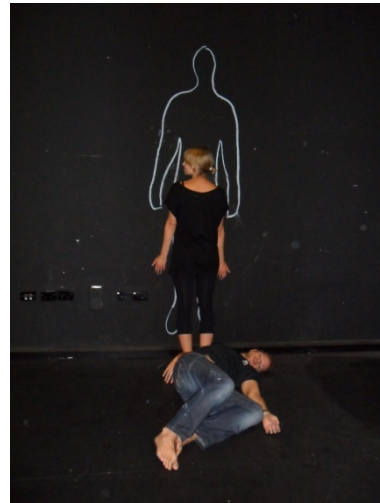


Next Generation of Actors Emerge at JUTE Theatre

-Sunday 9 to Thursday 13 January 2011-



Next G participants (L to R) Laura Pegrum, Ella Watson-Russell and Christiaan Westerveld get into character at JUTE Theatre



Natalie Taylor (back) and Anthony Ring improvise during JUTE Theatre's Next G project

As part of its mandate to develop regional theatre artists, JUTE Theatre makes a dynamic start to its 2011 season with the launch of Next G – an innovative new program that develops early career actors while creating new works.

The first stage of Next G began on Sunday January 9 with five actors being given the golden opportunity to work with award winning playwright, Finegan Kruckemeyer for an intensive five day creative development.

Kruckemeyer, who hails from Hobart, is currently gaining national and international acclaim for his work that include *The Girl Who Forgot to Sing Badly* (the first ever children's work selected for the prestigious *Re:Viewed* program in Dublin Theatre Festival). Finegan has had 46 of his commissioned plays performed. In 2010, 11 works premiered and in 2011, 15 plays will have seasons on five continents. His plays have been part of

31 international festivals, two Sydney Opera House seasons and a three month season with The Actors' Gang in LA.

Along with Kruckemeyer, the actors, namely Laura Pegrum, Natalie Taylor, Anthony Ring, Ella Watson-Russell and Christiaan Westerveld will be directed by JUTE Theatre's Artistic Director and CEO, Suellen Maunder. Dramaturg, Peter Matheson and assistant dramaturg Essie Kruckemeyer will also be actively involved in the process as they develop a story that is based on a range of provocations and their own unique perspectives. This work will be produced in 2012 as part of JUTE's 20 year Celebrations Program.

According to Suellen, Next G is an initiative that culminated from last year's annual, open auditions that successfully unearthed these very talented actors currently in the early to mid stage of their professional career.

"We could not ignore this gift of exciting young performers – so instead, set about creating a program to have them developing and performing work together.

"The Next G program is also about connecting young regional actors to nationally recognized theatre makers beyond our region and thereby broadening their long term career opportunities," she said.

For further information, call Jodie Savina on 4050 9444 or email jodie@jute.com.au

Established in Cairns in 1992, JUTE Theatre is a significant regional theatre company driving the development, co-production, national and international touring of contemporary Australian plays from the regions. JUTE passionately engages others in the telling of new stories that stimulate the mind, revitalize the spirit and lift 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.

Ends

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