



2007  
ANNUAL REPORT

# JUTETHEATRE





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# VISION, PURPOSE, VALUES & GOALS

**VISION:**

JUTE aims to make regional theatre count!

**PURPOSE:**

To privilege regional theatre makers & audiences

**VALUES:**

'Can do' attitude to making things happen  
Punching above our weight  
Surprising our audiences  
Growing through evaluation feedback  
We love collaboration, sharing resources & knowledge  
Striving for excellence in our operational procedures

**GOALS:**

JUTE is driven by plays, people, prosperity and place.

## COMPANY PROFILE

JUTE was established in 1992 by three passionate theatre makers who wanted to create opportunities for professional theatre in Cairns. In 1994 JUTE began to produce new plays from regional playwrights. In 2001, JUTE began the Enter Stage Write script development program for regional writers, culminating in an annual conference which now stretches across regional Australia. JUTE has won two awards for the development of regional writing.

In 2005, together with regional companies across Queensland and the Northern Territory, JUTE transformed the presenter driven regional touring initiative into a producer driven new model of touring that has significantly increased employment for regional theatre practitioners and increased the audience for regional work tenfold. JUTE is driving the national version of this model known as the Regional Wave Cohort which develops, co-produces and tours new work from regional theatre makers across regional Australia.

JUTE is dedicated to raising the profile of regional theatre in Australia.



# OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS

## PLAYS

Each year JUTE produces or co-produces a season of 2 – 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 presents seasons of work from companies in regional Queensland and from the Northern Territory.

## SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM & REGIONAL THEATRE CONFERENCE

Each year JUTE develops the work of up to 10 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.

## JUTE THEATRE VENUE HIRE

The JUTE Theatre was opened in 2004 and has been successfully managed by JUTE full time staff with an excellent usage rate of 80-85% capacity each year. The 248-seat venue provides a professional environment for a myriad of community groups and corporate clients as well as professional dance and performance companies, contemporary music concerts and regular independent film nights and lectures. The JUTE Theatre venue hire is a business unit for JUTE, bringing in an income of up to \$30,000 per annum.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

JUTE grew out of the Cairns community and engages with the community on many levels. Apart from providing an annual season of professional contemporary performances for our regional community, JUTE develops new, emerging and mature playwrights and theatre makers, connecting freelance artists to the broader national theatre sector. JUTE now provides independent producers with an opportunity to produce work as part of the JUTE Indie Season. JUTE provides an education program for schools and supports the community groups hiring the JUTE Theatre by mentoring their students throughout the production process. JUTE undertakes school holiday programs for young people aged 7 – 16. JUTE produces social justice theatre projects for the clients of some Government Departments.

## AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

JUTE is committed to bringing new audiences to theatre in regional Australia. JUTE annually undertakes audience development programs to understand the barriers to people attending theatre. JUTE 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.

# 2007 HIGHLIGHTS

## **JUTE Theatre Season of Plays**

JUTE presented 4 plays for 2 1/2 week seasons at the JUTE Theatre:  
2 new Australian works produced by JUTE  
1 adaptation toured in from Crossroad Arts in Mackay  
1 contemporary Australian play co-produced with Darwin Theatre Company  
and Tropic Sun Theatre, Townsville

## **Theatre to the Edge – Regional Touring**

Toured *Constance Drinkwater and the Final Days of Somerset* from Darwin to  
Cairns (2 1/2 week season as part of Festival Cairns) and  
Townsville (1 week season)  
Toured in *Animal Farm* from Crossroad Arts, Mackay (2 1/2 week season)

## **Commissions & Script Development Programs**

Commissioned 4 writers to develop first draft of a play for 2009 Q150  
Celebrations  
6 regional writers took part in a year-long script development program  
8 young & emerging regional writers from across Australia took part in the  
National Young & Emerging Regional Playwrights – National Pilot Program to  
develop the skills, scripts, networks and career paths for young & emerging  
regional playwrights.

## **Audience Development**

Implemented Rebecca Schollen's "Talking Theatre" audience development  
forums for the 2007 season to understand non-attenders reactions to theatre.  
Engaged with Queensland initiative "Test Drive the Arts" to bring non-attenders  
to theatre.  
Average 25% return on exit surveys for each performance night of each season  
with 90% positive feedback over the 4 show season.

## **National Regional Theatre Development**

Driving the Regional Wave Cohort national regional theatre collaboration &  
touring initiative  
Brought 78 regional theatre practitioners together for the National Regional  
Playwrights & Theatre Makers Conference

# CHAIR REPORT

The 2007 year has been another high point in JUTE's artistic and commercial journey. Suellen's artistic report details our many achievements, not the least of which was being successful in obtaining triennial funding from Arts Queensland. Although we were not able to increase our grant (and in fact lost out due to confusion over some CoCA services), securing triennial status continues to be important, not only for financial security but also as a recognition of our place in Queensland arts. Australia Council funding has increased and we are clearly held in high esteem by our major funding bodies. We are grateful for this support by the State and National Governments.

In 2007 we also achieved tax deductibility status, meaning that we can now more readily approach donors. I believe that we will be increasingly relying on non government funding and this will be a challenge that we need to successfully meet if we are to continue to grow. Thanks to those donors who have already helped out and thanks in anticipation to our prospective financial supporters.

The JUTE Board met 11 times in 2007 and we continue to mature in our skills and performance. Through the efforts of Finance Officer Veronica Cullen and Finance Director Stewart Trainor our financial processes are becoming much more efficient and we now have integrated budgeting, cost control and acquittal. The Board remains "stable yet renewing", and somehow we continue to replace irreplaceable people. Sad as we were to lose Deputy Chair Donna-Maree O'Connor to work commitments, we were pleased to welcome Leigh Boswell [DR1] and her boundless energy and school connections. We are rapidly expanding our presence in this essential sector and this will only benefit JUTE in the coming years.

The Board now has a broad range of skills including the arts, public relations/media, finance, government, school-based performing arts, legal, planning, and the environment. We also have a wide circle of critical friends and contacts to ensure that we continue to stay in touch with our community and fill those seats.

As Chair of JUTE I am also a director of CoCA Ltd. In this role, I have continued to liaise with Arts Queensland over the future of the Centre. This has now been resolved in the short term and JUTE looks forward to future decisions that will ensure some stability in the coming years. The lack of a functional café continues to be a bugbear and no firm plans are in place to address this. On a more positive note, Stage 2 (the Rehearsal Studio) is happening and should be complete in early 2009.

Our success would not be possible without our dedicated staff and volunteers – you have all done a great job in 2007 and the Board certainly recognises this and thanks you for your efforts. Outlook for 2008? Very, very good. Our first play (the Gods of Spicy Things) was a triumph in all respects and may even go on to be played in India (the Gods and funding willing). The rest of the program is very strong and will certainly meet all of our expectations.

**David Rivett**  
Chair

# ARTISTIC DIRECTOR REPORT

2007 was a year of change for the theatre sector at both state and national level. The State Government's new arts strategy promised a shake up of the Cultural Infrastructure Program in an effort to review the operational funding in place for the small to medium sector that had developed over the previous 10 years. This created an environment of insecurity throughout the sector with companies being threatened with loss of funding. At the same time, the theatre board of the Australia Council was putting forward a new vision for support for this sector through the Make it New discussion papers.

For JUTE, there was the added instability of the unresolved questions surrounding the operational structures of the Centre of Contemporary Arts and the ownership of the JUTE Theatre venue, requiring significant energy by the Board and staff in trying to resolve these issues.

While these operational concerns were occupying the board and the Artistic Director, the creative program was barrelling along, refusing to be undermined by the forces at play.

2007 was an extremely successful year creatively and at the box office. It was also the first year to fully engage the Theatre To the Edge touring initiative that provided our audiences with a range of work to engage with as well as taking our work to new audiences. The collaboration between regional companies, the exchange of artists, the sharing of resources and knowledge and the opportunity to perform for new audiences is an extraordinary leap forward for the companies involved in the initiative. All of the companies are gaining skills, particularly in the area of touring which will be extremely important as we stretch our touring capability across regional Australia.

In the lead-up to the Q150 Celebrations in 2009, JUTE commissioned four Cairns playwrights to develop work about distinctive Queensland stories. Two of these works will be produced in 2009 as part of the Q150 celebrations and toured through regional Queensland.

It is exciting to see the national reach of the script development program, supported by Playlab Inc. The new design of the National Regional Playwrights & Theatre Makers Conference was a truly exciting development in the creation and exposure of new work from regional practitioners. The Conference is creating confidence in the work being produced by regional practitioners and is developing a strong supportive network that can present a significant force for the development of the regional theatre sector.

The future of regional theatre is looking very healthy from where we sit!

All of these great outcomes would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the JUTE Staff. Operations Manager, Sarah Flenley is to be congratulated for her significant work in the development of JUTE audiences and her restructuring of the marketing & promotions to great effect, receiving compliments from marketing experts on the media presence of JUTE productions. Sarah's position is being developed towards that of General Manager. Nate Leslie was our Production Manger until July when he moved to Townsville for family reasons. JUTE made the decision to engage a recent graduate of the Launceston Theatre course of the Uni of Tasmania, Taryn Carne who is now a resident of Cairns. JUTE plans to invest in Taryn's development as a Production Manager. Taryn has great strengths in the position already and will become an excellent manager of our creative programs. Our new Finance Manager, Veronica Cullen joined us following the disruptions created by the CoCA company demise and loss of a full time CoCA finance officer and turnover of temporary and part time staff in the position. Veronica has brought a high level of efficiency and effective procedures and processes that have again brought the finances under control. JUTE now has a highly effective and efficient and passionate staff who support the significant activity of the company.

I would like to extend a special thank you to the David Rivett, the Chair of JUTE. Without his significant hands on support of the company during the difficult negotiations with Arts Queensland regarding the CoCA building, the artistic program would no doubt have suffered with me having to focus on these issues rather than the creative outcomes.

Kathryn Ash and Dominie Hooper in their role of Artistic Associates of JUTE have been invaluable as artistic collaborators in support of my role. Peter Matheson, Kathryn Kelly, John du Feu, Steve Mayer-Miller and Jane Atkins have also provided creative and strategic support to my role and I thank them for their continued support and championing of JUTE's aspirations for regional theatre.

So many artists pass through JUTE each year and give much more than 100% to the projects. Scott Witt was one of those, engaged through support from the Queensland Theatre Company Regional Partnerships program, he brought a great energy, laughter and new skills to the company.

A wonderfully creative year despite the operational difficulties.

# ○ SEASON OF PLAYS

## THE CHICKEN PLAY OR MARMALADE & EGG BY MELISSA CANTWELL

**DIRECTOR**

Scott Witt

**DESIGNER**

Dominie Hooper

**LIGHTING DESIGNER**

Nate Leslie

**SOUND DESIGNER**

Nicholas Mills

**CAST**

Suellen Maunder

Natalie Taylor

Jason Klarwein

Jack Haywood

**STAGE MANAGER**

Nicola Keane

**DESIGN ASSISTANT**

Kairi Russell

**DESIGN MENTOREE**

Laila Thaker

**DIRECTOR MENTOREE**

Warren Clements

Venue: JUTE Theatre, Centre of Contemporary Arts, Cairns

Producer: JUTE Theatre

Rehearsals: 22 January - 17 February 2007

Tech Week: 16 February - 20 February 2007

Preview: 20 &amp; 21 February 2007

Season: 22 February - 10 March 2007

This script first came to JUTE Theatre's attention during the JUTE Playwright's Conference in 2005. Written by Melissa Cantwell, it received the dramaturgical support by Peter Matheson via JUTE Theatre's Enter Stage Write program. Directed by Scott Witt by special arrangement of Queensland Theatre Company as part of the Regional Partnerships Program.

**Review Excerpt:**

"This play is clever.... It is a bit like a fairy-tale, with a forlorn heroine, a dashing hero, a kindly old farmer and a wicked, selfish mother, but the plot has more twists than a liquorice stick.."

**Arts Nexus****Audience Feedback:**

"Ivan and I went last night to see *"The Chicken Play"* and it was great.....Ivan is not into theatre, well he can never sit long enough in one stop, and he also enjoyed it!"

**SEASON OF PLAYS****VICTOR & SASS****BY KATHLEEN CANTERELLA****DIRECTOR**

Suellen Maunder

**DESIGNER**

Dominie Hooper

**LIGHTING DESIGNER**

Nate Leslie

**SOUND DESIGNER**

Nicholas Mills

**CAST**

Toma Hartley

Anthony Ring

**STAGE MANAGER**

Lenine Millard

Venue: JUTE Theatre, Centre of Contemporary Arts, Cairns

Producer: JUTE Theatre

Rehearsals: 7 May - 25 May 2007

Tech Week: 25 May - 29 May 2007

Preview: 30 &amp; 31 May 2007

Season: 1 June - 16 June 2007

This script began as seven pages of intense dialogue that were submitted to the Enter Stage Write program in 2004. It received a reading at the 2005 and 2006 JUTE Playwrights Conference. The play explored taboo subjects and fraught relationships in dysfunctional families. It was a devastating piece of theatre generating intense audience discussion.

## Review Excerpt:

"Playwright Kathleen Cantarella has done brilliantly to capture all the elements, and while the subject matter is certainly disturbing, if you are looking for a play to touch new emotions and engage your thoughts, *Victor & Sass* is for you."

**Cairns Sun**

## Audience Feedback:

"Sharon & I were discussing the show this morning - I had goose bumps as we spoke. Sure was powerful. Great production - loved it!!!"



# ○ SEASON OF PLAYS

## CONSTANCE DRINKWATER & THE FINAL DAYS OF SOMERSET BY STEPHEN CARLETON

**DIRECTOR**  
Merrilee Mills  
**DESIGNER**  
Morag Cook  
**LIGHTING DESIGNER**  
Reuben Hopkins  
**CAST**  
Suellen Maunder  
John Du Feu  
Chris Glover  
Daniel Cunningham  
Ella Watson-Russell  
Jason Chong

**Venue:** Darwin Entertainment Centre, JUTE Theatre, Centre of Contemporary Arts, Cairns & School of Arts, Townsville.  
**Producer:** Theatre to the Edge Co-producers - Darwin Theatre Company, JUTE Theatre and Tropic Sun Theatre  
**Rehearsals:** 16 July - 10 August 2007  
**Tech Week:** 10 August - 14 August 2007  
**Preview:** 15 August 2007  
**Season:** Darwin: 16 - 19 August 2007 (Darwin Festival event)  
Cairns: 29 August - 15 September 2007 (Festival Cairns event)  
Townsville: 19 September - 23 September 2007

This production was a collaboration between JUTE Theatre, Darwin Theatre Company (DTC) and to a lesser degree Tropic Sun Theatre in Townsville. Author, Stephen Carleton has strong connections with both JUTE and DTC, having had long associations with both companies, having lived and practiced in Darwin for many years. In keeping with the cross-regional collaboration, the cast were drawn from Darwin, Cairns and Townsville, including the two Artistic Directors of DTC and JUTE. Two of the cast were drawn from Sydney and Melbourne.

The show was toured to Cairns and Townsville as part of the Theatre to the Edge touring initiative.

### Review Excerpt:

'Cairns is very lucky to have JUTE. On this occasion, it brings to Cairns audiences the work of a major new Australian playwright, in what is undoubtedly a definitive version of his play. It is essential theatre for our generation.'

### Arts Nexus

### Audience Feedback:

"Enjoyed the themes and the location it was based about as well as characters portrayed on a subject that is not really spoken about our past"



# SEASON OF PLAYS

## ANIMAL FARM

**PRODUCER:**  
Crossroad Arts Theatre,  
Mackay  
**DIRECTOR**  
Steve Mayer-Miller  
**ACTORS**  
Sue Hayes  
Donnielle Fatnowna  
Simon Hapea  
Anthony Ring  
John Pickup

Previews: 31 Oct & 1 Nov  
Season: 2 - 17 November

*Animal Farm*, based on the infamous book by George Orwell, was a Crossroad Arts production engaging actors from Cairns, Mackay and Brisbane. It was brought to JUTE Theatre as part of the Theatre to the Edge initiative.

Review Excerpt:

"*Animal Farm* has "more innovation than a five-year plan, more guts than an abbottoir in full swing, and more power than a Chernobyl meltdown". It deserves to be seen nation-wide."

**Arts Nexus**

Audience Feedback

"Loved the current affairs adaptation, excellent, simplicity of set, great passionate actors"

# SCRIPT COMMISSION FOR Q150 CELEBRATIONS

In 2007 JUTE applied to the Q150 Celebration Fund to support the commissioning of the first draft of four new works for the stage exploring Queensland stories.

These commissions were to form the first stage of a significant program culminating in the production and touring of a body of work celebrating Queensland. The writers commissioned were Kathryn Ash, Michael Beresford, Kathleen Cantarella and Victoria Carless.

All of the works will receive dramaturgical support throughout 2008. The works by Kathryn Ash and Victoria Carless have both been programmed for the 2009 season with tours throughout Queensland and Darwin. The script by Michael Beresford will receive a creative development with a public showing in 2009 and a production outcome in 2010. The script by Kathleen Cantarella has not been programmed at this stage.

## 'CAKE' BY KATHRYN ASH

A mad country women cooking comedy full of passionfruit slice, fluffy pumpkin scones and champion fruitcake.

## 'THE SHINING PATH' BY VICTORIA CARLESS

A Queensland train journey in search of a lost leg, filled with quirky quintessentially Queensland characters at every station.

## 'UNCONFIRMED SIGHTINGS' BY MICHAEL BERESFORD

A dark journey through central Queensland to return magic stones to their rightful place.

## 'THE CAPE YORK SOLUTION' BY KATHLEEN CANTARELLA

Four Queensland politicians survive a plane crash on a deserted island. A *Lord of the Flies*-inspired tale of political masinations.

# CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

## 'TIPTOE' BY MICHAEL BERESFORD

Playwright and JCU Lecturer, Michael Beresford was successful in gaining a research grant to explore his new work *Tiptoe*, selected for production by JUTE in 2008. A one-week creative development involving the Playwright, Director David Fenton, Dramaturg Kathryn Ash and actors Carol Burns, Suellen Maunder, Lou Bennetto & Natalie Taylor took place in April.

The development clarified the structure and the plot of the work resulting in a final draft for the 2008 production.

## REGIONAL WAVE COHORT

Two new works were given the opportunity to undertake creative development processes at the National Regional Playwrights & Theatre Makers Conference. The two new works are now set for co-production – one in 2008 (*7 Deadly Australian Sins*) and one in 2009 (*Half Way There*).

# SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The program has run since 2001 and has been responsible for working with up to ten regional playwrights each year. Over the 7 year life of this program, JUTE has produced 24 new works by regional writers with a further 11 scripts in the pipeline for future production. Three of these productions have been collaborative works involving 3 – 7 writers. The programs have gained JUTE two state awards for the development and production of a regional voice for stage. The script development programs began by working with writers in the Far North Queensland region but over the last number of years have expanded to include writers from across regional Australia. In 2007, JUTE Theatre conducted five main script development programs:

### Peter Matheson Dramaturgy Residency (April - September)

Peter Matheson is one of Australia's leading dramaturges and in 2007 undertook regional residencies in Queensland and the Northern Territory, working with companies and individual writers in the development of work from regional writers. For JUTE, Peter worked with six mature playwrights from this region for two weeks of residency in April and September. Between these two visits Peter continued to work with the writers electronically. The first of these works was co-produced and toured in 2008. Two of these writers will have their work produced in 2009 after further development in 2008 and another is scheduled for a creative development in 2009 with a production outcome in 2010.

### Regional Playwrights - National Pilot Program (March - December)

The project worked with 8 young and emerging playwrights from across Australia in 2007 to develop skills, develop new work and create career pathways for isolated playwrights by connecting them to a dynamic network of regional theatre makers. The first stage of this project was funded by the Ian Potter Foundation and the second stage by Regional Arts Fund.

The first stages of the project were focused on the playwrights while the final stage brought the group together with members of the Regional Wave Cohort to take part in the National Regional Playwright & Theatre Makers Conference at the JUTE Theatre in Cairns. This ensured that there was focused skills and script development time for the writers as well as the opportunity to have their work exposed to the broader sector.

The participants were:

Dramaturges: Peter Matheson (Regional NSW) & Kathryn Ash (Cairns)  
Director: Scott Witt (Brisbane)

### Young & Emerging Playwrights:

Rod Ainsworth	Bundaberg (Qld)
Victoria Carless	Cairns (Qld)
Mischa Ipp	Perth (WA)
Finegan Kruckemeyer	Hobart (Tas)
Amy Losiak	Cairns (Qld)
Carrie McLean	Launceston (Tas)
Finn O'Branagain	Darwin (NT)
Fran Porter	Cairns (Qld)

# INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

## NATIONAL REGIONAL PLAYWRIGHTS & THEATRE MAKERS CONFERENCE

From Wednesday 5 – Sunday 9 December, JUTE produced and hosted the newly branded National Regional Playwrights & Theatre Makers Conference at the JUTE Theatre. 78 Theatre makers from across Australia came together in Cairns for an intensive five days of skills development, creative development, regional theatre discussions and play readings. The Key Note Speaker Michael Gurr addressed the conference on Friday 7 and conducted two masterclasses on Saturday 8 and Sunday 9. Conference participants came from Queensland, Northern Territory, Western Australia, Victoria and Tasmania.

Each year the conference shapes to the needs of the participants. In 2007 the focus shifted from panels and forums to hands on writing tasks moving through to rehearsal of the work and performance. This provided emerging writers with an opportunity to gain an appreciation of the process of moving the work through to a performance. The skills sharing provided some skilled regional theatre makers with the opportunity to facilitate workshops and pass on their skills. The creative developments of two new works provided a wonderful opportunity for creative teams to come together in the development of new work, refining the work towards production in 2008 & 2009. The highly collegial nature of the conference means that we have highly skilled mature artists sharing their knowledge and skills with emerging practitioners and creating networks that will open career opportunities for regional theatre makers.

## THEATRE TO THE EDGE INITIATIVE

Theatre to the Edge is a collaborative initiative for touring work from regional companies across regional Queensland and the Northern Territory. Funded by Arts Queensland via Queensland Arts Council the initiative is driven by JUTE Theatre, Tropic Sun Theatre Company, Crossroad Arts and Darwin Theatre Company.

In only 3 years 9 productions have toured to 19 centres for an average of 20 weeks. This has meant that actors and stage managers working on these shows have had an extra 20 weeks of employment. By an average of 5 in the touring company that has meant an extra 100 weeks of paid employment or approximately \$80,000 in increased employment value. It has also meant that approximately an extra 9,000 audience members have seen work from a range of companies in regional Queensland and the Northern Territory. The companies tour the work into their seasons with a week or 2 weeks of performance in their centre.

More than this, the initiative has led to significant cross-regional collaboration and sharing of resources, creatives and audiences. It is a new methodology of touring with companies in each centre hosting the touring company for 1 – 2.5 weeks of performance. It is sold as part of the entire season of each of the companies in their centres and builds a profile for the touring company in other centres. It provides for workshops to take place in the local community by the visiting practitioners and generally leads to artistic development.

# ○ INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

## MENTORING PROGRAMS

Each year JUTE undertakes a number of mentorships involving young people and emerging theatre makers. In 2007, five mentorships took place, two in theatre design (including a YAMP project), one in stage management and two in directing. JUTE also mentored two independent theatre producers towards the Indie Season production in 2008.

# ○ AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## TALKING THEATRE FOCUS FORUM

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 and 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.

JUTE wanted to explore this idea for contemporary theatre and embarked on a campaign to attract new people to the theatre, and to ask the 'big' questions about how people perceive JUTE and live performance in Cairns. 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 four plays in 2007 and give honest feedback about how the experience matched their expectations. 13 participants booked to start the program. 10 Females/3 Males age range 21 to 75. 5 did not continue throughout the year: two were uncomfortable in the group discussions and found it difficult to contribute, one moved to Perth and two had increased work commitments, which prevented them from attending. We worked with a core group of 8 participants – 7 female and 1 male over the year.

The project was a great success for JUTE on many levels:

- engaged in discussions with our community, particularly theatre non-attenders
- discovered people's attitudes towards JUTE and contemporary theatre
- received immediate and honest feedback as to how non-theatre people reacted to our shows
- formed relationships and gained the trust of non-theatre goers
- turned them into theatregoers!
- raised the profile of JUTE and contemporary theatre in Cairns
- confirmed that people enjoyed the diverse range of theatre experienced at the JUTE Theatre and that we make them think!

## TEST DRIVE THE ARTS

Both Arts Queensland, the state government's arts body, and the Australia Council at the federal level, have 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. It 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. The take up to this program in Cairns was minimal, experienced both by JUTE & Cairns Civic Theatre. This was addressed with Arts Queensland and plans were made for 2008 for a budget and marketing implementation to be allocated to the regions.

## LIVE BOOK CLUB

The LIVE BOOK CLUB is a new initiative (first in Australia even!) that asked current book clubs to come along and try theatre as their next "book". Plays are "live books" and through an exciting and creative process of imagination, design and rehearsal, the written words, on a play's page, morph into 3D. The LIVE BOOK CLUB meets on the first Wednesday evening of each performance season to see the show and then meets with their host afterwards to chat about the show.

In 2007, the LIVE BOOK CLUB met 3 times and discussions were facilitated by our Literary Manager, Kathryn Ash. The LIVE BOOK CLUB night is also planned with an Arts Nexus Members night out so there is a mix of arts folk & general audience members coming together for robust discussions about what they just experienced.

The LIVE BOOK CLUB is in its infancy and its best potential is to work in conjunction with our FOCUS FORUM participants from the previous year in keeping people engaging in conversations about live theatre.

# .....○ COMMUNITY VENUE HIRE SCHEME

## END CREDITS

End Credits, the local independent film club, are a permanent venue hirer of the JUTE Theatre. The group shows up to 26 films per year on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month. End Credits has a cinema screen installed in the JUTE Theatre and generates approximately 3000 attendances per annum.

## ADFAS

The Australian Decorative Fine Arts Society hold monthly national and international guest lectures at the JUTE Theatre. They are a permanent hirer and bring approximately 500 people per annum to the JUTE Theatre.

## DRAMA & DANCE SCHOOLS

Numerous drama and dance schools hold annual concerts and performances at the JUTE Theatre. Apart from managing the venue hire, JUTE supports these activities in a range of ways, mentoring the light design and back stage crews and generally supporting their professional development.

## OTHER HIRERS

in 2007, there were 100 days of venue hire at the JUTE Theatre. These include contemporary music gigs, corporate events, community events, JCU lectures, Indigenous CD/Film launches and many other activities. JUTE provides technical support and event management.

# .....○ COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## WORK FOR THE DOLE PROGRAMS

JUTE 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.

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES: YOUTH JUSTICE PROGRAM

JUTE provides programs for young people at risk. These programs provide the young people with theatre workshops where they can gain self-confidence, learn how to work within a team, be given the opportunity to express themselves appropriately in a safe environment and provide an environment where they can take pride in their achievements. The program is extremely successful with young offenders for the first time, openly talking about the program with their case officers – usually they are unwilling to discuss the programs that they are required to attend. As well as being a worthwhile program for the community, it also provides JUTE with another source of income and the ability to provide employment for freelance theatre makers.

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

JUTE has run the VIP (Volunteer Incentive Program) over the last 6 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 team and working in a professional, welcoming and friendly environment.

The Front of House services requires 5-6 volunteers per night of performance.

With 60 JUTE performances at the JUTE Theatre in 2007 this equates to 300 volunteers x 2 hour shifts, totalling 600 volunteer hours, worth approximately \$9000 per annum to JUTE.

## JUTE THEATRE STAFF

### KEY STAFF

Suellen Maunder  
Sarah Flenley  
Nate Leslie  
Taryn Carne  
Stuart Wright  
Alan Worboys  
Veronica Cullen  
Karen Jackson

Artistic Director  
Operations & Marketing Manager  
Production Manager (Jan – August)  
Production Manager (Aug – Dec)  
Finance Officer (16 hrs)  
Finance Officer (16 hrs)  
Finance Manager (Jul – Dec) (16 Hrs)  
Administrator (20Hrs)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### DAVID RONALD RIVETT – CHAIR (4 years on Board)

David is Principal and founder of the Cairns-based environmental planning consultancy of Environment North. He holds a Bachelor's degree in civil engineering (1975) and a Master's degree in of Natural Resources (1994). He is a certified practising planner and corporate member of the Planning Institute of Australia. Environment North provides consultancy services for public and private clients and it was through a small commission to write the brief for the site selection consultancy to find what became the Centre of Contemporary Arts that David was introduced to JUTE. Prior to this formal involvement David had a long-standing respect for the company as a regular theatre-goer.

Since becoming a JUTE director in 2002, David has acted as Company Secretary and in 2006 was elected Chair. He is also a Director of Centre of Contemporary Arts Limited and is a CoCA patron.

David brings to the JUTE board practical knowledge in business and planning as well as organisational skills and experience gained from chairing a number of professional and community groups including the Cairns local groups of the Institution of Engineers (Australia), the Environment Institute of Australia, and the Fun in the Sun Committee (the forerunner to Festival Cairns).

### KATHRYN ASH – ORDINARY DIRECTOR (8 Years on Board)

Kathryn holds a BA Honours degree in Japanese from the University of Qld. and is fluent in the Japanese language.

Kathryn is one of the founding members of the Just Us Theatre Ensemble. An established playwright, author of eight full length professionally produced plays, including Bag O' Marbles, winner of the ANPC New York Dramatist Exchange, Co-produced by JUTE and Queensland Theatre Company in 2002, and in by Playlab Inc. Kathryn was commissioned by Queensland Theatre Company as part of The Works 2002 program, writing a play entitled Danse Macabre. In 2002, Kathryn has also worked as a dramaturgical mentor with a Townsville youth playwright, Catherine To, under the auspices of the ANPC and in 2003 worked as a mentor for a local youth playwright, under the Queensland Government Youth Arts Mentoring Program. Kathryn's play, Bag O' Marbles, was workshopped at the ANPC National Conference in 2001, co-produced by Queensland Theatre Company and JUTE in 2002, published by Playlab and the play was also winner of the ANPC New York New Dramatist Exchange Award in that same year. She has also had 13 of her plays professionally produced. Her new play Flutter has been selected for the Banff Playrites Residency through the Australia Council for the Arts and the Banff Playrites Colony, in Banff, Canada. In 2004 Kathryn was appointed by the Minister for the Arts to the board of the Pacific Film and Television Corporation.

### SUELLEN MAUNDER – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (8 Years on Board)

Founding Member and Artistic Director of JUTE, a multi-award winning Theatre Company. She has been the recipient of acting and directing awards. Suellen has a broad knowledge of the Australian theatre industry and was integrally involved in the \$2.7m funding bid, design and development of the Centre of Contemporary Art, Cairns. Suellen is currently a Trustee of the Queensland Performing Arts Centre and is a board member of a number of Queensland and National organizations and is the driving force behind the Regional Wave Cohort. Suellen is

committed to the development of professional theatre practice in the regions.

PIP MILLER – ORDINARY DIRECTOR (2 years on Board)

Pip Miller is founding principal of Cairns based public relations business, Pip Miller PR. Established in 1994, this vibrant consultancy manages the day-to-day communication and publicity for a strong client base of local businesses and organizations spanning tourism, hospitality, real estate development and retail. Contracts includes the branch management of ATEC (Australian Tourism Export Council) and the prestigious public relations contract for Festival Cairns; north Queensland's most significant community based event and Australia's fastest growing festival. This three week event has been held in August and September for the past five years. Its program spans art, culture, sport and entertainment based events and activities and is considered a highlight of Cairns' community calendar.

Pip is a trained journalist who began her career with Australian Consolidated Press' magazine division. After cutting her teeth on fashion, design and lifestyle publications, Mode, Belle and Gourmet, she moved into the field of public relations. Travelling to England she worked for two and a half years in a London based consultancy specializing in travel and tourism. According to Pip, this is where she worked with the best and honed her skill in readiness for her return to Australia and relocation to Cairns in 1992. Pip brings her experience in communication methods and management to the JUTE table. As a director, she offers support and advice to the organisation's marketing effort with the objective of heightening awareness, box office and community goodwill.

MICHAEL LINNAN – ORDINARY DIRECTOR (2 years on Board)

Michael Linnan is a registered urban and rural real estate Valuer and is an associate with the Australian Property Institute. He is currently the Director of State Government Department of State Development, Trade and Innovation. He has an extensive career of public service management having worked in several diverse departments. He has had wide experience in land and property related matters as well as a long association with natural resource management. He also has experience in the education and training Sector having recently completed a secondment to Tropical North Qld Institute of TAFE.

Michael has a long association with sport as a player and also as an administrator. He has a practical sense of purpose and brings a business perspective to the board.

STEWART TRAINOR – FINANCIAL DIRECTOR (joined Aug 06)

Stewart Trainor completed a Bachelor of Commerce degree from James Cook University and then completed a CA program and became a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in 1998. Stewart is currently a partner at Pacifica Chartered Accountants specialising in Taxation & Business services to small-medium enterprises. Most of his career has been spent in public practise but has gained some industry experience from working overseas as the financial controller of a multinational recruitment firm based in Dublin.

LEIGH BOSWELL – ORDINARY DIRECTOR

Leigh Boswell completed a Bachelor of Arts (Drama) and a Bachelor of Education (Secondary) at the Queensland University of Technology where she graduated with Honours. Having worked within the education sector in both Queensland and in the United Kingdom, Leigh is currently, the Drama Co-Coordinator at St Augustine's College, Cairns; a Marist Brother's boarding school for boys from 12yrs – 17yrs. She is the co-founder of Saints Youth Theatre and is also a Senior Drama panellist in the Cairns district for the Qld Studies Authority. Leigh has a broad knowledge of the arts industry, particularly in relation to youth theatre, having worked for a number of youth arts organisations around Queensland in a variety of roles. From 2000 through to 2004 Leigh was an Executive Board Member at Backbone Youth Arts in Brisbane where she was the Board's Secretary. Leigh has also worked with the Brisbane City Council on a number of youth initiatives including the Visible Ink Festival from 2001 through to 2004, where she focused on marketing, promotion and sponsorship. She has also worked for debase Productions in Brisbane as a theatre director and also a project officer for their Sheila's Shorts season of one-act plays. Leigh has also worked for the Queensland Performing Arts Centre in writing and developing student and teacher notes for main-house performances.

Leigh brings to the JUTE board thorough knowledge of the region having been a resident in the north since a young age. She also brings practical and theoretical knowledge regarding the education sector and young people's perspectives on theatre. Leigh is passionate and dedicated to the development of theatre in the region for young people.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

JUTE Theatre is able to create outstanding contemporary theatre and as a result would like to thank the following organisations for their support during 2007.

## FUNDING PARTNERS



## THEATRE TO THE EDGE PARTNERS



**Ontour onstage**

This tour is assisted by Arts Regional Touring Service (ARTS), a Queensland Government initiative.

## PRODUCTION SPONSORS



## PROGRAM PARTNERS & COLLABORATORS

Queensland Theatre Company

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



PLAYLAB inc



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