



Elyse Phelan, 21, and Hollie Sams, 10, star as Alice at various ages in *Alice Through The Looking Glass*.

Picture: ALIX SWEENEY

Take the family on an adventure into a magical world with TheatreINQ's interactive, visually stunning outdoor production of *Alice Through the Looking Glass* these school holidays.

The show, set up at Pimlico's Anderson Gardens, invites the audience on Alice's journey to rediscover her inner child.

Director Terri Brabon described the show as the traditional Alice meeting Alice as a teenager.

"We're six years on from the original stories, and she's at that point in her life, where most teenagers are, where she thinks she's a grown-up and shuns everything to do with being a child," Brabon said.

"We see her as a child in the younger Alice trying to make her remember her history and who she was as a kid, and wonderland. The looking glass is a very different world.

"It's really teenage Alice remembering who she was."

Teenage Alice is played by TheatreINQ apprentice Elyse Phelan, who has performed different roles in TheatreINQ's previous two adaptations of *Alice in Wonderland*.

"It really is just fun to be a part of. It's a kids show, you can go wild on the physicality, it's great, and you get the best costumes," she said.

"It's different, the Alice that you're used to seeing is a nine or 10-year-old and the original Alice we had was much younger, so I was just sort of thinking of how I can make that teenager attitude really come across.

"It's fun, I get to go back and be that moody teenager."

*Alice Through the Looking Glass* also features a young Alice, played by 10-year-old Hollie Sams.

Elyse said it had been fun to work with a younger version of her character.

"It's been awesome, she's great. Shows me

up all the time," Elyse said. "She's a real professional in the rehearsal room, she's very prepared," Brabon added.

"We've known Hollie for a while and she's done little workshops and things with us, but this is the first time she's been working with the big kids in the show. She's a wonderful addition to the company and to that role.

"I think it's always important to me that the role of Alice is a child. I loved *Alice in Wonderland* as a kid because I was a kid and it was this imaginative, dreamy child, and that's who I was, so definitely we always wanted to connect and have a child there. But also by having Elyse there, we get to see the journey and Alice lives on in a way."

Brabon said the show was open to anyone and everyone of all ages, with children two years and under able to see the show for free.

# A WORLD FULL OF WONDER

KELSIE IORIO

I think it's one of the most undervalued gardens in Townsville," she said.

"I would encourage people to stay after the show. Bring a picnic, stay and play, make a day of it with the family. We bring the cast back out to take photos and play with the kids, the kids love that opportunity as well. The actors love it too. (Audiences) come dressed up as well and we encourage that. People really get in the spirit of it and that makes the best day.

"The cast is a mixture of our company professionals, our company ensemble and our Bridge Project actors. It's a really wonderful experience for those training actors to be outdoors, get their vocal skills up and it's very much a fitness exercise, there's a lot of running.

"It's quite a logistical feat, but those are the sort of puzzles that we love."

*Alice Through the Looking Glass* is part of the inaugural Northern Fringe Festival, and Brabon said she expected the boost in cultural events in the region to be positive for the community and arts organisations alike.

"It's exciting for the community and for the council to put so much money and support behind the arts as well," she said.

"That's a really important thing for us, to feel our value in the community, and hopefully for our productions at least, we can't speak for everybody, but the community really gets behind these shows as well.

"It's such a joyful show to work on and to watch."

**Alice Through the Looking Glass opens Saturday, June 29. Tickets are \$20 per person, spaces are limited and bookings are essential as a number of shows have already sold out. Visit [theatreinq.com](http://theatreinq.com) for more info and tickets.**

"For the really young people there's colour and movement, we move throughout the show so they don't have to sit still, there's lots of music, colourful costumes, dance routines and fun activity," she said.

"There's so many jokes in there that will just go over the kids' heads, and that's for you mum and dad.

"So often it's the parents or grandparents who have to bring the kids to these things, and I want to entertain them as well, I want them to want to come back. There's a lot in there for adults. Mum and dad will thoroughly enjoy it."

Brabon said the outdoor, moving performance complete with handcrafted sets brought an exciting element to the experience.

"Anderson Gardens is absolutely beautiful,