

GOOD WITH MAPS

Siren Theatre Co (Australia)

Good with Maps is a rich imaginative story and a sad and funny celebration of the cartographic imagination and the power of reading.



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Good with Maps is one of those rare and beautiful productions I dream about, where a fine writer has handed a text to a fine director who calls forth a great performance from a fine actor who inspires creatives around her to produce their best for the show... The language here is intricate and finely woven, operating very much in the way modern, digital-age thought is collated and expressed. Still, the language retains its rich poetic beauty. She has the perfect director in Kate Gaul who embodies the character and the writer in her abyssal grasp of the complex text, turning her skilled hand to the nuanced and underexplored feminine depths of narrative and voice. Kate Gaul has the perfect subject to mould in Jane Phegan whose immersion is unparalleled as she presents to us that most unknown creature, the female explorer/philosopher/anthropologist.

Good with Maps is an exquisite production, knotty, agrarian and ideologically blasphemous. It's not easy – this is not a visit to the theatre to “chillax” – but it is untamed and necessary, lyrical and intense. I found myself hanging off every word and surprised when it reached its end.

[Lisa Thatcher](#)



What's an explorer to do now the world has been discovered, all the maps have been made, and the lines have been drawn?

The writing is often dense with description ... but Kate Gaul's direction and Jane Phegan's performance give the text great clarity ... Phegan's performance is thoughtful, calm and full of wonder, and becomes very moving.

In fact, every element in this production is in step and working together to create this fascinating and ultimately heartbreaking piece of theatre. [Ben Neutze, Daily Review](#)

“... intelligent, lyrical and haunting ... supported by the brilliant soundscape of audio designer and composer Nate Edmondson .. this is something special. With absolutely no sense of cultural appropriation, his themes are a counterpointed homage to South American rhythms and instruments ... The single instrument for the dragonfly which swells and rises evocatively to suddenly fall silent as the speaker's father appears in the story gave me goosebumps

It's a robustly intellectual essay softened and moderated at the heart by the emotion of our final travelling. The linking of the two themes towards the end of the piece is almost throwaway, a breathtaking simplicity which belies the complexity and reach of the work.

Why do humans quest? Is it just to see what is on the other side or, more profoundly, to find the ultimate meaning before our inevitable death? That surely is the quest of *Good with Maps*.

[Sydney Arts Guide](#)

★★★★★ “A quiet and modest triumph” [London City Nights](#)

“ ... an ensemble of fine creative artists who made this work the complete heartfelt experience I love ... Switching by as little as a change of thought from this fine actor between the hospital, the Amazon, a supermarket aisle, the corner of Hertfordshire where she grew up, and the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, we lived in her worlds and relished her journeys.” [Chris Grady](#)

★★★★★ “A fine performance, delivered from the heart.” [Edinburgh Guide](#)

★★★★★ “... a complex, deeply rewarding piece of theatre, one that balances cerebral exuberance with shattering emotional power” [Broadway Baby](#)

★★★★★ “ ... multi-faceted story masterfully guided by Jane Phegan.” [Everything Theatre](#)