

ADELAIDE FESTIVAL 2026



AF26 DIGITAL DAYBILL

Mama Does Derby

Windmill Production Company

Dates: Fri 27 Feb - Sun 8 Mar

Venue: Adelaide Entertainment Centre Theatre

Duration: 1hr 30mins, no interval

Cast & Creatives

Co-Creator & Director Clare Watson

Co-Creator & Writer Virginia Gay

Producer Kaye Weeks

Assistant Director & Choreographer Larissa McGowan

Designer Jonathon Oxlade

Lighting Designer Lucy Birkinshaw

Music Director / Guitar & Vocals Joe Paradise Lui

Sound Designer Luke Smiles

Story Consultant Ivy Miller

Skate Consultants Maddy "BB Gun" Wilkinson,
Jude "Vaderella" Gaffney

Performer (Mama/Maxine) Amber McMahon

Performer (Billie) Elvy-Lee Quici

Performer (Drew 'The Wombat' & Therapist Agatha)
Annabel Matheson

Performer (Hux) Aud Mason-Hyde

Performer (Neil, Voice of Nathan) & Drums Antoine Jelk

Performer (Nathan) Benjamin Hancock

Performer (Dave) Dylan Miller

Bass Calliope Jackson

Drums Katya Spitsyna

Derby Athletes Members of the Adelaide Roller Derby League

Crew

Production Manager Abigail Heuer

Production Consultant Peter Kelly

Stage Manager Carmen Evans

Assistant Stage Manager Taylor Dawson

Head Mechanist Benjamin Johnston

Head Lighting Ellen Demaagd

Head Sound Patrick Pages-Oliver

**Derby Team Leader & Derby Assistant
Stage Manager** Maddy "BB Gun" Wilkinson

Props and Costume Maker
Renate Henschke

Costume Makers Ziva Von Der Borch, Olivia
Zanchetta, Eden Boucher, Alinta Von Der
Borch, Shannon Cooke

Scenic Artists Abi Drummond, Anna Van Den
Broek

Dresser Kellie Jones

Set Build Michael Kumnick, TSA, Jardine

Cover photo credit Claudio Raschella



A message from the director / co-creator, Clare Watson

Roller derby is a sport full of tenacious, dynamic humans who work together as a team... honing their skills, pushing themselves, constantly communicating, making the conditions just right for their jammer to fang it. The making of *Mama Does Derby* has felt just the same. This team is simply stellar - from every skater, actor, musician to our Windmill wonders, our courageous crew and creatives... this enormous and wonderful team have demonstrated the power of community on the daily. Our community includes the brilliant teams of Adelaide Festival, Sydney Festival and Brisbane Festival, MFI and the Creative Futures Fund.

Mama Does Derby is dedicated to the memory of Sarah Strong-Law (Barrelhouse Bessy) who is the founder of roller derby in Adelaide in 2007. Barrelhouse Bessy chose to create a community whose ethos is 'daggy and endearing'. We hope that we've met that brief. And we hope that *Mama Does Derby* will inspire you to be your weird, wonderful self, possibly strap on some skates and most importantly give to your community.

As Frida Kahlo says "everything changes, everything moves, everything revolves, everything flies and goes away". Life is short...let's get amongst it.

A message from the writer / co-creator, Virginia Gay

We wanted to make something that yelled about everything that was excellent about live theatre – live music, exhilarating movement, huge heart, constant jokes, the roar of a crowd, and a heavily-sequined surprise character. You know, all the classic tropes. We wanted to make something that harnessed the electricity that went through every Australian, but I would argue particularly every Australian girl, when the Matildas got into the World Cup. We wanted to write a love letter to cool, complicated single mums and their quiet, complicated kids, and to honour that very specific time in your life where your parents stop being your heroes and start being your triggers - how that propels you apart, and how you, delicately, carefully, come back from that. We wanted to make something that acknowledged that a lot of the great teenagers we know feel like they are carrying the weight of the world on their shoulders, that they have to fix the mess we've left for them, and what that does to a little soul, who's also just trying to get by, make friends, keep sane, survive high school.... We wanted to talk about the anxieties that torment us, the things that stop us from sleeping at night (or haunt our dreams when we do), and we wanted to do it in the context of a comedy horror where those demons take physical forms, because *Buffy* actually is the most important text of my generation, and I need to pass its learnings on. And we wanted to make a show that celebrated funny, silly, wonderful, bonkers, big-hearted humans who populate small towns, extended families and roller derby leagues.

It's been such a joy making this show with Windmill, with our brilliant cast and creatives, with Clare and Ivy, with Adelaide Festival and with our awesome skaters. We hope it makes you roar and cheer and throw yourself at something, physically or metaphorically.

Windmill Production Company

Based in Adelaide, Australia, Windmill Production Company has a global reputation as a leading producer of theatre and screen projects for children, teenagers and families. We bring artists together to uncover and ignite stories that are burning to be told. Each year we perform in our hometown, and tour across Australia and around the world.

Co-Creator Biographies

Clare Watson Co-Creator, Director

Clare Watson is a multi-award-winning director and theatre-maker. In 2023, she was appointed Artistic Director of Windmill. Her first work for the company, *Hans and Gret*, enjoyed a sell-out season at the Adelaide Festival.

From 2016-2022 she was Artistic Director of Black Swan State Theatre Company and the former Artistic Director at St Martins Youth Centre. Clare has directed work for several major theatre companies and festivals including Malthouse Theatre, Belvoir, Melbourne Theatre Company, State Theatre Company South Australia, Sydney Theatre Company, Edinburgh Festival, Adelaide Festival among others. She directed *Cyrano*, adapted by Virginia Gay which won a Fringe First Award in Edinburgh and was nominated in London for three Offies Awards including Best Production and Best Director. Clare is the recipient of a Sidney Myer Performing Arts Award.

Virginia Gay Co-Creator, Writer

Virginia Gay is an award-winning actor, writer and director. She recently starred in *Colin From Accounts*, *SBS' Safe Home*, *Savage River* and *Thank God You're Here*. She was Artistic Director of Adelaide Cabaret Festival 2024-25 and received a Logie nomination for most Outstanding Supporting Actor for *After The Verdict*. She won a Sydney Theatre Award for Best Actress for *Calamity Jane* and wrote and starred in *Cyrano* for Melbourne Theatre Company in 2022. *Cyrano* had a smash-hit new production for Edinburgh Fringe 2024 (winning a Fringe First Award for Most Outstanding New Writing), followed by a London season (nominated for an Off West End Award for Best Lead Actor). In 2026 she will direct Yve Blake's new show *Mackenzie* for Bell Shakespeare.

Acknowledgements

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