

Theatre Works proudly present the premiere season of

WellBless

Written and created by Debra Thomas and Ella Roth Barton

Directed by Kellie Tori

1 - 11 December, 2021

Theatre Works - 14 Acland St, St Kilda, VIC

www.theatreworks.org.au



This December, Melbourne's iconic **Theatre Works** welcomes **Wellbless** to the stage in a pertinent premiere season by writers **Debra Thomas** and **Ella Roth Barton**. Filled with spectacle, pole dance, and an in-depth introduction to vaginal steaming, this darkly satirical comedy is a compelling examination of the parasitic world of wellness, and the flaws in our medical system that allow this trillion-dollar industry to thrive.

At her in-person *Soul Convergence*, Juniper is ready to unveil her cure-all Miracle Tonic. Packaged as the elixir to ageing, cancer, and even COVID-19, this marvel promises to restore body and soul. But as millions of Instagram followers flock to the convention there's a slight glitch; Instafamous cancer-patient Maha (who stopped chemotherapy to follow Juniper's wellness program) dies onsite. With Juniper's world set to unravel, she solicits advice from her team of 'experts'. Together, they go to extreme lengths to hide the truth from her followers and she might just get away with it - except that journalist Mindy Flores is asking way too many questions.

Diagnosed with cancer in 2018, **WellBless** co-creator **Debra Thomas** had multiple friends advising her to "reconsider her approach to life"; her diet and exercise, stress levels, and the toxicity of those she had around her. Well meaning as it was, the idea that she was to blame for getting cancer through these choices was incredibly impactful and didn't make the healing process any easier. Dial forward three years and, after working together with **Ella Roth Barton**, **WellBless** is a crucial and entertaining commentary based off that experience.

Shining a spotlight on the wellness industry, **WellBless** zeroes in on **Gwyneth Paltrow's Goop** empire and **Belle Gibson's** cancer con, as well as the medical misinformation that has become its own kind of virus during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rebooted after a 2020 season cancellation due to VIC Lockdown, **Theatre Works** now proudly welcomes audiences back to the venue for this premiere event. An exploration of the dangers of wellness, and how the medical industry's historic ignoring of women has allowed this industry to thrive, **WellBless** is a perfectly timed and engaging season, not to be missed.

This season is proudly supported by Theatre Works, the National Institute of Dramatic Art and the City of Port Phillip Cultural Development Fund

Written and created by Debra Thomas and Ella Roth Barton - Directed by Kellie Tori - Performed by Ella Roth Barton, Debra Thomas, Emily Joy, Joseph Lai, Andrea Mendez and Lauren Steiner - Dramaturgy by Saffron Benner - Sound Design by James Cole - Lighting Design by Camille Bortz - Set Design by Kellie Tori - Costume Design by Ella Roth Barton and Debra Thomas - Costume Construction by Laura de longh

1-11 December, 2021

Tues – Sat 7:30pm

Opening Night: Thurs 2 December, 7:30pm

Tickets: \$37.50 Full, \$29.50 Concession and \$22.50 Student and Preview

Bookings: (03) 9534 3388 or online at www.theatreworks.org.au/program/wellbless

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