

**CANBERRA  
YOUTH THEATRE**

**2022**

**THE VOICE  
OF YOUTH  
EXPRESSED  
THROUGH  
INTELLIGENT AND  
CHALLENGING  
THEATRE.**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

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Canberra Youth Theatre acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional custodians of the lands on which we collaborate, share stories and create art.

We pay respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and recognise their enduring culture and contribution to our community.

We celebrate their rich history of over 60,000 years of storytelling, and are privileged and grateful to share our stories here.

Sovereignty was never ceded. This is Ngunnawal country. Always was. Always will be.

# 2022 AT A GLANCE

**4** MAJOR  
PRODUCTIONS

**25**  
PERFORMANCES

**3,496**  
AUDIENCE  
MEMBERS

**373**  
YOUNG  
ARTISTS

**25**  
TRAINING  
PROGRAMS

**450**  
WORKSHOPS

**28**  
PROFESSIONAL  
ARTISTS  
EMPLOYED

**2** RESIDENT  
ARTISTS

**2** NEW WORKS  
PRODUCED

**1** NEW WORK  
COMMISSIONED

**3** CREATIVE  
DEVELOPMENTS

**2** SCRATCH  
EVENTS





# ABOUT US

Canberra Youth Theatre is one of the leading youth arts companies in Australia.

We create opportunities for young people to collaborate, develop their artistic skills and create pathways to the professional arts sector.

We advocate for and amplify the voices of young people, providing a space for them to discover and express their creative selves.

We produce powerful theatre where young artists ignite urgent conversations, challenge the forces that shape them, and invite us to see the world from new perspectives.

Canberra Youth Theatre is the voice of youth expressed through intelligent and challenging theatre.

# OUR GOALS

- Be a leading theatre company that creates work with young people across the Canberra region.
- Deliver opportunities for young people to collaborate, be creative, and develop their own artistic practice.
- To invest in professional artists and create pathways for emerging talent.
- Deepen and broaden our engagement with young people, audiences, our local community, and the national arts sector.
- Be a thriving arts organisation through effective governance and management practices.
- Diversify our revenue streams to ensure sustainability, growth and investment in our artistic programs and organisation.





# WE VALUE

## ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

- We create artistic works of a professional standard that are challenging, intelligent and impactful.
- We deliver high quality artistic experiences that respond to the needs of young people and strive to showcase the best of what youth theatre can offer.
- We make an essential contribution to the cultural vibrancy of the ACT through the creation and presentation of new work, generating opportunities for young and emerging artists.

## CREATIVITY AND COLLABORATION

- We bring together young people, emerging and professional artists to collaborate, learn new skills, create powerful performances, and build pathways to artistic careers.
- We support young people to share their voice and discover their own artistic potential.
- We want to develop creative thinkers, makers and lovers of art and performance.
- We collaborate with artists and organisations to create new opportunities and possibilities for creating theatre.

## INNOVATION

- We believe the ideas, experiences and perspectives of each generation of young people call for new forms to express them.
- We provide a supportive space for young people to take artistic risks and push the boundaries of what theatre can be.
- We support the development of bold and challenging work that is relevant to young people, embraces emerging arts practices, and celebrates experimentation.
- We want to inspire our artists and challenge our audience's expectations about what theatre created by young people can achieve.

## PATHWAYS

- We create access opportunities and pathways to artistic careers, through skills development, mentorships and professional collaborations.
- We build connections between young people, the professional theatre sector, educational institutions and the wider community.
- We believe the experiences and connections made through youth theatre are long-lasting and essential to the development of young people: personally, creatively and professionally.

## INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

- We believe theatre should be inclusive, diverse, and accessible to everyone.
- We create an environment where young people feel supported and safe, as individuals and through the expression of their creative ideas.
- We work to amplify the voices of young people, making space for them to discover and express their creative selves.
- We are committed to fostering inclusiveness and embracing the diversity of all people, including differences in cultural background, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or socio-economic background.

## YOUTH LEADERSHIP AND EMPOWERMENT

- We believe in the voice and vision of young people.
- We want to empower them so they have the agency and confidence to create the positive change they want to see in the world.
- We promote youth leadership in our programs and governance, empowering young leaders with the guidance, resources and support to develop an autonomous artistic practice.
- We give young people a platform from which they can grow professionally and continue to contribute to our arts and cultural sector.
- We ensure that the voices of young people are involved in our strategic and artistic planning.





# OUR TEAM

## STAFF

### ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CEO

LUKE ROGERS

### ADMINISTRATION & WORKSHOPS MANAGER

HELEN WOJTAS

### MARKETING & ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

KARINA HUDSON (until April 2022)

CHRISTOPHER CARROLL

### ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

BONNIE CURTIS

### FINANCE & STRATEGY MANAGER

LOUISE DAVIDSON

### MARKETING & ADMINISTRATION COORDINATOR

THEA JADE

## RESIDENT ARTISTS

CAITLIN BAKER

SOPHIE TALLIS

## BOARD

KAREN VICKERY (Chair)

CHRIS WAGNER (Deputy Chair)

PETER HOOLIHAN (Secretary)

TESSA HAMMOND (Treasurer)

ELLEN HARVEY

CASSANDRA HOOLIHAN

ADRIANA LAW

CELIA RIDEAUX

## WORKSHOP ARTISTS

CAITLIN BAKER

ELLA BUCKLEY

ELLIOT CLEAVES

CHRISTOPHER CARROLL

REBECCA DUKE

CLAIRE IMLACH

HOLLY JOHNSON

TIAHNA JOHNSTON

ANNA JOHNSTONE

TIJANA KOVAC

TOBI ODUSOTE

CHARLOTTE PALMER

CATHY PETOCZ

JENA PRINCE

RACHEL ROBERTSON

MARTHA RUSSELL

YLARIA ROGERS



# CHAIR REPORT

This year we were proud to celebrate 50 years of Canberra Youth Theatre serving the community: working to amplify the voice of youth in our city and region by providing creative opportunities for young people to develop skills, producing performances exploring all aspects of theatre, and providing mentoring by professional artists.

This significant anniversary prompted the company to trace the differing trajectories of numerous alumni who have gone on to have successful careers, both in the arts and across other professional fields. We opened our anniversary season with a revival of Debra Oswald's remarkable play, *Dags*, which has enjoyed innumerable iterations in youth companies and schools throughout Australia over the years after its originating commission and performance at Canberra Youth Theatre in 1985. We also engaged in partnership with the University of Canberra to sort through and index our archive, helping to preserve our proud legacy.

An additional two new works – specifically for young artists – were commissioned, produced, and published for posterity by Currency Press; *The Initiation* by Canberra Youth Theatre Workshop Artist, Cathy Petocz, and *How to Vote!* by Julian Larnach, a satirical look at university politics. We also produced the world premiere of the award-winning *Soul Trading* by Kate Walder, now published by Playlab. The company garnered numerous nominations and secured seven awards across both the Canberra Area Theatre Awards and the Ovations Awards. This is an extraordinary achievement and I congratulate the staff and our young artists on the very high standards achieved in our productions. We are particularly grateful to Alex Budd and the team at Canberra Theatre Centre, where all our productions were staged. This partnership with Canberra Theatre Centre enriches the creative opportunities for our young artists and theatre lovers immensely and no doubt builds future audiences and future artistic collaborations.

I would also like to thank artsACT for their continued support of this important company, and Holding Redlich for the beginning of their three-year support of the Emerging Playwright Commission. We also appreciate the multiple-year support of the Emerging Artist program from the Jeremy Spencer Broom Legacy, and ActewAGL for funding our important scholarship program.

This year, the Board was proud to announce the establishment of our Producers Circle which aims to expand our philanthropic support base and enable us to continue to enrich the lives of young people through our productions.

Our staffing structure continues to respond to our changing strategic needs. I am immensely proud of our Artistic Director & CEO, Luke Rogers, who has led the company through this important year of recovery post-COVID and raised the company profile during this milestone anniversary. Louise Davidson, Helen Wojtas, Christopher Carroll, and Bonnie Curtis have all made powerful contributions,

alongside our wonderful team of Workshop Artists, many of whom are Canberra Youth Theatre alumni, and the professional artists that work on our productions. We thank Thea Jade for her contribution to Canberra Youth Theatre and wish her all the best for her move to pursue a professional arts career in Sydney, and welcome to the staff Beth Avery as Workshops Manager, and Lachlan Houen as Workshops and Marketing Coordinator.

Finally I wish to acknowledge the extraordinary Board members, all of whom give their time, energy and commitment voluntarily to Canberra Youth Theatre. After serving as a Workshop Artist and then joining the Board in 2016, I am proud to have served as Chair for six years. I believe in the importance of leadership renewal to foster new ideas and bring new skills to a performing arts company. It is easy to overstay one's welcome when one is passionate about the mission and work of the company, and so I am stepping down from my role at Canberra Youth Theatre. I leave the company in a strong and powerful position artistically and in terms of governance. I shall always remain a friend and associate of Canberra Youth Theatre. Thank you for having me.

Karen Vickery

**Karen Vickery**  
Chair of the Board



# EXECUTIVE REPORT

2022 was the year to celebrate Canberra Youth Theatre being 50 years young!

Embedded in our community for over five decades, we continue to be a driver of change through a dynamic artistic vision and philosophical approach of inclusive, youth-centred arts practices; continually evolving and responding to the passions and perspectives of generations of young people. We remain at the forefront of Australian youth theatre, creating innovative and challenging opportunities for young people to access, develop and engage in professional quality theatrical experiences.

Our 50th anniversary season celebrated our position in the cultural landscape of both the ACT and national youth arts sector. We offered more creative opportunities for young people, increased our investment in new works and emerging artists, built pathways for emerging talent, and enhanced audience engagement. Canberra Youth Theatre continues to invest in the commissioning and development of new works that contribute to a rich canon of new Australian plays created especially for young people. In 2022, we produced four major productions, including three world premieres: *The Initiation*, *How To Vote!*, and *Soul Trading*, plus a new production of the Australian classic, *Dags*, that was commissioned by Canberra Youth Theatre some 38 years ago. We are publishing all of our commissioned plays that we produce with Currency Press, which will continue the life of these new works, and promote our company, artists, and the ACT arts sector to a wide audience.

Canberra Theatre Centre generously extended the support they offer to our entire production season as part of their commitment to nurturing the young and emerging artists of the ACT. Our productions at the Courtyard Studio continue to sell out, and we were delighted to return to The Playhouse for one of our biggest productions ever. At the inaugural Ovation awards, specifically designed to acknowledge excellence in local, independent performing arts in our region, Canberra Youth Theatre won five awards across 10 categories and 18 nominations. We are ecstatic for all our artists who have been recognised for their extraordinary contribution to theatre in Canberra.

We work to ensure that young people in the ACT have access to some of the best artistic training and mentorship opportunities in the country. Our Emerging Artist program continues to thrive and create pathways for early-career artists to engage in industry-standard training, collaboration and mentorship. We welcomed two new Resident Artists into the company, Caitlin Baker and Sophie Tallis. Our Emerge Company program for emerging theatre-makers resulted in the creation of a new devised work, *503: Service Unavailable*. A massive thanks to Arts Capital at Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres, and the Broom family for their generous support through the Jeremy Spencer Broom Legacy, who have made our Emerging Artist Program possible, and will continue through to 2025.

We continue to offer young people both opportunities to engage with theatre and all the benefits of personal and social development it provides, and forge pathways to the professional sector. Our Ensemble workshops bring young people together to connect, collaborate, discover new skills, and express their creativity. We are strengthening our engagement with the ACT and regional NSW education sectors, supporting the teaching of arts curriculum through specialised in-school programs and opportunities that enrich arts experiences for young audiences.

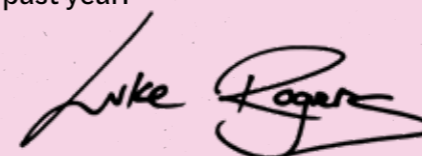
We are building a supportive community that is welcoming, inclusive and diverse. Our scholarship program opens up opportunities for participation in the arts by removing financial barriers to participation, especially for young people from low socio-economic backgrounds, with a focus on CALD and First Nations participants. Thank you to ActewAGL who are funding this program throughout 2023. We were thrilled to announce our new partnership with national law firm, Holding Redlich, who are the principal sponsor of our Emerging Playwright Commission over the next three years. With over 60 submissions from every state and territory in Australia, the 2022 winner of our Emerging Playwright Commission was Honor Webster-Mannison, who will see their commissioned play undergo a creative development with our young artists in 2023.

Students from the University of Canberra provided their time and expertise, making their way through the treasure trove that are our archives. Their work will ensure the 50-year history of Canberra Youth Theatre is preserved, and enable us to promote the history of our company for years to come.

We have achieved so much over 50 years, but there remains an urgent need to advocate for the opportunities and benefits that an investment in young people and our cultural sector can generate. The COVID pandemic has highlighted the need to provide young people with creative and collaborative outlets. Our artistic programs have a positive impact on wellbeing, mental health, and resilience for participants; and a flow-on effect which produces positive community outcomes. They achieve this by bringing young people together to connect, evolve their personal identity, draw on the wisdom and perspective of others, and to collaborate and create intelligent and challenging theatre that champions the voices of young people.

Canberra Youth Theatre is a dynamic organisation, excited about the future. We are a resilient company and will continue to respond to challenges as we work together towards building a sustainable, creative future for our young artists and audiences. We will strive to generate new sources of revenue to support our strategic vision; seek opportunities to respond to the impact affecting our operations during the centenary renovations of Gorman Arts Centre; champion revenue growth to support the youth arts sector; and advocate for additional funding support to ensure that staff, artists and arts workers receive appropriate financial recognition for the value and contribution they make.

Thank you to the entire Canberra Youth Theatre staff and our Board; our young artists and their families; and to all the artists, collaborators, donors, sponsors, and audiences who support our young and emerging artists. Together we have continued to grow the legacy of Canberra Youth Theatre as a theatre company that fiercely advocates for the voice of youth, expressed through intelligent and challenging theatre. I am especially grateful for the positive and supportive contribution made by you all to our wonderful company this past year.



**Luke Rogers**  
Artistic Director & CEO





# 50 YEARS YOUNG

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR ARTS MINISTER

Canberra Youth Theatre makes an essential contribution to cultural vibrancy through the commission, creation, production and presentation of new and high quality artistic experiences, and the opportunities this provides for young and emerging artists. Young people are brought together with professional artists to collaborate, learn new skills, create powerful performances and build pathways to sustainable artistic careers. Now in its 50th year, Canberra Youth Theatre continues to both cement and build on its reputation as one of Australia's leading youth arts companies and a destination for young people looking to explore theatrical experiences.

This impressive 2022 season is the latest showcase of professional standard artistic works that are challenging, intelligent and leave a lasting impact and impression—both for the artists and their audiences—and befitting of the incredible milestone of 50 years of Canberra Youth Theatre.

This is a season which celebrates Canberra Youth Theatre's position in the arts and cultural landscape of both the ACT and national youth sector, with four major productions, including three world premieres and an Australian classic that began at Canberra Youth Theatre. This 50th anniversary season duly heralds the impact—and the legacy—of investing in new works created with and for young people.

This is also a season which champions partnerships. It celebrates the long-standing collaboration with Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres: the home of Canberra Youth Theatre for the last 40 years, and the dynamic hub for its workshop and professional development programs. From the partnership with Canberra Theatre Centre, which is presenting the entire production season, to new and exciting collaborations, to more engagement with both existing and new artists and audiences, this season anticipates amplified attendance and participation which will undoubtedly be realised.

It has been an incredible 50 years—and this is a very worthy celebratory season. Congratulations Canberra Youth Theatre!



**Tara Cheyne MLA**  
ACT Minister for the Arts



## OUR LEGACY

From our early beginnings as Canberra Children's Theatre, through the Youth Theatre Workshop years of the 1970s, and decades more as Canberra Youth Theatre, we are now one of the leading youth arts companies in Australia.

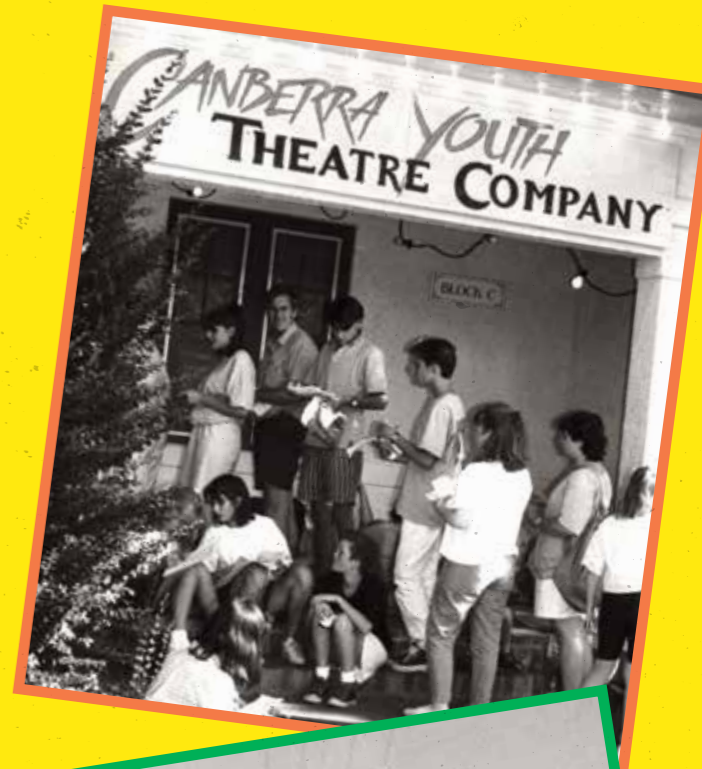
In 1981, Canberra Youth Theatre moved from its first home at Reid House to Gorman Arts Centre where we are still a resident company, and have since collaborated with thousands of young artists through productions, workshops, creative developments and community events.

As an ACT Key Arts Organisation, we have created work across all of Canberra: in our major theatres, public spaces, and national cultural institutions. We have toured around the country, and internationally.

Canberra Youth Theatre has grown and evolved significantly over the past five decades, constantly responding to the passions and perspectives of generations of young people, and adapting to changes in the way we create and experience live performance. We remain at the forefront of Australian youth theatre practice, creating innovative, accessible and challenging opportunities for young people to access and engage in professional-quality theatrical experiences.

Through decades of turmoil and many triumphs, our wonderful company has continued to nurture and develop young people, giving them a place to belong, to share their voice, and to inspire audiences of all ages. It is an amazing legacy to celebrate.

Here we are, the voice of youth expressed through challenging and intelligent theatre. 50 years young, and loving every minute of it!





# ARTISTIC EVALUATION





# PRODUCTION PROGRAM

Our production program strives to showcase the best of what youth theatre can offer and challenge audience's expectations about what theatre created by young people can achieve.

In 2022 we celebrated a phenomenal 50-year legacy of bringing young people together to create challenging and intelligent theatre with one of our biggest seasons ever, including three world premieres, and the revival of an Australian classic that started right here.

To kick off our 50th year, we went back to the 1980s with a very special anniversary revival of *Dags* by Debra Oswald. Commissioned by Canberra Youth Theatre in 1985, and now one of Australia's most popular plays for young people, *Dags* is an hilarious, quirky journey through adolescent anguish, the struggle to be popular and the need to be true to yourself, all set in the coolest/cringiest decade of all time.

*The Initiation* by Cathy Petocz is a new play exploring the horrors of the early teen experience, the deep fears young people face journeying into adulthood, and the spiritual site of Black Mountain. Conceived within our Ensembles workshop program, and created in collaboration with our teenage artists, we supported two creative developments of this play throughout COVID shutdowns in 2020, and were thrilled to see it in all its horror and gore reach the stage.

We were thrilled to return to The Playhouse with a new commission, *How To Vote!* by Julian Larnach. This epic comedy unveiled the treacherous political landscape of university life, set amongst a cut-throat election campaign, filled with ambitious student politicians, journalists, and theatre-makers, all fighting to make it to the top.

We finished the year with the world premiere of *Soul Trading* by Kate Walder, where our youngest artists took us over 50 years into the future, to a world where humans are created with gene selection technology, artificial intelligence is everywhere, and children's best friends are robots.

We have committed to investing in the creation and development of new plays written especially for young people. All of our premiere productions this year – *The Initiation*, *How To Vote!*, and *Soul Trading* – have been professionally published, making these new plays available to be performed by young people all around the world.

Thank you to the teams at Canberra Theatre Centre and Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres for collaborating with us and helping us bring these works to the stage.





# DAGS

BY DEBRA OSWALD



## STATISTICS

Audience Numbers	599
Audience Capacity	99%
Performances	7
Professional Artists Employed	3
Young / Emerging Artists	16
Participants with Disability	2

**8 - 13 APRIL 2022**

THE COURTYARD STUDIO  
CANBERRA THEATRE CENTRE

### A SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY REVIVAL

I'M GOING TO ADMIT SOMETHING I NEVER THOUGHT I'D ADMIT TO ANYONE EVER. I'VE GOT A CRUSH ON ADAM. HEAD OVER HEELS. UNCONTROLLABLE PASSION... UNREQUITED PASSION, OF COURSE... I KNOW HE'D NEVER GO FOR A DAG LIKE ME.

Gillian is 16. She's interesting, erudite, soulful, romantic... and she's a dag. I mean, *daaaaaaag!* She's a misfit, an outcast, a chocolate addict, on a desperate quest to be beautiful and popular. Oh yeah, and she's hopelessly in love with Adam – and I mean hopelessly – like, a negative vacuum of sub-atomic non-hope.

Follow Gillian's pursuit of romance and happiness, as she navigates overbearing sisters, schoolyard politics, head-over-heels crushes, and first kisses, to discover that maybe finding out who you really are isn't so bad after all, even if you are a dag.

*Dags* is an excruciatingly funny and compassionate journey through the world of adolescent anguish. Originally commissioned by Canberra Youth Theatre in 1985, it has become one of the most definitive and popular Australian plays for young people ever. Of course, life as a teenager has changed so much since the 80s... hasn't it?

Whether you're living it for the first time, or have been reliving it ever since, *Dags* is the ultimate show about the awkward glory of never fitting in, 'cause who the hell would even want to?

### CAST

PERSEPHONE BATES D'ARBELA  
WILLIAM BEST  
SOPHIE BLACKBURN  
JADE BREEN  
ELLIOT CLEAVES  
HANNAH CORNELIA  
JESSI GOODING  
MATTHEW HOGAN

JOSH JAMES  
BREANNA KELLY  
ABIGAIL MARCEAU  
ALEXI CLARK MITCHELL  
JUNIPER POTTER  
DISA SWIFTE  
LILY WELLING

**DIRECTOR**  
LUKE ROGERS

**SET & COSTUME DESIGNER**  
AISLINN KING

**LIGHTING DESIGNER**  
ANTONY HATELEY

**SOUND DESIGNER**  
LUKE ROGERS

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**  
SOPHIE TALLIS

**STAGE MANAGER**  
RHILEY WINNETT

**ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER**  
ASHLEY POPE



## REVIEWS

“It’s hard to imagine a more appropriate production to celebrate Canberra Youth Theatre’s 50th year than this exuberant play... Debra Oswald’s delightfully observed depiction of adolescent angst is brought to life by Rogers and his cast in a light-hearted series of sequences, punctuated by well-staged ensemble scenes broadly and enthusiastically performed... a thoroughly entertaining production.” — *Australian Arts Review*

“Artistic Director Luke Rogers has produced a turbo charged revival that ricochets with vitality and relevance. It is youth theatre at its very best, dynamic, honest and relevant to the highly skilled teenage performers... vibrant, tight and fast paced production is as relevant as it was all those years ago... Canberra Youth Theatre has shown under Rogers that it is fifty years young, with a finger on the pulse and hope for the future in the heart.” — *Canberra Critics Circle*



## AWARDS

### THE OVATIONS Nominations:

- Best Production of a Play (Community): *Dags*
- Best Youth Performance: Jade Breen
- Best Sound Design: Luke Rogers
- Best Costume Design: Aislinn King

## YOUNG ARTIST STATEMENT

### Jade Breen

“Being involved in *Dags* was honestly such an incredible experience. Gillian has been my dream role for so many years. I was given a platform in which to share my ideas and engage in artistic exploration of quite a high, professional level. Youth theatre has this very unique aspect to it, that in the sharing of our ideas, we are able to inspire other young people. I remember younger girls coming up to me after seeing *Dags*, so excited because they saw someone like themselves in the characters on stage, and suddenly their experience isn’t something so alienated. We can share these ideas and give confidence, a voice, and a platform to people who aren’t necessarily heard in our world.”





## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE

In 1984, Debra Oswald, at the time an emerging 24-year-old playwright, was tapped on the shoulder to write a play for Canberra Youth Theatre. Since that first production, *Dags* has been produced all around Australia, in the UK, and the USA. I knew we had to keep it up our sleeves for our 50th anniversary season, celebrating the ongoing legacy of one of the most popular Australian plays for young people ever created, bringing it back to where it all started.

Our team immersed themselves in a world of 1980s Australian adolescence – possibly the coolest and cringiest decade to be a teenager. This was a deadset, grouse nostalgia trip, as well as a reminder of how tormenting and cringe-worthy being a teen was (and that, yes, you really did dress like that!). Whilst the context may have changed, reviving *Dags* in 2022 proved that the experience of teenage life clearly has not.

From overbearing sisters, schoolyard politics, first crushes, first kisses, and friendship, *Dags* is a touching coming of age production that still commands respect for its quirky humour, compassionate view of adolescence and accurately observed truths about being sixteen and angst-ridden, being popular and being true to yourself.

The opening was set back by about a week (thanks again, COVID) but we were lucky that the wonderful team at Canberra Theatre Centre were able to help keep us on stage, and not let the delay spoil any of the fun.

A beautiful moment happened during the final dress rehearsal when we were honoured to welcome Darby Carr, who played the original Wendy / Karen in the 1985 production of *Dags*, to sit in on this rehearsal and meet the cast (pictured left). Darby spoke with us about his time with Canberra Youth Theatre in the 70s and 80s, what it was like to be part of the original production, and share stories about how his life has changed since his time in youth theatre, both professionally and personally. It was a very special moment where our young artists could see first-hand the positive impact that youth theatre can have on someone's life, and the powerful legacy of this wonderful company and the work it creates.

Our 2022 season strived to demonstrate the impact that investing in emerging writers, and new works for young people, can create. Opening our 50th year by bringing home a beloved work that began right here, and continues to bring so much joy to young performers and audiences around the world, seemed like the perfect place to start.

Audiences roared, critics raved, our cast and creative team rocked (with hair crimped to perfection). We couldn't be more proud of the rollercoaster journey that was bringing *Dags* back to Canberra Youth Theatre.



CANBERRA YOUTH THEATRE PRESENTS

# THE INITIATION

BY CATHY PETOCZ



## STATISTICS

Audience Numbers	349
Audience Capacity	63%
Performances	6
Professional Artists Employed	5
Young / Emerging Artists	8
Participants with Disability	3

15 - 19 JUNE 2022

THE COURTYARD STUDIO  
CANBERRA THEATRE CENTRE

## WORLD PREMIERE

THERE'S A PLACE IN THE BUSH BALANCED BETWEEN STONE, SKY, WATER.  
PAST STARTS SENDING ANCIENT LIGHT.  
YOU'LL FIND WHAT YOU NEED FOR THE INITIATION  
AND YOU WILL COME OUT CHANGED.

A double-dare draws six seemingly normal teenagers into the twilight bush of Black Mountain. As night falls and time keeps shifting around, they realise they are lost. When a knife keeps turning up, despite their efforts to get rid of it, they fear they'll never come out alive.

*The Initiation* is about the horrors of the early teen experience; that uncanny period between childhood and fully becoming an adult, and the scary things you feel you have to do to get through.

Exploring teen horror movie tropes, real teen experiences, and the deeply spiritual site of Black Mountain, *The Initiation* asks us to find our way to the core of our fears in order to discover where the real threat lies.

## CAST

SYLVIE BURKE  
LATSAMY CARRUTHERS  
ZOE HARRIS  
JUNIPER POTTER  
TARA SAXENA  
HARRY ZIARNO

**DIRECTOR**  
CATHY PETOCZ

**SET & COSTUME DESIGNER**  
NYX MATHEWS

**LIGHTING DESIGNER**  
GILLIAN SCHWAB

**SOUND DESIGNER**  
PATRICK HAESLER

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**  
CAITLIN BAKER

**STAGE MANAGER**  
RHILEY WINNETT

**ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER**  
DISA SWIFTE

**COLLABORATOR**  
ETHAN BELL

CANBERRA  
THEATRE  
CENTRE



## REVIEWS

“The cast is focused, tight and committed. There’s plenty of blood and breakdown as the six characters navigate their night on the mountain. The *Initiation* is lively and funny; dramatic and dynamic; never turgid or self-indulgent. What’s beautiful about this show is the simple vulnerability of the characters. No matter how meta or steeped in style, these teenage characters face the same doubts and dilemmas that Youth Theatre kids faced 50 years ago when the company began.” – *City News*

## ARTIST STATEMENT

Cathy Petocz

“There were many shades of horror in *The Initiation*: the blood and gore of body horror, jump scares and disquiet, the uncanny and the paranormal. One of the pleasures of making theatre is that the rehearsal room—and the stage—are safe spaces in which to explore extremes of the human experience. And the experience of being a teenager often feels quite extreme.

The play works to critique the teen horror genre. The narratives of teen horror movies often undermine the teenage characters: anyone who is curious or defiant or sexual is punished with harm or death, teen characters with power are often written as out-of-control monsters, and the ‘lone survivor’ is celebrated at the end of the movie. However, this is a harmful message as teenagers often flourish the most when they are in community with each other.

There is much to fear in the world at the moment, but I’m not afraid of the future because if it’s filled with the humans who are our teen artists now, we are in brave and caring hands.”







## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE

*The Initiation*, a teenage horror story set on Black Mountain by Canberra Youth Theatre alumnus Cathy Petocz, was the first of three world premiere plays that we produced as part of our 2022 season. Cathy can trace a long history with Canberra Youth Theatre, from taking part in workshops and shows in her youth, to developing her own voice through our emerging artist programs, and leading workshops alongside a multi-faceted professional artistic practice. As we celebrated our 50th anniversary and all the many incredible young people who have passed through our doors, we were especially thrilled to support Cathy's latest work.

*The Initiation* began as a weekly workshop project with Cathy Petocz and an ensemble of teenage actors in early 2020. During COVID lockdowns, we supported Cathy to continue to develop this work further with her young artists over Zoom. Canberra Youth Theatre supported the script through two creative developments, culminating in staged readings which were met with overwhelmingly positive feedback from an invited audience and the young artists themselves.

As the play is set on Black Mountain in Canberra, a sacred site for Ngunnawal men, Cathy Petocz was awarded funding from artsACT to work with Ngunnawal poet, Ethan Bell, on dramaturgy of the final script, focussing particularly on how Country is represented in the play.

*The Initiation* was a dark and disquieting tale about a group of teenagers whose deepest fears come to pass in a transformative night on Black Mountain. Confronting, mysterious and uncomfortably relatable, this redemptive story honoured the struggle with identity, belonging, and visceral change that every teenager must face.

We were delighted to be able to now take this new work through to full production, with Cathy directing her own work, and collaborating with a team of established and emerging designers. It was a thrill to see how our young artists relished this complex, scary, and gory material in an atmospheric production about the horrors of the early teen experience.



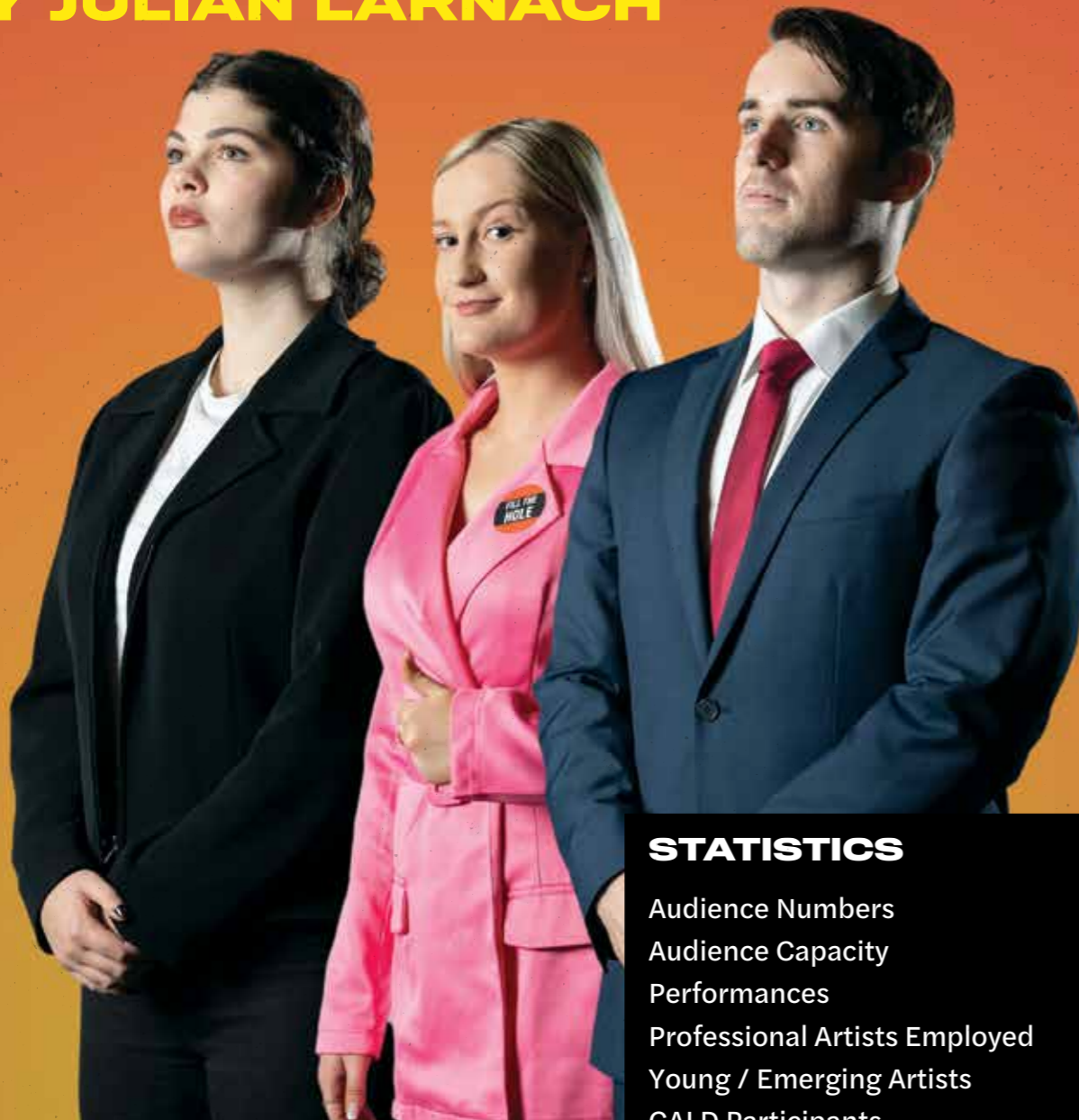


CANBERRA YOUTH THEATRE PRESENTS

# HOW TO VOTE!

OR, THE REPERCUSSIONS OF POLITICAL AMBITION AND PERSONAL RIVALRIES WITHIN STUDENT LEADERSHIP AND MEDIA ORGANISATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE POST-COVID-19 NEOLIBERAL UNIVERSITY INSTITUTION

BY JULIAN LARNACH



## STATISTICS

Audience Numbers	952
Audience Capacity	60%
Performances	5
Professional Artists Employed	6
Young / Emerging Artists	31
CALD Participants	3
Participants with Disability	4

7 - 10 SEPTEMBER 2022

THE PLAYHOUSE  
CANBERRA THEATRE CENTRE

## WORLD PREMIERE

I'M ADDICTED. I'M SICK. I'VE BEEN DIAGNOSED, I'VE GOT ALL THE SYMPTOMS AND NO AMOUNT OF MEDICINE OR BED-REST IS GOING TO STOP ME FROM GETTING WHAT I WANT, GETTING MORE OF WHAT I WANT, GETTING ALL OF WHAT I WANT. POWER. REAL POWER.

Election season is upon us! When the incumbent President of the University Student Council mysteriously steps down, new players must enter the arena. But behind the three-word slogans and non core promises lies an underbelly of secret deals and divided loyalties, corruption and ambition; all designed to win the hearts and minds of the student body.

Following an entire election cycle within a prestigious university, *How To Vote!* explores the treacherous political landscape of campus life, and what happens when you put the word 'student' before journalism, politics and theatre.

Commissioned by Canberra Youth Theatre, this world premiere whip-smart political comedy is set in an election year (topical!) in a city that's definitely not Canberra (it's totally Canberra!).

Featuring a massive ensemble cast of university-aged artists, *How To Vote!* smashes together *Secret City* and *Sex Education* in an epic exploration of power and what it takes to wrestle it from your enemies' cold, dead hands – all while scraping through your end-of semester exams.

## CAST

RAHEL ALEMSEGED  
JASMINE ATKINS  
CAITLIN BAKER  
MAXINE BEAUMONT  
NICHOLAS BERMINGHAM  
ELLA BUCKLEY  
ASHLEIGH BUTLER  
TIM CUSACK  
CALLUM DOHERTY

JESSICA GOODING  
QUINN GOODWIN  
BLUE HYSLOP  
CLAIRE IMLACH  
THEA JADE  
BREANNA KELLY  
YVETTE MPINGA  
TRACY NOBLE  
BEN O'LOUGHLIN

JOANNA RICHARDS  
MISCHA RIPPON  
CAMERON ROSE  
MARTHA RUSSELL  
JACK SHANAHAN  
EMILY SMITH  
TOMMY WARBURTON  
SAAR WESTON  
MATT WHITE

**DIRECTOR**  
LUKE ROGERS

**LIGHTING DESIGNER**  
ANTONY HATELEY

**COSTUME DESIGNER**  
HELEN WOJTAS

**SOUND DESIGNER**  
PATRICK HAESLER

**VIDEO DESIGNER**  
ETHAN HAMILL

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**  
SOPHIE TALLIS

**STAGE MANAGER**  
RHILEY WINNETT

**ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS**  
KATE MCDONALD  
ROWENA MCPHEE  
ASHLEY POPE

**COSTUME ASSISTANT**  
RHIANNON ROBERTS

**CANBERRA  
THEATRE  
CENTRE**





**REVIEWS**

“Witty, ironic and highly entertaining insight into the wild world of university life... a slick and engaging production... Canberra Youth Theatre has entered a new era of theatrical sophistication. How To Vote is the proof and the promise, worthy of a youth theatre that has stood the test of time and gives voice to the young people of today and the citizens of tomorrow.” — *Canberra Critics Circle*



**ARTIST STATEMENT**

Julian Larnach

“When I was at university, I was involved in student politics: I edited the student newspaper, I sat on the SRC and I spent way too much time wearing primary coloured t-shirts splashed with slogans and friends’ faces. I was motivated by equal parts ambition and spite, and was exhilarated by the idea of skipping class in order to change my little sandstone world. Returning to this particular world a decade later with Luke and the amazing young artists at Canberra Youth Theatre, I found that even though the music, haircuts and fashion had changed, the same pulse was still beating beneath the surface. This play is dedicated to all the stupol nerds out there – the young and not so young – who embraced the co- more than the -curricular and realise that’s where the real lessons are.”



**AWARDS**

**THE OVATIONS**

**Winner:**

- Best Production of a Play (Community): *How To Vote!*
- Best Lighting Design: Antony Hateley

**Nominations:**

- Best Original Work or Adaptation: *How to Vote!*
- Best Supporting Male Performance in a Play: Jack Shanahan
- Best Supporting Female Performance in a Play: Caitlin Baker
- Best Featured Performance in a Play: The Ensemble in *How to Vote!*



## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE

*How To Vote!* was one of the biggest productions Canberra Youth Theatre has tackled in many years, and a fitting venture for our 50th anniversary: one that champions the absolute force that are our emerging artists, and resulted in an epic work that demanded the resources of The Playhouse stage.

We have lots of conversations with our artists about how they feel living in our nation's capital – the political centre of Australia, surrounded by government institutions with the House on the hill at its core. Does this make them more politically engaged, or apathetic towards our democratic systems? As a company, I wanted us to look at how young people viewed the culture of politics, what was behind their growing distrust towards political systems, and the issues that activated them to advocate for social change.

Canberra is also a university town, so before long we started to talk about what happens when the word 'student' is placed before things like politics, journalism, and theatre. A university feels like a microcosm of our society: a place where we learn about the arts, philosophy, technology and science, but also how to basically function living out of home. We discover our tribes, often stay in our social bubbles, and declare that we're going to take over the world. We party hard, fall in love, mess up, think that we know it all, realise that we never will, but remain determined to challenge the establishment and make things better... all whilst under the pressure of having to get our essay in on time.

I brought Julian on board to join me in these conversations, and throughout many workshops and creative developments with our young artists – culminating in a staged reading in the House of Representatives at Old Parliament House last year – and finally the world premiere of a new Australian play on The Playhouse stage. I am proud that we have created an epic work for a huge ensemble of emerging artists; a satirical play that delves into the cut-throat world of student politics, about what drives our ambition for power, and the lengths we are prepared to go to hold onto it.

This production caught the attention of Canberra's political community. We were thrilled to have our own federal member, Alicia Payne, visit rehearsals to get a close-up look at the work in action, and an extra special cameo performance each night (via video) from our federal Arts Minister, Tony Burke, as a keen intern hoping to make it in the big in world of politics, and later found out that we had inspired a local MLA to quote the production's war-cry "Fill the Hole," in a debate in the Legislative Assembly... so we've made it into the ACT's Hansard too.

To have over 30 emerging artists perform in a brand new play on one of the most beautiful stages in the country was an absolute privilege, and a big thank you to the team at the Canberra Theatre Centre who generously supported this production as part of their commitment to nurturing the young and emerging artists of the ACT.





# SOUL TRADING

BY KATE WALDER

## STATISTICS

Audience Numbers	594
Audience Capacity	92%
Performances	7
Professional Artists Employed	5
Young / Emerging Artists	14
CALD Participants	3
Participants with Disability	2



5 - 8 OCTOBER 2022

THE COURTYARD STUDIO  
CANBERRA THEATRE CENTRE

## WORLD PREMIERE

I CAN SEE YOUR SOULS.  
THEY MIGHT BE IMPERCEPTIBLE TO THE HUMAN EYE  
BUT IT'S VERY CLEAR TO US THAT YOU HAVE SOMETHING THAT WE DON'T.

The year is 2079. Humans are created with gene selection technology, Artificial Intelligence is part of everyday life and children's best friends are their Learning Bots. Except for Jerry. Jerry is not like the others. Neither is Neutron Finch, an exceptionally clever Learning Bot who seems to appear out of nowhere. He is smarter than most Bots, funnier and also possibly illegal. It doesn't take long for the status quo to unravel and one night, Jerry and his classmates are summoned to the oval...

The Bots want souls. Specifically, theirs. It's up to six young minds to solve the greatest existential question of all time within 24 hours. Will their soul-searching provide the answers they need to stop AI destroying the world as they know it?

*Soul Trading*, winner of the 2019 Junior Australian Theatre for Young People Foundation Commission, is a funny, fascinating and eye-opening sci-fi adventure that asks vital questions about human connection, and our rapidly-evolving relationship with technology.

## CAST

TED ABRAHAM  
IMOGEN BIGSBY-CHAMBERLIN  
SA-LI ANN CHAN  
ORLANDO DOVE  
CLANCY HOBAN  
THEO JEBB

AADHYA KARTHIK  
SOPHIE KHOKHAR  
HUDSON MATTHEW  
ERINE SIMENEL  
KLEIO SLATER  
AIDEN TITHERIDGE

**DIRECTOR**  
JENA PRINCE

**SET & COSTUME DESIGNER**  
PHOENIX MAE

**LIGHTING DESIGNER**  
ANTONY HATELEY

**SOUND DESIGNER**  
PATRICK HAESLER

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**  
CAITLIN BAKER

**STAGE MANAGER**  
RHILEY WINNETT

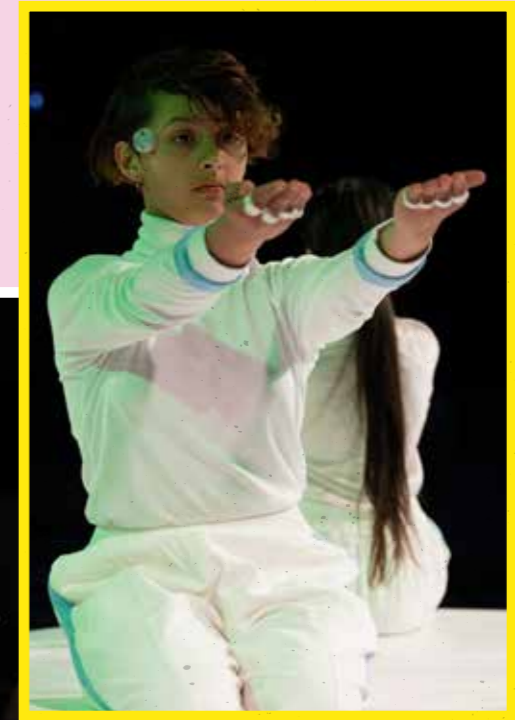
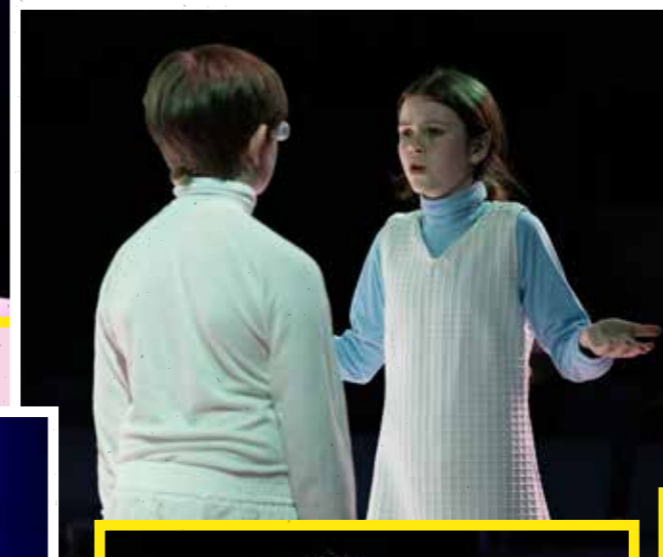
**ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER**  
SOPHIE BLACKBURN



## REVIEWS

“*Soul Trading* serves as a worthy caution about overlooking the nature of our humanity, tackling some serious questions about human connection, imagination, and drive... Exhibiting faultless memories for their lines, the actors also displayed perfect timing... The entire cast of twelve acquitted itself well, with commendable commitment to its roles... Canberra Youth Theatre plays an important role in readying young theatre performers for bigger things as they tackle challenging issues. With intelligent productions such as *Soul Trading*, that tradition is sure to flourish.”  
★★★★★ – *Arts in Review*

“a tight, funny and thought-provoking show... Performed by a cohort of children who have had to engage with their learning through technology, in isolation, this show is a moving celebration of human connection.” – *City News*



## AWARDS

### THE OVATIONS

#### Winner:

- Best Original Work or Adaptation: Kate Walder for *Soul Trading*
- Best Set Design (Joint-winner): Phoenix Mae
- Best Sound Design: Patrick Haesler

#### Nominations:

- Best Production of a Play (Community): *Soul Trading*
- Best Lighting Design: Antony Hateley

### CAT AWARDS

#### Certificates of Excellence:

- *Soul Trading*, directed by Jena Prince
- Phoenix Mae, Antony Hateley and Patrick Haesler for integrated set/costume, lighting and sound design.



## ARTIST STATEMENT

### Jena Prince

“It has been a pleasure and privilege to tackle such enormous concepts with this extraordinary cast. Every time I walk into the rehearsal room, I am met with twelve courageous, funny and energetic young actors who work as hard as professionals, think as deeply as adults (often more deeply, if I’m being honest), and who simply love being on stage together. They have approached this play with a maturity and sense of wonder.”





## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Our final production for our anniversary season saw our youngest artists take us over 50 years into the future. *Soul Trading* was the winner of the 2019 Junior Australian Theatre for Young People Foundation Commission, programmed by ATYP in both 2020 and 2021, but unfortunately cancelled both times due to COVID. Canberra Youth Theatre produced the world premiere of the play, in an enchanting production directed by Jena Prince, featuring a cast of 12 young artists in school years 4 to 7.

*Soul Trading* was a funny, fascinating and eye-opening sci-fi adventure that asked vital questions about human connection, and our rapidly-evolving relationship with technology. The play ignited conversations with young people and their families about Artificial Intelligence and the future of humanity, asking some very big questions: what if young people became so attached to their devices that they no longer had human friends? What would happen if this dependence was disrupted by the arrival of a human-like AI who was keen to understand the essence of being human? *Soul Trading* celebrated our humanity, and the power of wonder and imagination. It was also fun, humorous, insightful work for young people, where they also relished the opportunity to play robots!

*Soul Trading* has been published by Playlab, with Canberra Youth Theatre listed in the publication as the originating producers, and the production was professionally filmed and available to be streamed on the ATYP On Demand education platform, which removes geographic and economic barriers that students and teachers across Australia face when wanting to engage with performing arts.

The brilliant work of the entire creative team has been lauded with numerous awards, and we couldn't be prouder of this phenomenal production to wrap up what has been an epic year.

## YOUNG ARTIST STATEMENT

Aadhya Karthik

"Being part of the cast has taught me so many things that I'll always use. The cast and crew were so supportive and understanding. For the first time, it felt like I had found my tribe. It's an amazing feeling to feel like you truly belong somewhere and I'm so grateful that I got to experience that by being part of the cast. I've not only learned so many new skills, concepts, and methods, I've created life-long friendships."

## PARENT STATEMENT

Kelly Farrell

"The care you showed the kids, the time you spent, the commitment to their development and experience: just exceptional. The experience of it will have a significant influence on all the kids, and we will see it not just now, but well into their futures, no matter what they choose to do with them. It has had several positive impacts – an increase in confidence, willingness to have a go at things, a sense of – *I can do this!*"



# EMERGING ARTISTS PROGRAM

We are passionate about creating pathways for early career artists aged 18–25 to achieve their creative ambitions.

We offer opportunities to participate in artistic training and creative development, explore and shape individual artistic practice, and build professional networks.

Our Emerging Artists program is made possible thanks to the Jeremy Spencer Broom Legacy and Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres.

## STATISTICS

Young / Emerging Artists	55
Professional Artists Employed	10
First Nations Participants	1
CALD Participants	5
Participants with Disability	5

THE  
JEREMY SPENCER BROOM  
LEGACY

**A+G**  
Ainslie and Gorman  
Arts Centres

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# RESIDENT ARTISTS

Canberra Youth Theatre has a long history of being an incubator and creative hub for emerging professional theatre makers who are passionate about creating new works and exploring their artistic practice.

Our Resident Artists program provides mentorship opportunities for early-career artists to be embedded in the life of our company, collaborate on artistic projects, lead creative developments, mentor other young artists, support artistic programming, and undertake professional development projects.

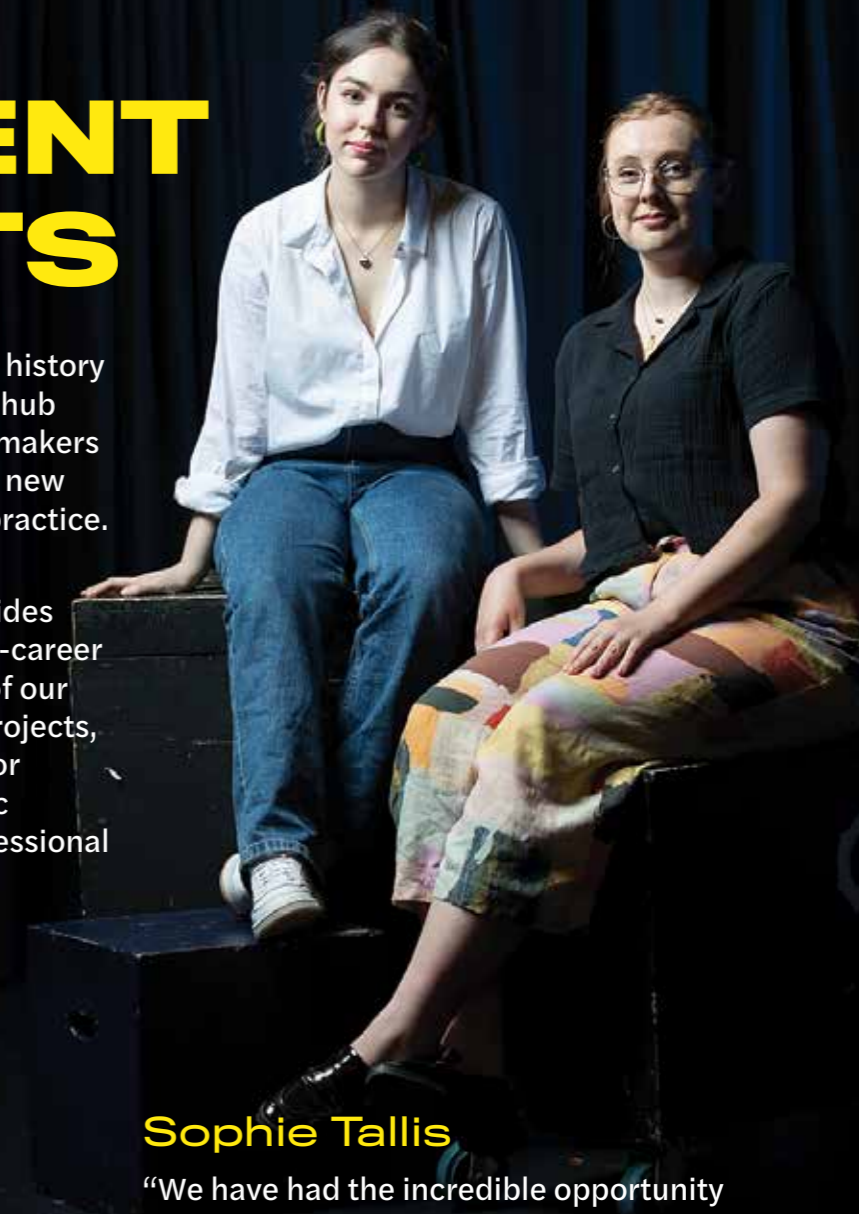
In 2022 our Resident Artists were **Caitlin Baker** and **Sophie Tallis**.

## Caitlin Baker

“As someone who started as part of the Ambassadors program at age 15, the workshop program at 16, performed in her first emerging artist production at 17, and has now come full circle to complete an artist’s residency and work as Workshop Artist, I cannot help but speak to the community, resilience and ingenuity which comes from giving young artists the time, space and respect to develop their practices. That is exactly what the Emerging Artist program does. Canberra Youth Theatre has become an integral part of my creative career, fostering my practice at every stage, granting me the support, skills, and stage to tell my story... just as much at 22, as it did at 15.”

## Sophie Tallis

“We have had the incredible opportunity to become an integral part of the Canberra Youth Theatre ecosystem: learning not just about our own creative practices and identities, but what it takes to create independent theatre, and foster the skills and stories of young people. We engaged in everything from assistant directing on the major productions, dramaturging the massive *How to Vote!* commission, contributing to a National Youth Performing Arts Summit, running workshops for a whole range of young people, and having the room to discuss and run our own creative endeavours. We’ve been able to meet other theatre makers, both emerging and established across the country, build our networks, and become industry advocates helping to create the artistic practices we want to see in the sector.”



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# EMERGE COMPANY

Emerge Company is our training and professional development program that brings together emerging theatre makers aged 18–25 to collaborate, train and create their own work as a company, led by Lead Artist, Christopher Carroll.

In 2022, the program was restructured from one 3-hour session per week, to two 2-hour sessions per week, with a clearer focus on devising as an integral part of the program from the very beginning. These changes, and being able to conduct the program without interruptions due to COVID lockdowns as in 2021, allowed for a more ambitious, cohesive production outcome: *503: Service Unavailable*.

This year's program was planned with deliberate and integrated combination of skills, devising and industry knowledge. Skills sessions included voice masterclasses with Jess Chambers, playwriting with Mary Rachel Brown, design with Aislinn King, production with Bonnie Curtis, and audition techniques with Luke Rogers. Industry knowledge sessions included talks from Femke Withag and Laurine Kelson from artsACT on writing funding applications, and Adam Deusien from Canberra Theatre Centre on pitching to venues. The program was structured to allow members of EmERGE to participate in the company's production of *How to Vote!*, which included a large cast of 18–25 year olds.

There remain challenges to balance the bold ambitions of the program, the staffing resources of the company to support it, the time commitment and financial cost required from participants, and being a consciously risk-taking, experimental platform for the first draft of a devised work, as well as a diverse learning experience for participants.

As in 2021, participants' feedback for the program was overwhelmingly positive. EmERGE Company is unique in Canberra, laying a foundation for empowered, resourceful theatremakers, who possess real confidence in their own voice as artists and their right to occupy that space. Pleasingly, the program is also fostering the kind of peer networks that are so vital to supporting and sustaining professional careers into the future.

A contingent of the EmERGE Company have continued to work together as an independent company since the program ended, further developing the 503 project through a one-week creative development in January 2023 which Canberra Youth Theatre was able to support with rehearsal space, applying for Canberra Theatre Centre's New Works program, and pitching the show to Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres towards a full production. Three of the ensemble, Ashleigh Butler, Ella Buckley, and Quinn Goodwin, are now employed as Workshop Artists with the company.





## ARTIST STATEMENT

Christopher Carroll

“Mighty, impossible, mind-bending things were accomplished with Emerge Company 2022. By opening up the Pandora’s box of a full-length work conceived, devised and produced by participants, it unleashes a few known unknowns, and a whole lot of unknown unknowns, tied together with invisible string into something resembling a show.

Some participants had more time than others to pour into the production, and flourished, discovering capabilities they didn’t know they had; from designing and building sets, to digging into the real spade-work of script-writing, to the organisational gesamtkunstwerk of production. For a part-time program that goes above and beyond, there’s something to be said for shooting for the moon, and seeing those who are hungry for the challenge rise to meet it.

There are interesting points of comparison between this year’s and last year’s production outcome: the common parameters of an ensemble of performer/ creators working collaboratively on a new work that is relevant to their lives, to be staged in C-Block, have produced two naturalistic character-driven dramas about a group of loosely-connected uni-age peers, with science-fictiony world-jolting inciting events. In 2021, a party counting down to an unspecified apocalypse; in 2022, the unexplained shut down of the Internet. Similarities in form could also be a result of the limited exposure among Canberra-based emerging artists to more diverse forms of theatre. It would be a good provocation to explore different forms with next year’s program, and see how genuinely new the work can be.

I’m incredibly proud of the work of Emerge Company over the last two years, and I feel confident that many of its participants will leave lasting impressions on theatre, in Canberra or elsewhere, in years to come.”



## EMERGING ARTIST STATEMENT

Quinn Goodwin

“Emerge Company has been instrumental in my continued practice as a performer. The autonomy we had over our work fostered a space for the ensemble’s creativity to take centre stage, encouraging collaboration and critique to work towards an end product that everyone can say they’ve contributed too. The group-work has been something I have carried with me as I continue to work with members of the company as well as my independent work as I see the value in disagreement and suggestion. Overall, Emerge has provided a strong foundation for me to return to throughout my practice and made me a stronger theatre maker and performer. I am grateful for the program for all that it has equipped me with going forward.”



## EMERGING ARTIST STATEMENT

Ashleigh Butler

“Emerge has literally changed the direction of my life, helping me see the path to a career in the arts. I really appreciated the different strands of the program, which encompassed the different areas that you need to develop as an emerging artist, from acting to producing to funding. The idea of creating a show feels very large, but breaking it down into achievable steps made it possible, and creating the production in the way we did gave us a guideline to follow for future work. Emerge also put me in contact with other creatives that I’ve continued to work with beyond the program.”



# 503: SERVICE UNAVAILABLE

CREATED BY  
THE EMERGE COMPANY

## STATISTICS

Audience Numbers	37
Performances	3
Guest Artists & Arts Workers	8
Emerging Artists	10



4 - 5 NOVEMBER 2022

C BLOCK THEATRE  
GORMAN ARTS CENTRE

Excited to finally be back inprecedented times, a group of young people wake up to yet another earth-shattering crisis: the Internet they grew up with is gone and it doesn't look like it's coming back. Faced with the first world problem of first world problems, this cluster of loose connections is thrown together as they try to figure out how to join the network when no one has the key. Did anyone have this on their 2022 bingo card?

Devised from the obsessions, dependencies, community, and culture of a group of actor-creators who have lived it first-hand, this is a show for anyone who's ever scrolled through Instagram to avoid making small-talk, texted instead of knocking, googled how to boil an egg, or laid awake at night with the niggling doubt that everything you thought to be true is made of cake.

How do you find your soul-mate without Tinder? How are you supposed to know what's happening in the world? If the timeline is cleared, could you really start over? Is cancel culture cancelled? If the Cloud evaporates, will we disappear with it? And has anyone tried turning it off and on again?

Insightful, self-aware and perversely entertaining, *503: Service Unavailable* is a kaleidoscopic snapshot of digital natives and the virtual hellscape we call life. No filter.

## EMERGE COMPANY

MAXINE BEAUMONT  
ELLA BUCKLEY  
ASHLEIGH BUTLER  
JESSI GOODING  
QUINN GOODWIN  
CLAIRE IMLACH  
THEA JADE  
EMILY O'BRIEN  
CAMERON ROSE  
EMILY SMITH

## LEAD ARTIST

CHRISTOPHER CARROLL

## GUEST ARTISTS & ARTS WORKERS

MARY RACHEL BROWN  
JESS CHAMBERS  
BONNIE CURTIS  
ADAM DEUSIEN  
LAURINE KELSON  
AISLINN KING  
LUKE ROGERS  
FEMKE WITHAG



Ainslie and Gorman  
Arts Centres



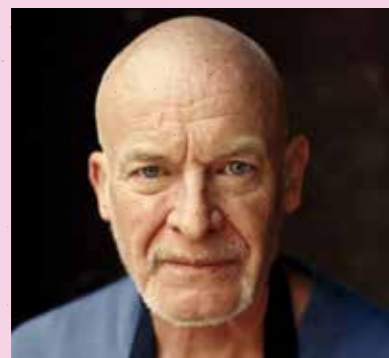
# MASTERCLASSES

Throughout the year we offer a series of specialised masterclasses with leading industry professionals. Our Masterclasses provide practical training for emerging artists looking to develop their skills and collaborate with industry professionals in a challenging and supportive environment.

In 2022, Canberra Youth Theatre ran four masterclasses as part of our Emerging Artist Program. Two of these programs (*Drama School Auditions* and *Directing Intensive*) were run by our Artistic Director & CEO, Luke Rogers.

In collaboration with Lakespeare, Tony Knight (former Head of Acting at NIDA) delivered a masterclass specially designed for emerging artists to connect with the scale of language, emotion and ideas in Shakespeare's plays.

Canberra Youth Theatre was especially pleased to work with Intimacy Coordinator, Shondelle Pratt, to deliver the *Advocating Consent in the Rehearsal Room* workshops. We offered this workshop to three cohorts: to our staff, Workshop Artists and Resident Artists as professional development; to the cast of *Dags*, and to teachers and theatre professionals in the Canberra region. Through offering this vital skills training to a wide cross section of our community, we are able to increase the knowledge and best practices of our theatre community.



## PERFORMING SHAKESPEARE

Tony Knight delivered two masterclasses to a group of emerging artists focussing on approaching the scale and range of language, emotion and ideas in Shakespeare's plays. Participants delved into the technique of Shakespeare to deepen their theatre craft, and were given the opportunity to pick the brain of one of Australia's most celebrated and renowned acting teachers.



## ADVOCATING CONSENT IN THE REHEARSAL ROOM

Intimacy Coordinator, Shondelle Pratt, led a series of masterclasses exploring intimacy and consent in the rehearsal room. Participants were given a practical guide to exploring physical boundaries, scene work using consent principles, self-care techniques, and learning how to safely and confidently improvise within boundaries. This experience was incredibly impactful for our *Dags* cast, who learned a set of tools, language, and developed self-confidence that informed their production process. We also engaged Shondelle to lead a masterclass with our staff, as well as the wider theatre community in Canberra, as we work to lead the change towards safe, supportive creative environments, and advocating for best practice across all areas of our theatre sector.



## DIRECTING INTENSIVE

Led by Luke Rogers, this new program offered emerging theatre makers the opportunity to develop the skills and processes necessary to become a theatre director. Over eight intensive sessions, artists developed their director's toolkit, learning how to create a concept and articulate an artistic vision, analyse and unlock the creative ideas within a play, build collaborative relationships, learn how to best conduct auditions, confidently run a rehearsal room, and successfully work with actors. This program empowered artists to discover the kind of director they want to be, the work they want to create, and gain the confidence to pursue their artistic visions.



## DRAMA SCHOOL AUDITION MASTERCLASS

Participants were supported and guided through their preparation auditioning for actor training schools. Led by Luke Rogers, actors learnt how to choose pieces that best showcase their talents, perfected contrasting monologues, and were given tools to prepare for the challenges of the audition room. A number of participants used the masterclass to film the video submissions for their drama school applications.



# SCRATCH

*Scratch* is an opportunity for emerging artists aged 18–25 years to meet, network, experiment, and share their work. Held at Smith’s Alternative, these events showcase new works-in-progress, the early beginnings of a creative idea, a new song, some comedy, improv, poetry, dance – anything at all – however rough or ready it may be. Audiences are then invited to participate in a guided critical response process to offer feedback and insights into the artists’ work. *Scratch* is for performers, writers and theatre makers who are itching to share ambitious ideas, make new connections, and be supported to develop their creative projects.

Scratch Events	2
Emerging Artists	10
Audience Numbers	26
New Works Presented	6



# EMERGING WRITING PROGRAMS

We are committed to investing in the creation and development of new Australian plays written especially for young people, and to nurture the professional development of emerging playwrights.

The stories of young people are at the heart of our work at Canberra Youth Theatre. Our Emerging Writers Programs provide opportunities for emerging playwrights to develop their creative skills and confidence. We strengthen their professional networks so that they can become our next generation of storytellers. Our emerging writers will go on to be at the centre of our theatre culture, creating new works for companies all over the country.

Our Young Playwrights Program was put on hiatus for 2022 whilst we reviewed the program and prepared to relaunch it in 2023 as a series of masterclasses with industry professionals.

A special workshop was run in collaboration with Griffin Theatre to coincide with their production *Whitefella Yella Tree* by Dylan Van Den Berg. Young artists participated in a free playwriting workshop with Julian Larnach and Dylan, before heading across to Canberra Theatre Centre to watch a performance of the play.





# 2022 ALUMNI STORIES

We continue to provide pathways to professional practice, with longtime Canberra Youth Theatre artists Alex Castello and Charlotte Palmer starting professional actor training in 2023 at Actors Centre and National Theatre, Melbourne respectively. Rebecca Duke (Resident Artist 2020, Emerge Company 2021, 2022 Emerging Playwright Commission finalist) was accepted to study a Masters of Fine Arts in Writing for Performance at NIDA. Rebecca's play, *At Dinner*, ran for a three-night season at ACT Hub in February 2023, directed by fellow-2020 Resident Artist, Holly Johnson, and featuring Thea Jade and Tim Cusack.



## Charlotte Palmer

"I've been with Canberra Youth Theatre for just over 10 years now and throughout my time I have met so many talented and inspirational people that have pushed me to not only become a better performer, but a human being. From participating in holiday programs, to weekly workshops, productions, emerging artist programs, touring to Sydney, and going to New Zealand to collaborate with another youth theatre company, I am beyond lucky. I can't put into words how much I love this company and what it does for young people. As a participant I have made friendships that have supported me and lifted me. As a tutor I continue to be amazed by the amount of talented young artists and the positive impact that the arts have on their lives. I know this is not goodbye and that I'll be back at some point as a very proud alumni. I look forward to everything that Canberra Youth Theatre has in store."



## Alex Castello

"The training I got at Canberra Youth Theatre rewired my understanding of theatre. We explored so many possibilities and had opportunities to work with professionals that inspired us to want to dive even more into theatre. Being able to work with other passionate actors gave me the motivation to push myself beyond my limits and develop the necessary skills and discipline to continue to pursue acting. Being able to work at a professional standard really gave me the confidence to be able to take more risks creatively and put myself out there to get into drama school. I am forever grateful for how Canberra Youth Theatre has helped me grow as an artist and as a person, helping me build a solid foundation that has proved to be immensely invaluable for me today."



## Rebecca Duke

"Canberra Youth Theatre has supported my development as a writer and artist from the very beginning. The company's staff and network of artists have placed my voice as a young artist at the centre of the creative process, and done so much to develop my writing practice to this point. This is such a crucial time in my career, where I'm entering the arts sector as an independent, skilled and disciplined writer. The opportunities I've had here, within a company I love, have been a springboard towards everything I am yet to achieve."





# EMERGING PLAYWRIGHT COMMISSION

Our Emerging Playwright Commission offers a professional commission to an emerging Australian playwright, to create a new full-length work that brings the voices and stories of youth to the stage.

This initiative places emerging playwrights at the centre of the creative process, and is specifically designed to springboard writers at a crucial point in their career. This commission is for emerging Australian playwrights aged under 35 who have created a modest body of work, but have not yet been professionally produced by a major theatre company. Our goal is to nurture an emerging playwright's professional growth by investing in their artistic development at the early stages of their career, and supporting them through a creative development process that results in a new, challenging and intelligent theatrical work that expresses the voice of youth, whilst contributing to the development of a rich canon of new Australian plays written especially for young people. The commissioned playwright receives dramaturgical support, a series of creative development workshops on their script in Canberra with the Artistic Director and Resident Artists, and sees their script come to life in a staged reading of their work.

With over 60 submissions from every state and territory in Australia, the 2022 winner of our Emerging Playwright Commission was Honor Webster-Mannison, who will see their commissioned play undergo a creative development with our young artists in 2023.

Our Emerging Playwright Commission is generously supported by Holding Redlich.

*"My play is a surreal, punk comedy that explores the lives of nine young people who realise they're underpaid, overworked, and trapped in a time loop working in a fast-food restaurant. I was inspired by working in lots of hospitality jobs, thinking about the ways work affects our relationships with one another, and with power and authority structures. I'm passionate about creating work for young people that resists the simplification of the issues and ideas that affect their lives."* - **Honor Webster-Mannison**



Elizabeth Carroll and Andrew Klein (Holding Redlich), with Luke Rogers



2022 Finalists: Jamie Hornsby (SA), Honor Webster-Mannison (VIC), Rebecca Duke (ACT)

## NEW WORKS

Canberra Youth Theatre is committed to investing in the creation and development of new Australian plays for young people.

From Debra Oswald's now classic *Dags*, and works by other Australian writers such as Tommy Murphy, Mary Rachel Brown, Lachlan Philpott, Angela Betzien, Liv Hewson, Ross Mueller, Emily Sheehan, Jessica Bellamy, Cathy Petocz, Julian Larnach, and Tasnim Hossain, we have nurtured new voices and commissioned professional artists to create acclaimed works for young people.

In 2022, we conducted a series of creative developments and a staged reading of Joanna Richards' play, *You Can't Tell Anyone*, which was the winner of our 2021 Emerging Playwright Commission. This play will premiere as part of our 2023 season and be published by Currency Press.



# WORKSHOPS

Find your voice.  
Explore your craft.  
Share your story.

Our workshop programs bring young people together to think imaginatively, express themselves artistically, and discover the joys of performance.

We treat young people as artists in their own right, empowering them to find their own unique voice and share their stories.

We create a space for young people to connect, collaborate and belong. We bring them together with professional artists to discover new skills, build self-confidence and learn how to make theatre in a supportive and encouraging environment.

Our weekly Ensembles are semester-long programs that run in line with school terms. Participants learn a wide range of skills across many performance styles, creating an end-of-semester showcase performance for family and friends.

Our Workshop Artists are professional theatre-makers who are passionate about collaborating and creating work with young people. Together they make exciting work that challenges us to see the world from new perspectives.

Whether our young artists are considering pursuing a professional career in the arts, or simply want to expand their skills, make new friends, and have fun, Canberra Youth Theatre is a safe, inclusive space for all young people to be creative, share their voice, and explore their passion.





# ENSEMBLES

In 2022, we were thrilled to be able to deliver all our workshops in person, and not pivot to digital delivery due to lockdowns. All workshops were able to present their end-of-semester performances in person, and we were thrilled at the imagination, creativity, collaboration, and stagecraft shown by all ensembles.

2022 saw us expand our programs to deliver workshops for years 4–6 in Q at The Q - Queanbeyan Performing Arts Centre, and for years 7–9 at Belconnen Arts Centre.

Young Artists	215
Programs	18
Individual Workshops	358
Artists Employed	12
Performances	18
Audiences	340
First Nations Participants	8
CALD Participants	65
Participants with Disability	28



## Tobi Odusote - Workshop Artist

“2022 was my first year working as a Workshop Artist and in that time I’ve learnt so much about how truly endless the imaginations of young people can be. I’ve realised how often adults tend to hold back young people without even realising it, all in the name of ‘doing what’s right’. I was shocked by how many young people would tell me that school makes them feel stupid, but then watch these same young artists create things I would never even think of! I’ve made it my personal mission as a Workshop Artist to focus on creating a safe space that doesn’t limit creativity and encourages self-expression in the hope that an hour or two of creative freedom each week is enough to keep that spark alive.”

# SCHOOLS PROGRAM

We work with primary schools across the ACT to provide quality after-school drama programs. Participants work with a professional Workshop Artist on a weekly program that builds creativity and confidence through collaboration, improvisation, and performance. They discover new skills, express themselves creatively, and work as an ensemble to create a performance at the end of the term for their family and friends at their school.

Young Artists	114
Programs	10
Individual Workshops	92
Artists Employed	6
Performances	10
Audiences	137
First Nations Participants	8
CALD Participants	7
Participants with Disability	5

In 2022, Canberra Youth Theatre returned to Red Hill Primary School, Telopea Primary School, and Turner Primary School. Sadly, we were unable to return to North Ainslie Primary School, and the program at Turner Primary School finished at the end of term 2 due to low enrolment numbers, and the inability to secure appropriate spaces in the school to run our schools program.

In 2022, we were excited to re-vamp our schools program to a term-by-term engagement, and engaged Jena Prince to write a Workshop Plan to be used across all our schools. With the change to term long enrolments in the school program, we have given parents more flexibility with enrolments, and aligned the enrolments with other programs offered within the school environment. Although this shortened each program to an enrollment of 7–10 weeks, the School Workshop Plan allows us to deliver a dynamic, skills focused workshop program to all participants.





# HOLIDAY WORKSHOPS

Canberra Youth Theatre delivered six holiday workshops across 2022. Workshops were well attended, and we were thrilled to be able to present the end of workshop performances in person.

**JANUARY 2022**

Years 1 – 6  
Young Artists

19

## MYSTICAL MAGIC

Young artists joined us to explore the world of magic from wizards to fairies, enchantment to trickery, and the real to the imagined. Young artists dived into mystical adventures of all kinds as they worked collaboratively to free their imagination and devise new stories.

**Workshop Artists** Tiahna Johnson and Martha Russell

**JANUARY 2022**

Years 1 – 6  
Young Artists

19

## THE QUEST

This was a quest between good and evil! Young artists developed their own original superhero or villain, ready to defend or defeat the citizens of earth and beyond. Together, our heroes and villains created the story of a new imagined world, and collaborated together to devise and perform a new work.

**Workshop Artist** Charlotte Palmer



66

**JANUARY 2022**

Years 7 – 9  
Young Artists

14

## ACTING THROUGH SONG

Led by Ylaria Rogers, this workshop introduced young artists to the skills necessary to develop an engaging musical performance; through strong vocal technique, emotional expression, and an understanding of the narrative journey of a song. Participants learned to connect their singing to the emotional truth and characterisation that are the lifeblood of every great musical. They were given the opportunity to examine different conventions of musical theatre, from main-stage classics to the subversive contemporary influence of cabaret.

**Workshop Artist** Ylaria Rogers

**APRIL 2022**

Years 1 – 6  
Young Artists

15

## TOP SECRET

Pssst... Can you keep a secret? Participants joined us on a top secret mission in search of the truth. Young artists delved through imaginative twists and turns, collaborated to spot red herrings and built to the climactic scene where all was revealed! Or was it..? Young artists got an introduction to the elements of theatre making, stagecraft, and physical and vocal expression. They shared their ideas and opinions about the world, and collaborated together to devise and perform an original piece of theatre to perform for family and friends.

**Workshop Artist** Tijana Kovac



67



**JULY 2022**

Years 1 – 6  
Young Artists

**9**

## CREEPY SPOOKY LURKING NASTIES

AAAAARRGHHHH! (Have we got your attention?) Participants got their shriek on in this spooky workshop that made them shiver with delight – or fear – or both?! Young artists developed their devising skills through energetic exercises and creative play, as well as perfecting their prowess in that essential actor's skill: the melodramatic death. Screaming was encouraged. Blood was not included. Discounts were available for the living dead.

**Workshop Artist** Rebecca Duke

**OCTOBER 2022**

Years 1 – 6  
Young Artists

**14**

## THE MACHINES ARE ALIVE AND WANT TO BE OUR FRIENDS

The future is ours! The most incredible futuristic technology is already a part of our everyday lives, so just imagine what lies ahead. In this creative workshop, participants explored their relationship with technology through theatre, exploding the infinite possibilities of sci-fi futures. Excited? Scared? Impatient to have a Robot Best Friend? Some people see things as they are and ask "why?" We dream things that never were and say, "why not?!"

**Workshop Artist** Rebecca Duke



# WORKSHOPS BY DESIGN

Our Workshops By Design offer students a practical experience of drama, performance and theatre making within the school environment. With lockdown and school restrictions easing in 2022, we were able to return to schools to offer six workshops by design within schools. We also reached out to regional NSW delivering two workshops in Temora.

### ERINDALE COLLEGE

Years 11 - 12  
Participants **17**

### HAWKER COLLEGE

Years 11 - 12  
Participants **40**

### HOLY TRINITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Year 6  
Participants **48**

### MOUNT STROMLO HIGH SCHOOL

Years 9 - 10  
Participants **20**

### ST GREGORY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kindergarten  
Participants **125**

### ST JOHN PAUL II COLLEGE

Years 11 - 12  
Participants **8**

### TEMORA SHIRE COUNCIL

Ages 7 - 18  
Participants **22**

## PHYSICAL THEATRE

**Workshop Artist** Christopher Carroll

## POLITICAL THEATRE AND SATIRE

**Workshop Artists** Luke Rogers and Rachel Robertson

## VOICE AND MOVEMENT

**Workshop Artist** Rachel Robertson

## VOICE AND MOVEMENT

**Workshop Artist** Christopher Carroll

## INTRODUCTION TO DRAMA AND PERFORMING

**Workshop Artists** Anna Johnston and Ella Buckley

## VERBATIM THEATRE

**Workshop Artist** Joanna Richards

## THEATRE FUNDAMENTALS

**Workshop Artists** Tobi Odusote and Rachel Robertson



# ACCESS & TRAINING

## SAFE THEATRE PRACTICES ADVOCACY

In 2022, Canberra Youth Theatre continued to promote and demonstrate safe theatre practices for our community. We aim to make professional-level theatre practices the heart of all productions, by modelling best practices in the rehearsal and performance spaces, actor agreements and employing professional artists in the creative team for young artists to work with.

Working with Shondelle Pratt, the cast of *Dags* participated in an age-appropriate workshop on *Intimacy and Consent in the Rehearsal Room*, and these practices were adopted and implemented by the cast enthusiastically. Through our masterclass series, we additionally offered this training to the wider ACT region theatre community, to enhance best practices in the region. All directors working with us in 2022 also participated in a training workshop, and were encouraged to use what they learned in their rehearsal rooms over the year.

## STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In 2022, Canberra Youth Theatre provided two formal professional development opportunities to all staff and workshop artists.

In January, A Gender Agenda ran a full day professional development session on *Intro to Sex and Sex Characteristics: Gender, Sexuality, Pronouns, and How to Have a Safe Conversation*. In this workshop, we were introduced to statistics and information about sex, gender, sexuality, and pronouns, as well as being given tools and resources to apply in the rehearsal room and workshops environment to continue to operate in a safe and inclusive manner, and to demonstrate best practices when interacting with our community, especially our vulnerable young artists.

The second professional development opportunity was *Advocating Consent in the Rehearsal Room* with Shondelle Pratt. As with the masterclass delivered to the public, workshop artists and core staff were given a practical guide to boundaries and consent mechanics in the rehearsal room and acting classroom, as well as ways to use consent concepts in collaborative scene work. Workshop artists applied the skills they learned in the professional development session in both the workshop, and rehearsal environment, and reported that using some of the methods helped with disruptive behaviours within the workshop environment to positive effect.

# ORGANISATION EVALUATION





# GOVERNANCE

Canberra Youth Theatre's Board of Governance is responsible for the long-term strategic planning for the organisation, providing leadership and governance to the organisation and its CEO, including legal and financial accountability, strategic vision and planning, advocacy, and staff appointments and supervision. The Board guides Canberra Youth Theatre's strategic direction, but is not involved in day-to-day company business.

The Board recognises that good corporate governance promotes accountability of board members and management in order to improve transparency, disclosure, compliance, performance and act as a primary force behind reputation management of the company. Canberra Youth Theatre's systems of governance are designed to provide strategic guidance, ensure effective monitoring and review, to guarantee the organisation achieves its purpose, along with enhanced overall performance.

The Board consists of suitably committed, skilled, energetic and passionate individuals who regularly meet to shape the future of the organisation and are drawn from a variety of professions and backgrounds; bringing a wealth of knowledge and experience to the company, and an understanding of the important role we play in the Canberra community and across the national youth arts sector. The skills of the board members are within the areas of the arts, culture, youth, finance, legal, governance, strategic planning, education, philanthropy, communication and marketing.

The Canberra Youth Theatre Board, in conjunction with the Artistic Director & CEO, is responsible for determining the long-term strategic directions, ratifying performance indicators, and reviewing performance against annual performance targets.

# BOARD

NAME	ROLE	YEAR JOINED	SKILLS AND EXPERTISE
Karen Vickery	Chair	2016	Performing Arts, Cultural institutions, Public Access
Chris Wagner	Deputy Chair	2017	Marketing and Communications
Peter Hoolihan	Secretary	2017	Legal and Corporate Governance
Tessa Hammond	Treasurer	2017	Finance and Human Resources Management
Ellen Harvey	Member	2022	Digital Content Strategy
Cassandra Hoolihan	Member	2021	Education and Youth Arts
Adriana Law	Member	2022	Marketing Technology
Celia Rideaux	Member	2020	Philanthropy and Events

# BOARD



**KAREN VICKERY**  
Chair

Karen Vickery has had a long career in the performing arts in which she has worked as an actor for companies such as Sydney Theatre Company, Belvoir and Q Theatre, and as a translator and dramaturg of Russian play texts. Karen lectured at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) from 1996 and was Head of Performance Practices there for five years, specialising in history of performance along with the history of visual art, architecture, literature and music before moving to Canberra. Karen was Director of Access and Learning at the National Portrait Gallery from 2011 to mid 2022. Karen has a strong interest in the relationship between cross-platform performance and visual art, along with a passion for communicating about the arts to as wide a public as possible through arts education. Karen is an award-winning actor and director in Canberra theatre, and a founder of Pigeonhole Theatre Company, and Chaika Theatre at Canberra's new venue for independent theatre, ACT Hub. She has a Certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language, a Bachelor of Arts with Honours and First Place from the University of Melbourne, a Bachelor of Dramatic Art in Acting from NIDA, and an MA in Theatre and Film Studies from the University of New South Wales.



**CHRIS WAGNER**  
Deputy Chair

Chris Wagner is currently Managing Director and Partner in Talkforce Media and Communications Strategist. Chris has 20 years experience in the communication sector, working in ministerial offices, government departments and for a number of not-for-profit and corporate organisations. A former journalist and Canberra Youth Theatre participant, Chris has a background in the areas of arts, governance, mental health, suicide, criminal and civil justice, national security and emergency management, as well as grassroots community liaison, amongst others. He is married to a fellow communicator and a father of two very talkative kids.



**PETER HOOLIHAN**  
Secretary

Peter Hoolihan is a Senior Associate at Maddocks, admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of the ACT and the High Court of Australia. Peter has practiced across a number of legal areas, with expertise in property, construction, environment and planning law. Peter has represented commercial clients, state governments and the Commonwealth of Australia on complex leasing arrangements, construction and infrastructure projects, acquisition and disposal of land and property procurement processes around the country. Peter



has also practiced in corporate governance, intellectual property and business transactions including for multiple not-for-profit and charitable organisations. Peter has a background in the creative arts, performance and drama having studied these at university and has been involved in multiple productions both on stage and off (including with Canberra Youth Theatre). His connection with Canberra Youth Theatre goes back to 2013 when his wife, Cassandra, worked and trained with the company. He has been an avid supporter since.



**TESSA HAMMOND**  
**Treasurer**

Tessa Hammond is a HR Analyst with Tailored HR Solutions. Tessa is currently working on a diverse range of engagement types, including the collection, compilation and use of a variety of technologies to analyse and report on data trends and outcomes. Previously, Tessa worked as a Senior Consultant with Bellchambers Barrett where she was involved in a wide range of audit engagements including external audits for not-for-profit and charitable organisations, including risk management engagements

and financial controls assessments.



**ELLEN HARVEY**  
**Member**

Ellen Harvey is currently Director of Digital Content for the ACT Government. She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative Writing Production and a Graduate Diploma of Book Editing and Publishing. Ellen has previously been in the executive and leadership teams of National Young Writers Festival, ACT Writers Centre, Scrapbook Creations (Universal Magazines), and Canberra Writers Festival. She has worked with Penguin Books, Random House Australia, and Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres. Ellen is a passionate advocate for

accessibility, inclusion and diversity, with a particular interest in equitable communications.



**CASSANDRA HOOLIHAN**  
**Member**

Cassandra Hoolihan is an experienced secondary educator and is the Arts Coordinator at Caroline Chisholm School. Cassandra has directed, stage managed and choreographed many events at the school, including musicals, plays, talent nights and dance festivals. Cassandra has a background in the performing arts as an actor and performer. She has performed with companies in Newcastle (Tantrum Youth Arts, Newcastle Theatre Company, Stooged Theatre) and Canberra (Canberra Youth Theatre), and

toured productions to Sydney, Gloucester Shakespeare Festival and regional NSW. Upon her move to Canberra, Cassandra trained with the Senior Ensemble at Canberra Youth Theatre and joined the team in administration and marketing in 2013. After completing a Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary), she then worked as the Education Officer at Canberra Theatre Centre in 2016, creating programs for and communicating with teachers across

Canberra, giving her a unique understanding of the performing arts landscape as it relates to education in the ACT.



**ADRIANA LAW**  
**Member**

Adriana Law is a marketing consultant, specialising in marketing technology and customer experience. Adriana, a lapsed musician, has worked in the arts and not-for-profit sector for more than 20 years: in administration, front of house, and back of house; for venues and production houses, big and small (and medium). She has held roles in marketing, ticketing, and technology at Canberra Theatre Centre, Opera Australia, Sydney Opera House, Bell Shakespeare, Sydney Theatre Company, Sydney Symphony, and more.



**CELIA RIDEAUX**  
**Member**

Celia Rideaux is currently the Assistant Director of Philanthropy at the National Library of Australia. She is a passionate fundraiser with a keen interest in the arts. Celia has helped raise millions of dollars throughout her career working for Amnesty International, St Vincent De Paul Society, the Salvation Army and the Australia War Memorial. When Celia was asked why she wanted to support Canberra Youth Theatre her answer was simple, "My brother Sebby." Celia grew up in Bega and her brother did not fit the cookie cutter system society tried to push him into and it broke her heart to see him

bullied and his creativity misunderstood. When he joined a local performing arts group, it changed his life. Her brother Sebby, aka Mr Marmalade, is now a professional Magician and is a constant source of inspiration for Celia, who hopes to share this inspiration with young people through her role as a member of the company's Board. Celia is excited to be part of an organisation that is supporting creativity in young Australians, just like her brother, while bringing quality performances to the Canberra community.



# STAFF



## LUKE ROGERS Artistic Director & CEO

Luke is the Artistic Director & CEO of Canberra Youth Theatre. He is a graduate of NIDA (Directing) and Theatre Nepean (Acting), and the Artistic Director of Stories Like These. Luke is currently studying for a Masters of Fine Arts in Cultural Leadership at NIDA. Previous roles include Theatre Manager of New Theatre, Artistic Director of The Spare Room, and a Resident Studio Artist at Griffin Theatre Company. Directing credits include: *How To Vote*, *Dags*, *Two Twenty Somethings Decide Never To Be Stressed About Anything Ever Again*, *Ever*, *Little Girls Alone in the Woods*, *Normal*, *Possibility*, *Collapse* (Canberra Youth Theatre), *Collected Stories* (Chaika Theatre / ACT Hub), *In Real Life* (Darlinghurst Theatre Company), *Blink*, *MinusOneSister*, *Fireface*, *The Last Five Years*, *The Carnivores* (Stories Like These), *Play House* (NIDA), *The Pillowman*, *Waiting For Godot*, *Don Juan in Soho*, *Art is a Weapon*, *After The End*, *Blasted* (New Theatre), *100 Reasons For War*, *Love and Information*, *Spring Awakening*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Shakespeare's Women*, *Shoot / Get Treasure / Repeat* (AFTT), *Lysistrata*, *The Burial At Thebes*, *Pool (No Water)*, *4.48 Psychosis*, *Eyes To The Floor* (Sydney Theatre School), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Mr Marmalade* (CQUniversity), *Macbeth*, *Cyberbible*, *Embers* (AIM Dramatic Arts) and *Two Weeks With The Queen* (Mountains Youth Theatre). Tour Director: *The Witches* (Griffin Theatre Company). Assistant Director: *Eight Gigabytes of Hardcore Pornography* (Griffin Theatre Company/Perth Theatre Company), *Story of the Red Mountains* (NIDA), *The Boys* (Griffin Theatre Company/Sydney Festival), *Steel Magnolias* (Blackbird Productions / Australian Tour), *Assassins* and *The Crucible* (New Theatre). Luke regularly directs and lectures at various acting schools and universities. He was a member of Directors Lab: Melbourne (Theatre Works/Melbourne Festival) and Playwriting Australia's Dramaturgy Program and Directors Studio.



## HELEN WOJTAS Administration & Workshops Manager

Helen Wojtas joined the Canberra Youth Theatre team in January 2020. She comes from a background of hotel administration, and is a professional costumer, graduating from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts in 2015. Helen spent her childhood immersed in the youth arts scene in Canberra, as a member of Canberra Youth Music (formerly the Canberra Youth Orchestra Society, now Music for Canberra) between 1993 and 2010. She found her experience within the Canberra Youth arts scene invaluable, and understands the importance of providing the next generation of Young Artists with the experiences within the arts. Helen continues to be involved in the Canberra arts scene, as a member of a circus training school, and a violist within the National Capital Orchestra, and as a costumer. Helen is passionate about youth arts, and brings her unique skill set of administration and experience in the theatre industry to Canberra Youth Theatre.



## CHRISTOPHER CARROLL Marketing & Engagement Manager

Like many theatre-makers, Christopher has sharpened his communication skills through a travelled career of telling stories that matter, through promoting his own work with his company, Bare Witness, and advocating for the value of the arts. He fiercely believes that theatre is for everyone – they just don't know it yet. Some of Christopher's early theatre experiences in his native Ireland came through Dublin Youth Theatre and Roundabout Youth Theatre, companies that are renowned for radical, confronting productions that stand up and stand apart in a city with strong theatrical traditions. Having followed the path from youth theatre to professional training and a fulfilling career in the arts, he can speak to the life-changing impact of those formative experiences, and the important role of youth arts in the cultural landscape, not only for the future, but in the here and now. Christopher has also worked with us since 2018 as a Workshop Artist, and balances his role as Marketing & Engagement Manager with that of Lead Artist for the Emerge Company, our training and professional development program for emerging artists aged 18-25. As an active arts practitioner and educator, he has been privileged to guide many young people through Canberra Youth Theatre and witness their development into confident, conscientious, expressive young artists – so naturally, he's eager to get the message out there about how great they are!



## BONNIE CURTIS Associate Producer

Bonnie Curtis is a multi-faceted artist, driven by a curious imagination and a desire to discover. Born and bred in Sydney, Bonnie trained at the Academy of Music and Performing Arts (B.Dance Performance) before moving to Europe to further her artistic development. During her career, Bonnie has worked as an independent artist, producer, director, choreographer and performer in film, installation and live performance. She is the founder and Artistic Director of the Australian dance company Bonnie Curtis Projects. Her creations and collaborations have been featured at ImPulsTanz, MuMoK (AT), Girona Film Festival (ES), Quadstock Music Festival (US), CinéWomen – Womenartconnect (EU), Asia International Youth Short Film Exhibition (CN), Lift-Off Festival (UK), NZ Fringe (NZ), Sydney World Film Festival, Melbourne Fringe, DirtyFeet's The Choreographic Lab and The Flying Nun by Brand X (AU). Bonnie teaches and lectures at dance and performance schools. Her current and past appointments include Te Auaha Institute of Creativity (NZ), Excelsia College, Evolve Performance Studios, APA Macarthur, STADS, and Academy of Music and Performing Arts where Bonnie is the Arts Management lecturer for their Bachelor of Dance program.





**LOUISE DAVIDSON**  
**Finance & Strategy Manager**

Louise Davidson has spent most of her 30 years in Canberra in a variety of management roles in the not for profit and public sectors including 22 years as the Business Manager for two major secondary colleges, Finance Manager for a not for profit organisation working with disadvantaged youth and as the Building and Security Services Director for the Australian National Library. At the Australian National Library, Louise was part of a collegiate group of managers from the major national cultural institutions aimed at enhancing

the overall cultural experience for Canberrans and visitors to the National Capital. Louise had management responsibility for the wide range of cultural events conducted by the National Library, ensuring the performance and display areas were safe and fit for purpose. A significant achievement during Louise’s time at the National Library was Louise’s management of the architectural design and construction of the internationally regarded Treasures and Exhibition Gallery. As Business Manager of two secondary colleges, Louise had Project Manager responsibility for the architectural design, procurement and construction of major projects totalling over \$60m. Included in these projects was the construction of performing arts facilities at each of the colleges. These facilities were designed for teaching and public performances across the full range of the performing arts. This experience has left Louise well qualified to ensure that performance spaces meet the needs of the artists as well as providing a comfortable, safe and high quality audience environment. Louise has enjoyed working with young people through her career. She obtains immense personal satisfaction from the contributions that she has made to the development of our future leaders in a wide variety of fields.



**THEA JADE**  
**Administration and Marketing Coordinator**

Thea Jade made her stage debut last year as Elise in Canberra Youth Theatre’s world premiere of *How to Vote!* by Julian Lanarch at The Playhouse. Thea has built a strong screen acting portfolio with over fifteen acting awards and nominations – most recently ‘Most Memorable Performance’ at the 2022 Enlighten Film Festival. Thea is devoted to youth advocacy and engagement, part of the core staff at Canberra Youth Theatre, and was a member of the Emerge Company, where she co-devised and performed in *503: Service Unavailable*.

# OUR PARTNERS

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of our partners who are key to the success of our work.

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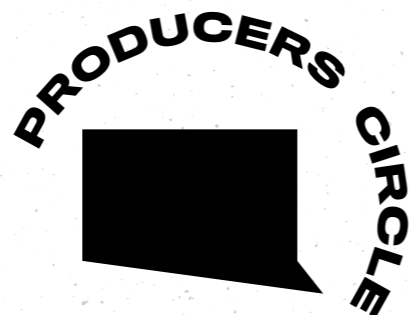
THE  
JEREMY SPENCER BROOM  
LEGACY



# PRODUCERS CIRCLE

At the 2023 season launch, Canberra Youth Theatre announced the formation of the Producers Circle.

As grateful as we are for the funding we currently receive, the reality is, our funding covers our core salaries, and the income we generate from workshops helps cover administration costs. But the hard truth is, that it doesn't go far enough to allow us fulfil what we believe is an essential part of our mandate as a company: professional-quality productions that enable young artists to make a significant contribution to our arts sector.



We are at a turning point in our company's future where, if we want to be a theatre company that continues to produce theatre and engage professional artists to mentor our young people, we will have to rely on philanthropic support from a wider community of supporters, who recognise the value of the work we do and want to be a part of it.

The generous support of Producers Circle members will enable young artists to experience live theatre both on and off stage, providing valuable opportunities for our next generation of theatre makers. The Producers Circle will help fund Canberra Youth Theatre's production program, so we can continue to offer young artists opportunities to be part of our professionally-run theatre productions, and provide audiences of all ages with bold and courageous theatre experiences that express the voice of youth.

Producers Circle members are part of a community of passionate theatre lovers who each make an annual tax-deductible donation of \$1,000, and receive exclusive invitations to special 'behind the scenes' events linked to our productions, opportunities to visit open rehearsals of commissioned plays, plus other recognitions of support and opportunities to network across the Canberra Youth Theatre community.



*"Canberra Youth Theatre has become like a second home to me. Being involved in their productions has brought out a confidence in me that I didn't even know I was capable of. Theatre gives me a power that I have nowhere else in my world. While the rest of the world might still see me as just a kid, in this space, I am more than that. The professional environment that Canberra Youth Theatre creates makes me feel like a real artist. They have given me this platform where I feel valued, and my voice and ideas will always be heard. This is the theatre that I want to be a part of."*  
- Jade Breen





# MARKETING AT A GLANCE



**2,714**

LIKES

**199**

NEW LIKES  
+7.9%



**1,809**

FOLLOWERS

**240**

NEW FOLLOWERS  
+15.3%



**2,200+**

SUBSCRIBERS



**15,244**

WEBSITE USERS  
-6.81%

**23,794**

SESSIONS  
+0.9%

**24,000**

PAGE VIEWS  
+0.8%



**67**

SUBSCRIBERS

**18**

NEW SUBSCRIBERS  
+26%

**12.5K**

VIEWS  
+547%

# MARKETING REPORT

With four productions across our 50th anniversary year, Canberra Youth Theatre has led the way in the ACT for home-grown theatre in the uncertain climate of the post-pandemic recovery. We can articulate our point of difference in a competitive market, focusing on the professional-quality experiences led by our Workshop Artists, the pathways we offer to professional practice, and the platform of our productions at Canberra Theatre Centre, supported by professional practitioners. We are committed to representing the 'Voice of Youth' across all our messaging, creating platforms for our young artists to be our strongest advocates.

There is work to be done across the sector to reconnect with audiences, who are going out less, making safer choices for bigger, well-known commercial shows, and increasingly booking last minute (as per overall trends from PAC Australia's National Presenter Outlook survey and Patternmakers' Audience Outlook Monitor). In this climate, we can draw great encouragement from the audience engagement with our 2022 production season.

Very strong audiences for *Dags* reflected the large cast size, the irresistible appeal of 80s nostalgia, and the promise of a fun, exuberant, relatable, entertaining show. Teen horror, *The Initiation*, attracted considerable media coverage and made a strong statement for our values as an organisation: this confronting new work originated in our workshop program, and was developed with the input of our young artists, on the way to its world premiere production. *The Initiation* was written and directed by Canberra Youth Theatre alumni Cathy Petocz, who participated for many years in workshops, and is now one of our Workshop Artists, with an established professional practice.

*How to Vote!* was an epic political satire that filled The Playhouse stage and asserted our position as the premier youth theatre company of the nation's capital. Ironically, we discovered that social media algorithms are very wary of any content that appears overtly political, and some of our online marketing was (mistakenly) censored by Facebook for attempting to manipulate the democratic process! Then again, we did inspire an MLA to quote "Fill the Hole" in a debate in the Legislative Assembly, so maybe they were right...? And for our younger age group, *Soul Trading* connected exceptionally well with younger audiences and their families during the October school holidays.

For workshop programs, we can point to a very strong retention rate at our home base at Gorman Arts Centre, where our weekly Ensembles workshops continue to flourish. We face greater challenges as we seed new relationships with communities at our 'off-site' bases in Belconnen, Gungahlin, and Queanbeyan. This broader community engagement is an ongoing process, working closely with our partner venues to serve the entire Canberra region.



# FINANCIAL REPORT

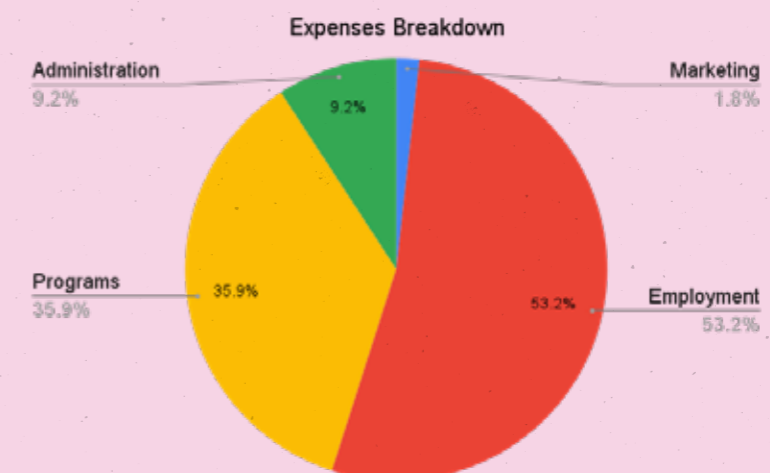
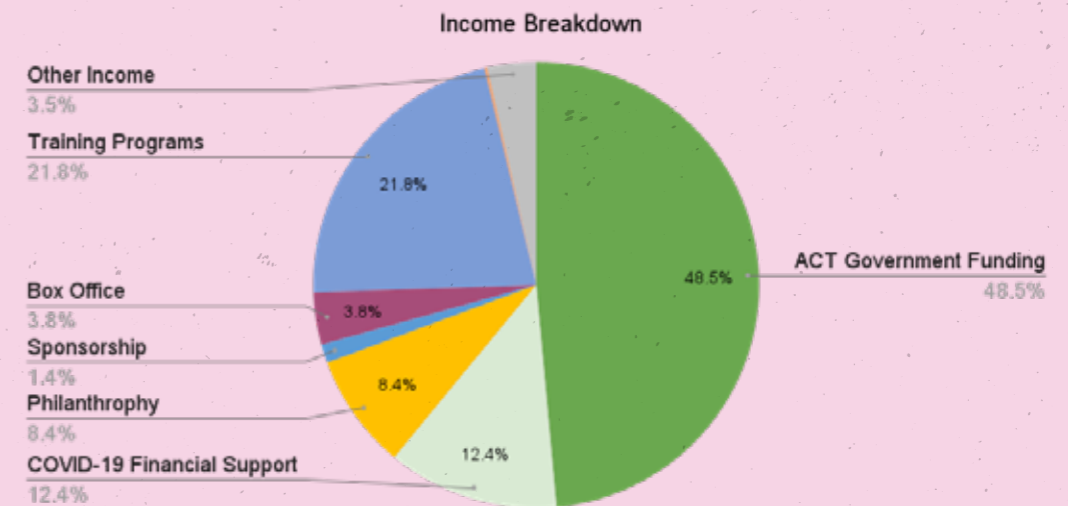
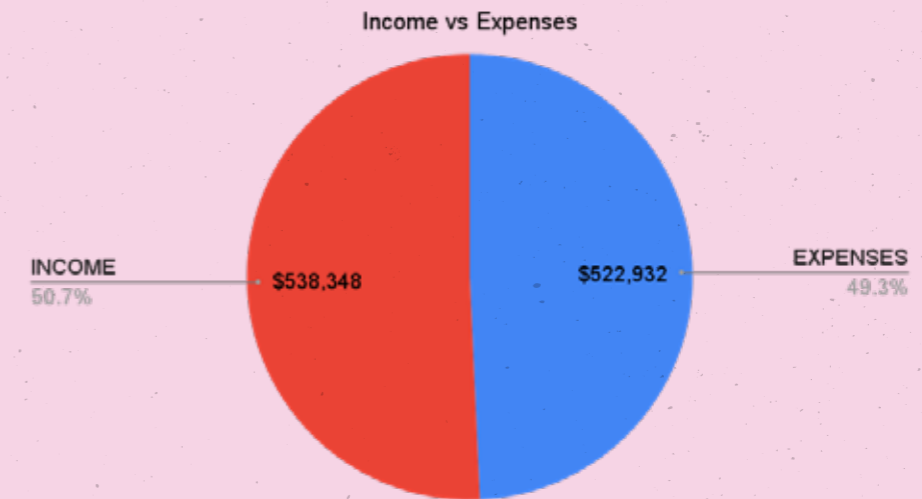
Our Emerging Artist program provides high quality training and development opportunities that bridge the gap between youth arts and the professional sector. In 2022, we built upon relationships with the National University Theatre Society and ShakeSoc at ANU through cross-marketing of events, and will continue to seek more opportunities for engagement through on-campus workshops, and collaboration with ANU's English Department, particularly with a view to connecting with potential playwrights.

The 50th anniversary year has been a useful reminder of the importance of alumni engagement. It is rare for an arts organisation to reach this milestone, and we can point to thousands of people who have had formative experiences at Canberra Youth Theatre, and have wonderful stories to share. The archiving work that was begun in 2021, and continued this year by a research hub of Heritage and Culture students from the University of Canberra, is part of a longer-term process that can allow us develop and sustain stronger connections to a wider alumni network. We recognise that alumni engagement is also the cornerstone of our philanthropic fundraising, and will be an essential strategy to support the long-term future of the organisation.

We can rightly stake a claim to be one of the leading youth arts companies in Australia, and while the pandemic and its after-effects have meant we have had limited interstate engagement, this year we have taken small steps to increase our national profile. In July, Artistic Director & CEO Luke Rogers and Resident Artists Caitlin Baker and Sophie Tallis attended FUSE, a youth arts summit hosted by ATYP in Sydney. We published and distributed scripts of commissioned plays *The Initiation* and *How to Vote!* through Currency Press. And our Emerging Playwright Commission, a nationally significant opportunity for playwrights, is attracting a growing number of applications each year from all over the country.

Revamping all our website content as we approached the end of the year prompted an overdue review of our Search Engine Optimisation, which has since been improved. Once we get people through the door, whether they be audiences or participants, we can feel confident that the quality of the experience we have to offer will keep them coming back. Our goal is to attract people who have never heard of us, working to lower access barriers so that their first step toward us is as easy as possible.

To close 2022, we can reflect on the success of our 2023 Season Launch – our first in-person launch since COVID. This event at Canberra Theatre Centre was a rare occasion that brought together our entire community. It acted as a birthday party for our 50-year anniversary and celebrated our legacy, while looking forward to all our plans for the year ahead. Crucially, an event like this demonstrated to key stakeholders – our community of participants and their families, government, venue partners such as Canberra Theatre Centre and Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres, and sponsors such as Holding Redlich – the breadth, depth and impact of our work. Everyone involved with Canberra Youth Theatre knows the value of what we do. The main role of marketing in an organisation like ours is to let people see it.





# TREASURER'S REPORT

As Treasurer of Canberra Youth Theatre, I am pleased to present the audited financial statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2022.

It was an exciting year as we embraced our 50th Anniversary and celebrated Canberra Youth Theatre's position in the arts and cultural landscape, investing in new works created for and with young people. We faced another year managing the impact of COVID-19 and the difficulties the continued effect of the pandemic has had on the cultural and creative sector. We produced one of our largest artistic programs ever, and I am pleased to report it was another financially sound year closing 2022, with a slight deficit of \$3,613.

The financial outcome for 2022 is a significant achievement and demonstrates the resilience of Canberra Youth Theatre. The challenges faced over the previous few years, continued into 2022, and were met with optimism and flexibility. The core staff, artists, participants and Board continued with enthusiasm to meet the challenges and concerns.

In 2022, we launched the Producers Circle, a philanthropic initiative to help provide financial support for our productions. The donations received through this venture will provide resourcing to continue to create life changing experiences for young people, through the generous support of the members of the circle.

Our Emerging Artist Program offered opportunities to participate in artistic training and creative development, shaped individual artistic practice and built professional networks. This program was made possible thanks to the Jeremy Spencer Broom Legacy. Holding Redlich is proudly partnering with Canberra Youth Theatre over the next three years as the principal sponsor of the Emerging Playwright Commission, offering a major investment towards an emerging playwright to create a new full-length work that brings the voices and stories of youth to the stage. The success of Canberra Youth Theatre can also be attributed to the valuable partnerships and support (including in kind) provided from Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres, Canberra Theatre Centre, and our incredibly supportive community.

In 2022 we received a grant from ActewAGL to provide opportunities for young people to participate in workshops where financial barriers existed, enhancing mental health and wellbeing outcomes.

Revenue increased in 2022 to \$720,849 (2021: \$538,349). The income received from Fees and Services increased to \$205,639 (2021: \$117,254) and income from the ACT Government artsAct Investing Funding contributed \$346,576 (2020: \$261,343). With agreement from artsACT, unspent 2021 funding of \$80k was carried forward and included in this total.

In late 2022 we were advised that Canberra Youth Theatre's ACT Arts Organisation Investment funding application was successful, and will provide essential funding for the next four years 2023-2026. We continued in 2022 to focus on diversifying Canberra Youth Theatre income through Sponsorship and Philanthropic initiatives totalling \$50,100 (2020: \$52,385).

## EXPENSES

Expenses increased in 2022 to \$724,462 (2021: \$532,142). This increase is mostly attributed to an increase in the Artistic Program and Training Program totalling \$333,523 (2021: \$196,742). Employee benefits increased to \$305,353 (2021: \$278,033).

As we moved to the straight-line depreciation method in 2020 the depreciation expense for 2022 is \$265 (2021: \$0), our non-current assets have a written down value of \$1,325.

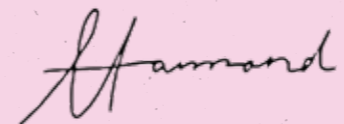
We continued to manage the complexities of adapting to working within a COVID-19 environment, costs associated with embracing an online cloud-based platform increased to \$10,005 (2020: \$2,050). As anticipated the costs of marketing and promotion increased to \$30,655 (2020: \$9,210) and our insurance costs were \$7,536 (2021: \$6,345). Other expenses remained relatively stable throughout 2022.

## FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 31 December 2021, Canberra Youth Theatre was in a strong financial position with short-term liquidity, cash reserves and low levels of debt. Canberra Youth Theatre is well-positioned to meet its short-term commitments and continue being financially viable for the medium to longer terms. The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis, which assumes that Canberra Youth Theatre will be able to meet its debts as and when they fall due. The retained earnings at the end of 2022 are reported as \$267,948 (2021: \$271,561).

## OUTLOOK

The Board is excited about the future and we believe the outlook is positive. Whilst the uncertainty of the ACT Government funding is no longer, and we acknowledge the invaluable commitment and support provided by artsACT, the grant received was significantly less than we had applied for. We are committed to developing and producing home-grown theatre in Canberra, positioning ourselves as the one of the leading creators of new works in the ACT, growing and diversifying our youth engagement initiatives aimed at increasing participation and representation of diverse young people across our programs. There is an imperative to increase revenue through growth in our own source income, the Producers Circle and other philanthropic initiatives will be a priority for 2023.



**Tessa Hammond**  
Treasurer





**CANBERRA YOUTH THEATRE COMPANY INCORPORATED**  
**ABN: 99470855403**  
**FINANCIAL REPORT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

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**CANBERRA YOUTH THEATRE COMPANY INCORPORATED**

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**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**  
**ABN: 99470855403**

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CANBERRA YOUTH THEATRE COMPANY INCORPORATED  
ABN: 99470855403  
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

Your Committee members submit the financial report of Canberra Youth Theatre Company Incorporated for the financial year ended 31 December 2022.

**Board Committee members**

The names of Committee members of Canberra Youth Theatre Company Incorporated throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

Name	Role	Date of Appointment
Karen Vickery	Chair	AGM 2022
Chris Wagner	Deputy Chair	AGM 2022
Peter Hoolihan	Secretary	AGM 2022
Tessa Hammond	Treasurer	AGM 2022
Cassandra Hoolihan	Member	AGM 2022
Celia Rideaux	Member	AGM 2022
Adriana Law	Member	AGM 2022
Ellen Harvey	Member	16 <sup>th</sup> May 2022

Committee members have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

**Principal Activities**

The principal activity of Canberra Youth Theatre Company Incorporated during the financial year was to promote and create theatre with young people that is inspirational, enriching, empowering and innovative.

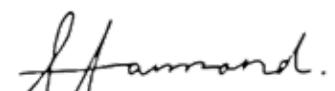
**Significant Changes**

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

**Operating Result**

The **deficit** for the year ended 31 December 2022 amounted to \$3,613 (2021: surplus of \$6,207).

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the Committee.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member

Dated this 31st day of March 2023.

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF  
CANBERRA YOUTH THEATRE COMPANY INCORPORATED  
ABN: 99470855403

**Scope**

I have audited the accompanying financial report of the Canberra Youth Theatre Company Incorporated for the financial year ended 31 December 2022, including the statement of financial position, statement of comprehensive income and statement of cash flows for the year then ended a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information and the statement by Members of the Committee.

**Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report**

The committee of the association is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and has determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, which form part of the financial report, are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991* (ACT) and are appropriate to meet the needs of members. The committee's responsibilities also include designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

**Auditor's Responsibility**

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that I comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal controls relevant to the organisation's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal controls. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Board, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

**Independence**

In conducting my audit, I followed applicable independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

**Basis of Accounting**

Without modifying my opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 of the financial report which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report is a general purpose financial report and has been prepared by the Committee to satisfy the requirements of the reporting obligations to the Canberra Youth Theatre Company Incorporated and to meet the needs of members. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.



STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Auditor's Opinion

In my opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Canberra Youth Theatre Company Incorporated as at 31 December 2022 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the *Associations Incorporated Act (1991)*.



David Perceval  
Fellow of the Institute of Chartered  
Accounts of Australia  
ICAA Member #45109

13<sup>th</sup> March 2023  
Canberra, ACT

	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Revenue</b>		
Audience Sales	68,488	20,270
Fees and Services	205,639	117,254
Sponsorship	50,100	52,385
Donations and Philanthropic Funding	33,674	-
Grants		
- ArtsACT	346,576	261,343
- Other Grants	2,000	-
- ATO Stimulus	-	66,900
Other Income and Interest	14,372	20,197
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>720,849</b>	<b>538,349</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Employee benefits	305,353	278,033
Artist Program	209,244	49,068
Bookkeeping and Audit	7,850	7,030
Training Services	124,279	-
IT & Communication	11,564	10,005
Depreciation expenses	265	-
Banking Fees	1,726	1,189
Rent and Running Costs	12,090	15,376
Insurances	7,536	6,345
Marketing Promo Documentation	30,655	9,210
Office Consumables/Resources	13,901	8,212
Exhibition/Touring	-	147,674
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>724,462</b>	<b>532,142</b>
<b>Net surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>	<b>(3,613)</b>	<b>6,207</b>



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash at Bank	83,948	161,742
Term Deposit	241,200	240,000
Petty Cash	44	45
Trade and other receivables	1,578	-
Rental Bond	6,568	6,568
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>333,338</b>	<b>408,355</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Office Equipment at Cost	20,008	18,418
Less Provisions for Depreciation	(18,683)	(18,418)
Creative Equipment at Cost	3,000	3,000
Less Provisions for Depreciation	(3,000)	(3,000)
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>1,325</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>334,663</b>	<b>408,355</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Sundry Creditors	11,165	10,777
Provision for Employee Entitlements	24,921	7,222
Fees/Grants Received in Advance	30,629	118,795
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>66,715</b>	<b>136,794</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>267,948</b>	<b>271,561</b>
<b>REPRESENTED BY:</b>		
Members Funds at the Beginning of Year	271,561	265,354
Retained earnings	(3,613)	6,207
<b>MEMBERS FUNDS AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>267,948</b>	<b>271,561</b>

CASHFLOW STATEMENT  
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Cash Flows from Operating Activities</b>		
Receipts in the course of operations	629,449	525,722
Interest received	1,656	3,417
Payments in the course of operations	(706,110)	(503,330)
<b>Net cash outflow from operating activities</b>	<b>(75,005)</b>	<b>25,809</b>
<b>Increase in Investing Activities</b>		
Purchase of plant and equipment	(1,590)	-
<b>Net cash outflow from investing activities</b>	<b>(1,590)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year</b>	<b>401,787</b>	<b>375,978</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year</b>	<b>325,192</b>	<b>401,787</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>		
Cash at Bank	83,948	161,742
Term Deposit	241,200	240,000
Petty Cash	44	45
	<b>325,192</b>	<b>401,787</b>



**NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The financial report is a general purpose financial report which has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, Australian Accounting Interpretations and the *Associations Incorporations Act (ACT) 1991*.

The financial report covers the Canberra Youth Theatre Company Incorporated as an individual entity. The Association as an association incorporated in the ACT under the *Association Incorporation Act 1991*.

The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by the economic entity in the preparation of the financial report. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

**Basis of Preparation**

*Reporting Basis and Conventions*

The financial report has been prepared on an accrual basis and is based on historical costs modified by the revaluation of selected non-current assets, and financial assets and financial liabilities for which the fair value basis of accounting has been applied.

**Accounting Policies**

**a. Income tax**

No provision has been made for income tax as the Association is exempt from taxation under Section 50-5 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

**b. Property, Plant and Equipment**

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Where an asset is acquired at no cost, the cost is its fair value as at the date of acquisition

The carrying amount of the assets is reviewed annually by directors to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from these assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows that will be received from the assets employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows is discounted to their present values in determining recoverable amounts.

**c. Depreciation**

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated on a straight-line basis over its useful lives to the Association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The depreciating rates used for each class are:

<b>Class of Fixed Asset</b>	<b>Rates</b>
Plant & Equipment	25%
Theatre Equipment	30%

**d. Financial Instruments**

**Recognition**

Financial instruments are initially measured at cost on trade date, which includes transaction costs, when the related contractual rights or obligations exist.

**e. Impairment of Assets**

At each reporting date, the Association reviews the carrying values of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying value. Any excess of the asset's carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the income statement.

Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the group estimates the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

**f. Employee Benefits**

Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee benefits that are expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus related on-costs. Employee benefits payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits

**g. Provisions**

Provisions are recognised when the Association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result, and that outflow can be reliably measured.

**h. Cash and Cash Equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the balance sheet.

Cash flows are included in the Statement of Cash Flows on a gross basis. The GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

**i. Revenue**

*Grants & Fees*

Government grants and fees are recognised as income on the basis over the periods necessary to match them with the related costs.

The revenue recognised for the ArtsACT grant for 2022 was \$266,576. The total of \$346,576 includes \$80,000 carried forward from prior years.

*Donations*



CANBERRA YOUTH THEATRE COMPANY INCORPORATED  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022  
ABN: 99470855403

Donations revenues are recognised when they are received.

*Interest revenue*

Interest is recognised on an accrual basis.

**j. Goods and Services Tax (GST)**

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the balance sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

Cash flows are presented in the cash flow statement on a gross basis, except for the GST component of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

**k. Comparative years**

Due to the change in the chart of accounts the expenses attributed to Production Services were distributed across other expense accounts in 2021.

CANBERRA YOUTH THEATRE COMPANY INCORPORATED  
STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE

In the opinion of the committee the financial report

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Canberra Youth Theatre Company Incorporated as at 31 December 2022 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, mandatory professional reporting requirements and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Canberra Youth Theatre Company Incorporated will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member

Dated this 31st day of March 2023



# CANBERRA YOUTH THEATRE

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CanberraYouthTheatre

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