

HAPPY MEAL




Sydney
Festival
2023

HAPPY MEAL

Theatre Royal Plymouth & Roots | UK
AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

Eternity Playhouse
Darlinghurst Theatre
17-22 January
60 minutes (no interval)

CAST AND CREDITS

Sam Crerar (they/he)
Tommi Bryson (she/her)

Writer Tabby Lamb (they/she)
Director Jamie Fletcher (she/her)

Set and Costume Ben Stones (he/him)
Video Daniel Denton (he/him)
Lighting Kieron Johnson (they/them)
Sound Eliyana Evans (she/her)
Dramaturg Jennifer Bakst (she/her)

Company Stage Manager Amber Chapell (she/her)
Touring Technical Manager Tom Trace (he/him)

Producer for Roots Steven Atkinson (he/him)
Producer for Theatre Royal Plymouth Sian Weeding (she/her)
Head of Production, Theatre Royal Plymouth Hugh Borthwick (he/him)

Press Michelle Manghan (she/her)
Marketing Emma Martin (she/her) & Pippa Fox (she/her) for Emma Martin Arts Marketing

Promotional Photography Michael Wharley (he/him)
Graphic Design Rebecca Pitt (she/her)

ABOUT THE SHOW

Two people meet online as young teenagers and begin an intense friendship that transcends changes and updates in technology.

As they move through their lives into young adulthood they help each other find the confidence to be their true selves and support each other through turbulent and uncertain times. They laugh together, learn, fall out, frustrate each other, make up and eventually develop their unbreakable bond into a lifelong relationship.

Tabby Lamb (she/they), **writer**, said: “I started writing *Happy Meal* during lockdown, when trans people were more often than not isolating alone or in unsupportive environments. This is a play about trans people by trans people and for trans people - a celebration of everything that makes us powerful!”

Steven Atkinson (he/him), **producer for Roots**, said: “As theatre is returning to live performance, we think it’s the perfect time to celebrate trans lives with Tabby’s hopeful new play about how the internet and the real world can be a joyful queer space that accepts the rights and freedoms for all people to be who they are. For Roots to be touring our first show to Australia in co-production with Theatre Royal Plymouth, shows such positive action from leaders within the theatre industry to platform trans artists and promote inclusive queer stories.”

James Mackenzie-Blackman (he/him), **Chief Executive of Theatre Royal Plymouth**, said: “I’m delighted that *Happy Meal* will be made with TRP. We’re at an important moment of change. I’m committed to opening our programme to include more voices, more perspectives and more theatre that connects to more people in our city and region. Tabby is an extraordinary artist and we’re delighted to be producing her play with Roots.”

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A NOTE FROM THE WRITER

This play was inspired by three people.

Number One is my dear friend Nicol who once turned to me and said, “you were born in exactly the right body”. This sentence is what prompted me to begin creating a world where lines like this are normal.

Number Two is my fiancé, my very own Alec, who every single day inspires me to be the very best version of me possible – for myself, for them and for our community. I’ve rarely met anyone as kind or as caring, and I hope one day to be as good a person as they are.

Number Three is my fiancé’s father, who passed away just before rehearsals began. Doug created the person I love the most in the world, embraced his weird future daughter-in-law, and in fact he was the very first person to call me ‘daughter’. I learnt so much from him, from the fact that a single Star Wars film is not called a Star War, to how to be myself at any age, and how it’s never too late to stop learning and growing. I hope that Alec and Bette continue to learn, grow and develop long after the final line of this play. They deserve to live lives as full of love and happiness as Doug did.

Finally, this play is for every single trans person who wants to see themselves on stage. It’s for future Alecs and Bettes, future audience members, every single one of us who put on *Maid in Manhattan* and said, “this would be better if JLo had a dick”.

– Tabby Lamb, writer

ROOTS

Roots is Yorkshire’s queer touring theatre company, staging ambitious collaborations between citizens and LGBTQIA artists. Find out more at rootstouring.com

THEATRE ROYAL PLYMOUTH

Theatre Royal Plymouth is a registered charity providing art, education and community engagement throughout Plymouth and the wider region. We engage and inspire many communities through performing arts and we aim to touch the lives and interests of people from all backgrounds. We do this by creating and presenting a breadth of shows on a range of scales, with our extensive creative engagement programmes, by embracing the vitality of new talent and supporting emerging and established artists, and by collaborating with a range of partners to provide dynamic cultural leadership for the city of Plymouth.

Theatre Royal Plymouth specialises in the production of new plays alongside the presentation of a broad range of theatre – including classic and contemporary drama, musicals, opera, ballet and dance. We have three performance spaces – The Lyric, The Drum and The Lab. TRP has a strong track record of presenting and producing international work from companies and artists including Ontroerend Goed, Big In Belgium at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Robert Lepage and the late Yukio Ninagawa. In March 2019, TRP unveiled *Messenger*, the UK’s largest lost wax bronze sculpture created by the artist Joseph Hillier.