

PROMPT RESOURCE / **ENGLISH**
CLOUDSTREET



6 MAY – 16 JUN

BLACK SWAN
STATE THEATRE
COMPANY



**MALTHOUSE
PROMPT**

SEASON
2019



Malthouse Theatre and Black Swan State Theatre Company present Cloudstreet. Cloudstreet was first commissioned by Black Swan State Theatre Company and Company B Belvoir in 1998.

© Copyright: Malthouse Theatre, the artists, designers, photographers, collaborators and contributors. All rights reserved, 2019.

PROMPT PACK CREATED FOR MALTHOUSE PROMPT—MALTHOUSE THEATRE'S YOUTH AND EDUCATION PROGRAM.

Cover Image / **Zan Wimberley**
Rehearsal Photos / **Pia Johnson**
Design / **Hours After**

Education Coordinator / **Alexandra Macalister-Bills**
Education Producer / **Toby Sullivan**
English Prompt Pack written by / **Jill Fitzsimons**

Indigenous Australians and The Aboriginal People of Western Australia pages reviewed and edited by /

Jason Barrow
Cultural Awareness Officer
Kurongkurl Katitjin
Centre for Indigenous Australian Education and Research
Edith Cowan University
2 Bradford Street
Mount Lawley Western Australia 6050

CONTENTS

Page 05	About Malthouse Theatre
Page 11	Director's Note / Matthew Lutton
Page 12	Tim Winton on <i>Cloudstreet</i>
Page 14	Cast & Creative Bios
Page 22	Curriculum Focus
Page 24	Amendments to Original Script
Page 26	Contextual Information
Page 26	<i>Cloudstreet</i> – The History of the Novel
Page 26	<i>Cloudstreet</i> – The Creation of the Play
Page 27	<i>Cloudstreet</i> – The History of the Play
Page 30	Plot Overview
Page 32	Australia 1943 – 1963
Page 35	Indigenous Australians
Page 36	The Aboriginal People of Western Australia
Page 38	<i>Cloudstreet</i> – Perth 1943 – 1963
Page 38	<i>Cloudstreet</i> – Geraldton, Margaret River, The Wheat Belt WA 1943 –1963
Page 42	Pre-Show Activities
Page 48	Post-Show Activities
Page 52	Video Interview with Matthew Lutton
Page 54	Video Interview with <i>Cloudstreet</i> cast members Ian Michael, Arielle Gray & Bert Labonté
Page 58	Assessment advice
Page 63	Copyright Notice

SEASON
2019





SEASON
2019

YOUR JOURNEY WITH MALTHOUSE THEATRE AWAITS.

At Malthouse Theatre we collaborate with local and international artists to create inventive performances that cut to the core of the human experience. Theatre has the power to interrogate, disrupt and to be an agent of change—and we think it always should. At Malthouse Theatre, the work we produce explores the world personally, socially and politically. Based in a dedicated venue, The Coopers Malthouse in Melbourne, we are a home for live experiences that entertain and provoke a dialogue with and within audiences. Welcome to Malthouse Theatre.

SEASON
2019





VIDEO RESOURCES



INITIAL PRE-REHEARSAL INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR MATTHEW LUTTON



REHEARSAL INTERVIEW WITH CAST MEMBERS IAN MICHAEL, ARIELLE GRAY & BERT LABONTÉ

BONUS MATERIALS



DESIGN PRESENTATION / An internal recording of the initial design presentation for Malthouse Theatre's team, in December 2018. Contains spoilers! Don't watch this video until you've seen the show.



CLOUDSTREET TRAILER / Featuring Benjamin Oakes (Fish Lamb) and Guy Simon (Quick Lamb)

CAST & CREATIVE TEAM



MATTHEW LUTTON
DIRECTOR



ARIELLE GRAY
CAST



BRENNA HARDING
CAST



NATASHA HERBERT
CAST



BERT LABONTÉ
CAST



EBONY MCGUIRE
CAST



MIKAYLA MERKS
CAST



IAN MICHAEL
CAST



BENJAMIN OAKES
CAST



SCOTT SHERIDAN
CAST



GUY SIMON
CAST



GREG STONE
CAST



ALISON WHYTE
CAST



ZOË ATKINSON
SET & COSTUME DESIGN



PAUL JACKSON
LIGHTING DESIGN



J. DAVID FRANZKE
SOUND DESIGN



ELIZABETH DRAKE
COMPOSITION



KATT OSBORNE
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR



NATALIE ROWAN
STAGE MANAGER



DANAE CRAWFORD
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER



ANGUS ROBSON
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER



SEASON
2019

DIRECTOR'S NOTE / MATTHEW LUTTON



When I first read Tim Winton's *Cloudstreet* it helped me understand what it meant to be growing up in Perth. It broadened my understanding of living in the world's most isolated city. The feeling of distance, aloneness, the sense of the supernatural power of the Swan River, and the intensity of the plains. It affirmed that I was living on haunted land—a land filled with wisdom and scared of its history.

One of the remarkable qualities of *Cloudstreet* is that it means something different to everyone who experiences it. It is the story of two families who are forced together against their will, on land they have no connection to. It is a story about being homeless and making a new home. It is a story about culture, spirituality,

and history that has been repressed and denied, demanding to be heard.

This is not the story of Australia. This is the story of two families who spend 20 years coming to understand that there is no 'us' and 'them', only 'us' and 'us'. That the voices of those who are missing, lost and forgotten in our land, are always living on with us, and that we must think into the future with these lives in our hearts and minds.

This theatrical adaptation of Tim Winton's story offers a very different experience to reading the novel. It offers a community, where an audience has the opportunity to live, for a period of time, with the characters of *Cloudstreet* and the spirits of the house, and to worry for them, want for them, and love with them.

TIM WINTON ON *CLOUDSTREET*



I don't pretend to understand the phenomenon at all, but *Cloudstreet* seems to have a life of its own, and since it was published in 1991 I've mostly been reduced to the role of quizzical onlooker. Note to self: shrug and smile awkwardly.

Initially, I was a bit sceptical about the original Black Swan State Theatre Company/ Belvoir St Theatre adaptation in 1998. I just couldn't see how it could be done. But when I finally saw the play I was shaken by its emotional power and I came to realise that something special was happening up on stage

that I couldn't account for, but just had to dumbly acknowledge. A lot of people seemed to feel the same way.

Cloudstreet is a big, baggy story and finding ways to bring it to life on stage was no simple business 20 years ago, and it can't have gotten any easier since, so I appreciate Malthouse Theatre taking up the challenge with such brio. Mad buggers. Making theatre isn't for the faint-hearted. It takes a lot of art-workers to lift something like this into view and bear aloft over the journey. Brave souls, all. I salute them.

SEASON
2019



CAST & CREATIVE BIOS



MATTHEW LUTTON
DIRECTOR

Matthew Lutton is Malthouse Theatre's Artistic Director and Co-CEO. Prior to this, he was Malthouse Theatre's Associate Director and the Artistic Director of ThinIce in Perth. Directing credits for Malthouse Theatre include *Melancholia*, *Bliss*, *Black Rider: The Casting of the Magic Bullets*, *The Real and Imagined History of the Elephant Man*, *Away*, *Edward II*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *I Am a Miracle*, *Night on Bald Mountain*, *The Bloody Chamber*, *Dance of Death*, *Pompeii*, *L.A.*, *On the Misconception of Oedipus*, *Die Winterreise* and *Tartuffe*. For STC he has directed *The Trial*, *The Mysteries: Genesis* and *The Duel*. Other directing credits include *Love Me Tender* for Belvoir and *Don't Say the Words* for Griffin Theatre Company. His opera directing credits include *Make No Noise* for the Bavarian State Opera, Strauss' *Elektra* for Opera Australia and West Australian Opera and Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman* for New Zealand Opera.



ARIELLE GRAY
CAST

Arielle is a performer, theatre-maker, puppeteer, voice-over artist and improviser. She is a founding member of The Last Great Hunt theatre company and has created, performed in and toured original, inventive and engaging theatre. Malthouse Theatre credits include *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. Credits for The Last Great Hunt include *Lé Nør* (Perth Festival), *The Advisors*, *Stay With Us* (as Director), *Monroe & Associates* (Sydney Festival), *Improvement Club*, *Falling Through Clouds* (Sydney Festival), *All That Glitters*, *Old Love*, *Minnie and Mona Play Dead* (Brisbane Festival) and the Helpmann Award nominated productions *New Owner* and *It's Dark Outside*. Other theatre credits include *My Robot* (Barking Gecko Theatre), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Dark Room* and *Pool [No Water]* (Black Swan State Theatre Company) and the Blue Room Theatre Award-winning *Laika: A Staged Radio Play* (Second Chance Theatre).



BRENNA HARDING
CAST

Brenna is one of Australia's most exciting young actors. Theatre credits include *The Wolves* (Belvoir), *The Almighty Sometimes*, *The Bleeding Tree* (Griffin Theatre Company), *The Gulf* (Lume Productions) and *Jumpy* (MTC/STC). Television credits include *Black Mirror*, *Puberty Blues*, *Secret City*, *The Code*, *My Place*, *Packed to the Rafters*, *A Place to Call Home* and *Glitch*. Film credits include *The Turning*, which premiered at the 2012 Melbourne International Film Festival. Brenna is on the board of anti-homophobia organisation Wear it Purple and founder of the Sydney-based feminist group Moonlight Feminists. Brenna was the recipient of the 2014 Marie Bashir Peace Prize and a 2012 Logie Award for Most Popular New Female Talent. She was nominated for a Graham Kennedy Award for Most Outstanding New Talent and an AACTA Award for Best Young Actor. Brenna was a 2018 finalist for the Heath Ledger Scholarship. She is currently completing a Bachelor of Communications and Creative Intelligence and Innovation at UTS.

CAST & CREATIVE BIOS



NATASHA HERBERT
CAST

Previous work with Malthouse Theatre includes *Trustees*, *Away*, *On the Misconception of Oedipus*, *Happiness*, *Kitten*, *Speaking in Tongues*, *Rapture*, *Still Angela*, *Black Sequin Dress*, *Honour*, *Love Child* and *Wolf*. Natasha has also appeared in *The Father*, *Neighbourhood Watch*, *The Dreamlife of Butterflies*, *God of Carnage*, *Pillowman*, *The Balcony*, *The Three Sisters*, *Hysteria*, *I'm Not Rappaport* and *I Hate Hamlet* (MTC), *War Horse* (Global Creatures), *The Unspoken Word is Joe*, *The Large Breast or the Upside-down Bell*, *Inconsolable* (Griffin), *The Country* (Belvoir), *The Wall* (Ranters Theatre), *Small Metal Objects* (Back to Back Theatre) and many more. Film credits include *The Menkoff Method*, *X*, *Lake Mungo*, *Corroboree* and *Boytown*. Television credits include *Neighbours*, *The Time of Our Lives*, *The Doctor Blake Mysteries*, *City Homicide*, *MDA* and *Stingers*. Natasha was awarded Green Room Awards for Best Fringe Actress in *Portrait of Dora* and for Best Ensemble in *I Heart John McEnroe* and *On the Misconception of Oedipus*.



BERT LABONTÉ
CAST

Bert is one of Australia's leading actors. Malthouse Theatre credits include *I Am a Miracle*, *Timeshare* and *The Good Person of Szechwan*. Select theatre credits include *The Book of Mormon* (Watchtower Productions), *All My Sons* and *The Grenade* (STC), *Dreamlover* (GFO), *Phedre* (Bell Shakespeare), *Birdland*, *Rupert*, *Elling*, *The Mountaintop*, *Clybourne Park*, *Next to Normal*, *A Behanding in Spokane*, *Richard III*, *The Hypocrite*, *Don Juan in Soho* (MTC), *When I Fall in Love - The Nat King Cole Story*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Essential Theatre). Musical theatre credits include *An Officer and a Gentleman*, *Let's Get It On*, *Chess*, *Kismet*, *Grey Gardens*, *Pippin*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* and *Guys and Dolls*. Select Film credits include *Animal Kingdom* and *Rats and Cats*. Television credits include *Wentworth*, *Winners and Losers*, *Upper Middle Bogan*, *Lowdown*, *Wilfred*, *Sea Patrol*, *City Homicide*, *Bogan Pride*, *Neighbours* and *Blue Heelers*. Bert received a Helpmann Award for *An Officer and a Gentleman* and has been nominated for several Green Room Awards.



EBONY MCGUIRE
CAST

Ebony is an actor, writer, facilitator and a WAAPA graduate. *Cloudstreet* is Ebony's Malthouse Theatre debut. Her theatre credits include *Casting Doubts* (WAAPA), *What Do They Call Me?* (The Blue Room), *Kep Kaatijin* (Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company), *The Fever* and *The Fret* (Yirra Yaakin/National Playwriting Festival), *Coranderrk* (Ilbjerri Theatre Company), *A Scandal in Weimar*, *Outside In* (wit incorporated) and *Caliban* (Western Edge Youth Arts). Ebony was a facilitator in Culture 2.0 | Respecting Yourself | Respect Your Culture workshop (Yirra Yaakin) and was a part of the development of the Shakespeare Sonnets in Noongar workshop (Yirra Yaakin). She has participated in creative developments for MTC, Black Hole Theatre Company and Yirra Yaakin with Bell Shakespeare in 2018.

CAST & CREATIVE BIOS

**MIKAYLA MERKS**

CAST

Mikayla is a Perth-based actor and a recent graduate of WAAPA. *Cloudstreet* is Mikayla's first mainstage production since graduating in 2018. Mikayla will also feature in Perth's Fringe World production of *FRONT*, which is a part of the 2019 Summer Nights program.

**IAN MICHAEL**

CAST

Ian is an award-winning actor and Noongar man from Western Australia. Credits for Malthouse Theatre include *Blak Cabaret*. Other theatre credits include *Our Town*, *Let the Right One In* (Black Swan State Theatre Company), national and international tour of *HART* (She Said Theatre), *Flashblaks*, *Northwest of Nowhere* (Ilbjerri Theatre Company), *The Kid* (MTC) and the Yellamundie First Peoples Playwriting Festival (Sydney Festival). Screen credits include *Where are the Warriors?*, *Needle* and *Offspring*. He was the recipient of Melbourne Fringe Festival's Most Outstanding Indigenous Actor in 2013 and 2015 and was awarded Best Emerging Artist at Adelaide Fringe in 2016. In 2018, he was the assistant director for *Skylab* (Black Swan State Theatre Company/Yirra Yaakin). Currently, Ian is the Resident Artist at Black Swan State Theatre Company. He is a WAAPA graduate.

**BENJAMIN OAKES**

CAST

Benjamin is a Geelong-based actor and sound artist. He is a member of Back to Back Theatre's Theatre of Speed and a founder of sound art group Noise Scavengers. He recently appeared in Matchbox Pictures' and Back to Back Theatre's co-production, *Oddlands*. Ben also featured in the recent short film *Friend for Life* and several training videos for the NDS. He has performed in many Theatre of Speed live productions since 2015. Ben has performed with artists such as The Amplified Elephants, Adam Simmons, Belinda Woods, James Hullick and Dave Brown. Ben was diagnosed with autism at the age of four.

CAST & CREATIVE BIOS



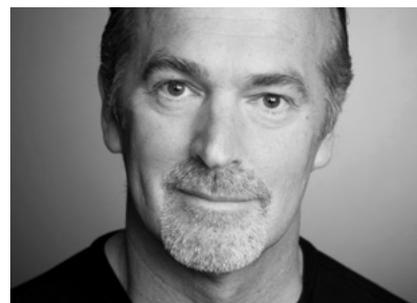
SCOTT SHERIDAN
CAST

Cloudstreet is Scott's Malthouse Theatre debut. Recent credits include *Luna Gale* (Ensemble Theatre) and *In a Dark Dark Wood* (Barking Gecko Theatre). Other credits include *The Witches* (Griffin), *Rupert* (MTC), *Hamlet* (Bell Shakespeare), *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Arcadia*, *When the Rain Stops Falling*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Black Swan State Theatre Company), *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Othello*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Tempest* (Sport for Jove), *Drake the Amazing* (Darlinghurst Theatre) and *Stones in His Pockets* (Critical Stages). Screen credits include *Peter Allen: Not the Boy Next Door*, *Careless Love* and *Marley Someone*. Scott is a creative with General Legends and has written and featured in the short films *Undedicated* (Austin Film Festival) and *Unwanted Friend* (Tropfest). Scott is a WAAPA graduate and has studied at The Second City and iO Theatre Chicago. He is a proud MEAA member.



GUY SIMON
CAST

Guy is an Australian actor and a NIDA graduate. Credits for Malthouse Theatre include *Blaque Showgirls*. Other credits include *The Harp in the South*, *The Battle of Waterloo*, *Stolen* (STC), *Jasper Jones* (Belvoir/MTC), *The Myth Project: TWIN* (MTC), *Black Diggers* (QTC), *Strangers In Between* (Cameron Lukey), *This Fella*, *My Memory* (Moogahlin Performing Arts), *I am Man* (Browns Mart Theatre), *Junction* (Bakehouse Theatre) and *Lucky* (IPAN Productions). Film credits include *Undertow* and *Around the Block*. Television credits include *The Wrong Girl*, *Redfern Now*, *A Chance Affair* and *Occupation: Native*. In 2017, Guy received a Helpmann Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role in a Play for *Jasper Jones*.



GREG STONE
CAST

Greg Stone is well known to Australian theatre audiences and has performed in over 80 productions with major theatre companies. Theatre credits include *A Doll's House Part 2*, *The Weir*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Clybourne Park*, *Poor Boy*, *Blackbird*, *A Little Night Music*, *Angels In America* (MTC), *Oklahoma!*, *Funny Girl* (The Production Company), *Hir*, *Hamlet*, *Babyteeth*, *Stuff Happens* (Belvoir), *Ladies in Black* (QTC/MTC), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolf* (Black Swan State Theatre Company) and *Once* (GFO Attractions). Television credits include *Ms Fisher's Modern Murder Mysteries*, *Glitch*, *The Doctor Blake Mysteries*, *Underbelly*, *Winners and Losers*, *Neighbours*, *Secret City*, *The Ex-PM* and *Offspring*. Select film credits include *The Sunset Six*, *Is This the Real World*, *Swerve*, *Oranges and Sunshine*, *Van Diemen's Land* and *The Bank*. Greg has been nominated for several Sydney Theatre, Helpmann and Green Room Awards. He was awarded a Helpmann Award and Green Room Award for Best Male Actor in *Stuff Happens*.

CAST & CREATIVE BIOS



ALISON WHYTE
CAST

Alison Whyte is one of Australia's most accomplished and celebrated actors, with an outstanding reputation in theatre, film and television. Malthouse Theatre credits include *Love and Information*, *The Bloody Chamber*, *Optimism* and *Tartuffe*. Select theatre credits include *Faith Healer* (Belvoir/MTC), *The Testament of Mary*, *Travelling North* (STC), *Last Man Standing*, *Clybourne Park*, *All About My Mother*, *Richard III* (MTC), *Hand to God* (Vass Theatre Productions), *Australia Day* (MTC/STC), *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* (MTC/Belvoir) and *Rising Water* (Black Swan State Theatre Company). Select film credits include *The Dressmaker*, *Centreplace*, *The Jammed*, *Subterano* and *Saturday Night*. Television credits include *The Kettering Incident*, *Glitch*, *Playing For Keeps*, *The Doctor Blake Mysteries*, *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, *Tangle*, *Satisfaction* and *Frontline*. Alison has received multiple industry awards.



ZOË ATKINSON
SET & COSTUME DESIGN

Zoë studied Design for Performance at the Prague Academy of the Performing Arts, the International Institute of Figurative Theatre and the Institute de la Marionette. Malthouse Theatre credits include *The Odyssey*, *On the Misconception of Oedipus*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and *Black Rider: The Casting of the Magic Bullets*. Other works with Matthew Lutton include *Elektra* (WA Opera) and *The Flying Dutchman* (New Zealand Opera). Zoë was the Artistic Associate and Designer for Perth Festival's opening events *HOME* in 2016, *Boorna Waanginy* in 2017 and *The Museum of Water* in 2018. Zoë is currently designing *Life of Galileo* with Belvoir. She has received a Helpmann Award for Best Costume Design for *The Odyssey* and a nomination for *Black Rider: The Casting of the Magic Bullets*.



PAUL JACKSON
LIGHTING DESIGN

Paul Jackson is a multi-award-winning designer who works across Australia and internationally. Design credits include *Blasted*, *Melancholia*, *Bliss*, *The Testament of Mary*, *The Real and Imagined History of the Elephant Man*, *Black Rider: The Casting of the Magic Bullets*, *Away*, *I Am a Miracle*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *Meow Meow's Little Mermaid* (Malthouse Theatre), *Mary Stuart*, *Love and Information*, *The Histrionic*, *The Trial* (STC/Malthouse Theatre), *True West*, *The Mysteries: Genesis* (STC), *Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, *As You Like It*, *Phedre*, *Tartuffe*, *Julius Caesar* (Bell Shakespeare), *Seventeen*, *Nora*, *Oedipus Rex* (Belvoir), *Arbus and West*, *Gloria*, *The Children*, *Three Little Words*, *Hay Fever* and *Di and Viv and Rose* (MTC). Paul has received a Helpmann Award, a Sydney Theatre Award, seven Green Room Awards, three Australian Production Design Guild Awards and 31 Green Room Award nominations. He is the current recipient of an Australia Council for the Arts Fellowship. Paul is a graduate of the University of Melbourne and RMIT.

CAST & CREATIVE BIOS



J. DAVID FRANZKE
SOUND DESIGN

Malthouse Theatre credits include *Away, Picnic at Hanging Rock, Night on Bald Mountain, Pompeii, L.A.*, and *The Odyssey*. Select design credits include *Australia Day* (STC/MTC), *The Wonderful World of Dissocia*, *Venus & Adonis* (Bell Shakespeare/Malthouse Theatre), *Come Away with Me to the End of the World*, *Song, Intimacy, Holiday* (Ranters Theatre), *The Odd Couple*, *The Beast*, *The Joy of Text*, *The Grenade*, *August: Osage County*, *Don Juan in Soho*, *Birthrights*, *The Recruit* (MTC) and *Aviary* (Balletlab). Film credits include *X* and *Acolytes*. David has received Green Room Awards for Composition and Sound Design for *Away, Picnic at Hanging Rock, Pompeii, L.A.* and for Outstanding Contribution to Design and Technology for *Skin Flick*.



ELIZABETH DRAKE
COMPOSITION

Elizabeth Drake is a pianist and composer. Malthouse Theatre credits include *Cargo*, *Still Angela* and *Black Sequin Dress*. Other credits include *Nightfall* (Adelaide Festival), *Top Girls* (MTC) and *Grounded* (Red Stitch). Select film credits include *Looking for Grace* (Venice Film Festival), *Japanese Story* (Cannes Film Festival), *Road to Nhill*, *For Love or Money* and *Black Man's Houses*. Pianist credits include Perth International Arts Festival, WOMADelaide, IWAKI Auditorium ABC Classic FM and Ballroom Flinders Street Station. Elizabeth has been awarded a Green Room Award, a AFI-AACTA Award for Feature Film Original Music, an APRA-AGSC Feature Film Screen Music Award and a Film Critics Circle Award.



KATT OSBORNE
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Katt is a director, producer and theatre-maker. She is currently the Artistic Director of Riptide Youth Performance Company. She was a co-founder of The Last Great Hunt and a Resident Artist at Black Swan State Theatre Company. Directing credits include *Unheimlich* (Independent/Performing Lines), *The 1's and the 0's*, *And Everything in Between*, *Walk With Me*, *Some Kind of Disaster*, *Queen Leah* (Riptide), *The Crossing*, *Elephants*, *Minnie and Mona Play Dead* (The Last Great Hunt) and many other independent theatre productions. Opera directing credits include Strauss' *Ariadne Auf Naxos* and Menotti's *The Old Maid* and *The Thief* (Operabox). Assistant directing credits include *Our Town*, *Xenides*, *The Lady Aoi* (Black Swan State Theatre Company), *Dr Seuss' The Lorax* (The Old Vic), *The Removalists* (Perth Theatre Company) and *Antigone* (ThinIce). Katt was a recipient of a WA Young Achiever of the Year for Arts, a Golden Key Honorary Membership, a PAWA Best New Play Award and a 2013 Fringe World Martin Sims Best New WA Work Award.

CAST & CREATIVE BIOS



NATALIE ROWAN
STAGE MANAGER

Natalie is an experienced stage manager working in Australia and internationally.

Cloudstreet is her first Malthouse Theatre production. Credits include *Soweto Gospel Choir*, *Operation Ouch Live* (Andrew Kay and Associates), *Emma Matthews: The Space Between* (Arts Centre Melbourne), *Sleeping Beauty*, *A Knight Avengers Tale*, *The Adventures of Peter Pan and Tinkerbell*, *Cinderella*, *Aladdin and his Wondrous Lamp*, *Snow White Winter Family Musical*, (Bonnie Lythgoe Productions), *Common Ground* (Chunky Move), *Calamity Jane* (One Eyed Man Productions), *The Play That Goes Wrong* (Australian Tour Lunchbox Theatrical Productions), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Luckiest Productions/Tinderbox Productions), *Santa Claus and The Christmas Adventure* (Jamie Wilson Productions), *Cinderella*, *Aladdin* (Blue Genie Entertainment), *The Palm Court*, *September Tide*, (Charles Vance Productions), *Dirty Dusting*, *Motherhood The Musical*, *Menopause The Musical* (Robert C Kelly) and *Mother Goose* (Wish/Imagine Theatre).



DANAE CRAWFORD
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Danae has a Bachelor of Performing Arts in Stage Management from WAAPA.

Cloudstreet is her first mainstage production. Danae has just completed a stage management internship on *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* in Melbourne. During her time at WAAPA, she was involved in multiple productions in various roles. She has stage managed for several Perth Fringe World Festival shows and the 2018 Propel Youth Arts' KickstART Festival music stages. In 2018, Danae was awarded WAAPA's Peter Smith Award for Stage Management.



ANGUS ROBSON
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Angus Robson is a theatre production all-rounder working across Australia. His previous roles include stage manager, production manager and an operator for music, contemporary dance and ballet. He has worked with Chunky Move, Tracks Dance Company, Artback NT and Browns Mart Theatre amongst others. Angus has a Bachelor of Contemporary Music from Charles Darwin University.



CURRICULUM FOCUS



Cloudstreet's mature themes and content means it is best suited to senior English and Literature studies. It is an ideal text for:

- Year 10 English;
- Year 10 English elective subjects;
- Unit 1 English/EAL;
- Unit 1 Literature or;
- Cross-curricular study (for example, VCE subjects such as: English and Theatre Studies; English and Drama; Literature and Theatre Studies or Literature and Drama).

It also aligns with the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority's [VCAA] text selection guidelines because:

- It is an Australian text with enduring artistic value and literary merit;
- It provides students with opportunities to engage in the Cross-Curriculum Priority: Learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures;
- It raises interesting issues and challenging ideas while offering an affirming perspective;
- Is an accessible text for students working at different levels and from different backgrounds, and
- It provides students with an opportunity to view and experience a complete play and develop an informed appreciation of literature.

This Prompt Pack contains a wide range of teaching and learning activities and assessment advice for the subjects listed below. It also contains resources and hyperlinks to external sources to provide additional support to teachers and students.

SUBJECT	YEAR LEVEL	FOCUS	RESOURCES
ENGLISH	10	YEAR 10 ENGLISH (Levels 9 and 10 of Victorian Curriculum) Level 9: (VCELY441) (VCELT454) (VCELY442) (VCELY456) Level 10: (VCELY486) (VCELT484) (VCELY479) (VCELT460) (VCELT462) (VCELY467) (VCELA470) (VCELA471) (VCELY469) (VCELA474) (VCELY480)	/ Preliminary and post viewing formative activities / Summative assessment advice / Supplementary resources
CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING CAPABILITY		Meta-Cognition: (VCCCTM052)	
VCE ENGLISH/ ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE [EAL]	11	Unit 1, Area of Study 1: Reading and creating texts	
VCE LITERATURE	11	/ UNIT 1: Approaches to literature / AREA OF STUDY 1: Reading practices / AREA OF STUDY 2: Ideas and concerns in texts	

AMENDMENTS TO ORIGINAL SCRIPT



If students are studying the script version of *Cloudstreet* rather than the novel it is important to note that the Director Matthew Lutton, in close consultation with playwright Justin Monjo, has made some amendments to the original script of *Cloudstreet*. Teachers should use the original Currency Press script of *Cloudstreet* in conjunction with these amendments.

Malthouse Theatre has provided access to these amendments for schools. The script amendments are available [here](#).

The changes to the original script mean that the scene order and content is slightly altered for the Prologue and scenes 1,2,3,4 and 8. There are also changes to some scenes in Part Two and Part Three. Important directorial and casting decisions such as changing the character of BLACK MAN to STORYTELLER have been influenced by the script amendments. It is recommended students familiarise themselves with the amendments prior to seeing the play.



CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

CLLOUDSTREET – THE HISTORY OF THE NOVEL

Cloudstreet, released in 1991, was Tim Winton's fifth novel. Prior to its release, Tim was firmly on the radar of Australian readers and had already established himself as a new and important voice in the Australian literary landscape. He had won many awards for his previous writing. So, when Tim's eagerly awaited fifth novel, *Cloudstreet*, hit the shelves in March 1991, it was enthusiastically embraced by Australian readers, who had developed a thirst for Tim's exciting and unique writing style. The initial small print run sold out in a week.

Cloudstreet received multiple awards including: the 1991 Miles Franklin Award, the 1991 NBC Banjo Award for Fiction, the 1991 Western Australian Premier's Book Award for Fiction and the 1992 Deo Gloria Award (UK). Within a very short time, *Cloudstreet* had embedded itself into the hearts and minds of Australians. Creatives from other disciplines have paid tribute to the text, realising it through theatre, television and opera. The novel is considered an iconic Australian text.

Incredibly, the manuscript of *Cloudstreet* was nearly lost at Rome Airport. The Winton family had been living overseas supported by a grant from the Literature Board of the Australia Council. They travelled to Ireland and Greece and stayed in an apartment in Paris. During this time—circa 1989—Tim penned the beginnings of *Cloudstreet*. Tim, his wife and young child were returning to Australia when the manuscript that Tim had been working on was accidentally left on the bus. Fortunately, an observant and very persistent Italian bus driver chased Tim and kept pointing back at the bus. Finally, Tim saw the grey, vinyl sports bag.

'...I could have kissed the guy. It was only half a book at that stage, a couple of years' work—handwritten, typescript and the carbon copy, but I couldn't have reproduced it. I think it scares me more to think about it now.'

—TIM WINTON

CLLOUDSTREET – THE CREATION OF THE PLAY

Playwrights – Nick Enright and Justin Monjo

Justin Monjo, born in the USA in New York, is a screenwriter and television producer. He studied at NIDA (National Institute of Dramatic Art), graduating in 1984. Justin had already adapted Tim Winton's novel, *That Eye, the Sky*, for stage when he embarked on adapting *Cloudstreet* in 1996.

Justin enlisted his former NIDA teacher Nick Enright AM to work with him on this adaptation. Nick was a distinguished and award-winning Australian playwright who wrote many highly regarded plays over his career including *On the Wallaby* (1982), *Daylight Saving* (1990), *Property of the Clan* (1993) and *Blackrock* (1997). Tragically, Nick passed away from melanoma in 2003. Nick was awarded an Order of Australia posthumously. The movie *Happy Feet* (2006) is dedicated to Nick.

TIM WINTON – THE NOVELIST

Timothy Paul Winton was born on the 4th of August in 1960 in Perth, Western Australia. This article by Aida Edermariam for The Guardian gives a wonderful and insightful account of his life story.

[/ The Guardian, 2008](#)

There is a continuous motif of water in Tim's writing. He has always lived near the coast and has actively enjoyed the water. He has been a lifelong recreational surfer and boater. The river and each character's interaction with water in the *Cloudstreet* is highly charged and significant. Fish is the most effected by his near drowning and then is plagued by his longing to return to water. Below is a quote that gives insight into Tim's affinity with water.

'When you're in the water you're almost weightless and that's freedom from gravity. I find it endlessly exciting.

Let's face it, you do nine months as a free diver in your mother's womb; you belong to a planet that's mostly water; your body is mostly water.

I don't think there's any mystery why we would be drawn to it – I think there's some kind of ancestral yearning. We all came from water. It feels like home...'

[/ Tim Winton, ABC News](#)

A fierce advocate for the coastal and ocean environment, Tim has been proactive in working to save marine environments and creatures. He has written texts on the subject and has spoken for the Australian Marine Conservation Society. In 2003 he was awarded the Australian Society of Authors Medal for his environmental advocacy.

Tim has had an illustrious career. You can find more information on the novels and stories he has published on [Britannica here](#). This is a link to the novels and stories he has published to date. The link also cites a list of his numerous awards. His most recent novel, *The Shepherd's Hut*, published in 2018 is missing from the list.

CLOUDSTREET – THE HISTORY OF THE PLAY

The play, which was the product of a collaboration between Company B (now Belvoir Street Theatre) and Black Swan State Theatre Company based in Western Australia, premiered at the Sydney Festival on the 3rd January, 1998. Appropriately—considering Tim Winton's strong connection to the sea and water—it was staged in a warehouse at Berth 9, Darling Harbour (aka the King Street Wharf). The show was five and a half hours long. But audiences did not balk at the time commitment; they adored the production.

Following the Sydney Festival the play toured to Perth where it played in the Fremantle Dock Theatre. This was followed by a season at the Adelaide Playhouse in 1999 and then it moved into the Merlyn Theatre at Melbourne's Playbox Theatre Company (now Malthouse Theatre).

In June 2001 it had a return season in Sydney at the Theatre Royal. In July 2001 it played at the Southbank Playhouse (now QPAC) in Brisbane. Wherever the play went it continued to enchant, inspire and deeply move its audiences. Every night the play would receive a standing ovation. *Cloudstreet* went on to tour internationally.

'Simply awesome. Cloudstreet is a winner from beginning to end ... something native, new, vast and unforgettable.'

—SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

'The audience is hooked into a dialogue that often touches the soul.'

—THE AGE

Monjo and Enright's play adaptation had earned itself a brilliant reputation in the world of theatre.





PLOT OVERVIEW



Set in Western Australia, *Cloudstreet* is an epic novel that spans three decades, 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. The story primarily revolves around two families; the Lambs and the Pickles. The families are very different. But, both have experienced hardship and disappointment. The one thing they have in common, is that they share an address; Number 1, Cloud Street in an unidentified suburb in Perth.

The Pickles family consists of: Sam (father), Dolly (mother), Rose (eldest daughter), Ted (first son) and Chub (second son). Sam is an erratic breadwinner. He doesn't seem to be able to settle into stable work. Therefore, the Pickles family do not have a regular income. He is an incorrigible gambler who wastes any windfalls on betting. The Shifty Shadow governs Sam's life choices. The Shifty Shadow is luck and Sam believes that it moves.

'...It was as though luck made choices, that it could think. If you greeted it, it came to you; if you shunned it, it backed away.'

Dolly is a troubled, lonely and bitter woman damaged by her past and further demoralised by what she perceives as her husband's uselessness. She spends most of her time in the pub encouraging the advances of other men, neglecting her responsibilities. Rose is a bright, capable girl. But, she is forced to look after her father and the two boys to compensate for her mother's absence and neglect. Ted and Chub

are typical boys; more concerned with spending time with their friends, and when they are older, chasing girls. The Pickles have been living in Uncle Joel's hotel in Geraldton, Western Australia. The family is down on its luck. Dolly and the children live in the hotel while Sam works offshore on an island collecting guano (seabird faeces/ phosphate) used to make fertiliser.

Unfortunately, Sam has a catastrophic winch accident and the family is precariously close to falling on even harder times. Then in another twist of events, Uncle Joel, unexpectedly dies and leaves two thousand pounds and his property in Perth—Number One, Cloud Street—to Sam. The will imposes the condition that Sam must not sell the house for twenty years. So, the Pickles family moves from Geraldton to Perth and take up residence in the ramshackle old house by the railway line. The suburb is not named and Tim Winton has never revealed which suburb he had in mind, if he in fact had a specific one. But the general consensus seems to locate

the house in the West Leederville, Subiaco, Shenton Park area.

Due to the accident, Sam is unable to work. He loses the money they have been left so their situation is now dire. They have a huge house but no money. Eventually, Sam decides to let half the house out. This is when the Lambs arrive on the scene and the epic story of the two families '*...living in the great continent of a house...*' begins in earnest.

The Lambs family: Lester (father), Oriel (mother), Quick (eldest son), Fish (second son), daughters Hattie, Elaine and Red, and Lon (youngest son) are living a similar life of hardship in Margaret River, WA. They are a deeply religious family who work hard and conscientiously to overcome the difficulties that life confronts them with. The Lambs are a more united family than the Pickles; they have a more robust and honest family dynamic. However, they also become the victims of tragedy when Fish is nearly drowned while night fishing in the river. His mother Oriel frantically tries to revive Fish, pounding his chest and pleading with the Saviour Jesus to restore him to life and his family. Fish does start to breathe again but due to oxygen starvation he suffers irreversible brain damage. As a result of Fish's acquired brain injury the Lambs lose their faith and decide to leave Margaret River for Perth,

'...you can't stay in a town when everything blows up in your face—especially the only miracle that ever happened to you.'

The Lambs rent half of Number One, Cloud Street. They work hard, setting up a small grocery business that does very well. But there are tensions and griefs that the Lambs have to overcome.

The third strand of the story involves the Indigenous girls who inhabited the house in the 1930s. A wealthy, but amoral woman, who was encouraged by an Anglican priest to turn the house into a mission for Indigenous girls, owned Cloud Street. The woman followed the priest's suggestion. But, she was cruel by nature and the poor girls, many of whom were

stolen from their people and country, were treated appallingly. Many tried to escape but they were always caught and brought back to the house. Finally, one of the girls poisoned herself in desperation. The widow sent the remaining girls away and died soon after. The house was locked up with all the misery and despair trapped inside it. The restless spirits of the girls and the old woman haunted the house and occasionally the living got a sense of their presence. As a result of his brush with death, Fish Lamb can see and commune with the spirits, he seems to be existing in a limbo between the worlds of the living and the dead.

The novel is broken down into smaller named 'chapters'. The titles give the reader a tantalising sense of what may happen. For example, in the 'chapter' entitled 'A house on Cloud Street', Sam Pickles learns of his inheritance. These small 'chapters' are like separate episodes. Each character has many episodes written for them over the span of the novel. This structure was used to create the separate scenes in the script.

So these three story strands; the Lambs, the Pickles and the Indigenous presence, run alongside each other and, occasionally overlap when the characters move into another's physical, emotional or spiritual space.

Over the epic course of the narrative the characters deal with loss, guilt, hardship, love, and joy. The characters are all flawed and vulnerable. Winton's masterful writing allows the reader to connect with each character on a visceral and empathetic level. *Cloudstreet* represents a microcosm of Australian society during the mid 1900s. Therefore, it is very easy to identify with the experiences and memories in this magnificent tale.

AUSTRALIA 1943 – 1963

The story is set over three significant decades in Australian history.

History is referenced often in *Cloudstreet*. Although mostly founded in fact, Winton a consummate storyteller, sometimes takes poetic licence, blurring fact and fiction. For example, the successful racehorse Eurythmic did exist and was Perth owned. But Eurythmic wasn't owned by Sam Pickles' uncle; Joel Morris Bloom. However, other historical events such as the story of the Nedlands Monster, Eric Edgar Cooke, are faithful to events.

Australia with a population of nearly 7 million people was barely in recovery from World War I (1914–18) and The Great Depression (1930–36) when World War II broke out in 1939. Australia was involved in World War II between September 1939 and September 1945. This was a time of great anxiety and uncertainty. Especially, for the more geographically isolated Australian west coast population, who felt uncomfortably close to the Japanese invasion of the Philippines, Singapore and New Guinea, the bombing of Pearl Harbour, Darwin, Broome, and Cairns. The Australian population was weary and psychologically scarred by strife. The parents in *Cloudstreet* were the children of this era and had grown up only knowing turmoil and hardship. This context goes a long way to explaining some of their behaviours as they search for certainty, stability, luck, and success.

Cloudstreet seems to start just shy of the end of World War II; probably circa 1943. Politically and psychologically, Australia still felt very attached to England and the Commonwealth. This would have been particularly obvious in Perth where a large percentage of the population was English migrants. Australia also formed a strong allegiance to America during the latter part of World War II. The 'Yanks', as they were fondly called, were romanticised. They represented protection and were regarded as the exemplar of democracy. The presence of Dolly's lover, the American pilot, represents the American presence in Australia at that time.

Following the end of World War I, Australia began to grow in prosperity and national confidence. The war had been won. Peace had arrived. The economy was beginning to pick up and jobs were available. Families began to feel as though they could start to make good lives for themselves. But, it was still a struggle for many who had lost their family members, their way or their health during the war. The younger generation—like the Lamb and Pickles children—were at the coalface of a new dawn.

The 1950s heralded a new age of an industrious, more affluent Australia. Large-scale manufacturing started to grow. Holden cars is one example of a successful brand. The Australian people generally had greater social and financial stability. Families were able to settle down, purchase homes and focus on growing and educating their children. Women, who had taken on many working roles during the war, were back being homemakers for the most part. However, a percentage of women worked or embarked on careers and higher education. Waves of post-war migrants from Europe had arrived in Australia. The government used the slogan 'Populate or Perish'. The most significant group were the 'Ten Pound Poms' followed closely by the Italian and Greek migrants.

Social conditions for the majority of the population were very good. There was still an obvious class structure; working class, middle class and the upper class. This would probably have been more evident in an isolated city like Perth. Black and white television was launched in Australia in 1956. Perth got TV broadcasting in the late 1950s. Until the advent of TV, most people regularly attended the cinema. Sir Robert Menzies was the Liberal Prime Minister. A position he held for 20 years between 1949 and 1966—almost the entire span of *Cloudstreet*. The end of the 1950s was characterised by a rebellious undercurrent rising. This was primarily led by the younger generation. Rock and Roll reared its head and young Australians followed the lead of other

young people in UK and America, Much to the unease of their elders, the young began their search for individual freedoms.

The population had grown to nearly 10.3 million by 1960. Australia was becoming a much more culturally diverse nation. But there was racism and antagonism towards the 'newcomers' from some quarters. The 1960s was an era of significant change for many groups in Australian society. The middle class had grown with the arrival of the post-war babies nicknamed 'The Baby Boomers'. The Lamb and Pickles children were a little older than this generation. However, they would have been experiencing a sense of change around them.

One of the most significant movements was that of the young who demanded greater individual independence and freedom. In *Cloudstreet* Quick and Rose both leave home against their parents' wishes to search for a different life. This movement caused great inter-generational conflict. The traditional societal values of parents and elders were being brazenly challenged. Young people wanted sexual and personal freedoms. They were collectively defying social mores such as marriage before sex. The social stereotypes of the woman being a stay-at-home mother and the father being the sole breadwinner did not hold currency anymore. The traditional model of the nuclear family living happily in the suburbs was being rejected.

The younger generation were also politically engaged and proactive. The main cause of angst was Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. Australia's involvement began in 1962 when military advisers were sent over. Australia joined the Americans in this theatre of war to stop the spread of Communism, which was seen as a threat. This potential spread was called 'the Domino Theory'; meaning Communism might come down to Australia because of our proximity to Asia. Many Australians, particularly the young, were appalled at the thought of

another war. They vehemently and actively opposed it, protesting on the streets and defying efforts to conscript the young men. The Peace Movement that found its roots in America took firm hold of Australia's youth.

In conjunction with these changes, larger numbers of women were entering the workforce and the traditional family model was beginning to alter to suit different, individual needs. The Civil Rights Movement brought the conversation about racial tolerance to the forefront. However, our own Indigenous people remained ignored, unsupported and under-represented for the most part. Massive shifts in culture were also occurring. Contemporary music was becoming more mainstream. Travel was more accessible for middle class families. Access to books and popular films from overseas was more immediate. Eating out at the pub or the Chinese restaurant or having takeaway fish and chips or a hamburger was affordable for the average family. Many Australians owned a caravan or a beach house. Annual Christmas holidays were usually spent by the sea.

So, Australia was growing up. It was developing its own unique identity and culture. It's values were undergoing a brisk audit at the hands of the younger rebels and the older thinkers in society. The 60s was a massive time of change throughout the nation.

SEASON
2019



INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS



But there is a very important group of Australians who seem to be constantly missing from our nation's history. The Indigenous people of Australia are often absent from the national conversation.

During the 1900s, despite serving in all deployments of Australian defence services and having populations in all states, the Indigenous people remained largely invisible to governments and most of the mainstream population. Just like the troubled spirits of the Indigenous girls in the *Cloudstreet* house, they were ghosts in their own country.

In fact, this is still a troubling reality today on many levels. Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders only gained the right to vote in federal elections in 1962—just when the story of *Cloudstreet* comes to an end. In a state election Queensland extended the right to vote to these groups well after the other states in 1965. A national referendum was held in May 1967. Ninety percent of the Australian population voted 'Yes' to counting Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders in the national census, and for Indigenous people to be subject to the Commonwealth laws rather than just state laws. 'Sorry Day' was instigated in May 1998. This day was dedicated as a day of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

In May 2000, 250,000 people walked across Sydney Harbour Bridge in support of an apology to the Stolen Generations and for recognition of Indigenous people in the constitution. In an historic moment for the nation, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd gave an apology speech to the Stolen Generations of the nation on the 13th February 2008. It could be suggested that in Winton's story, the girls who were imprisoned in the *Cloudstreet* house represent the stolen children and the suffering of the Aboriginal people of WA. More recently there have been inroads into easing Indigenous suffering. Active steps have been taken to include the original people of Australia into the constitution. But, frustratingly, the struggle that has been raging since 1995, to have Indigenous Australians recognised in the constitution, is still not satisfactorily resolved. Some emotional statements from Indigenous spokespeople sum up the urgent need for resolution of this matter. There is still much healing to be done.

'...work towards constitutional recognition of our prior ownership and rights.'

—YOLNGU AND BININJ CLANS OF ARNHEM LAND TO KEVIN RUDD, JULY 2008

'...bring my people in from the cold, bring us into the nation.'

—GALARRWUY YUNUPINGU, DECEMBER 2009

'...for the nation's soul.'

—LOWITJA O'DONOGHUE, THE INAUGURAL CHAIR OF THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMISSION, JUNE, 2011

THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Tim has threaded the haunting presence of the Aboriginal people of Western Australia throughout his text. When the spirits appear, the reader or viewer has a sense of mystery and feels that they are glimpsing or have entered another world or realm. Some of the encounters are charged with sorrow and horror. Other moments are more magical and create feelings of awe and wonder. All of these episodes have either a nightmarish or dreamlike quality that hints at the present witnessing the past.

In 1826 a small garrison was established at Albany to deter French exploration and settlement of the southern coast. Then in 1829, 41 years after the first settlement of Australia at Sydney Cove, NSW, Captain James Stirling led the first party of settlers to Perth. It had been determined that the area around the Swan River would make an excellent new British colony. Unlike the east coast colonies, this was to be a free settlement with no convicts. Prior to the first settlement of the Swan River Colony, the local Indigenous people, the Whadjuk—later grouped under the name of the larger nation called the Noongar—had inhabited the area 50 kilometers to north, east and south-west of the current CBD of Perth, (Boorloo) for 65,000 years. The western boundary was in place before the end of the ice age that led to the rise in sea levels approximately 15,000 years ago.

Ships had occasionally come into this area for water, food and scientific exploration, but the arrival of the first white colonists heralded the demise of the Noongar and subsequently the other Aboriginal nations of WA. It could be argued that the Aboriginal people of Western Australia bore some of the worst atrocities at the hands of the colonial settlers. Perhaps this was because

of the vastness and remoteness of the state. Or, it was caused by the cultural and spiritual ignorance and arrogance that the colonists displayed toward the local people; ‘natives’ as they were called by the colonists. Or, possibly the greed and exploitive attitude surrounding ownership of the land’s mineral and pastoral wealth drove the desire to control and eradicate the Aboriginal people. In all probability the appalling treatment of the original custodians of the land was driven by a combination of all these factors. The new settlers brought the knowledge of how to settle land from experiences on the eastern seaboard. So, their ‘laws’ and practices were quickly and ruthlessly implemented. The Noongar, who had originally accepted the colonists believing them to be the ghosts of their ancestors returning to country, began to realise that these new inhabitants of their country were culturally and socially very different. For example, the new people killed and ate the swans and kangaroos without compunction, but when a Noongar person killed a sheep that person was severely punished. Tensions increased as the colonists began to clear and occupy the country and disrespect sacred sites. The Noongar very quickly found themselves under threat and eventually the killings started. At first Noongars were shot as reprisal for killing livestock or ‘stealing’ provisions. The Noongar retaliated, spearing colonists who had murdered their family members. The whole situation then spiraled out of control and the hurt and anger still resonates today.

Some of the worst examples of the cruel treatment of the Aboriginal population include:

- / The establishment of ‘The Native Penal Institution’ on Rottnest Island, where in a perversion of the sentence handed down to the English convicts, the Noongar were sentenced ‘to be transported across the seas’. Noongar boys and men were sent to Rottnest and imprisoned in shocking conditions. This was torture for them.

Firstly, the Noongar had no understanding of white law and therefore had no idea why they had been sent there. Secondly, they could see their country, which they pined for desperately, across the water. Many of them died from heartbreak, disease or malnutrition.

- / The practice where over 2,000 Indigenous people were kept as slaves by the pastoralists. Tricked into marking a 'contract' with an 'X', these illiterate people unwittingly became the property of the pastoralist. They were used as slave labour and some of the women were used as concubines. If they tried to flee they were tracked and caught. Punishments were extreme and not scrutinised by authorities.
- / The Education Act of Western Australia 1893, that allowed parents of white children to object to an Aboriginal child attending their child's school. This act denied Aboriginal children educational opportunities.
- / The Aborigines Act, enacted in 1905. The act encouraged the establishment of reserves and missions and introduced the role of Protectors. Under the act Aboriginal people were prohibited from towns and cohabitation of Aboriginal women and non-Aboriginal men was prohibited. The Aborigines Act also legalised the removal of Aboriginal children from their natural families. This allowed the state or officers of the state to remove Indigenous children from their parents who were deemed, '...biologically capable of having children but not socially capable of raising them'. This is when the Stolen Generations began and it continued into the 1970s.
- / The results of a survey run by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 1994 that found that of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders aged over 25 years, 10% were removed from their families. Horrifyingly, in Western Australia this equated to 25% of the Indigenous population.

- / A 1927 law that until relatively recently created a prohibited area of 5 square kilometers surrounding central Perth that was ruled off limits to Noongar people. Noongar who worked within this area had to carry a pass and ID. There was a 6pm curfew and Noongar in this area or travelling through it after curfew had to have a permit. This law was only revoked in 1953.
- / So, this was the world of the Noongar people from the time of first settlement. It is easy to understand and empathise with the ghosts in Tim Winton's story. They represent the shocking experiences that their ancestors went through and they embody the hurt and pain. Fish Lamb can see, hear and feel the emotions of these people. Sometimes the other characters enter their realm and can see them as well. These are cathartic moments in the work and they serve to transform and heal the characters. Matthew Lutton describes these moments as 'The past existing with the present'. He also talks about making the Indigenous characters and their plight 'visible' to the other characters and the audience of *Cloudstreet*.

This link to [ABC Splash](#) provides further insight into the traditional custodians of Perth and their first encounters with the first colonists. Please make sure you verify the factual content.

You are also encouraged to conduct your own broader research into the Indigenous history of Perth. A suggested area of investigation could be a timeline of Aboriginal history in Western Australia, focussing on the events that effected the Noongar population from the beginning of colonisation of Perth in 1829 to 2019.

CLOUDSTREET /

PERTH 1943 – 1963

The majority of the play takes place in Perth. This is where the Cloud Street house is situated. It is very important that you develop an understanding of this context so that you can analyse and evaluate how the creative team have tried to convey this context—Perth in the mid 1940s to the mid 1960s—to the audience. To explore Perth’s history the following sites are suggested. These sites are only suggested to assist you in starting an exploration of context. Please check the information before using it.

- / [Another Sunny Day In Western Australia](#) – film (National Film and Sound Archive of Australia)
- / [Memories of 60s Perth WA](#) – film (National Film and Sound Archive of Australia)
- / [Postcard from Perth](#) – film (National Film and Sound Archive of Australia)

GERALDTON, MARGARET RIVER, THE WHEAT BELT, WA 1943 –1963

The smaller regional towns of Geraldton and Margaret River feature in *Cloudstreet*. The Pickles live in Geraldton before moving to Perth and taking possession of the house. The Lambs live in Margaret River which they flee in shame and grief after Fish’s accident. Quick spends time as a roo (kangaroo) shooter in the wheat belt of Western Australia. The wheatbelt wraps around Perth, stretching 400 kilometers to

the east. Then down to the south below Albany and around to Esperance. It finishes about 300 kms above Geraldton. So Quick could have been anywhere in this vast cropping territory.

Conduct some extra research into these areas of Western Australia so that you can understand some of the history and gain an impression of the state of Western Australia during the decades the play covers.



SEASON
2019

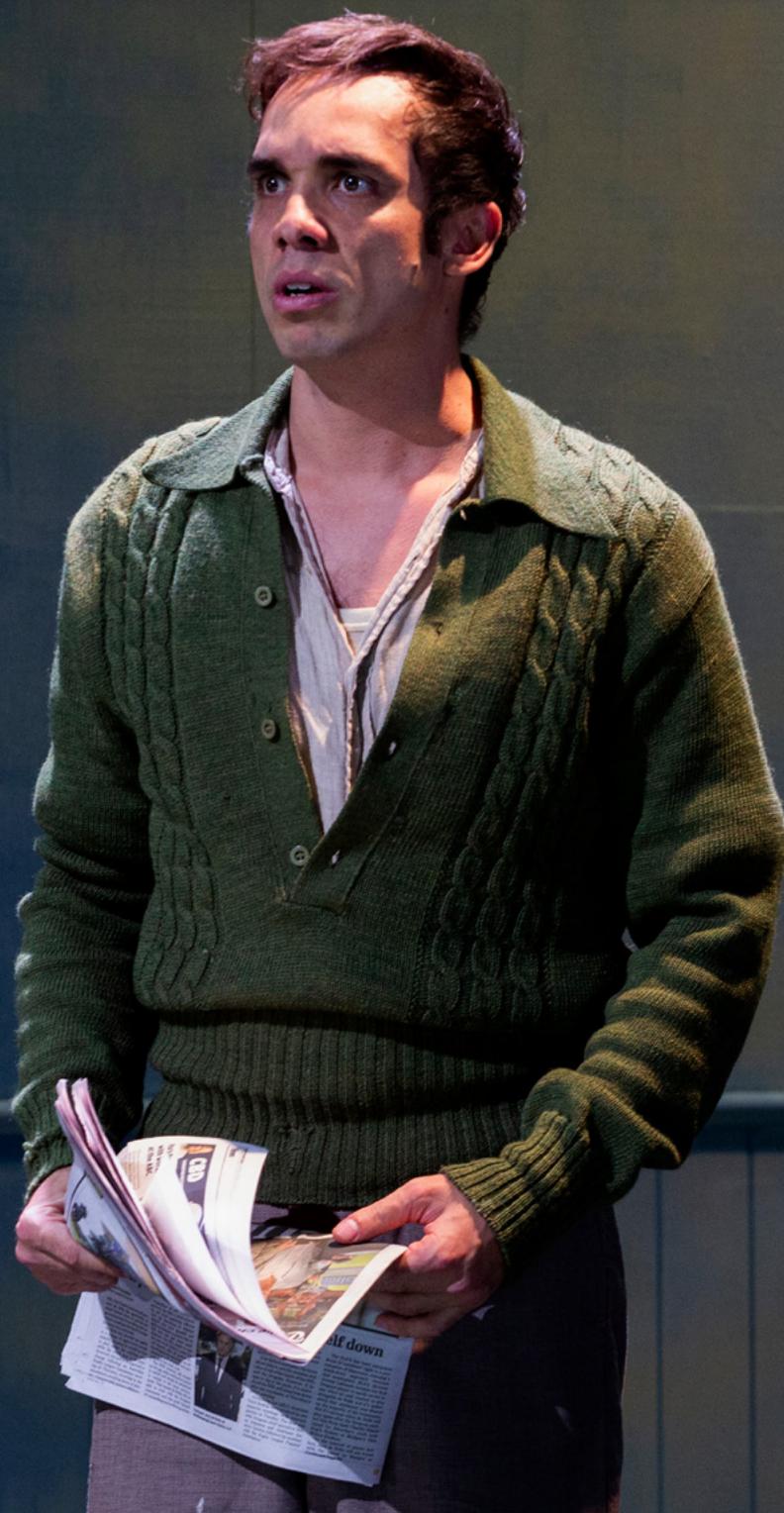


#CLOUDSTREETMALHOUSE





PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES & INFORMATION



ACTIVITY / THINK, PUZZLE, EXPLORE

Use the Think, Puzzle, Explore Visible Thinking routine to tap into your prior knowledge, cultivate your curiosity and develop your own questions about the play.

Write your answers to the questions on separate sticky notes. Take your time. When you have finished, place your answers on your classroom's whiteboard and discuss your answers as a class. Alternatively, create a class Padlet to share and compare your thoughts.

THINK / What do you think you know about *Cloudstreet*?

PUZZLE / What questions or puzzles do you have about *Cloudstreet*?

EXPLORE / How can you explore *Cloudstreet*?

ACTIVITY / SEE, THINK, WONDER

i) Watch [Malthouse Theatre's Season 2019 trailer](#) together as a class. This clip will provide you with a brief snapshot of *Cloudstreet's* concerns.

ii) Watch the clip for a second time and record your ideas in response to the following questions:

- / What do you see in the clip?
- / What does it make you think?
- / What does it make you wonder?

iii) Discuss your ideas as a class, identifying similarities and differences.

iv) Following your class discussion, write a paragraph summarising the class' predictions and curiosities in relation to the 2019 production of *Cloudstreet*.

v) The phrase, 'GREAT CONTINENT' appears in the launch video. This is a reference to a line from the novel that isn't spoken in the play. In the novel, the quote is located in Part III, in the chapter, 'Nights': 'They have no money and this great continent of a house doesn't belong to them. They're lost.'

- / As a class, discuss this line from Winton's novel. Why do you think he describes the 'house' as a 'great continent'? Try to think of as many reasons as you can.
- / To this end, consider how this concept might be articulated in the staging of the production. List the class' predictions and review them again after you have seen the production.

ACTIVITY / JOURNAL WRITING

Write a paragraph in response to each of the following prompts:

- / *Cloudstreet* features a haunted house. Do you believe in ghosts? Can houses really be haunted? What could cause a house to be haunted?
- / Do you believe in fate or destiny? Or do you think we make our own luck? What about religious miracles?
- / Life in a family can be a mixed experience. What do you love about your family? What do you find difficult?
- / *Cloudstreet* focuses on two families who live in the same house but are separated by a 'corridor'. Describe your relationship with your neighbours. Is your relationship close or distant? How are you similar to your neighbours? How are you different?

Share two of your paragraphs with a peer. Click on the link: [the two stars and a wish strategy](#) Using this strategy, provide your peer with feedback on both of their paragraphs.

ACTIVITY / THINK, PAIR, SHARE

In pairs, use the online resources provided by [Reading Australia](#) and your own research to create a two minute oral presentation on ONE of the following topics, as per your teacher's instruction (or by negotiation):

- / Tim Winton
- / *Cloudstreet's* adaptations
- / Mid-century Australia
- / Historical Perth
- / Anglican Children's Missions in Western Australia
- / The Swan River
- / Eric Edgar Cooke
- / The publishing context of *Cloudstreet*
- / Literary context of *Cloudstreet*

Your presentation must include visuals and a maximum of 5 dot points.

*You will need to [create a free account](#) to use Reading Australia's resources after 5 viewings.

At the conclusion of each presentation, each audience member needs to provide every presenter with feedback on their presentation using [the warm and cool feedback strategy](#). Please frame cool feedback in this way - 'You could raise the temperature of your next presentation by...'

ACTIVITY / VOCABULARY BUILDING

Language plays a key role in evoking *Cloudstreet*'s context and setting, however, Winton's distinctly Australian style of language may sound quite foreign to you.

Before you see the play, ensure you are familiar with the following words and idiomatic expressions by completing the following activities. Add to this list after you have seen the play.

[You can download a Word document of this table here.](#)

IN PAIRS, COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING TABLE:

WORD/ IDIOMATIC EXPRESSION	WHAT DO YOU PREDICT IT MEANS?	WHAT STRATEGIES CAN YOU EMPLOY TO CHECK OR DEVELOP YOUR UNDERSTANDING?	DEFINITION/ EXPLANATION FROM DICTIONARY OR CLASS DISCUSSION. <i>*Online dictionary</i>
idiomatic expression			
vernacular			
slang			
grizzle			
a cobbler fish			
penny, quid, shilling, ha'penny, pound			
perve (noun)			

shifty			
dunny			
chuffed			
fib			
The Mint			
clobber (noun)			
cobber			
sheilas			
haulage			
griping			
drongo			

bludger			
Pommy			
'Fair dinkum'			
'We're cactus'			
'Like a shot from a .303.'			
'Keeps the quacks away'			
'I've cottoned on to something.'			
'Using my noggin.'			
'a proper blue'			
'you prize dill'			

SEASON
2019

POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES & INFORMATION



ACTIVITY / THEME STUDY

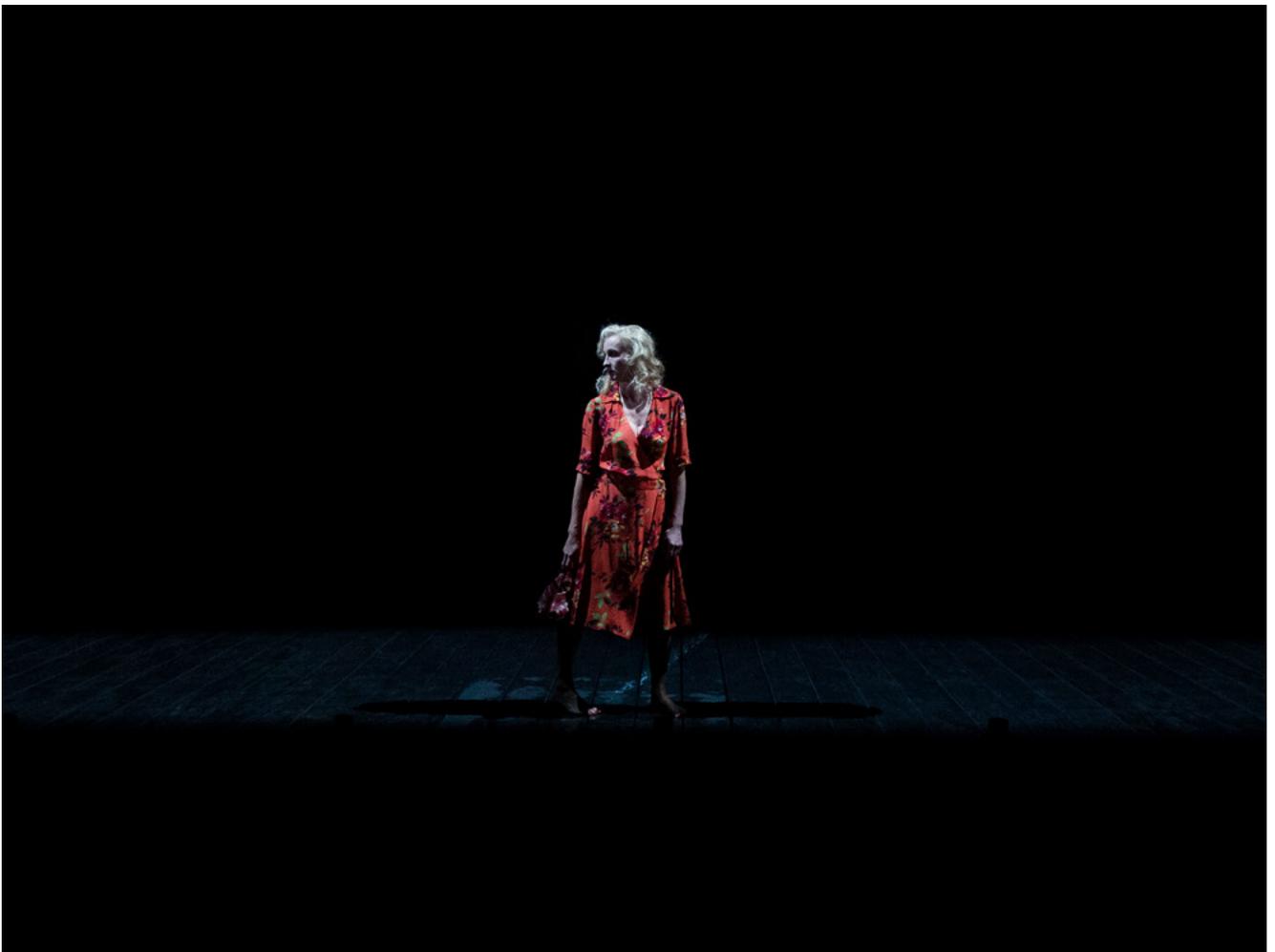
TRAUMA & LOSS /

- 1/ Compile a table which provides an overview of the distressing events experienced by the Lambs and the Pickles. Include examples of the different ways they respond individually to these events.
- 2/ Create a timeline of the key events which lead to Quick, Rose and Oriel's return to the family home.
- 3/ Once you have answered these questions, write two paragraphs about the perspective *Cloudstreet* offers on trauma and loss.

FINDING A PLACE TO BELONG & SOMETHING TO 'BELIEVE IN' /

Lester says, 'I don't know. Life throws a million things, good and bad, at me. I just wish I knew what to believe in' and Dolly says, 'I been waitin' all my life for everything'. Despite years of uncertainty and a sense of being incomplete, the birth of Wax Harry leads 'the house [to breathe] its first painless breath in half a century'.

TASK / Write two paragraphs discussing the role Wax Harry plays in helping the adults restore their faith in life and family, as well as the role love plays in 'freeing the house' of the 'spirits'. Please support your discussion with evidence from the play.



LANDSCAPE AND SPIRITUALITY/CONNECTING TO 'THE BIG COUNTRY' /

Quick's experiences in landscape play a pivotal role in his life, as does his relationship with the Indigenous Storyteller. Fish also feels a deep spiritual connection with nature and is constantly drawn to water.

TASK / Identify the locations and experiences in nature which seem to influence and shape Quick and find five quotations to support your analysis. Record these quotations. Find three quotations which underline the importance of Quick's relationship with the Storyteller.

TASK / As a class, discuss the significance of each of these quotes.

- / 'Everything important thing that ever happened to him had to do with a river.'
- / 'The sky, packed with stars, rests just above his head, and when Quick looks over the side he sees the river is full of sky as well...The boat's vibrating and the anchor's rattling and Fish tilts his wings in the bow.'
- / 'One night as Quick waits for the roos, he hears the familiar bashing in the wheat and raises the rifle and hits the spotlight to get a look at the bugger. But it's a man; he sees a man running raw and shirtless in the light. And it's him, right there in the cross-hairs of his Lee-Enfield.'
- / QUICK: 'Where you goin', Fish? You goin' home?'
FISH: 'The Big Country.'
- / 'When Cousin May found him the next day, Quick was lit up like a 60 watt bulb and he wouldn't stop crying. Cousin May didn't understand it, but she knew one thing: Quick needed his own.'

TASK / At one stage, Quick and Fish fly through the 'stars' in their boat. Explain the symbolism of this scene.

TASK / At one stage, Fish rows above the wheatfields to Quick and tells Quick he is going to 'The Big Country'. What are the different ways you could interpret this scene?

TASK / Watch the *Cloudstreet* trailer [here](#). What does this video add to your ideas of interpretation?

1950s AUSTRALIA /

TASK / Discuss the portrait painted of 1950s Australia by the play. Do you think the production casts a critical or celebratory eye over the past?

CLOUDSTREET AS A BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE /

The director of the 1998 production of *Cloudstreet*, Neil Armfield, wrote in his Director's Note: 'The big old house at Number One Cloud Street is Australia, perhaps, and Tim's story, if we're open to it, is a kind of map for the future.'

TASK / From your perspective, what key messages does *Cloudstreet* offer young adults about the key ingredients of a happy, thriving nation? What does it suggest about Australia's ability to erase borders to create community? Write a paragraph explaining your views.

SEASON
2019



#CLOUDSTREETMALTHOUSE

ACTIVITY / MEET MATTHEW LUTTON



vimeo.com/320623885

INITIAL PRE-REHEARSAL INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR MATTHEW LUTTON

Use the link to the right to jump to specific questions or click the image above to watch the whole interview.

In this interview Matthew Lutton shares his vision for this production of *Cloudstreet*. He discusses what drew him to the play, as well as the play's chief concerns; the rationale behind his and Justin Monjo's amendments to the play (including the decision to replace the character name 'Black Man' with 'Storyteller'); the shifts in theatrical form and how these amendments allow these scenes to be performed in a different way.

- What drew you to directing Tim Winton's *Cloudstreet*?
(direct link to question [here](#))
- What was the rationale behind the amendments to the play?
(direct link to question [here](#))
- What are the play's chief concerns?
(direct link to question [here](#))
- Both *Cloudstreet* the novel and the play feature Indigenous voices expressed in the text as the presence of ghosts in the house. In creating this adaptation, how have you made these voices more explicit?
(direct link to question [here](#))
- Can you discuss Fish Lamb's role in the play and your decision to cast an actor with an intellectual disability? (direct link to question [here](#))
- What do you think is important for students to note about the theatrical form of this production? (direct link to question [here](#))
- Spirituality does not mean the same thing for all characters in *Cloudstreet*. How are different forms of spirituality explored?
(direct link to question [here](#))
- What performance techniques or styles are you planning on using in creating *Cloudstreet*? (direct link to question [here](#))

ACTIVITY / DISCUSSION AND WRITING

Having viewed 'Meet Matthew Lutton', write three paragraphs exploring ONE of the following ideas in relation to Malthouse Theatre's production of *Cloudstreet*. Support your analysis with evidence from the text and the interview.

- / Reassessing representation
- / The repositioning of the Indigenous context
- / Borders and communities
- / Identity and landscape
- / Connecting to country/'The big country'
- / Number One Cloud Street as metaphor

VIDEO INTERVIEW WITH *CLOUDSTREET* CAST IAN MICHAEL, ARIELLE GRAY & BERT LABONTÉ



REHEARSAL INTERVIEW WITH CAST MEMBERS IAN MICHAEL, ARIELLE GRAY & BERT LABONTÉ

Use the links to the right to jump to specific questions or click the image above to watch the whole interview.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



- Ian, as a proud Noongar from Western Australia how does your identity determine and shape your role in *Cloudstreet*?
- What would you like your audience to take away from seeing *Cloudstreet*?

SEASON
2019





ASSESSMENT ADVICE FOR YEAR 10 ENGLISH

VIEWPOINTS /

Use the Visible Thinking routine: 'Perceive, Know about, Care about (Harvard Visible Thinking Routine)' to develop your understanding of the different viewpoints which exist in *Cloudstreet*.

For example, views in relation to:

- / Work
- / Class
- / Family
- / Chance and fate
- / Mothers
- / Fish
- / Number 1 Cloud Street

When you have completed your table, compare and contrast the viewpoints which exist in relation to ONE particular idea. (Individually/pairs and written/orally.)

CLASS DEBATE /

Use Read, Write Think's Discussion Web to prepare a class debate in response to the following provocation: 'That Fish Lamb's life is not a tragedy.'

Analytical text response topics for Lutton's *Cloudstreet* /

- 1 / 'I been waitin' all my life for everything.'
'The characters in *Cloudstreet* long for their lives to be different.'
Discuss.
- 2 / 'Well, we're done, kids, we're cactus. Thank you, Lady Luck...'
'*Cloudstreet* is more about misfortune than it is about happiness.'
Do you agree?
- 3 / 'We make war on the bad and don't surrender.'
'The women in *Cloudstreet* are stronger than the men.'
To what extent do you agree?
- 4 / 'But I want to live, I want to be with people, Quick. I want to battle it out.'
'Lutton's *Cloudstreet* is about the turning points in people's lives.'
Discuss.
- 5 / 'And the room sight, the house breathes its first painless breath in half a century.'
'*Cloudstreet* is more about healing than it is about grief.'
To what extent do you agree?

ASSESSMENT ADVICE FOR UNIT 1 VCE ENGLISH/EAL

CREATIVE TEXT RESPONSE /

Cloudstreet lends itself beautifully to the creative text response task. Students could explore many silences in the text or add to the text/explore gaps in the play. Students also have a wonderful opportunity to write in a variety of forms, for example, a script, a monologue, an epilogue. For further advice please consult [VCAA's English/EAL Advice for Teachers](#). This publication provides a detailed list of possible approaches and suggested forms.

Some suggestions appear below.

EXPLORING A SILENCE /

There are many characters who are largely hidden figures or relatively minor figures in the text. What perspectives could they bring to key events in the play?

- / Hattie (Hat), Red, Elaine and Lon Lamb
- / Ted (including his ghost) and Chub Pickles
- / Ted's widow
- / Mary
- / Pansy
- / Mrs Clay

FILLING A GAP/ADDING TO THE TEXT /

There are many gaps in the story that could be filled, including events that are referred to that we never see. There is also plenty of backstory that could be added to the text.

Here are some suggestions:

- / Why did Sam's cousin, Joel, stipulate that Number One Cloud Street could not be sold for twenty years?
- / Lucy records her experiences and hopes in a series of journal entries.
- / What happened to Mary after Ted left to become a jockey?
- / Rose breaks up with Toby via a letter.
- / What happens with Cousin May finds Quick 'lit up like 60 watt bulb and he wouldn't stop crying'?
- / Who is 'Geoffrey Birth, from Pemberton'? How does he come to return Quick to his family? Why doesn't he accept Lester's invitation to come inside?
- / Write a news report about the capture of the Nedlands' Monster and Quick's discovery of the 'Monster's' drowned son
- / Fish's funeral. Who delivers the eulogy and what is said?

UNIT 1 ANALYTICAL TEXT RESPONSE TOPICS /

- 1 / 'Every important thing that ever happened to him had to do with a river.'
'The past is always present in Lutton's *Cloudstreet*.'
Do you agree?
- 2 / 'I don't know. Life throws a million things, good and bad, at me. I just wish I knew what to believe in.'
'In Lutton's *Cloudstreet*, the characters' lives are characterised by uncertainty.'
Discuss.
3. 'I burst into the moon, sun and stars of who I truly am. Being Fish Lamb. Perfectly. Always. Everyplace. Me.'
'Despite the overwhelming sadness of Lutton's *Cloudstreet*, its message is ultimately one of hope.'
Discuss.
4. 'I know a story. The house hurts, you know.'
'Whilst Lutton's *Cloudstreet* is a tale about family, it also about nation.'
Discuss.
5. 'Lutton's *Cloudstreet* shows that only love can erase borders and build community.'
Do you agree?
6. 'The Shifty Shadow's shifted. Can't you feel it?'
'The Pickles and the Lambs are betrayed by their faith in forces beyond themselves.'
To what extent do you agree?
7. 'All of the characters in Lutton's *Cloudstreet* are haunted in some way.'
Discuss.

ASSESSMENT ADVICE FOR UNIT 1 LITERATURE STUDENTS

Cloudstreet is particularly well-suited to the teaching of:

UNIT 1: APPROACHES TO LITERATURE, AREA OF STUDY 1: READING PRACTICES, OUTCOME 1 /

Respond to a range of texts and reflect on influences shaping these responses

AND

UNIT 1: APPROACHES TO LITERATURE, AREA OF STUDY 2: IDEAS AND CONCERNS IN TEXTS, OUTCOME 2 /

Analyse the ways in which texts reflect or comment on the ideas and concerns of individuals and particular groups in society

VCAA's Advice for Teachers (Literature 2016-2021 [AFT]) contains excellent advice regarding teaching and learning activities and assessment for this Outcome.

POSSIBLE ASSESSMENT TASKS FOR OUTCOME 1 /

- / Reading Australia has assembled a terrific list of academic reviews of *Cloudstreet* (the novel) which can be accessed here: ([Critical Responses to Cloudstreet](#)). These can be used to examine different viewpoints on *Cloudstreet* and used in conjunction with the learning activities suggested on p. 9 of [VCAA's AFT. Ramona Koval's excellent interview with Hilary McPhee for the Wheeler Centre](#) (as well as Hilary McPhee's brief lecture on *Cloudstreet*) and the ABC's First Tuesday Book Club panel discussion between Peter Garrett, Mem Fox, Marieke Hardy, Jason Steger and Jennifer Byrne are wonderful resources for this task. ([This link to ABC Education](#) will link you to the video, the transcript and additional activities.) This task could also function as a summative task.

POSSIBLE ASSESSMENT TASKS FOR OUTCOME 2 /

- / The 'Meet the Director' and 'Meet the Cast' video interviews which appear on pages 52 and 54, could be used in conjunction with many of the activities suggested on p. 11 of VCAA's AFT.
- / The 'CHARACTER CHART' activity from p.12 of VCAA's AFT could also be used in conjunction with the Prompt Pack's video interviews. As suggested on p.12 of the AFT, many of these tasks could be used as the basis for a summative task.

For example, students could use their responses to develop a written analysis of characters in the text. Sample essay topics appear below:

- 1/ Write an extended analysis in response to the following question: How does Oriel's view of life influence her relationship with her family and herself?
- 2/ Write an extended analysis in response to the following question: How does Dolly's view of life influence her relationship with her family and herself?
- 3/ Write an extended analysis in response to the following question: How does Quick's view of life influence his relationship with his family, Rose and himself?
- 4/ Write an extended analysis in response to the following question: How does Lutton's *Cloudstreet* comment on the ideas and concerns of Indigenous Australians?
- 5/ Write an extended analysis in response to the following question: How does Lutton's *Cloudstreet* comment on the ideas and concerns of families living with disability?
- 6/ Write an extended analysis in response to the following question: How does Lutton's *Cloudstreet* comment on the ideas and concerns of women?





COPYRIGHT NOTICE

© Copyright: Malthouse Theatre, the artists, designers, photographers, collaborators and contributors. All rights reserved, 2019.

English Prompt Pack created by Jill Fitzsimons for Malthouse Prompt—Malthouse Theatre's Youth and Education program.

The person who has downloaded this document is granted a non-exclusive, limited license to print or make up to 20 copies and distribute them to students in the state of Victoria, for the express purpose of participation in the Malthouse Theatre's Prompt Education program.

These copies must be made available to those students free of charge.

Neither this pdf (digital document) nor its printed copies may otherwise be copied, distributed, emailed, stored or saved on a shared or public server or file service, in whole or in part, without the express prior written permission of Malthouse Theatre.

This copyright notice must be preserved in its entirety on all copies.

MALTHOUSE THEATRE
113 Sturt Street
Southbank VIC 3006

Phone 9685 5111
education@malthousetheatre.com.au

Cloudstreet runs 6 May – 16 June, 2019

