

2017
VICTORIAN
THEATRE FORUM
NO SUCH THING
AS A FREE LUNCH

FRIDAY 4 AUGUST
9:30AM - 4:30PM

BACK TO BACK THEATRE
60 LITTLE MALOP ST GEELONG

TNA.ORG.AU



As a national organisation, Theatre Network Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians of the different lands on which we meet, gather, and work.

VTF 2017 is held on the land of the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin nation, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present, and future.

FORUM SCHEDULE

9:30 am	Train departs Southern Cross
10:30 am - 11:15 am	Arrive at Back to Back Theatre Registration
11:15 am	Acknowledgement of Country Welcome to Back to Back Alice Nash Welcome by City of Greater Geelong Kaz Paton Curatorial Overview Kieran Swann
11:40 am	Panel Session Alice Nash, Chi Vu, Erica McCalman, Simon Abrahams with Nicole Beyer, facilitated by Kieran Swann
12:10 pm	Group Discussion
1:00pm	Lunch served
1:15 pm	Working Lunch
2:45 pm	The Wrap
3:30 pm - 4:30 pm	Drinks and Dessert at GPAC

VTF 2017: NO SUCH THING AS A FREE LUNCH

On Advocacy, Empowerment, and Asking For What You Need.

We are now at ground zero after a tumultuous decade for the arts and cultural sector.

Governmental funding has seen huge changes in the past year, and with it, shifts in focus on partnerships, innovation, efficiency, reporting. Many organisations are starting to make meaningful action on diversity and representation in our stories and on our stages - addressing a deeply ingrained problem. A greater social consciousness throws private support under the microscope, giving us pause to consider where our money comes from and why. Gender equity continues to elude many organisations, particularly at the top end of town, and particularly in leadership positions.

Further, artists are further considering their role in the wider world - our relationship to shifting global economies; to communities; to environmental action - and how to demonstrate leadership in these.

So taking stock in 2017, what do we do about it - about all of it?

Theatre Network Australia presents the eighth annual Victorian Theatre Forum - an opportunity for the state's artists and arts professionals to come together to reflect on the year past and planning the year to come. It's a day for dialogue, commiseration, and celebration - and most importantly, planning, collaborating, and organising. **NO SUCH THING AS A FREE LUNCH** moves away from the traditional forum format of keynotes and panels - instead, grouping together people from across our community in thinking and working groups.

We want to know what's driving you; what are the biggest issues you see in the arts right now? Where do you think we should be in ten years' time? Five years' time? One years' time? Let's share our thoughts, spitball ideas, and make some plans - over a beautiful long lunch.

Who's hungry?

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

The Victorian theatre industry is full of the most amazing and energetic minds and makers; some of the most creatively fecund in the country. With that in mind, we wanted to craft a day that activated you fully - with stimulus and frameworks to guide us towards action together.

So we're asking you to be ready to talk through problems, and start to build solutions. To work together to tease out *why* these concerns exist - where they've come from and what props them up. To identify our potential growths and challenges, and draw on each others' experiences, fresh perspectives, and collectively dream up new approaches to addressing these concerns.

The day unfolds in three parts, then -

First, with a panel; our four excellent facilitators kick us off with their own perspective on the past year - challenges they've identified and how they've worked to address them.

Then, the morning discussion; where we ask you to share. What do you see going on in the performing arts? Where are there challenges or opportunities? - for you, individually; for the sector as a whole; for the wider community, with possibilities for the performing arts to contribute to.

And then - over lunch - the working group. Swapping ideas of potential solutions. Sharing what we know that's been done elsewhere. Comparing notes about how best to deal. Spitballing shifts in philosophy; brainstorming possible projects; dreaming up new initiatives. Crafting calls to action.

Because remember - there's no such thing as a free lunch. We're asking for your mental labour; this is a working day, for us to plan the next concrete steps we take, together.

FACILITATORS

ALICE NASH

Alice has been the Executive Producer & Co-CEO of Back to Back Theatre since 2003. Under her stewardship, the company has toured to 92 destinations worldwide and become one of Australia's leading cultural exports. Previously, she was Acting General Manager and Associate Producer of Theatre at the Next Wave Festival and General Manager of the Big West Festival, both in Australia. Alice hails from Canada where she has worked with Edmonton's First Night Festival, Catalyst Theatre and Northern Light Theatre.

CHI VU

Chi Vu is an award-winning writer and director whose works span genres such as the postcolonial gothic, horror, magic-realism and comedy. Chi's recent play 'Coloured Aliens' premiered at La Mama theatre as part of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival 2017. Her other plays include 'The Dead Twin', 'A Story of Soil', 'Banh Chung' and 'Vietnam: a Psychic Guide'. Chi's novella 'Anguli Ma: a Gothic Tale' was short listed in a NSW Premier's prize; her short stories are published in 'Joyful Strains', 'Growing up Asian in Australia' and 'The Macquarie PEN Anthology of Australian Literature'. She is currently completing a PhD on genre tropes in translingual creative writing, and has recently moved to Geelong.

ERICA MCCALMAN

Erica is a producer, project and production manager with Ballardong (Noongar), Irish convict, Scottish, and Cornish heritage. In 2016 she returned to Next Wave after living and working in Sydney for Legs On The Wall physical theatre company and managing the British Council's ACCELERATE Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership programme. Previously Erica was an Associate Producer for Next Wave 2014 and has worked with Sydney companies Performing Lines, Sydney Festival, Blackfella Films and Performance Space managing programs and initiatives both locally and nationally. Her production credits include works within Melbourne Fringe, Melbourne International Comedy Festival, Adelaide Festival and Brisbane Festival. She has collaborated with artists from Korea, Australia, Timor Leste and holds a particular interest in contemporary, experimental and live art from indigenous and multicultural artists.

SIMON ABRAHAMS

Simon is a strategic arts consultant and creative producer with recognition as one of Australia's arts and cultural leaders. He has held senior programming and executive positions at the Wheeler Centre, Arts Centre Melbourne, Polyglot Theatre and Gasworks Arts Park. He sits on the Theatre Panel for the Helpmann Awards and the Contemporary and Experimental Performance Panel for the Green Room Awards. He is currently CEO and Artistic Director of Melbourne Fringe, and chair of TNA.

DELEGATES

Alana Hoggart

Alice Nash

Alise Amarant

Ally Harvey

Annette Vieuxseux

Beau McCafferty

Bruce Gladwin

Caitlin Dullard

Carolyn Lambert

Chi Vu

Chloe Weavers

Corey Reynolds

Daniel Clarke

Dan Koop

Daniel Oldaker

David Greenwood

Deborah Leiser-Moore

Debra Jefferies

Dianne Toulson

Eliza-Jane Gilchrist

Ellie Griffiths

Erica McCalman

Erin Milne

Erin Watson

Hahnje Goldfinch

James Lawson

Jamie Lewis

Jens Altheimer

Joel Evans

John Kachoyan

John Willis

Julie Wright

Back to Back Theatre

Tripwire Theatre Inc.

Back to Back Theatre

Lucy Guerin Inc

City of Darebin

Back to Back Theatre

La Mama

The SUBSTATION

Abbotsford Convent

Arts Centre Melbourne

Melbourne Fringe

Varietyville

CenterStage Geelong

Tashmadada

Creative Victoria

Ararat Rural City Council

Such As They Are

Bureau of Works

Back to Back Theatre

Vessel

Theatre Network Australia

Bunjil Place - City of Casey

Golden City Support Services

Polyglot Theatre

Julie-Anna Evans

Justin Murphy

Kate Hunter

Kate Stones

Katerina Kokkinos-Kennedy

Kaz Paton

Kieran Swann

Laura Hartnell

Liz Jones

Madeleine Flynn

Margaret Bourke

Mark Penzak

Megan Riedl

Melissa Stark

Merfyn Owen

Michelle Petro

Nancy Black

Nicole Beyer

Nikki Watson

Richard Watts

Rose Godde

Sara Strachan

Sarah Austin

Sarah Greentree

Sarah Lockwood

Sarah Mainwaring

Sasha Leong

Selene Bateman

Shannon Quinn

Simon Abrahams

Sue Giles

Tamara Searle

Tim Humphrey

Tobias Manderson-Galvin

Yuhui Ng-Rodriguez

Regional Arts Victoria

City of Greater Geelong

Theatre Network Australia

La Mama

Geelong Performing Arts Centre

Such As They Are

Tripwire Theatre Inc.

Back to Back Theatre

Black Hole Theatre

Theatre Network Australia

Back to Back Theatre

ArtsHub

1958

Black Arm Band

Drop Bear Theatre

Back to Back Theatre

Auspicious Arts Projects Inc

Melbourne Fringe

Polyglot Theatre

Back to Back Theatre

MKA + Doppelgangster

THEATRE NETWORK AUSTRALIA

Theatre Network Australia (TNA) is the leading industry development organisation for the performing arts, prioritising independent artists and small to medium companies. TNA strengthens artists and arts organisations, influences cultural policy, facilitates critical debate and networking, and advocates for a robust, interconnected and innovative sector. Based in Melbourne, Australia, TNA works nationally and has a dedicated Victorian program.

We run professional development forums, including the biennial Australian Theatre Forum, workshops on current issues for the sector including sustainability, touring, diversity in theatre, Indigenous theatre, women in theatre and interconnections, and we provide information and resources through our popular e-news and the online resource library.

A membership-driven organisation, TNA's members provide us with a core constituency to consult with, report to, and keep in mind as we undertake our national advocacy and sector development work.

Our members are located across regional and metropolitan Australia, and include independent artists, producers, and collectives; organisations and companies from the small to medium sector; and major performing arts companies, festivals, and peak bodies.

We use a broad church definition of theatre and represent members across the following artforms: Theatre, Dance, Circus and Physical Theatre, Hybrid and Interdisciplinary, Festivals, Presenters, Producers and Industry Development Organisations, and Independents.

As a member, you will receive a range of benefits including discounts to the biennial Australian Theatre Forum (ATF) and other events, as well as the knowledge that you are supporting our work, which benefits the entire performing arts sector.

Get in touch for more information on membership.

TNA'S PRINCIPAL GOALS

STRONGER ARTISTS & COMPANIES:

Theatre Network Australia strengthens, supports and connects independent performing artists and producers, small to medium organisations and larger performing arts organisations.

STRONGER ARTS SECTOR:

Theatre Network Australia achieves progressive change in the arts industry and impels evidence-based, values driven cultural policy.

STRONGER ORGANISATION:

Theatre Network Australia is recognised for its effective leadership in the performing arts and galvanises an extensive, broad and diverse membership in Victoria and across Australia.

BOARD

Simon Abrahams (Chair),
Alice Nash (Deputy Chair)
Jill Smith (Treasurer)
Ben Graetz
Catherine Jones
Lou Oppenheim
Sam Routledge
Brad Spolding
Annette Vieusseux
Sarah Austin

STAFF

Nicole Beyer | Executive Director | nicole@tna.org.au

Nicole Beyer is a leading Australian advocate for the arts, and a cultural policy expert. She leads and represents the arts industry through her roles on the Executive of the Arts Industry Council (Vic), and as the Convenor of ArtsPeak, the confederation of 37 national arts peak bodies. She advises the Victorian government on cultural policy through her role on the Minister's inaugural Creative State Advisory Board. Through her advocacy, Nicole works to attain greater recognition of the social, cultural and economic contributions of independent artists and small-to-medium arts organisations. She is a champion for Indigenous artists, artists from diverse backgrounds and those with disabilities, and she advocates for a more inclusive arts sector. Nicole has worked in social policy in two local government municipalities, and has worked as a consulting facilitator, strategic planner and policy adviser since 2005. Previous arts CEO positions include Back To Back Theatre (1996-1999) and Arts Access Victoria (2000-2005). She currently sits on the Board of Deakin University's Arts and Cultural Management Program. Nicole has been Executive Director of TNA since 2009. Nicole has a Masters of Public Policy and Management (MPPM) from Monash University (2013).

Simone Schinkel | General Manager | simone@tna.org.au

Simone joined TNA in 2016. A creative producer and project manager with extensive experience in arts and festival management, Simone was previously the General Manager of Lorne's 2016 Festival of Performing Arts (FOPA), and the Business Development Manager at dance-theatre company KAGE. Simone was also the Executive Producer and General Manager at KAGE where she grew the company from operating on a project basis, to become a key organisation in Australian dance.

Kieran Swann | Program Producer | kieran@tna.org.au

Kieran Swann is an artist, curator, and producer. He is a core member of The Good Room, a collective who use the anonymous experiences of ordinary people to create extraordinary theatre works; and one half of McCarthy-Swann Projects, a curatorial partnership with Amy-Clare McCarthy focusing on practices of feminist, queer, and culturally diverse artists. He has worked for Performance Space 122, Portland Institute for Contemporary Arts, Danspace Project, Venice International Performance Art Week, Metro Arts, and fortyfivedownstairs. His body of work has received national acclaim; ABC Radio has described his work as "nothing short of brilliant", and RealTime has noted him a "fabulous liar in a mundane world". Kieran has studied at Wesleyan University's Institute for Curatorial Practice in Performance, Victorian College of the Arts, and Queensland University of Technology.

Jamie Lewis | Communications Coordinator | jamie@tna.org.au

Jamie creates and performs experimental and contemporary intercultural work, facilitating meditations on identity, place, and time, through autobiographical stories, conversation and food. Jamie is also interested in alternative models in her practice, and a re-imagining of leadership, governance, and structures. A graduate of LASALLE College of the Arts (Singapore) and the Victorian College of the Arts (Melbourne), Jamie collaborates as facilitator, dramaturg, and co-creator. She has experience in Audience Development, and consults on branding, marketing, and communication across arts organisations and small businesses.

Bethany Simons | E-news Editor | bethany@tna.org.au

Born and raised in Dubbo, NSW, Bethany is a four-time Green Room Award nominated writer and performer. Her work has toured extensively throughout Australia, appeared on the 2012 and 2015 VCE Drama Playlist and been awarded the RAVE Touring Award from Regional Arts Victoria for outstanding contribution to regional arts and culture. Bethany has experience as a teaching artist, workshop facilitator, producer, arts administrator and writer. She regularly directs drama, playwriting and industry workshops across Australia. Bethany joined TNA in 2014, and before travelling internationally (and so only able to continue as our e-news editor), her role had included producing TNA's events and leading the organisation's communications, membership, business management and marketing strategies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Theatre Network Australia thanks Back to Back Theatre for their support.

About Back to Back Theatre:

Over the last 30 years Back to Back Theatre has made a body of work that questions the assumptions of what is possible in theatre, but also the assumptions we hold about ourselves and others.

As an ongoing dialogue with our audience, each new project is an investigation seeking answers to questions raised in previous works. Our attention lies with design, light, and sound. The stories we pursue weave the personal, the political and the cosmic. We work to curiosity and interest in the live moment, to what sits within and between.



The 2017 Victorian Theatre Forum is supported by the City of Greater Geelong.



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