

# MTC WOMEN IN THEATRE PROGRAM 2019

## MID-YEAR REPORT



Thank you for your generous support of the MTC Women in Theatre Program.

Your contribution makes a genuine, lasting difference to the career development of the participants and helps transform the culture of gender inequality in the arts sector for generations to come.

## Women in Theatre 2019 Update

Our 2019 Women in Theatre program commenced in February with a meet and greet at MTC HQ, providing an opportunity for each participant to share their work and hear each other's experiences to date. During the first week of salons commencing Monday 11 February, the participants engaged in now well established sessions that covered:

- **Profile Management & Networking - hosted by MTC Executive Director Virginia Lovett.** In this Salon discussion, Virginia Lovett shared details of her career, highlighting the best ways to approach networking and building a professional profile as well as those to avoid. The session focused on networking skills to build a professional profile, particularly during their time in the program.
- **About MTC – hosted by MTC Producer Martina Murray.** This session involved learning about the inner workings of MTC as Australia's oldest professional theatre company and where it sits within the industry.
- **Programming – hosted by MTC Artistic Director Brett Sheehy AO.** Using Season 2019 as an example, Brett Sheehy shared the challenges of programming for a major performing arts company, the appeal of stories he is drawn to and scope he works within. He also offered advice for participants interested in working on main stages.
- **Fearless Leadership – hosted by Leadership Coach Corrinne Armour.** This full day workshop offered time for participants to reflect on their personal leadership style and provide tools to further develop their personal authority, confidence and build leadership and communication skills.

During the second week of salons commencing Monday 6 May, the participants engaged in sessions that covered:

- **Creative Pathways – hosted by MTC Associate Artistic Director, Sarah Goodes; Head of Education & Families, Jeremy Rice; MTC Casting Janine Snape & Matthew Bebbington.** Divided into 3 parts, this salon discussion explored creative pathways in the performing arts using real examples and practical career building advice.
- **Personal Wellbeing – hosted by Gabriel Edwards Managing Director of Engaging People, and founder and counsellor at Breathing Space.** In this full day workshop, participants explored the impacts of mind, body, relationships, career and environment on mental health and wellbeing. The group looked at techniques for dealing with stress, building personal resilience and ways of positively managing career and workplace environments.
- **Production & Playing Spaces – hosted by Senior Production Manager Michele Preshaw.** This session involved a backstage tour of venues used by MTC including The Sumner and The Lawler, whilst discussing the benefits and challenges of each performance space. The MTC Production Management team of MTC gave insight into using communication channels and key roles effectively when working as part of a large company. This involved meeting management strategies, tips on working with permanent staff and within company design timelines with available resources. In addition, they outlined their approach to productions weeks and how to get a show up and running in the theatre.

In addition to these formal sessions, one-on-one mentoring sessions have been taking place throughout the year, thanks to our impressive 2019 Mentors.

#### Participants and Mentors:

Participant	Area	Mentor	Mentor Title
Amy Hardingham	Creative Director	Virginia Lovett	Executive Director, MTC
Alice Pollard	Production Management	TBC	TBC
Clemence Williams	Sound Design & Composition	Adena Jacobs	Director / Artistic Director, Fraught Outfit
Emily Sheehan	Playwright	Joanna Murray-Smith	Playwright
Emily Sweeney	Producer	TBC	TBC
Grace Ferguson	Emerging Sound Design	Jethro Woodward	Composer & Sound Designer
Keziah Warner	Dramaturgy	Michelle Lee	Playwright
Penny Harpham	Directing	Clare Watson	Artistic Director, Black Swan
Rachel Chant	Directing	Imara Savage	Director
Rachel Lee	Lighting	Emma Valente	Lighting Designer
Romanie Harper	Set & Costume Design	Anna Tregloan	Designer
Roshelle Fong	Multi-discipline Artist	Carri Twigg	Public Engagement Strategist
Xanthe Beesley	Artistic Direction	Rose Hiscock	Director, Science Gallery Melbourne

The Women in Theatre participants have also been attending rehearsal room Company Runs, Dress Rehearsals, MTC Opening Nights and presentations by the Season's Directors and Designers, to better understand and appreciate the page-to-stage cycle of a major theatre company.

We are delighted to share that our 2019 technical design stream participants have worked in paid design associate placements on two of MTC's mainstage productions. **Amy Holley** joined the *Così* creative team as Sound Design Associate and **Clare Springett** is working on *Shakespeare in Love* as Lighting Design Associate. Another exciting update is that 2019 participant Penny Harpham has accepted a six-month role as Teaching Artist for MTC's Education program, working with Virtual Schools Victoria in semester two this year. The program sees Year 8 -9 students work together to create an original performance piece for an audience – all via online lessons and in-person workshops.

#### July to December 2019

We look forward to welcoming back our 2019 Women in Theatre Participants in September for their final week of Salon Sessions. This culminating week of workshops will focus on the development of new Australian works, Marketing Campaigns and Fundraising, and feature two optional extras of Personal Finance and Grant Writing. To wrap up the busy week, Erica Bagshaw, Executive Leadership Coach will lead her specially designed Pitching Masterclass in preparation for the cohort's Pitch Day to MTC in November 2019.

## Women in Theatre Alumni Updates

### *Alumni working with MTC in 2019:*

- Rachel Chant (2019 participant) was the Assistant Director on the MTC and STC co-production of *Così*.
- Clemence Williams (2019 participant) was the Sound Designer and Composer for MTC productions *Arbus and West* and *Heisenberg*.
- Kat Chan (2018 participant) is with the Company at the moment as Assistant Designer on *Golden Shield*.
- Prue Clark (2017 participant) directed, and Amelia Lever-Davidson (2017 participant) was the Lighting Designer for MTC's education show this year – *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me To You*.

### *Other updates:*

- Lauren Makin (2018 Participant) is now one of the Production Managers at Sydney Theatre Company and will be responsible for the tour of *Black is the New White* to MTC later this year.
- Susanah Day (2018 participant) has taken on the role of Program Manager at The Torch Project.
- Dans Maree Sheehan (2017 participant) has taken up the position of Production Manager of Circus Oz.
- Kellie Anne Kimber (2017 participant) is one of four artists selected to partake in Malthouse Theatre's 2019 Besen Family Artist Program.
- Mary Rachel Brown (2017 participant) had a successful season of her play *Dead Cat Bounce* at Griffin Theatre in Sydney, directed by Artistic Director of STCSA Mitchel Butell.
- Natasha Phillips (2016 participant) took up a position as Associate Producer at Arts Centre Melbourne.

We are also thrilled that a number of Alumni are involved in MTC 2020 productions, and we look forward to sharing further details with you over the coming months.



*2019 Women in Theatre participants at the welcome drinks in February*