

Access Guide for The Placeholder



We strive to make *The Placeholder* accessible for Deaf and Disabled people and are working towards embedding dignified access during the season.

We acknowledge that there are access measures that we have not been able to address.

We support the social model of disability, and welcome feedback to learn how we can address barriers to experiencing theatre.

Thank you for your patience.

Contact - Access services requests

Email: info@fortyfivedownstairs.com

Call: +61 (03) 9662 9966

fortyfivedownstairs need to know 24 hours before the show, or by 5pm on Friday if it is a weekend event if you will require access support including, but not limited to, wheelchair access.

They will then provide you with detailed instructions including the position of a doorbell to alert the front of house team, as well as arrival times.

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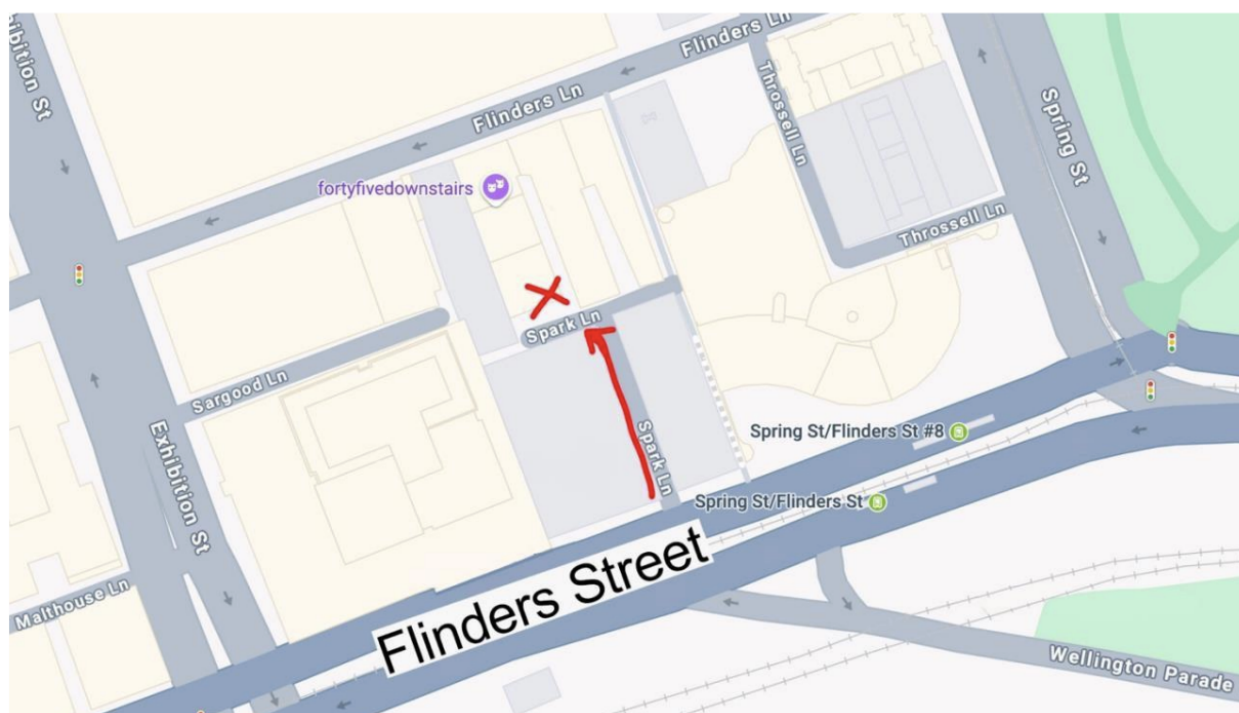
Getting to fortyfivedownstairs

Address – Stairs access

45 flinders lane
Melbourne 3000
Australia

Address - Wheelchair accessible entrance

fortyfivedownstairs has level access to the theatre space only, which is accessed at the back of the building via Spark Lane.



Please arrive at Stage Door **15 minutes** prior to advertised show start time.

Enter **Spark Lane** via **Flinders Street** (in the block between Spring and Exhibition Streets). **Please note that Spark Lane is used by two construction sites, and as such is not in good condition. The Lane is very uneven and difficult to manoeuvre. We are in communication with the worksites to improve the situation.**

The lane terminates in a 'T' intersection with a metal roller door.

To the left of the roller door is a metal fence enclosing a fire escape. The Stage

Door is on the other side of this fence, accessed via a short concrete ramp.

On arrival, press the **Ring Doorbell button**, located on the left hand side of the doorframe. This will contact the Front of House staff and alert them to your arrival. An usher will come and open both doors and ensure you are settled inside the theatre.

If you are running late or need further assistance, please call **0415 163 490** to speak with our Front of House staff. This number will be monitored for 1 hour before show start time.

Please be aware, there is no parking available at the entry. The options are to either:

- Drive up to Stage Door, gain access for guest/s requiring level access, *then* park the car elsewhere and enter the venue via the main entrance off Flinders Lane - Use pedestrian access for *Spark Lane* (the closest tram stop is Stop 8 on the Flinders/Spring Street intersection).

If access is required by anyone using a wheelchair or mobility scooter, please be advised the gate accommodates measurements of up to **80cm wide x 80cm** long to safely move through the passage.

Please contact access services to arrange access: +61 (03) 9662 9966

Wayfinding Video: <https://vimeo.com/1047703823/3a5dc932ad?share=copy>

If there is data missing or questions resulting from our wayfinding video, please email chelsey@5-foot.com as this can help us make our videos better at assisting you in the future.

Stairs access to the theatre

To access the box office and gallery space there are two flights of stairs. 28 Steps in total, with a landing in the middle.

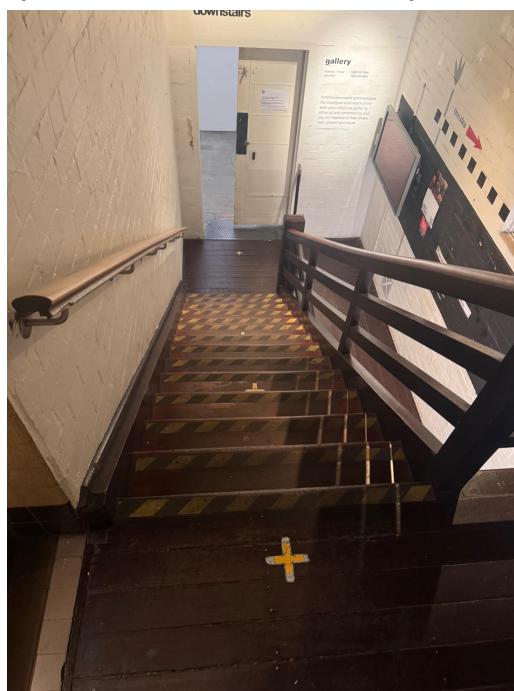
The first flight has a handrail on the right-hand side going down, the second flight has a handrail on both sides. To enter the theatre space, there are an additional two flights of stairs down. 28 steps in total, with a landing in the middle.



Picture 1: Steps from front path



Picture 2: Steps to middle landing



Picture 3: Middle landing down to gallery/box office



Picture 4: Gallery floor to theatre



Picture 5: Gallery floor to landing.



Picture 6: landing to theatre

Wayfinding video:

<https://vimeo.com/1047707583/f47d284574?share=copy>

Train and Tram

Parliament Station is the closest train station; however, the best accessible public transport is via Flinders St Station, or Collins St trams running low floor service (109 and 48).

Parking

First Parking at Collins Place (28 Flinders Lane) or Secure Parking at 12-20 Flinders Lane.

Getting Home Safe

Information to come.

Taxi and rideshare

This drop-off point on 45 Flinders Lane has barriers and scaffolding on either side. Directly in front of 45 Flinders Lane at the theatre entrance is open.

Drop-off is Spark Lane for the wheelchair accessible entrance.

Facilities

Assistance Animal Facilities

Assistance Animals are welcome in the venue.

We can only admit Assistance Animals that have passed a public access test.

Please contact access services to let them know in advance +61 (03) 9662 9966.

Bathroom - Wheelchair Accessible

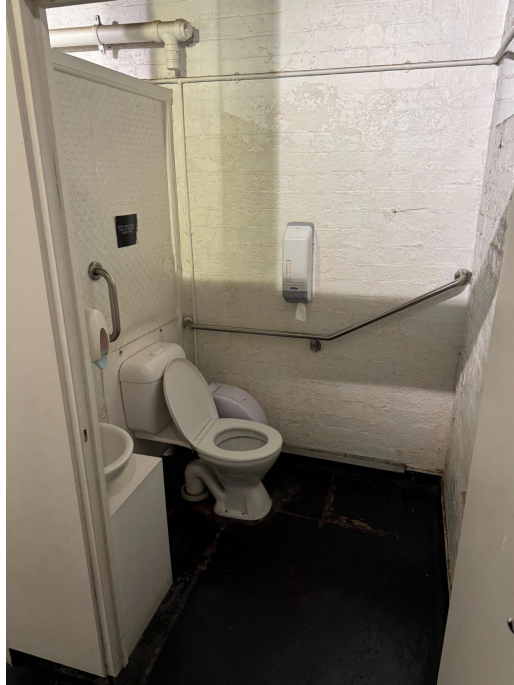
The wheelchair accessible bathroom is on the opposite side of the entrance. The door to the wheelchair accessible bathroom door itself is 96 cm wide.

The surface of the toilet seat in the accessible bathroom is 41 cm high.

There is a handrail attached to the wall next to the toilet. The sink in the wheelchair accessible bathroom is 76 cm from the ground to the rim.



Picture 14 : hallway to bathroom Picture 15 : bathroom door



Picture 16: wheelchair accessible bathroom stall

Bathrooms - Gallery (not wheelchair accessible)

Every bathroom is All Gender.

The Gallery bathroom is in front of you, when you come in the door.

There are three stalls.

There is no wheelchair accessible bathroom on this level.

Bathroom stall doors are 67 cm to get through. The stalls themselves are 63 cm wide.

Sinks are 91cm to the rim.

The base of the mirror above the sink is 140 cm from the ground.



Picture 7: Gallery bathroom



Picture 8: Gallery stall

Bathrooms - Theatre (not wheelchair accessible)

Every bathroom is All Gender. The bathroom is down the first hallway to your left if you come in via the stairs.

There are three stalls.

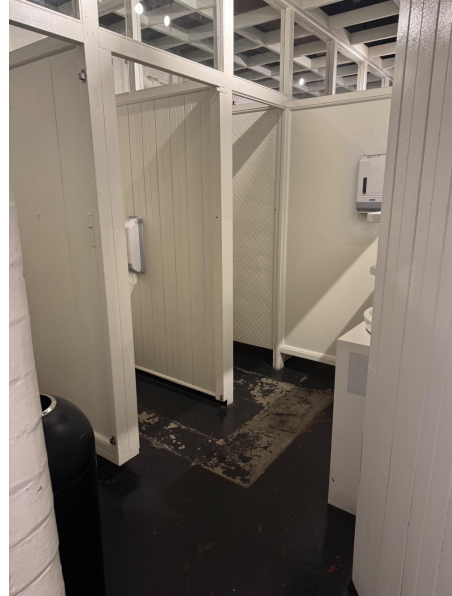
The bathroom door is 72 cm to get through. The stalls themselves are 72 cm wide, with the last stall being 62 cm wide.

Sinks are 92 cm to the rim.

The base of the mirror above the sink is 143 cm from the ground. Theatre Wheelchair accessible information on page 16.



Picture 9: Hallway to bathroom



Picture 10: inside bathroom



Picture 11: theatre bathroom stall

AUSLAN

Auslan will be provided for the **Friday 6th February 2026**

Auslan interpreters will be Linda Dornay and Gen Cassin.

BLIND AND LOW VISION ACCESS

Audio Description is not being offered for this performance, however dialogue, music and sound make up more than 75% of the performance experience. We have created Access Notes for Blind and Low Vision Audiences that includes Pre-Show Notes and descriptions of the visual aspects of the show.

[\[Access Notes for Blind and Low Vision Audiences linked here\]](#)

Charging Points

Charging points are available in the theatre bar and in the office on the gallery level.

Scent

Fortyfivedownstairs have air fresheners dotted around the theatre bathrooms and stairwell to combat their signature musty aroma. They aren't overwhelming at all when you are passing through (I don't enjoy a strong smell myself).

There are no major chemical smells in fortyfivedownstairs gallery and theatre.

The bathroom soap has a palmolive smell.

fortyfivedownstairs staff

You are welcome to approach staff at any time. They can help with requests for assistance and show you around.

A team of three front of house staff will be at the venue preshow: one Box Office Manager and two ushers. The ushers will be dressed in black clothes with fortyfivedownstairs lanyards. Staff will be wearing radios.

In the gallery staff serve drinks at the bar.

Any of these staff can help with access or direction, please do not hesitate to say hello. During the show, two ushers will remain in the theatre, please approach them or raise your hand if you need assistance at any time.

Photography

We ask that you do not take any photographs during the show.

Before or after the show, we ask that you do not take any photographs without the consent of people in the photo, including people in the background.

Quiet Space

The building does not have a space that is completely quiet.

If you feel overwhelmed, you are very welcome to leave the theatre and head upstairs to the gallery space.

If you leave mid-performance, an usher will assist you to light your way to the bathroom or exit.

In the gallery there are chairs and tables set up where you can sit down and relax. Upstairs the noise is reduced.

Seating

In the theatre there will be fixed seating. The chairs are raised, with stairs to access.

Staff can reserve seats on your behalf, and space for wheelchairs and companions will be made available on request.



Picture 13: middle seating bank

The Placeholder

Show Details

- Written by Ben MacEllen
- 140 minutes including 1 interval

Subject Warning:

Contains Adult themes; strong language; references to illness, grief, death, gender transition, transphobia, mentions of Australia's plebiscite and homophobia.

If you have any questions about the above warnings please contact

chelsey@5-foot.com

Tech Warnings:

- Use of Haze and Smoke

Loud Noise

- There are no loud noises in the play. There is quiet music that plays and excerpts from radio announcements.

Lighting and Audio-Visual Description

- The show is set to feel like you are in Patricia's kitchen with very subtle and naturalistic lighting.

Set Design and Props

An open-plan kitchen and dining room in a large regional country town in Australia. It's an 1890's Victorian weatherboard house owned by Patricia "Pat" Quinlan, previously shared with her now-deceased husband Graham and more recently her best friend Barbara "Barb" Horvath. Prominent in the space is a large wooden country-style kitchen table. The chairs are colonial kangaroo back wooden chairs. One chair stands vacant and cherished – the chair that Barb sat in while convalescing with Pat during the last years of her life.

Playwrights Notes

The role of Nic is played by one actor. This actor is someone who has a lived experience of transitioning from female/femme to male/masc (physically and socially). The actor portrays the character's authentic gender from the beginning to the end of the play without change. Other actors see him as Nicole (she/her) in the first part of the play, before he begins his transition, but the actor's appearance does not change. Their attire throughout is appropriate for a "masc" presenting female or male. This casting choice is key to the themes of identity presented in the play.

Questions

How many people is maximum capacity?

105 people

Is there a quiet place I can go if I feel overwhelmed?

See Quiet space.

Can I familiarise myself with the performers?

Yes.

CAST

Meredith Rogers as Patricia Quinlan (she/her)



Michelle Perera as Helen Sutherland (she/her)



Rebecca Bower as Keira Russel (she/they)



Brigid Gallacher as Joanna Horvath (she/her)



Oliver Ayres as Nic Larson (he/him)



Alessandra Merlo as Jess Schneider (she/her)



Need Help?

If you need to speak to someone from content raised in *The Placeholder*, please reach out to:

[The Rainbow Door](#)

1800 729 367

10am — 5pm (7 days)

Rainbow Door is a free specialist LGBTIQA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Gender Diverse, Intersex, Queer, Asexual, BrotherBoys, SisterGirls) helpline providing information, support, and referral to all LGBTIQA+ Victorians, their friends and family during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.

[Switchboard Victoria](#)

Switchboard is the Victorian partner in the national telephone and web counselling, information and referral service QLife. This free peer-based service is for LGBTIQA+ identifying people and those who have questions or concerns about LGBTIQA+ issues.

This includes families, friends, teachers and coworkers of LGBTIQ+ people. This service is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health.

[Q-life](#)

1800 184 527
3pm — 12am (7 days)

[Beyond Blue](#)

1300 22 4636 (24/7)

Headspace (12 - 25-year-olds)

10am - 1am
1800 650 1800

Lifeline

24/7
13 11 14