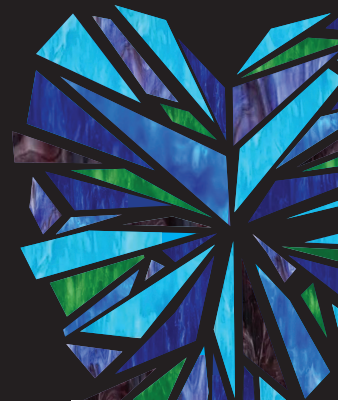


GEELONG REPERTORY THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

T H E  
H E A R T B R E A K  
C H O I R

b y A I D A N F E N N E S S Y



**The Heartbreak Choir** is an uplifting celebration of music, friendship and community. It made its world premiere with the Melbourne Theatre Company in April 2022.

**Director:** Sue Rawkins

**Music Director:** Amy Young

**Mentors:** Jules Hart, Derek Ingles

- **Performance dates:** Friday 5 September - Saturday 20 September 2025.
- **Performance venue:** The Woodbin Theatre, Coronation Street, Geelong West.
- **Information Night:** Weds 23 April 2025 at 7pm at the Woodbin Theatre.
- **Auditions:** Sun 4 May, Mon 5 May, Weds 7 May 2025 at the Woodbin Theatre.  
Please book your 15 minute time slot at the Info Night,  
or you can book via the Geelong Rep website: <https://www.geelongrep.com/audition>

## S Y N O P S I S

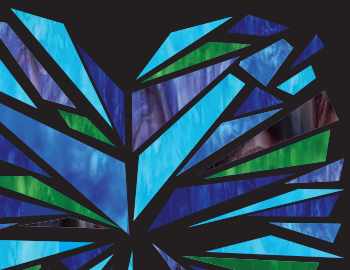
The play is set in the present day in a rural township about 90 minutes from a major metropolitan city in Victoria. It takes place over seven weeks at the end of winter, but the nights are still cold.

The 26-strong town choir was established eight years ago by Barbara, and rehearsals were held in the local Catholic church hall, but this choir is now in the throes of an upheaval.

An ethical wedge has split the group and Aseni, Barbara, Mack, Savannah and Totty are intent on forging their own path.

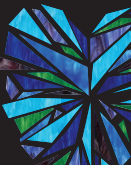
With a new name, a new rehearsal space - the old CFA hall on the outskirts of town - a public debut booked and their latest recruit Peter and his son Beau along for the ride, all they need to do now is right the wrongs of the past.

*continued...*



# THE HEARTBREAK CHOIR

## CHARACTERS:



**BARBARA**, 60-ish. Choirmaster. A psychologist. She carries about her an air of faded elegance. She wears loose, Tibetan-inspired robes, scarves etc. She speaks in an educated, white-collar professional manner. *Vocal range:* Mezzo Soprano.

**MACK**, 50-ish. A large, bustling countrywoman who runs a herb farm with her husband. She has anxiety issues. She gets about in pragmatic farm gear - gumboots, woollen socks. *Vocal range:* Alto.

**SAVANNAH**, 23-ish. Mack's daughter. She is a selective mute and there is something pensive and mystical about her. She is the eyes and ears of the room, however. She wears long, gothic style dresses. *Vocal range:* Soprano.

**ASENI**, 35-ish. Eight months pregnant. She and her family moved here from Zimbabwe a year ago. Her English is accented but very good. She is a qualified doctor, but is yet to practice here, so works in the deli at the IGA. A practising Christian, she is a breath of fresh air. She wears long, colourful robes and a traditional headscarf. *Vocal range:* Mezzo soprano/Alto.

• **Feature song: Helele Mama** <https://thelivingroomchoir.com/?s=helele+mama>

**TOTTY**, 56-ish. Founding choir member. A resolutely single and frighteningly organised woman. Although independently wealthy, she walks and talks like a bogan and has no interest in money at all. She likes to get about in hi-vis gear for no reason. Totally fearless. *Vocal range:* Alto/Mezzo Sop.

**PETER**, 45-ish. Local policeman for the last 15 years, born and raised in the town. His wife, Caro, was a founding member of the choir. She took her own life six weeks ago. He is now raising two teenage boys alone. He is all but lost.

• **Feature song: Lucky Old Sun** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PL3kvxN3xFc>

**BEAU**, 18-ish. Peter's son. A good kid but troubled. His childhood has been dominated by his mother's depression. He's a boy in a man's body. He wears a beanie, hoodie and black jeans. He's still in shock.

## ACTOR EXPECTATIONS:

These characters form **The Heartbreak Choir**, and, as its name suggests, has to be an actual choir. To bring the best version of this to our Geelong audiences we need to start the usual six-week rehearsal period early, in order for our choir to learn the six full-length songs sung during the play.

Actors/singers: must be experienced in vocal dynamics and able to maintain a tune in amongst four-part harmonies. Ability to read music would be great, but not essential.

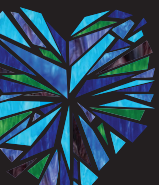
**PETER** has to learn only three songs.

**BEAU** does not sing, but the ability to beatbox and/or use simple percussion (eg claves or cabasa) would be great.

Vocal rehearsals will be held by Music Director Amy Young at the Woodbin Theatre, once a week, starting on **Mon 12 May**.

The songs need to be learnt before the on-script acting rehearsals start on **July 20 2025**. You will not be needed at every acting rehearsal. *Dates tbc.*

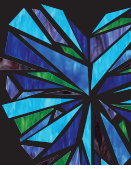
• *Please be aware that you will need to commit 100 percent to this time frame (May-Sept), which is longer than for the usual Rep play.*



*continued...*

# THE HEARTBREAK CHOIR

## AUDITION REQUIREMENTS:



• Auditions will be held in 15 minute slots. An ACTOR INFORMATION SHEET is provided at the end of this document. Please fill in and bring to your audition.

**1** At the **Information Night**, you will be given an excerpt from the play to prepare for the character(s) you are interested in auditioning for. We don't expect you to be word perfect, but an understanding of the character must be shown. In-depth character profiles will be available at the **Information Night**.

**Or**

You may perform a two-minute monologue of your own choosing, which might reflect the character you have chosen.

**2** You will need to prepare a song in a contemporary style (verse and chorus) which effectively displays your vocal range.

Bring backing tracks, please (no piano accompaniment will be available). A Bluetooth speaker will be available.

• All actors will be notified whether they are successful or not, by Sunday 11 May.

### IMPORTANT DATES:

**You MUST be available for all of these:**

**Production Week:** Mon 1, Tues 2, Weds 3, Thurs 4 Sept 2025.

**Show times and dates:** 7.30pm each night except for matinees at 2pm.  
You will need to be at The Woodbin one hour beforehand.

Week 1: Fri 5 Sept (Opening Night), Sat 6 Sept, Sun 7 Sept (matinee)

Week 2: Thurs 11 Sept, Fri 12 Sept, Sat 13 Sept, Sun 14 Sept (matinee)

Week 3: Thurs 18 Sept, Fri 19 Sept, Sat 20 Sept (Closing Night)

Sun 21 Sept - Bump out.

\*If ticket sales are strong we may add an extra date, which will be a Wednesday during that period, so please keep these free.

• All cast and crew must be members of Geelong Repertory Theatre Society.  
Join here: <https://www.geelongrep.com/membership>

#heartbreak\_choir #seeyouatthewoodbin



### ••••• POP-UP CHOIR! •••••

Want another opportunity to sing and perform onstage in each performance as part of  
**The Heartbreak Choir?**

We need 20-30 singers (aged 18+) to take part in the finale of **The Heartbreak Choir** in each show  
from Fri 5 Sept - Sat 20 Sept 2025

If interested, your details from Information Night will be kept, and you will be emailed more  
information about this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity in July 2025.

Another Information Night for the **Pop-Up Choir** will take place in August  
- so stay tuned - literally!



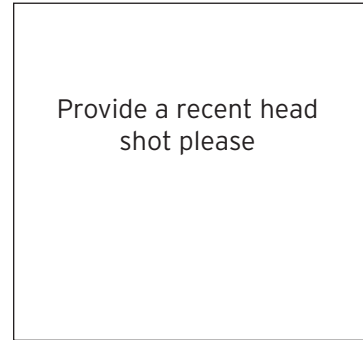
# THE HEARTBREAK CHOIR ACTOR INFORMATION - please hand in at your audition

Name: .....

Preferred Role(s): .....

Phone: .....

Email: .....



## VOCAL Q & A

- Do you have experience in singing with a choir or vocal group? **Y** **N**
- Have you sung in Music Theatre shows or plays? **Y** **N**
- Your vocal range (*please indicate*)  
soprano   mezzo   alto   tenor   baritone   bass   other

## ACTING Q & A

- Please list the last three productions/shows/concerts you were part of, including your role(s):

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

## IMPORTANT DATES:

### • Vocal rehearsals

Once a week, every Mon, Tues, or Weds beginning on **Mon 12 May at 7pm** until **Wed 15 July**.  
*Days may be a little flexible as we have to fit in with another play at this time.*

To help us plan the schedule, please check your availability and list **here** the dates you are unavailable (if any).

> .....

### • On-script rehearsals

Starting on **Sun 20 July at 7pm**. Three rehearsals each week, each Tues, Thurs and Sunday until Production Week beginning **Mon 1 Sept**. *You may not be required at every rehearsal.*

To help us plan the schedule, please check your availability and list **here** the dates you are unavailable (if any).

> .....

### • Production Week and Show dates

You **MUST** be available from **Tues 2 Sept** until **Saturday 20 Sept**.

**Show nights are Thurs, Fri, Sat nights and two Sunday matinees, from 5 Sept-20 Sept.**

Please keep the Weds available, too in case we need to add an extra performance.

If you are not cast as one of the seven Heartbreak Choir members, are you interested in the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity of being part of the **POP-UP CHOIR**? This choir will sing onstage in the finale of every performance of The Heartbreak Choir, but you do not have to be in every performance. More info will be released in August.

**Y**

**N**