



SPARK fires up young artists

The national SPARK mentoring program offers young artists the ignition to get creative

... And a mentorship with a professional artist, alongside training, advice and funding, is exactly what the eleven young artists in this year's SPARK program have used to ignite their creativity.

For those who are wondering what it's all about, these up-and-coming young artists have much to show for their creative labours, with an exciting myriad of work spanning theatre, puppetry, dance film, photography, curating, physical theatre, design, directing and new media. These include:

Performance in a bubble suit...

In Sydney, physical performer Keith Lim will explore the boundaries of physical performance, using arm extensions, a soap bubble suit, hand held LED lights, and video projection to see how far he can go beyond that which is humanly possible.

Eluding surveillance cameras through art...

At RAW Space Galleries in Brisbane, emerging curator Bree Jackson will present a visual art exhibition entitled 'You Are Here' which plays on the constant video surveillance that infiltrates our lives – and what better way to shield yourself than with umbrellas? In March, audiences will witness a site-specific performance by Perth-based PVI Collective, who will present Panopticon, a privacy bubble created entirely from umbrellas.

The 'Play' in Theatre...

Emerging Melbourne theatre designer Cat Sewell is using her SPARK project to focus on the design for 'Playground', an interactive installation in which performers encourage the audience to play, have a giggle, tell a story and take a risk.

Applications for 2007 mentorships are now open!

It can only get better, with twelve mentorships available in 2007 to young and emerging dancers, theatre makers, interdisciplinary artists and artists working in communities.

More information and application details are available at www.yaq.org.au/spark or by contacting Youth Arts Queensland: spark@yaq.org.au / 07 3252 5115 or 1300 558 892. Applications will close 6 April 2007.

Mentors and mentorees in the current SPARK program are all available for interview.

For media enquiries, please contact Leah Shelton, SPARK Program Manager, on 07 3252 5115 or 0414 459 177 or email spark@yaq.org.au

About SPARK

SPARK is the Australia Council for the Arts' national mentoring program, assisting young artists from all over Australia to break onto the national arts scene.

The program provides support, training, advice and funding for young artists to focus on their creative ideas and to profile their work to the national arts industry. Each young artist chooses their mentor and they work together on an artistic project of their choice.

About the current SPARK mentorees

These up-and-coming young artists from across the nation have each ignited their creative sparks in different and exciting ways:

The Cronulla Project

Sydney-based director **Laura Scrivano's** (NSW) project will be based around the Cronulla beach riots of late 2005. The artists involved in the Cronulla project recently got together with a documentary crew to cover the anniversary of the riots in Cronulla and Lakemba, and will use interviews, research and media materials to develop the work. A reading of the work will take place on March 25 at The Stables (Griffin Theatre Company). Laura has also recently started work as director on a Hip Hop Cabaret, "The Naked MC" with Sista She.

Dancing in a bubble suit?

Physical performer **Keith Lim** (NSW) will use his SPARK grant to explore the limits of the human body, using various apparatuses to go beyond that which is humanly impossible. His creative explorations will play with arm extensions, a soap bubble suit, hand held LED lights, and video projection. Alongside support from his mentor, renowned performer / creator Kate Champion, Keith will also work with Erth Visual & Physical Theatre Company, with whom he is currently performing in New Zealand, puppeteering dinosaurs in their show *Gondwana – A Live Journey Through Time*.

Precious Shoes puppeteered

Michelle Anderson (WA) is performing in a solo work under the direction of her mentor Phillip Mitchell. *Mary Surefoot's Shoe Collection* is the story of Mary-Anne, an avid shoe collector who yearns to share her passion for the humble shoe. With the assistance of Spare Parts Puppet Theatre and The Western Australian Museum, Mary brings her audience just a crumb of a piece of toast of her magnificent shoe collection.

Fresh dance talent

Dancer and choreographer **Aimee Smith** (WA) has used the opportunity presented by SPARK to explore the realms beyond dance, including text and multimedia, to create the new work 'Courageously Heroic Gallantry', a battlefield of one woman, one war and no winner. The work will explore war and all its ridiculous contradictions and will premiere at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts in March. Recently billed as "the freshest talent WA has to offer" for her upcoming commissioned work with Buzz Dance Theatre, Aimee said "the SPARK project funding has provided me with the support to create my own work without making compromises".

A dance between states

Emerging choreographer, performer and promising dance-film artist **Deborah Robertson** (VIC/WA) has found herself based between Perth and Melbourne as she develops her dance practice across two states. Her new work, *The Deconstruction (of my shoulder blade)* was recently presented at Gasworks Arts Park, Melbourne, as part of the Midsumma Festival, and will also feature in a triple bill, 'Get Yourself Some Art' at Perth's The Blue Room in May. *The Deconstruction (of my shoulder blade)* releases the stories held in the body through the use of movement, text and projected image. Through the work the audience is invited to become witness as Deborah peels away layers of physicality, revealing resonant memories of her life.

Emerging designer does QTC

Twenty-two year old **Kieran Swann** (QLD) has this year been selected for Queensland Theatre Company's emerging artists' program, which will involve working with established designers and designing shows himself for the mainstage season. Through the program he will continue his collaboration with his mentor, theatre designer Bruce McKinven, which will see them work together on the design of the upcoming Queensland Theatre Company production 'Private Fears in Public Places'. Kieran's SPARK project saw him take on the role of designer/deviser for a visual theatre adaptation of the seventeenth century satire *Gulliver's Travels*.

Escaping Big Brother's lenses

Twenty-three year old emerging curator **Bree Jackson** (QLD) is currently hard at work on her upcoming exhibition *You Are Here*, which will explore video surveillance in public places and the boundaries between trust and fear, private and public life. Through the SPARK program Bree was able to make contact with Perth-based arts collective PVI, who will present a live performance work which offers to shield a member of the public from the intrusions of video cameras through the use of umbrellas. Works from Swiss artist Roman Signer and local Brisbane emerging artist Tom Hall will also be presented in the exhibiton. Bree's mentor, Robb Kelly, is the director of Raw Space gallery where Bree's exhibition will be presented in March.

International Truth Commissions – 'In Other Words'

Emerging director **Talya Chalef's** (VIC) project was inspired by the disappeared people in South America and the stories and testimonies of international truth commissions. Talya has been invited to talk about this work-in-progress at the Space & Place Intellectual Collective at the University of Minnesota and her workshopping process will be the subject of a joint article by two academics from University of Minnesota and University of Cape Town.

** STOP PRESS – Talya has just been nominated for a Green Room Award in the Theatre Panel New Form – Outstanding Direction category, for her recent work site.

Launch of a new company x:machine

Melbourne's **Olivia Crang** (VIC) is an amateur, director, writer and performer, who is using the support of SPARK to launch her company x:machine, a collaborative aiming to create dynamic performance projects related to themes of technology and the body. x:machine will launch mid March at LOOP Bar and will present their inaugural production 'Senseless', a solo performance of interconnected monologues performed by Olivia, in May 2007 at fortyfivedownstairs in Melbourne.

Around the world

Performer and director **Daniel Koerner** (VIC) has covered vast ground for his SPARK mentorship, which included an internship at New York company Radiohole and architectural research in London, Dublin and Tokyo. Dan is currently in the process of collating all of his research towards creation of a new work, Wanda. This work will be based around the image of a woman in the metropolis and will explore gender and representation through the use of live performance, lighting and photography.

** STOP PRESS – Dan has just been nominated for a Green Room Award in the Independent Theatre – Direction category, for his recent work Kissy, Kissy.

The 'Play' in Theatre

In Melbourne, emerging designer **Cat Sewell** (VIC) is exploring new spaces to stage theatre performances, from residential kitchens to outdoor parks. Created in collaboration with performer Nancy Sposato, the work 'Playground' will deliver an interactive installation in which performers encourage the audience to play, have a giggle, tell a story and take a risk.
