



THEATRE
NETWORK
NSW

2015

a year in review



Leadership

To be the leading industry service organisation for the NSW professional theatre sector.

After receiving NSW government support through Arts NSW for its 2014 operations, the interim committee employed its inaugural Director, Dr Jane Kreis who commenced work on 5th January 2015 on a part-time (3 days/week) basis. Jane ran the organisation's operations from office locations in Bankstown, Redfern and Grafton.

Starting with attendees at previous TNN events, a Theatre Network NSW contact list was established. At subsequent events and meetings this network grew from 90 to over 400 by the end of 2015 – the majority of these stakeholders are performing arts practitioners and theatre workers from NSW. These network members were gathered and maintained through website (Wordpress) registration, online media (Facebook and Twitter pages), personal invitations (Eventbrite and Mailchimp) and calls to action, and surveys (Survey Monkey). By the end of 2015 this information was established within a CRM with a view to being able to better identify and engage with stakeholders.

TNN's first action was to establish its role and relevance to its stakeholders during the busy month of the Australian Theatre Forum. Theatre Network NSW's visual identity was finalised prior to its January launch and featured a 'call-out' or 'speech bubble' and strong, plain colouring designed to reflect a confident, highly connected and accessible organisation. This logo and a library of information services, resources and industry images was established as a basis from which to develop our communication with stakeholders throughout 2015 and into the future.



Photo: TNN Inaugural Director, Jane Kreis

Leadership

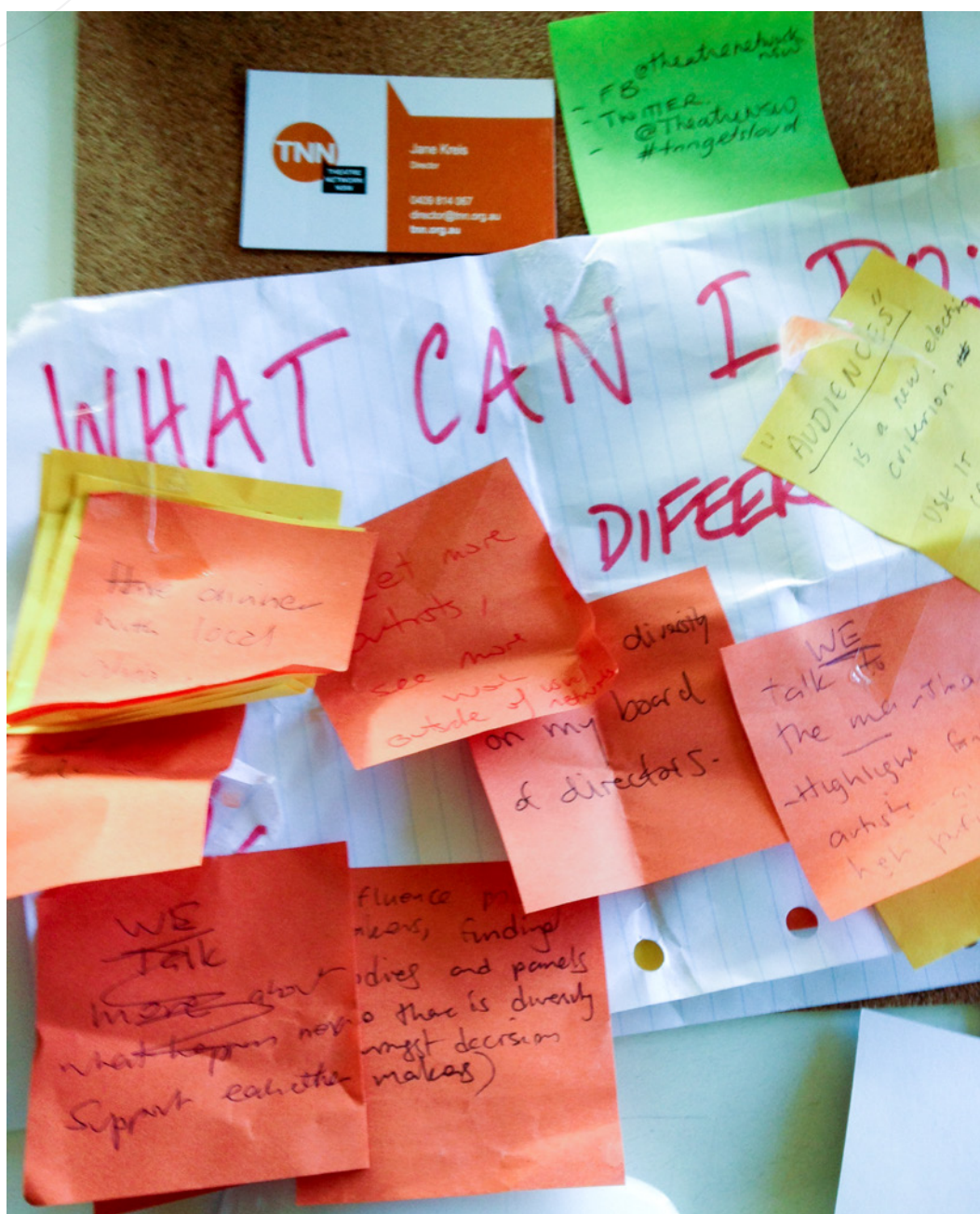


Photo: 'What Can I Do?' Post-It Notes from TNN's Building Audience Diversity forum

Connection

To increase connection and dialogue within and between all those involved in professional theatre making in NSW.

Theatre Network NSW Incorporated was officially launched as part of the Australian Theatre Forum in January 2015 at The Seymour Centre's Everest Foyer. Over 80 attendees joining the board and newly appointed Director for drinks and a spot of...networking and celebration! This event was reported on by ArtsHub and Creative Foyer.

The organisation's major event for the year 'Building Audience Diversity' at Bankstown Arts Centre had over 50 attendees for the half-day forum featuring Kristine Landon-Smith and facilitated by Fiona Winning. Online attendees also participated in this event through live-streaming and Q&A with panel members. Other, smaller, events held over 2015 include: regional theatre meetings (Singleton, Armidale, Lismore); NSW theatre producers' meetings held in partnership with Sydney Theatre Company; and two workshops (one at ICE in Parramatta and one at MEAA Offices in Sydney) to assist stakeholders with submissions and presentations relating to the Commonwealth Inquiry into the Federal Arts Budget.

Over 450 participants at our events and actively engaged with the network from across the theatre sector of NSW and Australia. TNN advised on sourcing theatre equipment, employment and training, business services and funding, and generally served as a hub for theatre makers and theatre organisations to access information and support as they needed it. TNN's role as a network is to put people in touch with one another the resources they need so that they can get on with what they do best – make great Australian performance. TNN connects, cultivates and collaborates with NSW theatre at our events and other industry events, at meetings, through individual phone or email inquiries, direct requests through our website, media reports and other publications, or simple word of mouth.



Photo: TNN's Jane Kreis talking diversity with guest speaker Kristine Landon-Smith

Connection



Photo: Attendees at TNN's Building Audience Diversity forum

Advocacy

To be an advocate for the NSW theatre sector and to support those in the sector articulate their own successes, priorities, and challenges.



Photo: Rosie Dennis and Sonny Dallas Law advocating for diversity

The 2015 Federal Budget and the ensuing funding changes forged Theatre Network NSW's advocacy role as being industry-led, independent, and able to move fluidly across the local and national spectrum. Theatre Network NSW made its own submissions and was called as a witness at the Sydney Parliamentary Inquiry, spoke with the media and lobbied politicians. A key element of TNN's role is also to support the sector to advocate for itself and this includes articulating what it does so well. TNN engaged in considerable research and analysis of industry data useful for advocacy and provided one on one support or workshops in Sydney, Western Sydney and regional NSW. It worked with partner organisations and media outlets to promote industry strengths and collate information that tells the real stories of our industry and their relevance to our society.

Networks are critical to effective advocacy and TNN was a central source for the NSW theatre sector to get information on sector updates and events throughout the year. Similarly, TNN could use its own networks to filter and strengthen the sector's core messages. TNN's flexible and accessible communications style reflects the way the theatre industry works and connects with one another and is a vital advocacy strategy in a creative sector that faces constant change.

Resources

To build and share a body of knowledge and resources with our members, our colleagues, our partners, government and others.

The organisation is founded on excellent research and long-term consultation with the sector including Kim Hanna's 2011 Scoping Report on a Theatre Network for NSW. This research was continued in 2015 with three surveys 'Five on Friday' focussing on sector demographics and advocacy as well as TNN's open and consultative approach to its programming and service provision. This approach enables TNN to focus its resources where they are most needed and most effective.

In 2015 TNN established policies and procedures that facilitated both the organisational requirements of the organisation (financial protocols, employer and employee obligations, communications, internal reviews) and the needs of its stakeholders (**Auspicing**, contract templates and other sector resources such as the Theatre Network NSW's Share, **Swap 'n' Sell Facebook page**).

Reporting to key partners and funding agencies is an important part of ensuring TNN and its programs remain effective and relevant. Theatre Network NSW is supported by the NSW Government through Arts NSW but also partners with industry to ensure that our program is accessible. In 2015 these partnerships included venue and event partnerships with Performing Lines, Australian Theatre Forum, Bankstown Arts Centre and Urban Theatre Projects, ICE, Sydney Theatre Company. Business partnerships were created with Connecting Up, Liz Mackinlay Consulting, and Skybridge Financial Services.



Photo: TNN Secretary Viv Rosman with UTP Producer Antonia Seymour

Resources



Photo: Fiona Winning and Lina Kastoumis taking action!

Governance

To manage and govern Theatre Network NSW in a respectful, effective, accountable and environmentally responsible manner.

TNN was auspiced by Performing Lines throughout 2015 while it established its core operations and investigated how it might best operate into the future. Theatre Network NSW is supported by the NSW Government through Arts NSW. Additional financial resources, although small, were secured through service fees, event attendance income. Theatre Network NSW, like the industry it supports, is a lean organisation and is heavily reliant on pro-bono or volunteer support, its charitable status and generous in-kind partnerships.

Over 2015 the interim committee formalised its board governance, held 9 board meetings and one strategic planning session. The level of board commitment at meetings, TNN events and working groups reflect the strength of the board's commitment to the NSW theatre sector it works with.

TNN applied for and was granted Charitable Tax Status in early 2015 and was subsequently registered with the ACNC. In accordance with its not-for-profit associate status, it reports to the ACNC, ATO and NSW Office of Fair Trading. TNN also commenced investigations into obtaining DGR status and has made provision for this status in its Constitution.



Photo: Chair Julieanne Campbell welcoming attendees at TNN's Building Audience Diversity forum, 2015.

Governance

2015 Board Members are:

Julieanne Campbell

Chairperson since 2015

Currently General Manager, Urban Theatre Projects. Previous roles include General Manager, Performance Space (2003–2011) and General Manager, Parramasala.

John Baylis

Deputy Chairperson since 2015

Currently Chief Programs Officer at Bundanon Trust near Nowra. Previous roles include CEO of Stalker Theatre, Producer with Performing Lines, Director of Theatre at the Australia Council, and Artistic Director of Urban Theatre Projects.

Chris Bendall

Treasurer since 2015

Currently CEO of Critical Stages. He was previously Artistic Director and CEO of Deckchair Theatre (2008-2013), and prior to that he was Artistic Director of Theatre@Risk (2001-2007)

Viv Rosman

Secretary & Public Officer since 2015

Currently Executive Producer and Co-CEO of Polyglot Theatre. Previous roles include Deputy General Manager of Griffin Theatre Company, Producer of the MAPS NSW program at Performing Lines and Program Manager of Darwin Festival.

Paschal Berry

Committee since 2015

Currently Performing Arts Development Officer, Blacktown Arts Centre, Paschal is also a playwright and theatre maker who has presented work across Australia and overseas.

Claudia Chidiac

Committee since 2015

Currently Independent Theatre Producer. Previous roles include Theatre Producer, Casula Powerhouse and Artistic Director, Powerhouse Youth Theatre.

Stephen Champion

Committee since 2015

Currently Manager of the Bathurst Memorial Entertainment Centre (BMEC) and has worked in the performing arts for 40 years. Previous roles include Associate Director with Drugie Studio Wrocławskie, Poland, Artistic Director of Jigsaw Theatre Company in Canberra, and Domain Manager for the Sydney Festival.

Andrea James

Committee since 2015

Currently Aboriginal Producer at Carriageworks. Andrea James is a descendant of the Yorta Yorta and Kurnai Aboriginal nations. Previous roles include Artistic Director of Melbourne Workers Theatre and Director of the Yellamundie Playwriting Festival in 2013. Andrea is currently a Board Director of Moogahlin Performing Arts and Urban Theatre Projects.

Elizabeth (Lizzi) Nicoll

Committee since 2015

Currently Development Director with Sydney Dance Company. Previous roles include Head of Development at National Institute of Dramatic Art, Director of The Federation of Scottish Theatre and Head of Sponsorship at the Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

Liza-Mare Syron

Committee since 2015

Currently Indigenous Research Fellow and Chair of Moogahlin Performing Arts. Department of Media, Music, Communications and Cultural Studies, Macquarie University, Australia. Previous roles include Senior Aboriginal Cultural Development Officer, Arts NSW and Head of Acting, Eora College for Aboriginal Education.

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