

# A Shy Tiger

Many assume that it is almost impossible to combine a challenging career in the arts and a family. But as a successful actress, producer and director of her own production company, Shy Tiger Productions, and also a wife and mother of two daughters, Margot Knight proves them wrong.

For many years Margot has been engaged in the entertainment industry, gaining impressive experience in television, film, and theatre. Margot began acting straight out of school and is known for her roles in the recent drama-documentary Charles Bean's Great-War, and the television series Prisoner. She also had a supporting role in the feature film Till Human Voices Wake Us, starring Helena Bonham Carter and Guy Pearce.

"I love to be a part of an artistic community. We have the same thinking, same sense of humour, same interest; it's

like being a part of a big family of like-minded people."

"I have a very supportive husband who encouraged me in my career, and he always said that he prefers me to be busy as I seem to function better that way," laughs Margot.

Margot is currently producing and acting in the theatre production Home for Lunch, a play by AWGIE-award winner Rebecca Lister in collaboration with businessman and philanthropist David Bardas. Home for Lunch explores one man's struggle adapting to retirement and a changed life, where identity is lost, relationships are strained, and the path of rediscovery and renewal lies ahead.

"I want to do a show that has relevance in our culture, and Home for Lunch hits that niche - right there."



## The Melbourne uni people don't know

By Tony Miles

It was founded 26 years ago. It's right in the heart of Melbourne. It has nigh on 900 members. But I'd not be surprised if you've never heard of it. In fact, some people call it one of Melbourne's best-kept secrets. We call it U3A Melbourne City.

U3A? Until a couple of years ago I hadn't heard of it either. Thirty months on or so, I can't imagine life without it. It's given me new focus, new knowledge and, very importantly, interesting new friends. I also suspect it's helping keep the grey matter from getting any greyer.

Worldwide, people call it U3A because its full name is a bit daunting. It started in 1973 as l'Université du Troisième Age at France's second-oldest university, Toulouse. It reached Cambridge in 1982 and landed in Melbourne three years later as Australia's first campus, U3A Melbourne City.

The Third Age? Nothing to do with Aquarius or the Moon being in the Seventh House. First Age =

Childhood. Second = Working Years. U3A is designed for people retired and/or no longer working full-time. Probably in their fifties and beyond. I've heard the term 'lifelong learning'.

As for the University, it's used in an earlier sense of the word: people sharing ideas and developing their knowledge and skills together. Learning from each other in a wide range of subjects.

One attraction of U3A for many is that, unlike most unis, it has no entrance exams. You don't need prior qualifications either and - for many people, the best part - there's no end-of-year swatting. Because there's no exam to swat for.

But no exams doesn't mean low standards. U3A tutors are often retired academics and almost always experts or specialists in their field. So although there's none of the pressure of academia, there's certainly enough of the challenge to keep you interested week after week.

Not only is U3A Melbourne City a great place to make new friends while you're brushing-up on or starting to learn your chosen subjects, it's also remarkably inexpensive. U3A has no paid staff. They're all volunteers. That's why there are so many courses

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- mostly year-long, but there are short courses, too - whilst making sure the strain on the budget is gentle. Annual membership at U3A Melbourne City is what those noisy TV commercials would probably call a crazy \$45 a year. (What a good job we can't afford to be on the box).

From Current Affairs (and our monthly Thursday Forums, which are open to the public) to Wine Appreciation,

the choices are wide. Take French, for instance. There are no fewer than six levels. And if French doesn't do it for you, you can choose other languages. Or chess. Or literature. Or painting. History, bird-watching, yoga, crafts, the choir... the choice is huge.

U3A Melbourne City has a social side, too. Among other things, we go to the theatre, the opera and take two or three trips. And, of course, people often go out wining and dining with chums, old and new.

There's plenty going on and if you'd like to know more please visit the website ([u3amelbcity.org.au](http://u3amelbcity.org.au)). Or call the office (9639 5209). Or simply drop in (Level 2 at Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane, just down on the left from Swanston Street, next door to the City Library. 10am - 4pm, Monday to Friday).

I'd be very surprised to hear that you couldn't find something to pique your interest.

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