BACK TO BACK THEATRE'S 2015 YEAR IN REVIEW
WE ARE AN ENSEMBLE OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WHO MAKE THEATRE WORKS AND TROUBLE THE WORLD.
In 2015 Back to Back Theatre undertook 3 international tours including 1 first-time tour to South America, presentations in 3 regional French cities and a special 10 year celebration of our work SMALL METAL OBJECTS in Vienna. We presented 29 performances of major works to 10,424 audience members worldwide. We reached 1,575 community participants through 58 community workshops. We undertook creative development for 3 new works, hosted 7 presentations of 2 new experimental works in Geelong, ventured into blogging, and welcomed 1 new ensemble member. In all our work, we pushed ourselves and others to redefine expectations of possibility in theatre and in the world.

Awards
Australia Council Award for Outstanding Achievement in Theatre, Bruce Gladwin
Geelong Disability Awards, Finalist, Mark Deans
Give Where You Live, Inspiration Award, Back to Back Theatre

Creative Developments
LADY EATS APPLE
WE DID DIE LAUGHING
SUCKER

Experimental Laboratories
THEATRE OF SPEED
ACTING & WRITING FOR FILM & TV
UNMASTERCLASS

International Touring
GANESH VERSUS THE THIRD REICH
Vooruit, Ghent, Belgium
Culturgest, Lisbon, Portugal
Le Lieu Unique, Nantes, France
Espace Malraux, Chambéry, France
La Filature, Mulhouse, France
Festival Internacional de Buenos Aires (FIBA), Buenos Aires, Argentina
Fundación Festival Internacional Teatro a Mil, Santiago, Chile
SMALL METAL OBJECTS
Vienna Festival, Vienna, Austria

Geelong Presentations
SUCKER by Theatre of Speed
WE DID DIE LAUGHING by Theatre of Speed at Geelong After Dark
CAMP Come And Make Performance

Advocacy & Leadership
National Disability Insurance Scheme Rollout: Advocating for artistic practice via the NDIS
Internships & Secondments: Hosting individuals to help them learn
Based in the regional centre of Geelong, Back to Back Theatre is an outstanding Australian theatre company of national and international significance.

Driven by an ensemble of actors with disabilities, the company creates new forms of contemporary performance giving voice to social and political issues that speak to all people.

Back to Back Theatre makes work locally and tours it globally. In addition to its professional practice, Back to Back Theatre collaborates intensively with communities throughout Victoria, Australia and beyond. The company is considered one of Australia's most important cultural exports, a leader in its field and a guide to others.

Back to Back Theatre seeks to make theatre that redefines expectations of possibility, that challenges the assumptions we hold about ourselves and about others, resulting in real social change.

The company’s aspiration is to make the best theatre in the world.

GOALS

Great Art – Create an exceptional and unexpected body of work that challenges artistic, social and political convention

Impact, Advocacy & Leadership – Effect positive social change via audacious artistic practice and sectoral leadership

Audience & Communication – With our actors as the voice and public face of the company, strengthen audience and relationships locally, nationally and internationally to maximise reach

Sustainability – Build organisational resilience via a culture of acuity and clarity in strategic partnership with others

THE BACK TO BACK THEATRE ENSEMBLE

Images: Rhian Hinkley

Brian Tilley  Mark Deans  Romany Latham  Sarah Mainwaring  Scott Price  Simon Laherty
Brian Tilley, Mark Deans, Romany Latham, Sarah Mainwaring, Scott Price & Simon Laherty

Life in 2015 was full of successes and failures. We worked hard on LADY EATS APPLE and we think the show is going to blow people’s minds. So this is high up on our list of successes. We interviewed people who have had near death experiences. We’re still divided on our beliefs in the afterlife, but we agree there must be something there, Simon says he has to believe if there’s any hope of coming back as band manager for Britney Spears. We don’t know the exact end point of LADY EATS APPLE, but now we know one is possible.

Romany is quite satisfied with his first year as part of the ensemble and how he has settled in to the group, so this is on the list of successes too. Romany thinks differently to everyone else, but we love difference in opinions.

It was the company’s first time to South America in 2015 and it was done well. Simon celebrated 10 years of SMALL METAL OBJECTS in Vienna with a sell out season.

He met the Ambassador at his penthouse for a drink after one of the shows. Bruce and Mark won awards too. We made sure we recognised each other’s achievements at company meetings and staff meetings.

We had worker reviews and the opportunity to table some concerns. We worked with the community for CAMP, presented shows with THEATRE OF SPEED and helped Bruce deliver UNMASTERCLASS. It’s an important part of our time here, to integrate with the community, to share our knowledge and to meet new people.

Alice took some time off last year. If you didn’t know, Alice works at Back to Back; she is the Executive Producer. Generally speaking she is the person who keeps the entire place running, so she makes us possible. Alice is hard working, and she respects other people’s worlds. Alice talks to people at parties. She is a great person to talk to about visiting festivals around the world.

Simon reckons Alice is higher than Bruce, more important than Bruce. Simon reckons we should sack Bruce and bring Alice into the creative team. It was good to have her back after her holiday.
At Back to Back Theatre we contend that our operation as a theatre company is beyond expectation of possibility: an affirmation for human potential. The company’s existence contributes to the richness and diversity of Australian life and palpably projects Geelong, Victoria and Australia to the world as innovative, sophisticated and dynamic.

Each major new work ambitiously aims to have a minimum of a decade’s global touring. In 2015 we marked the 10th anniversary of our iconic, site-specific work SMALL METAL OBJECTS at the Vienna Festival, having now presented the work in 34 cities across 15 countries and reaching 25,548 audience members since 2005. We are truly humbled the show has had such enduring impact for audiences worldwide.

2015 saw GANESH VERSUS THE THIRD REICH tour to Ghent (Belgium), Lisbon (Portugal), Nantes, Chambéry and Mulhouse (France), followed by a debut tour of South America with seasons in Buenos Aires (Argentina) and Santiago (Chile). In all destinations, we were astounded by the heart of our audiences.

Our community programs provided a point of intersection between established and emerging artists, acting as a crucible for new ideas and inter-disciplinary practice. We spread our wings into the screen world, recruiting 17 community participants for ACTING & WRITING FOR FILM AND TV and held intense collaborations of CAMP (COME AND MAKE PERFORMANCE), THEATRE OF SPEED’s elegant SUCKER and WE DID DIE LAUGHING.

As Chair and CEOs of Back to Back Theatre, we extend our admiration and thanks to the ensemble, Board and staff; to our public supporters and private fellow travellers; to community members, carers and families. You are travelling with us to create theatre that is seemingly impossible and we are honoured to have you in our midst.

We thank audiences who bear witness to our work and inspire our future exploration. A theatre show does not exist without an audience, taking place in large part in the wild, hopeful, complex imaginations of those who behold it. We could not be on the world’s most important stages without your incredible attention and presence.

Working in the arts in Australia in 2015 was not easy. The funding landscape shifted under our feet: we felt the fragility of experimental artistic practice more poignantly than ever, but we were heartened as artists, private supporters, audiences and politicians across the country affirmed our collective importance to the nation.

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Jo Porter, Chair
Alice Nash, Executive Producer & Co-CEO
Bruce Gladwin, Artistic Director & Co-CEO

As explorers of narrative complexity, our priority is making challenging works of scale that dissect the unspoken imaginings of society. Exploring our place in time, new works are developed as part of a creative continuum with each responding to the one before. Creative development in 2015 focused on the company’s most ambitious work to date, a show titled LADY EATS APPLE. Set inside a vast inflatable, LADY EATS APPLE examines the awesomeness of our existence and the simultaneous tragedy of our death.

The company acted as a reference point and resource for disability arts practitioners and organisations in Australia and beyond, and we provided essential advocacy, leadership and mentorships to artists with and without disabilities.
LADY EATS APPLE Creative Development
Image: Jeff Busby
In 2015, we continued the creative development of a major new work, LADY EATS APPLE, which will have its world premiere in 2016. Through LADY EATS APPLE, we aim to harness our primal intuition, to be raw, pure and simple, and to embrace the unpredictable.

In the act of creating LADY EATS APPLE, the cast – who themselves symbolically represent restriction and limitation - advocate for individual empowerment, to have total freedom to examine, question and criticise, to challenge dogmas, norms, rules and institutions.

Located within a vast, awe-inspiring inflatable auditorium, this work transports the audience to the lush scenographic landscapes of the Garden of Eden, a snowstorm in medieval Europe and the frenetic urban jungle. In 2015, with the invaluable support of our neighbours, GPAC (Geelong Performing Arts Centre), we realised the shifting landscapes of the new work.
More than ever, long live theatre!
GANESH VERSUS THE THIRD REICH TOURING

**Vooruit**
Ghent, Belgium
7 May – 8 May

**Culturgest**
Lisbon, Portugal
14 May – 15 May

**Le Lieu Unique**
Nantes, France
19 May – 20 May

**Espace Malraux**
Chambéry, France
26 May – 27 May

**La Filature**
Mulhouse, France
2 June

**Festival Internacional de Buenos Aires (FIBA)**
Buenos Aires, Argentina
25 September – 27 September

**Fundación Festival Internacional Teatro a Mil**
Santiago, Chile
2 October – 4 October
We began at Vooruit, in Ghent, Belgium. This arts complex, built by the Ghent Socialist Movement in 1913, is an outstanding example of excellence in design and programming. The audience's attentiveness gave way to hearty applause at curtain call, leading into a lively discussion in the café after both shows.

Our two shows at the Culturgest Festival in Lisbon, Portugal, were well served by the exceptional sound system and broad proscenium in the Grand Auditorio. The Q&A after the second performance was a standout. Host Francisco Fraciao’s understanding of the layered nuance of the text supported questions around the process of devising work. The Australian Ambassador to Portugal, Ms. Anne Plunkett, attended the second performance.

We were quickly swept to our next engagement in an old biscuit factory in Nantes, France. The venue’s reputation as a ‘factory producing the imaginary’ felt like a good match for Back to Back. We were joined by a large number of high school students, so a younger-than-average audience dominated the auditorium for both performances.

A highlight of our season at Espace Malraux, Scène Nationale in Chambéry, France, came at a workshop with a local high school. A student in beautiful yet halting English asked Scott if the members of the ensemble accepted their disability in a positive way, noting both their professional achievements together with their position outside the ‘norm’. Scott responded with pragmatism and eloquence, explaining the pride he has in his work, and how his ability as an artist with a disability is what had brought him to Chambéry in the first place. The potency of the ensemble’s influence on perceptions of disability was again highlighted in this context.

We journeyed to La Filature in Mulhouse, France, where GANESH captivated an audience of 527. Monica-Guillouet Gélys, Director and Renaud Serraz, International Artistic Advisor had seen the work in Vienna in 2012 and more recently in Basel in 2014; they spoke of its relevance on the stage now and then, and how pleased they were for it to be at La Filature after all this time.

We embarked on our first tour of South America with a season at Festival Internacional de Buenos Aires (FIBA) at Teatro Coliseo, Buenos Aires, where as well as three shows, we presented our first incarnation of our one-day workshop UNMASTERCLASS. We attended a function in our honour at the home of Noel Campbell, Australian Ambassador to Argentina, who then brought guests along to enjoy the last show.

In Santiago, Chile, GANESH was presented in Teatro Municipal de las Condes under the auspices of the Fundación Festival Internacional Teatro a Mil, an extension of Festival Internacional de Buenos Aires. Audiences were attentive and warm with laughter.

A renowned theatre director in the audience said: “I have been trying for 30 years to get a moment of connection on the stage between two actors that can be read by an audience. But you did it there, just in a moment; you did it, between Mark and the tyrannical director. You have renewed my faith in the capacity of theatre to transform. I can keep working.”

It seems fitting to end with a handwritten note that was passed to Alice Nash in the foyer in Santiago. It was written – so we were told – by the famous Chilean actress, Calu Rivero. It read:

“Sometimes, and this is one of those stellar, one of those special moments, where theatre performs a miracle and brings together – through a new beauty – soul, heart and ethics. More than ever, long live theatre!”

Engagement Post show Q&As in Ghent, Lisbon & Buenos Aires, Meet & Greets in Chambéry & Mulhouse, Welcome Event in Buenos Aires, post show talk in Santiago, UNMASTERCLASS workshops in Buenos Aires & Santiago.
Devisors Bruce Gladwin, Genevieve Morris, Jim Russell, Simon Laherty & Sonia Teuben
Performers Genevieve Picot, Luke Ryan, Simon Laherty & Sonia Teuben
Stage Manager Alice Fleming
Sound Composer & Designer Hugh Covill
Sound Engineer Marco Cher Gibard

Back to Back Theatre presented a sell-out season, seven shows, of SMALL METAL OBJECTS at the Vienna Festival. The work was performed outside a busy train station on the corners of Mariahilferstrasse and Neubaugasse.

As ever, we were welcomed with perfect elegance by the exquisite team of the Vienna Festival, shepherded by our long-standing colleague, Stefan Schmidtke, who had staged the European Premiere of the work at Theaterformen in Hannover in 2007.

A decade ago we set ourselves the playful yet ambitious goal: to tour SMALL METAL OBJECTS for 10 years. The work premiered at the 2005 Melbourne Festival, so the 2015 Vienna Festival marked its tenth anniversary. Since 2005, SMALL METAL OBJECTS has been presented in 34 cities, 15 countries to 25,548 audience members.

“I was extremely fortunate to get to see SMALL METAL OBJECTS in Vienna a few weeks ago. I still think about it and have told my friends about it. It was a brilliant and moving performance.”
— Audience member, Vienna

SMALL METAL OBJECTS has travelled to:

Vienna Festival (Austria), Unity Festival (Cardiff, Wales), Seoul Performing Arts Centre (South Korea), Geelong Performing Arts Centre (Australia), The Kennedy Center (Washington DC, USA), Philadelphia Live Arts Festival (USA), Portland Institute of Contemporary Art, TBA Festival (USA), Arnolfini / Bristol Old Vic (Bristol, UK), Kampnagel (Hamburg, Germany), Exodus Festival (Ljubljana, Slovenia), Linz European Cultural Capital 09 (Austria), Singapore International Festival of Arts, Walker Art Center (Minneapolis USA), On the Boards (Seattle, USA), Flynn Center for the Performing Arts (Burlington, USA), PuSH International Performing Arts Festival (Vancouver, Canada), Harbourfront Centre (Toronto Canada), Under the Radar Festival / Public Theater (New York, USA), The Barbican / Theatre Royal Stratford East (London, UK), Dublin Theatre Festival (Ireland), Zürcher Theater Spektakel (Zurich, Switzerland), Noorderzon (Groningen, The Netherlands), Kobenhavns Internationale Teater (Copenhagen, Denmark), Paris quartier d’été (France), Theaterformen (Hannover, Germany), Ten Days on the Island (Hobart, Australia), The Capitol (Bendigo, Australia), Mildura Wentworth Arts Festival (Australia), Artshouse (Melbourne, Australia), Brisbane Powerhouse (Australia), Perth International Arts Festival (Australia), Sydney Festival (Australia), Australian Performing Arts Market (Adelaide, Australia), Melbourne International Arts Festival (Australia).
In 2015, Back to Back Theatre began an ambitious new screen project, ACTING & WRITING FOR FILM & TV.

We recruited and auditioned 17 Artists-in-Residence to train alongside our ensemble and other industry professionals, developing skills and knowledge in writing and acting for screen. Led by individuals with intellectual disabilities from the Geelong region, this will be our first step in a bigger planned foray into screen worlds.

Our objective to improve employment outcomes for individuals with intellectual disabilities is fundamental to this project, however this initiative also acknowledges the lack of diversity we still have on our screens in Australia, and the importance of representing difference on screen. It also affirms that people with disabilities can work as performing artists, engaging a larger and more diverse audience base.
THEATRE OF SPEED

WE ARE THEATRE OF SPEED. We are a group of people that make performance. We speak the truth. We don’t discriminate. We try and go for something and try not to be afraid. If you’re having trouble expressing your emotions, come and we will help relieve you of your stresses.

Workshop Facilitators Alisa Tanaka-King, Chris Kohn, Iris Gaillard, James Jackson, Jason Maling, John Howard, Tamara Searle & Wendy Grose

Participating Artists Adam Berry, Ben Oakes, Brian Tilley, James Lewis, Jessica Walker, Laura Berrisford, Mark Deans, Phoebe Baker, Polly Munday, Robbie Croft, Romany Latham, Rose McLachlan, Sarah Mainwaring, Scott Price, Simon Laherty & Tamika Simpson

Artist Support Leanne Stein

Secondments James Jackson, Jessica Leaming, Kate Stones, Suzanne Inglebrecht & Sherilee Kahui

Theatre of Speed is an experimental centre for young people with disabilities in Geelong, an intensive work and training environment where no other exists. Working with the Back to Back ensemble and leading Australian contemporary performance makers, community participants are partners in an experimental art making laboratory.

Running 46 Wednesdays of every year, Theatre of Speed allows marginalised members of our community to be seen and heard; to have a voice. The laboratory also plays a vital role in the sustainability of Back to Back Theatre’s artistic vibrancy, whereby an incursion of artistic talent affords a diversity in creative leadership and a broadening of the company’s creative palette.

For many of the participants, Theatre of Speed allows them to shift from the role of child, client, student, disabled person and / or employee, to that of author, actor and social commentator.

In 2015 Theatre of Speed focused on the development and presentation of two new experimental works, WE DID DIE LAUGHING, presented as part of Geelong After Dark, and a three-week season of SUCKER, both performed to Geelong audiences in Back to Back Theatre’s studio.

“Being here is really good for me because I want to be an actress one day…It’s my life basically…This thing is all about us, all about me. I have this one really good friend here Phoebe, she really inspires me, she and I are really good actors.”

– Rose, Theatre of Speed


**From Paris to Hollywood.**

**WE DID DIE LAUGHING** by Theatre of Speed

Director Jason Maling
Devisors & Performers Theatre of Speed Artists
Set Design Mark Cuthbertson
Lighting Design Kris Chainey
Manager Elise Brokensha
Technical Support Pat Scaddan
Secondments Kate Stone & Iris Gaillard

The starting point for **WE DID DIE LAUGHING** was a series of sketchy workshops called the ‘Suitability Agency’. The group developed intimate public services based on personal obsessions, drawing on their own experiences within the disability sector. They played with rules, bureaucratic mystification and the politics of provision. Over the final three months they pushed these ideas into the much more abstracted territory of dysfunction and change.

**WE DID DIE LAUGHING** was a one-off durational performance installation incorporating live performance and live film. 300 members of the Geelong community joined us for a wild stroll through the company’s studio and office space, encountering surprises at every turn.

**Stick it to the Man.**

**SUCKER** by Theatre of Speed

Director Tamara Searle
Devisors & Performers Theatre of Speed Artists
Costume & Set Design Matt Adey
Costume Assistant Bryn Merideth
Lighting Design Dans Maree Sheehan
Music Roland Cox

Dramaturg James Jackson
Secondment Jessica Leaming
Artist Support Leanne Stein

**SUCKER** is the story of five unlikely renegades who band together to stick it to The Man. It’s about having a huge impact with a tiny gesture, standing up for what you believe in, and helping others stand up for what they believe in.

The work began development in 2014 and sprang from Theatre of Speed’s interest in exploring the espionage genre. It mutated across time and, as with much new work, it revealed itself completely only in the last month.

Presenting six sell-out performances in the Back to Back Theatre studio, audience members were invited to experience a wordless narrative where dramatic action was the primary means of communicating the work. **SUCKER** offered another opportunity for Theatre of Speed to excel and grow through their creativity. This moved audiences, and in turn the performers.

**Engagement** Feature of Geelong’s International Day of People with a Disability Program, Think Impact Social Impact Surveys distributed after each performance, Think Impact Focus Group with members of Theatre of Speed.
"From the moment I walked into the foyer I felt a wonderful welcome and a feeling that it’s okay to be exactly as I am and share what I have to offer."
– CAMP participant

"The warmth and connections with others and myself I will take out into the world with me. Thank you for being in the world."
– CAMP participant

Risks of all shapes, sizes, textures and emotions.
CAMP – COME AND MAKE PERFORMANCE

Workshop Facilitators Adele Varcoe, Dan Han, Emma Valente, Ingrid Voorendt, James Pratt, Jessica Bellamy, Joseph O’Farrell, Kate Davis, Lyndel Quick, Nicola Gunn, Peter Houghton, Rob Reid, Tamara Searle & Wendy Grose
Emerging Artists Daniele Constance, Elmira Forest, Harmonie Downes, Jessica Bradley, Lisa Worthington & Magda Miranda

CAMP is an intensive weekend of delightfully ruthless creative investigations for community members with and without disabilities.

The program provides community members in Geelong and beyond access to exemplary contemporary theatre practice. CAMP enlists artists who are yet to work heavily within the disability context, enabling them to then extend their practice with marginalised communities.

In 2015 CAMP tickets sold out well ahead of schedule. Twelve workshops over two days were offered to 74 CAMP participants with and without disabilities. The cross-pollination of ideas, the underpinning ethos of equality, and the courage to challenge and be challenged imprinted on participants, artists, families and staff in a truly moving way.
“My brain is broken. I have found a new hope for my life.”
– UNMASTERCLASS workshop participant

**My brain is broken.**

UNMASTERCLASS

EXPERIMENTAL WORKSHOP APPROACH

Director Bruce Gladwin
Collaborators Brian Tilley, Marco Cher Gibard & Simon Laherty

Developed in 2015, UNMASTERCLASS is dedicated to randomness, uncertainty and a love of errors in the creation of new theatre. UNMASTERCLASS is a one-day theatre workshop that prioritises being over knowledge and skill, elevates doing over thinking. It’s an experience and experiment in relational transformations, a reminder that doing something properly is not always a way of doing it differently.

Three UNMASTERCLASS workshops were offered as part of our tour of GANESH VERSUS THE THIRD REICH to South America with great success, and will continue to be offered in response to community requests, both nationally and internationally.

**10 seconds of frame.**

THE DEMOCRATIC SET

SCREENINGS AND EXHIBITIONS

In 2015, films from past incarnations of THE DEMOCRATIC SET were presented at three international festivals, expanding the application and the overall reach of the project.

**Vooruit Ghent, Belgium**
7 May – 8 May

**Segal Festival of Theatre & Performance**
New York
Screening, 30 January

**Festival Internacional de Buenos Aires (FIBA)**
Buenos Aires, Argentina
27 September

**Fundación Festival Internacional Teatro a Mil**
Santiago, Chile
30 September – 1 October

**PQAU Prague Quadrennial**
Prague
Exhibition, 18 – 28 June

**Hebbel am Ufer (HAU), No Limits Festival**
Berlin
Exhibition, 5 – 7 November
In 2015 we set out to complete a wholesale reconfiguration of Back to Back Theatre’s digital presence, bringing our electronic communications in line with the creative ingenuity and technical excellence for which the company is known. We now look at the digital realm as a place for experimentation, playfulness and subversion. Our ambition is that each piece of planned communication we publish should have merit as a small piece of art in its own right.

In 2015 we re-branded, launched a new website and a new-look e-newsletter. We explored augmented reality, app development and gaming development. We produced a six-part mini film series, which highlights the scope and authenticity of each of our actors and we committed to a six-part blog series, with each part led by a new member of the Back to Back Theatre ensemble.

In 2015 this began with PRICE.

In 2015 Scott worked with filmmaker, Rhian Hinkley and director, Tamara Searle, to turn his talent and zeal for digital media into an extension of his artistic practice at Back to Back Theatre, ultimately taking the form of a video blog.

People frequently ask Scott why the company has to make such provocative work, and whether he understands the work. Scott’s blog is his attempt to answer those who might misunderstand provocation as merely shock tactics.

Publishing one episode a month in 2016, PRICE looks to challenge the vanilla perceptions people hold about individuals with disabilities and place new and existing online audiences in closer contact with the Back to Back ensemble.

“I’ve been interested in digital media since I was about 10 and through PRICE I’ve expanded myself as an artist. The opportunity for me to interview provocative artists and other leaders in their chosen fields is a beautiful, wondrous thing. It’s about helping people with important messages to get their message across.”

— Scott Price, ensemble member

Image: Jeff Busby
IMPACT

Back to Back realises that its most positive outcomes come from having actors with disabilities as the driving force behind great art. In 2015, we began collaborating with Think Impact on a research project to help us measure and articulate our impact. While Think Impact began their research, we analysed our reach through the collection of qualitative and quantitative data.

2015 GEELONG IMPACT

3,410 members of the Geelong community came into contact with Back to Back Theatre, 947 as participants attending 1 of 55 locally based workshops. We presented 7 performances of 2 experimental works to 582 Geelong audience members. We contributed to 34 local events and 4 local networks outside of the theatre, connecting us to an estimated 1,965 new members of the community.

2015 GLOBAL IMPACT

16,874 people around the globe came into contact with Back to Back Theatre, 1,199 of those as participants and 10,424 as audience members attending 1 of 37 performances of 5 works. An estimated 5,335 people came into contact with Back to Back Theatre through our participation in 52 national and international events, 6 network associations and 3 academic papers.
“When I’m offstage, I’m not confident, I’m nervous. But when I’m onstage it’s like I lose all that nervousness. And no one’s there. It’s just like I go into my own world and I can act.”
- Jess, Theatre of Speed participant

“I just got back home after witnessing the greatness of GANESH VERSUS THE THIRD REICH. My warmest of thanks to all the creative team behind this project. It really was a blessing and something that needed to be told and in such a respectful and sincere way.”
- GANESH audience member, Buenos Aires

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- Jess, Theatre of Speed participant

“Back to Back Theatre means to me a group of individuals, well that are assumed to be having a disability that come together and put on performances that people enjoy. It’s quite an honour to be part of Back to Back Theatre. How would I explain the importance to me? Don’t know how to explain it – theatre is very important to me, second to my family, is how important it is.”
- Ben, Theatre of Speed participant

“I am so grateful for Back to Back Theatre, my daughter would be diminished as a person without it. It has been effervescent for her to come to Back to Back because there is a constant stream of energy that Back to Back provides as a creative outlet. My whole family is so grateful.”
- Parent of community participant

“Back to Back Theatre means to me a group of individuals, well that are assumed to be having a disability that come together and put on performances that people enjoy. It’s quite an honour to be part of Back to Back Theatre. How would I explain the importance to me? Don’t know how to explain it – theatre is very important to me, second to my family, is how important it is.”
- Ben, Theatre of Speed participant

“What happens here is extraordinary. Back to Back Theatre is about what people can do, not what people can’t do.”
- Parent of community participant

“The Australians are showing the rest of the world what truly integrated theater access should look like with Back to Back Theatre Company.”
- P E Holdsworth, Blouin Artinfo, United Kingdom
INDUSTRY

Advice, Advocacy & Support
In addition to all of our activities, we provide approximately 300 instances of support, advice and advocacy to peer organisations and artists each year.

AWARDS

Australia Council for the Arts’ Inaugural Award for Outstanding Achievement in Theatre – Bruce Gladwin
We were thrilled that Artistic Director & Co-CEO Bruce Gladwin was named the inaugural winner of the Australia Council Award for Outstanding Achievement in Theatre. Presented at a ceremony at Carriageworks, Sydney on 19 March, this is the national body’s most prestigious award recognising the outstanding achievements and contribution of an Australian artist in their career to date, together with their continued potential contribution in the future.

Geelong Disability Awards Finalist – Mark Deans
Ensemble member Mark Deans was a finalist in the Geelong Disability Awards for his long-standing contribution to his field. Mark was honoured at an Awards Ceremony at Geelong Performing Arts Centre (GPAC) on 3 February.

Give Where You Live 2015 Aspiration Award – Back to Back Theatre
Back to Back Theatre was presented with the annual award in recognition of our investment in articulating and communicating our social impact.

MEDIA

To our knowledge, we featured in 192 national and international media articles over a variety of platforms, not including academic and arts journals and research papers. We were also a major subject in a book by author Matt Hargraves, ‘Theatres of Learning Disability – Good, Bad or Plain Ugly?’ (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

In 2015 we offset 268.83 tonnes of carbon emissions and invested in the Tasmanian Native Forest Protection Projects.

In addition to the climate change benefits, the projects help to protect and restore Tasmania’s valuable native forests, which provide a habitat for a number of endangered species including the wedge-tailed eagle, spotted quoll and the Tasmanian devil.

NDIS TRANSITION & ADVOCACY

We worked hard in 2015 to set precedents for the NDIS and the arts.

Back to Back Theatre is a resident within the Barwon trial site and from the project’s inception we have advocated on a national level for access to NDIS funds for artists and community members to pursue artistic practice. In 2015 we presented at NDIS conferences, participated in NDIS forums, panels and monthly meetings with regional colleagues, and hosted and participated in NDIS workshops. We spent 400 wo/man hours ensuring that arts practice (not just at Back to Back, but all kinds of art practice) can be supported via the NDIS.

SECONDMENTS, MENTORSHIPS & ATTACHMENTS

Back to Back Theatre opens its doors to students with and without disabilities from secondary and tertiary institutions. We offer formal and informal mentorship to emerging and midcareer artists, producers and theatremakers as well as aspiring arts administration professionals. We worked with 13 secondments in 2015.

NETWORKS & MEMBERSHIPS

We participated in the following formal networks and programs in 2015:

• BADEN (Barwon Australia Disability Enterprise Network) (NDIS Development)
• BIG (Barwon Implementation Group) (NDIS Development)
• Committee for Geelong
• G21
• GRAND (Geelong Region Action Network for Disability) (NDIS Development)
• Greener Live Performance
• NDIS & The Arts National Working Group (NDIS Development)
• Theatre Network Victoria
• Leaders for Geelong Program
• Williamson Community Leadership Program
In addition to public support, Back to Back Theatre has established relationships with the world’s most important arts presenters, creating widespread networks for collaboration, endorsement and advocacy. Impressively, these partnerships generally provide around 40% of Back to Back Theatre’s annual budget.

Nevertheless, making up the shortfall rests on our active engagement with government, corporate and philanthropic supporters.

To fully facilitate the level of excellence, opportunity and diversity the company aspires to provide, Back to Back Theatre joins forces with individuals, corporate and community supporters.

In 2015, individual private supporters donated $61,063 to Back to Back Theatre. There were 46 donors, contributing an average donation of $1,327.

We also received support from Corporate Community Partners totaling $35,000. This figure does not include the immense contributions of our pro-bono partners also noted in this Review, who provide essential services, advice and ballast to our endeavors.
PEOPLE

ENSEMBLE
Brian Tilley
Mark Deans
Romany Latham (from 2 February 2015)
Sarah Mainwaring
Scott Price
Simon Laherty

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT
Jo Porter, Chair
Yoni Prior, Deputy Chair
Jean Jansen, Treasurer (to 3 July)
Ben Slater, Treasurer (from 3 July; general member from 13 April)
Bobbie Hodge, Secretary
Mark Deans, Ensemble Representative
Ben Kay (from 7 December)
Jann Kinsela
Katrina Sedgwick (from 10 August)
Patrick Over (to 12 October)
Peter Bridges (to 10 August)
Phillip Keir (from 12 October)
Rose Hiscock
Shaun Cannon

STAFF
Alice Nash, Executive Producer & Co-CEO
Alison Harvey, Producer
Alice Fleming, Associate Producer (Acting) (from 2 March to 10 July)
Bruce Gladwin, Artistic Director & Co-CEO
Cecelia Cooper, Finance Officer (from 9 June)
Dans Maree Sheehan, Production Manager (from 2 March)
Juli Fryman, Project Coordinator
Laura McIlrath, Executive Assistant (Acting) (from 12 January to 27 March)
Maria Griffin, Executive Assistant (from 23 March)
Melinda Clarke, Development Manager (Corporate Partnerships & Individual Giving)
Nikki Watson, Community Programs Coordinator
Pauline Cady, Development Manager (Government, Trusts & Foundations)
Rebecca McIntyre, Marketing Manager
Simon Abrahams, Strategic Initiatives Manager (Acting) (from 28 January to 17 April)
Tamara Searle, Artistic Associate
Yuhui Ng-Rodriguez, Marketing Assistant (to 21 December)
THEATRE OF SPEED
Adam Berry
Ben Oakes
Brian Tilley
James Lewis
Jessica Walker
Laura Berrisford
Mark Deans
Phoebe Baker
Polly Munday
Robbie Croft
Romany Latham
Rose McLachlan
Sarah Mainwaring
Scott Price
Simon Laherty
Tamika Simpson

GUEST ARTISTS & COLLABORATORS
Adele Varcoe
Alice Fleming
Alisa Tanaka-King
Andrew Livingston
Bernadette Sweeney
Bryn Meredith
Chris Kohn
Dan Han
Daniel Schlusser
David Symons
David Woods
Emma Valente
Elise Brokensha
Genevieve Picot
Ingrid Voorendt
Iris Gaillard
James Jackson
James Pratt
Jason Maling
Jeff Busby
Jessica Bellamy
John Howard
Joseph O’Farrell
Justin Batchelor
Kate Davis
Kate Sultan
Kris Chainey
Leanne Stein
Lin Tobias
Luke Ryan
Lyndel Quick
Matt Adey
Marco Cher Gibard
Mark Cuthbertson
Nicola Gunn
Nicki Holland
Pat Scaddan
Peter Houghton
Rhian Hinkley
Rob Reid
Robbie Croft
Roland Cox
Sarah Walker
Shio Otani
Sonja Teuben
Todd Murphy
Wendy Grose

SECONDMENTS, MENTORSHIPS & INTERNSHIPS
Amelia Tuttleby

Chris Dunstan
Hannah Li Rosi
Iris Gaillard
James Jackson
James Madsen Smith
Jessica Learning
Kate Stones
Preethy Mathew
Rhiannon Petersen
Sherilee Kahui
Suzanne Inglebrecht
Todd Murphy

CAMP EMERGING ARTISTS
Daniele Constance
Elmira Forest
Harmonie Downes
Jessica Bradley
Lisa Worthington
Magda Miranda

CAMP PARTICIPANTS
Alisa Tanaka-King
Andy McKinnon
Anna Thomson
Anthony Knowle
Belinda Mahony
Brian Tilley
Cherie Kearney
David Maney
Daniel Constance
David Waldie
Debbie Zukerman
Francesca Neri
Gemma Falk
Grace Rose Turner
Heather Morris
Harmonie Downes
Iris Gaillard
Jenny Bowden
Jess Evans
Jessica Brady
Jessica Walker
Jonathan Graffam
Josh Farenbach
Joshua Haigh
Kasey Gambling
Katrina Welsby
Kayah Guenther
Kelly Clifford
Laura Burzacott
Lisa Worthington
Madison Holmes
Magda Miranda
Mario Liburdi
Mark Deans
Michaela Cantwell
Michel Labosse
Pam Roy
Pamela Heath
Phoebe Baker
Pippa Swanwick
Polly Munday
Prue McKimme
Robbie Croft
Romany Latham
Rose McLachlan
Ruby Fitzgerald
Samara Hersch
Sarah Mainwaring
Scott Price
Shea MacDonough
Simon Laherty
Tamika Simpson
Thomas Forsyth
Tiesha Ita-Ulima
Victoria Marshall
Virginia Calabrese
Wendy Davidson
Zac Chester

FILM & TV ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE
Adam Berry
Allan V Watt
Ben Oakes
Chris Hansen
Grace Rose Turner
Jake Anson
Jess Walker
Josh Haigh
Liam White
Michael Chan
Nicholas Walsh
Nikita Veitch
Noah Zvekic
Robbie Croft
Sonia Teuben
Stephanie Cook
Taylor Powell
THANK YOU

Each year a generous collection of people from varied worlds, provide assistance to the company. We would like to thank wholeheartedly:

Alleen Croghan
Alisa Tanaka-King
Almut MÖlk
Amanda Muschamp
Amanda Panayotou
Andreas Walter
Andy Miller
Angharad Wynne-Jones
Angus Smallwood
Annie Frazier
Art Gusto
Arts Project Australia
Austin Paterson
Australian Embassy Argentina
Australian Embassy Portugal
Australian Embassy Vienna
Bernadette Haldane
Berni Sweeney
Bethany Simons
Betina Wais
Bev Hamilton
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Prof. Brenda Cheridnichenko
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Caris Harper
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Carolina Arandia
Carolina Prieto
Carolyn Cliff
Cathy Truong
Cecelia Kuska
Cheryl Lambert
Chris Hartigan
Chris Kohn
Chris Taylor
Christian Sheehan
Christine Falkas
Cindy Vandermerken
Claire Wilcock
Claudia Purschke
Collette Brennan
Corinne Gaillard
Court House Youth Arts
Cynthia Scherer
DAL Café
Dan Simmonds
Dario Loperfido
David Everist
David Harvey
David Symons
Debbie Welsh
Dieter Timmerman
Dimitra Demikou
Don Shaw
Dorothée Roux
Duncan Esler
Elizabeth Schack
Elodie Lepérou
Emilie Fichter
Emma Bennison
Evelyn Campbell
Fenn Gordon
Filipe Folhadela
Florian Barberger
Francine Mitchell
Francisco Frazão
Gill Hill
Gillian Papadopoulos
Gino Tapia
Helen McKenzie
Henri-François Monnier
Iris Gaillard
Iris Raffetseder
Jaclyn Birtchnell
James Jackson
Jamie Smith
Prof. Jane den Holland
Jane Millett
Jason Maling
Javier Garfias
Jeff Busby
Jens Laureyns
Jessica Leaming
Jill Smith
John Howard
John Michie
Jon Mamonski
Jose Luis Fiorruccio
Joy Arab
Judith Blankenberg
Julie Barnes
Julie Cotter
Julie Graham
Justin Batchelor
Justyn Rowe
Karine Bellanger
Kate Stones
Katia Arfara
Kaz Paton
Kelly Clifford
Leanne Stein
Lefteris Karabillas
Les Frazier
Lesley Lightfoot
Libby Mears
Lisa French
Lisa Havilah
Lisa Murphy
Luciana Zylberberg
Luisa LaFornara
Luke McNamara
Marcel Bugiel
Marco Cher Gibard
Margaret Bourke
Margaret Linley
Maria Margarida Costa
Maria-Pia Bureaux
Mariana Cardoso de Lemos
Mariana Castellucci
Mariella Valutti
Marie-France Curdy
Marion Potts
Mark Ball
Mark Cuthbertson
Marta Cardoso
Martin Montaner
Martina Forster
Mary Ann Rolfe
Matthew Morse
Matt Adey
Matt Cox
Matthieu Goeyuru
Mercedes Saloña
Monica Guilouet Gelys
Natacha Guillemot
Nele De Cocker
Nicole Beyer
Noelia Svoboda
Nora Abadia Perez
Pablo Calderon
Paige Whyte
Pamela Ruiz
Paola Hevia
Pat Scadden
Patrick Gyger
Pauline Ansel
Paulo Ramos
Paz Canessa
Peter Eckersall
Peter Neilson
Rachel Spengler
Rebecca Casson
Renaud Serraz
Rhian Hinkley
Roció Valdez
OUR SUPPORTERS IN 2015

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

Back to Back Theatre receives funding assistance from the Australian Government via the Disability Employment Assistance Program.

Back to Back Theatre is assisted by the Australian Government through its philanthropic and social investment agency for the cultural sector, Creative Partnerships Australia.

PROJECT PARTNERS

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

CORPORATE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

DONORS

Alcoa
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Kate Richardson
Kim Tompkins
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Mary Harber
Nicki Bloom & Geordie Brookman
Nicole Beyer
Patrick Over
Rick McPhee
Robin Ramsay
Rose Hiscock
Shaun Cannon Family
Simon Abrahams
Susan Hungar
Trawalla Foundation
Anonymous (7)
Over the next 10 years, Back to Back Theatre seeks to build support that will enable its operations to transcend the unpredictable nature of public support.

Financial gifts given at any level are generous expressions of solidarity and make an important contribution to Back to Back Theatre’s commitment to shaping the world. However it is major gifts – truly transformational gifts – that enable Back to Back Theatre to leave a visible and valuable legacy in the hearts and minds of audiences across the world.

Back to Back Theatre seeks support from and collaboration with private individuals and organisations who share its vision for the future. Together, you can travel with us, creating work of exceptional artistic calibre, giving voice to important social and political issues, and inspiring a shift in perception through contemporary performance.

Contact us to find out more.

Back to Back Theatre Inc (ABN No. 95 834 484 241) is a Registered Tax Concession Charity (TCC) and Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR). All donations over $2 are tax deductible.

Donations can be made via the SUPPORT page on our website, or by calling us on (03) 5221 2029.

BACKTOBACKTHEATRE.COM/SUPPORT/DONATE
Back to Back Theatre is an Australian Disability Enterprise and is independently assessed each year to the six National Disability Service Standards. We provide specialised supported employment for people with disabilities for the creation and performance of contemporary theatre. Back to Back Theatre’s Quality Assurance System is audited by an independent auditor.

Back to Back Theatre acknowledges that we meet on the land for which the Wadawurrung people are the traditional owners and custodians.