



BACK TO  
BACK  
THEATRE  
**ANNUAL  
REPORT**  
2006



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## 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 that are 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.

## ABOUT BACK TO BACK THEATRE

**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 six 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.

Rose HISCOCK CHAIR

**Approaching its second decade Back to Back Theatre has managed to retain and achieve** much of its original charter. 2006, like our founding year of 1987, has been seeded with an investment in the Geelong community and the company's future with local workshops, a Summer School and the premiere of a new work (POD 7-Geelong) created in collaboration with artists of Geelong.

The company's consistency is a fabulous thing and a tribute to the staff and long-term Board members, in particular, Bobbie Hodge, and outgoing board members, Ann Tonks and David McGinness. As we stand ready to take on the world, thanks to all Board members and utmost respect and thanks to the dedicated and clever ensemble and staff.

In early 2007 the following, which continues to churn around in my head, appeared in an Ensemble report to Board: "We've been going through the Actors Manual. Scott [Price] doesn't actually agree with the twelve DSS (Disability Services Standards). [Scott wrote:] "I know what they are. I just want to live a normal life. I feel like I'm treated like a profoundly disabled person." We thank Simon, Rita, Nicki, Sonia and Mark for another magnificent year, for their insight, wisdom and contribution to the company and Board, and welcome new Ensemble members for 2007, Scott Price and Sarah Mainwaring.

In 2006 Bruce Gladwin and Alice Nash continued to lead the company to create extraordinary work. A carefully considered program has been realised to capitalise on interest in SMO whilst allowing for creative development and keeping the company financially stable.

We wholeheartedly thank all core and project staff, guest artists, community collaborators, funders, family, friends and dedicated fans for their amazing contributions to Back to Back Theatre in 2006.

- Awarded the 2005 Sidney Myer Performing Arts [Group] Award for the company's long-term contribution to the development of Australian theatre
- POD 6 – WARRNAMABOOL – a residency with Break of Day Players
- SMALL METAL OBJECTS at 7th Australian Performing Arts Market, Adelaide Railway Station
- BOOMTOWNERS with Snuff Puppets at the Commonwealth Games Live Site, Geelong
- Rita Halabarec exhibits work at the Karingallery, Geelong
- POD 7 – GEELONG– a full production of Back to Back's community workshop program, Theatre of Speed - premieres at Geelong West Town Hall as part of Alcoa Celebrate All Abilities Festival for International Day of Disabilities
- POD 8 – Hobart –a residency and experimental performance at the inaugural Amalgamation Arts Festival
- SMALL METAL OBJECTS nominated for a Helpmann Award for Best New Australian work
- Simon Laherty lands a major role in the feature film NOISE, playing the dog loving "Lucky Phil", a character who perhaps is witness to a brutal murder.
- Awarded the [Inaugural] Australian Business Arts Foundation National Giving Award for partnerships with the philanthropic sector

**ENSEMBLE**

Mark Deans  
Rita Halabarec  
Nicki Holland  
Simon Laherty  
Sonia Teuben

**STAFF**

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Bruce Gladwin  
GENERAL MANAGER / EXECUTIVE PRODUCER Alice Nash  
ENSEMBLE DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR Kate Sulan  
GUEST DIRECTOR, THEATRE OF SPEED Marcia Ferguson  
ADMINISTRATION MANAGER Sue Hartigan  
FINANCE OFFICER Marisa Chiappi  
FUNDING DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT Pauline Cady  
SUPPORT WORKER, THEATRE OF SPEED Jill Romanis  
ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT Stacey Baldwin

**COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT**

CHAIR Bobbie Hodge  
TREASURER & PUBLIC OFFICER  
David McGinness (to Apr 06); Ann Tonks (from May 06)  
SECRETARY Rose Hiscock  
ENSEMBLE REPRESENTATIVE Simon Laherty  
OTHER MEMBERS Patsie Frawley, Gillian Hoysted (May 06),  
Ian Bracegirdle (May 06), Patrick Over, Ann Tonks, Yoni Prior

## GUEST ARTISTS & COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Access for All Abilities	Frank Woodley	Madeleine Flynn
Adrian Hann	Hugh Covill	Marcia Ferguson
Andrew Livingston, Bluebottle3	Ian Pidd	Marianne Taylor
Arts Action Inc	Jeff Busby	Mark Cuthbertson
Bec Reid	Jenny Hector	Melissa Reeves
Ben Speth	Jessica Wilson	Rhian Hinkley
Berni Sweeney	Jethro Woodward	Sally Smith
Break of Day Players	Jim Russell	Sarah Cathcart
Caroline Lee	Jo Leishman	Shio Otani
Colin Lane	John Bennett	Snuff Puppets
Danielle von der Borch	Kate Sulan	Stephen Oakes
Danielle Walker	Lachlan Carrick	Tessa King
David Symons	Leanne Stein	Tim Humphrey
Deb Barclay	Lin Tobias, La Bella Design	Wendy Grose
Emily Barrie	Luke Robson	

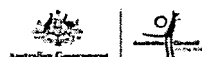
## THEATRE OF SPEED (COMMUNITY WORKSHOP PROGRAM)

COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS Samantha Bade, Laura Berrisford, Adam Berry, Joan Black, Robert Croft, Nicholas Farrell, James Lewis, Vanessa Masters, Scott Price, Joel Pollard, Tamika Simpson, Drisana Thornhill, Brian Tilley, Allan V Watt, Olivia Wilson

GUEST DIRECTORS, THEATRE OF SPEED Marcia Ferguson, Kate Sulan  
SUPPORT WORKER, THEATRE OF SPEED Jill Romanis

## FUNDERS, SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

Australia Council for the Arts



Arts Victoria



ANZ Trustees

Besen Family Foundation

City of Greater Geelong

Clayton Utz

Department of Family,  
Community Services &  
Indigenous Affairs

Department of Human Services

National Library of Australia

RE Ross Trust

St. Laurence Community  
Services

The Myer Foundation

The Percy Baxter Charitable  
Trust, managed by Perpetual  
Trustees

United Way (Geelong)

VicHealth



# THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Amalgamation Arts Festival

Arts Action Inc

Arts Roar

Break of Day Players

Cameron McNaughton,  
Percy Baxter Charitable Trust

Charles & Jessie Strong Trust

Charles Lamond Forrest Estate

Richard Hoad, Jodi Ainsworth  
and Deborah Polites at  
Clayton Utz

Cosmos Recreational Services

Denise Feldman, Disability Rights  
& Advocacy Service

Di Shaw, Kaz Paton, Duncan  
Esler, Janine Shelley, City of  
Greater Geelong

Erin Brannigan, Reel Dance  
Festival

Hobart City Council

Is Theatre

John Baylis, Carin Mistry, Kim  
Hanna, Julie Grayland, Olivia  
Wright at the Australia Council  
for the Arts

Kristy Edmunds, Kara Miller,  
Kare Ward, Mary-Ellen King,  
Alice Lowenstein,  
Maureen Gardner at Melbourne  
International Arts Festival

Lisa Mount

Louisa M Henty Estate

Lynden Costin, Luke Gleeson,  
Courthouse Youth Arts Centre

Neil Richardson at the  
Department of Family and  
Community Services and  
Indigenous Affairs

Paul Dunn, Sandy Oliver at the  
Department of Human Services

Rena Vasey Hall Estate

Rob Rees, St Laurence  
Community Services

Sandy Shaw, The Myer  
Foundation

Stuart Koop, Amanda Browne,  
Debra Jefferies Mandy Grinblat,  
Karen Lanceley Drew at Arts  
Victoria

Susan Ball, Vichealth

VCF – A E McKay Trust

Friends, families, carers,  
volunteers and various devoted,  
long-standing fans.

# ENSEMBLE REPORT

Mark Deans, Rita Halabarec, Nicki Holland, Simon Laherty, with Marcia Ferguson

## IN 2006

### SMALL METAL OBJECTS

*At the 2006 Australian Performing Arts Market*

### BEDROOM Creative Development

*Rhian took a camera out to each of our bedrooms and filmed us talking about our houses*

### FOODCOURT Showing

*At the Malthouse*

### DUMB Creative Development

*Had a lot of different people coming in to help us – Frank and Colin; Hugh Covill; Rita did drawings for DUMB; played around with sound.*

### Appointment of Ensemble Development Co-ordinator

*Kate Sulan oversaw ensemble professional development. We took day trips to Melbourne to look[ed] at masks; went to galleries; fitness with Cheryl at the YMCA*

### Auditions for new Ensemble members

### POD 7 - Geelong

*With Theatre of Speed and Marcia Ferguson and collaborators in Geelong West Town Hall*

### DISABILITY MAINTENANCE INSTRUMENT (DMI) Creative Development

*With Kate Sulan. We went to the National War Museum, looking at how machines worked, and did disguises with Emily Barrie.*

### Skills Development with Danielle von der Borch.

*We did a lot of movement mainly.*

### BOZ 'n' HOK vs. THEATRE OF SPEED

*International screenings*

### D9

*Finished off D9 [film]*

### SUMMER SCHOOL 2006:

*It was fun last year – really liked the games we did with Marcia*

### POD 6 – Warrnambool

*Break of Day Players [all] didn't show up. With local ensemble member, Nicki Holland*

### POD 8 – Hobart

*With Amalgamations Festival, and ensemble members Nicki Holland and Mark Deans.*

### WORKSHOPS

*Melbourne University, Kardinia College, Yarraville Special School*

### ART OF DIFFERENCE

*We participated in workshops, and saw a comedy show*

## WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS?

NICKI: *POD 8 in Hobart. The statues and movement when we wore suits with little lights. That was the best. I loved the searchers in POD 7. I loved being the leader of that.*

MARK: *Yeah. POD.*

RITA: *The Christmas party at the Barking Dog Hotel. I liked POD 7, my lighthouse drawings, the boxes where the people were sitting, my art on the screen, the grass green.*

SIMON: *POD 7. That was excellent. I liked the part where I played the Gothic man and Nicki played the Gothic woman. The best thing was dressing up in the costumes. I liked the way I could get into the POD and show the audience how good we were at what we were doing. The storyline was fantastic. Easy to follow. Also I enjoyed the Art of Difference. Was so amazing we could do all the workshops that day. My favourite was the leadership one. And the other favourite was doing my own movie called Noise.*

## WHAT WAS YOUR LOWEST POINT?

SIMON: *Going over to Adelaide to do the SMO thing. It was quite a long way to travel and I think I would have enjoyed it more if I'd done it in Melbourne.*

NICKI: *Learning my lines for Food Court. But I did succeed. And in Hobart my lowest point was doing fitness walks every morning. Having to keep up with Sue. It was a long way to the workshop venue too.*

RITA: *My father died. (this happened in 2005)*

MARK: *YMCA.*

## WHAT WAS THE FUNNIEST THING?

SIMON: *Some of Rita's drawings were funny. Everything was based on Iraq. Iraqi shower, Iraqi toilet...*

NICKI: *Christine Nixon in POD 7! (played by Tamika Simpson). And Vanessa and Simon playing the surfie couple.*





**WHERE COULD WE IMPROVE?**

SIMON: *More rehearsal time for POD. Too many people were mucking around in the afternoon. Take shorter lunchbreaks.*

NICKI: *My acting skills could be better.*

RITA: *Rhian's film. Don't do a jail film – do people's houses. It was too short.*

**WHAT COULD WE HAVE DONE WITHOUT?**

SIMON: *Nothing. Everything was good.*

**WHAT WAS MISSING?**

SIMON: *When Kate left.*

MARK: *Bedroom Project*

**WAS THERE TOO MUCH WORK OR TOO LITTLE WORK?**

SIMON: *Could have done a bit more. We could have done a little film for all the collaborators who worked here.*

NICKI: *It was enough. A good amount.*

RITA: *No, not enough. Keep going. Do a silly show. Short skits. More restaurants. Pizzas.*

MARK: *Nuh. Yeah.*

**WHAT I LOVE ABOUT BACK TO BACK**

RITA: *I play Gloria.*

NICKI: *Making cups of tea. Being with Rita. Being funny and being creative and silly.*

SIMON: *Mucking around with Bruce.*

MARK: *The people.*

Bruce GLADWIN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**Increasingly the company sees its community as beyond the geographical boundaries of** our home town. With week-long residencies in Warrnambool and Hobart, working with local community groups supporting artists with disabilities, Back to Back Theatre in 2006 offered valuable professional development, insight into our working process, genuine collaboration with and encouragement to our peers in regional settings.

Following the success of SMALL METAL OBJECTS at the Melbourne International Festival in 2005, Back to Back showcased the work at the Australian Performing Arts Market in March 2006. Swamped by overseas and national interest, company management stood before a steep learning curve of international markets and agents. Ultimately it has been an opportunity to give this work a further life, which we are thankful for, and which we will do, across Australia and around the world in 2007 and beyond.

Allowing the interest in SMALL METAL OBJECTS to fuel itself, the ensemble and creative collaborators forged ahead on multiple creative developments for DUMB – a new work, sometimes also called BEDROOM and FOOD COURT, for 2008 – casting the moorings for a large-scale in-house theatrical adventure, and a development of DISABILITY MAINTENANCE INSTRUMENT (DMI) – by our community workshop program, Theatre of Speed, for 2007 – to consolidate the company's Geelong presence amidst the touring schedule of 2007 and beyond.

Company management responded to the enormous changes that took place during the course of the year, most notably the growing international profile of and interest in the company.

Back to Back initiated the creation of a new position, Ensemble Development Coordinator in 2006. The position was filled by Kate Sulan. Kate drove the creative development period for DISABILITY MAINTENANCE INSTRUMENT (Theatre of Speed's new work for 2007) and made an enormous contribution to the company during her time, particularly in the areas of ensemble training and fitness. We wish Kate and Dom all the best with their newly arrived daughter, Mitali.

2006 concluded with the appointment of two new part-time ensemble members, Sarah Mainwarring and Scott Price. Long-standing ensemble member Sonia Teuben decided on a 12-month leave of absence from January 2007 (though she'll be touring with us for much of 2007). We farewelled David McGinness (bless him) and welcomed Ian Bracegirdle and Gillian Hoysted (bless them too) to the Board.

We look forward to the future and thank those organisations and individuals who have supported the company in its creative journey so far. It has without doubt been a rewarding year for the company.

Alice NASH GENERAL MANAGER

**It was a big year on the typing end of things. We thought it might be quiet but, as usual,** were deluded. All in the office – Sue, Marisa, Pauline, Stacey worked away diligently on the administration of the projects described in this report. That said:

In 2006, we spent much time responding to the enormous interest garnered from the presentation of SMALL METAL OBJECTS at the Australian Performing Arts Market in Adelaide. We had a strategy in place to respond to interest, but we hadn't anticipated the enormity of it all. By the end of the year, we had finalised tours to 7 Australian and 6 international cities in 2007 (and started work on 2008 touring.) We had finished a self-guided crash course in international touring, re-structured and increased our core staff and brought on Bluebottle3 (Andrew Livingston, Gabby Walters and Berni Sweeney) to work on tour production and Quaternaire (Sarah Ford with Aicha Boutella and Olivia Morin) to act as our overseas representatives in 2007 and 2008.

And then: we continued to respond with élan to our work as a Supported Employment Service for people disabilities; scoured through the company's archives and put them into order; commissioned research into the company's processes; sent Theatre of Speed's BOZ 'N HOK dance video around the world; and, of course, strove to be better (quicker, more clever, more cheerful) on all sorts of fronts.

In 2006, the Australia Council Theatre Board flagged significant changes to its funding programs from 2009. The company responded (and continues to respond) to the proposed changes which will see a re-shaping of our sector. Simultaneously, Arts Victoria, after a long political journey, announced much needed increases to the so-called small to medium performing arts sector, of which Back to Back Theatre is a part. We wholeheartedly thank our colleagues at the Australia Council and Arts Victoria for the enormous work they have done on these fronts. Similarly, we wish to thank all our colleagues and peers in other small companies across Australia for their regular support, advice and camaraderie, and all our friends in Geelong and further afield who nurture us with great generosity.

In 2006, with joy we welcomed Kate's daughter, Mitali, and with sadness, we farewelled Rita's father, Mick.

## 2005 SIDNEY MYER PERFORMING ARTS AWARD

In April 2006 Back to Back was awarded the prestigious 2005 Sidney Myer Performing Arts [Group] Award in recognition of its long-term contribution to Australian Theatre. Here is an excerpt from the Judges' Citation:

*"Since Bruce Gladwin became Artistic Director in 1999, Back to Back has focused on the development of its own work, with two Melbourne International Arts Festival premieres cementing its position in the international arts scene: soft in 2002 and small metal objects in 2005.*

*Both seasons were a hit with critics and audience alike. They sold out in days and went on to win The Age Critics' Award for Creative Excellence and The Age Critics' Commendation respectively. Other awards followed. soft toured to Zurich and Hamburg in 2003 and small metal objects has garnered overwhelming international interest and is expected to tour extensively in 2007 and beyond.*

*These we not just great production, upending assumptions about who can be an artist (as Back to Back has always done); they contributed brilliantly to expanding debates about performance spaces, actors and alternative non-verbal performance and the relationships that can exists between actors and audiences."*

# SMALL METAL OBJECTS

at the 7th Australian Performing Arts Market (APAM)

Thursday 2 March 2006, Adelaide Railway Station Concourse, North Terrace

*Photo: Jeff Busby*



## DEVISORS

Bruce Gladwin, Sonia Teuben, Simon Laherty,  
Jim Russell, Genevieve Morris

## SOUND DESIGN & COMPOSITION

Hugh Covill

**DIRECTOR:** Bruce Gladwin

## PERFORMERS

Simon Laherty, Sonia Teuben, James Russell,  
Caroline Lee

**COSTUME DESIGN** Shio Otani

**SCRIPT CONSULTANT** Melissa Reeves

## PRODUCTION MANAGER

Andrew Livingston, Bluebottle3

**STAGE MANAGER** Bernadette Sweeney

**SOUND OPERATOR** Lachlan Carrick

In 2005 SMALL METAL OBJECTS premiered to critical and audience acclaim at the Melbourne International Arts Festival, garnering The [inaugural] Age Critics' Special Commendation and was nominated for a Helpmann Award for Best New Australian Work.

Presented SMALL METAL OBJECTS at the Australian Performing Arts Market in Adelaide. The production was staged twice at the Adelaide Railway Station. The presentation was astoundingly successful and attracted serious interest from an impressive list of national and international delegates.

On the heels of this success, in October 2006, Bruce Gladwin and Alice Nash travelled (very quickly) to New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Minneapolis, Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Seattle – to meet with presenters and look at sites for SMALL METAL OBJECTS in 2008 and beyond.

By the end of 2006, we had confirmed that SMALL METAL OBJECTS would be presented at the Sydney Festival and tour to six Australian cities (Brisbane, Perth, Melbourne, Hobart, Mildura and Bendigo) as part of a Mobile States national tour and would tour extensively in Europe, the UK and North America in 2007 and 2008.

# DUMB (BEDROOM / FOOD COURT)

## Creative Development

Developed throughout the year, Courthouse Youth Arts Centre, Geelong

Work-in-progress showing, 12 August 2006, Courthouse Youth Arts Centre, Geelong

Major Festivals' Initiative (MFI) Development Site Showing, 16 October 2006, Malthouse, Melbourne

### DEVISORS

**Sonia Teuben, Rita Halabarec, Mark Deans, Nicki Holland, Simon Laherty, Bruce Gladwin**

**DIRECTOR Bruce Gladwin**

**ANIMATION & VIDEO Rhian Hinkley**

Inspired from the visual art practice of the Back to Back ensemble and the broader 'outsider' art movement, DUMB is an epic journey drawn from the actors' imagination and observations of human history and the contemporary condition, DUMB aims to shine the beacon for the universal and unending power of human creativity and destruction.

Ultimately this creative development has been about finding a shape and form for a new work. Initially a proposal for an installation-based performance of multiple stages with a limited audience capacity, the development has led us to expect that the new work will be presented in a more traditional theatre environment.

Working with video and animation artist Rhian Hinkley, the ensemble and director experimented with a series of small individual performance spaces all commonly linked to a central viewing area via a closed circuit television. This led us to play with the idea of a television-based production, where the studio floor becomes the stage. Although we felt this direction offered much potential there was a constant disconnection between the screen based performance and live performance.

We returned to drawing as a metaphor for creation, utilising actor Rita Halabarec's linear cartoons as content. Taking the form of a show-and-tell slide show, Rita rendered her image via a drawing program and tablet. The slower pace presentation was personal and still.

Liberating the computer's drawing cursor from the tablet to the performance space was achieved by ingenious motion tracking software developed by Rhian Hinkley. This enabled the actors to draw within a 3 dimensional space holding a point of light, their physical action becoming a choreography determined by the creation of their drawing in real time.

Script development included the creation of a 15-minute text titled FOOD COURT. Drawn from improvisation and generated around ensemble members Nicki Holland and Rita Halabarec, this dark minimalist text unfolds around two characters' hatred for a third representing 'the other'. In performance the dialogue is captured and broadcast by a boom microphone operator and his cable-carrying assistant. These two silent creatures control the pace and tempo of the delivery as the dialogue can only be delivered when the microphone is present. FOOD COURT is a text driven drama augmented by two silent clowns.

FOOD COURT was trialed at an in-house performance for invited guests in August 2006 and presented at a work-in-progress showing in October as part the Major Festivals' Initiative Development Site. This script as a scene, suggests not so much a meta-narrative but a direction of writing and performance style. The final content for DUMB will be determined by the creative contribution of the personnel of the 2007 ensemble.

DUMB has been awarded further seed funding from the Major Festivals' Initiative in 2007.

# THEATRE OF SPEED 2006

Theatre of Speed has developed from Back to Back's outreach work within the Geelong community, in particular the theatre workshop program begun in 1998. Theatre of Speed operates with the dual aims of creating a pool of associated artists with theatrical skills and teaching the ensemble leadership skills. The participants are young people perceived to have an intellectual disability, drawn from St Laurence Community Services. Theatre of Speed works with the Back to Back ensemble and collaborating artists every Wednesday for 42 weeks of the year.

## Theatre of Speed Skills Development

January - April 2006, Courthouse Youth Arts Centre, Geelong

**GUEST ARTIST Danielle von der Borch**

Now in its seventh year Theatre of Speed continues to provide a training environment for performance. Essential to this experience is the need for practical skill development. At the conclusion of each year approximately one third of the participants move to other vocational activities or seek employment; this opens up placement opportunities for new community members to work with the company. Beginning the year with a term of skill development allows new members a tempered adjustment period, with the aim of building a cohesive group dynamic and a skills base to draw upon for the development of new work.

The term began with workshops on game based performance with Bruce Gladwin. Working with a movement improvisation methodology, Danielle von der Borch then worked with the group for a four-week period.

## Theatre of Speed DISABILITY MAINTENANCE INSTRUMENT (DMI) Creative Development

April - June 2006, Courthouse Youth Arts Centre, Geelong

**GUEST DIRECTOR Kate Sulan**  
**DESIGNER John Bennett**  
**COSTUME DESIGNER Emily Barrie**

Theatre of Speed worked with director Kate Sulan, costume designer Emily Barrie and set designer John Bennett on the creative development for DMI - the major new work for 2007. The title and thematic for the work are derived from an administrative form by which the employment support needs of people with a disability are assessed - the Disability Maintenance Instrument. The participants investigated identity - what can be told from the documents we carry about in our wallets - devising lists of questions that would elicit the kind of information we really would like to know about other people and devising aliases - assuming disguises and creating false identities.

# Theatre of Speed POD 7 – GEELONG

30 Nov – 1 December 2006, Geelong West Town Hall

## DEVISORS / PERFORMERS

Samantha Bade, Laura Berrisford,  
Adam Berry, Joan Black, Robert Croft,  
Mark Deans, Nicholas Farrell, Nicki Holland,  
Simon Laherty, James Lewis, Vanessa  
Masters, Joel Pollard, Scott Price, Tamika  
Simpson, Drisana Thornhill, Brian Tilley,  
Allan V Watt, Olivia Wilson, Marcia Ferguson

**DIRECTOR & DRAMATURG** Marcia Ferguson

**INFLATABLE SET DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION**  
Mark Cuthbertson

**SOUNDSCAPE & SOUND DESIGN**  
Jethro Woodward

**ANIMATION** Stephen Oakes

**FILM** Ben Speth

**COSTUME DESIGN** Emily Barrie

**LIGHTING DESIGN & PRODUCTION  
MANAGEMENT** Jenny Hector

**SUPPORT WORKERS**

Jilli Romanis & Leanne Stein

**STAGE MANAGER** Berni Sweeney

**ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS** Stacey  
Baldwin, Zita Whalley

**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT** Adrian Hahn

**FRONT OF HOUSE** Sue Hartigan,  
Marilyn Pollard, Alison Richards, Alice Nash

Photo: Jeff Busby



*...a man follows a woman who  
disappears...*

POD 7 was an experimental performance project, presented at Geelong West Town Hall in an immense inflatable space. It was a rich narrative composition of live action, light, sound, animation and pre-recorded events.

POD 7 is the story of a lighthouse keeper whose daughter, already engaged to be married, falls in love with the boatman who ferries people between land and sea. The woman has two dominating figures in her life

– her father and her fiancé. The woman disappears. The show is a suspense story, a mystery.

The story stopped with each of the woman's last encounters with each man. The performers were emphatic that the performance remain a mystery for the audience to work out. Once they held the available evidence, the audience were left to make up their own minds about how she disappeared.

The development and rehearsal period for POD 7 took place one day a week from July to December 2006, with more intensive rehearsals leading up to the season in December.

Some of the real successes of the project revolved around innovative use of media technologies. Participants found the filming process a delight and were thrilled with the results of their work on film. The work itself made multiple uses of technology in the story telling process – filmed events, animation and light projections were integral parts of the drama.

As part of the Alcoa Celebrate All Abilities Festival for International Day of People With Disabilities, five performances of POD 7 were presented. They sold out.

# Theatre of Speed D9 [Film]

Re-development & Edit

## DEVISORS / PERFORMERS

Samantha Bade, Laura Berrisford,  
Adam Berry, Joan Black, Belinda Cini,  
Robert Croft, Mark Deans, Rita Halabarec,  
Nicki Holland, Simon Laherty, Joel Pollard,  
Scott Price, Tamika Simpson, Brian Tilley,  
Allan V Watt

**NARRATOR** Sonia Teuban

**DIRECTOR/EDITOR** Rhian Hinkley

**CONTENT DEVISOR** Marcia Ferguson

**DRAMATURG** Bruce Gladwin

**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT** Deb Barclay

**SUPPORT WORKER** Jill Romanis

**WORKSHOP COORDINATOR** Sue Hartigan

**GENERAL MANAGER** Alice Nash

**CO-PRODUCERS**

lowercase Films and Back to Back Theatre

*Photo: Jeff Bresby*



D9 was initiated as a follow-up to the successful "Boz 'n' Hok vs Theatre of Speed" and "Huge Covill vs Theatre of Speed" music video project. The music videos had worked exceedingly well on several fronts and the resulting pieces highlighted the movement abilities of the entire Theatre of Speed crew.

In 2005 Rhian Hinkley, Marcia Ferguson and Bruce Gladwin discussed the outcomes of the music video and proposed a project where the actors devised their performances themselves. The premise behind D9 was to allow the Theatre of Speed actors to create individual and or group performances within a

set of strictly defined parameters. Marcia had the task of working with the group on the theme of isolation and containment whilst Rhian took small groups on location to film their performances. The Geelong Gaol was chosen as the location due to its unique visual possibilities and also its ability to provide clearly defined spaces for the performances, namely the cells.

Thematically the film shifted as the devising took place and as the collaborators attempted to wrangle the pieces into a cohesive form. The environment, coupled with some astonishing individual performances, led to mid shoot re-writes and a certain amount of direction finding from all involved. At the end of the shooting period there was a collection of beautiful vignettes that were thematically linked but lacked any overall structure.

In 2006 post-production of D9 became a challenge, as big as the initial challenge of devising a new work. Several edits were tabled but none seemed to bring the performances together in a harmonious form. A script review was undertaken with the ensemble to find a direction for the final composition. The resulting script, narrated by Sonia Teuben, is an amalgamation of this development and input received from the Theatre of Speed participants.

Once the script was recorded, the edit became far easier and the final work was completed in a relatively short space of time. Stand out pieces by Scott Price, Adam Berry and Robert Croft highlight the acting and devising abilities of the Theatre of Speed crew. D9 has the potential to reach a very large audience. It has a distinctive visual style, born from the colour palette of the Gaol itself. The voice over gives the film cohesion as well as greater depth, another layer in an already dense landscape. D9 will premiere in Geelong in 2007 before we send it into the wider world.



## BOOMTOWNERS with SNUFF PUPPETS

25 – 26 March 2006, Commonwealth Games Regional Cultural Festival, Geelong Waterfront

### DEVISORS / PERFORMERS

From Back to Back and Theatre of Speed: Rita Halabarec, Simon Laherty, Mark Deans, Nicki Holland, Laura Berrisford, Adam Berry, Tamika Simpson, Brian Tilley; From Snuff Puppets Ian Pidd, Justin Holland, Ben Fox, Tim Ratcliffe, Zita Whalley

**DIRECTOR** Ian Pidd

**PUPPET DESIGN** Andy Freer

### COSTUME DESIGNER

Nick Barlow and Shio Otani

**SOUNDTRACK** Tim Ratcliffe



Back to Back in collaboration with Snuff Puppets presented four, half-hour performances over two days at the Regional Festival as part of the Commonwealth Games Cultural Program in Geelong.

The work was made over a three-day period, drawing on the previous relationship between the two companies and existing puppets that were created during BOOMTOWN in 1998. Directed by former Back to Back Director Ian Pidd, it involved artists from two professional theatre companies and several members of Back to Back's Theatre of Speed.

Using the theme of sport as a departure point, giant puppets and human performers alike were put into resplendent red tracksuits and undertook a series of boisterous games that the public were invited to participate in.

The performance began its alternative Olympic event with two humans running an extremely hilarious aerobics class, eventually awarding a gold, silver and bronze medal to the highest achieving participants (three giant puppets). The track-suited performers (human and puppet) then played a series of games (hide and seek, blind man's bluff, giants treasure) with the general public, interspersed with sequences of dance moves.

The response from the audience was extremely positive. Audience members greatly enjoyed the concept and responded well to the puppets and performers.

[pod] the outer case holding the seeds of a plant

POD is a workshop process and residency model developed to work with community groups in a variety of settings, to create a multi-disciplinary theatrical work merging architectural design, projected animation and live performance. Through POD, Back to Back creates a model for community performance making that encourages the development of original stories by individuals with disabilities.

By the end of 2006 POD had eight incarnations:

**POD 1 Hannover, Germany (August 2003)**

**POD 2 Geelong Night School (April - June 2004)**

**POD 3 Horsham's Awakenings Festival (October 2004)**

**POD 4 Ballarat in collaboration with Brrrr. Theatre (June 2005)**

**POD 5 Colac in collaboration with Ants Pantz Arts (July 2005)**

**POD 6 Warrnambool in collaboration with Break of Day Players (January 2006)**

**POD 7 Geelong in collaboration with Theatre of Speed (July - December 2006)**

**POD 8 Hobart at Amalgamation Festival (December 2006)**

Back to Back uses a literal structure - a large inflatable – to facilitate collaborations. The structure does not pre-determine process, content or outcomes. Each community collaborates in the creation of the artistic work (performance, construction and animation) and the research stream within their own contexts. The focus is on collaboration not facilitation, and the interaction operates in both directions.

The methodology for POD places people with disabilities as the drivers of artistic process and its resultant discourse. The residency does not create a finished work; it culminates in a presentation to an invited audience.

A unique sensory experience, POD advocates for the value of diversity of human form and simultaneously explores that subject through a dynamic diversity of theatrical form.

POD includes a research, documentation and dissemination process to examine artistic practice and community outcomes from interdisciplinary perspectives. The research stream seeks to embed the work of Back to Back and its communities within academic discourse and more broadly in civic society. The research stream aims to strength on the outcomes of the project through an evaluative approach.

## **POD 6 – WARRNAMBOOL**

### **With Break Of Day Players**

17-26 January 2006, Showing 26 January 2006,  
Warrnambool Civic Centre

#### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS**

Geoff, Cory, Kirribilli House Day Program  
participants and Nicki Holland

**DIRECTOR** Marcia Ferguson

**FILM & ANIMATION** Rhian Hinkley

**SET CONSTRUCTION/ INFLATABLES**  
Mark Cuthbertson

#### **LOCAL COORDINATORS**

Luke Robson & Maree Wyse, Break of Day  
Players Committee of Management

In January 2006, Back to Back undertook a five day regional residency, working in collaboration with Warrnambool's community disability theatre group, Break of Day Players, with whom the company has enjoyed a long-term relationship, via its annual Summer School.

Marcia Ferguson began the devising process asking participants to draw in response to the theme: things that change the world. The drawings offered a rich palette of ideas and Mark and Rhian began to explore these in terms of installation design and animation. Marcia took the first two days to explore performance skills.

One of the most successful artistic aspects of this POD was the use of shadow puppets, cut outs and shadows to tell the narrative; the adaptation of drawings into a mythological universe (micro-macro cosmic); the quality of the animated drawings (Geoff's work in particular); Rhian's excitement about torch-infrared technology as a means of live drawing; and interaction of animation with shadow puppets eg. animated "fire" came out of the shadow dragon's mouth.

As an experimental arts project, POD 6 brought together inflatable art, animation and shadow puppetry in a short performance before an audience of forty people. The fact that this audience attended at all was extraordinary – in 43 degree heat with wildfires burning outside Warrnambool and the Grampians it was not an easy day to come out!

## POD 8 – HOBART

### at Amalgamation Arts Festival

11-15 December 2006 with showings on 15 December 2006,  
Hobart City Hall

#### PERFORMERS / DEVISORS

Mark Deans, Kees de Jong, Evan Dowling,  
Patrick Eadington, Quinn Griggs, Nicki  
Holland, Grey Hoy, Kai Jenkins, Finegan  
Kruckemeyer, Emily Mallett, Lucy North,  
Christine Picolet, Darren Schyvens, Heather  
Styles, Sandra Watkins, Gayna Weatherley,  
AJ Webberley

**DIRECTOR** Marcia Ferguson

**DESIGN DRAMATURG** Bruce Gladwin

**SOUNDSCAPE** Jethro Woodward

**SET DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION**  
Mark Cuthbertson

**ANIMATION & FILM** Rhian Hinkley

**DIGITAL STORYTELLING** Susan Hartigan

**PRODUCTION MANAGER & LIGHTING  
DESIGN** Andrew Livingston

**STAGE MANAGER** Berni Sweeney

**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT** Nick van der Meer

**SUPPORT WORKERS** Lee Mountney,  
Lucy North, Kim West, Peter, Sue Hartigan

**FRONT OF HOUSE**  
Sue Hartigan, Alison Richards

**AMALGAMATION ARTS FESTIVAL**  
Marianne Taylor, Danielle Walker

POD 8 was produced by Arts Action Inc.  
with Hobart City Council.

Photo: Sue Hartigan



Workshops were integrated, with professional and developing artists from Is Theatre, Cosmos Recreational Services, Arts Roar and others interested in participating in community performance events. Seventeen workshop members attended with six support workers, who also participated and performed. There was a strong, positive spirit amongst the group, many of whom had not met before.

This POD was one of the most successful artistically, allowing for experimental exploration of new form and content. As the last in this series of PODs, the creative team were able to put into place working methods and structures that were a response to previous POD experiences.

The maturity and shared experience of Back to Back's team for this POD - Marcia Ferguson, Mark Cuthbertson, Rhian Hinkley, Nicki Holland, Mark Deans - who had formed a strong knowledge of the POD process, allowed them to delight in new ideas and 'grow' them, mutually, across art forms, very quickly. There was strong leadership from this group, whose excitement about making new work carried through the workshop process.

A few weeks prior to the workshop, participants were posted out an anonymous survey. This document informed the process in informal ways, but was also the source for a scripted dialogue.

In POD 7 we discovered sound design was a critical component in supporting performers and realising content. We felt the scale of the space and installation required a sound design. Jethro Woodward arrived on Wednesday morning. By Friday he had composed and built a complete score and sound design, adding enormous dimension to the performers' work.

Tasmanian participants brought a positive spirit, great energy, excitement and anticipation. Experience ranged from professional to community performers. The calibre of work gave permission for new performers to take risks. This produced wonderful outcomes: a high level of trust and accord; inspiring role models; rapid skills development; new community links; strong meaningful artistic discussions; innovative content; high quality performance.

Patrick Eadington, a committed disability arts worker and advocate, attended two workshop days. He performed an extraordinary dance duet on the Friday night performance. His words, work and presence were a highlight of the residency. We think we might be finished with PODs, but you never know...

# SUMMER SCHOOL 2006

18 & 19 November 2006, Courthouse Youth Arts Centre, Geelong

## PARTICIPANTS

Peter Abbey, Phoebe Baker, Tom Banks, Belinda Baum, Alistair Bandy, Angus Bannister, Allan Bonning, Jenny Bowden, Mark Davies, Melanie Erler, John Fidler, Jessica Hovey, Neil Hutterer, Stephen Hutterer, Barbara Machnyk, Polly Munday, Craig Murray, Joel Pollard, Renee Poulsen, Darren Riches, Shavorn Simpson, Sarah Sneddon, Ria Strong, Mark Deans, Rita Halabarec, Nicki Holland, Simon Laherty

## OBJECTS IN PERFORMANCE

Jessica Wilson

## PERFORMANCE MAKING

Sarah Cathcart

## THEATRE GAMES

Ensemble with Marcia Ferguson

## SOUNDS IN SPACE

Tim Humphrey & Madeline Flynn

## WORKING WITH TEXT

David Symons

## FALLING & HUMMING

Tim Humphrey, Madeline Flynn & Sally Smith

## SUPPORT WORKER

Leanne Stein



Back to Back's Summer School is an important component of our outreach work in South Western Victoria. Summer School provides intensive training and development opportunities, focusing on, but not exclusive to, people with disabilities, their carers and/or families. Summer School is an anticipated calendar event, particularly for those in smaller regional communities who do not always have access to high quality performing arts activities.

SUMMER SCHOOL provides workshops with a variety of professionals across a range of artistic forms and disciplines. Simultaneously, it offers these professionals the opportunity to work, often for the first time, with people with disabilities and to introduce the artists to the broader work of Back to Back.

SUMMER SCHOOL not only links individuals to Back to Back, but also operates as an informal network between organisations such as Brrrr Theatre (Ballarat) and Break of Day Players (Warrnambool) and the artists programmed as facilitators.

**Ensemble Development**

In 2006 Back to Back took a good look at its ensemble and the structures which support it. Kate Sulan took on the new role of Ensemble Development Coordinator, working with the ensemble on a range of artistic (and organisational fronts) including ongoing professional development and fitness training. Professional Development workshops were held with Rhian Hinkley (animation), Kate Sulan (directing) and Wendy Grose (voice)

Simultaneously, the company had a look at whether it could (structurally) recruit additional members to the ensemble and, to our delight, found we could: December 2006 saw the appointment of two new, fresh faced part-time ensemble members. It will be a great honour to welcome Sarah Mainwaring and Scott Price to the company from January 2007.

**Community Workshops**

In 2006, including Theatre of Speed, Back to Back facilitated over 70 individual workshops, with the majority of activity taking place in Geelong, including workshops from Kardinia College, but also including one off-workshops in Melbourne (Yarraville Special School and Melbourne University).

**Research Stream**

In 2006, Dr Alison Richards was commissioned to undertake research into the POD residency model spanning 2003-2006. The research is expected to be unearthed in 2007.

**Screenings of BOZ 'N HOK VS THEATRE OF SPEED [Video]**

**PERFORMERS** Adam Berry, Joan Black, Robert Croft, Mark Deans, Rita Halabarec, Nicki Holland, Voula Hristeas, Megan Humphries, Simon Laherty, Joel Pollard, Eric Rebernik, Tamika Simpson, Ken Smith, Sonia Teuban, Brian Tilley, Allan V Watt  
**DIRECTOR / VIDEOGRAPHER:** Rhian Hinkley  
**SOUND COMPOSITION:** David Franzke, Byron Scullin  
**CHOREOGRAPHERS** Fiona Cameron, Luke George, Rebecca Hilton, Jerril Rechter, Bec Reid, Gerard Van Dyck, Ingrid Voorendt

Theatre of Speed creates its own pop culture product, reinterprets the film clip and place themselves as the talent, the object of desire.

24 March 2006, Mirrorball/Down Under, Mirrorball @ Curzon Soho, London UK

30 March 2006, Film and Disability Day, Borderlines Film Festival, Hereford, UK

1– 6 May 2006, 3rd International Dance Video Festival, Tokyo, presented by Dance and Media Japan

14 May 2006, Dance Flicks, Reeldance Festival 2006, Dancehouse, Melbourne

14 & 21 Sept 2006, Reel Dance Take 12 at Dance Your Socks Off! New Zealand Film Archive, Wellington New Zealand

1 Oct 2006, Reel Dance: Take 12 at Electrofringe Newcastle

Oct - Nov 2006, Kinodance, St Petersburg International Dance Film Festival (17 Nov St Petersburg; 20 Oct Moscow; 19 Oct Ekaterinburg)

25 Nov 2006, Reel Dance Take 12 @ Cinemoves, Sydney Dance Company, Sydney (then Perth and Adelaide)

1 Dec 2006, 8th Festival Internacional de Videodanza de Buenos, Buenos Aires, Argentina

**The Archive / Collection Project**

In late 2005, Back to Back received a grant from the National Library of Australia, to assess our archival collection for its national significance and its merit for long-term preservation. During 2006, the company set about getting its archive in order in preparation for our assessment, slated for completion in May 2007.

The aim of the grant was to help Back to Back identify and preserve its community-based collection and undergo a significance assessment by an accredited historian. The assessment aimed to describe the collection, provide a written assessment of the significance of the collection and to provide recommendations for future work on the collection.

As Back to Back's collection was (we confess) dispersed and disorganised and lacking any form of indexation or classification, Adrian Hann was employed in 2006 to set up a system for archiving and to identify and collate material for the collection. Adrian has managed to assemble all material from 1987 to 1996 as well as identifying gaps in the collection.

Dr Jane Mullet was contracted to do the Significance Assessment and produced a wonderful report that included case studies on three distinct periods in the work of Back to Back, specifically focusing on material from *STINKING HOUSES* (1989), *VOICES OF DESIRE* (1993) and *SOFT* (2002). Aside from its use in the process of preparing our collection, this document is the first succinct and contextualised history of the company.

A Collection Development Policy has been drafted as part of this process. This policy supplies the purpose of the collection, the materials to be kept, the preservation activities (eventually preserving everything in a digital format) and who and how to have access to the collection (ultimately available through the website).

**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 Family & Community Services & Indigenous Affairs (FACSIA) 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.

In 2006 we made the decision to appoint an Artistic Associate for 2007 to work intensively with the actors on their professional development and extend their work opportunities. Our offices and kitchen area were redesigned and upgraded during the summer holidays (thank you Mark Cuthbertson and Adrian Hann) and it was decided to take up the vacant Australians Working Together position, bringing the ensemble number up to six for 2007. Other improvements included new information packs about the company, Theatre of Speed and our short films; induction packs for new employees, contractors and Board members; and a new auditioning pack for potential supported employees. Our mission statement was also updated and a new business plan developed.







### Mark DEANS

Mark joined Back to Back in 1989 and has been described as a "modern day Chaplin" (The Adelaide Advertiser 2002). Mark has created some of the most memorable characters in the Back to Back repertoire, including the legendary MR SEPTEMBER, the intellectually declining Tom in MENTAL, the infernally frustrated magician in COW, the enigmatic man from the future in SOFT, and the God of God's Gift to Women in MINOTAUR. On television Mark has performed in BLUE HEELERS and NEIGHBOURS and made a series of Super8 films including MULLET and MARK DEANS HUMAN CANNONBALL. In 2002 he starred in the independent short film, VICTIM OF CIRCUMSTANCE. Mark has performed his solo show COW in Spain, London, Hanover and most recently at the Sydney Opera House.

### Rita HALABAREC

Rita Halabarec is the longest serving member of Back to Back and has been developing work with the company since its inception in 1987. In that time she has collaborated with a broad cross section of Australian artists performing on stage, in film and as the lead singer with Big Bag. Rita's idiosyncratic voice circumnavigates the universe, dissecting heaven and hell, good and evil. Social institutions such as family and church are simultaneously vilified and vindicated. Her characters are plucked from all corners of the 20th Century and relocated into a surreal world. She's created a witch, an angel, a pussycat, a queen, a nurse, Elizabeth Taylor, a fairy, Susie O'Neil and other alpha females. Rita is a prolific visual artist whose work has been exhibited in Geelong most recently at the Hub Gallery, Geelong in March 2006. Rita's performance as the mermaid in MINDS EYE was nominated for a Green Room award in 1997. In MINOTAUR she played the imperious queen besotted with the white bull, as well as designing the set in collaboration with Emily Barrie.

### Nicki HOLLAND

Nicki joined Back to Back in 1997 after working with Warrnambool's Break of Day Players. Her first role for Back to Back was Mrs Darling in PETER PAN, and since then she has gone on to create a series of emotional and romantically thwarted characters including the tragic Sally in DOG FARM, the fantasy rabbit in MENTAL, the distraught mother in FISHMAN and the ghost of Queen Elizabeth in INSIDE THE ANGEL HOUSE. Nicki played the doctor in SOFT both in Melbourne and as part of the 2003 European tour. Nicki combines her love of food and melodrama when she plays Jenny, the other half of the famous DIET GIRLS. Her most recent role was in POD 7 as a Woman.

### Simon LAHERTY

Simon first worked at Back to Back when he was a student at Nelson Park School, devising and performing in DRAG RACES IN LOVE (1999). From 2001 to 2003 Simon was an important contributor to the development and growth of Theatre of Speed, taking lead roles in ARNOLD, FISHMAN and the short film, 12 WAYS TO OPEN A DOOR. Since joining Back to Back in 2003, Simon has continued to perform with Theatre of Speed. He created the character of Steve for SMALL METAL OBJECTS, which was reprised at the 7th Australian Performing Arts Market, and will be touring nationally and internationally next year.

### Sonia TEUBEN

Sonia Teuben has been creating powerful, passionate, intensely emotional and at times confronting performances with Back to Back since she joined the company in 1993. Sonia brings her own unique, and at times highly personal view of the world to each character she creates. Her one-woman play GINA'S STORY (1995) has been published in a collection of stories about women with intellectual disabilities. Sonia has performed in joint productions with Melbourne Workers Theatre, Handspan, Circus OZ and Arena Theatre Company. Sonia starred in the film, PORN STAR, (originally part of Back to Back's DOG FARM) which has screened at festivals in Germany, Montreal (2002) and London (2003). In 2002 Sonia travelled to Japan to participate in a workshop season with Muse Company. In 2004 Sonia created the character of Gary for SMALL METAL OBJECTS which she reprised at the 7th Australian Performing Arts Market. Sonia has decided to take a year off from theatre (apart from touring SMALL METAL OBJECTS) and will return to the company in 2008.

**Stacey BALDWIN** ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT  
Stacey first started working with Back to Back Theatre as a work placement student in 2005. In that same year, Stacey completed a Diploma of Arts – Small Companies and Community Theatre at the University of Ballarat. Apart from working with Back to Back, she is involved in the Geelong amateur theatre scene, most recently directing shows for Blunt Productions.

**Pauline CADY** FUNDING DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT

Pauline began working with Back to Back as an actor/puppeteer for its 1998 collaboration with Snuff Puppets: Boomtown. Pauline was a founding member of Snuff Puppets (1992-2003) working as co-artistic director, actor, puppeteer, dramaturge, builder and administrator. She has a degree in drama and dance from Deakin University and occasionally moonlights for other organisations (Big West Festival, Welltheatre and Peepshow Inc) as a dramaturge or funding application writer.

**Marisa CHIAPPI** FINANCE OFFICER

Marisa has worked as a bookkeeper for not-for-profit organisations and small businesses for six years. She also brings experience as an administrator, office manager and performer to her work at Back to Back, having spent many years as a star of both stage and desk over her working life. She likes the columns to balance, the dancing to be passionately in time and the tea to be hot.

**Marcia FERGUSON** GUEST DIRECTOR, THEATRE OF SPEED

Marcia is a performer, theatre maker and lecturer with a particular interest in avant garde and community theatre. Recent work includes writing and directing projects commissioned by Back to Back, including *INSIDE THE ANGEL HOUSE* (2003), *DOG FARM* (2000), and *FISHMAN* (2001), and Arena Theatre Company (*AUSTRALIAN MARRIAGE ACT*). Marcia co-founded *Crying Out Loud* (*PROMISES, INFECTIOUS*) and the Australian Women Directors' Group.

**Bruce GLADWIN** ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Bruce specialises in the development of adventurous theatrical work, working as director, designer and writer. He has created five works with Back to Back: *DRAG RACERS IN LOVE* (1999), *MENTAL* (1999), *DOG FARM* (2000), *SOFT* (2002) and *SMALL METAL OBJECTS* (2005). Work prior to Back to Back included extensive collaboration with Rosemary Myers at Arena Theatre Company (*AUTOPSY, MASS* and *PANACEA*). Bruce's other directing credits include *THE ISLAND* with Lano & Woodley, *BLUE RINSE CLUB* with MOMO (Museum of Modern Oddities) for the 2004 Melbourne International Arts Festival.

**Susan HARTIGAN** ADMINISTRATION MANAGER  
Sue coordinates Back to Back's community theatre workshops, its Quality Assurance requirements and represents Back to Back on the Inclusive Events Planning Group, among other things. She has a BA (Hons) in Photography from the University of Westminster and is currently undertaking a master's degree in Community Cultural Development at VCA. She was Community Coordinator for BLUE SHEEP, the first pilot of *such fertile ground*, for Geelong Arts Alliance and Regional Arts Victoria in 1999 and is still an active member of Geelong Arts Alliance.

**Alice NASH** GENERAL MANAGER

Alice rejoined Back to Back in 2003. Alice was General Manager of Back to Back in 2000. Previous appointments include Associate Producer – Performance and, subsequently, Acting General Manager, Next Wave Festival 2000-2002, and General Manager, Big West Festival 1998-2000. She has worked extensively in theatre and festival production and administration including Snuff Puppets, Melbourne Fringe, the Melbourne Moomba Festival, the Maribyrnong Festival, First Night Festival (Canada), and Catalyst Theatre (Canada).

**Jilli ROMANIS** SUPPORT WORKER, THEATRE OF SPEED

Jilli is Support Worker for Theatre of Speed but she also travelled to Europe with Back to Back on the SOFT tour. She has a Diploma of Performing Arts (Theatre) and Advanced Certificate of Aboriginal Music Theatre from Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. She has worked in theatre in Sydney and in 2002 was a cast member of The Torch Project and Youth Coordinator for Pako Festa. Jilli also has another life as a Safari Guide at Werribee Zoo.

**Kate SULAN** ENSEMBLE DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR & GUEST DIRECTOR, THEATRE OF SPEED

Since graduating from the Victorian College of the Arts with a postgraduate diploma in Animating, Kate has worked as a director, choreographer, performer and dramaturg. Kate has been the artistic director of Rawcus, a theatre company with actors with and without disabilities, since its inception, developing the productions *FLIGHT, DESIGNER CHILD* (Next Wave Festival 2002), *BORN RAWCUS* (Art of Difference Festival 2003) and *SIDESHOW* (Next Wave Festival 2004). Kate currently teaches for Ignition Theatre Training at Northern Metropolitan Institute of TAFE, a theatre-training course for people with intellectual disabilities.

**Ian BRACEGIRDLE**

Ian is the Co-Director of Mothers Art Productions P/L, an Arts based production company in Melbourne. He has extensive experience in project management, strategic planning and design, overseeing a design team of up to 50 people. Ian is a committed, practicing sculptor and painter with an impressive record of achievement as an exhibiting artist.

**Patsie FRAWLEY**

Patsie lives in Ocean Grove and has twenty years experience working in the disability sector in Victoria. She has expertise in research with people with disabilities, their families and service providers in the areas of advocacy, sexuality and policy development and evaluation. She is currently completing her PhD at La Trobe University looking at how a group of people with an intellectual disability participate in government advisory bodies.

**Rose HISCOCK**

Rose has more than ten years' experience in service marketing and extensive networks in the arts, media and tourism. In her current role she manages marketing and communications across the four Museum Victoria venues, Melbourne Museum, Scienceworks, Immigration Museum and the Royal Exhibition Building.

**Bobbie HODGE**

Bobbie has extensive expertise in the arts management, festival, theatre and cultural development sectors. As an Executive Officer with Arts Victoria she had her first exhilarating contact with Back to Back in 1987, and now qualifies as a Back to Back tragic. She is the General Manager of Astra Chamber Music, and company member of Eleventh Hour Theatre

**Gillian HOYSTED**

Gillian is a Manager of Human Resources with Museum Victoria. Gillian has extensive experience in senior HR roles in both the public and private sectors. She trained as a librarian and has extensive knowledge about archives and collections.

**David MCGINNESS**

David is the Chief Financial Officer of AKD Softwoods in Colac. He is a Certified Practising Accountant with over 20 years experience locally and internationally. He has interest in community art and participates in community arts events in the local region.

**Patrick OVER**

Patrick has been a lawyer for 10 years, and is currently a barrister at the Victorian Bar. Before he donned the wig and gown, he had a life that included working as a creator of programs for Scienceworks, presenting science shows in regional Australia, and being a radio announcer.

**Yoni PRIOR**

Yoni is a writer, performer, dramaturg and director. She is currently Coordinator and Lecturer in Drama at the School of Communication and Creative Arts, Deakin University. She was a member of the Theatre Board, and of the Multicultural Arts Advisory Committee of the Australia Council from 1999 to 2002. She is currently Chair of the board of the Big West Festival. A founding member of Gilgul Theatre, under the artistic direction of Barrie Kosky, she collaborated on the creation and performance of THE DYBBUK, ES BRENT, LEVAD and THE WILDERNESS ROOM. She has also worked with the MTC, Playbox, Danceworks, Theatreworks, and with the Cameri Theatre in Israel.

**Ann TONKS**

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.

# PRODUCTIONS

## 1988 – 2006

### 2006 SMALL METAL OBJECTS

7th Australian Performing Arts Market,  
Adelaide Railway Station

### 2005 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

### COW

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

### DOG FARM

2002 Shepparton Arts Festival

### 2001 MENTAL

Hot House Theatre, Wodonga

### 2000 DOG FARM

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

### 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, Lonsdale 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

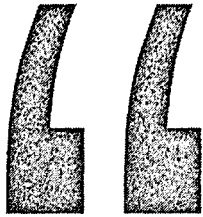
Geelong Performing Arts Centre, Geelong; Arena  
Theatre South Melbourne

# COMMUNITY PRODUCTIONS, RESIDENCIES & EVENTS 1988 – 2006

- 2006** **POD 8 – HOBART** Amalgamation Festival, Salamanca Theatre, Hobart  
**POD 7 – GEELONG** Performed by Theatre of Speed, Geelong West Town Hall  
**BOOMTOWNERS** With Theatre of Speed and Snuff Puppets,  
 2006 Commonwealth Games Live Site, Geelong  
**POD 6 – WARRNAMBOOL** with Break of Day Players
- 2005** **MINOTAUR** Performed by Theatre of Speed, Courthouse Youth Arts Centre Geelong  
**POD 5 – COLAC** With Ants Pantz Arts Trinity, College Colac  
**POD 4 – BALLARAT** With Brrrr Theatre, Camp Street Theatre, Ballarat
- 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 Momena Arts Geelong,  
 Courthouse Project, Geelong  
**THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE WEDDING** With Karingal participants,  
 Courthouse Project, Geelong

## AUDIENCE COMMENTS ABOUT POD 7 – GEELONG

PERFORMED BY THEATRE OF SPEED



*Pod7 was a 'sell out' for the 2 shows yesterday – a complex, clever and sometimes confronting show not to be missed!*

*Originality, always challenging - enjoy their voice being acted out in such an inspiring way.*

*Knowing that the show was devised by the performers makes it all the more special – would I be as game to do what I have seen them do? Excellent – will come again – I enjoyed it!*

*Loved it – amazing – brilliant*

*Loved the pod and the animation. The performance highlighted the fact that all people love – fantastic – thanks!*

*It was fun. The boatman is a hero. Theatre of Speed kicks arse!*

*The fabulous actors – everything – would never miss a Back to Back gig*

*Liked the pod, the special effects, the acting*

*Liked the feeling around me (but the fresh air could be improved!)*

*Keep it up!*

*Wonderful show, especially the stage set up*

*Great experience for the actors*

*The performers are so special – different theatre – awesome!*

*Melbourne audiences have to see this show – it is avant-garde! Art plus technology = new unity – Most exciting theatre company in Australia – MTC fucking boring – Geelong should be proud of the innovative work going on here*

*It was very very good!*

*It was fantastic! Great visual effects!*

*The usual boundaries seemed blurred but enough conventions were held to take us on the journey – I am so excited to see this wonderful display – I loved the gaps in the story – we had to fill the gaps.*

*Thoroughly enjoyed the performance – the script, the acting and the graphics – well done!*

*Enjoyed the different formats of presentation – use of pre-recorded screen, mime, and performance*

*Loved it all – just fantastic!*

