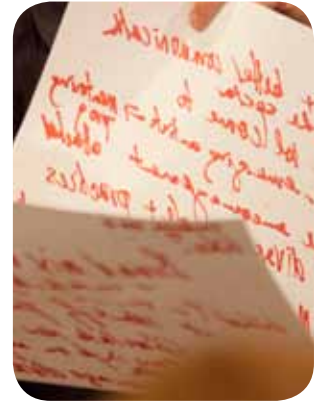


# Theatre Network Victoria

## *Annual Report 2011*



# Theatre Network Victoria (TNV)

Theatre Network Victoria advocates for the professional theatre industry.

We focus on strengthening the independent and small to medium sectors, and increasing connection between all parts of the industry. Theatre Network Victoria began as an initiative developed by the sector itself and funded by Arts Victoria through its Sector Development Partnerships program.

TNV operated as a project from May 2009 to December 2010. For the calendar year 2011, TNV received Annual Operations funding from Arts Victoria and two project grants from the Australia Council for the Arts, and it incorporated as an Association in March 2011.

In 2012, TNV received core Annual Operations funding from Arts Victoria.

This Report covers the period January 2011 to December 2011.

Victorian Theatre Meeting 2011, Malthouse Theatre. Photo: Gavin D Andrew





## FROM THE DIRECTOR

What a year 2011 proved to be for TNV! We produced the fabulous Australian Theatre Forum, which saw more than 280 theatre leaders from across the country meet for three days to determine strategies to strengthen the theatre industry.

Our Victorian Theatre Meeting saw 120 theatre makers meet to hear briefings from key sector events such as the Australian Theatre Forum, the Indigenous Theatre Forum and TheatreSpace; updates on topics such as the Malthouse Greenlight Project, Theatre Board news and artist provocations.

TNV coordinated training and network sessions in partnership with VAPAC, FCAC, APRA and more, and continued to work towards establishing a nation-wide theatre network by facilitating the growth of individual state/territory based networks.

In addition, our team grew as we added communications manager Anna Kelsey-Sugg and business manager Kim Webster to the mix; and our steadily increasing membership of theatre companies and theatre makers rose to nearly 800 (an increase of 75% on the previous year).

My heartfelt thanks to the committee for their support, especially Simon, Alice and Erin. Thanks to Anna who is a wonderful colleague; her smart style and voice show in all of TNV's communications, and big thanks to Kim for coming aboard so competently and keenly, and getting us up and running as a stand-alone organisation.

Thanks to all the theatre makers, our heart and soul, for continuing to make work and keeping theatre so dynamic and so relevant.

– Nicole Beyer, Director



## FROM THE CHAIR

I feel like a proud Dad, boasting about all the great work that Theatre Network Victoria has done. Certainly our baby has well and truly grown up. 2011 was the start of TNV's second chapter, now as an ongoing organisation rather than the one-off project first conceived by a group of industry leaders in 2008. We thank Arts Victoria for funding the organisation with core operational funding from its Annual Operations program for the first time.

In such a short period of time, TNV – led by the extraordinary Nicole Beyer – has more than grown into its ambitious plans, increasingly taking on projects of national significance. The Australian Theatre Forum was led by TNV, alongside the formation of an Australian Theatre Network – both with the support of Lyn Wallis and the Theatre Board of the Australia Council.

In both circumstances, it was inspiring to watch TNV staff take a real leadership role in leading sector development nationally, as well as to see the partnerships form so fruitfully across the country. Back at home, TNV organised a sold-out Victorian Theatre Meeting to frame local issues, among a busy program of activity.

My thanks to Nicole and her dedicated team Anna and Kim, as well as our committee of management for their tireless dedication to sector development well and truly above and beyond their day jobs. TNV is about the belief in something bigger and better than ourselves – because art matters. And so do drinks in foyers afterwards.

– Simon Abrahams, Chair

# Goals

## ADVOCACY

To provide an influential, respected, political voice for the sector.

## CAPACITY BUILDING

To build internal capacity within the theatre sector – individuals, organisations and networks – through connection with programs focused on sector development, professional development and theatre art-form development.

## ACTION RESEARCH

To gain and share evidence and understanding of sector issues nation wide.

## CREATING CONNECTION

To facilitate networking, information sharing, and connection in the theatre sector and the broader arts industry.

## COMMUNICATIONS AND SECTOR MARKETING STRATEGY

To communicate and articulate our messages clearly and effectively to our constituency, to the broader arts industry, to political decision makers and to the general public.

## GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

To capably manage and govern Theatre Network Victoria in an effective, responsible and creative manner.



# Highlights

Some highlights from 2011

- Second annual Victorian Theatre Meeting, Malthouse Theatre, 3 November 2011 (sold out)
- Australian Theatre Forum 2011, 14–16 September, Brisbane Powerhouse (sold out)
- 2011 Small to Medium Arts Organisation Remuneration Report
- Working with other service organisations and peak bodies on advocacy issues facing the sector, such as the National Cultural Policy, touring, and state and national arts funding reviews
- Working with national Arts Peak colleagues on national issues including submitting to the National Cultural Policy
- 11 monthly e-news editions and 16 other specific updates/ opportunities; TNV website improvements; four info sessions run
- Advocacy to the Australia Council on behalf of Victorian sector
- Promotion of sector issues through the media
- Supporting and working with other advocacy groups including DATA, Tipping Point, Ausdance and ACAPTA
- Developing federation of state-based networks – Theatre Network Australia.

Australian Theatre Forum 2011, Brisbane Powerhouse. Photo: Sean Young





# Achievements against goals

## Advocacy

- Worked with service organisations and peak bodies, including Arts Industry Council (Vic), on issues facing sector. Supported call for key funding programs at Arts Victoria to be continued. Sought funding announcements for our members after delays in the process. Contributed to submissions and consultation. Set meetings with key arts public sector managers.
- Worked with national Arts Peak colleagues on national issues that affect the Victorian sector, including meeting new Arts Minister Simon Crean, submitting to the National Cultural Policy consultation and contributing to the issue of the arts content cuts to the ABC. In its NCP submission, TNV expressed support for a Cultural Policy and argued for the inclusion of the issue of environmental sustainability, emphasising the arts and cultural sectors' great concern about the impacts of climate change.
- Promoted sector issues through the media, for example through interviews with *The Age* and *Crikey* journalists.

## Action Research

- Published the 2011 S2M Arts Organisation Remuneration Report.
- Created sector survey to assess needs and concerns of the industry, including priorities for action, outcomes from ATF and national concerns.

## Creating Connection

- Information sessions run including 'Rights and Risks' with Arts Law, APRA Music Rights, and Drinks in the West network event. Continuing to be the industry moderator for the Drama section of ArtsCareer.com.au
- Supported other advocacy groups including Diverse Australian Theatre Alliance, Tipping Point and ACAPTA.

*"The [Victorian Theatre] Meeting gave great insight into issues and strengths surrounding the theatre industry and provided valuable information ... which will be utilised to strengthen and create connections within the industry." – SkillsHub*



## Capacity Building

- Produced the national Australian Theatre Forum in Brisbane for 280 delegates – a sold-out, dynamic, three-day event with a diverse range of delegates and speakers from around Australia. Ten areas of action to strengthen the Australian theatre sector were determined (see page 10).
- Produced the 2nd annual Victorian Theatre Meeting on 3 November at Malthouse Theatre – a sold-out, half-day conference for over 110 professional theatre workers, with sector briefings, artist provocations, table discussions and networking.
- Worked with other states and territories on building capacity within their theatre sectors, towards a federation of networks – Theatre Network Australia – funded by the Australia Council.

## Communications and Sector Marketing Strategy

- Communicated information with our members via 11 monthly e-news editions and 16 specific updates/opportunities to over 700 subscribers.
- Increased Twitter usage, regularly communicating theatre news, events and opportunities, which saw a 330% increase of TNV followers (to around 500).
- Enhanced TNV website to improve capacity for publishing industry resources and TNV project information, and to enable online subscription.



# Achievements against goals cont...

## Governance and Management Strategy

2011 was the first year of TNV operating as an annually funded organisation and, to that end, we incorporated as an Association in March 2011. We still relied on Arena Theatre Company for financial management and we thank them for their professional and supportive work and advice throughout the past three years. In 2012 we will be running our finances in house.

Our core turnover for the organisation for the year 2011 was \$109,473. In addition, we produced and oversaw the financial management of the Australian Theatre Forum, with an income of \$192,933. We thank our colleagues at Metro Arts for auspicing the ATF project for us; it was a great partnership arrangement and a demonstration of successful models of national project management.

In 2011 we recruited two new staff for TNV: Anna Kelsey-Sugg, our 0.4 EFT Communications Manager, and Kim Webster, our 0.2 EFT Business Manager. We have very part-time hours, but very full-time commitment!

We love our new home at the Auspicious Arts Incubator in Bank Street South Melbourne and we thank all of our neighbours and colleagues for supporting us this year.

The TNV Committee of Management met eight times in 2011, overseeing the incorporation, the planning for 2012 and beyond, the governance of the two national projects, the reporting and acquitting of previous grants, and supporting the Director with the recruitments of Anna and Kim and other management tasks. The audit for 2011 was undertaken by Arena Theatre Company's auditor as a part of their audit. Details available on request.







# Victorian Theatre Meeting

**3 November 2011, Malthouse Theatre, 12.45–5pm**

Speakers included

**Fiona Winning** Curator, *Australian Theatre Forum 2011*

**John Harvey** Freelance Producer, *Brown Cabs*

**Rachael Maza** Artistic Director, *Ilbijerri Theatre*

**Verity Higgins** Regional Arts Development Officer, *Regional Arts Victoria*  
with the City of Ballarat

**Michele Bauer** Chairperson, *Malthouse Theatre's Malthouse Greenlight Team*

**Liz Jones** Artistic Director, *La Mama Theatre*

**Stephen Armstrong** Chair, Theatre Board, *Australia Council for the Arts*

**Dr Christine Sinclair** (Chief Investigator) and **Tim Stitz** (Project Manager)  
*Theatre Space, University of Melbourne*

**Jill Morgan** CEO, *Multicultural Arts Victoria*

**Christian Leavesley** Artistic Associate, *Arena Theatre Company* and  
independent artist.

Discussions were held to address issues such as: outcomes and aims for future Australian Theatre Forums; building and engaging with indigenous and diverse audiences; supporting locally based, professional theatre in regional Victoria; making sustainability part of the core business of arts organisations; the changing face of independent theatre; the impact of young people on programming; and the pros and cons of working as independent artists.

*"My perception of what can be done for the future of Australian arts was expanded exponentially by reflecting on first-hand knowledge provided by major players in our cultural community. Conversely, I feel that my contribution to the discussion – and, at some stages, heated debate – provided these very same experienced artists with a more invigorated approach to concerns or issues they've been dealing with for a long time." – Danny Delahunty, Artistic Director, AtticErratic*



# Australian Theatre Forum

**14–16 September 2011, Brisbane Powerhouse**

ATF 2011 was guided by a national steering committee:

**Nicole Beyer** (Chair, Director *TNV*)

**Candy Bowers** (Freelance Superstar)

**Lenine Bourke** (Artistic Director *Contact Inc*)

**Liz Burcham** (CEO *Metro Arts*)

**Wesley Enoch** (Artistic Director *Queensland Theatre Company*)

**Kristy Edmunds** (Artistic Advisor *Park Avenue Armoury New York*)

**Fiona Maxwell** (Queensland Manager *Artsupport Australia*)

**Chris Mead** (Director *Playwriting Australia*)

**Rose Myers** (Artistic Director *Windmill Theatre*)

**Alicia Talbot** (Artistic Director *Urban Theatre Projects*).

Curator – Fiona Winning; Project Manager – Rebecca Meston.

The ATF 2011 was themed **Convictions & Connections: Urgent Conversations**. Compelling ideas. Inspiring vision. Professional theatre makers and artists from around Australia – working as independents, in large and small companies, festivals and venues – congregated in Brisbane for the second ATF.



ATF 2011 crew (l-r): Rebecca Meston, Anna Kelsey-Sugg, Fiona Winning, Nicole Beyer.

## Ten priorities to emerge from ATF 2011

- Strengthening Young People and Theatre
- Embracing Environmental Sustainability
- Better and More Efficient Managing
- Taking up Digital & NBN Opportunities
- Developing New Ideas for Touring
- Arts Action – politics & money
- Strengthening Partnerships & Networking
- Mixing it Up – Diversity in Theatre
- Supporting Independent Practice
- Valuing Creativity and Imagination

# Staff and Committee



## Staff

Director: Nicole Beyer

Communications Manager: Anna Kelsey-Sugg

Business Manager: Kim Webster

## Committee

Simon Abrahams, Co-CEO *Polyglot* (Chair)

Alice Nash, Executive Producer, *Back to Back Theatre* (Deputy Chair)

Erin Milne, General Manager, *Arena Theatre* (Treasurer)

Görkem Acaroglu, Creative Director, *Melbourne Workers Theatre*

Sarah Austin, Artistic Director, *St Martins Youth Theatre*

Rose Godde, Company Manager, *Platform Youth Theatre*

John Harvey, Creative Producer, *Brown Cabs*

Emily Sexton, Artistic Director, *Next Wave Theatre*

Ann Tonks, General Manager, *Melbourne Theatre Company*

Chris Thompson, freelance writer, Artistic Directorate member *Jigsaw Theatre*

Theatre Network Victoria thanks its funding bodies Arts Victoria and the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.



# Theatre Network Victoria

**Nicole Beyer | Director**

nicole@tnv.net.au

**Anna Kelsey-Sugg | Communications Manager**

anna@tnv.net.au

**Kim Webster | Business Manager**

kim@tnv.net.au

ph: (03) 8256 9685

w: tnv.net.au

228 Bank Street, South Melbourne 3205

twitter: @TheatreNetworkV

facebook: Theatre Network Victoria

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