



# Shakespeare

## REPUBLIC

*All the world's a stage...*



"... a sophisticated twenty-first century series with its own particularly Australian flavour."  
 The Shakespeare Blog, Stratford-upon-Avon, UK

"This should be in EVERY classroom!"  
 KIN Collective, Australia

"... a thoroughly fresh and modern take."  
 Kuriositas.com, UK

"Shakespeare Things To Do This Week #7  
 Watch *Neighbours* actor Alan Fletcher as Macbeth in this *Shakespeare Republic* video."  
 Shakespeare Magazine, UK



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**“... a sophisticated twenty-first century series with its own particularly Australian flavour.”** - *The Shakespeare Blog, Stratford-Upon-Avon, UK*

## THE SNAPSHOT

Is Shakespeare still relevant? Does he still speak to us? Is he REALLY for everyone?

We are Shakespeare Republic and our answer to all of the above is one simple word – yes.

Yes, yes, YES!

Using the medium of a web series, Shakespeare Republic is a journey through the works of William Shakespeare and his fellow Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights, with the aim of rediscovering, reinvigorating and occasionally re-interpreting these universal observations in a modern setting, through the lens of current events and social issues of our time.

## SEE THE FULL SERIES ONLINE:

<https://vimeo.com/channels/shakespearerepublic/>

Running time: 23mins 43 seconds



## ABOUT SHAKESPEARE REPUBLIC

From Hamlet in a bathtub to Juliet as one half of a same sex couple, *Shakespeare Republic* is a collective of Australian-based actors who have come together to celebrate Shakespeare, his works and his enduring legacy, through sharing their interpretation of his words and thoughts, via settings and circumstances that are familiar to a 21st Century audience.

A web series with performances from Michala Banas (*Always Greener*), Alan Fletcher (*Neighbours*), Ben Steel (*Home & Away*), Sally McLean (*Utopia*), Rowena Hutson (*Strong Female Character*) and Billy Smedley (*Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*) this is deliberately Shakespeare with a difference!

Using some of Shakespeare's most famous monologues and sonnets, each episode is a stand-alone 'moment in time' short film, set in modern circumstances, that highlights how Shakespeare (and his fellow Elizabethan playwrights) were talking about issues and ideas that we are still debating and experiencing today.

The takeaway? Shakespeare speaks to us now just as strongly as he did 400 years ago when he first put quill to parchment.

*Shakespeare Republic* - all the world's a stage ...

See the full series of the six films that make up Season One here: <https://vimeo.com/channels/shakespearerepublic>



## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Many years ago I was fortunate to have as my Honorary Patron (and mentor), Sir Nigel Hawthorne. Most remember him for his role as “Sir Humphrey Appleby” in *Yes, Minister*, but unless you were also an avid theatre-goer, you may not have known that he also played a lot of Shakespeare. It was while he was rehearsing the title role in *King Lear* for the RSC, that we briefly discussed the idea of Shakespeare for the screen and what might work for modern audiences. He was interested in how Shakespeare could be adapted for different times and cultures and was happy to share some thoughts with me at the time.

Nigel's approach to Shakespeare truly appealed to me. I loved his attention to detail and his way of seeing the world and his work within it – something he brought to all his roles. His notes on *Lear* and his conclusion that the character was suffering senile dementia were fascinating, and I think, right on point. While Shakespeare and his contemporaries may not have had a term for that illness, it makes total sense to me to explain both *Lear*'s actions in the play and the reactions of those around him. He's not a tyrant, he's a once-loved king losing control – due to fighting a losing battle within himself that becomes externalized through his (out-of-control) actions. And I always respected Nigel's way of clarifying why he made the choices he did – with innate intelligence, honesty and total integrity.

That's one of the things I loved about Nigel, he “got” it and wasn't afraid to go against the grain of popular opinion on how a piece “should” be played. Shakespeare wrote about human beings, not caricatures. Whether you agreed with Nigel's interpretation or not, you were in no doubt that he was playing a man overwhelmed by the uncontrollable forces of nature – giving us a living, breathing portrait of a man used to being in total control, who was no more.

During our correspondence, I mentioned my idea of finding a way to bring Shakespeare to modern audiences in bite sized pieces and Nigel thought it fascinating, but also warned me about the difficulty of finding a home for such a venture. This was the days before the Internet became what it is and the idea of the medium of web television hadn't even been thought of. And so the concept was put to one side, but not forgotten.

Sadly Nigel has since passed away and is not here to see that idea finally take form over a decade later and what the amazing team here in Melbourne have created. But wherever he is, I think he would be proud of us for finishing what we set out to do and remaining true to the original concept of bringing Shakespeare to modern audiences – without compromising the original work. From the start, I have kept what Nigel said all those years ago firmly in mind and I know he had a direct influence on my choices when making this. Keep grounded. Keep real. Play the person, not the part. Be true. Find the Real Person.

All good advice when directing (and playing) some of the most famous roles in English theatre.

Shakespeare is tricky – you either love him or hate him. And if you love him, you are either a staunch traditionalist or ... not. So, if audiences find us, there will be criticism, it comes with the territory. I just hope it's the kind that we can have an intelligent debate about – because THAT is one of the things we are aiming to achieve. If we can begin a conversation about Shakespeare where we all learn something, then we're winning. And not just for us, but for Shakespeare and all who have played his roles and staged his works down through the ages. Because if we're talking about him in the wider public in an intelligent way, then we're proving that he is indeed still relevant.

Ultimately, when doubt raises it's slightly deformed head to give me a quizzical look of unease, I simply nod in it's direction and send it this reassurance: “This above all: to thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

Shakespeare, as it turns out, has some very good advice as well.

*Sally McLean, Director  
Shakespeare Republic*



## **DIRECTOR FAQs**

### **Why Shakespeare?**

Shakespeare Republic was a passion project for me from the moment I thought of doing it (about a decade ago) and stemmed from my ongoing love affair with all things historical, dramatic and particularly Elizabethan.

From my time spent at drama school in London to my thesis on Elizabethan Theatre (for which I also spent time watching the building of the new Globe Theatre on Southbank, spending time inside it's walls as history was recreated around me), to my time being mentored by Sir Nigel Hawthorne until his passing in 2001, my work in production with the BBC Music & Arts Department and then my work with the Australian Shakespeare Company over three seasons, I have spent the better part of my adult life discussing, performing and celebrating the Bard.

### **Why contemporary settings?**

The one thing that used to sadden me were people, including my fellow actors, saying that they wouldn't "do" Shakespeare because he was either "too hard", "completely foreign" or "just not relevant anymore". I found this heartbreaking, but understandable. Until I had landed in drama school in London, I too was one of those actors who just thought Shakespeare "wasn't for me". I'd played Shakespeare pieces before, but never really got it. After a year with a brilliant Shakespeare teacher, Phil Peacock, and the chance to immerse myself in the world Shakespeare lived in - that all changed. I was a convert.

So, like all good converts, I began to wonder how I could make Shakespeare more accessible. Then along came the medium of the web series and voila! Shakespeare Republic was finally born. Bite-sized chunks of Shakespeare for people to try out and see if they like it. No more than 5 minutes of invested time to see if Shakespeare really is or isn't for you. All set in familiar, 21st Century settings, to help underline that what he wrote about 400 odd years ago is still happening now - albeit with the aid of computers, smart phones, surveillance technology and other gizmos we have invented in the years between.

### **How did you choose the cast?**

The fabulous cast who came to the project are all friends of mine who are brilliant actors, but covered a range of experience playing Shakespeare - from Shakespeare veterans, to never having played him before. Two of our cast make their Shakespeare debut with this series - Ben and Michala - and I am so grateful they agreed to take this sometimes overwhelming step with me. It was challenging, it was sometimes daunting, it was crazy hours with minimal sleep, but most importantly, it was fun. So much fun.

### **Will there be another series of Shakespeare Republic films?**

Absolutely! We are currently in pre-production for Season Two and will be announcing our plans in July 2016.



## ABOUT MICHALA BANAS - “PHEBE”

Michala’s acting career started very early with her first film credit at the age of 5 in her native New Zealand. her first award nomination was a NZ Film & TV Award for: Best Juvenile Performance for her role in Mirror Mirror at only 16 years of age. Since then, she has forged a remarkable film and television career spanning over three decades.

After moving to Australia in 1988, Michala worked on several productions before her breakout role in Always Greener (Channel 7) for which she was nominated for most popular female talent for the 2002 Logies. from there she has worked consistently, starring in ongoing roles in McLeods Daughters (Channel 9), Winners and Losers (Channel 7) and the remarkable telemovie Beaconsfield (Channel 9).

Her portrayal of two naughty puppets in her stage debut in Avenue Q in 2009, earned Michala a Helpmann Award for best lead female in a musical in 2010.

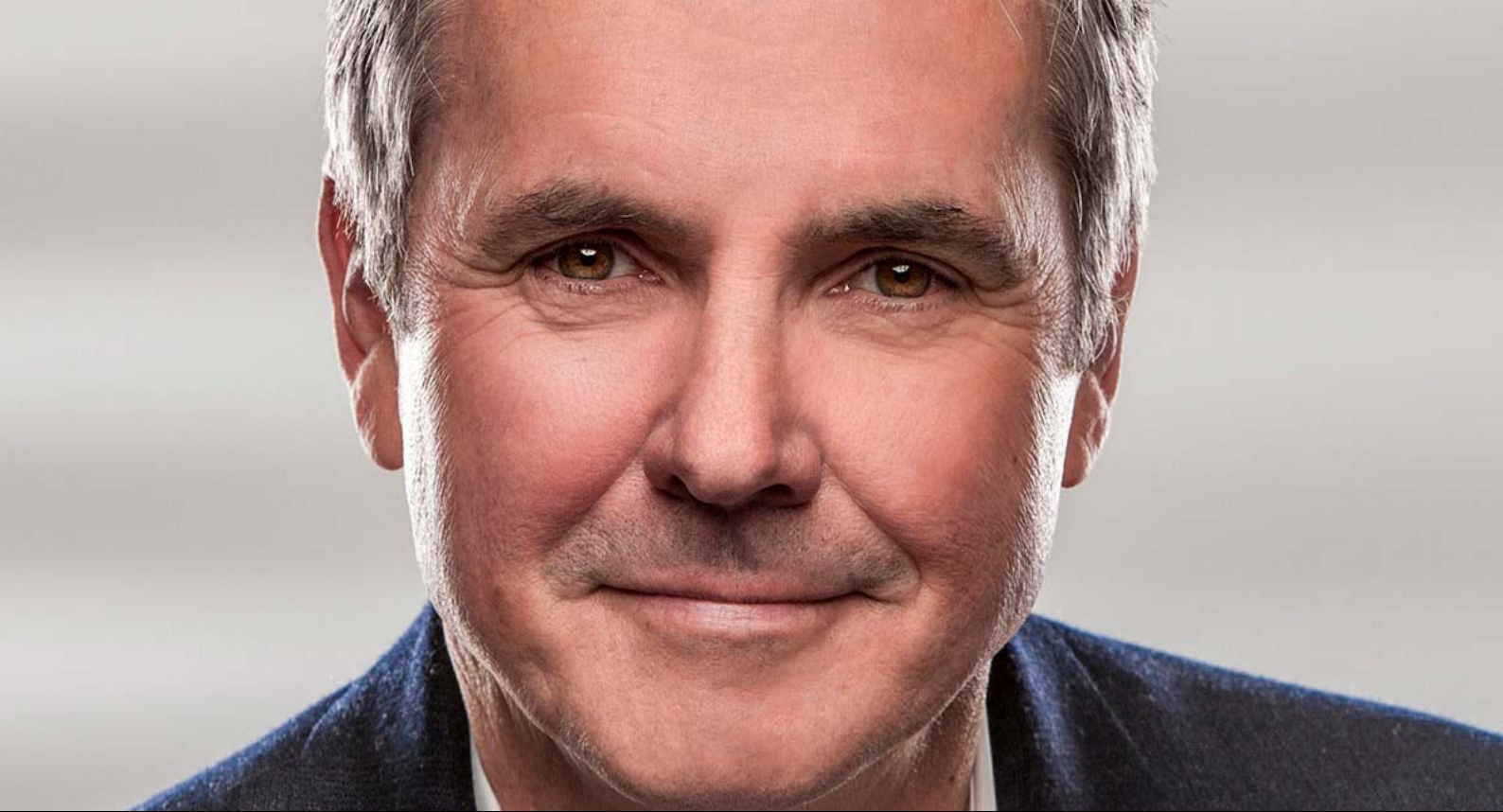
Most recently, Michala has played the kooky “Phoebe” in the multiple award winning Matchbox Pictures’ series Nowhere Boys (ABC), and the feisty “Amber Wheeler” in the hit ABC comedy series Upper Middle Bogan to much acclaim – the show’s cast took out the 2014 Equity Award for Most Outstanding Ensemble In A Comedy Series, and is nominated again for Series 2 in 2015.

Along with several stints in radio, Michala has worked regularly as a presenter and guest on shows such as The Circle (Channel 10), Dirty Laundry Live (ABC) and Have you Been Paying Attention? (Channel 10).

To add another feather to her bow, Michala has also become co-founder and current co-Artistic Director of The Kin Collective, a hugely successful independent theatre company based in Melbourne. She recently starred alongside Noni Hazlehurst in the company’s production of the tragic Irish play, The Beauty Queen Of Leenane“, for which the cast received a Greenroom Award nomination for Best Ensemble in 2015.

Michala’s most recent theatre foray was in the Melbourne Theatre Company’s (MTC) production of Birdland, where she played five characters with four accents ... one of them, a man.

IMDB PROFILE: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0824391>



## ABOUT ALAN FLETCHER - “MACBETH”

Alan Fletcher first appeared on Australian screens in *The Young Doctors*, before landing the role that would fully launch him into Australia’s lounge rooms – that of “Constable Frank Rossi” on *Cop Shop*. Various roles in film and television followed, including playing “Martin Blake” on *The Love Boat* opposite Morgan Fairchild, “Henry Landers” in *Gross Misconduct* opposite Jimmy Smits and “Frank Harkin” in *Mercy Mission: The Rescue of Flight 771* opposite Scott Bakula.

Alan has also appeared in several TV and radio comedy shows, including writing and performing for ABC Radio’s *Don’t Get Off Ya Bike!*, as well as playing lead roles in various landmark TV dramas including the Vietnam Vet mini-series *Sword of Honour* and his AFI-nominated performance as ‘Michael Clayton’ in ABC’s *Embassy*.

He briefly appeared in *Neighbours* in 1987 as ‘Greg Cooper’, a dishonest boxer working in Jim Robinson’s garage, before successfully landing his current role in 1994 of ‘Dr Karl Kennedy’ in the soap, which has made him a household name in both Australia and the UK.

Alan began his career in the theatre, landing his first professional contract in his early twenties at Perth’s *Hole in the Wall Theatre*, before moving to the *Perth Theatre Company* at the National Theatre, Western Australia, where he worked opposite such great talents as Warren Mitchell, Honor Blackman, Tom Stoppard, William Henry Kerr and Tim Brooke-Taylor, working in every style of theatre from Pinter to Shakespeare, melodrama to musicals. This was followed with a New Zealand tour of *Beyond A Joke* opposite Arthur Lowe, a year’s contract with Sydney’s *Q Theatre* and then three years at the *Melbourne Theatre Company (MTC)*. Despite his career becoming more and more focused on screen, this love of theatre never diminished and Alan has added to his CV the roles of ‘Henry Higgins’ in *My Fair Lady* at the *Melbourne Comedy Theatre*, Frank McGee in the workshop performance season of *Call Girl the Musical* and ‘Captain Hook’ in *Peter Pan* at *His Majesty’s Theatre, Aberdeen*, among many other stage roles over the past decade.

Notable Shakespeare roles include: ‘Tybalt’ in *Romeo & Juliet* and ‘Duke Senior’ and ‘Duke Fredrick’ in *As You Like It* for MTC and ‘Lucentio’ in *The Taming Of The Shrew* for *Perth Playhouse*.

Alan is also the lead singer of the band *Waiting Room*, with other members including Tommy Rando, Chris Hawker and drummer Jeff Consi, who have a regular gig in Melbourne and have undertaken several successful sell-out tours of the United Kingdom.

IMDB PROFILE: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0281936>



## ABOUT ROWENA HUTSON - “HAMLET”

Rowena Hutson is an actor and theatre practitioner. She graduated with a First Class Honours degree in European Theatre Arts from Rose Bruford College, London in 2008, and whilst studying, was awarded the prestigious Sir John Gielgud Charitable Trust Bursary for Promising Young Actors.

Rowena has since worked extensively with a range of independent theatre companies, performing throughout Europe and Australia. She is a founding member of the London-based theatre collective Sheer Lunacy, as well as a member of the ensemble for Melbourne’s very own Underground Cinema.

Highlights of her work include playing the tipsy pigeon ‘Jesse’ for Flap and Fear (which won the Best Newcomer Award at the Theatre Drachengasse Festival in Vienna), reprising that same role in Oslo, Norway, making her Edinburgh Fringe debut in The Wau Wau Sisters Last Supper, co-directing Underground Cinema Presents MAGIC and working on the feature film Henry IV Part 2 as Head of Acting in the UK summer of 2011.

Rowena received enormous critical acclaim and sell-out shows with her first one woman show The Unstoppable, Unsung Story of Shaky M, which toured Australia nationally, almost non-stop, over 2012-2013. Her second one-woman show A Four-Eyed Guide to the Galaxy has just completed sell-out and critically acclaimed seasons as part of the 2014 Melbourne Fringe and 2015 Adelaide Fringe Festivals and just completed two special presentations as part of the 2015 Melbourne Comedy Festival in March/April.

In September 2015, Rowena was acknowledged for her latest one-woman show “Strong Female Character” with the 2015 Melbourne Fringe Festival “Outstanding Comedy Show” award.

IMDB PROFILE: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm5129804>



## ABOUT SALLY McLEAN - “BILLIE”

A graduate of The Actors Institute, London, with further studies undertaken with Howard Fine, David Coury and faculty at HFAS Australia, Sally McLean has played roles in over thirty UK and Australian theatre productions, including *Flame Trees*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Auxiliary*, *Chasing Pegasus (a play in ten chords)*, *The Clairvoyant*, *P.S I Love You*, the professional Australian Premier of *I Love You*, *You're Perfect*, *Now Change* and the World Premier of *Annabel's Requiem* on London's West End.

Sally has also played Shakespeare in both Australia and the UK, playing roles in *Macbeth* and *Hamlet* in the UK before performing for three seasons with the Australian Shakespeare Company in their critically acclaimed productions of *Comedy of Errors* and *Romeo & Juliet*.

Sally has additionally appeared in various lead and guest roles on numerous UK and Australian television series including *Lowdown*, *Elephant Princess*, *Flying Doctors*, *Totally Full Frontal*, *Blue Heelers*, *Tonight Live*, *Bingles*, *Comedy Inc.* and the BBC mini-series *Bootleg*. Film credits include *Raymond Taylor's Earnest Adventures In Love*, *V for Vietta*, *Evie Wants A Baby* and *Why Must The Show Go On? (playing Lady Macbeth)*, amongst others.

Recently, Sally has been appearing almost exclusively on ABC Television, playing guest roles on hit television shows *The Worst Year Of My Life—Again*, *Utopia*, *Jack Irish* and Season Three of *Upper Middle Bogan*.

Her most recent theatre role was in November 2015 as “Nurse” in Spark Theatre Company's acclaimed production of *The Medea Project* in Melbourne.

IMDB PROFILE: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0824391>



## ABOUT BILLY SMEDLEY - “HAMLET”

A graduate of Ballarat Arts Academy (formally BAPA), Billy has played numerous roles in theatre, most notably Banquo and The Doctor in Macbeth, followed by Lysander and Lion in A Midsummer Night’s Dream for Oz Act and performing six seasons of new Australian writing with Fractured Femur theatre company in various lead roles.

His screen credits include playing the guest role of Lieutenant Colonel Roland Claremont in Miss Fisher’s Murder Mysteries for ABC TV, the lead role of Sheriff Sealey in the short film Ransom’s Bribe, the lead role of Bounty Hunter in the vampire short film Spring Cleaning, the guest role of Martin in Salam Café: Chef Rumzee for SBS TV and the lead role of Hawksborn in the much-anticipated Terry Pratchett short film Trollbridge, amongst others.

Billy is also a presenter and voice-over artist, most recently hosting the educational film The Physics of Light for VEA and voicing the role of “Spy” for a Team Fortress parody musical video, that has to date has gained just over half a million views on Youtube! He has appeared on several TV commercials including Australian Super and Ballarat University.

In addition to his acting work, Billy is a highly experienced Kung Fu practitioner, has a basic foundation in Parkour and is an ex member of the Australian Defence Forces (Army).

IMDB PROFILE: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm3830885/>



## ABOUT BEN STEEL - “JULIET”

Ben Steel is an international producer, director and writer for television and feature film. He has produced successful film and television projects in the USA, UK, Czech Republic, Aruba, and Australia, as well as working in production crew roles for international hit movies including The Matrix, Moulin Rouge!, Babe: Pig in the City, Dark City, Doing Time For Patsy Cline, Oscar and Lucinda, Two Hands, Bootmen and the recent Aaron Eckhart movie I, Frankenstein.

But audiences may best know Ben from his acting work both in Australia and overseas in roles such as the popular regular character “Jude Lawson” in Channel 7’s Home & Away and his more recent appearances in international feature films Solomon Kane (opposite James Purefoy) and George Lucas’ Red Tails.

Ben has been most recently seen on Australian television screens in the role of Aden Thomas for Winners & Losers, as well as playing Lcpl. Jack Winton for the film Peacekeepers, and ‘Secret Agent’ for the webseries Ninja Panda.

Under the banner of Ben Steel Films, Ben is currently developing several feature film and television projects for the Australian and international screen markets with collaborators based in Australia, the UK and USA.

IMDB PROFILE: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0824391>



## ABOUT CREATOR & DIRECTOR/PRODUCER, SALLY McLEAN

Sally McLean's work behind the camera began with the BBC as a member of the Books & Special Projects Unit in BBC Music & Arts, during which time she also Chaired the BBC Alternative Program Development and was Deputy Chair of the Australian Program Development Committee.

This led to her writing and producing her first film *A Little Rain Must Fall* in London in late 1996 in the UK, and forming her production business Incognita Enterprises under the Honorary Patronage of Sir Nigel Hawthorne – an association that continued until his passing in 2001.

Since then, Sally has written and produced numerous short films and theatrical productions, as well as working in production for the Nine Network, Endemol Southern Star, Crackerjack Productions, FremantleMedia and Network Ten, among other commercial networks and production houses. Other industry activities include serving as an official Jury member in both acting and screen craft categories for the AFI Awards, AACTA Awards and ATOM Awards since 2010.

As a playwright, Sally wrote, directed and produced the Melbourne and regional seasons of her play *Chasing Pegasus (a play in ten chords)* (starring Bridget Neval and Jennifer Hansen), the WW2 play *'Till The Boys Come Home* (workshop version, titled *PS I Love You*), and is at present immersed in her current works-in-progress *Bayonets and Bully Beef* (excerpts from which were performed under her direction at the Melbourne Arts Centre as part of the Your Text Here emerging playwrights showcase) and *Till The Boys Come Home*, currently in the final stages of development with a view to fully staging the work.

Current screen projects as writer/director/producer include the landmark feature documentary *A Life Unexpected: The Man Behind The Miracle Mile* and *Shakespeare Republic: Season Two*.

Sally continues to work in Australian theatre, film and television as an actor as well as developing several projects for both the big and small screen as writer and producer.

IMDB PROFILE: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0572643>



## ABOUT DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY, SHAUN HERBERTSON

Based in Melbourne, Victoria, but known for travelling all over the world for work, Shaun studied Film at Footscray City College, achieving his Diploma in Screen in 2008. Since then he has fallen in love with being behind the camera and become an in-demand Director of Photography.

With experience shooting both nationally and internationally, creating content for television, film, news, corporate films, music videos and everything in between, Shaun's varied credits include *Fashion Asia* (F.A.D. Group), *Inside MMA* (Spike TV), *Highway Cattle* (documentary), *Blood, Sweat & Tears* (documentary) and the multi award-winning *Chris & Josh* (*The Webseries*), among many others.

A full Australian Cinematography Society Member (ACS), Shaun has also recently completed shooting the feature films *36 Questions* and *The Journey* and is currently Director of Photography on the international feature documentary, *A Life Unexpected: The Man Behind The Miracle Mile*.

## ABOUT DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY, JAMES DENE

James Dene is a multi-hyphenate screen practitioner with credits as a Producer, Director, Camera Operator, Editor, Composer and Audio Producer.

With Bachelor's Degrees in Arts, Entertainment, and Media Management, Honours (1st Division, 2nd Class) and Creative Writing & Screen Studies from Southern Cross University, James' professional career began in copywriting, before moving into producing, directing and screenwriting with various production businesses, including his own co-op, Loose Association Media.

Currently Writer and Media Producer for Crankyfish production house in Melbourne, Australia, James continues to

## ABOUT DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY, YANNI DELLAPORTAS

Yanni Dellaportas has been capturing and documenting life and events on camera for three decades ever since his father gave him an old Pentax film SLR camera in 1982 .

His work has been published in major Australian newspapers, magazines, posters and international novels and photo books. His award winning images have been exhibited in art and photographic shows all around Victoria, Australia.

Yanni has worked as a photo journalist in local suburban newspapers since 1997 and has found this style of photography the most rewarding. Some of the best experiences have been when he has photographed an event or created images to support a local cause. Yanni loves getting to know people before he photographs them – finding inspiration in the human face. In this he also sees himself as a historian, and loves the interaction with the community. "You get to know and understand the community you live in a lot better , by sharing and capturing moments of people's lives".

Yanni has also moved into moving images – shooting and editing Director, Sally McLean's first short films *fixNATION* and *Brigit & Benny* (a modern faerietale), as well as bringing his extensive musical skills to the productions as Composer and Sound Designer for both films. Shakespeare Republic marks the tenth anniversary of Yanni and Sally's collaboration, and we are delighted to welcome him back to Incognita's stable!



## ABOUT LIGHTING DIRECTOR, DAN EVANS

Dan Evans is a highly experienced freelance lighting director, designer and operator, with credits in large scale events, concerts, festivals, corporate, TV, film and theatre.

With over a decade of experience, his credits include The Logies (Nine Network Australia), The Grand Final Footy Show (Nine Network Australia), The Eagles, Queen and Bee Gees Night Fever Australian tour, Queen It's A Kind Of Magic South African tour, Australian tours for Lady Ga Ga, Chilli Peppers, Billy Joel, Kylie Manogue, Linkin Park, Green Day, Rammstein and Neil Diamond, The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe Australian Tour (Perth), as well as lighting and production roles with Federation Square (Melbourne), Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, Showtime Productions, Golden West Network (GWN, Perth) and Austage Pty Ltd.

Shakespeare Republic marks the tenth anniversary of the first screen project Dan and Director, Sally McLean worked on together – the short film, fixNATION (also Sally's first screen directing credit), and we are delighted to have been able to lure Dan back from his busy schedule to the Incognita team!

## ABOUT THE SOUND OPERATOR/SOUND EDITOR, TIM MCCORMICK

Based in Melbourne, Australia, Tim McCormick is a qualified Sound Engineer (Bachelors of Recording Arts, Middlesex University England) and has a diploma in Sound Engineering from SAE in London. He has had over 10 years of experience doing studio and live work and has recently become more focused on post production and creating sound for picture.

Tim works with the philosophy is that sound is integral to storytelling. As he puts it so well: "Sound is something that is often over-looked in productions, it shouldn't be. It can be the difference between a good film and a great film." We couldn't agree more!

Tim's credits include several short & feature films, corporate videos, web series and documentaries, both as sound recordist and sound editor, including Director, Sally McLean's feature-length documentary *A Life Unexpected: The Man Behind The Miracle Mile*.

## ABOUT ASSOCIATE PRODUCER, PERRI CUMMINGS

Having studied Performing Arts at James Cook University and Screen Writing at RMIT, Perri works regularly as an actor and writer. Originally trained in physical theatre, Perri has worked for several theatre companies, including a nationally touring Shakespeare company and an avant-garde ensemble, where she spent seven years working and training with Jean Pierre Voos. As a writer, Perri has worked regularly for *Neighbours* both in the story room and as a script writer. She was commissioned to write her own six part comedy series, and is currently working on a contemporary screen reinvention of one of the great horror monster stories – *Jekyll and Hyde*.

## ABOUT ASSOCIATE PRODUCER, BILLY SMEDLEY

A graduate of Ballarat Arts Academy (formally BAPA), Billy has played numerous roles in theatre, most notably Banquo and The Doctor in *Macbeth*, followed by Lysander and Lion in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Oz Act and performing six seasons of new Australian writing with Fractured Femur theatre company in various lead roles. He has played lead and guest roles on Australian film & TV including *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, *Salam Café* and Terry Pratchett's *Trollbridge*. In addition to his acting work, Billy is a highly experienced Kung Fu practitioner, has a basic foundation in Parkour and is an ex member of the Australian Defence Forces (Army).



## WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT SHAKESPEARE REPUBLIC

“... a sophisticated twenty-first century series with its own particularly Australian flavour.” – *Sylvia Morris, The Shakespeare Blog, Stratford-upon-Avon (UK)*

“Shakespeare Things To Do This Week #7 Watch *Neighbours* actor Alan Fletcher as Macbeth in this Shakespeare Republic video.” – *Shakespeare Magazine (UK)*

“This should be in EVERY classroom!” – *KIN Collective (Australia)*

“This short, directed by Sally McLean, gives an old speech a thoroughly fresh and modern take.” – *RJ Evans, Kuriositas.com (UK)*

“Loved it! Dynamic performance and thank you Shakespeare Republic for revitalising Shakespeare into contemporary society!” – *Maree Shefford (Australia)*

“Brava, Sally McLean!!! Bravo, Shakespeare Republic!!! These pieces made me remember why I enjoyed studying the Bard!!! Well done!” – *Jeanne (USA)*

“Not only real, but current and alive. Old W.S. would appreciate the social media use. Gr8 way to experience W.S. More of this please.” – *Kurt Ovard (USA)*

“Its a shame this wasn't around when I had to study Shakespeare in school” – *Dannie Plant (Australia)*

“I have to say the complete team of Shakespeare Republic made a great job. I learned to have a different look on Shakespeare in the last weeks!” – *Berit (Germany)*

## SELECTED PRESS LINKS

[Sally McLean Radio Interview on SYN-FM](http://www.syn.org.au/sally-mclean-shakespeare-republic) - <http://www.syn.org.au/sally-mclean-shakespeare-republic>

[“Alan Fletcher takes on Shakspeare” - Network Ten Neighbours' News](http://tenplay.com.au/channel-eleven/neighbours/features/alan-fletcher-takes-on-shakespeare-republic) - <http://tenplay.com.au/channel-eleven/neighbours/features/alan-fletcher-takes-on-shakespeare-republic>

[“Ben Steel as Juliet” - Kuriositas](http://www.kuriositas.com/2015/10/ben-steel-as-shakespeares-juliet.html) - <http://www.kuriositas.com/2015/10/ben-steel-as-shakespeares-juliet.html>



## FESTIVAL OFFICIAL SELECTIONS TO DATE:



For current list of screenings, visit <http://shakespearepublic.com/awards-screenings/>



# Shakespeare

REPUBLIC

*"All the world's a stage ..."*

STARRING

**MICHALA BANAS ALAN FLETCHER ROWENA HUTSON**  
**SALLY McLEAN BILLY SMEDLEY BEN STEEL**

Written by William Shakespeare

Adapted, Directed & Edited by Sally McLean

Directors of Photography: Shaun Herbertson, James Dene & Yanni Dellaportas

Gaffer: Dan Evans

Sound Recording, Edit & Design: Tim McCormick

Behind The Scenes Photography: Ben Steel, Sally McLean, Charlie Johnson, Billy Smedley & Perri Cummings

Title Music: Doug Maxwell

Producer: Sally McLean

Associate Producers: Perri Cummings & Billy Smedley

*Filmed on location in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia*

**See the series in full:**

<https://vimeo.com/channels/shakespearerepublic/>

For full information about this film and the Shakespeare Republic series, go to

<http://www.shakespearerepublic.com>

*An Incognita Enterprises Production*

**incognita**  
enterprises



# Shakespeare

REPUBLIC

*"All the world's a stage ..."*

**SALLY McLEAN**

Producer/Director

Email: [interact@shakespearerepublic.com](mailto:interact@shakespearerepublic.com)

PO Box 9305, South Yarra VIC 3141 Australia

**Official Website:**

<http://www.shakespearerepublic.com>

**Official Vimeo Channel:**

<https://vimeo.com/channels/shakespearerepublic>

**Official YouTube Channel:**

<http://www.youtube.com/c/ShakespearerepublicAU>