



## In This Edition...

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The Americas acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we stand today, the Gadigal and Wangal people of the Eora Nation. We would like to pay our respects to their Elders, past and present. We would also like to acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who come to our programs and participate in any capacity.

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# A Note from Our Artistic Director

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It is with great enthusiasm that I invite you to experience the Australian premiere of Neil LaBute's *The Money Shot* this May. As an artistic director, it is rare to encounter a play that challenges the limits of both wit and discomfort while urging us to question not only the art of performance but also the very nature of our desires and our relationships.

Set against the high-stakes world of Hollywood, *The Money Shot* peels back the layers of celebrity culture, human vulnerability, and the often complex web between art, commerce, and intimacy. LaBute, known for his razor-sharp dialogue and darkly comedic explorations, brings us a world where what is seen on screen may just be as far removed from reality as what's happening behind closed doors.

Premiering in late May, this production will showcase the incredible talents of an Australian cast and crew. We are committed to presenting independent theatre at its finest. From the nuanced performances to the bold creative choices, every element of this production has been crafted with passion, precision, and a relentless commitment to storytelling.

Join us for an unforgettable night of theatre that will leave you thinking long after the curtain falls.

We look forward to seeing you there.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape.

**Kai Paynter**

*The Americas Artistic Director*

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# Coming Up...

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## The Money Shot Neil LaBute Premiere

Factory Theatre

*Preview 27 May. 28 May - 1 June*

**[Get Your Tickets!](#)**

Fasten your seatbelts Australia! The Americas, A Theatre Company are ecstatic to announce this premiere event.

Karen and Steve are glamorous movie stars with one thing in common: desperation. It's been years since either one's had a hit, but the latest movie by a hot-shot European director could change that. The night before filming a big scene (that will undoubtedly assure them a spot back on the pop culture radar), Karen, her partner Bev, Steve and his aspiring actress wife Missy meet in order to make an important decision: how far will they let themselves go to keep from slipping further down the Hollywood food chain?

Sexy, daring and darkly comedic - and Neil LaBute's first officially billed comedy - The Money Shot lands as sharp as a paparazzo's camera flash in a starlet's eye.

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# Coming Up...

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## Amongst the Living

*Late June 2025*

The AMERICAS, presents an intimate showcase of developmental work entitled *Amongst The Living*.

AGNES OF GOD, adapted & abridged by Kai Paynter from the play by John Pielmeier, is a powerful meditation on faith, trauma, and the search for truth. It explores the collision between reason and belief, science and the sacred. In an intimate chamber of doubt and conviction, three women confront the mysteries of suffering, sanctity and the unknowable.

NO EXIT is an existential classic by playwright Jean-Paul Satre. Adapted by Ruby Jenson, we see a tense, unrelenting examination of self, otherness, and the inescapable gaze of judgement. *No Exit* traps its characters - and its audience - in a psychological crucible where truth, identity and damnation are laid bare. Hell, it turns out, is not fire and brimstone... but other people.

MESSIAH, written by and starring Ruby Jenson is a poetic reckoning with love, loss, and the myth of rescue. *Messiah* explores the quiet collapse of identity inside an unfulfilling relationship - and the radical clarity that follows. It's an intimate meditation on female autonomy, emotional survival, and the unexpected voice of divinity that emerges when we finally listen to ourselves.

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# Neil LaBute, Playwright

## *Musings on The Money Shot*



“Go west, young man.”

And so I did. Like the 49ers before me (the gold miners, not the football team), I went west to make movies and it was an eye-opening experience. I wasn’t actually all that young when I did it—I was an “overnight success” that was ten years in the making—but I made a film (*In the Company of Men*) in relative obscurity, had success with it and then was given the chance to go to Hollywood and do the same thing again, this time with more money and a bigger cast. I loved that experience, which resulted in the film *Your Friends & Neighbors*—thanks in no small part to the brilliant acting and producing of Jason Patric—but after almost twenty years of making films (on both a small and large scale) I have never recaptured the feeling of making that first movie with a cast and crew of friends who did it for no reason other than their love of the cinema. I couldn’t pay them very much, so they were all there for the experience and as an experiment in what real independent filmmaking can be.

But spending time in Hollywood and Cannes and various cinematic watering holes in-between did lead me to this place—my first “comedy” as a playwright (or at least the first time I’ve had the guts to write that word on the title page) and one that uses the world of the movies as its playground. I couldn’t have done it without having been at a few opening nights and a few awards ceremonies and having stood on a few studio backlots with a few actors and directors and production executives.

You just can’t make this shit up.

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Sometimes—most times, actually—life is stranger than fiction and this was one of those rare times that I took a story nugget for a play from something that actually happened out there in the real world.

The play went through multiple drafts and readings and even a set of staged readings at the Cape Cod Theater Project and so I mistakenly went into the rehearsal process at MCC thinking the script was in great shape. I was wrong (as I so often am in life). It was good. It was fine. It was funny. That said, I have tweaked the hell out of this thing and could keep on doing it forever. Move a word. Lose a monologue. Add a set piece. It never ends with comedy and I and my collaborators have been ruthless in seeking only the best material to put on the stage. “May The Best Idea Win” has been the unofficial credo in the room and that has pretty much been the way it goes. All of us throwing out ideas—even now that the play is up on a stage every night with an audience watching—and I really love the process. I often love the process even more than the product but I’m a weirdo so, please, don’t listen very closely to me.

I don’t know how many comedies I’ll write in my lifetime—it’s a tough business and I admire the hell out of those people who seem to do it effortlessly. You sit down to write some kind of “art” but in the end it really feels like some kind of “science.” There is a sort of alchemy to being funny; a word more or less here, one additional beat of a double-take there and the audience roars with laughter where we had nothing the night before.

Audiences are the great equalizers—laughter is a visceral response and you either get it or you don’t. After a show, people can be calculated and thoughtful in what they tell you but in the moment and in the dark, they are free to be truthful and caught up in what is happening in front of them—if something is funny, they laugh or they don’t. Just like that.

As for this play, if you don’t get to see *The Money Shot*...then I hope you enjoy the read. I love reading plays but again—as mentioned earlier—I’m a weirdo. There is nothing like the live theater so at least get some friends together and read the thing out loud. Go to a local college or high school and see a show. Watch one on television or online, even. Inperson is best but do whatever it takes to experience the pure pleasure of watching words come off a page and spring to life in the hands of a good director and a talented cast of actors. I promise you, you won’t be sorry. In fact, it’s as close to Heaven as I may ever get (but for now I’m hedging my bets).

**- Neil LaBute**

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