

# Annual Report



2024

Utp

# Acknowledgment of Country

*Utp acknowledges the people of the Dharug nation, traditional custodians of the land on which we work. We also acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands of all nations on which we live and make work.*

*We pay respects to their Elders past, present and future communities. We recognise that on this land, sovereignty was never ceded. We thank all the First Nations people for their ongoing care and custodianship of the land, waters and air.*

# Who We Are

Utp is an experimental arts organisation in Western Sydney, supporting artists to make form-pushing, breakthrough works of scale. These manifest as performances, video works, talks, sound, emerging digital technology, exhibitions and essays.

Utp invests in long-term development and presentation opportunities for historically marginalised voices, to build a more equitable local, national and global arts sector. We prioritise knowledge production and long-term impact over short term outcome focused cycles. We work with intersectional Western Sydney artists and audiences who are First Nations, living with Disability, Queer, and/or from Diasporic experiences.

On Dharug Country we prioritise Dharug artists. We celebrate, respect and uphold the cultural rights of all First Nations artists, arts workers and communities. Utp is the only organisation of its kind with First Nations leadership at all levels.



# Chair Message

Each year, Utp's program is centred on an annual provocation, which sets the tone for the year's programs, activities and actions. In 2024, Utp's provocation was *First and Last*, encouraging us to imagine a world where First Nations people have the first and last say. From our home base on Dharug Country, this means prioritising Dharug artists, and extending our solidarity to indigenous people around the world fighting for their land, culture and rights.

The cornerstone of Utp's program is a group residency that responds to the annual provocation. The *ALWAYS: Call and Response* residency supported First Nations and Palestinian artists to come together — seeding relationships and projects, now and into the future. Utp also continued to work with artists in the Dharug Collective supporting them through administrative activism, professional development and fundraising to realise self-determined projects.

Other highlights in 2024 included the premiere of Wiradjuri-Scottish artist April Phillips' interactive digital work *Body Place*; and the culmination of *15 Cigarettes*, a project that fostered intergenerational collaboration between local seniors and artists. Both of these projects were years in the making, a testament to Utp's commitment to long-term artistic development processes.

We concluded the year with *Everything You can Dream of is True*, a series of screenings that allowed our audiences to engage with moving image works by over 20 First Nations, global indigenous and diasporic artists on Dharug Country.

Congratulations to our small, nimble and fierce team — I am proud of the way that you embody values and ethics in the work you do and deliver programs with care. Many thanks to the Utp Board, whose unwavering support and sharp insights are invaluable. And a big thank you to the artists for believing in and working with us — your work and practices are the reason we exist.



Our artistic program would not be possible without our financial supporters, in particular, Create NSW and Nielsen Foundation, whose multi-year commitments make this work possible. Thank you also to project partners Creative Australia, Creative Partnerships Australia, Bankstown Arts Centre, Tactical Lab UNSW, Canterbury Bankstown City Council, Sydney Community Foundation and Sweatshop Literacy Movement.

Our 2024 provocation, *First and Last*, has not only led our programming but also an internal process of reflection and operational change, guided by our Equity Action Plan and supported by a series of workshops with Garuwa. This work doesn't end with the conclusion of this annual statement but will inspire, grow and feed into our 2025 provocation, *who is ready for another world?* So, get ready.

Tian Zhang



# Co-Artistic Directors Message

In 2024, Utp centred its programs around the provocation *First and Last*, which builds on the often cited commitment ‘First Nations First’, to imagine a world where First Nations people have not just the first, but also the last word. We have supported artists to rewrite narratives, to fearlessly straight talk, confront post-reconciliation realities with truth-telling.

In March, we saw the culmination of a five year working relationship with Wiradjuri-Scottish artist April Phillips, in her most spectacular project to date, *Body Place*. We were thrilled to offer a series of public programs including artist talks, panels and the all abilities dance party *Crip Rave Theory* to invite audiences into this interactive and immersive screen project. First presented at Utp’s purpose-built space RS1 on Dharug land, this project then toured to ACMI for *Now or Never* and Melbourne Film Festival.

Utp’s annual group residency, *ALWAYS: Call and Response*, saw six First Nations and Palestinian artists come together to discuss world (re)building, sovereignty and art as resistance methodologies for global First Nations communities. Each artist then presented outcomes peppered across the year, including *Al Pheniq*, a night of performance by Feras Shaeen and *Entity*, a work in progress from Travis De Vries, to be realised in 2025 with support from Utp.

In 2024, Utp remained committed to investing in long term development, with ambitious projects *She Rested* by Aimée Falzon and *Bulunggayi* by Leanne Tobin, as well as multi-year support for emerging Western Sydney artists through Utp Rising. Utp also continued to assist with auspicing and realising self-determined projects led by Dharug artists through the Dharug Collective.

We are proud to have supported 147 artists and community members and welcomed 1824 audience members through the door. This was achieved with our small team of incredible, diverse arts workers and a committed Board. We would like to thank our community who showed up, the talented artists we have the honour to work with and financial supporters who make it all possible.

We continue to think critically about the role of arts organisations in responding to the crises in Palestine and neighbouring regions, while being acutely aware of the impact the ‘no’ vote continues to have on First Nations Peoples. We stand publicly with artists who are affected and allies who are working in all forms of activism. We sit in our strength and solidarity within communities here on Dharug land and globally. Now more than ever, we believe it is our duty to support artists and strive for a more equitable world.

Hannah Donnelly and Dr Jessica Olivieri



# FIRST *and* LAST

# 2024 Provocation

Deepening our commitment to First Nations people of Australia, *First and Last* is a year of embedded programs and administrative strategies ensuring a continued strong commitment to First Nations Peoples on the land where we live and work as well as globally.

The *First and Last* artwork is a collaborative project, with typography by Ngemba/Ngiyampaa, Dutch and Irish illustrator and designer Emma Sjaan Beukers and an artwork by Dharug, Lebanese, Chinese and English artist, M. Sunflower.

## Design by Emma Sjaan Beukers

Artist statement:

"This design shows the enduring nature of First Nations people who epitomise survival, strength and power — the strong geometric and linear shapes in the type complements and balances the artwork visually and aids in movement of the composition. The soft curves and serifs emulate the natural and organic flow seen in the artwork and in nature. The intersecting and overlapping letters show the connectedness and coming together of the first and last; of the past, present and future. A lighter purple is used alongside the deeper plum in the type to provide contrast within the lettering but also against the bright colours of the artwork. The darker colour used in 'and' shows the importance of inclusion of the first and last and ties together the connected lighter letters."

## Artwork by M. Sunflower

Title: *Rhizome - Ancestral Landscapes*

Artist statement:

Badu. Water.  
Daramu. Tree.  
Ngayana. Breathe.

Take a deep breath. Ngayana. Breathe.

What sounds do you hear? Ngara. Listen.  
What scents can you sense? Gana. Smell.  
What does the wind feel like on your skin? Gura. Wind.  
What do the leaves feel like as you slide your fingers across them? Djirang. Leaves.

Take another deep breath. Ngayana. Breathe.

Feel the sunlight on your skin. Guwing. Sun.  
Listen to the water lap against the banks of the lake. Badu. Water.  
Can you hear the birds call? Binyang. Bird.

These are our Ancestral Landscapes.

Complex. Shifting. Deep threads weaving into the earth like Rhizomes.

Though the word rhizome is derived from a Greek word meaning “to take root”, the rhizome is not about the common tree structure whose branches have all grown from a single trunk.

Rhizome subverts such traditional hierarchies.  
Rhizome offers liberation from these structures of power and dominance.  
Rhizome has no beginning, no centre and no end.  
Rhizome can be entered from any point, and all points are connected.

When injured or broken at one site, rhizome simply forms a new connection that emerges elsewhere.

Rhizome is not about what is or what was, but about what might be.

# 2024 Snapshot

16

performances presented

14

creative developments supported

11

workshops delivered

147

artist collaborators

1824

event attendance

\$218,000

fees paid to creative professionals

14,624

audience reached (newsletters & social media)

# 2024 Snapshot

8

partner organisations

18

emerging artist  
mentorships supported

95%

of programs took place  
in Western Sydney

# 2024 Programs

## PRESENTATION

# Body Place

Utp presented *Body Place*, by award-winning Wiradjuri-Scottish artist April Phillips.

The work is a cinematic story, an immersive 2-channel projection, and a gamified journey. In real time, the companion sky spirit took the audience for a celestial virtual walk on Country – from the depths of subterranean soils, to a ground-level play space, ascending to meet the clouds.

“*Body Place* is positioned in the transformative powers of Country, driven by the audience’s movement.” — April Phillips

Leveraging boundary-pushing technologies, *Body Place* combined real-time person tracking and motion capture. This allowed audiences to roam an expansive illuminated 14 metre screen, in Utp’s purpose-built space.

"Body Place uses the potential of technology to continue the millenia-long practice of First Nations storytelling." — Hannah Donnelly and Jessica Olivieri, Utp Co-Artistic Directors

## About April Phillips

April Phillips is a Wiradjuri-Scottish woman of the Galari peoples, based on the Yuin Nation. April is aligned with representations of Indigenous futurism and intergenerational healing to celebrate the potential of computer art for a new world.

Exhibition Dates 2-30 March 2024

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Venue RS1, Bankstown Arts Centre

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**Creative Team:** April Phillips, Jordan East, Pat Younis, Alvin Zhong, Warren Foster Jnr, aka Prodikal-1, Jack Prest and Mark Leahy

**Utp Creative Producers:** Eddie Abd, Amy Prcevich and Jane Wade

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Credits



*"Never seen anything like this before, a new visual experience!"* — Visitor

PRESENTATION

# Body Place: Public Programs

Audiences engaged with a series of talks and events expanding upon April Phillips' immersive exhibition, *Body Place*.

**Saturday 2 March** — Official opening event and *Sub worlds: First Nations world building panel discussion*, featuring Kate ten Buuren, facilitated by Hannah Donnelly

**Saturday 9 March** — Artist Walkthrough, led by April Phillips, Jordan East and Pat Younis

**Saturday 16 March** — Curators' Reflections, led by Hannah Donnelly and Jessica Olivieri

**Saturday 23 March** — *Crip Rave Theory x Body Place* dance party, curated by Riana Head-Toussaint

Event Dates      Every Saturday, March 2024

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Venue              Bankstown Arts Centre

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Image credit: Jacquie Manning



*"The details in Body Place's immersive world are so captivating. I could see the textures change in the skyscape, and the Companion spirit's body shimmering."* — Visitor

# Crip Rave Theory

*Crip Rave Theory* is a party and a proposition: drawing on disabled/ crip knowledge to create more intersectionally-accessible rave spaces. In response to inaccessible and exclusionary club spaces, *Crip Rave Theory* centres and celebrates all bodies that are sidelined in traditional nightlife culture; a space for community, connection, pleasure and self-expression.

*Crip Rave Theory* was held as a public program during April Phillip's *Body Place* exhibition, including an Intro to DJ-ing Basics workshop with Rydeen.

Utp hosted a day to night party that sprawled across indoor and outdoor spaces. There were embedded features that were attentive to accessibility, including a low sensory zone, party support people, having masks and earplugs available, tiered pricing and free tickets for First Nations people and the disabled community.

*Crip Rave Theory* acknowledges and appreciates that everyone's access needs are complex and changing. At times, they may overlap and conflict with one another. Striving for greater access for all is an ongoing, collaborative process.

Date 23 March 2024

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Venue Bankstown Arts Centre

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**Curator and Founder:** Riana Head-Toussaint

**Artists:** Lakatoi, halalbutch, Atro, Aquentia, Cilicia, Barbi Ghanoush, Rydeen

Credits **Utp Producer:** Amy Prcevich

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*"At the party, I experienced disabled joy in all its glory!  
I could really be myself here." — Visitor*



*“Quality artworks that were all very engaging and emotional and honest. Meaningful and relevant.” — Visitor*

Image credit: Tugba Demir

## PRESENTATION

# Everything You Can Dream of is True

*Everything You Can Dream of is True* is a moving image series that invites a re-imagining of ourselves and the world around us.

Over 20 First Nations, global Indigenous and Diaspora artists interrogate the status quo and propose new ways of engaging with complex histories, politicised identities and futurisms.

Sparking conversations across Dharug land (Western Sydney) and Naarm (Melbourne), this new program was curated by Utp, and delivered in partnership with West Space.

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Dates 28 September, 26 October and 30 November 2024

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Venue RS1, Bankstown Arts Centre

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Partner West Space

**Moving Image Artists:** Hoda Afshar, Akil Ahamat, Tarik Ahlip, Maissa Alameddine, Paola Balla, Travis De Vries, Jagath Dheeraseskara, Kuba Dorabialski, Tania El Khoury, Lux Eterna, Riana Head Toussaint, Roberta Joy Rich, Gillian Kayrooz, Eugenia Lim, Jumana Manna, Hayley Millar Baker, Sancintya Mohini Simpson, Jazz Money, James Ngyuen, Katy B Plummer, Khaled Sabsabi, Larissa Sansour, Feras Shaheen, Subash Thebe Limbu

**Live Offering Artists:** Omar Sakr, Nicole Bakarat, Majdi Jelda and Seraj Jelda

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Credits **Utp Creative Producers:** Eddie Abd and Rachelle Esaid

PRESENTATION

# LIVE TO TELL MY STORY

Nationally acclaimed writers and thinkers from First Nations, Palestinian and Arab backgrounds united for two back-to-back panels which critically examine the crisis in Palestine.

With a focus on literary and arts activism, these urgent and necessary dialogues explored themes of sovereignty, self-determination, solidarity and bearing witness.

## Panel 1: For the Record

Facilitator: Dr Jumana Bayeh

Panellists: Dr Randa Abdel-Fattah, Sara M. Saleh and Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad

## Panel 2: Bringing Hope

Facilitator: Dr Sarah Ayoub

Panellists: Jazz Money, Dr Lana Tatour, Fahad Ali and Amani Haydar

Dates 13 January 2024

Venue RS1, Bankstown Arts Centre

Partner Sweatshop Literacy Movement

**Speakers:** Dr Jumana Bayeh, Dr Randa Abdel-Fattah, Sara M. Saleh, Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad, Dr Sarah Ayoub, Jazz Money, Dr Lana Tatour, Fahad Ali and Amani Haydar

Credits **Utp Creative Producer:** Amy Prceovich





Image credit: Faride Makdessi

*“The project is developing to be more than an artistic outcome, it's unravelling stories, histories and memories that between all of the participants reveals new points of connection, between countries, families and generations.”*

— Gillian Kayrooz

PRESENTATION

# 15 Cigarettes

Beginning in 2022, *15 Cigarettes* was founded on studies that show social isolation can be as harmful as smoking.

It supported local senior creatives, artists and arts workers to connect, build relationships and collaborate on creating artistic outcomes shaped by the conversations and ideas that unfold during the process.

This project brought together seniors and artists from Arabic-speaking backgrounds. United by a love for art, they collaborated to create heartfelt films exploring family archives and discussing experiences of migration.

Dates 21 January 2024 (Video Launch)  
27 July 2024 (Screening)

Venue RS1, Bankstown Arts Centre

Partners Olivetree Women's Network and Community Minds

**Creative Team:** Gillian Kayrooz, Aunty Badiha Ajami, Claudia Chidiac, Aunty Faride Makdessi, Yamane Fayed, Aunty Shams Issa, Aunty Rehab Graf and Eddie Abd

Credits **Utp Creative Producer:** Eddie Abd

# Counterflows

*Counterflows* is a residency collaboratively designed by Utp and Arts House. A group of transgenerational artists from New South Wales and Victoria came together in a writing lab at Utp after their visit to the Sharjah Biennial 15 in 2023.

These rich ideas generated by the experience were consolidated into a learning reader, edited and distributed by Runway Journal, an open access and interdisciplinary publication.

Below are the individual artist contributions and the transcript of a conversation captured during the writing lab.

## Counterflows Conversation

Eddie Abd, *a few reflections*

Akil Ahamat, *Opening to the Dark*

Tarik Ahlip, *Witness*

Jagath Dheerasekara, *A travelogue; from the Cataract river to the Port of Ashdod*

Samira Farah x Roberta Joy Rich, *afro-fractions*

Jody Haines, *ART DUBAI reflection piece*

Gillian Kayrooz, *Within a Droplet, Sharjah and Dubai: 35mm Archive*

Eugenia Lim, *Notes from Dubai (before the flood<sup>1</sup>)*

Publishing Date August 2024

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Partners Arts House, Runway Journal

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**Artists:** Paola Balla, Eugenia Lim, Roberta Joy Rich, Jody Haines, Gillian Kayrooz, Jagath Dheerasekara, Akil Ahamat, Tarik Ahlip, Samira Farah

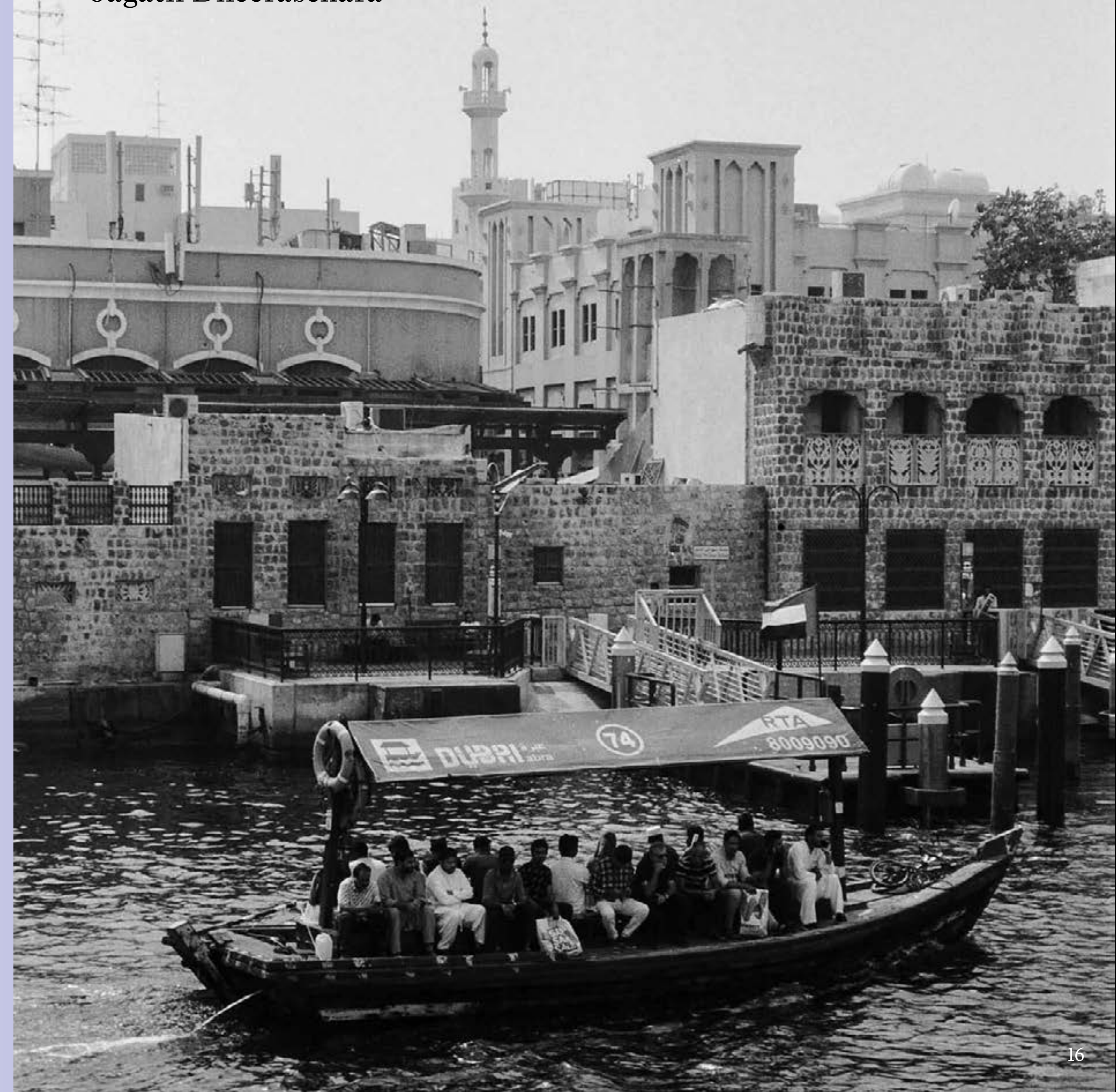
**Runway Editors:** Georgia Hayward, Yuna Lee  
**Arts House Creative Producer:** Varsha Ramesh  
**Utp Creative Producer:** Eddie Abd

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Credits

*“Counterflows gave me an opportunity to look at myself as an artist in a broader world.”*

— Jagath Dheerasekara





## PRESENTATION

# A1 Pheniq

Utp proudly supported *A1 Pheniq*, a performance curated by Feras Shaheen, who was part of *ALWAYS: Call & Response* residency.

Brothers Majdi and Seraj Jelda are highly experienced Palestinian artists who recently arrived in Australia. Bringing their instruments, oud and riq, on their backs all the way from Gaza, they are ready to connect with new communities through music and dance.

In sharing Palestinian songs and stories, the artists keep their culture alive and push back against the attempts of erasure. This event was intended to replenish and appreciate the communities who have been endlessly advocating for Palestine.

During a time of struggle and grief, as well as collective and consistent action for justice, music and dance are forms of resistance. Resistance in these forms allows us to experience joy with the people that are active in the same fight of disrupting injustice systems that seek to divide us. Joyful defiance. Joyful resilience.

Their cousin Feras Shaheen guided the audience through the history, stories, and guest acts of the night.

Dates 17 August 2024

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Venue RS1, Bankstown Arts Centre

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**Curator:** Feras Shaheen  
**Performers:** Majdi Jelda, Seraj Jelda, DOBBY

Credits **Utp Creative Producer:** Amy Prcevich

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# ALWAYS: Call & Response

*ALWAYS: Call and Response* is a development lab, creating a place of solidarity and exchange between Palestinian and local First Nations artists.

Drawing on the seminal line "always was, always will be Aboriginal Land" this development lab marked a necessary moment to engage in truth-telling about dispossession and colonisation, following the rejection of the Voice to Parliament referendum and the genocide in Gaza.

Through conversations, board games, movement and drawing exercises, the artists explored play as ritual. The creative exchange prompted the group to interrogate the role of artists and artmaking in the current moment. They reflected on how current realities of ongoing colonial violence in Australia and in occupied Palestine, have ruptured their worlds and profoundly impacted their art practice. The week-long lab was loaded with generative discussions about the possibilities of new laws, and new systems.

This program is an annual group residency that responds to Utp's 2024 provocation, *First and Last*.

Residency Dates 11-16 March 2024

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Venue RS1, Bankstown Arts Centre

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**Creative Team:**

Travis De Vries (Gamilaroi/Dharug)  
Lux Eterna (Dar Zaccak, Palestinian Yafa/Haifa)  
Feras Shaheen (Palestinian Gaza/Al Lid)  
Hazem Shammass (Palestinian Fassouta)  
Shay Tobin (Dharug)  
Serene 'Dubs' Yunupingu (Gumatj/Dharug)

Credits **Utp Creative Producer:** Amy Prcevich

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Image credit: Celine Cheung

*“It’s always a privilege to be invited into such wonderful convening, replete with wonderful people. We look forward to what will emerge from this initial circle.”*

— Lux Eterna

# Dharug Collective

Dharug Collective is a professional development, mentoring and administrative activism program for Dharug artists on Dharug land. Artists or collectives can contact Utp for support with grant writing, project administration and development for new ideas. Utp assists with auspicing and realising projects led by Dharug artists.

Our curatorial model ensures projects are self-determined by artists and/or communities, challenging the dominant methodology of the lead Artistic Director to give rise to truly artist/community led projects.

Several artists and collectives supported through the Dharug Collective model have continued to pursue major presentations of new work.

## Supported projects include:

Final development of Leanne Tobin's script *Bulunggayi*, produced by Utp

Residency support for Jannawi Dance Clan's final development of major work *Garrigarrang Badu*, executively produced by FORM Dance Projects

Dates 2024

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Venue Various

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**Artists Supported:** Leanne Tobin, Jannawi Dance Clan

Credits **Utp Co-Artistic Director:** Hannah Donnelly

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# She Rested

*She Rested* is a concert and a ritual, a song and a story.

This new work by performer-composer Aimée Falzon, with collaborators, is an experimental vocal performance. It features newly commissioned visual design by award-winning artist Eddie Abd that centres the transformative experience of motherhood.

The work performs the rite of passage of new mothers, which is often unrecognised or invisible. It's a performance-ritual that welcomes the new person who emerges through the fire. It reveals how ushering in and nurturing new life can also be an act of obliteration, metamorphosis and rebirth for the parent. Bearing witness to this transformation, the work blends mythology with personal anecdotes of domesticity, live music with storytelling, contemporary feminism with the goddesses of all our pasts.

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Residency Dates     12-23 August 2024

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Development  
Showing             Friday 23 August 2024

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Venue                 RS1, Bankstown Arts Centre

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**Artists:** Aimée Falzon, S. Shakthidharan and Eddie Abd.

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Credits                **Utp Creative Producer:** Amy Prcevich

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Image credits: Celine Cheung



*“It’s really a tender time when you’re coming back to yourself and your artistic practice, re-emerging as an artist. I’m so grateful Utp has been holding that space for me.” — Aimée Falzon*

# Entity

*Entity* is a new film by Travis De Vries which explores the other within the idea of community. This concept of the other draws from ways of positionality within traditional community structures that include people who live apart from the core community. The folklore of the witch, the wise woman(or man), the shaman and spiritual beings of First Nations cultures have a certain level of fear attached to it.

The project will juxtapose the concepts of Artificial Intelligence as a modern cosmic horror entity with the reverence and complexity of a First Nations deity. It will delve into how both are perceived — as powerful, often unknowable forces, with AI embodying the unknowable terror of a cosmic horror, and the First Nations deity symbolising a potent spiritual presence, deeply connected to land, culture, and existence.

Screening Date      Wednesday 20 November 2024

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Venue                      RS1, Bankstown Arts Centre

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**Artist:** Travis De Vries

Credits                    **Utp Creative Producer:** Amy Prceovich

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PRESENTATION

# Utp Rising

Utp Rising is a space for young people who are interested in art-making to meet each other and experiment with different forms of art. It began in 2019 in response to the lack of tertiary art education in Western Sydney for local communities.

In 2024, we welcomed a new cohort of Utp Rising artists all hailing from Western Sydney, who will be a part of this 4 year program. Young artists participated in a series of workshops led by artists, writers, performers, and arts workers across professional stages. Along with visits to art spaces, Utp Rising’s first year program introduced artists to multiple mediums, including digital art, photography, installation, printmaking, theatre and writing.

Utp Rising aims to expand young artists’ horizons on the possibilities of art, encourage critical thinking and experimentation. With a focus to engage young emerging Western Sydney creatives as facilitators, the program enables knowledge sharing, to equip artists with skills to navigate a career in our unique context.

Dates 2024

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Venue RS1, Bankstown Arts Centre

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Guest Presenters emoeba h♥rtbridge, National Association for the Visual Arts, Emily Greenwood, Nithya Nagarajan and Olivia Satchell

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Artists: Grace Almansour, Aliyah Safi, Benjamin La, Elijah Kinnavong, Aisata Bah, Nawar Alsabahi, Dani Abbas Isabelle Phillips, Jaz Birett, Zia S Mae

Credits **Utp Creative Producer:** Jane Wade

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*“This is a first experience, I really enjoyed it and I have not done this before.”*

— workshop participant



# dyanmila studio space

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 3-week access to a rent-free space, the *dyanmila studio* welcomed artists and collectives who want to develop a new project or body of work in a dedicated space and supportive environment with feedback from leaders in the industry.

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

Dates May - December 2024

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Venue Bankstown Arts Centre

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Partner Outloud

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**Artists:** Julian Hamman, Fei Gao, Milo Pittman, Lux Eterna, Heart Armour, Aysenur Kara, Nelson Nghe, Joyce Tang

Credits **Utp Creative Producer:** Jane Wade

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Image credit: *The Path*, Fei Gao, photo by Michael Cole, courtesy of USU and Verge Gallery



SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

# Measuring Impact: The Performing Arts and the Academy

This event brought together representatives from industry and government in collaboration with academics to explore the ways that 'impact' is understood and mobilised in the performing arts.

Focusing here on the connections between artists, artworks, arts organisations and their communities, this event helps inform practice in the performing arts sector and provide key insights for UNSW Arts, Design and Architecture's Societal Impact agenda.

**The activities in the symposium is as follows:**

**Workshop:** In this workshop, we addressed a need in the NSW small-medium performing arts sector to implement, measure and report on the impact and benefits of their work as it relates to their artists, staff and audiences/communities.

**Roundtable:** During this Roundtable, speakers addressed the term 'impact' as it occurs as a concept. Appearing in policies, 'impact' informs practices, and is experienced as a desire that drives the work we do. This session was recorded by a live scribe for future research use by all involved.

Dates 14 August 2024

Venue Esme Timbery Creative Practice Lab  
UNSW Kensington Campus, Sydney

Partner UNSW Arts, Design & Architecture

Credits **UNSW Associate Professor:** Erin Brannigan  
**Utp Co-Artistic Director:** Jessica Olivieri



# Partners & Supporters

## Organisational

Utp is supported by NSW Government through **Create NSW** and the **Neilson Foundation**.

Utp is a resident company at **Bankstown Arts Centre**, supported by **City of Canterbury Bankstown**.

## Projects

<b>Body Place</b>	This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body's VACS funding. With support from Create NSW, Creative Partnerships Australia, Neilsen Foundation, Bankstown Arts Centre and Tactical Lab UNSW.
<b>Crip Rave Theory</b>	This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body.
<b>Everything you can dream of is True</b>	This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body. This project is delivered in partnership with West Space.
<b>LIVE TO TELL MY STORY</b>	This project has been produced in partnership with Sweatshop Literacy Movement.
<b>15 Cigarettes</b>	This project has been supported by Canterbury Bankstown City Council, Sydney Community Foundation and assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body.



# Partners & Supporters

## Projects

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<b>Counterflows</b>	This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body. This project has been produced in partnership with Arts House and Runway Journal.
<b>Al Pheniq</b>	This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body.
<b>ALWAYS: Call and Response</b>	This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body.
<b>Dharug Collective</b>	This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body.
<b>She Rested</b>	This project is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW.
<b>Entity</b>	This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body.
<b>Utp Rising</b>	This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body.

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# Show Your Support

Support the creation of meaningful programming by donating to Utp. Join a passionate group of donors to seed contemporary Australian work by historically under-represented artists.

## Partnerships

Utp welcomes new ways to work with businesses and companies, particularly those based in Western Sydney. Utp invites potential sponsors and partners to discuss the possibilities of working together.

For more information, visit our [Support Us](#) page.

To discuss any aspect of Utp's philanthropy and development program, please email [admin@utp.org.au](mailto:admin@utp.org.au).

*Utp (Urban Theatre Projects) is a charitable institution and is registered as a deductible gift recipient. All donations made to the Urban Theatre Projects Public Fund of over \$2 are tax deductible. All donors are issued a tax receipt.*



# Our Team

*“I'm taking the liberty of writing a thank you on behalf of us artists to express a deep thank you for making space, time, funds and relationships happen.*

*We acknowledge your effort, time and generosity which goes into running an organisation.”*

— Lux Eterna

# Staff

## HANNAH DONNELL — CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Hannah Donnelly (she/her) is an award-winning Wiradjuri curator, artist, and producer. In 2022, Hannah established the Paul Ramsay Foundation's First Nations core art collection and permanent exhibition at Yirranma Place, she was a curatorium member for the 23rd Biennale of Sydney and she edited *Blacklight: Ten Years of First Nations Storytelling* (Sweatshop), a literary anthology of First Nations storytelling from Western Sydney. Her practice and curatorial research spans Indigenous Futures, south-eastern Aboriginal art and intergenerational/intercultural collaborations. Hannah brings her unique set of skills in arts leadership to Utp as Co-Artistic Director, with her background not only in multi-arts but also working in policy across international human rights law and developing fee-for-service cultural safety training models. She is passionate about standards and policies to implement organisational structures around ICIP (Indigenous and Cultural Intellectual Property) protection, benefit sharing and reparations. Hannah's previous roles include Producer of First Nations Programs at ACE and Curator of Aboriginal Programs at Carriageworks. Her recent publications include essays and poetry for Performance Space New York, *Artist Profile*, *After Australia*, *Sovereign Words*, *Artlink*, *Acclaim Magazine*, *Writers Victoria* and *Cordite Poetry Review*.

## JESSICA OLIVIERI — CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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 intersectional access to the arts.

## HAREEN JOHL — GENERAL MANAGER

Since 2020, Hareen Johl (she/her) has been working as a Co-Director and Treasurer at Pari, an artist-run space based in Parramatta. Her previous roles include Finance Manager and Head of Product at Art Money. Hareen's experience in a startup and early-stage business as well as a community-centred ARI has equipped her to improve and adapt an organisation's internal systems and structures to respond to its evolving needs, in order to best serve its values and communities.

Hareen completed a Master of Art Administration from University of New South Wales and holds a Bachelor of Finance & International Business from University of South Australia. Hareen grew up in Launceston, lutruwita/Tasmania.

#### 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 mum, working and making art.

#### AMY PRCEVICH—CREATIVE PRODUCER

Amy Prcevich (she/her) is an artist, curator and creative producer. Her approach to these overlapping roles is underpinned by conversation, research and writing. Amy has a particular interest in social and public space, language and labour. She is specifically interested in the nature and value of artist's labour, which was the focus of her recently completed Master of Fine Art (UNSW). She has participated in residencies at Test Sites (Public Art Development Grant, City of Melbourne) and Parramatta Artist Studios and has exhibited at The Substation, Arts House, Bus Projects (VIC) and Campbelltown Arts Centre, Pari and Firstdraft (NSW).

#### JANE WADE — CREATIVE PRODUCER

Jane Wade (she/they) is an emerging photographic artist based on the unceded land of the Cabrogal People working across photography, video and installation after recently completing a Bachelor of Design in Photography at UTS. Previously touching upon memory and simulacra, Jane's work is currently centred on communal surrealism as an understandable response to collective memory.

As of now, Jane is a co-director at Pari and recently participated in 'The Places We Call Home', a mentorship and exhibition program facilitated by AndThen Photo Agency and commissioned by Stocklands Merrylands. Previously, Jane has been a part of several group exhibitions heavily linked to her academic life; these spaces include the Art Gallery of NSW, Tamworth Regional Gallery, Airspace Projects, Babekuhl Gallery, and the Gaffa Gallery.

#### CELINE CHEUNG — COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Celine Cheung (she/her) is a visual artist based on Wallumedegal land, working across drawing, installation, performance, video projections and jewellery. She moves between art-making, education and curating as a freelance community facilitator. Celine has held roles at 4A Centre for 4A Centre of Contemporary Asian Art, Bankstown Arts Centre and various film festivals. Since completing a Bachelor of Fine Arts/Arts from UNSW Art and Design, she has worked with Parramatta Artists' Studios, The Waiting Room Project and Diversity Arts Australia to present various projects and commissions. She is also a Co-Director at artist-run gallery Pari.

#### RENAN SAN JOSE — FINANCIALS

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

# Board

TIAN ZHANG  
Chair

Tian Zhang (she/her) is an independent curator, facilitator and writer based on Dharug Country in western Sydney. She is a founding co-director of Pari, a collective-run gallery in Parramatta and the author of 'A manifesto for radical care or how to be a human in the arts' (Sydney Review of Books/ Documenta Fifteen Lumbung Press). She has curated and produced programs at Documenta Fifteen, Tate Modern (UK), AGNSW, Sydney Customs House, Sydney Festival, Brisbane Festival and Utp.

MICHELLE HANNA  
Chair until May

Michelle (she/her) is a communications and production specialist working across arts, media, not-for-profit and government. Currently Manager of Internal Communications at the Australian Communications and Media Authority, Michelle also chaired the Sydney Outreach Committee for Human Rights Watch in Australia. Previously, she worked on social impact documentaries and produced for TV arts channels. She was a casual arts reporter for SBS World News, and arts publicist including for Sculpture by the Sea, the Biennale of Sydney and triple j. Michelle is undertaking a Graduate Certificate of Social Impact at the UNSW's Centre for Social Impact.

AMANDA BRISOT

Amanda (she/her) is the Head of Engagement and Partnerships at Social Ventures Australia. Having grown up in the region, she is a passionate advocate for Western Sydney. Amanda has more than three decades of experience in marketing, commercial partnerships and stakeholder engagement across government, private and not-for-profit sectors.

SHANNON WILLIAMS (BROTHABLACK)

BrothaBlack (he/him) grew up and still lives on Dharug Country. He is one of Australia's pioneers of Indigenous Hip Hop, a founding member of South West Syndicate. BrothaBlack has released a solo album and is also an accomplished performance maker, working with Utp as a lead artist on projects including Back Home in 2007.

AKIN KARACA

Akin (he/him) is a Chartered Accountant with extensive experience in financial management, business strategy, and leadership across diverse sectors, including SMEs and multinational corporations. Akin is a former professional tour guide in Turkiye, where he was born. He came to Australia in 2003.

LOUANA SAINSBURY

Louana (she/her) is a Burramattagal Dharug woman and experienced producer and curator. Her practice spans theatre & performance, contemporary art, moving image and storytelling. Currently, she is a Creative Producer at Arts House. She has previously held roles at ACMI, Arts Centre Melbourne, Sydney Festival, Performing Lines, Think+DO Tank Foundation, Urban Theatre Projects, Belvoir and Bangarra Dance Theatre.

## PASCHAL DAANTOS BERRY

Paschal (he/him) is a curator, writer, performance maker and dramaturg. He was part of the curatorium for Rivus the 23rd Biennale of Sydney 2022 and the curator of programs for NIRIN the 22nd Biennale of Sydney 2020. He has previously held leadership roles at Blacktown Arts, the Biennale of Sydney and the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

## THINESH THILLAI

Thinesh (he/him) is an Eelam Tamil queer lawyer and creative. He is a banking lawyer and creator and producer of award winning podcast, You Have Been Told A Lie. Thinesh also works in community engagement for queer and south Asian communities.

## THEO PSYCHOGIOS

Until October

Theo (he/him) is a Partner with Deloitte's Financial Advisory practice and focuses on providing services to government agencies and private sector organisations. Theo has been a lead advocate for Western Sydney's sustainable and equitable growth. His work has influenced job generators, amenity and public infrastructure and services. Theo's Greek heritage has forged his unwavering belief in the value of community, culture, diversity, commitment, exchange and creative expression.

## MOUNA ZAYLAH

Until October

Mouna (she/her) is Arab Australian born and raised in Western Sydney. She is an arts and cultural development worker with over 25 years experience working in community arts and local government. She is the Director of Campbelltown Arts Centre. She held roles at Arab Film Festival, Screen NSW, Information and Cultural Exchange (ACE), Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre and a range of other community and youth based organisations over the years as an arts administrator, project coordinator and cultural consultant.

## CATHERINE SULLIVAN

Until May

Catherine (she/her) 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.

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