

Tiny Universe: a view inside the beautiful worlds we imagine for ourselves

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Friday 27 April 2021

Comprising 60 years of impact in the Australian arts landscape, Shopfront Arts Co-op and Milk Crate Theatre join forces on a bold new intergenerational work, *Tiny Universe*, which will premiere at PACT Centre for Emerging Artists in Erskineville from May 20 – 29.

Co-directed by award winning team, Shopfront's Creative Director, Natalie Rose, and Milk Crate Theatre's Artistic Director, Margot Politis, *Tiny Universe* explores the delineation between inner and outer worlds – what we present to the world, and what is actually happening behind closed doors. It invites audiences to consider what we carry with us through life, and how that changes over time. What are the rituals we perform, the modicums of self-soothing that occur in our own little corners of our lives?

Who are we – and how do we cope - when no one is looking, especially if we feel there is something about ourselves that makes us different from others? Do we ever get used to the uncertainty that life throws at us?

Through conversations with “self”, *Tiny Universe* reveals how we reckon privately with social pressures, systems, and expectations, through the exploration of set, space, movement, lighting, and text.

The devised work reflects both companies' commitments to championing the voices of artists from underrepresented communities and backgrounds. Through this new partnership, Shopfront and Milk Crate Theatre will bring forward the stories and artistic expression of young people and people with lived experience of homelessness, mental health issues, and disability.

“The most wonderful thing about this work is the collaboration between the two companies, the artists and the creative team,” says Shopfront's Creative Director Natalie Rose.

“The process has proven that regardless of lived experience, we are all the same. We share the universal – we all want to feel safe and be the best versions of ourselves whenever we can.”

Milk Crate Theatre's Artistic Director Margot Politis describes her excitement at “bringing our dynamic theatre organisations together on this project,” explaining that the performers are all “exploring the very painful as well as the very funny experiences of life – and the reasons why sometimes it is easier to just hide away.

What we're finding is that the issue of self-discovery is something that affects us at all stages of our lives – maybe when we are older we just get a little more used to the uncertainty.”

The production has been developed in collaboration with a team of cast and creatives, including Desmond Edwards, Harrison Bishop, Lana Filies, Lily Hayman, Lisa Griffiths, Matthias Nudl, Steve Konstantopoulos, and Nick Vagne, and will feature the work of revered composer, James Brown, lighting designer Liam O'Keefe, and support artists Lucy Watson.

SEASON & TIMES 20 – 29 May Wednesday – Saturday 6.30pm Matinee Friday 21 May 12pm

ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCES All performances are wheelchair accessible. AUSLAN interpreted performance: 6:30pm Friday 21 May Relaxed performance: 6:30pm Wednesday 26 May

VENUE PACT Theatre for Emerging Artists 107 Railway Parade, Erskineville NSW 2043

PRICE Individual tickets \$12 - \$22 Group tickets \$100

More information and to purchase tickets: www.shopfront.org.au/tiny-universe Promotional Images: Hero Image Image Credit: Artists: Darlene Proberts and Steve Konstantopoulos. Photo by Joshua Morris / David Molloy.

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Image credit: Joshua Morris, with Overlay artwork by David Molloy

CREATIVE TEAM Directors: Natalie Rose, Shopfront Arts Co-op Margot Politis, Milk Crate Theatre

Composer and AV Design: James Peter Brown

Lighting Design: Liam O'Keefe

Set Design Margot Politis

Performers: Desmond Edwards, Harrison Bishop, Lana Filies, Lily Hayman, Lisa Griffiths, Matthias Nudl, Steve Konstantopoulos, Nick Vagne

Support Artist:

Lucy Watson

ABOUT SHOPFRONT ARTS CO-OP www.shopfront.org.au

Shopfront Arts Co-op is the home of youth arts. We stand as Sydney's only cross-art form organisation led by and dedicated to the artistry of young people. For over four decades, Shopfront has amplified the voices of young people. Supported by practising, professional artists, our members make bold and ambitious works of creative expression. We champion acts of artistic bravery. We are acknowledged for this bravery through awards, recognition and support of arts bodies, and by the thousands of people who have at one time or another in the last four decades considered Shopfront to be their second home. Being a member of Shopfront means you are part of something. Our co-operative is an inclusive community of artists sharing a common goal of making great art (and having a lot of fun along the way).

ABOUT MILK CRATE THEATRE www.milkcratetheatre.com

Milk Crate Theatre effects social change through the power of performance. We provide opportunities for people whose voices are under-represented in mainstream discourses to engage in artistic practice, sharing bold and resonant stories that build empathy and break down barriers. Our community of Collaborative Artists are generally living with, have experienced or are at risk of homelessness; living with mental health or disability support needs; have experienced domestic violence, or come from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. With a deep and genuine Community Arts and Cultural Development ethos, and employment of Sydney's most exciting and communityversed contemporary artists, we make dynamic and impactful performance work that integrates film, sound, movement and aesthetic to achieve high level outcome in the expression of integral social justice subject matter.

With thanks to:

We acknowledge the Bediagal and Kameygal people of the Eora nation who are the traditional custodians of the land on which Shopfront is built. We also acknowledge the Gadigal and Wangal people of the Eora nation who are traditional custodians of the land on which Milk Crate Theatre work and create theatre on. We pay our respects to those elders past and present, and to all our brothers and sisters of our first nations people.

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