

# **“Trent Dalton’s Love Stories” Audio Description**

## **Pre-Show Notes**

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### **Show Information**

Trent Dalton’s Love Stories started its life in 2021 when author and journalist Trent Dalton spent two months in Brisbane asking people from all walks of life the question “Can you please tell me a love story?” He gathered a vast array of stories, and these were compiled into a book published in September 2021 which won Book of the Year at Australia’s Indie Book Awards in 2022. The book was later adapted into a theatre show by director Sam Strong and writer Tim McGarry. The show premiered at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre in September 2024, and has been touring Australia through 2025.

### **Creative Team**

Adapted for the stage by Tim McGarry

Additional writing and story - Trent Dalton and Fiona Franzmann

Director - Sam Strong

Choreographer - Nerida Matthaiei

Associate Director - Ngoc Phan

## Set and Props

The Riverside Theatre is a traditional proscenium arch venue, with 761 seats across three levels: the stalls, the circle and the gallery. The architectural design is based on the common European Opera House concept to provide a warm, intimate and live performance space. The stage is approximately 12 metres wide by 5 metres deep and is raised above the audience floor level.

Covering the entire back of the space is a large screen which has images, videos and lines from the show projected onto it. A camera is located in the centre of the space hanging from above. At the start of the show, it is facing towards us and its image is projected onto the screen. It later flies up looking down onto the stage. Directly underneath it is a light blue typewriter with a piece of paper hanging out of the top. A second camera held in a black frame, is used at ground level to focus on different people throughout the show. When it does, its image is also projected onto the screen. During fantasy sequences, the screen is generally blue and black and two performers do interpretive dancing around what the writer is saying. During the nightmare sequence, the camera image is projected in black and white with a thick haze around each person. Behind the screen, hidden from view is a white door.

There are seven black benches surrounding the space floor. Three in a row at the back, and two on each side coming forward. Each bench is two metres long, fifty centimetres tall and fifty centimetres wide. Framing the space on both sides are black leg curtains covering the wings, and between them are poles with stage lights on them. A set of stairs is located on the right of the space running from the stage to the front of the auditorium.

The intersection of Adelaide and Albert streets in Brisbane is bustling with people walking through, and is where our writer gathers most of his stories. Unless a camera is focusing on someone, there is a partly cloudy sky projected onto the screen.

Rooms in the writers house each have a small set piece with wheels underneath so they can be brought on and off easily.

- The kitchen is on the right of the space which features a cabinet with a wooden bench top. The cabinet is approximately one metre tall, 1.2 metres wide and 1 metre deep. On its left is a tea towel rail and three shelves with utensils on them, and on the right side is a white cupboard door. A small window frame is projected on the screen.
- The bathroom is in the centre of the space with a white hand basin vanity on the left and a white toilet behind on the right. A window with Venetian blinds is projected on the screen.
- In bed, a long picture frame and two dimly lit lamps are projected on the screen, and the wife brings in a white blanket.
- A light brown wooden bench is used in the final house scene.

Featured props include a black fold up chair, two large blue flags during a flash mob, a dark blue baby capsule, a bunch of red balloons on a stick, a smoke machine, a scissor mop which is a mop with two handles and opens out like a v shape, and a black dining chair.

## Characters & Costumes

### Jean-Benoit Lagarmitte

Jean-Benoit, also known as JB, played by Rashidi Edward, serves as one of the narrators of the show. He is of Rwandan descent with dark coloured skin and very short orange hair. He wears an orange sleeveless shirt, long green track pants, and black sneakers. When he first enters, he plays a white upturned bucket as a hand drum. This later changes to an African drum called a Djembe which has a white skin tied down with narrow black ropes around a wooden, goblet shaped base.

The actor playing JB also plays Joni Mitchell in the nightmare, and Victor who wears a blue and white floral t-shirt and the same track pants as JB.

### The Writer

The writer, played by Jason Klarwein, is the other main narrator of the show gathering love stories from lots of different people. He has fair coloured skin and short brown hair. He wears a mid-blue jacket over a white t-shirt, navy jeans and brown leather shoes. When we first see him, he is carrying a black letter board under his arm. Displayed on it in white capitals is 'Sentimental writer collecting love stories'.

### Wife

The writer's wife, played by Anna McGahan, has become estranged from her husband and wishes to leave. She has fair skin and short hair and wears a red shirt with white polka dots, navy jeans and white shoes. The top later changes to a solid red short sleeved t-shirt. In the kitchen, a blue-green double breasted jacket is worn over the red shirt. In the bedroom, she wears a pink and white dressing gown over pink silk pyjamas. In the nightmare, she wears a pink polo shirt and track pants.

The other seven actors in the show each play lots of different characters, each with their own love stories to tell. Each actors characters will be in order of appearance.

### Ngoc Phan

Ngoc is of Asian descent with straight, chest length black hair. This is tied into a ponytail or a partial bun for some characters. Her characters are:

- Sakura Tomii is a Japanese coffee blog writer who wears a pink cardigan over green sleeveless shirt, and a red & white long skirt. She carries a cup of coffee and a pink notebook.
- Claudia is a former stripper who has her hair out and wears a green singlet & light green shorts over blue gym pants.
- Zak has her hair in a high ponytail and wears the same clothes as Claudia.
- Ashlee Cairns wears the same clothes as Sakura.
- Sarah wears the same top as Zak and Claudia, and the same skirt as Sakura.
- Moana has her hair tied back in a ponytail and wears an orange high-vis vest over a dark green jacket, and the same shorts and gym pants as Zak and Claudia.

## **Will Tran**

Will is also of Asian descent with his hair tied in a bun. His characters are:

- Reuben Vui is a charity worker who wears a white vest over grey shirt, khaki shorts and brown leather shoes. He carries an iPad on a strap over his right shoulder
- Jack Chester who wears the same clothes as Reuben, but without the vest and iPad.
- Johnson Wen wears black and white long sleeve flannel pyjamas, and white sneakers. In the flashback scene with Johnson, four rugby players each wear padded helmets and pass a Steeden ball to each other.
- Michael wears a cream jacket over a white shirt and the same shorts as Reuben and Jack.
- Ashlee's Boyfriend wears the same clothes as Michael.
- Sky Man wears the same as Jack but also includes a black beanie on his head.
- Concrete Guy wears a yellow workers shirt & mid grey pants with black pocket linings.
- Paul wear a black singlet top and the same khaki shorts as Reuben and Jack.

## **Valerie Bader**

Valerie is of Caucasian descent and has wavy, chest length blonde hair. Her characters are:

- Helen Clark who has her hair ties in a ponytail and wears a blue button shirt over black and white striped t-shirt and navy trousers.
- Football security who wears an orange high-vis vest over the same clothes as Helen.
- Lady Succubus is a dominatrix who wears a black leather dressing gown and silver lined waist belt over a black corset and pants. She carries a flog to whip her submissive partner.
- Rachelle wears a tan coat over white shirt & navy trousers.
- Dot wears the same as Rachelle
- Lei-lissa has her hair out and wears a long blue dress with sleeves rolled to elbows, and sandals.
- Kerry Shepherd has her hair loosely tied back and wears a white shirt with rectangular gemstone patterns, and navy trousers.

## **Kirk Page**

Kirk is of Mununjali descent. The Mununjali are an Aboriginal clan from South-East Queensland.

Kirk has short, curly, black and grey hair, and a tall build. His characters are:

- Stephen Dibb is a jewellery shop owner who wears a white collared shirt with a light blue square grid pattern over white singlet and grey trousers.
- Norm Clark is Helen's partner who wears the same clothes as Stephen.
- Josh Creamer is a lawyer from Mount Isa. He wears a dark blue suit jacket over white collared shirt and grey trousers.
- Ben wears the same as Stephen, he is partnered with Sarah and together they carry the baby capsule.
- Elder Blackburn runs a men's wellbeing group in Byron Bay. He wears a loose green and white shirt with an open chest, and matching loose pants.

## **Bryan Probets**

Bryan is of Caucasian descent with short mid brown hair with a thinning patch and whiskers. Bryan wears long brown trousers with all of his costumes. His characters are:

- Rugby commentator who wears a blue button up shirt.
- Dr John O'Hagan, an ageing scientist who wears grey flat cap, cardigan and trousers.
- Steve Swart wears a navy polo shirt with white horizontal stripes.
- Evil Spawn Demon Imp is the Scottish submissive partner of Lady Succubus. He has a black leather collar around his neck and wears a black singlet & brown trousers.
- Harvey wears the same clothes as the rugby commentator and carries a silver SLR camera around his neck.
- Jan Kubert wear a dark green and white flannel shirt.
- Marko is Croatian. He wears a brown open jacket over black singlet and brown trousers. In his pocket is a wallet with photos.

## **Jacob Watton**

Jacob is one of two dancers in the show. He is also of Caucasian descent and has orange hair spiking upwards. His characters are Aaron Hall who wears a light blue unbuttoned shirt over mid-blue t-shirt & navy trousers and Ian Gibson who wears the same as Aaron, except the first shirt is buttoned up.

## **Hsin-Ju Ely**

Hsin-Ju, also known as Raw, is the other main dancer in the show. Raw is also of Asian descent with black, neck length hair tied in two braided ponytails. During dance sequences, she wears a pink shirt and dark blue chino pants. She wears the same pants with all of her costumes. Her characters are:

- Lisa Ryan who wears a blue denim jacket.
- Carly, who is Aaron's partner, and wears a yellow t-shirt.
- Rhonda Wittman, who is best friends with Rachelle, wears the same as Lisa.
- Lani Gibson is Ian's wife who wears a white headband and a black dress with white polka dots.

A stage crew member also appears through the show without any dialogue bringing in props when required. She has a headset on her head and wears a black shirt and pants.

End of pre-show notes.