



**KULTOUR
KG2014
INTERIM
REPORT:
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Kultour Programs Manager



Building upon the KG2013 Laboratory and Forum process, the KG2014 program has now been delivered in Darwin, Brisbane, Melbourne and Hobart.

Responses from participants, provocateurs, panelists and guests is extremely positive with additional content from anonymous evaluation survey is providing further rich-intelligence to inform future program development. Participant and provocateur feedback also indicates an eagerness to contribute to the on-going development of the national agenda.

KG2014 Melbourne Participant: *Gatherings like this from the micro interpersonal level are so important, to nut out the 'forbidden', 'dark spots' of conversations that are so hard to talk about on a national level. As a CALD artist, a person of colour, being able to talk about and be open about the impacts of racism, as a person of a non-heteronormative sexuality and share that deeply to be heard and understood is extraordinary.*

The laboratories are identifying a range of critical issues for the sector as well as developing deeply honest connections between the artists as they review their practice.

Whilst each location has its own specifics; access to resources, networks and presentation platforms with opportunities for collaboration are emerging as the key universal themes.

The depth of intimacy being established during the laboratory sessions has necessitated a reshaping of the public forums with the focus moving from presentations by the artists – maintaining the integrity of the laboratory process.



KG2014 Melbourne Participant:
To realise how I could take control of the future as an artist and make conscious initiatives for change. I have a stronger sense on my practice. I am clearer about my practice. I have clearer idea of what 'diversity' looks like in contemporary Australia.

Presentation of the provocateur's observations and issues raised during the laboratories now provides the core framework for the public sharings. This has strengthened the effectiveness of the process to stimulate discussion and provides a more supportive environment for the laboratory artists' participation in the public discourse.

Adam Tucker - KG2014 Provocateur Brisbane

Having attended Kultour's inaugural industry forum at the 2013 Brisbane Gathering, it was with great enthusiasm that I accepted the position of Provocateur at the 2014 Brisbane Gathering. It was an enormous pleasure to spend two and a half days in reflective practice with an assembled group of extraordinary artists to challenge and support their journey. From an Iranian early-career artist working in the field of presenting Ancient Persian myths in a contemporary context, to a senior artist having performed the world over in contemporary live performance, a remarkable group of diverse and humble contemporary artists were assembled with the desire to learn, meet, share, reflect and grow – there is no other platform like this.

The major benefit of this insightful program lies in the simplicity of structure and inherent flexibility that allows deep conversation and reflection to take place. In such a fast-paced industry environment we rarely afford ourselves the time to simply stop and reflect on the way in which we create or manage our business.

The opening remarks from Kultour's Program Manager at the beginning of the Gathering resonated deeply with me and I believe on the Brisbane event's process as a whole: It appears in today's world that we have lost the ability to really listen to one another, we seem to listen only to reply – the focus of this weekend is to deeply listen to each other's voices.

With rigorous planning underpinned by Kultour's advocacy role, the Gathering was an extraordinary event to partake in and contribute to. As an aside to the specific event, participation in this program has returned me to my organisation seeking to promote moments of reflection for our musicians as a part of their rehearsal and performance process, and importantly as we assemble Season 2015, asking the question of how we can connect, engage and promote cultural diversity through our own programs in a more profound manner.



Panel members for Darwin, Brisbane and Melbourne – Louise Partos (ArtbackNT), Bong Ramillo (DCA), Wesley Enoch (AD Queensland Theatre Company), Jo Pratt (CEO BEMAC), David Gerrand (Creative Producer – the City of Brisbane), Luke Harriman (Artour Cultural Broker), Jayne Lovelock (Creative Director & CEO Melbourne Fringe Festival), Jade Oud (Marketing and Communications Manager MAV), Judith Seares (Arts Victoria) and Steven Richardson (Creating Partnerships Australia) – have commented on the value of this program and its conversations as critical to the strategic development of the ecology in all its forms and for noting the sector’s forward movement and growth.

Jayne Lovelock – Creative Director / CEO, Melbourne Fringe Festival

It was fantastic to have all of the Kultour Lab artists and provocateurs in the Fringe space during Festival time. The Melbourne Fringe Festival is a time to have real and challenging conversations about the kind of art that is developed and presented in Melbourne, and the Kultour Gathering added much to this conversation. A highlight of the afternoon for me was hearing snippets of the artists’ experiences over the two days and learning about their journey towards the final session on Sunday. The resounding message I took from the afternoon was a positive one, about the power of exceptional art to break down perceptions of diversity in programming. Spending an afternoon with such talented and insightful artists is one of my 2014 Melbourne Fringe Festival highlights and I thank Kultour for running such an important event.

WHAT WE’VE DELIVERED SO FAR:

Darwin, Brisbane, Melbourne and Hobart

WHAT IS YET TO COME:

Canberra, Sydney, Perth, Adelaide, Cairns

WHO HAS BEEN INVOLVED?

Number of artists represented (by location):

4	Darwin Laboratory Artists
10	Brisbane Laboratory Artists
12	Melbourne Laboratory Artists
7	Hobart Laboratory Artists
11	Canberra Laboratory Artists
10	Sydney Laboratory Artists

NUMBER OF DISCIPLINES REPRESENTED (BY PARTICIPANT SELF-IDENTIFICATION):

7	Visual Arts Craft and Design
9	Theatre/Drama
2	New Media/Digital Technology
10	Community Arts and Cultural Development
4	Dance
4	Music
8	Literature and Creative Writing
11	Interdisciplinary Practice
7	Producer
6	Presenter
10	Arts Manager
8	Advocate

PROVOCATEURS BY LOCATION AND NAME:

Chief Provocateurs

Angela Chaplin – Darwin, Cairns, Brisbane, Hobart, Sydney

Fotis Kapetopoulos – Darwin, Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney, Perth

Brisbane Provocateurs

Sam Cook

Adam Tucker

Melbourne Provocateurs

Kane Forbes

Margaret Dobson

Bernadette Fitzgerald

Hobart Provocateurs

Jane Hayley

Annie Grieg

Canberra Provocateurs

Avi Amesbury

Chenoeh Miller

Sydney Provocateurs

Martin Del Amo

Fraser Corfield

Perth Provocateurs

Kerry O'Sullivan

Sally Richardson

Cairns Provocateurs TBC

WHO ARE THE KEY PARTNERS SUPPORTING THE GATHERINGS BY VENUES AND OTHER?

National

The Australia Council for the Arts

NT – Darwin

Darwin Community Arts Centre, Artback NT, Darwin Festival. Darwin Entertainment Centre

QLD – Cairns

Arts Queensland, Cairns Centre of Contemporary Art, JUTE

QLD – Brisbane

Arts Queensland, Brisbane City Council, BEMAC, Metro Arts, Queensland Theatre Company, the Camerata of St John's, ArTour

VIC – Melbourne

Arts Victoria, Creating Partnerships Australia, MAV, Melbourne Fringe Festival, Footscray Community Arts Centre, Regional Arts Victoria

TAS - Hobart

Tasmania Performs, Salamanca Arts Centre, Tasmanian Museum and Arts Gallery

ACT – Canberra

The Street Theatre, Craft ACT, Belconnen Arts Centre, Tuggeranong Arts Centre

NSW – Sydney

Australian Theatre for Young People, Groundswell Arts NSW

WA – Perth

The Blue Room, CANWA



KG2014 REFLECTIONS

The following reflections are a random sample of initial feedback from participants, provocateurs and panelists.

ELEANOR JACKSON – KG2014 LABORATORY PARTICIPANT: BRISBANE

Contemporary corporate speak these days is permeated by the enthusiastic sloganeering of “continuous quality improvement”. The discourse of “feedback loops” and “organisational research, learning and development” is increasingly ubiquitous, whether in government, business, science, sports or the arts.

We are always sharing “lessons learnt” nowadays, aren’t we?

But what does it mean to truly learn? Beyond education or training, the acquisition of new knowledge, new skills, new modes of thinking, is a

complex and slippery process. And if we are always focused on achieving an outcome of that new learning, finding an immediate, panicked way to “do something” with what we now “know”, are we merely adopting the tomorrow’s new trend, which is, in turn, next year’s bad habit?

At the Brisbane Kultour Gathering 2014, I had a fantastic opportunity to consider the role of deep reflection and inquiry as a part of ongoing learning as a writer and as a creative producer – taking part in learning in an entirely refreshing context, with a talented and eclectic group of participants and provocateurs from the greater South-East Queensland area.

Before the Gathering, I held many unanswered questions about the process – was it a professional development session? skills sharing? networking powwow? a talkfest? support group? preaching to the choir? All I was sure was that the calibre of previous participants drew me deeply and intuitively to the concept. Ultimately, the Gathering was none and yet, positively, somehow all of the above. What emerged, however, still feels hard to describe, as is often the case with sessions that are facilitated with gentleness, a willingness to pull and thread and keep pulling it as long as the discussion proves rich and fruitful. Imagine the languor of the very best dinner table conversation, fuelled by nothing coffee and a deep enthusiasm for the arts, and the attentive care of your unobtrusive hosts. The frankness of participants, willingness to engage with open-ended process, thoughtful provocation, and generosity of ideas and experiences lead to public presentation that was not only guided by practical, lived experience but remarkably unified considering the diversity of participant background. Perhaps there is something in this open-ended, networking, dialogic style of learning across diversity, after all?

At Peril Magazine, the editorial team and board regularly question and challenge our respective understandings of culturally and linguistically diverse art making and literature. As a collective, we are often searching for a new way to learn from the Australia’s cultural past, to dream it

forward into a place that more closely resembles Australia’s complex cultural realities – we want to re-write our own stories into a cultural discourse that continues to perpetuate the myth of mono-culturalism. Situating these discussions in an intercultural and interdisciplinary context, both resonated with and posed valuable challenges to that ongoing project – and my personal writing practice. I would not only leap at the chance to participate again, but have been enthusiastically applying model of discussion as a way of enriching debate with my colleagues at Peril – like a high-octane feedback loop that turns into a great glittering hula hoop and then returns like a fractal drawing or mandala.

Some weeks later, I’m still returning to questions of audience and critical drive posed by a circus professional with a flair for a feminist clowning; wondering about the equal myth of whiteness as presented by a visual artist whose work challenges geographical and practice backgrounds; thinking of interstitial meditation to traffic; finding percussion instruments in discarded rubbish; and wondering how many countries the soundtrack of my life features – all of which is funneling and then exploding processes for the lenses I apply to my own practice.

What a beautiful process – my humblest gratitude for the opportunity to contribute to such a rich and reflective conversation about the role of the arts in Australia’s contemporary society.



LIAN LOW – KG2014 LABORATORY PARTICIPANT: MELBOURNE

The night before the Melbourne Kultour Gathering, I read Panos Couros' [reflections](#) from last year's gathering, then hopped online to watch the writing panel he curated "[Home is where the heart is](#)" at the *Wordstorm* writers festival in Darwin this year. The panel featured Antony Loewenstein, Chi Vu, Lionel Fogarty, Philip McLaren, Alexis Wright, Annette Shun Wah, Teresa Crea discussing the concept of home. I was immediately struck by facilitator Teresa Crea (co-founder of Doppio Teatro, Australia's first professional bilingual theatre company, in 1983), when she said, "I haven't been on a forum with this combination of people, I think, through my whole history with multiculturalism, I haven't had this kind of forum and this kind of conversation, so there's a huge responsibility on us to

unpack some of those issues."

In reflecting on my experience at the gathering, the above panel discussion was always at the back of my mind as I entered into a space contemplating Australia's cultural diversity, the historical fictions that prop up a national identity and the policing of our national borders. I wonder why having a panel such as the one above is a unique experience rather than the norm. It's powerful to read that according to Crea, last year's gathering was an important historical moment. That the gathering enabled discussions and conversations about current issues while also capturing what may have been forgotten.

At the Melbourne gathering, all twelve artists and practitioners, four provocateurs and Kultour staff were in the room because we wanted to reflect upon the history and meaning

of multicultural arts beyond food and folk festivals. Kane Forbes, Manager of Performing Arts Touring at Regional Arts Victoria and one of the provocateurs said, "Often diversity is talked about in abstract ways as a problem". At the industry session and public forum, discussion and debate arose as to the meaning of a 'Western canon'. Furthermore, what constitutes 'great art', but also, importantly who dominates the production, creation and representation of 'great art' in Australia?

The wonderfully kitchen-table intimate conversations that occurred formally and informally was profound. From aesthetic practices (visual arts, installation, filmmaking, performance making, writing) to community engagement, positive engagement with 'being different' (without being exoticised!), media representation,

the benefits of online platforms, multilingualism, loneliness, working and living sustainably, funding sources and viability, racism, sexism, queerphobia, transphobia; from the personal to the systemic, with a view to Australia's current arts, culture and political climate compared globally – the conversations were always rich, multilayered, meaningful.

In the closing industry and public forum, in response to a participant's feedback about having more questions after the gathering, Marcus Hughes, Kultour's Program Manager replied that Kultour's commitment is to keep the questions alive. Hughes also said, "As a society, we no longer listen to understand, but listen to reply". In these conversations, I hope for a ripple effect and as a society, I'm sure it's already happening.

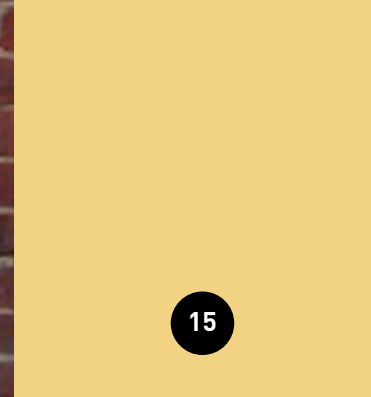


**SAM COOK – KG2014
PROVOCATEUR: BRISBANE**

My thoughts on the Kultour Gathering 2014 Brisbane.

I've been gravitating most recently to small groups and intimate spaces which I'm finding nourishing in the way they enable spaces to become conduits for deep engagement. The ability to privilege voice, hear and be heard seemed to underpin the Brisbane Kultour Gathering of 2014 as the intimate room and focus of the groups forged a remarkable set of articulations and outcomes, never once under the duress of time and space, nor swamped by a mass dialogue and talking, but not hearing platforms.

I find it so vitally important that we seek to engage often on this level, and find its worth to be supportable, equal to that of the larger group settings as it is a generator of inspiration, creativity and positive outcome. The group itself proved self-nurturing and self-sustaining, new networks forming from a curated group who had never previously met. I look forward to the many collaborations and relationships that come from this intimate group full of heart and was happy to have been able to provoke and stimulate conversations through my lived experiences that may aid the journey forward.





Australian Government



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All images by Emile Zile and Zoe Bilotta