

## **Spark 2006 Mentorees: 11 young artists with fire in their eyes**



Eleven young Australian artists have set their sights on success, as they commence the 2006 SPARK mentoring program.

These young artists have already demonstrated their determination for a career in the arts by securing a place in the prestigious SPARK program. SPARK is a national young artist's mentorship program in dance, theatre and visual arts. It is an initiative of the Young and Emerging Artists fund of the Australia Council for the Arts, and is managed by Youth Arts Queensland (YAQ).

Rob Kelly, director of Raw Space art gallery and 2006 SPARK mentor, recognises the potential in this group of young emerging artists. He notes that: *"Success in this industry depends not only on having considerable talent, but also having the drive to go with it."* Robb's mentoree, Bree Jackson, has worked hard to establish her promising career in the industry. She will be curating her first exhibition "NO 1 -324 AND TO BE CONTINUED", at Raw Space Galleries during the mentorship, opening on Friday 28 July.

Spark Program manager Bella Siphthorp agrees: *"What sets these young artists apart is their determination. They are undoubtedly talented, but what make them so potent, so outstanding, is their intent. They are capable of simultaneously having a mind for creativity and a mind for success. It is a rare quality in creative minds."*

The Spark program will give these young artists the practical knowledge to manage the business side of their art, to accompany their creative talent.

The response to this year's call for application exceeded expectations, attracting an overwhelming response from young artists aged 18 – 26 across Australia. Competing for just 11 places in the national mentoring program, the successful applicants were selected for their artistic vision, their creative project outlines and their potential to contribute to the Australian arts industry.

In the coming nine months, each mentoree will develop their artistic practice, gain practical skills, develop their networks and increase their profile with the support of their chosen mentor, a professional Australian arts practitioner.

The eleven partnerships selected for the SPARK program in 2006 are:

**Olivia Crang (VIC) will be mentored by David Pledger (VIC)** in theatre and visual arts. Olivia is a theatre maker, creating hybrid-visual theatre works. Inspired by Mentor David Pledger's work as Artistic Director of performance ensemble *Not Yet Its Difficult*, she intends to focus her Spark mentorship on developing the first work to be presented by her own collaborative ensemble.

**Deborah Robertson (VIC) will be mentored by Tracie Mitchell (VIC)** in dance. Debbie will take her own live dance practice into film. Drawing on the experience of her Mentor, Debbie will choreograph a new dance-film work of her own.

**Catherine Sewell (VIC) will be mentored by Zoe Atkinson (WA)** in theatre. Cat is a theatre maker who designs live spaces for performance. She is inspired by how art forms

cross-pollinate and feed off each other. Cat seeks to develop the design of the set, objects and costumes for a physical, interactive performance piece.

**Keith Lim (NSW) will be mentored by Kate Champion (NSW)** in dance. After recently performing in the Brisbane Festival Theatre Fringe, Keith intends on discovering a completely new language of movement and developing it into a contemporary physical performing arts piece.

**Daniel Koerner (VIC) will be mentored by Leisa Shelton (VIC)** in theatre and dance. Teaming up with previous SPARK mentor Leisa, Dan will experiment with established modes of devising physical work and exploring new physical approaches to performance.

**Bree Jackson (QLD) will be mentored by Robb Kelly (QLD)** in visual arts. Bree aspires to follow in her mentor's foot steps in curating contemporary visual arts exhibitions. Her exhibition project will feature young and emerging visual artists.

**Kieran Swann (QLD) will be mentored by Bruce McKinven (QLD)** in theatre. Crossing Visual Arts, Dance and Theatre, Kieran's practice is performance design. With the support of Bruce, Kieran will be developing design concepts and materials in a series of creative developments of an eighteenth century satire piece in a visual theatre context.

**Talya Chalef (VIC) will be mentored by Liz Jones (VIC)** in theatre. Talya will explore her one woman performance *site*. Her second project will involve the development of a new hybrid performance work exploring Australian identity.

**Aimee Smith (WA) will be mentored by Andrew Lake (WA)** in dance and visual arts. Through her SPARK experience, Aimee will to broaden her artistic practise on interdisciplinary art forms. She plans on developing a new performance work integrating digital media and contemporary dance.

**Michelle Anderson (WA) will be mentored by Philip Mitchell (WA)** in theatre. Michelle identifies puppetry as an integral part of her future work. She is inspired by her mentor Philip's technical mastery and enthusiasm for puppetry. In her project, she aims to develop her skills in animation and puppetry.

**Laura Scrivano (NSW) will be mentored by Kate Gaul (NSW)** in theatre. Laura aspires to create theatre that embraces resistance, challenges and changes the audience. She is planning to extend her work in a verbatim theatre piece that addresses social issues within her community.

Contacts & Information -  
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