

2022

Annual Report

Utp



Who we are

“I love Utp because the company is committed to reflecting Australia as it really is.”

Daniel Browning
Blak Box Curator/ABC Arts journalist

Acknowledgment of Country

In 2022 we have worked on the lands of the Darug people at Utp's home base at Bankstown Arts Centre. We would like to acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded and we are un-invited guests on this land. We thank all the First Nations people for their ongoing care and custodianship of the land, waters and air.

About us

Utp is leading a not so quiet revolution of art that is locally responsive and internationally relevant. We ask difficult questions, we listen, and we respond with creative programs that change the world.

We create, support and facilitate impactful and meaningful experiences. Our projects are self-determined and led by the artists and communities we work with. We engage in long term commitments with time for dreaming and relationship-building. At times we use the theory of change methodology, defining the big picture issue and then figuring out what steps we might take to address through the expanded field of creativity.

We believe in the radical accessibility of the arts. We want creative and critical thinking to be available to everyone. Radical accessibility is a direct response to our shared responsibility to clear the pathways to a creative life – particularly for people who have been or still are most acutely affected by COVID-19, people from Western Sydney, people experiencing financial hardship, people from culturally diverse backgrounds, First Nations people of Australia, people living with disability and young people.



Image credit : Dorcas Tang
Utp Rising

Artistic Director/CEO message

In 2022 we strove to find answers to difficult questions. Questions like: What have we learnt about equity and justice or the lack-there-of, in the last two years? What have we learnt about access? What can we take with us from these extraordinary times in order to create a better sector/community/society?

We have developed an annual framework of provocations/questions, generated from our internal Big Conversations series initiated by Kiri Zakinthinos. This has strengthened the overall artistic and organisational direction. In 2022 our provocation, *Radical Accessibility*, seeded a multi-year essay partnership with Sydney Review of Books and will continue to resonate and unsettle our status quo for years to come through programming and organisational change.

Radical Accessibility is a direct response to our shared responsibility for equal access to art and ideas – particularly for First Nations people, those from Western Sydney, young people, those experiencing financial hardship, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people who live with disability.

Mentoring from Jackie Bailey from BYP Group has strengthened Utp's evaluation strategies to ensure continued learning, reflection and evolution of best practice. We follow a Theory of Change methodology that takes place formally at the beginning, with evaluation at middle and end of each project life cycle. Each evaluation process is bespoke to the project and can include an audience survey, participant interviews, marketing reports, artist debriefs and always includes a team 'deep dive.'

As you read the subsequent pages of this report, you will see 2022 was a very big year, big ideas – captured in the online international conversation series *for the circular movement of knowledge*, big outcomes like the in-theatre performance of *M'ap Boulé* by Nancy Denis and big impact with projects like the community generated *15 Cigarettes*.

I want to take this moment to thank the Utp team, the Board and our financial and non-financial supporters. Years like this only happen with thoughtful collaboration with a dedicated community of people. I want to acknowledge Kiri Zakinthinos for her contribution as General Manager. Kiri helped steer us through the uncertain days, months and years of the COVID-19 pandemic with care and diligence. We are excited to work alongside Kiri as the new CEO of Curious Works.

2022 has been defined by self-determination, care and reciprocal trust, with learnings to take into the future:

- creative problem solving for effective use of resources backed by strong governance that balances risk and responsive innovation
- agility for a high degree of artistic achievement despite challenges
- care for team, artists, and community in line with First Nations Protocols and cultural safety. This care includes the provision of free access to mental health Employee Assistance Program for all artists, contractors and team.

From this foundation we thrive.

Dr Jessica Olivieri

Chair Message

‘Western Sydney is a beginning rather than the end.’ So says writer Sheila Ngoc Pham in her essay ‘Western Sydney is dead, long live Western Sydney!’, describing both the area and the idea of it as a place of possibilities. Pham’s essay is one in a series commissioned by Utp in 2022 in partnership with Western Sydney University’s online Sydney Review of Books.

As we began to emerge - but not quite - from years of COVID lockdowns, the possibilities of what stories can be told and how they can be accessed was evident in Utp’s programming. Responsive, urgent and as true as ever to Utp’s founding ethos of questioning what art can be and who it can be for, we saw the creation of new artistic experiences and exchanges.

We enjoyed welcoming friends old and new to two big performances. *Blak Box: Precarities* at Barangaroo’s epic Cutaway space, a magnificent line-up of contemporary First Nations artists and performers curated by Daniel Browning. And the phenomenally talented Nancy Denis’ *M’ap Boulé* sharing her personal story through song at Eternity Playhouse in Darlinghurst Theatre. And multi-national artistic conversations took place online in *for the circular movement of knowledge*.

The number and quality of projects delivered by Utp in 2022, despite having less revenue and with a scrupulous management of resources, is commendable. Utp remains committed to using its financial resources to sustain its level of operations to continue supporting arts workers. The organisation is well-positioned to navigate through this ongoing challenging period and look to a bright future and to support a vibrant local cultural sector.

Over the last two years, Utp has built reserves and intends to invest them in the sustainability and development of the company as we continue through challenging times into 2023 and 2024. This will allow us to maintain our place in the arts ecosystem and to prepare for ambitious programming, increased operational costs and leadership innovation. We have developed a Reserves Policy to ensure we are strategic and sustainable with this investment.

Thank you to Utp’s collaborators and funders. We welcomed the Neilson Foundation’s new multiyear funding and a new fundraising opportunity with the Sydney Community Foundation’s initiative *Be Kind Sydney*. Locally, thank you to Bankstown Art Centre, Canterbury-Bankstown Council and the Western Sydney University. Thanks to the previous NSW government for their ongoing and project support, and the previous Federal government for project support. Utp welcomes the new National Cultural Policy and its vision that puts First Nations first.

To Jessica Olivieri and the Utp staff for their unwavering commitment and agility, all while experiencing the cumulative impacts of the pandemic in yet another year of uncertainty, but with moments of confidence and joy.

I thank everyone who makes Utp what it is through their essential contributions - the artists, creatives, staff and Board. And each of our wonderful funders and treasured supporters who give to their capacity.

To our audiences - everyone who attended a Utp performance, read an essay or engaged with an online work in 2022. We hope it inspired you, broadened your view of the world and started new conversations.

Michelle Hanna
Chair, Utp

2022 Snapshot

22

creative developments supported

9

performances presented

153

artist collaborators

\$164,000

fees paid to creative professionals

\$1.2m

turnover

25

workshops delivered

8,230

audience reached (newsletter, social media, audience)

2022 Snapshot

1

ensemble
in residence

2

industry panels
facilitated

4

student internships
facilitated

8

emerging artist
mentorships supported

70%

of programs took place
in Western Sydney

2022 Programs

PRESENTATION

M'AP BOULÉ

2022 saw the realisation of a 4 year development with an in-theatre premiere of Nancy Denis' *M'ap Boulé*. This is a play with songs that tells the story of a child born of immigrants growing up in a country called Australia. It is an expression of art inspired by the Ancestors of Nancy Denis and their stories. Produced with the help of Carl St. Jacques, Anthea Williams, Victoria Falconer, Mick Stuart and Kween G.

A focus on reaching new audiences

With the community at large still reeling from the COVID pandemic, we paid particular attention to generating audience for this project. This was the first time Utp worked with a community liaison in order to make sure we reached the audience reflected on the stage. In this case, an intersectional audience of African diaspora communities, queer and disability communities were in attendance. By engaging Gabriella Appau, we were able to secure an interview on the popular podcast, *Fufu & Tibs* and directly invite members of the African Australian communities in Sydney.

Dates 6, 7 & 9 December 2022

Venue Eternity Playhouse, Darlinghurst Theatre

Lead Artist, Writer and Performer: Nancy Denis
Composer: Carl St. Jacques
Dramaturg: Liza-Mare Syron
Director: Anthea Williams
Musical Director: Victoria Falconer
Musician: Mick Stuart
Performer: Kween G
Costume and Set Designer: Maitê Inaê
Lighting Designer: Karen Norris
Lighting Operator: Annika Bertinat
Sound Engineer: Annika Unsen
Community Engagement: Gabriella Appau

Credits



Image credit: Intwari

“Congratulations to all involved, big thank you to Nancy for sharing her story and being so generous with the audience to take us with her - what a talent! All artists on stage were brilliant and so supportive of each other. Lovely to watch and feel a part of.”

Audience Member

REVIEWS

M'ap Boulé received several rave reviews. We were conscious to invite critics of colour to undertake these reviews. You can see the insightful approach these critics have taken.

“Nancy Denis is a warrior, not only of circumstance, but also of heritage. A woman of Haitian background, a fighting spirit thrives in her blood. Generations of colonial history have not been able to subdue Denis, as she declares in her show *M'ap Boulé*, or “I’m On Fire” in English. Featuring stirring music composed by the recently departed Carl St. Jacques, *M'ap Boulé* is a passionate exhibition of one woman’s joy and pain, and a poignant autobiography by a young artist with a lot to say.”

Suzy Wong for Suzy Go See



★★★★★
 “In *M'ap Boulé*, Denis invites us into a space where she is free – and in the process, she gives us the permission to be free ourselves. It doesn’t matter who you are or where you come from, Denis wants you to know that you will be healed.”

Vaanie Krishnan
 Time Out

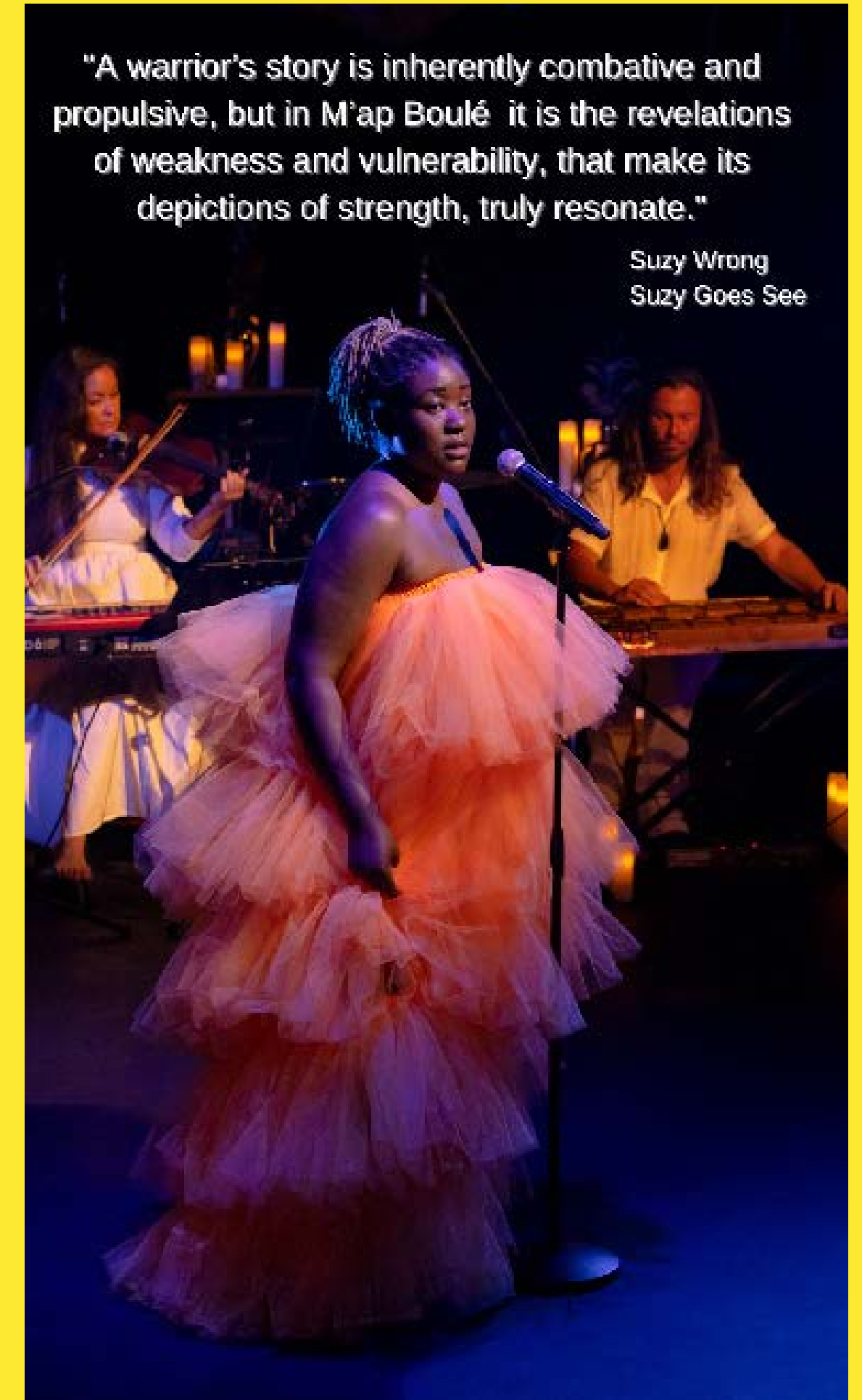
Image credit: Jacquie



★★★★★
 “Denis has that rare gift of irresistibility: the spotlight loves her and so does her audience. She trades jokes and asides with us, and with the performers onstage with her – musical director Victoria Falconer at the keys; Mick Stuart on the drums and polyimba; and Kween G Kibone, the hip-hop artist and performer whose affirmations, asides, and bars serve to elevate and navigate the show from song to song, moment to moment.”

Shamim Razavi, John Shand and Cassie Tongue
 Sydney Morning Herald

Image credit: Jacquie Manning



“A warrior’s story is inherently combative and propulsive, but in *M'ap Boulé* it is the revelations of weakness and vulnerability, that make its depictions of strength, truly resonate.”

Suzy Wong
 Suzy Goes See

Image credit: Jacquie Manning

PRESENTATION

BLAK BOX: PRECARITIES

Precarities asked: How do we navigate a world in flux?

What do the voices of First Nations artists, who have collectively experienced a cataclysm, tell us about the way forward?

Precarities was a hybrid deep listening experience featuring some of Australia's best First Nations artists working in the fields of music and spoken word, in its world premiere season.

This was no typical *Blak Box* because these are not typical times – this iteration is live and external, bringing our artists together for two nights in active collaboration in a real-life echo chamber of the Cutaway, lit with soft amber and sky blue by lighting designer Karen Norris. This outdoor approach was in direct response to the ongoing impact of COVID, in particular on immune compromised communities. Rather than sitting in the intimate architecture of the *Blak Box*, the box was opened out to fill the Cutaway at Barangaroo.

The beating heart of this deeply resonant and stridently political sonic artwork is the possum skin drum, tuned to the urgent sound of one of Shakespeare's most quoted soliloquies - translated into Wiradjuri.

Precarities combined blackfella-style cabaret, music for solo violin and rapid-fire spoken word with performances by comedian Steven Oliver, poet and activist Lorna Munro, rapper Dobby (aka Rhyan Clapham), violinist Eric Avery and singer-songwriter Ancestress, curated by sound artist, radio broadcaster and journalist, Daniel Browning.

Theory of change framework

Driving Question: How does Utp reflect Australia as it really is?

How can Utp do this? Platform First Nations artists

Activity: Dedicated First Nations led project

“Black Box: Precarities hooks your ear and reels you into our story. The voices in Black Box sing up our history and our future, amplifying the whispered language of survival into an incessant howling wind.”

Wesley Enoch

Dates 2nd, 3rd October 2022

Venue Barangaroo Reserve

Partners: Place NSW

Curator: Daniel Browning
Lighting Designer: Karen Norris
Creative Producer (2021): Travis De Vries
Contributing Artists: Eric Avery, Steven Oliver, Rhyan Clapham (Dobby), Lorna Munro, Teila Watson (Ancestress)
Utp Creative Producer: Eddie Abd
Utp Artistic Director: Jessica Olivieri
Utp General Manager: Kiri Zakinthinos
Utp Communications & Marketing Manager: Jason L'Ecuyer

Credits



Image credit: Rhett Hammerton

“The main message is that testimony to survival, that audio sovereignty, that we are asserting in this space and filling this space with.”

Lorna Munro, Blak Box Artist

DREAM SEQUENCE

Dream Sequence is Utp’s ongoing online space for experiments in the digital realm, where artists are resourced to play and present new works. Artists engage in a two-week residency from home to produce a short experimental digital work, shared with audiences on the Utp website.

Dream Sequence began in 2020 as a response to the impact of the COVID pandemic on the livelihood of artists. Today it continues as an accessible space for artists and audiences to meet, and a space to innovate and expand experimental digital practice.

Building Utp’s online audience and remaining accessible

During lockdowns, arts organisations rushed to go online, something the disability communities had been asking for and had been repeatedly told was ‘too hard’. At Utp, we were conscious to consult our peers in the disability sector in order to make sure *Dream Sequence* was a meaningful offering to this community. This included workshops in 2020 with audio describer and disability advocate, Imogen Yang, so that we embedded accessibility from the beginning.

In 2022, we were conscious that the world was (attempting) to return to ‘normal’ and that we needed to make a conscious choice to continue programming in the online space. *Dream Sequence* and *for the circular movement of knowledge* are our continued commitment to accessible online programming.

Episodes available on the [Utp website](#).

Episodes

Episode 11: Solstice

Tarik Ahip
(27 April 2022)

Episode 12: Existential Bread

Ayebatonye Abrakasa
(May 2022)



Ayebatonye Abrakasa Image credi: Supplied, Existential Bread

Dates Episodes released in April and May 2022

Venue Utp website

Artists:
Ayebatonye Abrakasa
Tarik Ahlip

Credits

PRESENTATION

RADICAL ACCESSIBILITY ESSAYS

In partnership with Sydney Review of Books, Utp is commissioning a series of essays over three years. We have asked some of Australia's most progressive thinkers the big questions that keep us up at night in order to take responsibility for the future we are co-creating.

Essays

['Western Sydney is dead, long live Western Sydney'](#) by Sheila Ngoc Pham

['The R Word'](#) by Riana Head-Toussaint

Essays and audio available at [Sydney Review of Books](#) or on the [Utp website](#).

Dates 14 June, 26 September 2022

Venue Online

Partners: Sydney Review of Books

Artists: Riana Head-Toussaint,
Sheila Ngoc Pham

Utp Creative Producer: Verónica Barac-
Gomez
Utp Artistic Director: Jessica Olivieri
Utp General Manager: Kiri Zakinthinos
Utp Communications & Marketing
Manager: Claire Holland

Credits

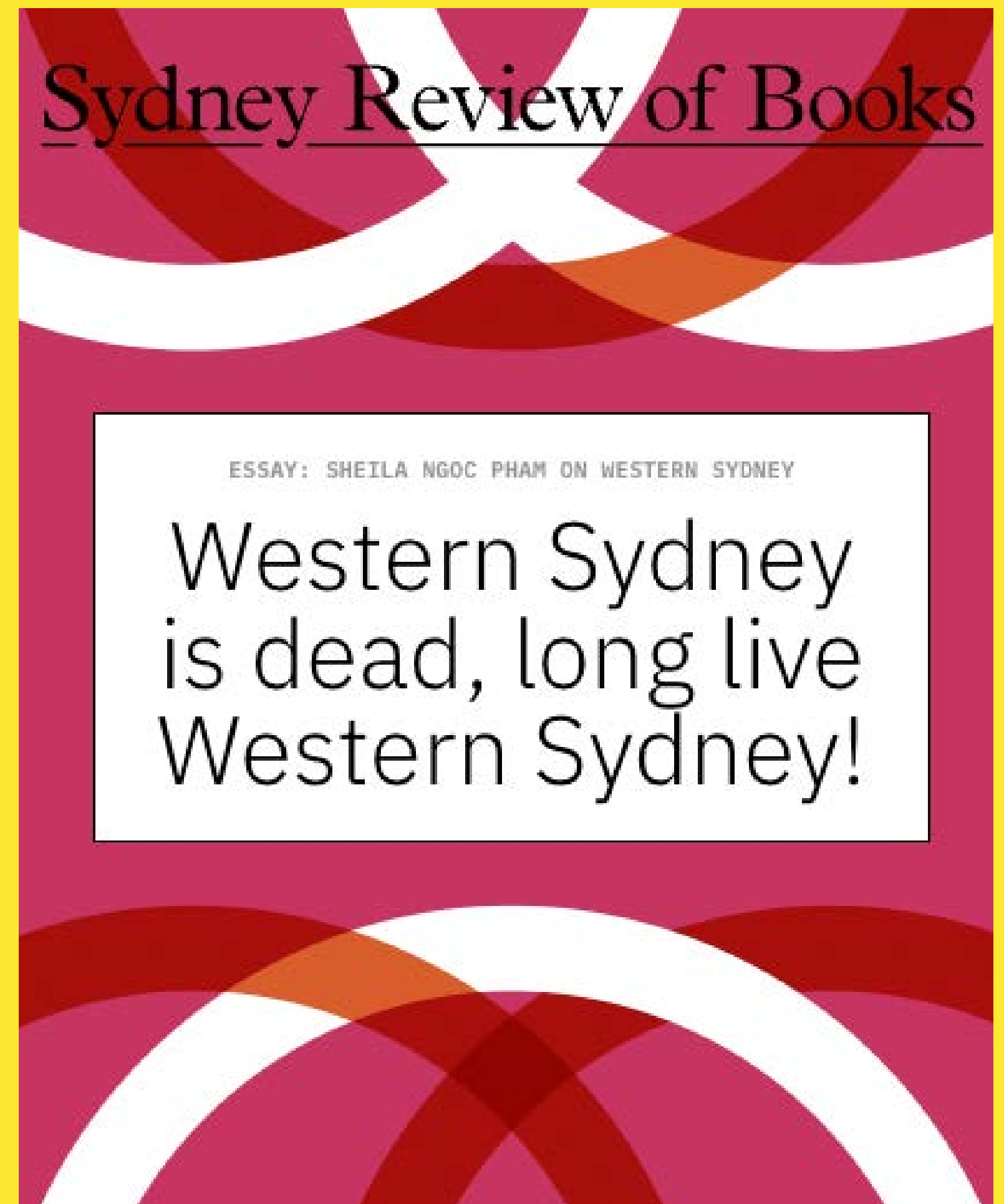


Image credit: Sydney Review of Books



FOR THE CIRCULAR MOVEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE

for the circular movement of knowledge is an online series of conversations where artists create new relationships with peers through knowledge exchange.

During online conversation residencies, Utp artists engage in exchange with a collaborator who holds knowledge in an area of interest to them. At the end of the week they will open up their digital space to share their learnings with audience via video and podcast presentations.

Theory of change framework

Driving Question: How do we support artists to slow down and focus on relationship building?

How does Utp do this? By brokering meaningful relationships for Western Sydney artists and international peers.

Activity: The creation of a conversational residency program for ideas exchange.

Dates July-November 2022

Venue Online

Utp Creative Producer: Verónica Barac-Gomez
Utp Artistic Director: Jessica Olivieri
Utp General Manager: Kiri Zakinthinos
Utp Communications & Marketing Manager:
Jason L'Ecuyer

Credits

Episodes

Episode 1: Jagath Dheerasekara in conversation with Neha Kale (07 July 2022)

Episode 2: Feras Shaheen in conversation with Amir Sabra (19 July 2022)

Episode 3: Gillian Kayrooz in conversation with Cindy Trinh (24 August 2022)

Episode 4: Emele Ugavule in conversation with Steev Lauffilitoga-Maka (28 September 2022)

Episode 5: Debra Keenahan in conversation with JulieMc

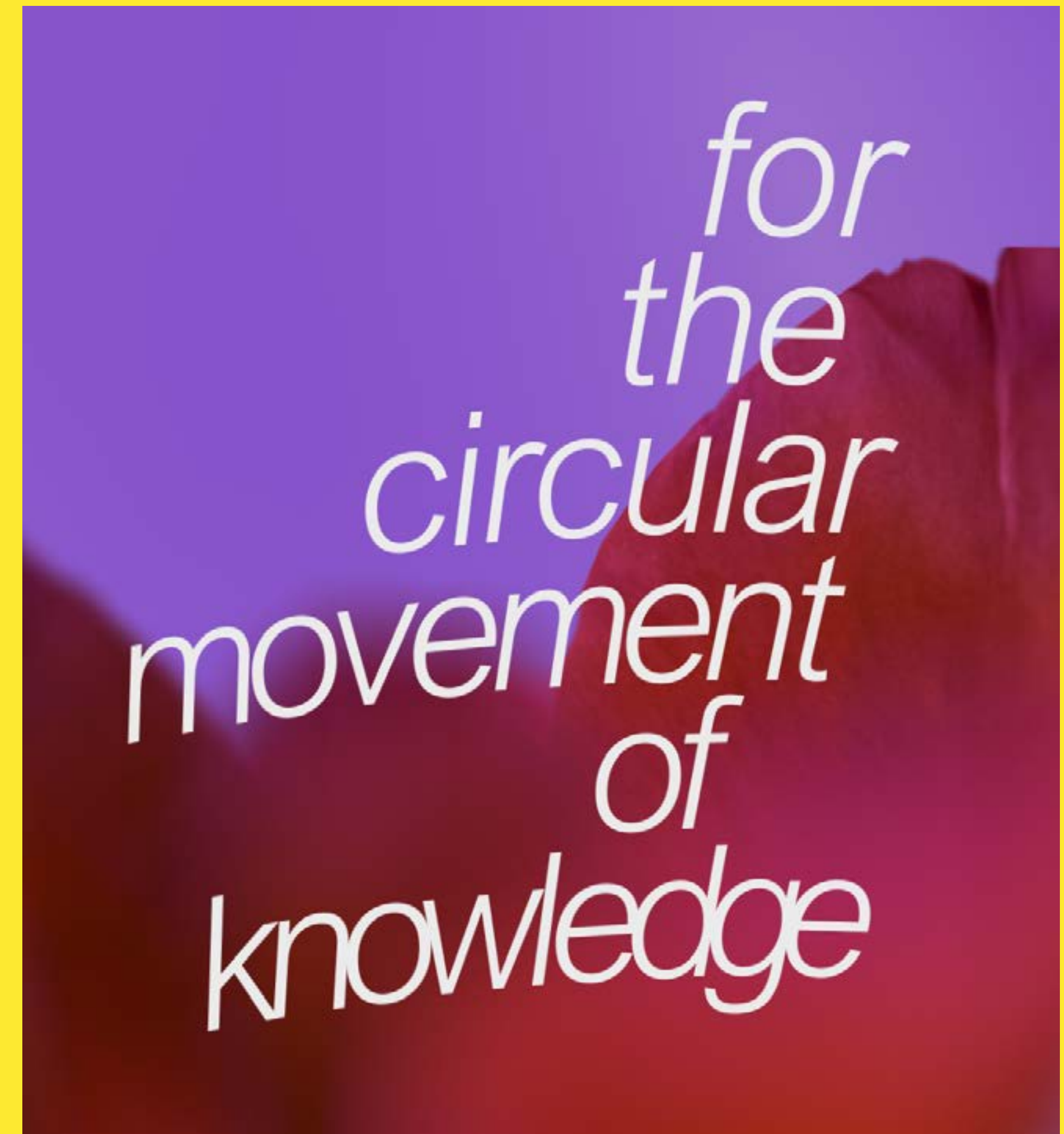


Image credit: Akil Ahamat

“It was truly remarkable the support you gave me throughout the residency. I thoroughly enjoyed it without a slightest exaggeration. Thank you Veronica for all the support and patience.”

Jagath Dheerasekara

BILINGUAL SCREENS

Bilingual Screens was a project that brought together young people and artists from Arabic speaking backgrounds to explore their relationship to the Arabic language and Arab culture through art making.

Bilingual Screens builds on Bilingual Kids' Art Lab (2019) and is an ongoing partnership between Utp and Arab Theatre Studio.

Theory of change framework

Driving Question: How do we strengthen community and individual pride in Arabic language?

How can Utp do this? A space for young people to explore their relationship to the mother tongue.

Activity: Arabic written and spoken languages are centered in arts project.

“You all left a lasting impression on my girls. The workshop provided the children an opportunity to express themselves, making a connection between their cultural background, technology and popular culture showcasing their talents. It was really lovely to watch their displays at the end of the workshop. Thank you once again!”

Iman, Parent of Bilingual Screens participant

Dates May- July 2022

Venue Bankstown Arts Centre

Partners: Arab Theatre Studio

Contributing Artists: Miriam Mubayyid, Marian Abboud, Maissa Alameddine & Samuel Kanaan-Oringo
Participants: Amel, Jayda, Liana, Gabriela, Leila, Salma, Maia, Lord

Utp Creative Producer: Eddie Abd
Utp Artistic Director: Jessica Olivieri
Utp General Manager: Kiri Zakinthinos
Utp Communications & Marketing Manager: Claire Holland

Credits



Image credit: Eddie Abd

“The objectives are very important; for young people to have fun, develop creative skills and to have an affinity and a love for Arabic language and whatever Arab cultures mean to them in their everyday.”

Alissar Chidiac, Arab Theatre Studio, Bilingual Screens project partner

ARTS WORKERS UNITE!

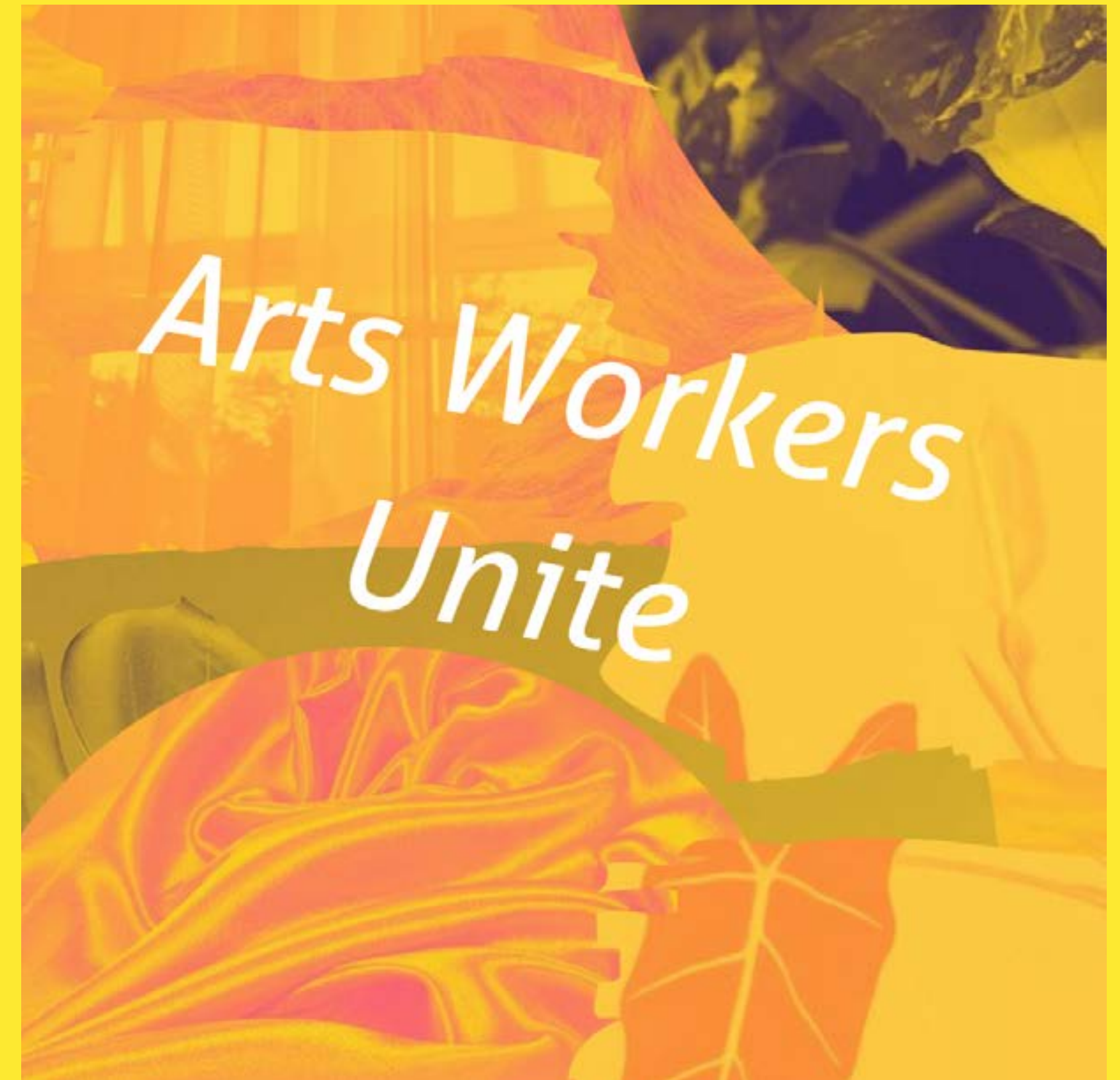
Arts Workers Unite was an art-making workshop space for arts workers to come together after an exhausting few years. Artist Linda Brescia guided us through multi-material activities as we discussed ways to support each other as peers and people in this new COVID-normal world.

Arts Workers expressed appreciation for a workshop designed with them in mind. It was a great chance to exchange feelings and ideas around working conditions in the sector.

Dates 15 June 2022

Venue Bankstown Arts Centre

Utp Creative Producer: Verónica Barac-Gomez
Utp Artistic Director: Jessica Olivieri
Utp General Manager: Kiri Zakinthinos
Utp Communications & Marketing Manager: Claire Holland



ROCK, PAPER, SNAP!

Rock, Paper, Snap! invited children and their families in Bankstown to explore connection to place and people through photography. Guided and supported by local artists, students and their families took part in creative activities that drew on the experiences associated with living in Bankstown, strengthening their community-mindedness, collaboration skills, connections and creativity.

Participants received a point and shoot digital camera and a printed book of the collaborative photographic works, launched at a community celebration at Utp.

“What is community for you?..
Everything!”

Rock, Paper Snap! Participants

Dates April- June 2022

Venue Bankstown Arts Centre

Partners: Community Minds

Artists: Chanel Biala, Angela Crichton,
Jagath Dheersekara
Participants: Annabel, Celina, Dillon,
Kevin, Sedra, Sereen, Reem, Sylvia

Utp Creative Producer: Eddie Abd
Utp Artistic Director: Jessica Olivieri
Utp General Manager: Kiri Zakinthinos
Utp Communications & Marketing
Manager: Claire Holland

Credits



Image credit: Eddie Abd

“You learn a lot more growing up with different people.”

Rock, Paper Snap! Participants

UTP RISING

Utp Rising are an ensemble of young artists working to find their place and roles within a burgeoning arts community. Utp Rising are supportive, curious, critical and sincere and work within Utp to ground their roles, careers and ambitions as artists.

In 2022, *Utp Rising* presented 'soft landings' an interdisciplinary exhibition at Bankstown Arts Centre and *Re:presents* a publication edited by Rory Moy featuring the Utp Rising artists. This high caliber exhibition included installation, video, painting and performance. 'soft landings' was a culmination of 2 years mentorship with established artists and peer-to-peer learning within the group. This exhibition signaled the emergence of a new era of artists with a unique perspective.

Dates	January- November 2022
Venue	Bankstown Arts Centre
Credits	Utp Creative Producer: Verónica Barac Gomez Utp Rising members: Samuel Kanaan-Oringo, Harsh Yalam, Bea Birett, Aeron Vicente, Miriam Mubayyid, Tala Issaoui, Hope Lee, Grace Lee, Cynthia Florek

“Utp Rising has given me the biggest opportunity to expand myself creatively. As an artist, it has given me resources and mentoring to guide me in my creative practice and future endeavours.”

Tala Issaoui

“Being in Utp Rising reminds me that I have an artistic side of me that I need to explore and work on.”

Harsh Yalam



Image credit: Dorcas Tang

“Utp Rising gave me a supportive creative environment that I could always come back to during what was a stressful and isolating year. It helped me gain confidence and gave me the opportunity to work with like-minded people.”

Miriam Mubayyid

WSU STUDENT ENGAGEMENT ON CAMPUS

Utp was engaged by Western Sydney University (WSU) to understand why student engagement on campuses is low – a challenge that was identified by WSU –and to present ideas and considerations to invigorate WSU’s campus life through arts and culture.

Utp’s guiding vision for this report is to centre the students’ voices as they offer a genuine and immediate picture of the current situation and what is needed and desired from their perspectives to activate campuses making it a vibrant social and cultural space for the students and wider WSU community. Utp has also consulted with WSU teaching staff offering an additional crucial perspective to inform the writing of this invaluable report.



Image credit: Eddie Abd

15 CIGARETTES

15 Cigarettes is a project that confronts cross generational loneliness through the vehicle of digital up-skilling and literacy. The project supports people to connect, build relationships and collaborate on creating artistic outcomes that are shaped by the conversations and ideas that unfold during the process.

15 Cigarettes will explore the idea that long-term loneliness is as damaging to your health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. This project will confront generational loneliness by bringing together young artists who will teach digital literacy skills to an older generation.

Theory of change framework

Driving Question: How can society address the loneliness pandemic?

How can Utp do this? Increase connections through creativity.

Activity: Gatherings and collaborations between seniors and artists, sharings reverberating within community.

Dates January- November 2022

Venue Bankstown Arts Centre

Partners: Olivetree Women’s Network and Community Minds

Artists: Gillian Kayrooz, Claudia Chidiac, Yamane Fayed
Utp creative producer: Eddie Abd
Utp Artistic Director: Jessica Olivieri
Utp General Manager: Kiri Zakinthinos
Utp Communications & Marketing Manager: Jason L’Ecuyer

Credits



Image credit: Eddie Abd

“15 Cigarettes for me has been about wonderful new connections with exceptional women and to reflect on my own relationship with parents and relatives - to find better ways to be present in their lives and to acknowledge them for who they really are.”

Yamane April, participating artist

IN DEVELOPMENT

DYANMILA RESIDENCY STUDIOS

The dyanmila* Studio Space is a joint initiative of Utp and Outloud, offering residency opportunities to artists and creatives who reside in or have connections to the Canterbury-Bankstown LGA or greater Western Sydney area. With an offer of two months access to a rent-free space, the dyanmila Studio is ideal for someone (or a duo or small collective) that wants to develop a new project or body of work and would like a dedicated space in a supportive environment with feedback from leaders in the industry.

*A Darug word meaning play. Aunty Lyn Martin has given us permission to use this word

Theory of change framework

Driving Question: How can an arts organisation be more accountable to our community?

How can Utp do this? Open up our spaces to the benefit of our community.

Activity: Open call studio space program



Dates Call Outs 2022

Venue Bankstown Arts Centre

Partners: Outloud

Artists: Tjoet Aishah, Gigi Kun, Brian Obiri-Asare
Utp Artistic Director: Jessica Olivieri
Utp General Manager: Kiri Zakinthinos
Utp Communications & Marketing Manager: Jason L'Ecuyer

Credits

IN DEVELOPMENT

AUNTY ORACLE KODEX

"The seas have risen, the pandemic blunders on, the last remaining forests burn and blacken the sky. In the water a flotilla of people cling to white goods. Mothers and infants in a giant freezer. Teens hug dryers and washing machines. Children and adults sit on fridges and paddle. An industrial cool room supports a whole family. There's a small community of them in the sea. Floating towards a mountain that has become an island. Their leader is Aunty Oracle Kodex, she sits regally on a trash compactor."

In this work in development, Peter Politics and Latai Taumoepeau draw from their personal experiences, cultural heritage and ancestral stories, to construct a fantasy narrative that speaks to the rupture and change occurring to communities today. Their first digital outcome in 2021 as part of Dream Sequence centred on a fictional community leader from a third place, stuck in transit, warning humanity of the errors of their ways. This became the story of Aunty Oracle Kodex of Rayon Island. In continuing this project, Peter and Latai will work with an animator to build worlds for the character of Aunty Oracle Kodex to make an animated film.

Dates 2022

Venue Bankstown Arts Centre

Lead Artists: Peter Politics and Latai Taumoepeau
Utp creative producer: Verónica Barac-Gomez Utp
Artistic Director: Jessica Olivieri
Utp General Manager: Kiri Zakinthinos
Utp Communications & Marketing Manager: Jason L'Ecuyer

Credits



Image credit: Sidney McMahan

IN DEVELOPMENT

BODY PLACE

Body Place plays with body politics and gender neutrality, in a light-hearted projection of vivid colour and bold form. This immersive work will envelop the viewer with empathy, an embodied mind-shifting sensation within a safe, virtual space.

Treating the body as a site is the building principle of the work, to examine and test the limits of our biological perceptions. Phillips is a Wiradjuri-Scottish illustrator, visual arts educator, and researcher based on the South Coast of NSW - Yuin Country. She is currently experimenting with new modes of visual storytelling and character design within the Virtual Reality (VR) space.

Dates 2022

Venue Bankstown Arts Centre

Credits Lead Artist: April Phillips
Dramaturg: Jessica Olivieri

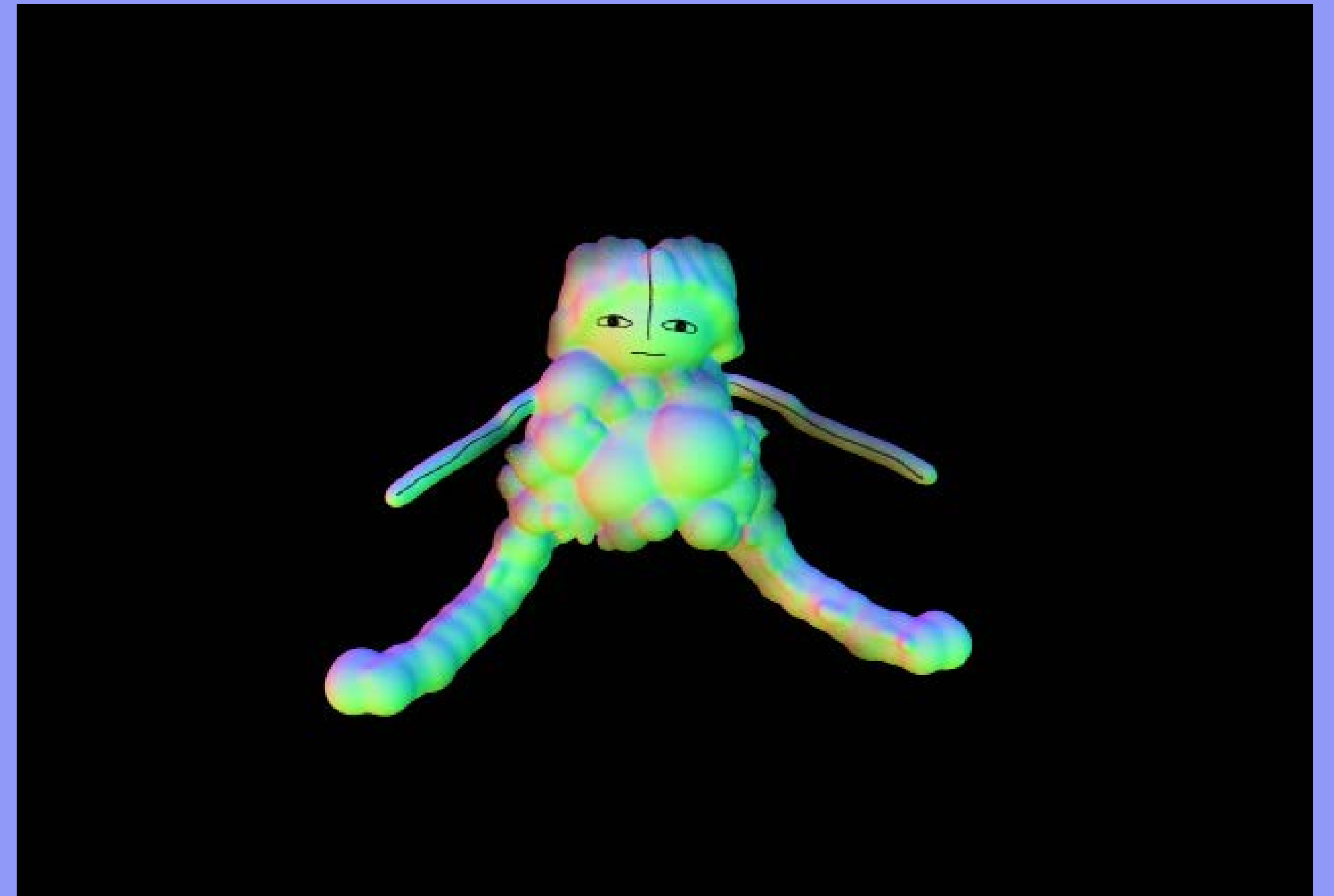


Image credit: April Phillips

Supporters

Organisational

This organisation is supported by NSW Government through Create NSW

Neilson Foundation

Projects

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the arts, its arts funding and advisory body

This project is supported by NSW Government through Create NSW

M'ap Boulé

This project is supported by the Crown Resorts Foundation and the Packer Family Foundation

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the arts, its arts funding and advisory body

Blak Box

This work is commissioned by the NSW Government

This project is supported by NSW Government through Create NSW

Dream Sequence

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the arts, its arts funding and advisory body

Radical Accessbilty

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the arts, its arts funding and advisory body

for the circular movement of knowledege

This project is supported by the Crown Resorts Foundation and the Packer Family Foundation

Arts Workers Unite



Supporters

Projects

Bilingual Screens	<p>This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the arts, its arts funding and advisory body</p> <p>This project is supported by the Crown Resorts Foundation and the Packer Family Foundation</p>
Rock, Paper, Snap!	<p>This project is delivered in partnership between Utp and Community Minds and is supported by the Doing It Differently Grants Program offered by South Western Sydney Local Health District, Canterbury Bankstown Council and Bankstown Community Resource Group (BCRG)</p>
Utp Rising	<p>This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the arts, its arts funding and advisory body</p> <p>This project is supported by NSW Government through Create NSW</p> <p>This project is supported by the Crown Resorts Foundation and the Packer Family Foundation</p>
Aunty Oracle Kodex	<p>This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the arts, its arts funding and advisory body</p> <p>This project is supported by NSW Government through Create NSW</p>



Show Your Support

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN THE UTP FAMILY

There are a number of ways to get involved. Join a passionate group of donors to seed contemporary Australian work. Utp offers supporters an opportunity to engage with us in the creation of new work. You'll stay closely connected throughout the creative process—to the work, to the artists, and to our company.

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To discuss any aspect of Utp's philanthropy and development program, please email admin@utp.org.au.

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Image credit: Verónica Barac-Gomez

Our Team

“A significant part of the cultural and creative landscape, Utp has worked effectively in sophisticated and complex and personal ways with so many communities in Greater Western Sydney.”

Alissar Chidiac

Staff

JESSICA OLIVIERI— ARTISTIC DIRECTOR/CEO

Dr Jessica Olivieri (She/Her/They) is a BA graduate of the now defunct, always legendary Western Sydney University Art School, undertaking study at the Piet Zwart and receiving a PhD from Sydney University. This PhD focused on the intersections of visual art, performance, dance and theatre within a community setting and how to do it better. Prior to this, Jessica had a practice as an artist and curator showing at major institutions like Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney and Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne and curating for Performance Space, Sydney and Campbelltown Arts Centre. Jessica's experience of growing up in an inter-cultural environment, as well as ten years of house-bound chronic illness and dyslexia, have informed her commitment to

KIRIAKI ZAKINTHINOS—GENERAL MANAGER

Kiri is a Sydney-based arts professional and writer. Her driving purpose in all her work is a desire for a fairer, more inclusive, more democratic cultural landscape, which reflects our plurality of cultures and lived experiences.

Kiri has worked in the creative industries in diverse roles within local government and the small-medium non-profit sectors for organisations such as the Think + Do Tank Foundation, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Cumberland Council's Peacock Gallery and Arts Studio, new music outfit Ensemble Offspring, Diversity Arts Australia, and social change organisation, All Together Now. As an independent producer, Kiri has presented concerts, arts/cultural workshops and a children's music and storytelling show in key venues across Sydney.

She maintains a writing practice alongside her work in cultural projects, self-publishing commentary and review pieces on the theme of cultural diversity in the arts at culturalomnivore.blog, occasionally also reviewing theatre and performance works. Her essays and creative non-fiction pieces have been commissioned and published by Sydney Living Museums and Sydney Review of Books.

Kiri holds a Graduate Diploma in Creative and Cultural Industries Management from the University of Technology,

VERÓNICA BARAC-GOMEZ—CREATIVE PRODUCER

Verónica Barac-Gomez (She/Her) was born in Uruguay and lives in unceded Gadigal land. She's directed and produced Sydney Fringe Festival productions, coordinated the Liveworks Festival Delegates Program at Performance Space on a couple of wonderful occasions, and has worked at Utp for the past two years as Administrator and as Producer on Dream Sequence. She's passionate about collaborative spaces and moving slowly to foster deep relationships with artists and community

EDDIE ABD—CREATIVE PRODUCER

Eddie Abd (She/Her) is an artist and creative producer who lives on Darug and Gundungurra land with her husband and two children. She is Lebanese and Australian and is constantly reminding herself to speak in Arabic with her kids. After working in radio as a broadcast journalist for a few years, Eddie started her career in the arts working on community arts projects in Western Sydney as an artist facilitator and thanks to esteemed cultural workers in this field has learned (and is still learning) how to work collaboratively and respectfully on projects that centre people. Eddie studied Fine Arts (painting) at the Lebanese University and Digital Media at UNSW. She has recently been awarded the Blake Art Prize (emerging artist) and is getting better at balancing and interweaving being a

CLAIRE HOLLAND—MARKETING COORDINATOR (JAN- JUN 2022)

Claire is an experienced arts marketing professional with a passion for digital and social media marketing. Claire has held a variety of marketing roles including with: Canberra Youth Theatre, Canberra International Music Festival, Music for Canberra and Aerialize. Claire graduated from the Australian National University in 2020 with first class honours in Digital Humanities and throughout her time at university also held roles as TV Editor of Woroni, Artistic Director of the National University Theatre Society, Marketing Manager of the You Are Here Festival, Event Coordinator for Orientation Week and producer of numerous productions.

JASON L'ECUYER—COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING COORDINATOR (JUN—DEC 2022)

Jason (he/him) is a marketing specialist and digital content creator living on Gadigal and Wangal land. Originally from the US, Jason has a background in journalism, audio production and town planning. At the core of his work is a conviction in the power of storytelling as a means to convey complex ideas.

RENAN SAN JOSE—FINANCIALS

Take Care of Books is a bookkeeping service company that provides high quality bookkeeping services to small businesses.

DANIEL BROWNING—BLAK BOX CURATOR

Daniel is a highly respected journalist and radio broadcaster from the Bundjalung and Kullilli peoples of far northern New South Wales and south-western Queensland. A trained painter, he is a visual arts graduate of the Queensland University of Technology. Since 2005 he has produced and presented *Away!*, the Indigenous art and culture program on ABC Radio National. He has produced sound artworks from three UNESCO World Heritage sites, exhibited during the 2015 Mildura Palimpsest Biennale and *in extremis* at Arts House, Melbourne in 2017. As a documentary maker he has received a bronze medal at the New York Festival for *Cast Among Strangers*, a study of the human zoo phenomenon. His documentary *Fernando's ghost* about the Aboriginal rights activist Anthony Martin Fernando was highly commended in the John Newfong Media Prize in 2008 and received an honourable mention at imagineNATIVE, the international festival of Indigenous film and media arts in Canada. Currently, he produces *s*, a podcast which shares Australia's diverse Indigenous languages one word at a time.

Board

SHANNON WILLIAMS (BROTHABLACK)

BrothaBlack is one of Australia's pioneers of Indigenous Hip Hop. He is a founding member of Indigenous hop hop crew, South West Syndicate. In 2007 he released his first solo album 'More Than a Feeling' featuring the breakthrough single 'Are you with me out there' fast becoming an anthem for underground Hip Hop goers and added some genuine south-west side grunt to the soundtrack for Foxtel's smash hit TV series, 'Dangerous'. He has received extensive airplay on Triple J including performing a set for Live at the Wireless, broadcast in 2007. BrothaBlack is also an accomplished actor and performing with more than 200 performances under his belt. He featured on the Foreign Heights track 'Get Yours (Remix)' nominated for the 0207 ARIA Award for Best Urban Release. BrothaBlack also appeared as the studio host in Move It Mob Style seasons 1, 2 and 3 nominated in 2012 for The ASTRA Awards Most Outstanding Children's Program or Event and in 2014 for Most Outstanding Children's Program at the 56th annual TV Week Logie Awards.

AMANDA BRISOT

Amanda joined the board of Urban Theatre Projects in 2019, drawn to the company's passion for telling the important and unique stories of Western Sydney in such an authentic and innovative way. Having grown up in the region, Amanda shares a deep appreciation for the wonderfully diverse fabric of the local community and is a passionate advocate for Western Sydney. In her current role as General Manager of Western Sydney Business Connection, Amanda has led a number of successful advocacy campaigns and programs within the region that aim to drive economic growth and positive social outcomes for the community. Amanda has more than three decades of experience in marketing, commercial partnerships and stakeholder engagement across government, private and not-for-profit sectors.

CATHERINE SULLIVAN

Catherine is a lawyer with extensive law firm and in-house corporate legal experience and is currently Head of Legal Delivery & Senior Legal Counsel at ASX Limited specialising in financial markets, corporate, governance and regulatory law. She is a director of Utp, Critical Path and National Young Writers Festival and former Chair of Critical Stages and director of Brand X.

MICHELLE HANNA
Chair

Michelle is a communications and production specialist working across arts, media and government. Currently working in Internal Communications for the Australian Communications and Media Authority, Michelle also chairs the Sydney Outreach Committee for Human Rights Watch in Australia. Previously, she worked in social impact documentary for a film about Huntington's Disease as well as with GoodPitch2 Australia at the Sydney Opera House. Michelle was an in-house producer for the subscription TV arts channels and a casual arts reporter for SBS World News, and an arts publicist prior to that. Michelle commenced her career working with the team that delivered the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Arts Festivals.

THEO PSYCHOGIOS

Theo is a Partner with Deloitte's Financial Advisory practice and focuses on providing services to the State, Local and Federal governments, government agencies and private sector organisations they interact with. Theo has been a lead advocate for the economic and social development of Western Sydney, starting with the ground breaking Shaping Future Cities - Designing Western Sydney report which provided an economic blueprint for the region sustainable and equitable growth. His work has influenced Government and Private sector investment in the job generators, amenity and public infrastructure and services that will underpin Western Sydney's growth for the years to come. Theo's professional and personal life has been heavily influenced by his Greek heritage. The lessons and experiences from his parents and extended family have forged his unwavering belief in the value of community, culture, diversity, commitment, exchange and creative expression. Celebrating the unique and shared stories of all Australian cultures, and supporting truth telling for our first nation people and artists, is something that Theo is especially passionate about.

JESSICA OLIVIERI
CEO/Artistic Director

MOUNA ZAYLAH

Mouna Zaylah is Arab-Australian, born and raised in Western Sydney. She is an arts and cultural development worker with over 25 years experience working in the community arts and cultural development sector and local government. She is currently the Business and Engagement Manager at Campbelltown Arts Centre, Campbelltown City Council overseeing the operations, education and public programs, community and audience engagement, grants and funding. She was Co-Director of the Arab Film Festival 2007-2017. From 2015 to 2020 she was a member of the NSW Film and Television Industry Advisory Committee (Screen NSW). In 2019 she joined the Create NSW Multi-Artform Board. Between 1999 and 2016 she worked for Information and Cultural Exchange managing artistic and cultural programs, producing resources for artists and communities, coordinating cultural events, performance and screen-based projects with artists, community groups and organisations. She works across sectors including community, arts, screen, technology and business. Mouna has also worked for Urban Theatre Projects in administration and as a project officer (1992-1997). She has also worked for Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre in administration, curatorial and project coordinator roles (1997-1999) and a range of other community and youth based organisations as a freelance arts administrator, project coordinator and cultural consultant.

TIAN ZHANG

Based on Darug Country in western Sydney, Tian Zhang is an award-winning curator and change-maker working at the intersections of art and cultural practice. Her work often involves a recalibration of rituals and cultural phenomena within our understandings of contemporary art and life. She has more than ten years experience producing culturally attentive and site responsive projects, working with organisations such as Utp, Parramatta Artists' Studios, Blacktown Arts, Sydney Customs House, Brisbane Festival and Brisbane City Council.

With a deep commitment to grassroots, collective and collaborative practices. Tian is a founding co-director of Pari, an artist-run gallery and community space for Parramatta. She was previously Chair and co-director at Firstdraft and has co-founded and contributed to arts collectives in Meanjin/Brisbane. Tian is an alumnus of the Australia Council for the Arts Future Leaders Program and the British Council INTERSECT Program.

NINA TROFIMOVA

Nina is an accomplished CFO / Head of Finance, with over 15 years' experience in the NFP sector. She has a deep understanding of industry-specific issues, including legislation, funding and reforms. She specialises in driving business process efficiencies, leading financial strategy, and implementing new systems to meet business objectives.

F CPA and CA qualified, Nina is a for-purpose person, deeply committed to making a difference. She works as Senior Finance Associate, simply speaking 'outsourced CFO', at financial consulting company Purpose Accounting. Prior to joining Purpose, Nina managed Finance Functions for large non-profit organisations within the arts, culture and environmental sectors, including Biennale of Sydney. Nina currently holds the position of Chair to CPA Australia's Not For Profit Committee, acting in an advisory capacity to the CPA NSW Divisional Council.

Nina brings to the Board her professional qualities as well as a passion and love for the art sector.

