

DOUBLE SHIFT

As she prepares to stick it to the man in a stage-musical version of the classic comedy film *9 To 5*, actor Erin Clare puts a twist on traditional office workwear. Now, that's a way to make a living...

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With a power-dressing wardrobe on hand, Erin Clare is sliding into Dolly Parton's role as Doralee in *9 To 5 The Musical*, based on the beloved 1980 feminist comedy of the same name.

"The role was written for [Dolly]," says the theatre star. "So [the fashion] is a nod to Dolly – it's all very pink, short, leopard-print heels, little pink purses – it's '80s meets country meets Dolly."

Things were more sedate in Clare's shoot with *Stellar*, with the 31-year-old showcasing a modern spin on corporate attire that retains the era's working-woman must-haves, like power shoulders and sharp tailoring – but with no animal print in sight. "In theatre, the hair is big, the make-up is big, and this [shoot] was very, very stripped back," she tells *Stellar*. "It was a way I hadn't seen myself before."

The Sydney-based actor, who started performing at the age of eight and had her big break touring Australia with the musical *We Will Rock You* in 2016, is in the midst of rehearsals for *9 To 5*, which has been a long time coming, given that the pandemic has delayed the show's run by nearly two years. "We were set to rehearse in March 2020, then everything shut down."

However, the show's relevance has only grown, particularly in the post-#MeToo era, Clare points out, citing the issue of "rampant sexism in the workplace" and its story about three fed-up office workers who finally give their male boss what for. "It's all about female empowerment and rising against misogyny," she says, adding that the plot's fantastical side translates well to a live show. "The farce and the dream sequences really work on stage – it's larger than life, anyway."

Speaking of larger than life, Parton herself imparted a bit of wisdom to the cast. "[Dolly] recorded messages telling us, 'It's time to get to work!'" says Clare. "I have a voice clip of her saying my name, which lives rent-free in my mind at all times." ★

9 To 5 The Musical opens on February 16 in Sydney, then heads to Brisbane and Melbourne. For details, visit 9to5themusical.com.au.



(opposite) **Maggie Marilyn** jacket, \$1075, and pants, \$557, maggiemarilyn.com; **Roger Vivier** shoes (worn throughout), \$1920, rogervivier.com; (this page, top left) **Arnsdorf** blazer, \$850, pants, \$490, and belt, \$149, arnsdorf.com.au; (above) **Wynn Hamlyn** blazer, \$850, wynnhamlyn.com; **Caes** pants, \$455, incu.com; **Arnsdorf** belt, \$149, as before; (left) **Ganni** blazer, \$595, and pants, \$425, ganni.com

Hair Taylor James Redman using Hair Rituel by Sisley Paris
Make-up Kristyan Low using Sisley Paris

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