

VIVID BUT NOT GARISH PRESENTS



Emma Sandall, OzArts Nashville, 2024, photographer: Tiffany Bessire

AN AMBIVALENT WOMAN OF 37

By Emma Sandall

PRESENTER PACK

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Vivid But Not Garish is an independent creative production company founded by artist and producer Emma Sandall. With a background in international ballet and a practice spanning dance, theatre, writing, and multimedia performance, VBNG develops original works that move between disciplines, exploring contemporary experience with intelligence, humour, and emotional depth.

VBNG aims to create and tour works combining story, movement, and innovative production design in ways that surprise, delight, and engage diverse audiences.

SYNOPSIS

A striking two-hander blending dance, theatre, animation, and live music, *An Ambivalent Woman of 37* follows Emma—an artist nearing the end of her childbearing years—as she tries to answer the question that won’t let her go: should I have a child? Provocative, darkly comic, and emotionally honest, the show dives into instinct, pressure, and legacy with cabaret flair and surprising tenderness.

CREDITS

Creator/Performer: Emma Sandall

Composer: Elena Kats-Chernin

Director: Emma Sandall and Paul Vasterling

Choreographer: Emma Sandall and Paul Vasterling

Animator: Emma Sandall

Lighting Designer: Roderick van Gelder

Set Designer: Emma Sandall and Roderick van Gelder

Production Manager: Roderick van Gelder

Pianist (on tour): TBC

BIOGRAPHIES

Emma Sandall

Emma Sandall is an award-winning dancer, writer, and choreographer who has performed with Béjart Ballet Lausanne, The Royal Ballet, Scottish Ballet, and West Australian Ballet. Her choreography has been recognised internationally, including at the Rome Choreography Competition and Stuttgart Solo Tanz Festival. In 2024, through her company Vivid But Not Garish, Emma created and performed in *An Ambivalent Woman of 37*—a surreal dance theatre work blending movement, music, and projected animation. Her practice explores authorship, intimacy, and the body as an instrument of emotional truth.

Yanghee Kim

Yanghee Kim is a distinguished pianist, educator, and vocal coach. A former ABC Young Performers Award winner and Landa Scholar, she trained in Sydney, the U.S., and London. Known for her

expressive clarity and technical mastery, she has over 30 years' experience mentoring musicians and singers. In *An Ambivalent Woman of 37*, Yanghee performs as live pianist, provoking and partnering the lead performer in real time. A polyglot with a passion for the voice, she brings linguistic nuance and musical insight to every collaboration.

Elena Kats-Chernin

Elena Kats-Chernin AO is one of Australia's most celebrated composers, known for *Wild Swans*, *Eliza Aria*, and scores for stage, screen, and orchestra. Born in Tashkent and trained in Sydney and Germany, her music has featured in the Sydney Olympics and major European theatres. Her richly textured original score for *An Ambivalent Woman of 37* underscores the work's surreal humour and emotional force.

Paul Vasterling

Paul Vasterling is Artistic Director Emeritus of Nashville Ballet and a renowned choreographer of narrative works including *Lucy Negro Redux*, *Romeo & Juliet*, and *Dracula*. A Fulbright scholar and NYU Center for Ballet and the Arts Fellow, Paul is known for blending dance, text, and original music. He served as creative advisor on *An Ambivalent Woman of 37*.

Roderick van Gelder

Roderick van Gelder is a production and lighting designer whose work spans from sculptural installations and opera to dance and live performance. He has collaborated with Ken Unsworth, Sydney Dance Company, and Taikoz, among many others. He designed and toured *An Ambivalent Woman of 37*, tailoring the production's minimal tech and immersive feel.

PERFORMANCE SPECIFICS

Duration: 60 minutes (no interval)

Technical Rating: B or C (dependent on animation setup)

Minimum Stage Size: 5m x 5m

Number of Performances Per Week: Up to 6

Minimum Break Between Performances: 90 minutes

Touring Party: 4

- Performer (Emma Sandall)
- Pianist (TBC)
- Production Manager (Roderick van Gelder)
- Stage/Tech Manager (TBC)

COSTS

(*Indicative only. Final budget TBC.*)

Weekly Fee: 17, 345

One off show: 7, 230

Remount Fee: 10, 755

Royalties: 12%

Freight: Minimal (no set)

Tech bump-in: 1 day

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

- Post-show Q&As
- Writer Talk: On adapting Sheila Heti's *Motherhood* and shaping personal narrative through live form

MARKETING

MARKETING COPY

One-Liner

A bold, funny, and tender dance-theatre cabaret about the choice to have a child—or not.

Short Copy

An Ambivalent Woman of 37 is a bold, intimate work of dance-theatre that asks: should I have a child? With cabaret energy and emotional insight, Emma Sandall and pianist Yanghee Kim take audiences on a moving, surreal, and often hilarious journey through doubt, desire, and the quiet pressures we carry.

Extended Copy

Should I have a child?

That's the question dancer and writer Emma Sandall can't shake—and the spark for *An Ambivalent Woman of 37*, a bold and surreal work of dance-theatre that speaks to the quiet weight of choice. Performed by Emma with live pianist Yanghee Kim, the piece blends striking physicality, spoken text, animated projection, and cabaret-style humour to explore the shifting terrain between longing and resistance, instinct and expectation, art and motherhood.

The story begins when Emma is “inseminated” by Sheila Heti’s provocative novel *Motherhood*, and from there unspools a theatrical quest to find an answer before time runs out. Along the way, the show digs into taboos, exposes quiet fears, and invites audiences to laugh, cry, and sit inside the uncertainty.

Whether you’ve lived the question, lost the chance, or stood beside someone who has, *An Ambivalent Woman of 37* is a moving, funny, and unforgettable ride into one of the most intimate dilemmas of modern womanhood.

MARKETING MATERIALS

A full Marketing Toolkit will be provided to all presenting venues. This includes:

- High-resolution production and rehearsal photography
- Promo trailer and hero images
- Poster and flyer design templates (editable and print-ready)
- Social media tiles and copy
- Copy options (long, short, one-liner)
- Patron advisories
- Media release and pre-answered artist interviews

Marketing Support

Emma Sandall and the creative team will actively promote the show via their social media channels (Instagram and Facebook) and provide content aligned with each venue's campaign. We also recommend local engagement opportunities including:

- Partnering with bookshops, libraries, and book clubs (inspired by Sheila Heti's novel *Motherhood*)
- Hosting pre- or post-show artist talks
- Community discussions around themes of identity, autonomy, and creative fulfilment
- Forming local "Friends" committees to seed word-of-mouth interest

Successful Case Study: OzArts Nashville

- Targeted outreach to local arts radio and publications
- Friends group hosted pre-show events and shared across networks
- Discounted last-minute ticket offers
- Pre-show drinks for subscribers featuring artist Q&A
- Post-show discussion with cast and creatives

Teacher Resources

A comprehensive Teacher Resource Kit is available on request, offering curriculum-aligned pre- and post-show discussion prompts, background on the work and artists, key themes, and suggested activities.

Video Links

- **Trailer:** <https://vimeo.com/1071973923>
- **Excerpt (5 mins):** <https://vimeo.com/1066240553>
- **Full archival recording:** <https://vimeo.com/1036540105/f91a42a0ec>

Acknowledgements

This production has been supported by the City of Sydney and OzArts Nashville. All future presentations should include appropriate acknowledgment in collateral. Logos and text requirements will be supplied.

Performance History

- *Sydney Fringe Festival* – September 10–14, 2024, Flight Path Theatre, Marrickville (6 performances)
- *Critical Path* – November 1–2, 2024, The Drill Hall, Rushcutters Bay (2 performances)
- *OzArts Nashville* – November 15–16, 2024, Nashville, TN, USA (2 performances)

Target Audience

This show speaks most directly to women aged 35–55—educated, curious, and engaged—who seek out thought-provoking, emotionally intelligent work. However, audiences have ranged from teenage girls to octogenarian men, all responding to the show’s candid, warm, and darkly comic take on taboo themes.

It is for adventurous audiences open to bold theatricality, including frank conversations around sex, ageing, autonomy, and maternal ambivalence. With its intimacy and humanity, the work remains accessible across generations.

Content Warnings

- Recommended for ages 15+
- Contains sexual references
- Theatrical haze/smoke effects may be used

Audience Responses

“A complex story... thought provoking and inspiring, not to mention hilarious.” – Female, 20

“I was filled with reflections about my decision around having children and my perspectives at different stages of life.” – Female, 79

“Bloody brilliant. Even as a mother, it covered off so many real moments... Emma’s beautiful, embodied movement.” – Female, 35

“Totally resonated. Loved the humour and the integration of animation and live music. Didn’t expect to laugh so much.” – Female, 44

“Fantastic show. Pertinent to all women. Powerfully performed.” – Female, 60

“Original theatre – funny, sad, and much in between.” – Male, 50

Critical Reviews

“A swirling work of thought-provoking intricacy.” – Music City Review

“One of the most deeply felt pieces of theatre I have witnessed.” – Sydney Arts Guide

“Powerful and uplifting.” – Sydney Arts Guide

“Motherhood is a very large and consuming subject... in this intriguing new work, Emma does an excellent job.” – Stage Whispers

“A piece of unique, engrossing theatre.” – City Hub

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

An Ambivalent Woman of 37 is best presented in a black box venue with tiered seating and a flat, sprung floor. It requires projection, audio, and lighting setups suited to small–mid-scale touring productions. A portable set (including uprights, black legs, and projection screen) is available for less conventional venues.

Ideal Venue Configuration

- Stage: Minimum 8m (w) x 7m (d) clear performance space
- Height: Minimum 6m from floor to grid
- White cyc: 10m x 6m
- Masking: 4 sets of 8m-wide black legs
- Floor: Black Harlequin, Rosco, or Marley dancefloor preferred (or flat Masonite)

Projection

- Floor-mounted projector (downstage centre)
- 10K lumen minimum brightness, 1920 x 1080 native resolution
- HDMI fed from production QLab laptop
- Preferred brands: Barco, Panasonic, Epson or equivalent

Audio

- Main PA: Meyer UPQ-1P + 700HP Subwoofer or equivalent
- Fills/monitors: Meyer UPM-1P
- Small digital desk (Yamaha DM3, Allen & Heath Qu-16 or similar)
- Inputs:
 - 1–2: Piano L/R
 - 3: Performer mic
 - 4: Pianist mic
 - 5–6: QLab stereo

Radio Mics

- Preferred: Shure UR4D+ Dual Receiver J5E
- Transmitters: 2 x Shure UR1M with DPA 4066 headsets (beige)

Keyboard / Instrument

- Yamaha P-515 preferred (CP88 acceptable)
- Includes foot pedal, music rest, and fully enclosed stand
- *X-frame stands or tables are not acceptable*

Lighting

- Full plot and plan provided post-booking
 - Showfile: .ESF3D (ETC Nomad system tours with production)
 - Equipment required (or equivalent consistent fixtures):
 - 18 ETC S4 PAR (NSP, barndoors)
 - 8 ETC S4 PAR (MFL)
 - 14 ETC S4 Profiles (mixed beam angles)
 - 10 Chauvet Colorado
 - 5 EclCyclorama 050
 - 6 booms (3m) with 3 arms each
 - 1 Beamz LF1500 Low Fog Machine
 - *LEDs must have min. 45° beam angle and excellent colour rendering*
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CREW & CALL TIMES

Bump In

- 2 mechs for blacks and cyc (4-hour call)
- 2 LX for rigging and cable (8-hour call)
- 1 sound tech (house), or 2 if sound is hired (6-hour call)

Performance

- Touring team handles operation
- 1 venue tech on standby for emergencies

Bump Out

- Production team can remove all own gear
- Times flexible per venue requirements

CONTACTS

VIVID BUT NOT GARISH

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