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Matters**

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Coming Out

by [Kris Weber](#) | Feb 17, 2023



By George Dixon.

I always enjoy the Mid-Summer Festivals and this year is no exception. One of the plays worth seeing is **Coming Out**. A play written, directed, and produced by the immensely talented **Scott Taylor**.

With **Coming Out**, Scott has total control of the presentation, which has afforded the audience to see and experience the creator's goals as it is intended.

This is a very clever and articulated play, loosely based on a Cabaret-style performance with behind-the-scenes encounters that open up dialogue and understandings around the issues of “Coming out”, Queer culture, betrayal, and cheating. It also exposes aspects of identity or, should I say, dual identity, fluid sexuality and online culture.

While the focus is on male same-sex attraction, it is also very relatable to all gender types.

The situational comedy is extremely funny and flows naturally. The original cabaret songs are not only clever, they also punctuate a strong message.

Musical numbers such as “**Coming out is never easy**”, **Show your Face**, and **Cast a bigger Shadow**” adds an extra layer to the experience. The finale, which is a reprise of “**Coming out is never easy**”, brings us full circle back to the cabaret.

This play is easily transportable to any location, with a limited stage area, the set layout is impressive, and the open staging allows for seamless movement between scenes.

The production is very tight and precise. Hats off to **Anthony Jacobson**, *Lighting Designer/Operator*, who provided a masterclass in spotlight precision and timing.

Robert Taylor, *Musical Composer* and the brother to Scott, provided the melody to the songs to which the updated lyrics were added. Interestingly, the melodies were developed many years before, waiting for the right opportunity to shine, and shine they do.

Cathy Taylor, *Seamstress*, whose craftsmanship on the absolutely stunning dresses is amazing; not only are they exquisite, they also fit perfectly and are appropriate to the character’s situation. A lot of thought and care have clearly been taken.

The Cast.

Cheers and thank you to the casting team, who selected such a highly talented assemble of cast members. Their collective professionalism and talent not only brought the play and its characters to life, they collectively assisted in “fine-tuning” the dialogue and placements, which provided a realistic and true-to-life presentation.

Stephen Loftus as *Cole/Michael*. As a freelance performer, Loftus is building an impressive resume in stage and other mediums, with a BA

(Musical Theatre) 2020. This versatile triple-threat actor has performed with Opera Australia and other independent productions, touring Australia with Meerkat Productions, performing at primary schools.

As *Cole*, Loftus Tenor's voice, facial expressions, commanding stage presence and physical appearance lends to a very tenable character that wins the audience's hearts. The freedom of the character, who is clear about his sexuality, Cole becomes the reflection of what Coming Out could look like. Calling things for what they are in a simplified and uncluttered way provides a great vehicle for providing the What-If questions.

As *Michael*, Loftus presents a typical heterosexual University student who is so layback, to the point of feeling totally at home at his parent's home while living on campus. There's a complete transformation between the characters, including accents and mannerisms.

I found Loftus's performance sincere and authentic. It will be interesting to follow his ongoing career.

Perri Cummings as *Lynda*. Cummings needs no introduction; as soon as she enters, you will say to yourself, "I know her". Cummings portfolio is immensely impressive, with works from Shakespeare to appearances in Neighbours (Jill Ramsay). Cummings is also one half of an independent film company *Cinema Viscera*. Further to all this, Cummings continues to write for Neighbours.

As *Lynda*, the loving wife of husband *Simon*, played by **Scott Taylor**, **Cummings** portrays a simple yet complex character who is misguided by her husband's deception. The situation that unfolds as she searches for answers. The realistic dialogue between the family members is expertly presented, with well-timed emotion and confusion. The well-meaning actions of a supporting wife is naturally highlighted within the situation comedy having Lynda being the "Straight person". Cummings skill and professionalism shines as the natural glue and catalyst that brings everything together.

Olivia Piplos as *Joey/ Cabaret Stage Manager/Jane/Tracey*.

As a new talent, Piplos is, as they say, "the real deal". Having completed studying at NIDA's Screen Acting Studio and being accepted into the full-time extension program at 16th Street Actors Studio. From there, Piplos has been in demand, which is not surprising. Her chameleon abilities as each character is stunning to the point that each character is unique.

It was a real delight to witness such artistry.

Scott Taylor as *Simon*. Taylor began his career as an actor before moving into other areas like writing, producing, and directing productions.

As *Simon*, Taylor portrays a husband struggling with his sexual orientation, who is searching to apply and accept a label while in denial with his thoughts and actions.

The complex situations of living a dual life opens up heartfelt discussions and revelations about the many sides of trust, deception and cheating.

Putting all this aside, Taylor is well cast for this role which, in some ways, seems to be a reflection of his story.

The play is current with the use of online dating and text discussions via “Grinder” displayed via a large phone screen. The two acts of sixty minutes each passed quickly; the audience was completely captivated by the performance; many were nodding their heads and making soft comments as they related to the characters and the situations.

There is no doubt that this play is very entertaining while highlighting an important range of topics. Optimistically, we will see additional productions in the near future.

Image: Sionainne Costello

