

A1 2007



2007 was Back to Back Theatre's biggest and most successful year ever. It has been a year of exponential growth and phenomenal opportunity. The company has seized upon the extraordinary audience and critical response to our work and in a short time blossomed into an internationally recognised contemporary theatre company, with its vision and processes firmly grounded in its Australian context.

# This is what we did in 2007

The company relished the challenge of operating in two different hemispheres simultaneously! At home in Geelong, we forged ahead with multiple creative developments, as essential investment in the development of new work. This culminated in a pitch to the Major Festivals' Initiative in October, which will result in the premiere of our next major work, **FOOD COURT**, at the 2008 Melbourne International Arts Festival.

Throughout 2007 Back to Back continued to collaborate with local communities. Most notably, Back to Back's company B for young people with disabilities, Theatre of Speed, premiered **DMI: DISABILITY MAINTENANCE INSTRUMENT** for a sold out season at the Courthouse Youth Art Centre in Geelong. Theatre of Speed's utterly original work is challenging, of a very high quality and drawn directly from the experiences of the participants. Theatre of Speed offers Geelong audiences the chance to hear a genuine and positive expression of the perspective of a young person with an intellectual disability in this community; a direct connection into the rich diversity of the Geelong community.

Our annual **Summer School**, focussing on nurturing the theatrical practice of people with disabilities from across south-western Victoria, was, as ever, a resounding success. **Summer School** makes high quality contemporary theatre practice accessible to all.

In 2007, **small metal objects**, which premiered at the 2005 Melbourne International Arts Festival, re-appeared in Australia with a full-festival, sell-out run at the Sydney Festival; then in a six-city Australian national tour (via Mobile States), including seasons at the UWA Perth International Arts Festival, Ten Days on the Island; in Bendigo and Mildura in regional Victoria; in Brisbane and back to Melbourne. It then toured to acclaim to international contemporary arts festivals in Hannover, Paris. Copenhagen, Groningen, Zurich, Dublin and was presented as part of The Barbican's Ozmosis season of Australian work in London.

The season in Paris was presented under the auspices of the Australian International Cultural Council where the script was translated into French and presented with live in-ear translation. **small metal objects** was also translated into German for the seasons in Groningen and Zurich where it won the ZKB Acknowledgement Prize for "extraordinary artistic achievement", a mark of the calibre of the work measured within a dynamic international environment.

**small metal objects** also won a Green Room Award for Best Theatre Production (New Form) for its return season to Melbourne.

### THIS IS HOW WE THINK WE DID IT.

Back to Back has forged its own unmitigated relationship to theatre, developing a unique artistic voice and a working process that supports its ensemble of actors with intellectual disabilities as the central creative entity. They make work that is transcendent, devastating, incisive, shattering, strenuous, joyful and redemptive.

We have invested ruthlessly in creative development, safeguarding the territory that is required for imagination. Managerially, we have been thoughtful, considerate and rigorous because these qualities protect us, protect the ensemble and protect everyone we deal with. We have taken calculated risks. We have, at times, been daunted but we have sought too to be energised by new tasks to learn, new structures to disassemble and then create anew as working models for ourselves.

Back to Back acts as an ambassador for the innovative and unique artistic practice of the Australian contemporary performing arts community, promoting the depth and diversity of Australian culture and highlighting the innovative use of technology and the pioneering exploration of theatrical form in contemporary Australian theatre.

It has been a great year and there will be more of them to come. We are certain.



Back to Back Theatre was founded in Geelong in 1987 to create theatre with people who are perceived to have a disability. It has gone on to become one of Australia's leading creative voices, focusing on moral, philosophical and political questions about the value of individual lives.

With a full-time ensemble of seven actors, Back to Back creates work that is idiosyncratic, passionate and at times confronting. Back to Back's ensemble is made up of actors perceived to have intellectual disabilities, a group of people who, in a culture obsessed with perfection and surgically enhanced 'beauty', are the real outsiders. This position of marginality provides them with a unique and at times subversive view of the world. The stories they create explore "the cold dark side" of our times, be it the sexuality of people with disabilities, the uses of artificial intelligence and genetic screening, unfulfilled desire, the inevitability of death, and what the fixation with economic rationality and utilitarianism means for people excluded from the 'norm'.

With Bruce Gladwin as Artistic Director, Back to Back has nurtured a unique artistic voice, placing the ensemble at the centre of social and cultural dialogue. Through a process of research, improvisation and scripting, and collaboration between the ensemble, Artistic Director and invited guest artists, new work is realised.

### **ENSEMBLE STATEMENT**

"We're people who do shows.

We're all quite short, but each one is a little bit taller than the one before.

We're agile and work professionally as a theatre company.

There are other things we do as well ... warm ups, research, trips to Melbourne, lots of meetings, and time off when we need it.

Sometimes we have noodles for lunch.

The artistic director's name is Bruce and he makes us laugh.

He gets on the table, pretends he's a dog, and then turns into a robot. He tells us to put our noodles down.

We love people. We believe in angels, shows and Britney Spears. Hugs all round."

### **MISSION**

To create new forms of contemporary theatre imagined from the minds and experiences of a unique ensemble of actors with a disability, giving voice to social and political issues which speak to all people.

# 2007 HIGHLIGHTS

small metal objects sell-out season at the Sydney Festival.

small metal objects Mobile States Australian National Tour to:

- · UWA Perth International Arts Festival / Perth Institute of Contemporary Art
- · Brisbane Powerhouse
- Mildura Wentworth Arts Festival
- · The Capital Bendigo Performing Arts Centre
- · ArtsHouse Melbourne / Federation Square
- Ten Days on the Island / Salamanca Arts Centre (Hobart).

**small metal objects** wins a Green Room Award for Best Production (New Form) wins the 2007 ZKB Acknowledgement Prize for "extraordinary artistic achievement" at the Zurcher (Zurich) Theater Spektakel.

small metal objects tours to 6 international cities including:

- · Theaterformen, Hanover, Germany
- · Paris quartier d'ete, Paris, France
- · Kobenhavns Internationale Teater, Copenhagen, Denmark
- Noorderzon Festival, Groningen, Netherlands
- · Zurcher Theater Spektakel, Zurich, Switzerland
- Dublin International Theatre Festival, Dublin, Ireland
- · The Barbican, London, as part of their Ozmosis season of Australian works

Theatre of Speed's **DMI: Disability Maintenance Instrument** premiere at the Courthouse Youth Art Centre in Geelong.



# 2007 ENSEMBLE, STAFF, COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT, GUEST ARTISTS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS, THEATRE OF SPEED

# **STAFF**

Alice Nash, Executive Producer
Bruce Gladwin, Artistic Director
Marcia Ferguson, Artistic Associate
Marisa Chiappi, Finance Officer
Pauline Cady, Funding Development
Stacey Baldwin, Administration Manager

Sue Hartigan, Quality Assurance

### **ENSEMBLE**

**Mark Deans** 

Nicki Holland

Rita Halabarec

Sarah Mainwaring

**Scott Price** 

Simon Laherty

Sonia Teuben (on leave)

# **COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT**

Bobbie Hodge

Gillian Hoysted

lan Bracegirdle

Patrick Over (SECRETARY)

Rick Merrigan (TREASURER)

Rose Hiscock (CHAIR)

Scott Price / Sarah Mainwaring (ENSEMBLE REPRESENTATIVE)

Yoni Prior

# THE TEAM cont.

# 2007 ENSEMBLE, STAFF, COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT, GUEST ARTISTS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS, THEATRE OF SPEED

### **GUEST ARTISTS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

Adam Berry Genevieve
Adrian Hann James Sau
Aicha Boutella Geoff Moo
Allan V Watt Malcolm N
Alexander Coleman Gerard Var
Andrew Livingston Grit Media
Ashleigh Grist Hugh Covi

Bernadette Sweeney
BJ Long and Claire Mitchell
from Voice Bloom

Ben Cook

Bluebottle3
Box Wars
Brian Tilley
Caroline Arrighi
Caroline Lee
Denise Luccioni
Disability Media
Esther Hayes
Family Dog Circus
Gabby Walters
Genevieve Morris

Genevieve Picot
James Saunders
Geoff Moore
Malcolm Nash
Gerard Van Dyke
Grit Media
Hugh Covill
Jacinta Eltze

Jenny Empson
Jethro Woodward
Jilli Romanis
Jim Russell
Jo Leishman
Joanne Davis
Jody Mundy
John Bennett
John Bolton
John Colvin
Karen Witthuhn
Kate Sulan
Laura Benson

Leanne Stein

Jen Hector

Lynton Carr

Mark Cuthbertson Mothers Art Nina Bonacci Olivia Allen Olivia Morin Peter Farnan

Phillip Ivan Pietruschka

Rachel High
Rhian Hinkley
Sandra Long
Sarah Ford
Sarah Goninon
Shannon Bott
Skye Abikhair
Stephanie Harrer
Svenja Wasser
Tiffany Ball
Xan Coleman
Zenith Records

# THEATRE OF SPEED (COMMUNITY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS)

Adam Berry Polly Munday

Angus Bannister Renee Poulson (to April 07)

(for DMI season)

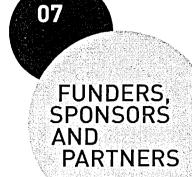
Brian Tilley

Robert Crofts

Samantha Bade

James Lewis Sarah Keating (to July 07)

Joan Black Scott Price
Laura Berrisford Tamika Simpson
Phoebe Baker Tom Banks



# CORE

Arts Victoria

Australia Council for the Arts

# **PROJECT**

Alfred Edments Estate, managed by ANZ Trustees

Australian International Cultural Council (AICC)

Besen Family Foundation

City of Greater Geelong

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

Myer Foundation

Percy Baxter Charitable Trust, managed by Perpetual Trustees

United Way Geelong

**ANZ Trustees** 

City Of Melbourne

National Library of Australia

**RE Ross Trust** 

# **PARTNERS**

Alcoa Celebrate All Abilities Festival

Clayton Utz

Inclusiveness Events Network

Mobile States

Performing Lines

St Laurence Community Services











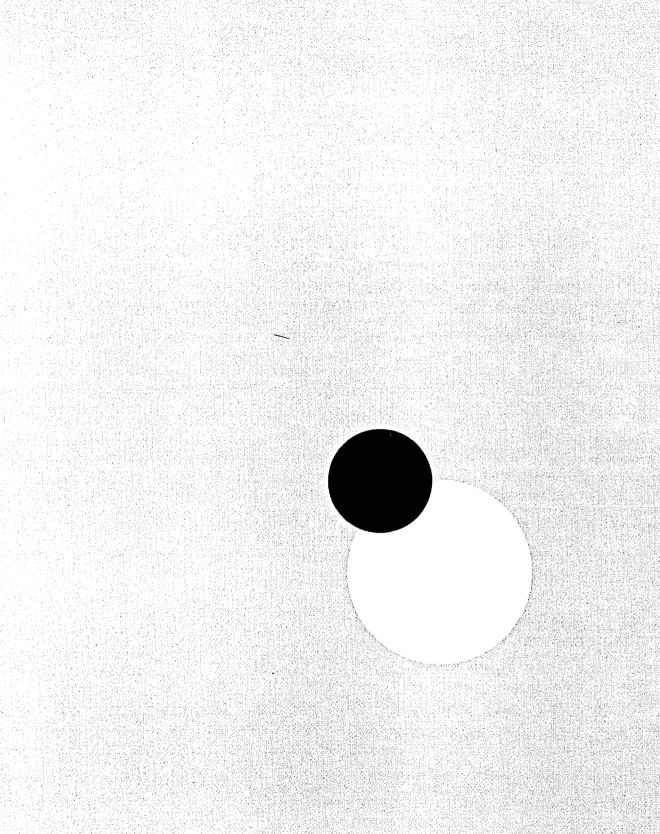












### ENSEMBLE ANNUAL REPORT

"2007 was a busy year. For some, SMO was the highlight. For others, these were the outstanding highlights:

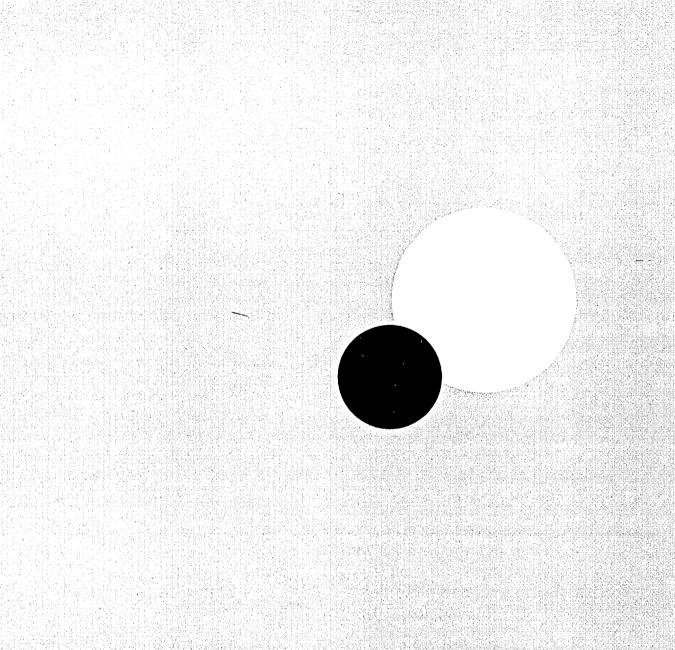
TOS, DMI, Musicircus, Hunger by Rawcus, the Ghost in Hamlet, telling great jokes and doing art at Karingallery.

I'd like to thank Esther for designing my costumes, my fans, Phoebe for her song in DMI, and Rita for her father story.

It was hard settling in as a new ensemble member. It was hard saying goodbye to my friends when I was leaving Australia to go away on tour. Shows were hard getting in people's way, walking too fast, corpsing. But one of the funniest times was Adam Berry laughing his head off in Exit the King.

We could have focused more on achieving IEP goals. We could have had more outings with Jilli with friends from B2B and the TOS guys. We could have had a bit less admin, more time in day programs, less notes on tour, and more notes in DMI. I'm sad I missed Criminology, a piece of cultural history.

There was a lot of work but we loved it. We love acting. Letting loose, Food Court, theatre. Everything. Except Board meetings – they're boring – but they've got to be done. A very exhausting year, but we rocked 2007".





Inverted claustrophobia is not a real condition; I made it up just then. By definition it would be a condition of the mind that embraces space. Instead of anxiety one would feel joy, instead of being uncomfortable in a confined space, one would be exhilarated by the diversity and breadth of different spaces. The people that fill those spaces would make one feel pleasant and comfortable, in fact the more people the better.

In 2007 Back to Back played to tens of thousands of people in a myriad of locations; theatres, parks, public squares, train stations, streets, malls and shopping centres. For our touring work, **small metal objects** assailed the public with a 'we will bring it to you attitude', with thousands of commuters and general punters becoming a part of the performance as extras on a huge set.

With engagement of Geelong audiences **Theatre of Speed** presented the premiere of a new work **DMI**, a poetic metaphor for current administrative assessment tools for Australians with disabilities, a brave new world, a science fiction, where hopes and dreams are blended with the reality of the contemporary world. As a process the project allowed 15 young Geelong based artists the opportunity to collaborate with some of the theatre industry's most exciting and dynamic makers.

Our **Summer School** bought artists from around the Australia to both participate and also to facilitate an exceptional palette of performance making workshops. With the majority of facilitating artists having not worked with the company previously Back to Back acts as a vital conduit to the dissemination of process, experience and information of the interface of theatre and disability.

The development of new work **Food Court** and **Ganesh vs the Third Reich** stretched the creative team to embrace new collaborators and direction. We as a company are richer for the experience.

2007 has been unlike any other year for Back to Back, in terms of opportunity, workload, exposure and fanfare. We don't anticipate we will have another year quite like it. We feel blessed with opportunities afforded to us, to engage with artists and audiences, to try and forge our understanding of what this thing called theatre is.

A social relationship mediated by sound and image in a space with people, the more people, the better.

BRUCE GLADWIN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

2007 was Back to Back's biggest year ever. We toured to 7 Australian and 6 international cities, mounted a major community work in Geelong, began developing two new works, and worked with community members in a range of settings. It was exhilarating but slightly terrifying. We re-imagined ourselves (several times), whilst striving to remain responsive, nimble and to laugh a lot.

I am grateful for the privilege of working with all my colleagues – with the ensemble (Mark, Rita, Nicki, Simon, Sonia, Scott and Sarah); with the myriad of collaborators (too many, thank goodness, to name); with the Board (Bobbie, Rose, Patrick, Rick, Yoni, Patsie, Ian, Ann, Gillian); and with my fellow staff (Bruce, Marcia, Stacey, Pauline, Marisa).

I'd like especially to thank Sue Hartigan who left in mid-2007 to work as the Manager of Cloverdale Community Centre in North Geelong. We were blessed for eleven years with her great acuity, wit, drive and caring.

I would also like to thank Ann Tonks who was a founding member of the Back to Back Board (1996) and our longest serving Board member to date. Ann is still General Manager of Melbourne Theatre Company. Whether that's because she has impressive financial, organisational, personnel and planning skills, or because she hasn't been found out, is unknown.

We are grateful for our audiences and for those who have worked with us in workshops. They are, collectively, our reason for making work.

# **ALICE NASH** EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

# small metal objects

# ZKB ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PRIZE FOR small metal objects

"Thanks, I feel better now" is the last sentence in the piece called "small metal objects" and this is the program in a nutshell. It tells the story of a friendship that is able to fully resist the profit maximising system and is immune to material temptations. The actors however have to be discovered first: they move amongst the public of the theatre spectacle, who in their turn can regard the spectators on the public gallery as part of the production. The boundary between the observers and the observed dissolve, and theatre conventions are called into question with gusto. There are many reasons why the Appreciation Prize of this year goes to the Australian Back to Back Theatre Troupe – outside the nomination list – but it is first of all the ingenuity of the synthesis of form and content that has convinced all the members of the jury".



# small metal objects

small metal objects (SMO) premiered and sold out at the 2005 Melbourne International Festival. It won the inaugural Age Critics' Special Commendation and was nominated for a Helpmann Award for Best New Australian Work.

In 2007 SMO was performed in 13 cities nationally and internationally including a return season in Melbourne for which it won a Green Room Award (New Form).

small metal objects

# small metal objects Sydney Festival Season

8-25 January, Customs House Square, Sydney Presented by the Sydney Festival

DIRECTOR Bruce Gladwin

PERFORMERS Genevieive Picot, James Saunders, Simon Laherty, Sonia Teuban

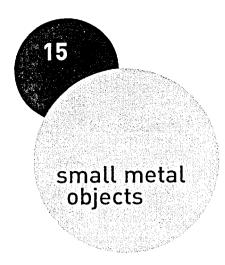
PRODUCTION MANAGER Andrew Livingston, bluebottle3

STAGE MANAGER Bernadette Sweeney
SOUND ENGINEER Lachlan Carrick

The Sydney Festival hosted us for a full festival – 24 performance-run. It sold out and was called "the gem of the theatre program, and the highlight of the whole festival" in the press.

Back to Back small metal objects in Sydney / photo: Prudence Upton





# small metal objects Mobile States Australia National Tour

10-24 February, Forrest Place, Perth Presented by Perth Institute for Contemporary Art and UWA Perth International Arts Festival

27 February - 3 March, Queen St Mall, Brisbane, Presented by Brisbane Powerhouse

7-11 March, Federation Square, Melbourne Presented by Artshouse in association with Federation Square

17 March, Mildura Centro, Mildura Presented by Mildura Wentworth Arts Festival

22-23 March, Bendigo Market Place, Bendigo Presented by The Capital - Bendigo Performing Arts Centre

28-31 March, Salamanca Square, Hobart Presented by Ten Days on the Island and Salamanca Arts Centre

#### **COLLABORATORS**

**DIRECTOR** Bruce Gladwin

Genevieve Picot, Genevieve Morris, James Saunders, Jim Russell, **PERFORMERS** 

Simon Laherty, Sonia Teuben, Allan V Watt

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Andrew Livingston, bluebottle 3 STAGE MANAGER Bernadette Sweeney, bluebottle 3

SOUND OPERATOR

Phillip Ivan Pietrushka

PERFORMING LINES,

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER Nina Bonacci

It was an immense opportunity, privilege and service to have an Australian National Tour produced on our behalf via the Mobile States consortium and Performing Lines. The Mobiles States consortium provided us with a process, the network, the savvy and the resources to undertake the tour. And we were very fortunate to have had our work shown to audiences in six Australian centres and to undertake workshops with local communities in Perth, Mildura, Bendigo and Hobart. The tour allowed us to easily broker relationships with some of the key contemporary art producers in Australia and to present our work within the context of two major Australian festivals.

#### SPECIAL THANKS

Performing Lines, Wendy Blacklock, Nina Bonacci

# small metal objects Hannover Tour

15-23 June 2007, Kropcke, Niki-de-Saint-Phalle-Promenade, Eingang Stadtbahn, Hannover, Germany Presented by Theaterformen

#### **COLLABORATORS**

DIRECTOR Bruce Gladwin

PERFORMERS Simon Laherty, Sonia Teuben, Genevieve Picot, James Saunders

SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION Stephanie Harrer, Svenja Wasser

TRANSLATOR Karen Witthuhn

PRODUCTION MANAGER Andrew Livingston, Bluebottle3 & Bernadette Sweeney

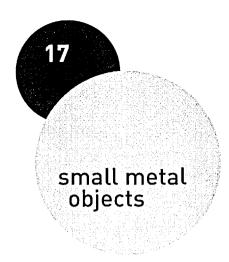
SOUND OPERATOR Phillip Ivan Pietruschka

STAGE MANAGER Jo Leishman

TOUR COORDINATOR (Europe) Aicha Boutella, Quaternaire

The international premiere of **small metal objects** was resoundingly successful, with amazing media reviews and adoring audiences. The script was translated into German and delivered via live in-ear to audiences who could chose English only or the bilingual version. Amusingly the seats were labelled 'Australian English' by the festival – it seems our twang and cadence is considered dialect as opposed to accent.

The company ran also ran a workshop for community members with disabilities whilst in Hannover, re-connecting with artists from our 2003 **POD** residency.



# small metal objects Paris, Copenhagen, Groningen & Zurich Tour

2-4 August 2007, Place des Innocents, Forum des Halles, Paris, France Presented by Paris Quartier d'ete [Festival]

8-11 August-2007, Radhuspladsen (Town Hall Square), Copenhangen, Denmark Kobenhavns Internationale Teater [Festival]

16-19 August 2007, Noorderplantsoen, Groningen, The Netherlands Presented by Noorderzon [Festival]

24-29 August 2007, Landiwiese, Zurich, Switzerland Zurcher Theater Spektakel

#### **COLLABORATORS**

DIRECTOR Bruce Gladwin
STAGE MANAGER Bernadette Sweeney

PRODUCTION MANAGER Andrew Livingston, Bluebottle3

PERFORMERS Simon Laherty, Genevieve Picot, Jim Russell, Sonia Teuben (Paris, Copenhagen, Groningen),

Allan V Watt (Zurich)

SOUND OPERATOR Phillip Ivan Pietruschka

SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATOR Laura Benson

FRENCH TRANSLATION Denise Luccioni, Caroline Arrighi

GERMAN TRANSLATION Karen Witthuln

TOUR COORDINATORS (Europe) Aicha Boutella, Quaternaire, Oliva Morin, Quarternaire

**PARIS:** Staged within sight of the Georges Pompidou Centre the season included an adaptation into French and was presented with the support of the Australian International Cultural Council. The Australian Ambassador in Paris, who played no small part in getting us to Paris, was moved to tears.

**COPENHAGEN:** In Copenhagen's main square, opposite the historic Town Hall: this was, by far, the hardest season of small metal objects. Audience members loved the show but a local journalist, who saw it simply asked the Festival Director: "Why?"

**GRONINGEN:** In a garden, by the canal, in the middle of this outdoor festival audiences and the public spoke to each other a great deal, and dealt with cars and bikes moving directly through the playing area. We got a 'sold out' sticker on our billboard a few shows into the season!

**ZURICH:** Presented **SOFT** in 2003 so this was our triumphant return: we think the show sold out before we arrived, small metal objects was awarded the ZKB Zurich Acknowledgment Prize for "extraordinary artistic achievement."

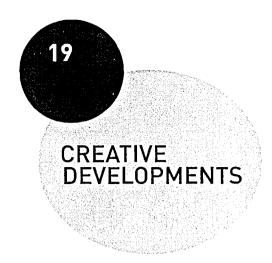
# small metal objects Dublin & London Tour

8-12 October 2007, Mayor Square, IFSC, Dublin, Ireland Presented by Ulster Bank Dublin Theatre Festival with support from the Dublin Docklands Development Authority)

31 October – 10 November 2007, Stratford East Station, East London, UK Presented by The Barbican in collaboration with Theatre Royal East Stratford, as part of Ozmosis 07, a season of Australian works

**DUBLIN:** Presented in Docklands district, a newly re-developed business area on the edge of a far less salubrious part of the city. This was the first time that the work had been presented in the world of the corporate characters within the show's narrative, and it proved the perfect place for the show. Sold out again.

**LONDON:** A lucky collaboration between The Barbican and Theatre Royal East Stratford, with a venue where three separate rail sytems came chaotically together. The show was Critics' Pick in The Guardian and London TimeOut.



# DUMB / BEDROOM / FOOD COURT Creative Developments

May and September, Courthouse Youth Arts Centre, Geelong

**COLLABORATORS** 

DIRECTOR Bruce Gladwin

PERFORMERS Mark Deans, Nicki Holland, Simon Laherty, Rita Halabarec,

Scott Price, Sarah Mainwaring

GUEST PERFORMERS Rachel High, Sarah Goningen, Adam Berry, Brian Tilley

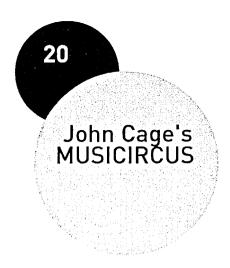
and Genevieve Morris

ANIMATION Rhian Hinkley
DESIGN Mark Cuthbertson
LIGHTING DESIGN Andrew Livingston
SOUND ENGINEER Hugh Covill

SOUND OPERATOR Phillip Ivan Pietrushka

It was called BEDROOM and then we called it DUMB and now it's called **FOOD COURT**. In 2007 and we undertook two period of creative development on it. The second development included four guest performers all of whom had been short-listed for positions in the ensemble. The developments felt a great way to invite them into the ongoing life of the company.

**FOOD COURT** will premiere at the 2008 Melbourne International Arts Festival. It will be underscored with a single musical track played live from the orchestra pit by **The Necks** (Chris Abrahams (piano), Tony Buck (drums), and Lloyd Swanton (bass)), one of the great cult bands of Australia.



# John Cage's MUSICIRCUS

October 2007, Federation Square, 5.20am – 6.48pm, Federation Square, BMW Edge, Melbourne Presented by the Melbourne International Arts Festival

#### **COLLABORATORS**

DIRECTOR/DEVISOR

Marcia Ferguson

**DEVISORS** 

Rita Halabarec, Mark Deans, Nicki Holland, Scott Price,

Sarah Mainwaring

SET DESIGN

Mark Cuthbertson

COSTUMES

Esther Hayes

SOUND

Jethro Woodward

"Art instead of being an object is a process set in motion by a group of people". John Cage

Musicircus was first mounted in the 1960s, as a site of random, temporal art happenings constituting pieces from many forms (music, theatre, circus). Since then, Musicircus has been re-mounted all over the world. We researched the lyrics of artists who worked with John Cage, as starting points for content. The circular patterns we found in Cage's soundscapes, the free, winding and random egress of audience members at Happenings, the looping path of the Yarra River, Melbourne's underground railway loop, and the rotating record player, all suggested circuitous form and free association.

A character (the Thin man) and situational encounters on a train, emerged from research into counter cultures. Rita's character, Alice, ambiguous and sharp, frozen since the death of her father, called herself the Ice Queen. Narrative developed around a 'to and fro' dynamic before two characters fall in love. The performers, like jazz musicians, interpreted and re-interpreted each other's words in a kind of spoken word form.

We performed at 7:18pm and 8:33pm. When the doors opened at 6.30pm, 2000 people rushed in, just like the Myer's Christmas sale.



# THEATRE OF SPEED

Theatre of Speed is an ensemble of fifteen young performers with intellectual disabilities who all live in the Geelong area. They attend Back to Back every Wednesday, where they focus on developing performance and teamwork skills before embarking on the creative development of their co-devised theatrical work.

# THEATRE OF SPEED – DMI (DISABILITY MAINTENANCE INSTRUMENT)

4-8 December 2007, Stott Theatre, Courthouse Youth Arts Centre, Geelong

**COLLABORATORS** 

THEATRE OF SPEED Adam Berry, Brian Tilley, Joan Black, Robert Crofts,

Tamika Simpson, Laura Berrisford, Samantha Bade, James Lewis, Phoebe Baker, Tom Banks, Polly Munday, Angus Bannister, Sarah Keating (left July 07), Renee Poulson (left April 07)

DIRECTOR/DEVISOR Marcia Ferguson

ENSEMBLE Sarah Mainwaring, Nicki Holland, Mark Deans, Rita Halabarec,

Scott Price, Simon Laherty

Marcia Ferguson DIRECTOR/DEVISOR John Colvin PRODUCTION MANAGER John Bennett **SET DESIGN** COMPOSER Pete Farnan **COSTUME DESIGN** Esther Hayes Jenny Hector LIGHTING DESIGN Berni Sweeney STAGE MANAGER Rhian Hinkley DIGITAL MEDIA Kate Sulan **DRAMATURG** 

SUPPORT & ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS Jilli Romanis, Mark Cuthbertson

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER Joanne Davis

INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS Jacinta Eltze, Ashleigh Grist, Malcolm Nash

from University of Ballarat TAFE

SOUND Lynton Carr

PHOTOGRAPHY Jeff Busby, with thanks to Cheetham Salt Works

FRONT OF HOUSE: Stacey Baldwin, Ben Cook

VOLUNTEERS Greta Newell, Graeme Price, Gina Munday, Joan Black

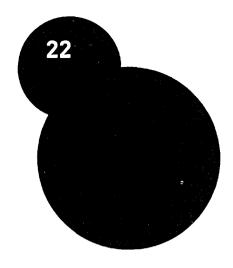
VIDEO DOCUMENTATION Rhian Hinkley, Chris Brown CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT Bec Reid (Movement),

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT Mark Cuthbertson (Visual Art Research)

"DMI was amazing. Its rawness succinct. I'm still thinking about it and its emotional impact" (Audience member)

A black comedy exploring the reduction of complex human beings to 'simple' solutions.

Feral stragglers reach the edge of the desert. At the Waiting Station, they undergo tests to enter the new land. The unlucky meet their fate in Room B. Enslaved by the exchange of water for labour, the beasts endure tests to survive attrition, to be 'maintained'. The last 'almost humans' break free, converting the wheels and cogs of the industrial age into an Ark, and float away on forty days of rain. Frenetic, slavish, futuristic and visually overwhelming, **DMI** is an installation on the rampage. With more than a nod to great films of bureaucratic excess (Blade Runner, Metropolis, Brazil), the past becomes our future. **DMI** bends the boundaries between dance, rock concert and theatre, animal and human and beggars the definition of intelligence.



# SECOND COURT BOMBSHELL

April 2007 - June 2007, Second Court, Courthouse Youth Arts Theatre, Geelong

#### **COLLABORATORS**

SCRIPT / DIRECTOR / FILMING / EDITOR Rhian Hinkley

DRAMATURGY

Marcia Ferguson

PERFORMERS/DEVISORS

Scott Price, Sarah Mainwaring, Nicki Holland, Mark Deans,

Rita Halabarec

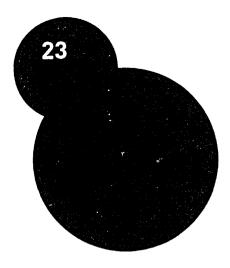
**SECOND COURT BOMB SHELL** is a 7 min film resulting from a three week development with the ensemble aimed at providing experience with acting for camera.

# D9 Screenings

The Old Geelong Gaol is a dark house of horrors, a space where humour and tenderness mix with tragedy and perversity – a weeping woman, the ghost of Steve McQueen, a never ending love triangle, humanity at its lowest ebb.

Welcome to **D9** developed in 2006, where everything starts for the first time... a short film by Theatre of SPEED

In 2007, D9 [2005/6, Theatre of Speed film] screened at: 12-16 November 2007, Normal Festival, Film is our Handicap, Prague, Czechoslovakia



# SUMMER SCHOOL 2007

8-9 December 2007, Courthouse Youth Arts Centre, Geelong

**SUMMER SCHOOL** is an annual event of workshops and training run by Back to Back Theatre for people of all abilities. People with disabilities, artists, community workers, experienced and inexperienced performers, and anyone with an interest in theatre or working in the arts come for a weekend of workshops.

#### **WORKSHOPS**

TEXT Olivia Allen
MAKING TV Grit Media
DANCE / MOVEMENT Xan Colman
STORYTELLING John Bolton

LIGHTS SOUND BOW WOW! WORKSHOP Family Dog Circus

BOX WARS Box Wars

VOICE B J Long & Claire Mitchell From Voice Bloom

DANCE / MOVEMENT Shannon Bott

MAINTHEATER Tiffany Ball, Sandra Long & Jody Mundy

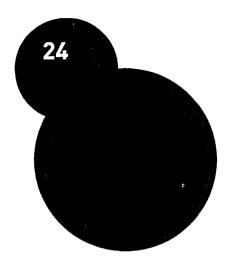
# **BACK TO BACK / ARCHIVE**

Back to Back Theatre has generated a large amount of material in addition to theatrical performances. This includes written material (programs, reviews, publications, features etc), pictorial material, film and video, posters, scripts, and original sound compositions as well as ephemera (fliers, invitations, T-shirts). This material provides both a valuable record of Back to Back's work and the history and significance of regionally generated creative work over the past twenty years in Victoria.

Back to Back received a Community Heritage Grant from the National Library of Australia in 2006 for a Significance Assessment to be conducted on the company's Collection, one step in the process of turning this material into an archive. In 2006, Sue Hartigan and Adrian Hann began the onerous process of sorting and ordering twenty years worth of material housed in three separate locations.

In 2007 Dr Jane Mullet finished the Significance Assessment – a valuable document as it historically contextualises the company in the theatrical and disability environments.

We are continuing to sort our Collection. The next step is to undertake a Preservation Assessment to work out the best way to preserve and house the Collection. Eventually we intend to make our archive available through our website, as well.



### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

#### **Quality Assurance & Continuous Improvement**

Back to Back is a supported employment service for people with an intellectual disability. We receive funding from the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs to support the ensemble in their work as professional actors. Back to Back became a Quality Assured Organisation in 2004 in accordance with the Commonwealth Disability Services Standards.

Along with Quality Assurance comes a commitment to Continuous Improvement. Back to Back seeks to improve its service to the actors in the ensemble across all work areas and practices. This includes supporting the actors to participate in decision and policy making, maintaining high professional standards in all areas of work including productions, workshops, promotional material, ensuring all staff have appropriate training and presenting a positive image of people with intellectual disabilities as artists, creators and performers.

Continuous improvements in 2007 included:

- Passing our audit with flying colours, receiving the highest possible grading
- · Creating a Continuous Improvement Matrix
- · Identifying key documents
- · Revamping personnel files
- · Beginning the process of reworking our policies and procedures manual

# **RESEARCH & RESEARCHERS**

In 2007, the following documents were produced or published:

- 1. POD: Seeding Change and Innovation in Disability Arts Practice. A Research Report on Back to Back Theatre's POD Project 2003 2006, Dr Alison Richards (publishing date as yet unknown)
- 2. Significance Assessment: Dr Jane Mullett, May 2007
- 3. Is there a gene responsible for our obsession with perfection? Disability, ethics and responsibility, Lalita Mc, Henry McHenry, Lalita. Performance Paradigm 3 (2007).
- 4. "The waving torch draws unbelievable pictures" Rhian Hinkley, Studies in Learning, Evaluation, Innovation and Development http://www.sleid.cqu.edu.au/
- 5. Australia / not Australia: Pathologies of hope in contemporary Australian performance.

  Dr Peter Eckersall www.documenta12





#### 2007 small metal objects

The Barbican, in conjunction with Theatre Royal East Stratford, East Stratford Station, London, osmosis 07 Festival, Barbican, Stratford Station, East London,

Dublin Theatre Festival, Mayor Square, Dublin, Ireland

Zurcher Theater Spektakel, Landiwiese, Zurich, Switzerland

Noorderzon [Festival], Noorderplantsoen, Groningen, The Netherlands

Kobenhavns Internationale Teater [Festival], Radhuspladsen (Town Hall Square),

Copenhagen, Denmark

Paris Quartier d'ete [festival], Place des Innocents, Forum des Halles, Paris, France

Theaterformen Festival, Kropcke, Hanover, Germany

Ten Days on the Island, Salamanca Square, Hobart

The Capitol, Bendigo Market Place, Bendigo

Mildura Wentworth Arts Festival, Mildura Centro, Mildura

Artshouse, Federation Square, Melbourne

Brisbane Powerhouse, Queen St Mall, Brisbane

Perth International Arts Festival, Forrest Place, Perth

Sydney Festival, Customs House Square, Sydney

#### 2006 small metal objects

7th Australian Performing Arts Market, Adelaide Railway Station

#### 2006 small metal objects

Melbourne International Arts Festival, Flinders Street Station, Melbourne

#### 2004 cow

Sydney Opera House, Studio, Sydney

#### 2003 cow

London International Festival of Theatre (LIFT), Battersea Arts Centre Long Night of the Churches [Festival], Markuskirche, Hannover, Germany

#### soft

Zuercher Theater Spektakel, Zurich, Switzerland, 2003 Laokoon Festival, Hamburg, Germany

#### **PORNSTAR**

Midsumma Festival, Black Box Victorian Arts Centre, Melbourne Art of Difference, Gasworks Arts Park, Port Melbourne

#### 2002 soft

2002 Melbourne International Arts Festival, Shed 4, North Wharf Road, Docklands, Melbourne

WORKSHOP RESIDENCY Muse Company Summer School, Tokyo

#### COW

6th Conference & International Festival of Theatre for Disabled Artists, Almagro, Spain

#### **DOGFARM**

2002 Shepparton Arts Festival

#### 2001 mental

Hot House Theatre, Wodonga





#### 2000 DOGFARM

La Mama, Melbourne Geelong Fringe Festival, Courthouse Youth Arts Centre, Geelong

#### mental

Sydney 2000 Summer Paralympic Arts Festival, Seymour Theatre Centre, Sydney

#### 1999 mental

Athenaeum Theatre II, Melbourne

#### **DRAG RACERS IN LOVE**

with Nelson Park School, Geelong Performing Arts Centre

#### **1998 BOOM TOWN**

With Snuff Puppets, Kardinia Park Football Arena Geelong

#### MINDS EYE

Adelaide Fringe Festival, Scott Theatre, Adelaide

#### 1997 PETER PAN

With Arena Theatre, George Fairfax Studio, Victorian Arts Centre, Melbourne Geelong Performing Arts Centre

#### **MR SEPTEMBER**

Courthouse Youth Arts Centre, Geelong

#### 1996 MINDS EYE

With Handspan Visual Theatre, Lonsdale St Power Station, Melbourne

#### **ROAD MOVIE**

With Melbourne Workers Theatre, Londsdale Street Power Station, Melbourne

#### 1995 BACK TO BACK IN SHORTS

A series of short works presented at the Irene Mitchell Studio, St Martin's Theatre, Melbourne

#### 1994 FREAK SHOW

With Circus Oz, Blakiston Theatre, Geelong Performing Arts Centre, Geelong; Napier St Theatre, Melbourne

#### 1993 VOICES OF DESIRE

Blakiston Theatre Performing Arts Centre Geelong; Polyglot Theatre Melbourne, Belvoir St Theatre, Sydney; tours to Albury Wodonga, Canberra

#### 1992 THE ADVENTURES OF BOBBI DAZZLER

Blakiston Theatre, Geelong Performing Arts Centre, Geelong; Polyglot Puppet Theatre, Melbourne

#### WOODENHEAD

Blakiston Theatre, Geelong Performing Arts Centre, Geelong; Arena Theatre, South Melbourne; Belconnen Community Theatre Canberra; and Bay Street Theatre Glebe, Sydney and tours in regional Victoria and Central Western NSW

#### 1991 I DON'T WANT TO LIVE IN LARA ANYMORE

Blakiston Theatre, Geelong Performing Arts Centre, Geelong

#### YELL BLUE MURDER

Blakiston Theatre, Geelong Performing Arts Centre, Geelong and Athenaeum II, Melbourne

#### 1990 THE PEG MACHINE

Blakiston Theatre, Geelong Performing Arts Centre, Geelong; Tours to TAS, QLD, NSW, ACT, VIC and SA

#### **EVERYTHING AND THE MERMAID**

Blakiston Theatre, Geelong Performing Arts Centre; Arena Theatre South Yarra Melbourne

#### 1989 CINDERELLA, THE FAT COW DEPARTS

Ashby Hall, Geelong

#### STINKING HOUSES

Blakiston Theatre, Geelong Performing Arts Centre; Victorian and ACT Tours

#### **1988 BIG BAG**

Geelong Performing Arts Centre, Geelong; Arena Theatre South Melbourne



# COMMUNITY PRODUCTIONS, RESIDENCIES & EVENTS 1999 – 2006

2007	DMI: DISABILITY MAINTENANCE INSTRUMENT
	Performed by Theatre of Speed, Stott Theatre, Courthouse Youth Arts Centre, Geelong

2006 POD 6 - WARRNAMBOOL with Break of Day Players

**BOOMTOWNERS** with Theatre of Speed and Snuff Puppets, 2006 Commonwealth Games Live Site, Geelong

POD 7 - GEELONG Performed by Theatre of Speed, Geelong West Town Hall

POD 8 - HOBART Amalgamation Festival, Salamanca Theatre, Hobart

2005 MINOTAUR Performed by Theatre of Speed, Courthouse Youth Arts Centre Geelong

POD 4 - BALLARAT With Brrrr Theatre, Camp Street Theatre, Ballarat

POD 5 - COLAC With Ants Pantz Arts Trinity, College Colac

2004 POD 3 - HORSHAM Awakenings Festival, Horsham Town Hall

#### 2003 INSIDE THE ANGEL HOUSE

Performed by Theatre of Speed, Courthouse Youth Arts Centre, Geelong

2002 WORKSHOP RESIDENCY, Muse Company Summer School, Tokyo

#### 2001 FISHMAN

Performed by St Laurence Theatre Workshop, Geelong Performing Arts Centre

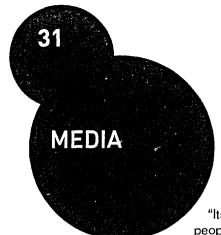
**2000 ARNOLD** Performed by St Laurence Theatre Workshop, 2000 Geelong Fringe Festival, Courthouse Project, Geelong

#### 1999 DRAG RACERS IN LOVE With Nelson Park School,

Geelong Performing Arts Centre

**PUSH PUSH** With Karingal participants, 1999 Momenta Arts Geelong, Courthouse Project, Geelong

**THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE WEDDING** With Karingal participants, Courthouse Project, Geelong



#### small metal objects

"Its beauty lies in the way that it forces you to concentrate on the things and people who are

normally rendered invisible. In their accidental participation in the show, the people in the crowds become distinct individuals ... [in] Back to Back's tender and deeply thoughtful piece of work."

#### TIME OUT LONDON (CRITICS' PICK)

"Shakespeare's suggestion that 'all the world's a stage" has seldom been better demonstrated, and the achievement of small metal objects is that it not only makes you look, it makes you see."

THE GUARDIAN, LONDON (CRITICS' PICK)

"The production... is as amusing as it is illuminating about the things we overlook and the experience of being invisible. Infused by a sense of a larger topsy – turvy world, it's a reminder of the value of stillness, of just stopping, watching and listening once in a while." METRO LIFE, LONDON

"A glorious exercise in multiple layers of perception, small metal objects insists that we participate beyond the bounds of mute observance: we are in a public space, isolated by technology yet bound together by it, following a narrative that becomes intensely personal."

#### IRISH THEATRE MAGAZINE, DUBLIN

"That the two leads are people with intellectual disabilities only adds another layer to the perception, as we are asked to revisit what we think a so-called impaired human being is capable of." IRISH THEATRE MAGAZINE, DUBLIN

"Master provocateurs, Back to Back does a rigorously mighty job on nudging and subverting "straight" audiences into seeing beauty where it is hidden" THE AGE, MELBOURNE

"An elliptical slice of barely-glimpsed life, unfolding at its own pace, striking no compromises with drama or narrative convention" **THE GUARDIAN, LONDON** 

"small metal objects turns the notion of theatre and the everyday inside out. It is a pure, open-hearted, complex and breathtaking production and a unique meditation on human worth."

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

"At once ingenious, provocative, disarming, and extremely funny." THE AGE, MELBOURNE

"With small metal objects Back to Back has devised a show about people who may otherwise be invisible to society (disabled, poor, on the fringe) and through presenting it in a real world setting forces us to acknowledge and – possibly empathise with these people. Walking away after the show you find yourself noticing more of the world and people around you, a small indication of the impact of this production." **STAGE NOISE, SYDNEY** 

""Even for habitual people watchers, small metal objects is totally engrossing."
THE SUN-HERALD, SYDNEY

"Any doubters about the transformative power of art must surely leave this show converted."

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN, PERTH

"The physical space and the surreal experience of being both the watcher and the watched make for a unique theatrical experience." THE COURIER-MAIL, BRISBANE

"It's the mass of humanity walking past, in all its varied forms, which steals the show."

THE COURIER-MAIL, BRISBANE

"Go see it. The world will look different afterwards." THE MERCURY, HOBART



#### DMI: DISABILITY MAINTENANCE INSTRUMENT

- "Best performance I've see."
- "Always enjoyable, interesting and surprising"
- "Amazing stagecraft and such a great ensemble"
- "It was a "very moving" performance. Wonderful and food for thought!
- "I found it quite emotional; it sent shivers up my spine"
- "Thought provoking"
- "Theatre of speed production are so thought provoking. I find each remains with me for months as I mull over each section of performance. All productions spectacular"
- "inspirational! You guys rock!"
- "The beautiful way in which the story was portrayed visually, through the performers as well as set and costume"
- "Very moving and stark reality of life sound was amazing"
- "A visual, auditory thought provoking mélange"
- "Look forward to attending more shows in the future"
- "Well done. I feel honored to have seen it (really!!)"
- "Congratulations to you all for all your hard work. A wonderful show. Thank you."
- "Great show. V. post Howard!"
- "Exceptionally moving in a number of places"
- "Some performances are confrontational others thought provoking and deserve exploration But all entertaining and emotional"
- "Great to see the ability and enthusiasm come out"
- "Please never stop what you do!"
- "Very impressive great performance definitely worth the train ride out from Melbourne!"