch set design by Dale Ferguson*



*Set Neighbourhood Watch set design by Dale Ferguson*



*Neighbourhood Watch set design by Designer, Dale Ferguson*

### **Questions to consider after seeing this production**

1. Based on what you can see in the images above, what are the key differences between the early model box design and the final set design?
2. Why might this change have taken place?
3. From your study of *Neighbourhood Watch* in how many different locations does the action of the play take place?
4. How do you think those locations may have been represented on this set?
5. Why might the designer have chosen the colour they did for the set?

# STAGING *NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH*



*Megan Holloway, Robyn Nevin*

1. Look at the costume each character is wearing - what does it indicate about their age, class, status, lifestyle and the period in which the play is set?
2. What can you tell about the relationship between these two characters from where and how they are standing, as well as their facial expressions?
3. Describe the set you see in the above photo - where are we? What is the mood/atmosphere? Are there many locations or just one? Does the set change or stay the same?



*Charlie Garber, Robyn Nevin, Heather Mitchell, Megan Holloway*



*Ian Meadows, Megan Holloway*

1. Describe the characters you see in the photo above and the photo below.
2. What does each character's costume indicate about their age, class, status, lifestyle and what period is it?
3. What do the physical positions and facial expressions of the characters in each of the photos tell us about their relationship?
4. Describe the set you see in the above photo. What is the mood atmosphere created by the set? Are there many locations or just one?
5. Describe the set you see in the photo below. What is the mood atmosphere created by the set?



*Heather Mitchell, Robyn Nevin*

**In the staging of flashback scenes how might you use lighting and costume to tell the story?**



*Megan Holloway, Ian Meadows*

**How would you describe the staging below? What scene do you think this might be and why? Give reasons for your answer.**



*Charlie Garber, Megan Holloway*

**How are the set and other production elements used to tell the story of the play? How does the staging convey the relationship between the characters? (e.g. space, body language, expression)**



*Megan Holloway, Robyn Nevin*

**In the below scene between Catherine and Martin, how is staging used to visually represent their relationship? Can you tell where in the theatre the actors are standing?**



*Megan Holloway, Ian Meadows*

**How do Australian theatre practitioners create images of a specific time and place to influence an audience's response to cultural issues and concerns?**



*Kris McQuade, Megan Holloway, Robyn Nevin*

# THE REVOLVE



*Stefan Gregory, Ian Meadows, Robyn Nevin, Megan Holloway, Heather Mitchell, Kris McQuade*

**How does the production use space, set, the revolve and props to create place and time?  
What might be the purpose of using a revolve to tell this story in the context of Australian society?**



*Stefan Gregory, Robyn Nevin, Megan Holloway, Heather Mitchell, Kris McQuade*

**During which scene do you think the photo below is taken? Why? How does this scene reflect experiences of Australian society?**



*Stefan Gregory, Megan Holloway, Heather Mitchell, Kris McQuade, Robyn Nevin*

# BUILDING COMMUNITY

A community is a group of people that have something in common. Australia has thousands of different communities within it, and there are many ways that a community can form or define itself. *Neighbourhood Watch* explores what it means to be part of a modern community for a variety of different people, many of whom are feeling lost or alone...

*If we all knew our neighbours, our neighbourhoods would be real communities.*  
Catherine

## COMMUNITIES BASED ON SHARED SPACE

A community based on shared space have a physical area in common. This can be a street, suburb, town or a country. In *Neighbourhood Watch*, Ana and Catherine are part of the Mary Street community, but also the Sydney community and the New South Wales community.

New South Wales is split into 152 Local Government Areas, each of which contains several suburbs. These are areas of shared space are overseen by local governments, who look after everything from public spaces to rubbish collection. The communities that live in these areas share spaces like parks, beaches, shopping centres and libraries.

### Moving the action

Playwright Lally Katz originally set *Neighbourhood Watch* in Kew, a wealthy suburb in Melbourne. However, to make the play more relevant to a New South Wales audience the play's location has moved to somewhere in Sydney's Eastern suburbs, an area like Waverley Local Government Area.

### Geographic Location

*We miss you on Creswick Street, Ana. Milova*

Waverley LGA's geographic location is quite close to Sydney's CBD but the area has several beaches and views of Sydney Harbour:

Waverley LGA's proximity to the city means that the area's demographic profile is a mix of young professionals who want to have access to the city and older people who may have lived in the area for their entire life. Each group will view their community in a different way.



Waverley Local Area - Aerial view

## Demographic Profile

*Very good the Marrickville. Like Europe. Very Europe the Marrickville. Ana*

When Ana refers to Marrickville (a suburb in Sydney's Inner West) as being 'like Europe' she is referring to the ethnic background of the people who live there. Ethnicity is one of the key factors that contribute to the demographic profile of an area – the types of people who live in a community based on shared space. Other factors include the age, profession, living arrangement and marital status of the people who live in the area.

The demographic profile of the main characters in *Neighbourhood Watch* looks like this:

Character	Country of Birth	Age	Profession	Living arrangement	Marital Status
Ana	Hungary	80	Retired	Living alone	Widowed
Catherine	Australia	25-29	Unemployed	Group household	Single
Ken	Australia	30-34	Self-employed	Group household	Single
Milova	Serbia	65	Retired	Family household	Married
Christina	Australia	50-59	Retired	Living alone	Divorced

We can use this information to think about how the characters interact with one another. For example, Ken is roughly the same age as Catherine but as he is employed and she is not there is an opportunity for dramatic tension in their relationship around Catherine earning money.

Ana and Milova are roughly the same age and we find out early in the play that they used to live on the same street. However, their different countries of birth will strongly affect their relationship; Serbia and Hungary have a history of conflict dating back to World War I and this shapes how Ana interacts with her old neighbour.

Christina and Ana are both living alone but their marital status helps us understand what this means for each of them. Ana is widowed and without children, so her living arrangement is not by choice. Christina is divorced and has children who travel, she generally chooses to separate herself from the small community on Mary Street.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Why does geographic location influence a community? For example, what if *Neighbourhood Watch* was set in a small seaside town or a rural area?
2. What are some other ways we can categorise the characters in *Neighbourhood Watch*?

## COMMUNITIES BASED ON SOCIAL ORGANISATION

A community based on social organisation has a shared set of interests, beliefs or values. For example, if you spend time with people who play the same sports, share the same hobbies or work in at the same place as you, you are part of a community based on social organisation.

## Online Communities

***World of Warcraft is a community. It's a global community.*** Ken

Ken's membership in *World of Warcraft* is just one example of a growing number of communities that exist online. Whilst these communities are based on social organisation, they also have a shared space - a virtual space. Games like *World of Warcraft* are based around interacting with other people who play the game - there are many parts of the game that cannot be successfully completed on your own, so you are encouraged to interact with other players to succeed. Other online communities include Second Life, Facebook and Lonely Planet (a community for backpackers).

## Neighbourhood Watch in *Neighbourhood Watch*

***I've got cameras all around the outside of my house. So I always know if I'm safe.***  
Christina

*Neighbourhood Watch* is an example of a community based on social organisation because the people involved have a shared interest - in keeping their area safe and crime-free. The characters in *Neighbourhood Watch* have different ideas about safety and privacy. Catherine and Ken feel safe but value their privacy, whereas Ana's has a huge dog to keep her safe and secure, but she is more interested in the lives of her neighbours.

### Discussion Questions:

3. Based on what we learn about them in the play, what are some communities based on social organisation Catherine or Ken could belong to?
4. How might Ana and Catherine's relationship change if at the start of the play they had something in common other than shared space?

## DIFFERENCES WITHIN AND BETWEEN COMMUNITIES

***I've hardly seen you. Strange. I suppose now we'll run into each other all the time.***  
Christina

Communities can have many smaller communities existing within them. A sporting team (social organisation) might have members that come from several different areas (shared space), or a beach (shared space) may be used by the surfing community of a whole city (social organisation).

Within the Australian community there is a huge migrant community - according to the updated 2009 population data 25% of people living here were born overseas.

In *Neighbourhood Watch* Ana and Milova both belong to this migrant community. However, there is further division between them as Milova belongs to the Serbian migrant community, which Ana (who was born in Hungary) became part of when she married her second husband but never felt truly accepted by.

Despite their differences, Christina and Ana are also part of a community based on social organisation - they both have a life-threatening illness. However, their attitude to their illness is to conceal it rather than share it and so they lack a connection to this community and to each other.

### Discussion Questions:

5. Imagine Ana and Milova meeting for the first time. How would these two characters interact with each other?
6. What other possible connections are there between characters in *Neighbourhood Watch*?

# MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

*Neighbourhood Watch* helps us explore the life of a woman who has come to Australia from overseas, leaving her family behind and beginning a new life. Ana's story is fascinating but it is not unique – for decades Australia has been welcoming people from all over the world to make a new life here. Whilst some of these people have come during peaceful times from peaceful countries, thousands of others came here as refugees from war and conflict.

## Setting the scene

*Neighbourhood Watch* begins in late 2007 – playwright Lally Katz sets the scene by having Catherine and Ken greet each other with 'Happy Kevin 07' – a reference to Kevin Rudd's election campaign. Ana is 80 years old, which means at the outbreak of World War II (1939) she was 12.

## WORLD WAR II AND EUROPEAN REFUGEES

*They catch me on the border of Yugoslavia, and so I am the prisoner in the camp. I am the prisoner in the Italiano camp... they send me to Australia, and then again the camp. Twelve years the camps.* Ana

Hungary was an ally of Germany during the war, but suffered terrible casualties and by 1944 had tried to negotiate peace with the Soviet Union. Hitler intervened, Soviet forces bombed the capital city Budapest and eventually laid siege to it over, killing over 38,000 civilians.

## OLD ENEMIES AND NEW FRIENDS

*When I live on the same street with her, never still the drape of the Milova.* Ana

Ana's relationship with Milova is a key point in *Neighbourhood Watch*. Why does she distrust her old neighbour, another migrant from the same country as her late husband? One answer might be that Serbia and Hungary have a history of warfare and political rivalry. It was a Serbian who murdered the Archduke of Austria-Hungary in 1914, leading to World War I and the loss of much of Hungary's territory. Ana's prejudice is based on decades of bad blood, and her choice to marry a Serbian man suggest that she is more gentle and forgiving than she lets on.



Kris McQuade

## Russian Soldier in Budapest

Following the end of the war in 1945, thousands of people in Europe left their war-torn countries of birth, looking for somewhere to start again. These people ended up in Displaced Persons (DP) camps spread throughout Europe. After escaping from Hungary, Ana spends time in Italian and French DP camps.

In 1947 the Australian Minister for Immigration Arthur Calwell toured the DP camps of Europe. Calwell believed that post-war Australia could offer a better life for the refugees he met and signed an agreement with the United Nations to accept displaced persons from all over Europe. When they arrived in Australia, refugees spent time in a 'migrant reception centre'.

## A TIMELINE OF REFUGEE MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA: 1947 – 1965

1947 Following its agreement with the newly-formed United Nations, Australia agrees to settle 12,000 displaced persons per year.

1948 Peace treaties with Italy, Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary (WW2 enemy countries) open the way for migration from these countries.

1949 Work begins on the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme. Thousands of migrant workers are involved in the massive engineering project.

1950 The Australian government plans to increase Australia's population by one percent per year by immigration for the 1950s.

1952 With rising unemployment and the European economy improving, the Displaced Persons Scheme is replaced with formal migration agreements.

1955 Australia's one millionth post-war immigrant arrives.

1956 'Operation Reunion' brings 30,000 family members from Europe to Australia.

An uprising in Hungary leads to the arrival of 14,000 refugees.

1958 The Revised Migration Act simplifies entry permits (visas) and removes the controversial Dictation Test used to enforce the White Australia Policy.

1961 The Italian Government refuses to renew the assisted migration scheme, placing it on hold until 1967. Australia beats Italy in the Davis Cup.

1965 Australia commits troops, including the children of post-World War II migrants, to the Vietnam War.

Source - 'Immigration to Australia During the 20th Century - A Timeline', Dept. of Immigration

## Discussion Questions:

1. How do Ana's experiences shape how she interacts with the other characters in the play?
2. What costuming decisions could you make to show that two characters like Ana and Milova are the same in some ways but different in others?



Charlie Garber

# WOMEN

*Neighbourhood Watch* shows us three generations of women living in Australia. Each of them has a different attitude to work, marriage and family and the role they play in shaping a woman's identity. The age of each character helps us explore the world that shaped their attitudes.

## WOMEN'S WORK

*Every day for thirty year I am working in the Commonwealth Bank. Evenings the babysitting. Weekends cleaning the rich houses.* Ana

The Australia that Ana arrived in was going through a time of social upheaval. During World War II women had been encouraged to take over the jobs of men who had gone to fight, allowing them to work in fields like manufacturing that were previously male-dominated.

However, the peace and prosperity of the 1950s saw women being told that their place was 'in the home' or back in more traditional types of work like cleaning or nursing. Many women were unwilling to be pushed back into a narrower selection of jobs and life choices.

By the mid-1970s there were still areas of work that were overwhelmingly male:

### Discussion Questions:

1. How would Ana's working life influence her opinion of Ken, who works from home?
2. What can an actor do to show the type of work their character does or has done without relying on costume or makeup?



Heather Mitchell

# WATCH & LISTEN



## **NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH**

Katz on Characters - Youtube video

<https://youtu.be/4alQOxnL8ZE>

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