

**Juute**  
theatre

**2009**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

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## Introduction

Born in Cairns in 1992, JUTE Theatre is a significant regional theatre company driving the development, co-production and national and global touring of contemporary Australian plays from the regions.

JUTE passionately engages others in the telling of new stories that stimulates the mind, revitalizes the spirit and lifts the heart, providing a true sense of true belonging.

Since 2004 JUTE Theatre has operated from its home at the Centre of Contemporary Arts - a significant regional infrastructure, funded by State Government.

## Vision

To make regional theatre a powerhouse of national and global collaboration and creation.

## Mission

From our North Queensland home, we develop and produce bold new work and collaborate with regional and metropolitan theatre companies, producers and venues to create and move new work from regional theatre makers across Australia. We support, mentor and nurture the development of independent theatre makers, independent producers and emerging theatre companies in the regions.

## Commitment

JUTE Theatre is committed to a flourishing regional theatre sector and drives strategies at local, state and national levels for the development of this sector. JUTE Theatre has a strong commitment to professional development for regional practitioners across the nation and provides opportunities to break down the isolation felt by these practitioners, leading to collaboration, co-productions and touring of new regional work. All work generated by JUTE Theatre and its co-producers starts with development of work through the annual script development programs. These multi award-winning programs support regional playwrights at a local, state and national level and use best practice models to ensure quality skills and script development with a view to production of distinctive scripts.

## The Future

The future is exciting. JUTE Theatre believes there is a distinctiveness and validity of work taking place in regional centres that stands beside metropolitan work, creating a rich ecology in the theatre sector. With 40% of Australia's population living in the regions, and as more people move to regional centres, the sector needs to be ready to take a significant role in nurturing the vibrancy of these communities. JUTE Theatre is a company that has the vision and the rigour to make regional theatre an energetic powerhouse of creation and collaboration.

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# OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS

## PRODUCTIONS

Each year JUTE Theatre produces or co-produces a season of 3 new plays from regional playwrights, touring some of these works through the Theatre to the Edge regional touring initiative. Through this same initiative JUTE Theatre presents seasons of work from companies in regional Queensland and the Northern Territory.

## SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM & REGIONAL THEATRE CONFERENCE

Each year JUTE Theatre develops the work of up to 16 regional playwrights and produces a National Regional Playwrights and Theatre Makers Conference that provides skills development, exposure of new regional plays and career pathways for regional theatre makers. We support, mentor and nurture the development of independent theatre makers, independent producers and emerging theatre companies in the regions.

## JUTE THEATRE VENUE HIRE

In 2009 the responsibility for Venue Hire was taken over by the Cairns Civic Theatre, allowing JUTE Theatre to focus on its core business.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

JUTE Theatre grew out of the Cairns community and engages with the community at many levels. Apart from providing an annual season of professional contemporary performances for our regional community, JUTE Theatre develops new, emerging and mature playwrights and theatre makers, connecting freelance artists to the broader national theatre sector. JUTE Theatre also provides independent producers with an opportunity to produce work as part of the JUTE Theatre Indie Season and supports the development of emerging theatre companies. JUTE Theatre undertakes school holiday programs for young people aged 7 – 16 years and engages schools through workshop programs and school matinees.

## AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

JUTE Theatre is committed to bringing new audiences to theatre in regional Australia. We annually undertake audience development programs to understand the barriers to people attending theatre. JUTE Theatre collects significant information from exit surveys and forum groups for each of its seasons of plays. This information is shared with other regional companies in Australia.

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# 2009 OVERVIEW

## JUTE THEATRE PRODUCTIONS & CO-PRODUCTIONS

Cake  
Half Way There  
The Shining Path

## THEATRE TO THE EDGE PRESENTATIONS

Watu – Creative Development & Workshops – Darwin Theatre Company  
Oedipus– Tropic Sun Theatre, Townsville

## PRESENTATIONS & HOSTED EVENTS IN THE JUTE Theatre

Indie Producer: Fools Freaks & Femme Fatales  
Indie Producer: Roland Thring and the Year all his Christmases Came at Once  
On Edge Festival  
Interplay – International Festival of Young Playwrights

## THEATRE TO THE EDGE OUTBOUND TOURS – TOWNSVILLE, MACKAY, DARWIN, ALICE SPRINGS, MALANDA & PORT DOUGLAS

Cake  
Half Way There  
The Shining Path

## QUEENSLAND ARTS COUNCIL TOUR

Gods of Spicy Things – A Divine Comedy

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

Lost Boys (Working Title)  
Stops the Nation  
Macbeth

## DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Enter Stage Write – annual script & playwright development program  
National Regional Playwrights & Theatre Makers Conference  
Indie Season – Supporting the development of regional independent producers  
Mentoring opportunities for emerging directors

## AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Focus Forums – theatre non-attendees program  
Test Drive the Arts – Introduction to theatre project

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# CHAIR'S REPORT

The year 2009 has been a difficult year for JUTE Theatre as the GFC made its mark on the regional economy. However, as the Artistic Director/CEO's report reveals, the year was a triumph in terms of touring, co-productions and mentoring via the Indie Season. JUTE Theatre is proud of its contribution to the network of theatre professionals in our region and around the country and we are held in high esteem for the connections that we make and the bridges that we continue to build.

At home we had a successful season of locally developed new work and pushed the boundaries in terms of stunning use of multimedia. All of our works are in 3-D and special glasses are not required!

2009 was our first full year of triennial funding with both Arts Queensland and the Australia Council and we are extremely grateful for that support and the imprimatur that this gives us. The level of certainty that the triennial funding provides has allowed us a small window of relative stability, but all too soon the cycle continues and we must sharpen our pencils and compete for our existence. Many of our colleague companies around the nation have been de-funded and that is a sad thing for the arts. It is unlikely to get better in the short term.

The JUTE Theatre Board met 10 times in 2009 and we continue to function well as a team. Unfortunately, we lost the services of Director and school drama legend Leigh Boswell who left to set up the highly successful "The Young Company" early in the year to further her interests in youth theatre. Not much later, Pip Miller (Director and PR whiz) left us for work and family reasons. And then mid-year Mick Linnan (Company Secretary) resigned due to excessive work commitments with the Queensland Government that followed a well-earned promotion. Much of the gap was ably filled by new recruit Shelley Evans-Wild who has hit the ground running. Shelley has a high profile around Cairns as a successful small business operator, former President of the Cairns Business Women's Club, and a current Vice President of the Cairns Chamber of Commerce. She brings to the board valuable skills in business, HR, and being busy.

The current Board has a broad range of skills including the arts, finance, business, law, planning, and the environment and is soon to add government and the built environment to the list. As in previous years, the JUTE Theatre "family" continues to supplement these skills via our volunteer program in particular. This program has yielded people with a range of skills, expertise and dedication and they contribute to the functioning of the company by complementing the skills of our hardworking staff. Our success would not be possible without our dedicated staff and volunteers – all have done a great job in 2009 and the Board certainly recognises this and thanks everyone for their efforts.

We had an interesting Strategic Planning session late in 2009, ably and generously facilitated by Susan Nixon. This helped us take stock of who we are

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and what we stand for. We also have some exciting ideas for branding and product definition that we believe will help audiences better anticipate the content and nature of our shows.

Unfortunately, the company has lost the services of JUTE stalwart Sarah Flenley in early 2010. Sarah has moved on to other pastures producing a commercial theatre product. Good luck, Sarah, and thanks for your dedication over the years. On the positive side, we created a new position of Associate Director and have welcomed Christopher Glover to that role. Christopher's contributions have already been felt and his excitement and enthusiasm is infecting all who work with him. He has also helped take some of CEO Suellen Maunder's load and has allowed her to devote more time to the business of JUTE Theatre. Thanks to Suellen for a huge year and for so ably responding to a raft of difficult situations that seem to go with the arts. And we do enjoy seeing you on the stage as well.

Last year's optimism that we would have a new Business Plan for the management of the Centre of Contemporary Arts in place by mid-2009 was misplaced, and negotiations continue between Arts Queensland and the Cairns Regional Council about the preferred model for management of the Centre. In the meantime, we are continuing to collaborate informally with the Cairns Civic Theatre about use of the JUTE Theatre and the new Rehearsal Studio. The lack of a café continues to leave a gap in our street appeal but there are plans afoot to remedy this. As we have learned to do before, we just get on with doing what we do ...

One of our great achievements in enhancing our connections with our community has been the launching of our new look eNews electronic newsletter and a fresh new web site. The eNews format promises to be a great tool for reaching out and selling our message, getting feedback, recognising sponsors and patrons, and seeking providers to help us with running our business. Thanks to board member Shelley Evans-Wild and her dedicated staff for helping to make it so.

I hope that all of our friends enjoyed the 2009 JUTE Theatre year as much as I did.



David Rivett  
Chair

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# ARTISTIC DIRECTOR/CEO'S REPORT

In 2009 JUTE Theatre once again produced and toured three bold new plays for the Australian stage. Two of the works were commissioned as part of the Q150 (Queensland's 150th anniversary), and celebrated quintessentially Queensland characters and places. Directed by our newly appointed Associate Director, Christopher Glover, the plays reinforced JUTE Theatre's very particular style of heightened theatricality, pushing design, sound and lighting as equal partners with performance and text. *"Each woman's domain, her kitchen, is captured cleverly by Ede – with the props and set working as an extension of each character". (Cake by Kathryn Ash); "this play has all its components integrated seamlessly from sets to costume to music and acting" (The Shining Path by Victoria Carless).*

The first of these Queensland-specific plays was a co-production with Townsville company Tropic Sun Theatre which is itself in the process of articulating its own distinctive style.

The third new work came from our collaboration with Darwin companies, Knock-em-Down Theatre and Darwin Theatre Company which under the strong direction of Ian Sinclair and his creative team drew a beautiful evocation of NT life and landscape.

*"...transported the audience to the strange world of remote Northern Territory and a pub that has become the centre of the universe for the three protagonists." (Half Way There by Mary Anne Butler)*

We were very proud to support and mentor the two Indie Season independent producers that brought to the theatre two very different shows, a contemporary burlesque circus and a heartwarming children's story, such a wonderful variety for our audiences and a significant learning curve for our independent producers.

Our Enter Stage Write script development program continued to support 14 writers (new, emerging and established) in the development of their craft as well as their scripts. Dramaturge Peter Matheson continues to be the cornerstone of this program and the company acknowledges the commitment and dedication that Peter brings to the company and to the writers he supports.

For the first time, JUTE's annual conference, the National Regional Playwrights & Theatre Makers Conference, was held in Brisbane in collaboration with Metro Arts and Playlab Inc. *"At The Centre of the Edge"*, the Independent Theatre Makers Conference brought together regional and metropolitan practitioners from across Australia to engage in discussions about the state of independent practice and share stories, ideas and engage in professional development workshops.

*"Has allowed me to breathe in, open up, step outside myself and look back. It's given me exposure to people and ideas; inspirational and career altering." (Conference participant feedback)*

In what was to be the final year of the Theatre to the Edge initiative, that supported the collaboration and touring of work by regional companies across Queensland and the Northern Territory, JUTE Theatre toured its productions and

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co-productions to Mackay, Townsville, Darwin, Alice Springs, Malanda and Port Douglas.

JUTE presented two Theatre to the Edge touring productions in Cairns. A new imagining of Oedipus by Tropic Sun Theatre that went on to tour to Japan. In a first for the Theatre to the Edge initiative, we toured a creative development of a new work, *Watu* by Tom E. Lewis in collaboration with Angela Chaplin.

Our very successful 2008 production *Gods of Spicy Things – A divine comedy* was taken on a whirlwind tour of 25 centres in 5 weeks in regional and remote Queensland through the Queensland Arts Council Onstage Ontour program.

JUTE continued to connect with the community through a range of workshops, mentoring programs and audience development projects.

In some ways 2009 represented a new beginning and the end of an era. Becoming an Australia Council triennially funded company was certainly a new beginning for JUTE (having successfully achieved triennial funding with Arts Queensland in 2008). However the landscape in Queensland and the Northern Territory significantly changed with the defunding of two of our major collaborators (Darwin Theatre Company and Tropic Sun Theatre) and the termination of Theatre to the Edge initiative, which had created such a high level of collaboration, outbound touring and touring presentations at the JUTE Theatre. In a review of theatre in the Northern Territory funded by Australia Council and Arts NT, the Qld/NT version of this initiative was hailed by the consultant Justin Macdonnell as *"..one of the most imaginative developments for the growth and exchange of original theatre work made in regional circumstances that has been evolved since the commencement of public arts funding in Australia."* He went on to say: *"While many hands and minds have contributed to it, the kudos should go to Just Us Theatre Ensemble (JUTE Theatre) in Cairns for so vigorously pursuing it and Arts Queensland for sustaining it. Properly managed and resourced, it has the potential to transform the way in which theatre is nurtured and grown in Northern Australia and to offer a paradigm for its support elsewhere in regional Australia.* It is a shame to have lost a program with such great outcomes and future potential.

"The global financial crisis finally caught up with our region towards the end of 2009 and some tightening of purse strings has begun to affect our audiences. However, JUTE has always had a great connection with its community and audiences and our fresh and exciting new Australian plays continue to bring audiences to our theatre.

A number of staff changes made it difficult to achieve some of the newer strategies that JUTE had hoped to implement in 2009. The resignation of the General Manager at the beginning of 2010, after 6 years of loyal service, was a great loss to the company but has given the company an opportunity to revise the staffing arrangements towards a stable future.

I would like to thank Sarah Flenley for her passion, dedication and hard work. Sarah was responsible for raising the profile of JUTE and her ability to build and

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maintain excellent relationships with the media, volunteers and audiences was second to none. I greatly valued Sarah's support and she is sorely missed.

On the positive side, I would like to acknowledge the significant attributes that Christopher Glover our new Associate Director brings to the company. Christopher has a substantial background in the development of new work, a terrific directorial vision and a passion for JUTE and contemporary theatre that he consistently communicates to our collaborators and audiences.

Our young Production Co-ordinator, Elisha Oatley shows great potential having only recently graduated from her Creative Industries degree. I believe that JUTE will be the first step on the road to a very successful career in theatre for this young woman and we feel a great sense of responsibility for the quality training and mentoring of this emerging arts worker.

Our Finance Manager Veronica Cullen, continues to refine our financial procedures and maintains excellent records and is a loyal, valued member of our small team. Jessica Masters our new young Administration Assistant has only begun her journey with JUTE and we look forward to supporting her development.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work, expertise and generosity of the JUTE Board of Directors and particularly the Chair David Rivett and new board member Shelley Evans-Wild. Their contribution and personal support of my position and the company has been invaluable.

Change is always energising and I am looking forward to the challenge of working closely with my Associate Director and our many collaborators to reinvent, re-imagine and reignite our love of great storytelling from regional Queensland!



Suellen Maunder  
Artistic Director/CEO

# JUTE THEATRE PRODUCTIONS & CO-PRODUCTIONS

## CAKE

TOWNSVILLE  
DARWIN  
MACKAY  
CAIRNS

25 FEB – 7 MAR  
11 – 15 MAR  
18 & 19 MAR  
24 MAR – 4 APR



VENUE	Townsville	Court Theatre
	Darwin	Browns Mart
	Mackay	Entertainment Centre
	Cairns	JUTE Theatre
Total no of performances	Townsville	11
	Darwin	6
	Mackay	2
	Cairns	11
Total paid attendances	Townsville	578
	Darwin	271
	Mackay	296
	Cairns	1162
All attendances	Townsville	694
	Darwin	355
	Mackay	341
	Cairns	1302
Total net box office	Townsville	\$14,845
	Darwin	\$5,564
	Mackay	\$3,501
	Cairns	\$28,151

## WORLD PREMIERE

## A JUTE THEATRE AND TROPIC SUN THEATRE COPRODUCTION

WRITER Kathryn Ash // DIRECTOR Christopher Glover // DESIGNER Luke Ede // LIGHTING DESIGN Jason Glenwright // COMPOSER SOUND DESIGNER John Goodson // CAST Madonna Davies, Karen Gibb, Susan Prince

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*The three female leads Madonna Davies (Mardi), Karen Gibb (Cooee) and Susan Prince (Birdie) were magnificent on opening night – sustaining energetic and vibrant performances in what is a physically demanding play filled with joyous, over-the-top song and dance numbers.*

*The performance of Susan Prince, as Birdie Crabbe, was especially enjoyable, swinging through a wide emotional range with a mixture of strength and fragility. (Townsville Bulletin)*

*Davies is an audience favourite. Her ability to throw herself into uproarious laughter that peters to a trickle was highly amusing, and she is a powerful singer.*

*Cake is a riotous rumble of madness and laughter and it's sure to have a long and successful run. (Cairns Post)*

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# HALF WAY THERE

CAIRNS

7 – 15 AUG

DARWIN

19 – 23 AUG

ALICE SPRINGS

27 & 28 AUG

TOWNSVILLE

2 – 6 SEPT



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VENUE	Cairns Darwin Alice Springs Townsville	JUTE Theatre Darwin Entertainment Centralian Theatre Court Theatre
Total no of performances	Cairns Darwin Alice Springs Townsville	9 6 2 5
Total paid attendances	Cairns Darwin Alice Springs Townsville	643 766 21 137
All attendances	Cairns Darwin Alice Springs Townsville	737 882 101 176
Total net box office	Cairns Darwin Alice Springs Townsville	\$16,187 \$17,805 \$1,703 \$1,953

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## WORLD PREMIERE

## A KNOCK-EM-DOWN, JUTE THEATRE AND DARWIN THEATRE COMPANY COPRODUCTION

WRITER Mary Anne Butler // DIRECTOR Iain Sinclair // DESIGNER Dominie Hooper // LIGHTING DESIGN Matt Scott // COMPOSER SOUND DESIGNER Steve Toulman // CAST Ralph Cotteril, Gail Evans, Laura Pike

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It has echoes of Ray Lawler's Doll in its use of down-to-earth, pithy one-liners and its gradual revelation of home truths that the characters will not admit either to strangers or, most of all, themselves. (Arts Nexus)

The performances of all three actors are superb, complementing the authentic set and moody lighting that transport the audience into the world that is half way. (Cairns Sun)

Setting the scene of the run-down outback pub is a seamless part of the production, with eerie dingo calls, maddening insect din, and chunks of red dirt on the ground. . . . . Very much Australian and very much an original play, make sure you go and see Halfway There (Arts Hub)

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# THE SHINING PATH

CAIRNS  
MALANDA  
PT. DOUGLAS

13 – 28 NOV  
2 NOV  
4 – 6 NOV



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VENUE	Cairns Malanda Port Douglas	JUTE Theatre Majestic Theatre Clink Theatre
Total no of performances	Cairns Malanda Port Douglas	15 1 3
Total paid attendances	Cairns Malanda Port Douglas	461 91 73
All attendances	Cairns Malanda Port Douglas	698 93 79
Total net box office	Cairns Malanda Port Douglas	\$11,530 \$1,575 \$1,820

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## WORLD PREMIERE A JUTE THEATRE PRODUCTION

WRITER Victoria Carless // DIRECTOR Christopher Glover // DESIGNER Luke Ede //  
LIGHTING DESIGN Jason Glenwright // COMPOSER SOUND DESIGNER John Goodson //  
CAST Syd Brisbane, Sue Hayes, Luke Kite, Peter Marshall

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“Luke Kite and Sue Hayes play all the characters the hapless lads meet on their journey. Their performances and inventions often cause the audience to burst into spontaneous applause. Under Christopher Glover’s directorial hand, this play has all its components integrated so seamlessly, from sets to costume to music and acting.” (Cairns Post)

Christopher Glover has drawn together a talented and versatile experienced cast, Syd Brisbane, Luke Kite, Peter Marshall and Sue Hayes. They worked meticulously as a team bringing energy, zest and a high calibre of acting expertise to the whole performance. (Arts Nexus)

While comedy comes very much to the fore in this lively production there is a serious undertone – the catastrophic incident in Peru that has put a wedge between Len and Dale. The Shining Path is an entertainingly funny ride that ultimately revolves around friendship, honesty and, in the end, redemption. (Cairns Sun)

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# THEATRE TO THE EDGE PRESENTATIONS

THEATRE TO THE EDGE IS A TOURING AND COLLABORATION INITIATIVE THAT SUPPORTS THE TOURING OF REGIONAL COMPANIES TO CENTRES ACROSS QUEENSLAND AND NORTHERN TERRITORY.

## WATU CAIRNS

11 – 16 MAY



Instead of touring an end product, The Watu project was a creative development that moved through 3 centres. The creatives, Tom E. Lewis (writer/performer) and Angela Chaplain (Director/Dramaturg) traveled to Cairns, Townsville and Mackay. Tom and Angela spent time in the rehearsal room developing the production and also took part in workshops with indigenous and school groups. The outreach workshops at local high schools were well attended. Tom and Angela had a reasonably flexible structure, so that they could respond to the feel of the room. Within this framework, some of the key issues that Tom was examining were introduced to the students, country, land, manners, respect, culture and of course storytelling. There was also a physical and rhythmic dimension to the workshops. The feedback from staff and students was very positive.

The week in Cairns finished with a 'showcase' of the work that had been developed over the week. 75 people attended the presentation of the "work in progress". The audience got a clear sense of the use of puppets, Watu (the dog) and the little boy. The small boy and his dog had an epic quality.

Angela had created a rough framework of possible scenes and these white cards were laid out on the stage like a storyboard. This loose narrative enabled Tom to be free to continue to create during the presentation. Angela helped the audience with stage directions, excerpts of story and the more metaphysical elements that have not yet translated into theatre language.

The evening was a huge success. An optimistic positive message about the power and responsibility we all have for country, culture and each other as people who share this land.

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# OEDIPUS

CAIRNS

17 – 20 JUNE



VENUE	Cairns	JUTE Theatre
Total no of performances	Cairns	15
Total paid attendances	Cairns	290
All attendances	Cairns	307
Total net box office	Cairns	\$5,563

## A TROPIC SUN THEATRE PRODUCTION A THEATRE TO THE EDGE PRESENTATION

WRITER Sophocles adapted by Tropic Sun // DIRECTOR Karen Gibb // CAST Jeremy Cheetham, Madonna Davies, Karen Gibb, Kate Hooper, Ron Pulman, Mark Reed & Anthony Ring.

Audience Exit Surveys:

Liked the sound effects and minimalist stage setting; Loved the creative use of all performance elements; Liked the costumes and interesting take on story

## INDIE SEASON

THE INDIE SEASON IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR REGIONAL INDEPENDENT THEATRE PRODUCERS TO HAVE THEIR WORK INCLUDED IN JUTE'S ANNUAL SEASON, TAKING

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ADVANTAGE OF JUTE'S RESOURCES AND EXPERTISE WHILE RETAINING CREATIVE CONTROL OF THEIR WORK. THE INDIE PRODUCERS ARE CHOSEN THROUGH A COMPETITIVE APPLICATION PROCESS AND ARE GIVEN \$5000 TOWARDS THE COST OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTION AND GIVEN CONSULTATION TIME WITH JUTE PRODUCTION MANAGERS AND CREATIVES. THE INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS ARE MENTORED BY JUTE STAFF THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS. THE INDIE SEASON STRATEGY IS ABOUT CREATING PROFESSIONAL PATHWAYS AND BUILDING SKILLS IN THE REGION.

## FOOLS FREAKS & FEMME FATALES

CAIRNS

9 – 12 DECEMBER



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VENUE	Cairns	JUTE Theatre
Total no of performances	Cairns	4
Total paid attendances	Cairns	544
All attendances	Cairns	544

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### PRODUCER: NERISSA BRANDENBERGER

Written & Directed by Nerissa Brandenberger // CAST Shep Huntley, Patrick Bath, Amelia Pegrum, Sophia Scarlett and Piers Freeman.

## ROLAND THRING AND THE YEAR ALL HIS CHRISTMASSES CAME AT ONCE

CAIRNS

16 - 19 DECEMBER

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VENUE	Cairns	JUTE Theatre
Total no of performances	Cairns	9
Total paid attendances	Cairns	643
All attendances	Cairns	737

**PRODUCER: ROD AINSWORTH**

Written & Directed by Rod Ainsworth // Set Design by Dominic Hooper // Light Design by Jason Glenwright // Sound design by Peter Rankin// CAST Finn O’Branagain & Susan Prince



## *HOSTED EVENTS in the JUTE Theatre*

### *On Edge Festival*

Now in its 6th year, On Edge Contemporary Media + Performance is an annual program of contemporary arts which strives to produce a Nationally and Internationally relevant program of independent new work, that traverses the various disciplines of performance, sound, screen, new media and installation.

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## *World Interplay – International festival of young playwrights*

World Interplay, for playwrights aged 18-26, is the largest international festival of young playwrights in the world. For two weeks every two years, fifty playwrights from thirty nations are joined by leading international directors and dramaturgs for two weeks of play development, workshops, forums, and cultural exchange. For the first time the Festival was hosted by JUTE Theatre in Cairns, having spent the last number of years in Townsville. The festival is a significant opportunity for young playwrights to develop their craft and to soak up another culture and JUTE was proud to play a part in the success of the festival.

## *DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS*

### *Creative Developments*

#### **Lost Boys**

Creative Team

Playwright	Michael Beresford
Director	Kate Gaul
Dramaturge	Peter Matheson
Designer	Dominie Hooper
Digital Vision	Russell Milledge

This script has been in development since late 2007 and as the work grew it became apparent that the work required a significant digital media component in the telling of the story as intended by the writer. While JUTE has engaged in AV and film within a production, it was clear that the level of digital vision required by this piece could not be realized within a 4-week rehearsal process. The creative development also offered JUTE the opportunity to set up structures for working effectively with digital media on future productions.

#### **Stops the Nation**

Creative Team

Playwright	Angela Murphy
Director	Christopher Glover
Dramaturge	Peter Matheson

This script has been in development since 2008. The playwright has been produced by JUTE Theatre previously (*The Boathouse*, 2006) and responds particularly well to working with a creative team to further the work. Angela received Regional Arts Development Funding for the creative development and JUTE supported the project by providing the Director and the venue. The work is now being considered for a future production by JUTE.

#### **Macbeth**

Creative Team

Adaptor/Director	Scott Witt
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Dramaturge	Peter Matheson
Designer	Dominie Hooper

This adaptation of Macbeth was scheduled for the first production of the 2010 season and the creative development worked as both the final development component of the script adaptation and an auditioning and workshop component for the 5 emerging performers in the production. General clowning and stage combat skills development and the audition process took place over two days with 17 contenders for the final 5 places. Once cast, the young ensemble worked with Scott to develop specific moments within the play which required them to improvise and bring ideas to the floor.

The remainder of the time was dedicated to the final development of the 'shadow play' within the play, mapping the journey of the shadow play characters as it related to their journey within the Macbeth story.

## *Script Development Programs*

The Enter Stage Write, script and playwright development program engaged with 14 writers, 5 new to the program. Three, one-week residencies were undertaken with Peter Matheson in Cairns (26 April – 2 May; 2-7 July; and 24-30 September).

Participants:

New	Emerging	Established
Emma Casey	Nerissa Brandenberger	Michael Beresford
Madonna Davies	Manawa Illingworth	Kathleen Cantarella
Brian Kneipp	Karen Jackson	Victoria Carless
Jane Modric	Amy Losiak	Angela Murphy
Tony Robertson		Susan Prince

During each of the residencies, writers have one-on-one dramaturgical sessions and take part in craft development workshops. The program focuses on craft development for new writers with more emphasis on development of a script towards a future production for the emerging writers and a complete focus on scripts for production with the established writers. There are currently 6 scripts from the above group being assessed for future production.

## **National Regional Playwrights & Theatre Makers Conference**

JUTE partnered with Metro Arts and Playlab Inc to present the National Regional Playwrights & Theatre Makers Conference in Brisbane as part of "At the Centre of the Edge" Independent Theatre Makers Conference 23 – 25 October 2009. JUTE Theatre, Metro Arts & Playlab all agree that the conference was a great success. The participant feedback attests to the level of re-inspiration and future potential projects generated by the conference.

Regional Theatre Makers developed networks with theatre makers from metropolitan and regional Australia. Metropolitan theatre makers came to better understand the

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wealth of new writing and performance being developed for stage in regional Australia. Regional writers and theatre makers took part in national conversations about the sector and writers were exposed to new methods of approaching the development of concepts and writing of their work for stage through numerous workshops and master classes. New creative partnerships were developed between regional writers and metropolitan theatre makers.

The gathering also provided an opportunity for key theatre makers from regional Australia to come together to develop a long-term strategic approach to the development of writing for stage in the regions.

Writers and theatre makers who are usually geographically isolated came away inspired and committed to the craft of telling stories on the stage. It was intended that creative developments would take place, however the conference time frame and the wealth of visiting key artists did not allow for this to take place. There were, however many alliances of like-minded artists who set about developing relationships for future projects.

*The Centre of the Edge* conference proved to be a wonderful opportunity for regional practitioners to connect into a broader network of peers, to engage in industry dialogue at a national level and to once again feel less isolated in the regions.

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## *INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS*

### *Theatre To The Edge & Regional Wave Cohort Initiative*

While the Theatre to the Edge initiative funding expired at the end of 2009, JUTE Theatre intends to continue the good work begun by this project. This initiative led to a connected, supportive, collaborating group of companies and independent theatre makers across Queensland and the Northern Territory and through the Regional Wave Cohort initiative to collaborations in WA and Tasmania. The meeting of key theatre makers at the *Centre of the Edge* conference in Brisbane continues to work to develop strategies to strengthen the potential for high quality theatre making in Australia's regions.

### *Mentoring Programs*

Each year JUTE Theatre undertakes a number of mentorships involving young people and emerging theatre makers. In 2009, JUTE Theatre worked with emerging theatre makers to support the development of their new company *Pop Robot Theatre Group*. JUTE also supports emerging directors by inviting them into the rehearsal room to observe the process. JUTE Theatre also mentored the two independent theatre producers in the 2009 Indie Season.

## *AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS*

### *Talking Theatre Focus Forums*

Dr Rebecca Schollen, a researcher based at QUT in Brisbane, completed her PhD on "Building New Theatre Audiences" which was largely based in Brisbane with studies of La Boite and Queensland Theatre Company audiences. From this research, Rebecca was keen to know how this would work regionally. Rebecca was commissioned through the Civic Centres' network Northern Australian Regional Performing Arts Centres Association (NARPACA) to work with focus groups in order to understand audiences for live performance and to build these audiences.

Overall the findings were very similar throughout the different regional centres with the main reasons for previous non-attendance being lack of familiarity, unsure about what to expect and the general feeling that the performing arts were not for the likes of them.

JUTE Theatre wanted to explore this idea for contemporary theatre and embarked on a campaign in 2007 to attract new people to the theatre, and to ask the questions about how people perceive JUTE Theatre and live performance in Cairns.

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We invited people, who had not experienced live theatre in the past 5 years, to be part of a focus group; to come along to all plays in our season and give honest feedback about how the experience matched their expectations.

We provided them with a relaxed, intimate, creative environment to experience live theatre where they (and at times their values) were challenged, provoked, entertained and engaged. In coming to all performances, they discovered why theatre is important in their lives and have essentially been 'converted' into theatregoers.

This program continues to be successful bringing new people to theatre and new insights into the barriers for attending theatre, and particularly contemporary theatre.

### *Test Drive the Arts*

Arts Queensland, the state government's arts body, and the Australia Council at the federal level, committed funding to Test Drive the Arts, a UK initiative. The project aims to give more people the opportunity to experience the world-class live performances that Queenslanders can now find right in their own back yard. This initiative is about growing audiences and making the performing arts sector economically and artistically more sustainable.

Test Drive the Arts launched in Brisbane in late 2007 to great success but unfortunately the media planned for the regions did not materialise. In 2007 the take up to this program in Cairns was minimal, experienced both by JUTE Theatre and Cairns Civic Theatre. This was addressed with Arts Queensland and in 2008 a marketing budget was given direct to JUTE Theatre and Cairns Civic Theatre to work with our local media and audiences and all seats allocated to the program were taken up. The program continued in 2009.

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# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

## *Work for the Dole Programs*

JUTE Theatre undertakes a Work for the Dole Program each year through Mission Australia. This program provides training in theatre production, event management and administration for long-term unemployed.

## *Volunteer Programs*

JUTE Theatre has run the VIP (Volunteer Incentive Program) over the last 9 years and our volunteers are an integral part of our company. The program provides people from the community with a range of access points including Front of House (Bar, Ticket Sales & Ushering), Administration, Marketing and Backstage (assisting prop & set construction, rigging, focus & plot and production support crew).

Our volunteers are committed to seeing contemporary theatre thrive in our city and enjoy the wide range of ways in which they can support and be part of this. They enjoy meeting like-minded people, being part of the JUTE Theatre team and working in a professional, welcoming and friendly environment.

The Front of House service alone requires 4-6 volunteers per night of performance. With 62 JUTE Theatre performances in 2009, this equates to approximately 310 volunteers x 2-hour shifts, totals 620 volunteer hours worth over \$9000 per annum to JUTE Theatre.

## Goals & KPIs

Strategies	Goals				
	1. Quality new Australian regional plays	2. Co-produce and tour nationally and internationally	3. Financial resilience of the company	4. Entice more people in regional communities to integrate theatre into their daily lives	5. Creative programs will be well supported and our company will have the strength to grow
a. Development, Creation, Co-Production & Presentation of high quality regional Australian plays & performances	YES	YES		YES	
b. State, National and International collaborations and touring of regional Australian plays	YES	YES	YES	YES	
c. Develop business opportunities & Philanthropic investment programs	YES	YES	YES		YES
d. Audience Development & Community Engagement & Education Programs			YES	YES	YES
e. Rigorous Governance and excellence in organizational procedures			YES		YES

GOAL	KPI	2009	
		Goal	Actual
1. We will produce quality new Australian regional plays through providing best practice script and writer development programs for our regional playwrights	Number of inter & intra-state regional scripts & writers developed	5-7 intrastate 1-2 interstate	14 intrastate 4 interstate
	Number of well developed new scripts progressed to production	2 intrastate 1 interstate	2 intrastate 1 interstate
	Number of Intra & Interstate projects developed at regional conference	2-3 creative developments of new cross-regional work	0 – format of conference changed & did not include creative developments

2. We will co-produce and tour nationally and internationally by building more producer driven touring circuits and raising our profile with established circuits	Number of Theatre to the Edge intra/ interstate co-productions & tours	2 intra/interstate co-pros + 3 tours	2 intra/interstate co-pros + 5 tours
	Number of NARPACA/Qld Arts Council/ Long Paddock tours	1 show toured	1 show toured
	Regional Wave Cohort Touring circuit established	1 x Tour & 1-2 x multi-state Cohort project developed + develop international collaboration	0 - Touring focus shifted with demise of Theatre to the Edge initiative
3. Our company will increase current income and secure new & diverse income streams in order to build the financial resilience of the company	Significant increase in Philanthropic giving & grants by 2011	\$50k	\$5,300 – Philanthropic program has not progressed as initially imagined. Advice from ArtSupport not realistic for small regional company.
	Increase level of Box Office income over 3 years by 35%	\$73-\$75k	\$65.9k (Reduced Theatre to the Edge program) and box office affected by GFC mid-late 2009.
	Increase Commercial Workshop income by 50%	\$25-30k	\$10.8k – Planned Education program taken over by The Young Company. JUTE supported this new company in its endeavours.
	Build reserves to 7% of turnover over 3 years	40k	\$37.4K
4. We will entice more people in regional communities to integrate theatre into their daily lives by offering accessible ways for them to connect with us	Number of performance seasons in JUTE annual program at the JUTE Theatre	8-9 performance seasons	8 performance seasons
	Number of social justice, education & youth programs produced	15-20 programs per annum	6 - Planned Education program taken over by The Young Company. A move that JUTE supported.
	Number of independent producers supported	2 local independent productions supported	1 local & 1 regional Qld independent productions supported
	Number of audience development programs undertaken	4-5 programs with 25% more people engaged	2 programs - did not increase

5. Our creative programs will be well supported and our company will have the strength to grow through rigorous governance and operational excellence	Professional Board with range of business skills	Undertake annual Board reviews	Annual review undertaken in 2009
	100% compliance with ASIC requirements	Retain finance officers & ensure new staff aware of compliance	100% compliance
	Procedures manuals in place for all company programs & operations	Evaluate program & procedures and update procedures manuals	Began development of new HR Polioptionment of policies & procedures being overseen by Board
	Increase salaries of quality staff & increase number of staff	Raise salaries and employ full time admin/marketing assistant + Artistic Associate & increase finance officer p/t hours	Salaries Raised; Full time admin/ marketing assistant + Assoc. Director engaged & inc finance officer from 16 to 20 hrs/wk

Strategy	Key Activities	Priority	Measures & Milestones	Actuals
a. Development, creation, co-production & presentation of high quality regional Australian plays & performances	Collaborate with peak script development organisations to work with skilled dramaturges to develop regional playwrights and their scripts	1	Work with up to 15 writers per annum	Achieved
	Identify creatively engaging scripts from development program and progress towards production over a 2-3 year process	1	3 new works per annum	Achieved
	Support local independent producers to produce work for presentation within the JUTE annual season	2	2 independent productions per annum	Achieved
b. State, national and international collaborations and touring of regional Australian plays	Develop Regional Wave Export Strategy 2009-2012 & lobby investors	1	Touring landscape changed – this strategy will not proceed in current climate	Not Progressed
	Build relationships & develop writers & scripts from regional Australian companies and SE Asian companies with a view to future co-production and touring	1	As above	Not Progressed

	Build company profile with established touring circuits and touring funding organisations	2	Engaging with new Touring strategy in Qld	Taking advantage of new opportunity
c. Develop business opportunities & Philanthropic investment programs	Develop Education Engagement plan with particular focus on increasing commercial workshop programs to generate income	2	Planned Education program taken over by The Young Company. A move that JUTE supported.	Supporting development of new youth focussed company
	Work with Arts Support to develop philanthropic & donations programs & apply to philanthropic grant programs	1	Program proving much more complex than initially advised – continued to work towards plan in 2009	Advice from ArtSupport out of line with reality in regional centre. Commencing small giving program in 2010
	Increase box office income through marketing & audience development strategies	1	Loss of Theatre to the Edge touring product and Global Financial Crises impacting on box office	Continuing Audience Development programs towards long term audience growth.
d. Audience Development & Community Engagement & Education Programs	Continue to run existing audience development strategies and implement new ones based on target audiences for 2009-2011	1	Did not increase audience development programs	Staffing turnover disrupted plans for increased audience development programs
	Research, develop and implement online strategies including updated website, customised newsletters, customer profiling	1	Website & branding updated, however customer profiling remains difficult without our own ticketing system	Negotiations continue with local ticketing supplier but local council owned operation cautious about privacy laws.
	Work with our freelance Education Officer to implement JUTE's Education Engagement Plan	1	Now operated by The Young Company	Part of JUTE's role as a Creative Hub is to support the development of emerging artists & companies
e. Rigorous governance and excellence in organizational procedures	Engage appropriate levels of staff to manage & implement company strategies & improve procedures	1	Experienced unexpected staff turnovers in 09, and GM resigned in early 2010.	HR consultancy undertaken in early 2010 to revise management structure and recruitment process will be completed by October 2010.
	Set appropriate levels of salaries & fees for staff and creatives	1	Increased salaries & creatives fees	Appropriate, benchmarked salaries & fees now in place.
	Recruit & maintain highly skilled board members	2	Annual review of board skills & identified gaps in expertise	Board member recruitment matrix used to recruit new members.

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## STAFF

Suellen Maunder  
Sarah Flenley  
Christopher Glover  
Veronica Cullen  
Alan Surgener  
Elisha Oatley  
Jennifer Kidd  
Jessica Masters

Artistic Director/CEO  
General Manager (Resigned Jan 2010)  
Associate Director  
Finance Officer (20 hrs)  
Production Manager (Cake Production only)  
Production Coordinator (from June 2009)  
Admin/Marketing Assistant (Feb – Aug 2009)  
Admin Assistant (from Oct 2009)



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Name & Position	Years on Board Term Ends	Professional Qualifications	Expertise for JUTE Board
David Rivett – Chair	6/2010	B Eng (Civil) QUT M Nat Res, UNE	Founded Environment North Impact assessment and Strategic Planning in public & private sector Tourism & Heritage
Stewart Trainor – Finance	2/2012	Bachelor of Commerce CA program	Partner at Pacific Chartered Accountants specialising in Taxation and Business services to small-medium enterprises. Accountant Financial and Budget Modelling Worked in public and private sector
Kathryn Laughton	Founding Member	BA Hon Japanese, UQ	Founding Member of JUTE Award winning & published Playwright
Suellen Maunder	Founding Member		Founding Member of JUTE & current Artistic Director and CEO Award winning actor & director Management & Administration in the private sector Adjunct lecturer, JCU Extensive knowledge of Arts Industry
Vanessa Maruna	1/2012	Bachelor of Law (Hons) Bachelor of Environmental Planning, Griffith University.	Development industry professional with town planning and legal qualifications Solicitor in both private practice and in-house positions specialising in planning and environment law.
Shelley Evans-Wild	0/2013	Bachelor of Education Bachelor of Psychological Science Diploma of Teaching	Prior to establishing her own training, coaching and consulting business, Shelley managed up to eighty personnel in the government sector. For over 17 years she has independently studied human behaviour nationally and abroad and has proudly worked with a board range of corporate to medium sized businesses and government agencies. She has sixteen years experience as an educator and curriculum leaders and 12 years as an executive coach.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## FUNDING PARTNERS



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## THEATRE TO THE EDGE PARTNERS



This Tour is assisted by Arts Regional Touring Service [ARTS], a Queensland Government initiative

## PRODUCTION SPONSORS



## PROGRAM PARTNERS & COLLABORATORS



This project is supported by Queensland Theatre Company as part of its Regional Partnerships Program



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