

## EMMA LOUISE PURSEY – BIO

Emma Louise Pursey is a critically acclaimed stage and screen actor who has performed nationally and internationally since 1997. She is faculty at 16th Street Actors Studio and The National Theatre, and has been an industry guest at Howard Fine Acting Studio Australia, Film & Television Studio International, and NICA. As an artist living with invisible disability, Emma actively engages in the ongoing practice of disability pride and self-advocacy.

Emma has over 25 years of experience in the Suzuki Method of Actor Training (SMAT). The first decade of her career was with Frank Theatre, a repertory ensemble that trained exclusively in the SMAT in Australia and Japan. Emma Louise Pursey toured regularly to numerous Japanese and European theatre festivals, playing principal roles such as Lady Macbeth, Juliet, Gertrude, and Jocasta; some of which were in bi-lingual productions. Festivals include the International Theatre Olympics (Shizuoka, Japan), Shizuoka Spring Arts Festival (Japan), International Youth Theatre Festival (Pula, Croatia), Toga Spring Arts Festival (Japan), European Regions Festival (Hradec Králové, Czech Republic), Hluboká Castle (Czech Republic), Adana International Arts Festival (Turkey), Aberystwyth University Theatre Festival (Wales), and London Festival (UK).

During this time, Emma Louise Pursey was also directed by the legendary Diane Cilento in her production of *Myrrah*, performed alongside David Helfgott, and became co-director of her own ensemble theatre company, The Brides of Frank; one of Queensland's most significant (and infamous) independent companies of the mid-2000s. In 2007, Emma's final performance with Frank Theatre saw her perform her Dell'Artè award-winning role of the Medium in *Rashomon* for Tadashi Suzuki (founder of the Suzuki Method) on his second-ever visit to Australia. Emma moved into independent and mainstage work for Queensland Theatre Company, Brisbane Powerhouse, QPAC, Metro Arts Theatre, and La Boite Theatre, where she won her second Dell'Artè award for her multiple roles in *Oodgeroo*.

Relocating to Melbourne, Emma expanded her screen work to include roles on *Neighbours*, *Winners and Losers*, *Underbelly Squizzy*, and numerous award-winning short films. Melbourne independent theatre highlights include playing the role of Character A in North of Eight's *Terminus*, being directed by John Gauci in *The Process*, Prospero in Melbourne Shakespeare Company's *The Tempest*, and Belinda in *The Man Of Mode* at Chapel Off Chapel.

Early in her career, Emma was also a vinyl electronic music DJ who played in Beijing for the Millennium and toured nationally and internationally performing a live-mixed soundscape to contemporary dancer Lisa O'Neill's solo work, *Fugu San*, at Dancehouse (Melbourne), The Performance Space (Sydney), New Territories Festival (Glasgow), and the Asia Contemporary Dance Festival (Osaka). Emma has also produced/assistant-directed photographer Peter Milne's *The Oddfellow's Daughter* for MICF at ACMI, short films *The Last Time I Saw You* and *Grevillea*, and Butoh artist Helen Smith's performance of *Lady Macbeth* at the Asia Pacific Triennial of Performing Arts.

Emma produced and cast the short film *THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU*, which won Third Prize at Tropfest along with five of the seven craft awards in 2018; Best Film at Port Shorts Film Festival 2018; Director's Top Ten Picks at Encounter's Short Film Festival (Bristol, England) 2018; and Best Short Film at Peninsula Film Festival 2019.

Emma is currently developing one woman show, *WHERE IS JOY?*, inspired by the life and work of Melbourne Modernist pioneer Joy Hester, in preparation for an inaugural 2025 season. She is also producing and will star in Sam Shepard's *FOOL FOR LOVE*, directed by former Artistic Director of La Boite Theatre Company, Sean Mee, with original music by Mick Harvey (Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds, PJ Harvey).