

The image shows an outdoor urban scene at night. In the foreground, there are three wooden chairs. The middle chair is draped with bright, crumpled fabric in shades of orange, pink, and red. A blue fabric item lies on the ground in front of the left chair. A small, brown, abstract sculpture sits on the right chair. The background features a dark street with parked cars and trees, illuminated by ambient city lights.

URBAN THEATRE PROJECTS 2013 Artistic Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

URBAN THEATRE PROJECTS' CURRENT BUSINESS PLAN 2012-2014 FOCUSES ON FOUR KEY GOALS:

- Make distinctive new performance works that are nationally and internationally significant, and extend the company's role as a leader in artistic excellence.
- To provide the best conditions for quality art making supporting the development of artists and contemporary performance in western Sydney.
- Ensure artistic vibrancy and financial viability through building on existing relationships and exploring new markets
- Ensure that the company is adequately resourced and operates efficiently and effectively with high standards of governance and accountability

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2013

- Presentation of Ahilan Ratnamohan's *Michael Essien I want to play as you....* at CCLuchbal, Belgium
- Presenting *Life As We Know It* at Campbelltown Arts Centre and Carriageworks
- Presenting *Catalogue of Dreams* at the Canberra Theatre Centre, a commission by the Centenary of Canberra.
- Presenting work-in-progress showing of *Flamingo* at The Junction and Dance 4 in the UK alongside a workshop program
- Research and development of *My Radio Heart* in partnership with NORPA
- Development and production of four new short works for radio by Aboriginal artists as part of B-Side
- Two-week residency for seven artists (six Australian, one international) as part of *Practice & Participate*
- Supporting four residencies throughout the year



PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS



MICHAEL ESSIEN I WANT TO PLAY AS YOU

Image credit: courtesy of the artist

FINAL STAGE REHEARSAL & PREMIERE
SEASON AT CCLUCHTBAL,
ANTWERP, BELGIUM.

KEY ARTISTS

Director: Ahilan Ratnamohan
Co-ordinator: Daisy Wouters
Dramaturg: Kristof Peryn
Co-devisors
performers: Lateef, Nosa, Junior, Praise, Jimmy & Sunday

Rehearsal dates: January
Season dates: 2-8 February
Artist Talk: 7 June, Bankstown Arts Centre

Venue: Cultuur Centrum Luchtbaal, Antwerp

Partners: Cultuur Centrum Luchtbaal, Antwerp City
of Sports' Opening Ceremony &
Keir Foundation

ABOUT THE PROJECT

*You may not see us.
You may not know us.
But we are training every day.
All over Europe, all over the world...*

The financial explosion of football coupled with the growing success of African players in Europe has led to many Africans genuinely believing in football as a way out of poverty. African players are now a commodity perpetually shipped out to Europe, the Middle East and Asia. While the majority of African players displayed by the media are on million-dollar contracts, there is a growing under-class of football-aspirants living in harsh conditions in foreign lands chasing the dream of a decent football contract. There are an estimated 20,000 homeless Africans on the streets of Europe alone.

...'Essien...' is definitely not just a social-artistic production, but a genuine message delivered through a beautiful theatrical form. Still it is above all the energy and joie de vivre of the player that stays with us... Stamp Media

Presented in a warehouse style space, in the framework of Antwerp, European City of Sport, there was a huge buzz at opening night. The audience was almost at capacity and included several artists and producers that Ahil and Daisy had worked hard to attract, as well as friends and family of the performers and a diverse general public.

The hour long presentation was extremely well made and lived and breathed the personalities of the performers who had devised the work over a long period with Ahil. It had all the rawness of their lives and all the confidence

of a well made production. Sophie Travers, Australia Council, IETM Project Director

BACKGROUND

The show was developed over 3 years including research in Africa and Europe, followed by a two creative developments in Antwerp.

During the research phase of the project (2011–2012) Ahilan trained with a group of African migrant footballers in Antwerp. Ahil led a devised physical theatre process that attempted to harness the players' physical prowess and expertise in football to create performance material. The ensemble developed physical and text-based material around the issues of football and migration, particularly in relation to Africa and Europe.

Rather than training as actors, the creation process centred around football — which they live and breath — and the entire physical vocabulary and theatrical language is derived from the game and its culture.

The final performance was devised by the players, using their own stories and experiences and tried to encapsulate the experience of their community — a group of young African men who meet every morning of the week to train in the hope of furthering a football career in Europe.

During 2012 and 2013 Daisy Wouters coordinated and supported Ahil's process, liaised with partners and supported participants. Belgian-based dramaturg Kristof Peryn joined the creative team in late 2012 and was a key support person for Ahilan throughout this final stage development.

An excerpt from the showing can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nORWnLDTkNA&feature=youtu.be>

AUDIENCE

It was difficult to gather detailed audience data for *Michael Essien I want to play as you...* due to the fact that the work was presented internationally in a country where English is not the first language. Data we do have is: total attendance for the public season was 700, at 73% capacity, comprising 50% paid attendance.

The audience was a diverse mix of ages and ethnic backgrounds — the content of the work attracting a younger audience than expected.

The Antwerp Cultural Centres coupled the performance with football free-style workshops bringing the participants in groups to the performances. The attendance of Africans was much higher than usual in Belgium and the performance had an especially strong appeal to the Nigerian community.

MEDIA

The performance drew impressive media coverage with a total of 9 newspaper articles, 3 television segments, 5 online journal articles and 1 radio interview in Belgium, France, England and Australia.

Via social media, the Essien project fan page accumulated 322 fans and the original trailer on YouTube received 2741 views.

FUTURE OF WORK

Since the premiere of this work Ahilan has been invited to present at the London International Festival of Theatre in June 2014.



LIFE AS WE KNOW IT

Image Credit: Heidrun Löhr

FINAL STAGE REHEARSAL & PREMIERE SEASON AT CAMPBELLTOWN ARTS CENTRE AND CARRIAGEWORKS.

KEY ARTISTS

Writer/Director: Rosie Dennis

Performers: Vicki Andrews, Daryl
Cooke, June Hickey, Judy
Murray, Ivan Sevrovic, Jenny
Shillingsworth & Dorothy Weir

Musicians: Matthew Steffen and Toby Martin

Lighting Design: Frank Mainoo

Production Manager: Frank Mainoo & Liz Astey

Design Concept: Rosie Dennis

Set Design: Joey Ruigrok Van Der Werven & David Hawkes

Set Construction: David Hawkes

Stage Manager: Gina Bianco

Rehearsal Dates: St James Anglican Church Hall

Season Dates: Campbelltown Arts Centre: 8–10 March

Carriageworks: 13–16 March

Partners: Campbelltown Arts Centre, Campbelltown
City Council & Working Together in Minto

Comissioned by Campbelltown Arts Centre

BACKGROUND

The Campbelltown suburb of Minto is an extraordinary place, with a rich social and political history. In the last 5 years Minto has been re-thought, re-modelled and socially re-engineered by Governments trying to build diverse and cohesive communities. Rosie Dennis has worked with the communities of Minto over this period of time to produce a body of work that can't be under-estimated in its contribution to national and international contemporary practice. Works such as *Driven to New Pastures* and *MINTO:LIVE* have not only reflected a community back onto itself but have changed the fabric of a community from existing within it.

Writer/director Rosie Dennis has delivered something remarkable, on a number of levels... Crikey

Life As We Know It is the latest in this body of work. It premiered at Campbelltown Arts Centre before a short season at Carriageworks in March 2013.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Bringing together seven senior residents from the Campbelltown suburb of Minto, *Life As We Know It* gives a personal insight into what it's like to be slowing down in a world that is speeding up. Sharing advice on all aspects of suburban life, from gardening to life long companionship, *Life As We Know It* is full of humanity and humour.

Moving poetically from the mundane to the extraordinary *Life As We Know It* shows Rosie Dennis's unique ability to bridge the gap between audiences and artists. Grounded in empathy, this production is characterised through the personal voice of people in their 60's and 70's that is rarely heard first-hand.

...a fantastic performance and I am so proud of the residents and a credit to you for seeing the potential within our seniors and going ahead with the project...
Pamela Ransom, Housing NSW

A highlight of the work was the set design which was a lush green vertical garden (8m x 3m) made from wooden pallets and planted with marigolds, strawberries, herbs and lettuce.

Surely this is what contemporary theatre is demanding of practitioners — to produce work that embraces audiences and values their generative contribution to the art-making process. RealTime

The work sits within a wider context that considers society's changing relationship to our aging population and more specifically shares a personal perspective on what it is like to be growing old in a technology-driven world that is rapidly transforming the way we relate and connect to each other. The later point is particularly relevant given that many older people live on their own and loneliness and isolation are issues they confront on a daily basis. For the *Life As We Know It* ensemble, more than half live on their own in social housing.

PROCESS

Following a four-week creative development in March 2012, Rosie invited professional musicians Toby Martin and Matthew Steffan to join the ensemble and perform live music.

...it's so exciting to be part of something like this – making a show from the very beginning... Daryl Cooke, performer

The creative team and ensemble reconnected at the end of January 2013 for a 6-week part-time rehearsal and final stage development at St James Anglican Church Hall, Minto. During this time the vertical garden was built and planted out on-site by David Hawkes and Rosie Dennis at a rural property in Wedderburn.

At a deeper level it is a gentle provocation, a challenge to assumptions about who should occupy our stages and what stories they should tell. Sydney Morning Herald

Seven local Minto residents were involved in all aspects of making *Life As We Know It*. This included:

- attending all rehearsals during March–April 2012 & Jan–March 2013
- performing the one-hour live performance at Campbelltown Arts Centre and Carriageworks Arts Centre in March 2013
- representing the work in media interviews including print, radio and television
- working in one-on-one sessions with writer/director Rosie Dennis to develop individual monologues
- workshopping and brainstorming themes for the show
- participating in conversations about the set design
- providing feedback on music used in the performance with professional musicians
- actively choosing their own 'costumes'

AUDIENCE

The work played to a sold-out audience at Campbelltown Arts Centre with standing room only and was comprised of predominantly audience from the local area.

The season at Carriageworks was 94% capacity with 54% ticketed. We have limited audience data from the Carriageworks season as we were unable to conduct audience surveys.

MEDIA

The project garnered a range of media including:
Campbelltown Advertiser
Sydney Morning Herald, Spectrum
Alternative Media Group
The Brag
Macarthur Chronicle
Drum Media
Daily Telegraph
Sydney Morning Herald Shortlist
Radio National Weekend Arts
FBi Radio Canvas
ABC 702 Mornings with Linda Mottram
Inner West Courier
Concrete Playground
Concrete Playground Editor's Note
Weekend Sunrise Channel 7 minute story
Crikey.com
RealTime

FUTURE OF WORK

Although not trained performers, the ensemble won over audiences in both Campbelltown and Redfern with their charm and wit. Following the season we had a number of requests for the work to tour regionally in NSW. We remain open to this possibility and have expressed interest in performing the show again to a new audience.

The vertical garden was an overwhelming success. UTP will pursue opportunities to remount the garden and shape a community engagement process with local residents around garden design and installation. The Company is presently in conversation with Blacktown Arts Centre for a project such as this for 2014.

The Company will continue to collaborate with *Life As We Know It* performers Jenny Shillingsworth and June Hickey on two separate projects during 2014/15.



CATALOGUE OF DREAMS

Image Credit: Fred Harden

FINAL STAGE CONSULTATION, REHEARSAL & PREMIERE SEASON

KEY ARTISTS

Co-Directors: Alicia Talbot & Rosie Dennis
Performers: Casey Keed, Jeremy Broom,
Benjamin Slabb & Moya Simpson
Child performers: Mercedes Ellis and Kasey Mitchell
Community Liaison: Tanya Keed
Designer: Imogen Keen
Lighting Design: Daniel McCusker
Production Manager: Gina Bianco
Stage Manager: Samantha Barratt

Rehearsal: 17 June–13 July
Season Dates: 16–27 July

Partners: Canberra 100, Courtyard Studio,
Canberra Theatre Centre

Commissioned by the Centenary of Canberra,
Supported by the ACT Government.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Catalogue of Dreams tells a multi-faceted story of the lives of young people at risk in the ACT, sharing a personal and profound picture of their social realities within a system that does not fit their needs.

Bold, evocative images collide as wannabe kings and make-believe queens jostle for power within their imaginary kingdom. Told with an imaginative and refreshingly honest style, *Catalogue of Dreams* is a street-smart, disturbing and ultimately heartbreaking story about a family caught in their own beautiful chaos.

This new work seeded the creative partnership of Rosie Dennis and Alicia Talbot, working in collaboration with a team of Canberra based artists. Complimentary in style, both Dennis and Talbot share a vision to tell stories of what it is like to live in urban Australia and how this connects with the rest of the world.

PROCESS

A key aspect of co-Director Alicia Talbot's work has been an ongoing engagement with what she refers to as public dialogue — an intensive dialogue process with individuals, organisations and cultural thinkers who have professional and/or lived experience of the subject matter, and work as advisors throughout the process.

Catalogue of Dreams consulted widely with the Fostercare community in Canberra. A total of 29 consultants participated in the consultation process, including 25 adults and 4 children. Over the course of the process there were 7 primary consultation sessions and 4 smaller consultations.

This consultative process involved community consultants and industry professionals attending rehearsals, and responding to material and scenes generated through extensive discussions and long-running improvisations. The sessions were not recorded electronically — notes were taken and made available to consultants and cast members. The consultants' critical and dramaturgical feedback greatly impacted on the believability of the work and brokered a relationship between opinions and observations of real, lived experience and artistic enquiry.

I believed in what you were doing...for us, we were telling our story by being a part of the show, so in the end they can understand. Because our input to it was telling our story and our journey, and then at the end, when them women got it, it was like, well they got our story as well.
— Tanya Keed, Community Liaison

Community Consultant statistics

The organisations represented by consultants included Create, Foster Care Association, Gugan Gulwan, Department of Education, ACT Corrective Services and the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Centre.

- A total of 55% of the consultants identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- The consultants represented a number of language groups and nations including: Wiradjuri, Dughutti, Gamilaroi and Waka Waka. One consultant also identified as Murri and another two identified from far north QLD
- 10% consultants were aged over 55 years
- 31% consultants were aged between 40 and 55 years
- 7% consultants were aged between 25–40 years
- 37% consultants were aged between 15–24 years
- 14% consultants were aged 14 years or under
- 24% were kinship carers
- 41% had experienced of out of home care
- 20% were foster carers
- 24% worked in roles relating to out of home care

[I was] slightly emotional, proud, and also had a slight sense of self-consciousness having seen my ideas applied.
— CJ Community Consultant

I think it's brilliant, I think it really is. Because people sit back... nobody gets up and does anything about it... but to actually see somebody get up and do it, you actually have faith. You think oh well somebody understands where I come from. Somebody out there is really listening to what I'm going through.
— KC Community Consultant

I was interested to see how the show comes together — especially in a cultural capacity, making sure that community were heard and protocols were in place. There were all different cultural aspects to consider and I think Urban Theatre Projects did really well.
— DR Community Consultant

A community consultants' showing was held prior to the opening of *Catalogue of Dreams*, and various consultants commented after opening night that they were surprised how much the work had changed in the last couple of days. People felt that their comments and feedback had been heard and they could see that their input had had an effect on the work.

AUDIENCE

In the intimate courtyard studio *Catalogue of Dreams* was seen by 676 people, the majority (70%) of which were female.

...a very honest, real and raw performance exploring challenging issues of family life... Audience Member

Of the surveyed audience members, 70% liked or loved the work. Given that we were presenting the work inter-state we were pleased to note that 30% of the audience had seen at least one UTP show prior to *Catalogue of Dreams*. Conversely, 70% of audience were seeing an Urban Theatre Projects show for the first time.

...works like Catalogue of Dreams bring hidden stories into the public imagination. I am thinking about fostering a child at the moment, so it resonated really strongly and emotionally for me. It made me reflect on the privilege of my childhood, and how different things are for other children... Audience member

MEDIA

Catalogue of Dreams binds imagination to the limitation of the state, creating a piece on family, identity and belonging as heart-breaking as it is beautiful.
BMA magazine

Co-directors Rosie Dennis and Alicia Talbot have produced a startling and unique look at a confronting urban problem. This is a production to make you think and its strength is in the way it is done. Its running time might be short but there are a lot of good things here to experience and stretch your imagination. Canberra Critics Circle

This is atmospheric stuff... (with) many moments to remember... Canberra Times

Much of the production negates the actor and the theatrical in order to focus on the issue. This is a strength that makes it resemble a kind of installation.
Canberra City News



CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT



FIRST STAGE CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT & WORKSHOP PROCESS, UK

KEY ARTISTS

Lead Artist:	Rosie Dennis
Dates:	The Junction, Cambridge 8–20 April
	Dance 4, Nottingham 25 April–2 May
Partners:	The Junction, Cambridge Dance 4, Nottingham

Flamingo was an Initiative of the IETM-Australia Council for the Arts Collaboration Project.

OVERVIEW

In this two-stage creative development, Rosie Dennis collaborated with members of the local amateur theatrical society through a series of workshops. Workshops focused on simple choreographies and spoken word tasks.

The creative development showing was part gamble, part social experiment, brokering and building a common language and generating material independently and collaboratively. Parallel to the workshops Rosie developed a series of fast-paced, monologues that explored the glamour and greed of casino gambling.

PROCESS

In total Rosie facilitated 12 workshops for amateur theatrical performers and dancers. Residencies undertaken in Cambridge and Nottingham offered different experiences. In Cambridge, Rosie worked with a small group of amateur actors who were

older and quite experienced. The process was rewarding for the actors. Rosie credits this to a mutual respect for each individual practice and a genuine willingness and openness to give this process a go.

I have loved working with Rosie Dennis here in Cambridge. I found the workshops and the whole process a totally freeing experience. It was so easy to trust Rosie as she has an easy and fun way of involving people into her way of working. The way she conveys her skill and imagination meant for me that my senses were constantly being challenged...All in all it has been a fascinating and unique experience and I will be very interested to see how 'Flamingo' as a piece of experimental theatre grows and develops. I am thrilled to have been a part of it.
Anne-Marie Hughes, workshop participant and performer in *Flamingo*.

In Nottingham the workshop process and project was open to amateur actors and contemporary dancers. The group was much younger and had a greater capacity to grasp the conceptual framework and aesthetic of the work. Overall, staging two workshop process in different cities was a useful process in terms of generating and testing material.

Working with Rosie was such a refreshing and nurturing experience. I have taken part in a number of workshops and development processes over the years and right from the get go this felt special. Rosie has a way of drawing out work that you didn't know was in there, of taking your preconceptions and allowing you to leave them behind somewhere. Ella Kent, workshop participant and performer in *Flamingo*.

FUTURE

Further developments of the work will take place at the Company's home in Bankstown 2015.



MY RADIO HEART

Video Still: Samuel James

WORKSHOP PROCESS WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS, AUDITIONS & CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

KEY ARTISTS

Director/Writer: Rosie Dennis
Performers: Mathew Daymond, Lydian Dunbar, Claudie Frock, Zac Mifsud, Leanne Butler, Phoebe Rose & Randolph Reimann
Sound Design: Lawrence English
Co-sound Design: Randolph Reimann
Video Design: Samuel James
Production Manager: Frank Mainoo
Producer (NORPA): Bethwynn Hackett

Dates: 18–30 March
(workshops & creative development)

13–24 May
(workshops & creative development,
auditions)

28 August–7 September
(workshops & creative development)

4–9 November (creative development)
2–7 December (creative development)

Partners: Multi-task, Red Inc, Wilson
Park Public School, See Space

Comissioned by NORPA

BACKGROUND

The seed for *My Radio Heart* came from Tralala Blip band members who began comparing a long list of repetitive tasks that dictated the daily rhythm of their lives and how, with such a strict routine, they might find love.

The notion of disrupting a routine is particularly pertinent for people with a disability who are often unable to break their own patterns and habits as they are reliant on the help and assistance of others to function each day. More so, with such a stringent routine, how do you find love?

Before Rosie Dennis joined Urban Theatre Projects NORPA Artistic Director, Julian Louis, invited her to meet Northern Rivers based band Tralala Blip in 2012 and Brisbane-based sound designer Lawrence English. Intial meetings and a three-day workshop with the band took place whilst Rosie was an independent artist in 2012.

My Radio Heart is now a joint collaboration between UTP and Northern Rivers Performing Arts Centre (NORPA) led by Rosie with a team of regional artists and performers.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The inspiration for the work draws upon Marvel comic book series X-Men, Joy Division's Ian Curtis and the Fibonacci sequence, to tell a love story for the 21st Century. The final work combines cinematic audio-visuals along with punk rock, electronica and country and western music to create a breathtaking fantasy world where love triumphs.

WORKSHOP PROCESS

During 2013 Rosie Dennis with Lawrence English, Randolph Reimann, Phil Blackman and Zeb Schultz led a series of professional development workshops in sound, dance and video for more than 50 people living with a disability in regional NSW including 14 students from Wilson Park Public school. The workshops took place over two distinct blocks in March and May 2013 and culminated in a small showing at SeeSpace, Lismore for partners and key stakeholders.

Following on from the May block, Rosie Dennis and Phil Blackman continued to work with Wilson Park Public school. The partnership with the school strengthened over the course of the year and the students became an integral part to the *My Radio Heart* story. With the support of a dedicated team of teachers, we were able to work with the students, not only teaching them new choreographies but also including them in the narrative of the show.

The school principal, Helen Rae, recognised *My Radio Heart* as an unique opportunity for the students to be part of a local art-making process which would not only provide a different experience for the students but also have a national reach.

Running parallel to the workshop process was an intensive performance-making process with the band during March and May which focused on basic improvisation and vocal techniques and task based exercises to build performance stamina and focus. Many of these tasks focused on building content through patterns and repetition.

There were definite challenges during this process including band member Leanne Butler no longer being able to participate in the project due to her declining mental health. This put a strain on developing content as the final performance ensemble was not confirmed until the August block of creative development.

The design and aesthetic of the work took shape during the May block of development — a simple three walled white box which would double as the surface for a three channel video projection that became integral to the visual narrative of the work. Knowing the role video would play in the final production, we invited video artist Samuel James to join the team from August.

We held an 'open studio' at the end of the November block which was attended by workshop facilitators, the school and the NORPA Board.

The creative development 'open studio' for My Radio Heart on Saturday was fantastic and I am sure will lead to an amazing production that will engage so many in our community — well done to all on the very talented creative team and we look forward to the evolution of this important production in our Generator project.
Andrew Binns, Chair NORPA

THE FUTURE

Following the December block, Rosie finalised the draft script for February 2014 rehearsals. During this time a seamstress was engaged to finish costumes, and Samuel James and Rosie worked on the visual/video content.

The final show was presented at NORPA and Bankstown Arts Centre in March and April 2014 respectively.



COMMISSIONS



THE RECEPTION RESIDENCY

Image Credit: Heidrun Löh

ARTIST LED COMMISSION - KATIA MOLINO WITH THE BANKSTOWN LAPIDARY SOCIETY

KEY ARTISTS

Writer/Performer: Katia Molino
 Performer: Philip Mills
 Production Manager: Gina Bianco

Residency: March-May
 Public presentation: 7 June

Partners: Bankstown Lapidary Society

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The *Reception Residency* is a commission for an independent artist to collaborate with a local community group to develop a one-off performance or installation. UTP acts as a broker, providing an introduction between a professional artist (or group of artists) and a community group from Bankstown LGA. As a model, the *Reception Residency* allows UTP to cross-fertilize audiences for niche live performance.

For 2013 we invited Katia Molino to build a relationship with the Bankstown Lapidary Society.

Between March and July 2013 Katia regularly met with members of the Bankstown Lapidary Club to research and develop *Inclusions* – a one-off performance lecture. Based at Bankstown Arts Centre, the Lapidary Club has a history dating back to 1964 and today has an active membership with groups meeting almost every day of the week.

[it] was a very special and relaxed project to be part of. I like that it was up to me to decide what to do artistically...and that UTP did the groundwork and set up and left the artist to do the rest and be creative.

Katia Molino

The Lapidary Society reported that they were extremely happy with the outcome. This response was a confirmation that small in-house collaborative projects with other resident companies are a positive step forward in forging relationships and building mutual respect for the diverse artistic practices taking place within Bankstown Arts Centre.

FUTURE

Discussions are currently underway with Katia Molino for a performance event in which all three works are presented as part of UTP's 2015 program. The working title for this project is: *Animal, Vegetable, Mineral*. The curatorial objective is to program three mini performance lectures all of which have been made in collaboration with local experts, hobbyists and enthusiasts alongside each other in a single night of performance, thus embracing the opportunity to cross-fertilize audiences from non-arts backgrounds who have been integral in the making of the work.

AUDIENCE

The Lapidary Society embraced the work and not only attended the live performance, but also requested an additional performance for their members.

FAST & FURIOUS WEEK OF WRITING FOR RADIO FOR EMERGING INDIGENOUS WRITERS

KEY ARTISTS

Writers:	Marley Nipps, Colin Kinchela, Katherine Beckett & Travis Cardona
Facilitators:	Nakkia Lui, Andrea James, Janice Muller and Rosie Dennis
Residency:	March–May
Recording Session:	7 June
Partners:	Koori Radio

BACKGROUND

B-side is a new addition to Urban Theatre Projects' yearly program. We recognise that more of our audience want their 'art on demand'. In response to this growing trend we have created *B-side* – a podcast channel on the UTP website broadcasting short radio plays written and performed by Aboriginal artists.

During 2013 we supported four Aboriginal artists.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

B-side takes place in 3 stages.

Stage 1: Over the course of a week, four Aboriginal artists at various stages in their career write a new short monologue or duologue for radio. Within the week-long intensive the artists are offered four workshops led by industry professionals as a means to inspire and challenge their own writing process.

Stage 2: *B-side* writers (and performers) record their works at Koori Radio.

Stage 3: The works are edited, post produced and broadcast live on Koori Radio and available for download on UTP's *B-side* podcast channel.

These little radio plays have been really well produced and the partnership with Gadigal Radio seems like it was a good one. Andrea James, facilitator

The project gave 14-year old Marley Nipps the opportunity to work alongside and learn from three emerging writers. At times Marley felt a little out of his depth, but with support and leadership from Travis Cardona, Marley crafted a delicate and vulnerable piece of writing about a young boy's experience of witnessing the wilderness being decimated by hunters.

Katie Beckett used the week-long residency to craft two scenes from a larger body of work — *It's Just Dad and Me* — which draws on the writers' memories of what it was like being black and living in a redneck country town before moving to the big smoke.

Travis Cardona wrote two parts to a web series called *Dave* — a funny and candid exploration of a young man's sub-conscious thoughts and insecurities in relation to dating.

Colin Kinchela tackled the awkward theme of attending a highschool reunion in a small town in QLD and penned a first draft of a poetic text.

I was very impressed by the writing and the actors. Koori Radio needs more of this kind of thing and I would be interested in looking into how we can develop more.
Khi-Lee Thorpe, Blackchat Koori Radio

THE FUTURE

Urban Theatre Projects is committed to producing *B-side* for three years. Podcasts will be made available on our website and broadcast on Koori Radio during 2014. Following the 2014 *B-side* session we will seek to create a podcast channel through i-tunes.



RESIDENCIES

UTP has a demonstrated track record in supporting young and emerging artists to develop their own aesthetic and voice within a well supported artistic and producing environment. During 2013, the Company supported 3 *SPACE* Residencies, and a research & development project for 7 artists *Practice & Participate*.



PRACTICE & PARTICIPATE

Image Credit: Jagath Dheeraseskara

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT IN BANKSTOWN FOR SEVEN ARTISTS WORKING ACROSS ARTFORMS IN RESIDENTS' FRONT & BACKYARDS

KEY ARTISTS

Curator:	Rosie Dennis
Artists:	Nicole Barakat, Alwin Reamillo, Vicki Van Hout, Joey Ruigrok van der Werven, Simone O'Brien, Toby Martin & Diego Bonnetto
Writers:	Mohammed Ahmed, Rebecca Conroy & Gaelle Sobott
Documentation:	Fadle El Harris and Jagath Dheeraseskara
Residents:	David Cranston, Frances Panapoulos, Betty Giddy, Michael Kamaledine, Rose Balamoan, Ivan & Mitra
Production Manager:	Gina Bianco
Dates:	9–25 October

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Over two and half weeks UTP facilitated PRACTICE & PARTICIPATE — a series of residencies for seven artists which took place in the front and back gardens of six Bankstown residents.

The project was an opportunity for local residents to be part of a creative process, and for residents and artists to share personal perspectives about broader social and cultural issues — or to just have a yarn and for UTP to get to know the neighbourhood.

PROCESS

In August 2013 we put a call out within the Bankstown local area seeking front yards for an art project via social media, direct mail, bill postering, letterbox dropping, door knocking and the local newspaper.

In total we received 14 responses from local residents who offered their private garden for the project. We chose six, based on location and proximity to each other.

Once the sites were secured, the artists were introduced to their 'hosts' and initial ideas sketched out. In the lead up to the residency UTP purchased and repaired 12 bicycles and on day one of the residency, each artist was given a bicycle to make travel around the area easier and avoid the use of cars.

We are introduced to Uncle Cole, one of Bankstown's Aboriginal Elders. The Scotsman tells us how he's lived here his whole life. That might be around eighty years. Uncle Cole has been here for sixty thousand years. He welcomes us to his home too, Bankstown, and welcomes us to his home, Australia. He says, 'All this around here is the Darug Country. This is home of the Darug Nation.' What a poetic way to start a project about coming into someone's community. Residents, colonial and indigenous, ancient and modern, black and white, both saying, 'Welcome'.

Isn't this the kind of Australia we all imagine? The kind of Australia we all hope for and believe in?

— Mohammed Ahmad, writer (excerpt from larger text)

Integral to the process were a series of lunches which were attended by the residents and artists. It was during these lunches that the larger group could have an open dialogue about process and art-making and share some of their experiences.

The project concluded with an informal artist talk and sharing which started at Michael Kamaledine's (site for Vicki Van Hout) and took the 40+ audience to Frances Panapoulos (site for Nicole Barakat) before finishing at Betty Giddy's (site for Alwin Reamillo). The artist talk was warmly received by industry and local residents.

THE ARTISTS AND THE RESIDENTS

Textiles artist Nicole Barakat who was hosted by Frances Panapoulos worked with the households' recycling to begin to make small-scale plants from plastic and tetra-packs. UTP has invited Nicole to continue working on her small-scale plants and open her process out to the wider Bankstown community through a series of workshops early 2014 with the view to creating a large-scale public installation.

...I absolutely loved being part of it and found that these opportunities always help me explore and develop my practice further... Nicole Barakat, artist

Diego Bonnetto was in residence with Rose Balamoan and her family. During the residency Diego continued his practice of exploring cultural identity through people's relationships to different species of plants. In the case of Rose's property he set up a mini-installation with signage and information about the weeds in her front garden.

Designer and director Joey Ruigrok Van Der Wervern and performance maker Simone O'Brien were in residence with David Cranston. Together they set-up a trophy garden and asked people to donate a trophy and a story/memory.

The project was memorable for me in that my home became somewhat of a meeting place for passers by of all backgrounds and occupations. These passers by were invited to come in, sit down and tell the stories of their life to the two resident artists "Joey and Simone". They did so willingly and it seemed to me such a wonderful way for people to get to know each other better.

David Cranston, Bankstown resident, Practice & Participate partner

The process was unfamiliar to musician Toby Martin. However he fully embraced the residency at Ivan & Mitra's vacant, ghostly house. Toby will continue to collaborate with UTP to write a series of songs that capture and reflect the rich cultural diversity and vibrancy of the suburb.

I loved working on P&P. I wrote a few songs I'm really happy with and have lots of ideas bubbling away. I think it was a brilliant project actually — really well curated and with real, profound, interactions between artists and Bankstown people. Toby Martin, artist

Filipino artist Alwin Reamillo moved between the Arts Centre and Betty Giddy's house. Betty is a 78 year old tour guide who has lived in Bankstown for more than 40 years. Alwin used the two and half weeks to build a prototype of a bamboo house out of found materials. One of the highlights of this project was stopping traffic to carry the house down Northam Avenue over an 800m distance and installing it in the front yard of Betty's. We have commissioned Alwin to build the house to scale out of repurposed bamboo with local residents and will premiere this work in early 2015.

Choreographer and performer Vicki van Hout worked tirelessly to find order within the chaos of Michael Kamaledine's front yard. During the residency Vicki made a short dance video and created a small mangrove installation using twigs from the property and coloured straws from Michael's corner store. It was an extremely productive time for Vicki and at the end of the residency both Michael and Vicki gained a mutual respect for each other's culture and beliefs.

...strange we judge a book by it's cover quickly...you knowthose artists, I wouldn't give them 10 seconds of my time, but when you're behind the counter and they come in and have a chat to you, you're obliged to speak to them and then I realised I was actually at a loss not knowing them...they've (the artists) opened a new chapter in my life in some of the things I couldn't see before...I'd love to do it all again... Michael Kamaledine, local resident

During the residency, Michael's property became a central meeting place for the artists. UTP will continue to collaborate with Michael on future projects.

DOCUMENTATION

Our vision is that *Practice & Participate* is a three-year project held at various sites within the Bankstown LGA. At the end of the three years UTP will publish a best practice compendium which documents the process and project. For this reason the Company has invested in three critical writers (Michael Mohammed Ahmad, Rebecca Conroy and Gaelle Sobott), a documentary filmmaker (Fadle El Harris) and documentary photographer (Jagath Dheeraseskara) all of whom were asked to record individual responses to the process and project.

FUTURE

The project was extremely successful for both the artists, the residents and UTP. It has ignited many new relationships for the Company in the local area with business, council and community. As mentioned above, this is a three-year initiative. In 2014 UTP will negotiate a series of simultaneous residencies for artists with small business owners in Bankstown CBD.

SPACE

OPEN CALL FOR SPACE-ONLY RESIDENCIES
HOSTED BY URBAN THEATRE PROJECTS @
BANKSTOWN ARTS CENTRE

KEY ARTISTS

Residency Artists: 1. Arab Theatre Studio
2. Nick Power
3. Johnny Marigliano

Dates: 7–23 May
29 July–11 August
19 August–7 September

OVERVIEW

The 2013 _SPACE residency program was very successful. In total we offered three residencies to artists working in theatre and contemporary dance. The _SPACE Residency offers access to our Rehearsal Studio 1 at Bankstown Arts Centre, 20 hours technical and administrative support and dramaturgical support with UTP's Artistic Director.

In 2013 we supported:

BURRA WA BA'ED by Alissar Chidiac and Saleh Saqqah which explored what lies beneath the heavy stigma that is associated with cancer. During the residency they developed the script which was performed in Arabic and English.

It was beautifully written and performed well. It was hard to watch at times. I knew so many people in the audience and also knew that many didn't know my story. But it felt like it was everyone's story. Many stories in one. I

*recognised so much of my own.. words that I used to tell me the story of my father. Its a shame that I couldn't bring him with me to watch. You know what he would've said....
yen3an abuki kalb!!!*

Audience member, Cancer & Stigma showing

The project was supported by The Multicultural Health Service (South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Area Health Service).

THE BEDBUG LIST is rooted in a collection of memories and stories of crime from 1970s Brooklyn by Johnny Marigliano. Johnny and his team used the two-week residency to physicalise the script and incorporate music and video elements.

CYPHER: Nick Power and collaborators undertook a two-week creative development of a new dance theatre work titled *Cypher* working with French choreographer Anne Nguyen exploring 'the hip-hop ritual'.

All three _SPACE residencies culminated in showings to invited audiences.

FUTURE

We will continue the _SPACE residency program in 2014 and have offered Alissar Chidiac and Sala Saqqah use of the space during 2014 to establish an Arabic theatre ensemble.

EMERGING INDIGENOUS PRODUCER CO-HOSTED WITH BELVOIR THEATRE

BACKGROUND

In 2012 Urban Theatre Projects and Belvoir agreed to jointly provide an 18-month mentorship to an emerging Indigenous theatre producer. The mentorship was designed in collaboration with the successful candidate to meet their specific skills development requirements and interests. The program also focused on the development of key competencies and experience necessary for a career in producing.

The successful candidate, Louana Sainsbury, worked across Belvoir's program for 9 months and then Urban Theatre Projects' program for the following 9 months. Louana gained experience across a range of crucial producing areas including artist liaison, project management and delivery, production, presentation, touring and budgeting.

FINAL STAGE

From April to October 2013, Louana was employed as Program Coordinator with the company, working closely with the General Manager, Artistic Director/CEO and Production Coordinator across several projects.

Louana found the experience challenging at times as she took on greater responsibilities in her role than she had previously done with Belvoir and Sydney Opera House. This gave her a realistic insight into the differences in structure of a small-medium theatre company and the specificities and requirements of producing a work for UTP.

Catalogue of Dreams was the key project that she was responsible for co-ordinating with the Company as part of the Centenary of Canberra celebrations in July. The project was a contemporary theatre work co-created by Rosie Dennis and Alicia Talbot in consultation with community and young people in Canberra with experiences of the foster and kinship care systems.

As Project Coordinator, she stepped into the role as the on-the-ground support for the team, travelling to Canberra weekly to liaise with community and organisations and coordinating consultation sessions and meetings.

She worked closely with the Community Liaison, Tanya Keed, on strategies to engage the community and ensure the voices of the consultants were considered during the process of creating the work. She also collected and collated the data from these community consultations into a report for the Company that was included in the submission of the final report of the project.

In addition to this community engagement, Louana also worked with the Artistic Director/CEO and General Manager to implement marketing and niche marketing strategies for the project.

Following *Catalogue of Dreams*, Louana worked on *B-Side*, our week-long intensive writer's lab for four emerging Indigenous writers in Sydney, resulting in a monologue for radio broadcast.

Finally, Louana undertook an international professional development trip to the Origins Festival of First Nations and the Indigeneity conference *In The Balance: Indigeneity, Performance, Globalisation*. She attended with Tiddas Take Back, a collective of five Aboriginal women from NSW. The group was mentored by Merindah Donnelly from Market Development at the Australia Council for the Arts, and hosted by Michael Walling, Artistic Director for the Origins Festival.

The trip allowed Louana to develop her knowledge of the international arts sector, increasing her experience and knowledge of industry sector programming and presenting, developing international connections and collaborations, and strengthening her critical writing skills through practical application and peer review. It also enabled her to expand and deepen her cultural and professional engagement with Indigenous artists and companies globally.

GOAL & KPI MATRIX - 2013 RESULTS

Goal	KPI	ACTUALS 2012	2013 BIZ PLAN 2013	2013 REVISED DEC 2012	2013 REVISED DEC 2013	2014 TARGET
Make distinctive new performance works that are nationally and internationally significant, and extend the company's role as a leader in artistic excellence.	Present at least 6 new works over the triennium	1 <i>Buried City</i>	2	4	3 - <i>Essien</i> - <i>Life As We Know It</i> - <i>Catalogue of Dreams</i>	4 - <i>My Radio Heart</i> - <i>Democratic Garden</i> - <i>Close Encounters x 2</i>
To provide the best conditions for quality art making supporting the development of artists and contemporary performance in western Sydney.	Support 6 research and creative development processes of new works by artists from and working in Western Sydney during the triennium	2	2	3	5 - <i>Space residency x 3</i> - <i>Reception Residency</i> - <i>Practice & Participate</i>	7 - <i>Space residency x 3</i> - <i>Reception Residency</i> - <i>Practice & Participate</i> - <i>The Tribe</i> - <i>Bankstown Bayanihan</i> <i>Spirit Hopping House</i>
	Build audience base and profile for UTP works at Bankstown Arts Centre	Build towards target	Build towards target	Build towards target	Build towards target	Build towards target
	Resource and implement Creative Associate role	Full time	Full time	Position no longer exists	Position no longer exists	Position no longer exists
Ensure artistic vibrancy and financial viability through building on existing relationships and exploring new markets	Increase paid attendance at self-presented work by 5% over the triennium	54%	55%	55%	41%	59%
	Secure 2 tours within Australia during the triennium	0	1	1	0	1 <i>Future Present</i>
	Secure 1 co-production in Australia over the triennium	1 <i>Buried City</i>	2	2	3 - <i>Life As We Know It</i> - <i>Catalogue of Dreams</i> - <i>My Radio Heart</i>	1 <i>Democratic Garden</i>
	Secure 2 international residencies or co-productions over the triennium	1 <i>Essien</i>	1	1	2 - <i>Flamingo residency (Cambridge & Nottingham)</i>	0
Ensure that the company is adequately resourced and operates efficiently and effectively with high standards of governance and accountability	Maintain a healthy accumulated reserve as a proportion of turnover over the triennium	44%	19%	20%	46%	38%

