



By Melanie Tait
Directed by Lee Lewis

About the show

World Premiere

The answer was there all along. The world just refused to listen.

For centuries, women across cultures knew how to stop smallpox. But science, politics, and prejudice buried their knowledge for 300 years. Melanie Tait's *The Royal Experiment* is a fast-paced, time-travelling comedy that unveils the absurdity of how medical breakthroughs are ignored, dismissed, or stolen.

With 18 characters spanning across multiple centuries, this NIDA-commissioned premiere blends biting satire with real history. Lee Lewis (Queensland Theatre, Griffin Theatre Company) directs this audacious new work, bringing an urgent and comedic lens to one of medicine's most outrageous oversights.

The past ignored them. Now, it's time to listen.

Director's Note

This play is an extraordinary act of celebration of our capacity as humans to solve problems. Across time, continents and cultures we managed to work together to eradicate smallpox. It is a reminder of what we can achieve, in a time when we are facing what seem to be insurmountable, existential crises.

It is a celebration of Australian playwriting. Every time a new Australian play makes it to the stage it's cause for celebration. Our capacity to create stories that speak to the world through our Australian lens is growing play by play. Yes, I love that an Australian playwright has created a story that brings together Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Janet Parker and Barbra Streisand. It is a global story that could only have come from the Australian brain of Melanie Tait. This may not be what you think an Australian play should look or sound like... GOOD! Australian playwrights can and should write for the whole world. Let's celebrate that!

And ultimately this production is a celebration of the young artistic talent coming out of NIDA, ready to create new work for the world. Every day working with these emerging artists has been inspiring. I have no idea which of these young creators will go on to make more new works, design spectaculars, light operas, compose symphonies, run companies, become Arts ministers. What I do know is that given the generosity, curiosity, humour and intelligence with which they have tackled all the challenges of making a new play, our theatre future is in good hands.

It is always a privilege to bring a new Australian play to life. This time, with this group of young artists, it has also been a joy. I join with you in celebrating their futures.

– Lee Lewis

The Company

Principal Cast

Actor
Actor
Actor
Actor
Actor
Actor

Ensemble/Understudies
(Diploma of Stage and
Screen Performance)

(in order of appearance)

Anastasia Feneri
Charlie Chandler
Claudia Leon
Minerva Khodabande
Nyasha Ogden
Thomas Russell

Brodie Chong
Isabel Stewart
Kathleen Thomas
Lola Merewether
Naomi Gomez
Nicholas Chong

Writer:
Director:
Costume Designer:
Lighting Designer:
Set & Props Designer:
Sound & Video Designer:
Movement Choreographer:
Voice Coach:
Assistant Director:
Production Stage Manager:
Deputy Stage Manager:
Construction Manager:
Costume Supervisor:
Costume Supervisor:
Props Supervisor:
Head Electrician:
Leading Hand Set:
Costume Maker:
Assistant Stage Manager:
Assistant Stage Manager:
Costume Design Assistant:
Set/Props Design Assistant:
Maker & Costume
Assistant/Dresser:
Dresser:
Properties Assistant:
Floor Electrician/
Board Operator:
Make-up Artist:

Melanie Tait*
Lee Lewis*
Bronte Hunt
BROCKMAN*
Daisy Hughes
Chaii Ki Chapman
Troy Honeysett*
Laura Farrell*
Emma Johns
Matthew Phillips
Lilly Green
Michael Fisher
Sophy Simson
Raphaela Kuhn
Liam Bate
Alexandria White
Emile Stuart
Raphaela Kuhn
Harry Deacon
Adelaide Tustian
Sophie Weller
Edward John
Grace Miles

Benaiah Brophy*
Lily Burn
Aiden Carter

Arielle Robinson

Make-up Artist: **Mabel Masters**
Technical Crew Coordinator: **Alexandria White**
Environmental Sustainability
Coordinator: **Matthew Phillips**
Environmental Sustainability
Coordinator: **Lilly Green**

***Guest Artist**
**** NIDA Staff**

Contains some strong language, sexual references, depictions of death
including suicide, and irreverent humor involving religious figures.

The Royal Experiment

06 Nov 2025 – 12 Nov 2025

The production of *The Royal Experiment* has been developed and produced
with the support of The Frederick J Gibson Bequest.