DIRECTORS' NOTES

Ruby Moon is an uncanny play; it feels highly familiar and yet edged with strangeness. It deals with archetypes that we both recognise and are estranged from. It is set in an Australia that feels like ours, a neighbourhood that sounds and echoes like childhood but whose fairy tales don't end well. It promises a resolution which is never delivered. The Moons cohabit a twilight world peopled with vulnerable doubles, freaky dolls and dotted with unsettling disappearances. Still, just as the promise of bad things lurking round the corner looms most ominously, the warmth of our shared messed-up ness shines through.

For the actors, *Ruby Moon* is an immense ask. But the rewards are proportionate. Matt Cameron knew what he was doing, it is highly challenging but not impossible to realise. Working with the cast of this production has been a challenge and a delight. There have been electrifying moments in the rehearsal room; when Veronica finally raised the violent reaction from Ray that she was provoking all along, when Sid performed his brutal bashing by the cops using the toys scattered around his flat. Every time the grief-stricken mother and the clammed up father transform; whether into a self-loathing teenager with her secrets or a gung-ho ex-military man in denial about his mother's death – then return to the state of limbo and uncertainty where Ruby is forever lost; each turn a small marvel.

What we have delved into – the loneliness, the detective story, the longing to be touched or finally freed from the impossible ache of not-knowing, as well as the theatrics of each of the neighbours – is all there to help you realise this text with heart as well as mind. Through the power of our collective imagination, responding to the rich fragmented imagery and symbols even as they metamorphose, we want to make Flaming Tree Grove as eerily familiar as a place you grew up in, that suddenly looks quite other when the shadows fall on it this particular night.

Cathy Hunt- on Illuminate Educates 2014 Production