



Back to Back Theatre's 2017

YEAR IN REVIEW



**Theatre changes me as a person,
that's what theatre does it changes
ya', it is something else, like
sliding down a slide. Theatre is
about making something special,
and rememberable. You have to
see it over and over again because
every time it is different. You
always get excited about the
next thing that is going to happen
in the theatre. The actors are so
soft and beautiful and front-full.
And you know that the first line
that comes out of their mouth,
you won't forget that line
throughout the entire play.**

**Theatre is for the rich. The poor.
For the loneliness. For the
forgiveness.**

**– An essay extract for *Imagined Theatres*
Sonia Teuben, Ensemble member**

Cover:

Main image: ODDLANDS co-star

Simon Laherty Small image:

ODDLANDS co-stars Simon

Laherty & Sonia Teuben

Illustrations: Rhian Hinkley

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Chair's Address

It has been a pleasure to begin my term as Chair of Back to Back Theatre this year, particularly at such an exciting time for the company.

In 2017, we marked the creation of our first major work for film, ODDLANDS. Starring two of our Ensemble, Simon Laherty and Sonia Teuben, with supporting roles from Ensemble members and 20 community members, the film was shot at home in Geelong and is set to broadcast on ABC in 2018. ODDLANDS will be a significant step towards increased representation of diversity on screen in Australia.

Further afield, we toured our latest work, LADY EATS APPLE, to Perth, Sydney, Hamburg, Vienna and Amsterdam and celebrated the 11th international residency of THE DEMOCRATIC SET at Tweetakt Festival in Utrecht, The Netherlands. In another new venture, we took THE DEMOCRATIC SET films into the gallery space for the first time, with two major exhibitions, *Ready for the Stage Act 1 & 2* at Arp Museum, Remagen, Germany and *We Are People: An Exhibition of The Democratic Set* at The Substation, Newport in Melbourne. It has been so rewarding to see the impact of works created with community members from all over the world finding ways to reach significant new audiences.

Our Community Programs this year provided an important point of intersection between established and emerging artists. We witnessed intensely creative collaborations at CAMP 2017 and held our first International Visiting Artists Week. Our community performance makers Theatre of Speed worked with students from Barwon Valley School and Geelong Grammar School, collaborated with two guest artists and began the development of a new work called SOCIETY. We also celebrated the international premiere of RADIAL at No Limits Festival, Berlin, an experimental film project that was first developed by Theatre of Speed in 2016.

The company is focused on making the best art we possibly can. The process is led by the imaginations of an amazing group of artists, some who identify as having a disability and some who don't, and the work aims to challenge the assumptions we make about ourselves, and about others. Locally, nationally and internationally we seek to help people reimagine what great art can be, and who can make it.

I extend my admiration and thanks to the remarkable Ensemble and Board, staff and collaborators; to our public supporters and private fellow travelers; to community members, carers and families, and to the audiences who inspire our future exploration.

We are honoured to have you in our midst.

Jann Kinsela

Chair

About Us

The actors and their performance tell us something about the world which we otherwise might not know exists. They bring strength, fragility, vulnerability, relentless healthy ego, tenderness, volatility, playfulness and playful deceit, and conceit. They are sly. They make us laugh.

Back to Back Theatre is a creator of surprising, original Australian contemporary performance that seeks to expand the notion of theatre and thus what is possible for people and civil society. We are presenters of that work, a collaborator with diverse and often marginalised community members with and without disabilities, and an advocate for a better world.

Back to Back Theatre is widely recognised as an Australian theatre company of national and international significance. As Back to Back Theatre matures, we move towards a simpler description of what we do. Our aspiration is to make the best theatre in the world.

Alice Nash

Executive Producer & Co-CEO

Our Purpose

Back to Back Theatre creates new forms of contemporary performance created by artists with disabilities, giving voice to social and political issues which speak to all people.

It depends on some characters or some shows. Sometimes we're someone else and sometimes we bring ourselves to the stage. We go on about our jobs a lot, because it's the best. We get to tour; we get to meet new people. A person who sits behind a desk gets bored cos there's so many meetings. Acting is a more physical job. Muck around; move around. We show people what we do. We like to welcome them into our stories. Art doesn't discriminate; it's for every single person. They see the theatre in us. What we can do as human beings.

– The Ensemble

Major Works

Back to Back Theatre has a unique and unpredictable process for making new work. Over time, shows are developed through research, improvisation and scripting, via collaboration between the ensemble, Artistic Director and guest artists. Emerging productions are driven by curiosity, and are never about a single theme or vision, but instead a list of ideas and questions which may have been raised in previous works. We invest heavily in artists and artistic process, taking up to three years to make a major work, with the intention to have it touring for a decade. Like most artists, our creative intention is to make something that is beyond our reach.

ODDLANDS

ODDLANDS is a tale of two unlikely heroes, Des and Tam, who are members of a clean-up crew in a strange toxic wasteland. It's a lousy job, but it's the best they can get. When they stumble upon what may be the wasteland's last human survivor, they have to decide between saving humanity or saving themselves.

Made in partnership with leading Australian production house Matchbox Pictures, ODDLANDS is a 28-minute film that marks Back to Back Theatre's first major foray into screen. Formerly known as BUNGHOLE, the film was shot over a week long period in May 2017, before going into an intensive editing process. ODDLANDS premiered at the Adelaide Film Festival and was winner of the Audience Award for Best Short.

Described as cheeky, dark, humorous and cutting, ODDLANDS represents an exciting opportunity for Back to Back Theatre to explore a new art form and develop the professional skillset of the company. The work addresses the historical lack of representation of people with disabilities in TV and film culture, while actively working to change the shape of employment inclusivity by generating meaningful work opportunities for artists in Geelong and beyond. The presentation of our work on screen allows us to reach a bigger audience, as we seek to transform societal attitudes about what is possible for people with disabilities.

ODDLANDS will be broadcast on ABC in 2018.

Writer & Director Bruce Gladwin **Cast** Belinda McClory, Ben Oakes, Brian Tilley, Emma Hawkins, Jacek Koman, Mark Deans, Paul Rochford, Robin Ramsay, Simon Laherty, Sonia Teuben & Zev Eleftheriou **Extras** Adam Berry, Allan V Watt, Chris Hansen, Felix Figaira, Francesca Neri, Greg Bird, Jessica Walker, Jillian Waite, Joshua Armour, Liam White, Lochie Campbell, Michael Chan, Neville Porter, Nicholas Walsh, Nikita Vietch, Phoebe Baker, Robbie Croft, Sarah Mainwaring, Scott Price & Tamika Simpson **Executive Producers** Debbie Lee & Julie Eckersley **Executive Producer & Head of ABC Arts** Mandy Chang **Producers** Alice Nash, Brendan Campbell & Stephen Corvini **Adelaide Film Festival Director** Amanda Duthie **Script Producer** Warren Clarke **Director of Photography** Matthew Temple **Production Designer** Jo Briscoe **Costume Designer** Aphrodite Kondos **Hair & Make Up Designer** John Logue **Editor** Daniela Rauli **Composer** Joff Bush **Artist Support** Nikki Watson



'A remarkable first chapter of a new screen experience. It's charming, it's compelling, it's Odd...' Adelaide Film Festival

'A singular and surprising short work for the screen'
The Australian

16 January – 24 March:
Script Development, Back to
Back Theatre Studio, Geelong

1 – 5 May:
Shoot Week, Avalon Beach &
North Geelong

9 May – 7 August:
Post Production & Editing,
Melbourne



ODDLANDS
Image: Tao Weis

10 September:
Cast & Crew Screening,
Backlot Studios, Melbourne

10 October:
World Premiere Screening,
Adelaide Film Festival, Adelaide

4 December:
Family & Friends Screening,
Village Cinema, Geelong

LADY EATS APPLE

LADY EATS APPLE takes an audience on a mythic journey exploring the fragility of human existence, set within a vast inflatable cocoon. Performed in three acts, the work uses headphone technology, beautiful soundscapes and epic set-design to present an intimate take on love, death and the in-between.

After its premiere season as part of Melbourne International Arts Festival at Hamer Hall in 2016, LADY EATS APPLE underwent further development in early 2017 and for the first time incorporated true stories of near-death experiences which we gathered first-hand from community members. The show toured to Perth International Arts Festival and Carriageworks, Sydney before venturing further afield to its international premiere, with three major seasons at Hamburg's Theater der Welt, Wiener Festwochen (Vienna Festival) and the Holland Festival in Amsterdam.

LADY EATS APPLE will be presented by the Barbican, as part of the London International Festival of Theatre (LIFT) in June 2018.

Director & Devisor Bruce Gladwin **Devisors & Performers** Brian Lipson, Mark Deans, Romany Latham, Sarah Mainwaring, Scott Price & Simon Laherty **Set Design** Mark Cuthbertson **Projection Design** Rhian Hinkley **Lighting Design & Technical Direction** Andrew Livingston & bluebottle **Composition** Chris Abrahams **Projectionist** Rhian Hinkley & Sam James **Sound Design & Mix** Lachlan Carrick & Marco Cher-Gibard **Sound System Design** Nick Carroll **Dramaturgy** Kate Sulan, Melissa Reeves & Tamara Searle **Near Death Experience Contributors** Joe Motley & Zoë Barry **Creative Development Artists** Brian Tilley, Robbie Croft, Shio Otani & Sonia Teuben **Costume Design** Eugyeene Teh **Mechanical Design & Fabrication** Kinetic Sets **Stage Manager** Alice Fleming **Assistant Stage Manager** Lucy Harrison **Production Manager** Dans Maree Sheehan **Artist Support** Nikki Watson

'Existential moments drenched in fear and vulnerability'

Australian Stage Review

'Geelong's greatest achievement. Profound and funny and epic work about love, loss and after. Amazing beautiful show' Audience member

'Seeing Act Two made me realise that I have got so much to live for' Audience member

13 – 15 February:
Creative Development, Geelong
Performing Arts Centre,
Geelong

2 – 5 March:
Season, Heath Ledger Theatre,
State Theatre Centre of WA,
Perth International Arts Festival,
Perth

16 – 18 March:
Season, Carriageworks,
Sydney



Top: LADY EATS APPLE,
Wiener Festwochen
(Vienna Festival)
Image: Zan Wimberley

Left: LADY EATS APPLE,
Wiener Festwochen
(Vienna Festival)
Image: Sam James



2 – 4 June:
Season, Thalia Theater,
Theatre Der Welt, Hamburg,
Germany

14 - 18 June:
Season, Theater an der Wien,
Wiener Festwochen (Vienna
Festival), Vienna, Austria

24 – 25 June:
Season, Stadsschouwburg
Amsterdam, Holland Festival,
Amsterdam,
The Netherlands

SMALL METAL OBJECTS

Gary and Steve are the type of people who normally go unnoticed. That is until they play a pivotal role in the lives of two ambitious executives who they've arranged to meet for a transaction. As events play out against the pedestrian traffic of a city backdrop, Gary and Steve's intensely personal drama comes to the fore, exploring friendship, respect and the notion of the outsider.

This year, Back to Back Theatre took SMALL METAL OBJECTS to Hong Kong. For the first time in the company's history, local actors were cast in two of the four roles. This generated an exciting new dimension to a work which is now in its 13th year of production.

After auditions were held in early August, SMALL METAL OBJECTS was performed at Taikoo Place, as part of Freespace festival in November. Staged in the lobby of a busy office complex, SMALL METAL OBJECTS was fully immersed in the social fabric of the city. The show was performed partly in English and partly in Cantonese, with live in-ear English translation.

Realising the show in the context of a new audience and with local cast members previously unfamiliar with Back to Back Theatre presented fresh questions about the work and its presentation outside a western setting.

Back to Back Theatre will present SMALL METAL OBJECTS in Japan in 2018.

Director Bruce Gladwin **Devisors** Bruce Gladwin, Genevieve Morris, Jim Russell, Simon Laherty & Sonia Teuben **Performers** Hollis Ngai, Onnie Chan, Simon Laherty & Sonia Teuben **Sound Design & Composition** Hugh Covill **Sound Engineer** Marco Cher-Gibard **Stage Manager & Artist Support** Nikki Watson **Production Manager** Dans Maree Sheehan

'This is my dream, to lead a theatre company someday and to devise with unique actors. To create shows and share with the world. I am grateful and I learned something more about myself' Guest Performer

'An experiment to explore the relationship between actors and architectural space'
South China Morning Post

26,760 audience members have seen SMALL METAL OBJECTS since 2005

29 – 31 August:
Auditions, West Kowloon Cultural District,
Freespace at Taikoo Place,
Hong Kong

1 – 3 November:
Season, West Kowloon Cultural District,
Freespace at Taikoo Place,
Hong Kong



**SMALL METAL OBJECTS,
Freespace at Taikoo Place**



THE DEMOCRATIC SET

THE DEMOCRATIC SET uses a custom-made film set with a neutral room and two opposing doors. Participants are invited into the set to respond to the space however they wish, with a camera recording their interactions. The individual portraits of each person or community in the space are then sewn together to create a unique collective screen portrait.

First developed with Theatre of Speed in 2008, THE DEMOCRATIC SET has since grown into an international touring residency and has been taken to 33 cities around the world. The multi-disciplinary nature of THE DEMOCRATIC SET, which uses film to record performers of all experience, trades and art forms, captures the diverse composition of communities around the globe.

In an exciting development in the work's trajectory and one unprecedented in the company's history, THE DEMOCRATIC SET appeared in a long-run exhibition *Ready for the Stage Act 1 (1900-2016)* at Arp Museum, Remagen in Germany, a major retrospective visual arts exhibition marking 100 years since the inception of Dadaism.

The project was subsequently mounted as a residency at the Tweekakt Festival in Utrecht, The Netherlands. Led by Ensemble member Scott Price, the team collaborated with school groups, ballet classes, traditional Dutch dancers and a vision impaired choir, weaving a poignant story of art in communities.

Later in the year, in an extension of THE DEMOCRATIC SET's exploration of the gallery space, a selection of the films were screened in *We Are People – An Exhibition of The Democratic Set* at The Substation, Newport in Melbourne.

As Back to Back Theatre evolves, we recognise the value of intersecting performance art with other forms as a way in which to explore and articulate the creativity of our community and the stories they seek to tell.

Original Concept, Design & Direction Bruce Gladwin **Original Set Design** Mark Cuthbertson **Original Videography** Rhian Hinkley **Residency Director** Tamara Searle **Residency Videographer** Sam James **Residency Ensemble Member** Scott Price **Production Manager** Dans Maree Sheehan

26,409 people have been part of THE DEMOCRATIC SET since 2008



THE SHADOW WHOSE PREY THE HUNTER BECOMES

THE SHADOW WHOSE PREY THE HUNTER BECOMES is a new major work in development, slated to premiere in 2019. The work is inspired by the true story of a group of men with intellectual disabilities who were employed as turkey factory workers in a rural American community from the 1960s onwards. Working in gruelling, underpaid roles for more than 30 years, this group of men lived in impoverished conditions.

Back to Back Theatre's shows unfold over time and seek to answer questions that are raised in previous works. Notions of interdependence and the dehumanisation of marginalised groups are being explored in the development of SHADOW, themes we hope will resonate for audiences. SHADOW will also look at the role of storytelling more widely, examining those whom society does and does not consider legitimate storytellers. With the audience seated in the round and the actors among them, the work will use an immersive approach to generate a sense of collective narration. The work will raise questions about our collective responsibility to society's most vulnerable.

Creative Development Artists: Brian Tilley, Bruce Gladwin, Mark Deans, Sarah Mainwaring, Scott Price, Simon Laherty & Sonia Teuben



24 – 28 July, 21 – 31 August,
16 – 23 October:
Creative Development,
Back to Back Theatre Studio,
Geelong

28 July:
Creative Development
Informal Showing,
Back to Back Theatre Studio,
Geelong

23 October:
Staff & Board
Informal Showing,
Back to Back Theatre Studio,
Geelong

This year has been hectic. Meeting new people, artists, open workshops. It has been joyful. We work together as a team. Provocative, sometimes. A muddle all over. It shows us all the different ways people can be a part of a group. It's fun to meet new people because they've got other things that can influence our work. Improvisations and guest artists. Everyone has a say, bringing their own ideas. Learning how to be different, to be stronger, to be more open minded. Eyes full of everything.

– Theatre of Speed

Community Programs

Back to Back Theatre's Community Programs provide accessible, inclusive and participatory arts programs for people with and without disabilities in the Geelong region and beyond. Collaboration is at the core of our Community Programs, having learned through longstanding experience and evaluation that this is one of the most successful ways to increase social inclusion and participation for a group of people often marginalised from mainstream society. Through public presentations of the work produced in our Community Programs, we also seek to transform societal attitudes towards people with disabilities, working to develop both the individual participants and our community at large.

Theatre of Speed

Theatre of Speed are a performance-making workshop consisting of 14 artists with intellectual disabilities who meet once a week in Back to Back Theatre's studio. The group work in collaboration with the company's Artistic Associate and esteemed guest artists to workshop ideas, develop new work and create experimental performance art that is shown to local audiences. The art produced by Theatre of Speed often evolves into larger-scale projects that are taken to national and international communities.

In 2017, Theatre of Speed worked with eight guest artists, including Ingrid Voorendt who spent five weeks mid-year developing *Dreams Are Real When You're in Them*, a reimagining of The Nutcracker story. Theatre of Speed also worked with other arts and disability organisations and schools in the region, including Barwon Valley School, Nelson Park School and Geelong Grammar School.

By using exploratory, playful and multi-disciplinary methods that are grounded in professional practice, Theatre of Speed encourages risk-taking and open communication to build trust, openness and a strong sense of social cohesion.

Participating Artists Adam Berry, Ben Oakes, Jessica Walker, Laura Berrisford, Liam White, Mark Deans, Phoebe Baker, Robbie Croft, Sarah Mainwaring, Scott Price, Simon Laherty, Tamika Simpson & Victoria Marshall
Program Curator Tamara Searle **Workshop Facilitators** Adele Varcoe, Andrew Singleton, Darren O'Donnell, Iris Gaillard, James Jackson, Shannon Quinn & Tamara Searle **Artist Support** Julie Fryman, Leanne Stein & Shannon Quinn

'Ingrid gave me the chance to be brave. Got me to something amazing. I conquered my fear' Participant

'Society was an amalgam of impish timidity, sinister cunning and joyous celebration set to the nostalgic Nutcracker Suite. Truly an amazing piece of theatre' Donor

8 February – 13 December:
Workshops

14 June:
*Dreams Are Real When
You're in Them* Showing
with Ingrid Voorendt

6 December:
Society Showing
with Tamara Searle



Society Showing
Images: Lachlan Woods

Come And Make Performance (CAMP)

Come And Make Performance (CAMP) is a weekend series of multi-disciplinary arts workshops led by practising artists for people with and without disability to explore and develop their creativity. CAMP is held every year at Back to Back Theatre, with differing participant venues each year. The Ensemble lead a warm-up session every morning to welcome new and familiar participants. This is followed by 12 separate workshops over the two days, with showings of the outcomes to our community over the course of the weekend.

This year participants crafted an installation made from junk, devised deep sea dances in handmade costumes, discussed personal politics in public speech and reimagined the role of a public gallery space, among many other wild interpretations. For the first time, we worked with Geelong Gallery to host a workshop, introducing a new space for performance making. One of our longstanding Theatre of Speed participants Ben Oakes was engaged as a Technical Intern, shadowing Back to Back Theatre's Production Manager to help set up the technical components of the weekend.

CAMP pays great respect to the art of experimentation, absurdity and nonsense. It offers a space in which people can be vulnerable and eccentric and make statements about the way they want to be perceived in society, without fear of judgement. Contributions are received and valued in an arts space that is led by the knowledge that everyone is equal.

Program Curator Tamara Searle **Workshop Facilitators** Brian Lipson, Emma Ikin, Ingrid Voorendt, Iris Galliard, Jackson Castiglione, Jason Maling, Joseph O'Farrell, Kate Sulan, Lucy Guerin, Sarah Kinsella, Soma Garner, Tamara Searle, Tanya Gerstle & Yumi Umumare **Secondment** Priscilla Ragesh

'I loved the workshops because it made me feel more free'
Participant

13 artists ran 12 different workshops for 50 participants

25 – 26 March:
Workshops, Back to Back Theatre Studio,
Geelong Gallery & Courthouse Youth Arts, Geelong



CAMP 2017 Workshop
Image: Simon Fitzpatrick

RADIAL

RADIAL captures performers from all angles, using a moving camera that is fixed to a circular track, which rotates around participants in the middle of the circle. In its first incarnation, RADIAL captured the idiosyncrasies of Theatre of Speed to spectacular effect and we decided to develop the work to reach other communities. In September we underwent a technical and creative development at Geelong's Fisherman's Pier, Geelong Performing Arts Centre and in our studio, testing different environments for the track.

In November, the company travelled to Germany to undertake a residency in collaboration with Theater Thikwa, an ensemble of multidisciplinary disabled artists, as part of the No Limits Festival in Berlin. Ensemble member Sonia Teuben led a small team to meet 12 of Theater Thikwa's ensemble and 15 community participants, to film across five days. The footage was then edited to produce *Laufen, Springen, Werfen (Running, Jumping, Throwing)*, a four-minute music video inspired by sport, teamwork and movement that was presented with jubilation at No Limits Festival to an audience from the local community.

The original RADIAL film was screened at Oska Bright Film Festival in Brighton, UK in November 2017. Film festivals present an exciting opportunity to reach new audiences and we look forward to taking RADIAL into other new spaces in 2018.

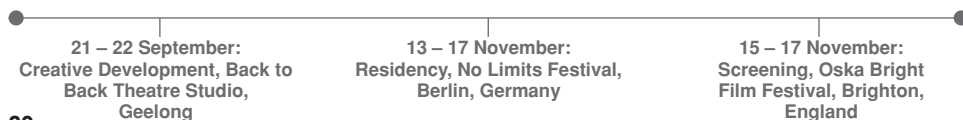
Original Concept Bruce Gladwin, Rhian Hinkley & Tamara Searle **Director** Rhian Hinkley & Tamara Searle **Videographer** Rhian Hinkley **Composer** Harry Myers Covill **Ensemble Member** Sonia Teuben **Production Manager** Dans Maree Sheehan

'From this work, everyone got more self-confidence' Participant

85% of artists said they felt more confident working across cultures since collaborating on RADIAL Berlin

'The applause at the end of each shot gave a lot of power to us'

Participant





RADIAL
No Limits Festival, Berlin
Image: Michael Bausse

International Visiting Artists Week

In July 2017, five artists from around the world joined Back to Back Theatre to learn about our process and work under the guidance and mentorship of Artistic Director Bruce Gladwin and the Ensemble. The Visiting Artists worked on the creative development of major new work *THE SHADOW WHOSE PREY THE HUNTER BECOMES* and participated in Theatre of Speed.

Back to Back Theatre often acts as a meeting point for established and emerging artists, local and international communities, professional acting and experimental workshops. With international artists arriving from Canada, Scotland and Chile to join two artists from Sydney and Geelong, this collaboration introduced some fresh new perspectives on Back to Back Theatre's work.

Visiting Artists Col Cseke, Ellie Griffiths, Katy Newell, María José Napolitano & Steve Wilson Alexander

Ensemble member Sonia Teuben spoke with artists Ellie Griffiths and Steven Wilson Alexander on their experience of the week:

Sonia: What have you got out of working with Back to Back this week?

Ellie: Partly the huge artistic ambition and being quite unapologetic about that. It's not just about what you're doing in the room, but what that means outside the room too.

Steven: Just being in the room, it's making me realise that this is what I want to do.

Sonia: I think it's great having outsiders coming into Back to Back. I feel like we can learn from the outside.

Ellie: I really enjoyed meeting everyone, the extended family of Back to Back. I found it quite challenging too, because your practice is connected to what I do but comes at it from a different place, which was perfect because I'm here to learn. My head was all full.

Steven: Sonia, how do you find working in Back to Back Theatre's studio?

Sonia: It's calm and easy. And then somehow it turns into something intense. It's like firecrackers going off.

Ellie: That's what it feels like. There's so many different elements and energies happening all the time. Every reaction is really respected. It makes you a bit less ignorant about other people. It's confronting in here and it's happening in a big way.

Sonia: It takes a while to process it.

Steven: Like crystallizing. Chunky. Juicy.

Sonia: Crystallizing is a good word.

24 – 28 July:
Back to Back
Theatre Studio, Geelong



International Visiting
Artists Week
Images: Maria José Napolitano

SERVICE LEAGUE (Working Title)

Back to Back Theatre sent a call-out to community members who identify as having an intellectual disability, inviting them to collaborate on a new project, SERVICE LEAGUE. Working across three weeks in a series of workshops, the Ensemble shared their wealth of experience and expertise in performance-making to assist those new to Back to Back Theatre.

On Day 1, everyone brought something that was of personal interest, whether it be something they loved or loathed. With this came 90s pop band memorabilia, an Oscar award, a lighter and a collection of South Park videos, among other weird and wonderful possessions. Over the course of six weeks, the group developed a visual art and video installation, using a multidisciplinary approach to the subject of personal storytelling. Participants presented the items through a live-camera, that was projected onto a screen for a standing audience to watch. All participants remained hidden behind the screen, delivering a live commentary on the different possessions presented. The work was performed to members of Geelong's cultural precinct in early December.

Designed for a gallery setting, SERVICE LEAGUE explores the ways in which we articulate and share our personal stories. It considers ideas of worth and how we form attachments to often seemingly banal objects. It's a space that can be accessed by those who have social phobias, those who have particular physical needs or those who don't use language in a traditional way. It mixes the imaginary and the real, generating a phantasmagorical effect of earnestness, humour, absurdity and genuine poignancy.

Concept Development Bruce Gladwin, Jason Maling, Lara Thoms & Mark Cuthbertson **Creative Development Artists** Allan V Watt, Annette McGovern, Brian Tilley, Bridh Gunn, Greg Bird, Harry Myers Covill, Josh Ferenbach, Joshua Haigh, Mark Deans, Nicholas Walsh, Rhian Hinkley, Sarah Mainwaring, Scott Cooper, Scott Price, Simon Laherty, Sonia Teuben & Zac Chester

'A fantastic
twisted version
of Antique
Roadshow'
Audience member

*70% of participants reported increased self-confidence
since participating in SERVICE LEAGUE*

13 – 30 November:
Creative Development Workshops,
Back to Back Theatre Studio,
Geelong

30 November:
Informal Showing,
Back to Back Theatre Studio,
Geelong

ECTOPLASM

Geelong After Dark is an annual evening of pop-up arts delivered by the City of Greater Geelong. Transforming the streets and laneways of central Geelong, the event invites participating arts venues and independent artists to share their work with the local community.

For the 2017 program, Back to Back Theatre developed an immersive multidisciplinary installation called *Ectoplasm*. Over 500 audience members came on a journey in the dark and were invited to respond to a series of questions that explored notions of death and the afterlife.

At the centre of *Ectoplasm* is a glow-in-the-dark installation, inspired by the organza material used in our latest major work LADY EATS APPLE. *Ectoplasm* was, in part, an extension of this exploration of death, in an ethereal interactive piece that places stories from our community at its core.

Director Tamara Searle **Sound Designer** Harry Myers Covill
Performers Liam Whyte & Scott Price **Guest Artist** Mark Cuthbertson

'Absolutely
beautiful'
Audience member

5 May:
Performance Installation,
Geelong After Dark,
Geelong

**Through devising, through writing,
through improvisation, through
workshops. We're actually being
paid here to work, not to do bullshit
stuff. Having a voice. Interacting
with people. Sticking up for people's
rights. Gut feeling. And imagination.
You need imagination.**

Our Impact

Back to Back Theatre continually seeks to understand the impact our major works and community programs have on our audiences in Geelong and around the world. By understanding our impact, we can create new work that has relevance in our society and deliver programs that have profound and lasting social impact.

Our Impact

After completing a formal Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis with consultants Think Impact in 2016, we have reformed our evaluation methodology to include the SROI model and our own internal process. We use a range of response methods to acquire qualitative and quantitative feedback from participants, artists and audiences. We also meet with our wider family, to understand the role the company plays in the lives of our supporters, industry friends, media and the families, friends and networks of those involved in our work.

Above all, we are interested in measuring our longitudinal impact. As such, we are currently focused on the following outcomes across all our work:

Artistic Outcomes

- Creative enrichment
- Appreciation of cultural diversity
- Creative expression and artistic satisfaction

Social & Economic Outcomes

- Increased sense of social inclusion
- Personal development and increased personal wellbeing
- Skill development and enhanced employment opportunities

Back to Back Theatre works to build slow but positive attitudinal change, so that we can work towards a more inclusive, diverse and culturally rich society.

Advice & Advocacy

Back to Back Theatre provides approximately 300 instances of advice to, and advocacy for, peer organisations and artists each year.

Awards

Adelaide Film Festival's Audience Award for Best Short, ODDLANDS

Environmental Sustainability

We invested \$5,000 in the Western Victoria Bio-Diversity Project, Myamun



Industry Events

Australian Theatre Forum
AsiaTOPA APP CAMP Associate Program, Australia Council for the Arts
Creativity & Business Breakfast Address, Currency House
Creative Hobart Forum Keynote Address, Hobart City Council
Creative State Summit Panel
Diversity in the TV Writers Room Panel Discussion, Monash University
Future Leaders Program Presentation, Australia Council for the Arts
Hall & Wilcox Breakfast Series
International Market Development, Belgium, UK and Germany
Panel Presentation, MPavilion
Q&A Session with Team Chocolate, ACMI
Shanghai Performing Arts Fair
Victorian Theatre Forum at Back to Back Theatre
WorkSafe Disability Action Plan Launch

Media

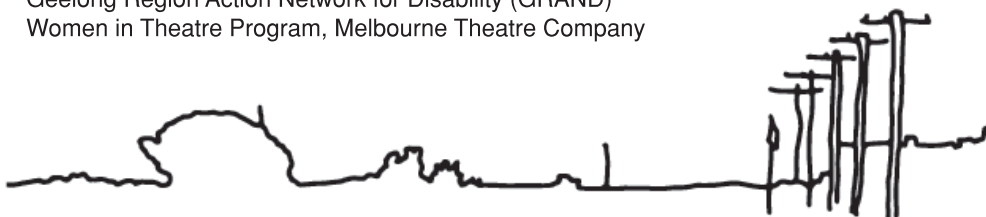
To our knowledge, we featured in 287 national and international digital and print media stories, and featured in three academic papers.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

In 2017, we worked hard to set precedents for the NDIS and the arts, spending over 400 hours ensuring that arts practice at Back to Back Theatre and in other organisations can be well supported via the scheme.

Networks & Memberships

AAA National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Arts Working Group
Arts Wellbeing Collective, Pilot Program, Arts Centre Melbourne and Geelong Performing Arts Centre
Barwon Australian Disability Enterprise Network (BADEN)
Board of Directors, Courthouse Youth Arts
Board of Directors, Theatre Network Australia
Committee for Geelong, Community Membership
Committee for Geelong, Leaders for Geelong
Creative State Advisory Board
G21 Arts & Culture Pillar
Geelong Chamber of Commerce
Geelong Performing Arts Centre Trust
Geelong Region Action Network for Disability (GRAND)
Women in Theatre Program, Melbourne Theatre Company



Mentorships & Secondments

Adelaide Film Festival HIVE Hub, Mentorship by Bruce Gladwin

Australia Council for the Arts Cross-Pollination Pilot Program

Charles Purcell, Next Wave Festival

Danielle Ierace, West Australian Opera

Marcus Youssef, New World Theatre

Priscilla Ragesh, CAMP Secondment

Sarah Farrugia, Worksafe

Tom Middleditch, Theatre of Speed

Zak Pid, Next Wave Festival

Workshops

Barwon Health Workshop, Back to Back Theatre Studio, Geelong

Schools Workshop, Poppykettle Festival, Back to Back Theatre Studio, Geelong

Theatre of Speed Open Workshop with Barwon Valley School, Geelong

Theatre of Speed Open Workshop with Geelong Grammar, Geelong

Unmasterclass Workshop, Undercover Artist Festival, Brisbane

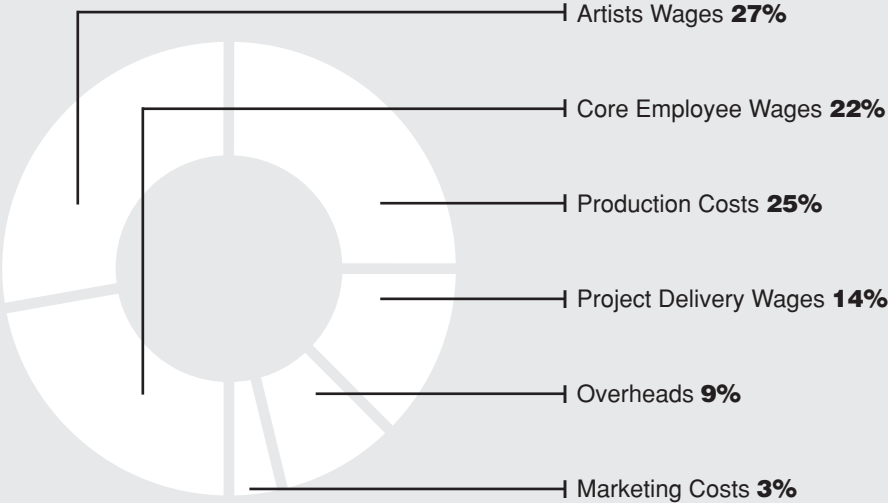
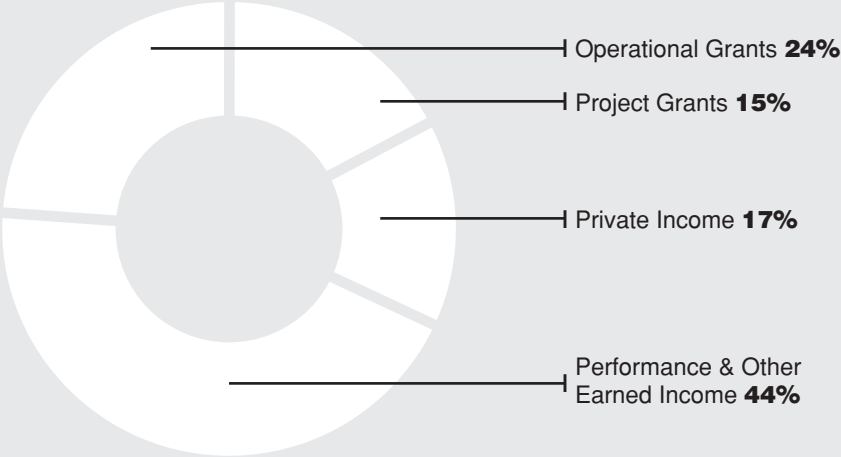
**'Sometimes I
think people
are scared to
talk to me, but
here they are
very open'**

Ensemble member

**'They let everyone have a say and they let
everyone bring their own ideas to make
something so beautiful and inspirational'**

Participant

Finance



Our Supporters

Government Partners



Back to Back Theatre is part funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

Project Partners



Community Partners



Corporate Partners



Donors

We are enormously grateful to the support of our donors in 2017. Thank you.

Aaron Spicer
Adrian Kennedy
Alex & Catherine
Angela Pamic
Anonymous (3)
Barb Dennis & Tim Orton
Ben Kay
Bobbie Hodge
Bridget Ikin
Brigid Nossal
Bruce Pollack
Callum Morton
Colin Bellis
Courtney Duncan
Debra Morgan
Diana Ryall
Edie & Jim Barton
Elea Neuman
Elizabeth Morris
Elliot Anderson
Elva Buckley
Fabienne Baldan
Fiona Menzies
Frank Costa
Frank Macindoe
Gael Wilson
Gillian Hoysted
Gillian Triggs
Hall & Wilcox
Hannah McMurtrie
Helen Firth
Helen Long
James & Genevieve Fahey
James McCaughey &
Ellen Koshland
Jann Kinsela
Jenny Schwarz

Jo Porter & Michael Nossal
Jude Munro
Julie Dyer
Karilyn Brown
Kate Nossal & Myles Neri
Katherine Barnet
Katrina Sedgwick
Katy Tyrrell
Kim Tompkins
Libby Christie
Lisa Chung
Lyn & Gus Nossal
Lynette Gillman
Margaret Lester
Marguerite Darmody
Marita Leuver
Marjorie Hall
Martin McCallum
Mary Ann Rolfe
Meg Wardlaw
Melanie Smith
Melinda Clarke
Melissa James
Meredith Martin
Michael McMahon
Michele Levine
Michelle McKenzie
Monica Le-Nguyen
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Nicole Beyer
Nikki Bloom &
Geordie Brookman
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Paul Wiegard Family
Penny Wilson

Peter Bridges
Phillip Cornwell &
Cecilia Rice
Phillip Keir
Polli Harkness
R Watson
Rob Brookman
Robin Ramsay
Ronald Kinsela
Rosalind Willett
Rose Hiscock
Rule 34
Samantha Gilligan
Sarah Benjamin
Sean Jameson
Simon Abrahams
Simon & Heather McKeon
Stephen Armstrong
Steven Di Sciascio
Susan Wilcox
Svenson Barristers
The Honourable Justice
Elizabeth Fullerton
Vicki Pryse
Wendy Dimmick &
Cate Paton
Wendy Lasica
Yoni Prior



Thank You

Thank you to those who have provided invaluable guidance and support this year.

Adrian Treahy	Jane Crawley	Michele Chung
Alison Richardson	Jane den Hollander	Michelle Finegan
Amanda Duthie	Janneke den Engelsen	Michelle Kotevski
Andrea Bruce	Jeff Busby	Miranda Brown
Andreas Meder	Jeff Challis	Mirjam Marks
Andrew Abbott	Jessica Darlow	Mirjam Reyneveld
Anna Reece	Jessica Liang	Molly McErlane
Anna Sowden	Jill Nieuwland	Nichole O'Duffy
Anne Deans	Jill Smith	Nicole Beyer
Anne-marie Geldhof	Jonathan Nicol	Olivia Lorensene
Annette McGvern	Josephine Wilson	Pauline Cady
Austin Paterson	Julie Barnes	Peter Bridges
Ben Starick	Julie Eckersley	Peter Neilson
Bobo Lee	Julie Fryman	Petra Blok
Brad Spolding	Julie Graham	Philippa Hawker
Brendan Campbell	The Honourable Justice	Professor Gillian Triggs
Bridh Gunn	Elizabeth Fullerton	Rebecca Casson
Caitlin Moore	Kali Michalidis	Robert Costa
Caroline Wake	Kaz Paton	Rosemary Hinde
Ching Ching Ho	Kee Hong Low	Rupert Reid
Claudia Purschke	Kelly Clifford	Ruth Gormley
Colin Wert	Kim Lewis	Ruth Little
Courthouse Cafe	Krystyna Croft	Sally Basser
Courthouse Youth Arts	Laura Bersch	Seasons Catering – Gen U
Cynthia Scherer	Laura McIlrath	Shannon Quinn
Dan Simmonds	Laurie Raco	Silke Stucke
Danielle Ierace	Leanne Stein	Simon Abrahams
Dave Pelletier	Liam Houlihan	Snezanka Angelovski
David Harvey	Lin Tobias	Sophie Clausen
David & Sylvia Mainwaring	Lisa Ffrench	Sophie Travers
David Singh	Lisa Havilah	Stefan Schmidtke
David Symons	Lucia Lechner	Stephen Corvini
Debbie Lee	Mandy Chang	Steve Salo
Dom Forde	Mandy Muschamp	Stuart Koop
Don Shaw	Margaret Bourke	Teresa Lawrence
Duncan Esler	Margit Moisl	Todd Murphy
Elaine Wong	Mark Beasley	Tony Ayres
Gerd Hartmann	Martina Schlögl	Tony Grybowski
Grace Kwok	Mary Ann Rolfe	Ulrich Schrauth
Graeme & Tina Price	Maurice & Jenny Laherty	Wayne Trait
Han Van Poucke	Megan Roberts	Wendy Martin
Helena Grehan	Melanie Wang	Yuki Jungesblut
Isabel Öhlinger	Melinda Clarke	

People

Ensemble

Brian Tilley (to 14 December)
Mark Deans
Sarah Mainwaring
Scott Price
Simon Laherty
Sonia Teuben (from 30 January)

Board

Barb Dennis (from 13 February)
Ben Kay
Ben Slater, Treasurer
Callum Morton
Jann Kinsela (Chair from 22 May)
Jo Porter (Chair to 22 May)
Katrina Sedgwick, Secretary
Meg Wardlaw
Phillip Keir
Rose Hiscock
Sarah Mainwaring,
Ensemble Representative
Yoni Prior, Deputy Chair

Staff

Alice Nash, Executive Producer & Co-CEO
Alison Harvey, Senior Producer
Bruce Gladwin, Artistic Director & Co-CEO
Dans Maree Sheehan, Production Manager
Erin Watson, Project Coordinator (from 8 May)
Georgia Whyte, Marketing Assistant (from 21 March)
Grace Sims, Development Coordinator
Maria Griffin, Executive Assistant
Melissa Stark, Development Manager
Nikki Watson, Community Programs Coordinator
Rebecca Kleindienst, Marketing Manager
Ryan Lewis, Marketing Assistant (to 27 March)
Susan White, Finance Manager
Tamara Searle, Artistic Associate

Theatre of Speed

Adam Berry
Ben Oakes
Jessica White
Laura Berrisford
Liam White
Mark Deans
Phoebe Baker
Robbie Croft
Rose McLachlan
Sarah Mainwaring
Scott Price
Simon Laherty
Tamika Simpson
Victoria Marshall (from 19 July)

SERVICE LEAGUE

Allan V Watt
Annette McGovern
Bridh Gunn
Greg Bird
Josh Ferenbach
Joshua Haigh
Nicholas Walsh
Scott Cooper
Zac Chester

Visiting Artists

Col Cseke (Canada)
Ellie Griffiths (UK)
Katy Newell (Geelong)
Maria Jose Duran
Napolitano (Chile)
Stephen Wilson-Alexander (Sydney)

Guest Artists & Collaborators

Adele Varcoe
Alan V Watts
Alice Fleming
Andrew Livingston (bluebottle)
Andrew Singleton
Birdman (Greg Bird)
Brian Lipson
Chris Abrahams
Chris Hansen
Darren O'Donnell
Emma Ikin
Eugyeene The
Felix Figaira
Francesca Neri
Hollis Ngai
Harry Myers Covill
Hugh Covill
Ingrid Voorendt
Iris Gaillard
Joe Motley
Kate Sulan
Kinetic Sets
Kirstin Honey
Jackson Castiglione
James Jackson
Jason Maling
Jillian Waite
Joseph O'Farrell
Joshua Armour
Lachlan Campbell
Lachlan Carrick
Lara Thoms
Liam White
Lucy Harrison
Lucy Guerin
Marco Cher-Gibard
Mark Cuthberston
Melissa Reeves
Michael Chan
Neville Porter
Nicholas Walsh
Nick Carroll
Nikita Vietch

Onnie Chan
Phoebe Baker
Rhian Hinkley
Romany Latham
Sam James
Samara Kinsella
Shannon Quinn
Shio Otani
Soma Garner
Tanya Gestle
Yumi Umumare
Zoë Barry





Image: Maria José Napolitano

30 Years

In 2017 Back to Back Theatre celebrated 30 years of making theatre in Geelong.

1988

Big Bag

Image: Cas Anderson



1989

Stinking Houses

**Cinderella, the Fat Cow
Departs**

1990

The Peg Machine

**Everything and
The Mermaid**

Image: James Penlidis



1991

**I Don't Want to Live in
Lara Anymore
Yell Blue Murder**

1992

Woodenhead

Image: Anda Stoltz

**The Adventures of
Bobbi Dazzler**



1994

Freak Show

1995

Back to Back in Shorts

1996

Road Movie

Minds Eye

1997

Peter Pan



Mr September

Image: Ponch Hawkes

1998

**Boomtown with Snuff
Puppets
Minds Eye**

1999

Mental

Image: Jeff Busby



2000
Dog Farm



2002
Soft
Image: Jeff Busby
Cow

2003
Pornstar



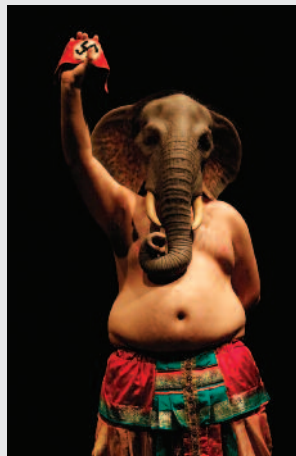
2008
Food Court
Image: Jeff Busby

The Democratic Set
Image: Carl Newland



2005
small metal objects
Image: Jeff Busby

2011
Ganesh Versus
the Third Reich
Image: Jeff Busby



2013
Super Discount

2016
Lady Eats Apple

2017
● Oddlands

A story is a dream in a person's mind. Being on stage is being in that dream. The whole time your heart is thumping and you get the sweats and your words stumble. We all know we've got a disability so we don't have to scribe it on stage. We don't make work for no reason though. We make work to have a voice and to be heard. We make work to share with the public, the punters, everyone. We make work to help them make their own work better.

I like to take the audience on a journey with us. They don't have to say straight up what they think of us. They can go away and think about it. But I'm not afraid to blow someone away. I'm not afraid to make someone have goose bumps when they're watching our show. I'm not afraid to go out there and say to an audience 'are you with me?'

Support Back to Back Theatre

Back to Back Theatre's work would not be possible without our donors. Support goes towards creating new work and delivering community programs for people with and without disability. As we look towards our future, we welcome old friends and new to join us and help the world become a better place, one wild theatre work at a time.

Contact Melissa Stark, Development Manager
on 03 5221 2029 or email melissa@backtobacktheatre.com
to make a donation or to find out more information.

**Donate online at backtobacktheatre.com/support/donate
Donations over \$2 are tax deductible**

Contact

Join our mailing list

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Email

info@backtobacktheatre.com

Street Address

60 Little Malop St, Geelong, Victoria, Australia

Postal Address

PO Box 1257, Geelong, Victoria, Australia 3220

Telephone

+61 (0)3 5221 2029

Back to Back Theatre Inc (ABN 95 834 484 241)



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