

NSW Theatre Gathering 2018



NSW THEATRE GATHERING 2018

NOV 27 | 1PM | Eternity Playhouse
Darlinghurst Theatre Company

You work in NSW Theatre. This is you
gathering.

Theatre Network NSW is supported by
the NSW Government through Create NSW



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Arts, Screen & Culture

Theatre Network NSW would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional custodians of the lands on which we work, live and create. TNN would like to particularly acknowledge the Bundjalung and Eora nations in which our offices are situated and where today's event has been developed.

The NSW Theatre 2018 Gathering is devised and produced by Theatre Network NSW.

This event is supported by Darlinghurst Theatre Company & Playwriting Australia.

The Gathering's rich and considered content relies on all its participants but would not be possible without the following programmers, facilitators and presenters:

Donna Abela is an award-winning playwright dedicated to redressing myths that underpin our harmful thinking, and forging forms that offer fresh perspectives. Her play JUMP FOR JORDAN won the 2013 Griffin Playwriting Award and the 2015 Australian Writers' Guild's AWGIE Award for Stage, is on the 2019-2022 HSC Drama Syllabus, and was the creative component of her 2016 doctoral thesis entitled Dialogic Interplay: a Strategy for Representing Difference and Cultural Diversity on Stage. This year, the play was also one of three Australian plays presented in Spanish at the Women Playwright's International Conference in Santiago de Chile. Donna is currently developing FLAME TREE STREET and THE SECRET WAR ZONE, two other plays set in the culturally diverse heartland of western Sydney. She is a dramaturge, mentor, teacher, founding member of PYT | Fairfield and 7-ON, and committee member with Milk Crate Theatre and the Australian Writers' Guild.

Nick Atkins is a Playwright and Director. He graduated from UNSW with a BA Media and Communications with 1st Class Honours in practice-based research. He is currently Director, New Work for Penrith Performing & Visual Arts where he leads the Q Theatre programme at The Joan. For Q Theatre he has directed Daisy Moon Was Born This Way, Frankenstein & Teacup in a Storm. He has completed residences with Blacktown Arts Centre, Urban Theatre Projects, Performance Space, PACT, UNSW and Centre D'Art Marnay Sur-Seine. He was awarded ATYP's Foundation Commission for

his play Wonder Fly, his one-man show, A Boy & A Bean (PACT, Q Theatre) was awarded Best Performing Arts event at Mardi Gras and he recently presented his new work Boom at the National Play Festival with the support of PWA and National Theatre of Parramatta. Nick has worked as an Associate Producer and Co-Artistic Director of Crack Theatre Panel and was Board Member of PACT Centre for Emerging Artists.

Pippa Bailey is Senior Producer at Sydney Festival after 4 years as Senior Producer with Performing Lines. She is a current Advisory Board Member of IETM, International network for contemporary performing arts. Pippa believes in the power of art and culture to open hearts, change minds and bring disparate peoples together. She works in theatre, dance, live events and large scale outdoor performance and has programmed for multi-arts centres, curated galleries, built a museum and played with fire. With a background in TV and music, the projects Pippa delivers are often participatory and always collaborative, reaching out to different audiences and outside the arts to other sectors. With Performing Lines Pippa worked with some of Australia's most exciting contemporary artists, with Total Theatre she produced a rigorous awards process at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and through BiDiNG TiME developed an ambitious global theatre project, imagining a new 'fairtrade' model for international collaboration.

Vanessa Bates is an award winning playwright, both produced and published. Plays include A Ghost In My Suitcase (Sydney Fest 2019, Melb Int Arts Fest 2018, Perth Fest 2019) Captain Dalisay, Trailer, Every Second, The Magic Hour, PORN.CAKE (NSW Premiers Literary Award) Checklist For An Armed Robber and Darling Oscar. She has been produced by The Malthouse, theatre@risk, Sydney Theatre Company, Belvoir B-Sharp, Griffin, Vitalstatistix, Deckchair, The Ensemble, atyp, Tantrum, Darlinghurst Theatre, Stogged and ABC Radio among others. She has won an AWGIE Award, a Premiers Literary Award and been shortlisted for the Griffin Award, the STC Patrick White Award and Theatre 503 New Play Award 2018. She has received a residency at Varuna and at the Cite Internationale des Arts in Paris. She is a NIDA Playwrights Studio grad and is one seventh of playwrights' company 7-ON.

Chris Bendall is a nationally respected and award-winning arts

leader, artistic director, creative producer & festival director. He is currently Director & CEO of Critical Stages, touring outstanding professional theatre and live performance to regional and metropolitan audiences across Australia and New Zealand (2014-present). He was previously Guest Curator of the 2013 National Play Festival for Playwriting Australia; Artistic Director & CEO of Deckchair Theatre (2008-2012) in Fremantle WA, and Artistic Director of Theatre @ Risk in Melbourne (2001-2007).

Branch Nebula was founded in 1999 by Lee Wilson and Mirabelle Wouters as a vessel to hold their communal creative exploits. Branch Nebula makes socially and politically engaged performance work and are recognised as one of Australia's most adventurous performance companies working at the nexus between performance, dance, sport and street-styles. They take their work into the public sphere in order to access audiences that do not engage with contemporary performance and dance, and who are not in the habit of going to the theatre because of socio-economic reasons. The basis of Branch Nebula's practice and choreographic concerns are site-specificity, inter-disciplinary skills and audience engagement.

Mel Carolan is Creative Producer at Critical Stages, where she's responsible for the delivery of the company's regional and national tours. In 2018 Critical Stages toured nine productions by independent companies, visiting 80 venues across the country and employing over 60 artists. Mel was previously Associate Producer at Griffin Theatre Company where her projects included Angus Cerini's The Bleeding Tree (Winner of the 2016 Helpmann Award for Best Play), Alana Valentine's Ladies Day, and Justin Fleming's The Literari (a co-production with Bell Shakespeare). Other previously-held positions include Administration & Program Coordinator at Griffin - where she oversaw the delivery of Griffin Independent - and Assistant to the Artistic Director at Merrigong Theatre Company. Mel is a graduate of the University of Wollongong.

Cathy Craigie is a Gamilaroi and Anaiwon woman from northern NSW and has worked in media and the arts for over 20 years. Update 26.11. 2018 Cathy sends her apologies and is unable to attend.

Peta Downes is a theatre director, producer and arts educator of over

twenty-five years' experience. Peta is currently Program Leader for AIM Dramatic Arts and a PhD candidate with the University of Sydney. She was Course Manager - National Short Courses for NIDA's Open Program from 2010-11 and Executive Coordinator - Creative Industries for University of Western Sydney from 2011-14 and holds a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Directing (QUT), a Bachelor of Arts – Honours -1A in Directing and Educational Drama (QUT) and a Graduate Diploma in Arts Management (UTS). She was an associate artist with Zen Zen Zo Physical Theatre Company from 1996-99, where she trained in the Suzuki and Viewpoints methods and performed the role of Lady Macbeth in the 1998 inaugural production of "Macbeth: As Told by the Weird Sisters".

Bronwyn Edinger has 25 years' experience in the management of the performing arts as a CEO and consultant. She is currently General Manager of Glen Street Theatre and Chair of Theatre Network NSW. Her arts industry roles include founding General Manager of Perth Theatre Company, General Manager of Arts on Tour NSW, Director of Illawarra Performing Arts Centre (Merrigong Theatre Company), General Manager of Black Swan State Theatre Company, General Manager of City Recital Hall Angel Place, and General Manager of Bell Shakespeare. Bronwyn has been president of both the national (APACA) and NSW performing arts centres' associations (NAPACA).

Wesley Enoch hails from Stradbroke Island (Minjeribah) in Queensland and is a proud Noonuccal Nuugi man. He is a writer and director for the stage and joined the Sydney Festival as Artistic Director in 2015. He was creative consultant, segment director and indigenous advisor for the opening and closing ceremonies of Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in 2018; the Artistic Director of Queensland Theatre Company from 2010 – 2015; Associate Artistic Director at Belvoir St Theatre from 2007- 2010; Australia Council Artistic Director for the Australian Delegation to the 2008 Festival of Pacific Arts; director of Opening Ceremony, MY SKIN, MY LIFE for the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne; Artistic Director of Ilbijerri ATSI Theatre Co-op 2003-2006; Resident Director at the Sydney Theatre Company from 2000-2001 and Artistic Director of Kooemba Jarrar Indigenous Performing Arts

from 1994-1997. His plays include BLACK MEDEA, THE 7 STAGES OF GRIEVING and THE STORY OF THE MIRACLES AT COOKIE'S TABLE. Wesley's recent directing work includes MOTHER COURAGE & HER CHILDREN and HAPPY DAYS. He has a commitment to new work and has directed many world premieres including COUNTRY SONG, HEADFUL OF LOVE, TROLLOP, WALTZING THE WILARRA and BLACK DIGGERS. "

Linda Gao joined TNN in 2018 as Membership Drive Manager and has worked in sales and marketing in the Arts, TV and Film industries for the last three years. Linda has previously worked for Entertainment One Australia, Avalon Distribution in London, The University of Sydney Union and the University of NSW. Linda is also a graduate of Commerce and Arts from the University of Sydney, and outside of her passions for broadcast media and the performing and visual arts, is an amateur textile designer specialising in watercolour prints.

Imogen Gardam joined Bell Shakespeare in 2015 as Executive Assistant, and has since been appointed Artistic Administrator, supporting General Manager Gill Perkins and Artistic Director Peter Evans. Imogen works across casting and contracting for the Company. Imogen is a graduate of Media and Communications from the University of Sydney, and has previously worked for Hopscotch Features, Entertainment One Australia and The Festivalists. Imogen also runs and produces for independent company Montague Basement, which she co-founded in 2014. Imogen is the 2018 winner of the Rose Byrne Scholarship for an Emerging Female Leader in the Arts.

The Hon Don Harwin is a minister in the NSW Liberals and Nationals State Government and leader of the Government in the Legislative Council. He is Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities and Minister for the Arts. Don Harwin has been a member of the New South Wales Legislative Council since March 27, 1999 and served as the 20th president of the Council between May 2011 and January 2017. He has been the leader of the Government in the Legislative Council since January 2017. Don Harwin was elected to the NSW Legislative Council at the 1999 state election and was re-elected in 2007 and again in 2015 for eight-year terms. In his maiden speech, he said he stood for "the dignity of the individual,

achieved through freedom, including the right to speak freely, assemble, vote, practise religion, own private property and, generally, live one's life with maximum freedom as long as no harm is done to another individual". Mr Harwin has written contributions to several volumes of NSW political history including: "Joseph (later Sir Joseph) Hector McNeil Carruthers" in Turner K, and Clune D, eds, The Premiers of New South Wales, Federation Press, Sydney 2005; "Women in the NSW Coalition parties" (with J Gardiner) in Brenna D, and Chappell L, eds, No Fit Place for Women?: Women in New South Wales Politics 1856-2006, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2006; "The 1971 Election" in Hogan M, and Clune D, eds, The People's Choice: Electoral Politics in 20th Century New South Wales, University of Sydney, 2001."

Jane Kreis is the Director of Theatre Network NSW. Jane has over 20 years' experience in the Australian arts & cultural industry and academia. She lives in Grafton on NSW's North Coast and travels extensively in her Theatre Network NSW role which focuses on building capacity in the NSW theatre industry and, in particular, the independent and small to medium sector of that industry. Jane specialises in sustainable, creative practice in Australian arts. Her 2010 doctoral thesis "Together Alone: Conditions for Sustainability in Australian Independent Theatre" was carried out with the Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong. This non-economic framework and her career experience underpin much of her current role with the Theatre Network of NSW. Jane worked for over 10 years as an actor/director, but her research degrees and experience in French and journalism are equally important to her arts & cultural career. Her previous research and publications (under O'Donnell maiden name) include "The Actor's Journey: Key Principles of Performance Presence" & "Distance and the Press: A Case Study of New Caledonia".

Irene Lemon is a performing artist, and has toured extensively across regional and remote NSW for over 20 years. She has over 10 years' experience coordinating community arts projects including internationally with AusAID in Pacific Nations, and a robust grant writing freelance consultancy which has secured over 4.8MIL for artists and community organisations in regional Australia. Irene is the NSW Department of Industry Business Connect Creative Industries Business Advisor, one of

only two in the state, and is contracted through Creative Plus Business to deliver one-on-one advisory sessions and workshops for regional artists and creative industry start-ups. She has also recently been invited to advise on the Department's Creative Industries task-force, contributing to the state's Strategic Plan for the NSW Creative Industries.

Amy Maiden is Head of Development & Marketing with Sydney Festival. General Manager with Australian Theatre for Young People (ATYP) and has Amy was General Manager with Australian Theatre for Young People (ATYP) and has built her theatrical career globally, with experience across a variety of roles and facets in the industry including with global marketing agency AKA in London, New York and Sydney. Amy's career has allowed to work with companies and producers including Sydney Opera House, The National Theatre of Great Britain, The Royal Court, The Powerhouse Museum Sydney, The Young Vic, as well as the full gamut of large-scale musical and commercial theatre.

Suzie Miller is a multi-award winning Australian/International playwright. She is a NIDA graduate, has an MA from UNSW in Theatre, an Honours degree in Science and a Masters of Law. Miller has recently been in residence at; National Theatre of Scotland (2014), National Theatre in London (2011 and 2009), Griffin Theatre Sydney (2012), Ransom Theatre in Ireland (2009), Critical Stages NSW (2013), Theatre Gargantua Toronto (2013), and is the 2016 artist in residence at La Boite Theatre. She was attached to Ex Machina Quebec with Robert Lepage (2012). She is currently commissioned by companies in Australia (NSW, WA and Qld), England, Scotland and Canada. Miller has had over 35 productions of her works in theatres and festivals around the world in Australia (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth), UK, Ireland, Canada, London and NY. Amongst other awards and nominations Suzie has won the 2016 WA Premier's Award for Script/Drama; 2008 National Kit Denton Fellowship for writing with courage; 2013 AWGIE for Radio; Winner of Inscription 2009; and 2006: mentored by Edward Albee 2009; 2012 Best New Play Irish Times; Winner 2008 New York Fringe Festival 'Overall Excellence Award for Outstanding Playwriting'."

Tommy Murphy is an award-winning playwright with recent productions in New York, San Francisco, Indiana, Auckland, Melbourne and Sydney. He is the only playwright to win the NSW Premier's Award, a prestigious national writing prize, in successive years. In 2006, he was the youngest recipient of the award with *Strangers in Between*. This play toured nationally in 2008 and is published by Currency Press in a joint volume with *Holding the Man*, which had five Australian encore seasons after breaking box office records in Sydney. Tommy is a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Art (Director's Course) and a former writer in residence at Griffin Theatre Company. His plays include an adaptation of Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris* (ATYP), *Troy's House* (TRS in Sydney and La Mama in Melbourne) and *Precipice* (Young People's Theatre).

Alison (Ali) Murphy-Oates is a Wailwan woman (Central-West NSW) who was born and raised on Darkinjung land (Central Coast NSW). Ali is based on Gadigal land and is Managing Director at Moogahlin Performing Arts, working alongside a team of Co-Artistic Directors to develop, produce, and present distinctive, culturally immersive, and interdisciplinary performance works from First Peoples artists and communities. She currently serves on the boards of BlakDance Australia and Theatre Network NSW, and has previously served on the board of Moogahlin Performing Arts. In 2015 Ali co-produced the 4th National Indigenous Theatre Forum at the Judith Wright Centre as part of the Brisbane Festival and from which was developed the Australian Blackfulla Performing Arts Alliance. Ali is also an amateur weaver, and has been studying and practicing Koori methods of grass weaving.

Katie Pollock is a British/Australian playwright, based in Sydney. Her plays for theatre are *The Becoming*, *The Hansard Monologues* (*Age of Entitlement*), *Blue Italian/Nil by Sea*, *The Hansard Monologues* (*A Matter of Public Importance*), *The Blue Angel Hotel*, *A Quiet Night in Rangoon*, *A Girl Called Red* and numerous short works. Her plays for radio are *Beetroot: A bloody journey through roots and belonging*, *Nil by Sea*, *Contact*, *O is for Oxygen*, and *Blue Italian*. Her works have been produced by the ABC, Seymour Centre, Merrigong Theatre, Redline Productions, Casula Powerhouse, Museum of Australian Democracy, Hothouse Theatre, Tamarama Rock

Surfers, *subtenuance*, *Apocalypse Theatre*, *New Theatre*, *The Street Theatre*, *Site & Sound Festival*, *Sydney Fringe Festival*, *Eastside FM* and *Newtown Theatre*. She is the winner of the 2018 Rodney Seaborn Playwrights Award for *People Inside Me*; the inaugural *Town Hall Theatre (USA)* 'Ingenious' grant, the *Inscription/Edward Albee Playwriting Scholarship* and the *Australian Writers Guild's What Happens Next* competition for *Normal*; the *Martin Lysicrates Prize for Summerland*; and *Hothouse Theatre's Solo* competition.

PYT | Fairfield is the leading professional youth theatre company in Western Sydney, situated in Fairfield. We create new, innovative and inclusive performing arts opportunities led by collaborative processes and participation. Our work is inspired by our local community and engages with concepts of cultural diversity.

Saman Shad began her career as a playwright by being part of an Asian women's theatre group called Kali. Her first play ended up going to the Edinburgh fringe festival. Saman has been a writer in residence at the Hampstead Theatre and the Soho Theatre and has had her work read in theatres across London. She also wrote a children's play for the Hampstead Theatre. In Sydney, Saman wrote an immersive theatre piece which was presented at the Rocks Pop up Festival. Her play, *The Second Son*, was performed in Melbourne last year. She is also a journalist and writes for *The Guardian*, *SMH*, *SBS* and other publications. Last year she received development funding from Screen Australia to write her screenplay, *One of Us*.

Penny Watts is an experienced theatre General Manager currently working with Merrigong Theatre Company, Critical Stages and the NSW & ACT Performing Arts Centres Association (NAPACA). Penny was the first General Manager with Monkey Baa Theatre from 2012-2018. Penny came to that role having worked from 2007 to 2011 for Really Useful Company as 'Cats' General Manager and then as Executive Producer of Really Useful Company. Prior to that Penny was General Manager for Perth Theatre Company; General Manager at Riverina Theatre Company; Tour Coordinator at Arts on Tour NSW and Production Manager for Railway Street Theatre Company.





Afternoon Program

REGISTRATION OPENS at 12.30PM for a prompt 1pm start...

SESSION 1: 1PM - 2PM

Welcome by Jane Kreis, Theatre Network NSW

Introduction by Event Facilitator Wesley Enoch, Sydney Festival

Four stories from our sector developed through a collaborative process through survey responses, meeting notes and workshops. The resulting four monologues, written by NSW playwright Donna Abela, firmly place the craft of theatre at the beginning of the afternoon's program. They form a catalyst for the discussions and interviews with each of our brave storytellers about how the sector is working on its priorities, hopes and values with one another and our communities:

- NSW Performing Arts & Screen Wellbeing Advisory Group's representative - Irene Lemon
- NSW Independent Theatre Advisory Group's representative - Mel Carolan
- NSW Theatre Producers Advisory Group's representative - Chris Bendall
- "Wake Up! Imagine Better" NSW Theatre and the Environment Advisory Group's representative - Pippa Bailey

Audience and Storyteller discussion facilitated by Wesley Enoch.

SESSION 2: 2PM - 3.15PM

Facilitated breakout sessions on sector-led topics and priorities, with playwrights Donna Abela, Vanessa Bates, Saman Shad, Tommy Murphy, Katie Pollock, Nick Atkins.

3.15PM - 3.50PM

Afternoon Tea

During this time material from Sessions 1 & 2 will be crafted into the TNN "NSW State of Theatre Address" by Playwright Suzie Miller and will be presented live from the stage. Please make your way back into the auditorium for 4pm.

SESSION 3: 4PM - 4.30PM

Welcome to & Address by The Hon. Don Harwin MLA, NSW Minister for the Arts

NSW State of Theatre Address by Playwright Suzie Miller

4.30PM - 5.30PM

Drinks and Celebration at the Eternity Playhouse Bar

5.30PM Event close

Watch out for live performance throughout the program in the shape of Enflame by Branch Nebula and PYT | Fairfield. Enflame is constructed as a modular series of actions in an unannounced, guerrilla intervention for events, festivals, foyers conferences and openings. Featuring Lucia May, Cheng Tang, Ebube Uba, Cheryn Frost.

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