



The fast five...

...with Australian stage actress and singer **Lucy Durack**, 29, who bends and snaps in the role of Elle Woods, in this month's *Legally Blonde The Musical*.

What has been your most memorable role? "Playing Glinda the Good Witch, in the musical *Wicked*, for nearly four years. It's a role I'll always be grateful for."

Do you see any similarities between yourself and Elle Woods? "Absolutely. I try to see the best in people and believe strongly in social justice. I also started a law degree, and love dogs and the colour pink!"

What can we expect from your upcoming self-titled album?

"Covers of classics, with a few originals I've co-written. I'm a massive fan of artists like Paloma Faith, Amy Winehouse and Duffy, who really pay homage to fabulous, brassy '60s soul, with a modern take, and in their own way."

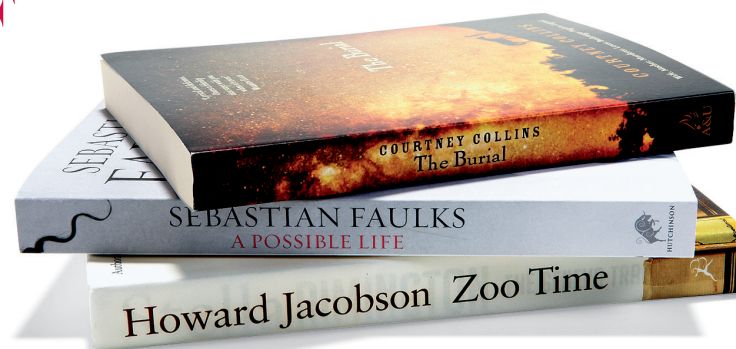
What's the most covetable item in your wardrobe? "A beautiful Rachel Gilbert dress I wore to the Sydney opening night of *Wicked*. It's beaded and sparkly silver on top, and floaty and white on the bottom. It makes me feel like a princess!"

Who are your favourite designers? "I love Chanel, Valentino, Sass & Bide, Alex Perry, Gorman, Collette Dinnigan and Manning Cartell."

Legally Blonde The Musical opens at the Sydney Lyric Theatre, The Star, on September 21; 1300 795 267/ticketmaster.com.au

SHELF LIFE

This month's most compelling novels will have you hooked, with liberal doses of romance, adventure and wit.



THE BURIAL by Courtney Collins (Allen & Unwin, \$27.99)

Set in 1920s rural Australia, this spirited novel, inspired by female circus-performer-turned-bushranger Jessie Hickman, imagines the life of one tough woman living in a man's world.

A POSSIBLE LIFE by Sebastian Faulks (Random House, \$32.95)

Five unique characters, who inhabit vastly different worlds: from a servant in 19th-century France, to a scientist in Italy a few years from now. A lushly descriptive collection of stories, which ebb and flow on the pursuit for human connection, from the best-selling author of *Birdsong*.

ZOO TIME by Howard Jacobson (Bloomsbury, \$29.99)

The Booker Prize winner is in fine comic form. His self-obsessed hero, Guy Ableman, is a novelist in love with both his wife and mother-in-law. Add to this, his career is heading south, his publisher is dead, his agent unsympathetic. Pathos? Think again: Jacobson's wit is wry and utterly enjoyable.



PHOTO FINISH

Whether your preference is wide brim or pillbox, you'll find race-day inspiration in this book focusing on fashion at the Melbourne Cup. Includes insights from designers Phillip Treacy and Leona Edmiston.

Fashion & Flemington (The Slattery Media Group, \$59.95)

TALKING SHOP

This month, local favourite Manning Cartell moves into Melbourne's Chadstone Shopping Centre. Don't miss the brand's vibrant prints, along with its new Bridesmaid line of wedding-party-appropriate dresses; 03-9568 6888