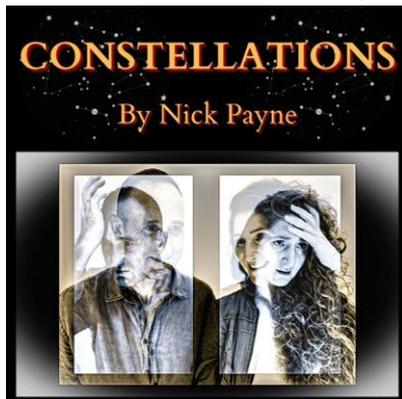


## Constellations



**Bakehouse Theatre. STARC Productions. 31 Mar 2022**

Layer upon layer of paradoxes shape and infuse playwright Nick Payne's *Constellations*.

Payne takes a relationship between two people, Roland, a beekeeper (Marc Clement) and Marianne, a Physicist (Stefanie Rossi) and cuts up its linear chronology like a piece of cinematic film. It is a boy meets girl story, restructured and chopped up into bits of life creating a profoundly illuminating, comic, heartbreaking and troubling discourse that asks 'what if I did/said' something else instead?

The universe of infinite possibilities is the heart of Payne's work, mediated through Marianne's pivotal, drunk in love explication of the grand theories, Quantum Physics and String theory. Anything is possible. Is it? Change a pose. Change a vocal tone. Change of body

language. All these shifts, all these possibilities – what do they add up to? In this relationship, many things. Or none.

So we get to see and ponder, as myriad versions of pivotal relationship moments play out in all their joy and profound grief.

Tony Knight's direction is taut, witty and extraordinary in its stripped back focus, exploring multiple shades of emotion, motivation, response and action in the relationship of Roland and Marianne. He is aided by the bright yet subtly suggestive backdrop of string lights and the strictly delineated floor space which keeps the pair to one side of the space each. Equally strict are the sound cues.

Knight's management of Payne's text is extraordinary as demonstrated in Rossi and Clement's performances, staggering in ultra disciplined bright, brittle and emotively profound brilliance. Here is control with exquisite comic timing. Snap to the darkest depths, and back to light hearted banter. Passionate human frailty in thrall to a misconceived sense of omnipotence.

Rossi and Clement own the audiences' very souls through their own soul baring spirited approach to performance. They are heartbreaking and life affirming at once in the vitality of their offering to an audience.

### **David O'Brien**

When: 30 Mar to 9 Apr

Where: The Bakehouse Theatre

Bookings: [bakehousetheatre.com](http://bakehousetheatre.com)