

# MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY



# 2023 EDUCATION

IMPACT REPORT

**Melbourne Theatre Company acknowledges the Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation, the traditional custodians of the land on which we work, create and gather.**

**We pay our respects to all First Nations people, their Elders past and present and their enduring connections to Country, knowledge and stories.**

**As a Company we remain committed to the invitation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and its call for voice, truth and treaty.**

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Deadly Creatives Corey Saylor-Brunskill, Emma Salmon and Brodie Murray. Photo: Tiffany Garvie



We'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of our Education & Families team

**Director of Families & Education**

Jeremy Rice

**Learning Manager**

Nick Tranter

**Education Content Producer**

Emily Doyle

**Education Coordinator**

Brodi Purtill

**Education Ticketing Officer**

Mellita Ilich

**Casual Administration**

Merryn Hughes and Matisse Knight

## PHOTO CREDITS

Cover image: Youth Scholarship Course. Photo: Jacinta Keefe

Photos by Emily Doyle, Tiffany Garvie, Jacinta Keefe, Brodi Purtill, Nick Tranter and Joshua Vickery-Stewart.

# Thank you

Youth Ambassadors.  
Photo: Joshua Vickery-Stewart



Reflecting on the full suite of Education activity in 2023, we are extremely proud of the breadth and impact of our work, all of which would not have been possible without your generous support.

Building on considerable research and development over recent years, 2023 saw the launch of our Education Hub, an ever-expanding library of free learning resources for schools and students across the state. Feedback from teachers has been glowing, and we look forward to its continued expansion in 2024.

As well as significant digital projects, in-person activity continued to go from strength-to-strength.

In May, our 2023 Education & Families production *I Wanna Be Yours* by Zia Ahmed hit the Lawler stage before touring to outer-metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

We also launched IGNITE – a new ticket, transport and relief teacher subsidy for students and young people experiencing disadvantage, removing financial barriers to spark a lifelong love of theatre.

And finally, after several years of restricted access, in-person engagement activity returned to pre-COVID levels at Southbank Theatre and HQ. Hearing young voices in our spaces again has been extremely rewarding and something we are looking to cement in the year ahead.

Thank you for enabling such extraordinary achievements in 2023 and ensuring life-changing arts access for thousands of young people. We hope you enjoy reading about the impact of your giving in this report.

**‘The impact of your production goes beyond entertainment; it has sparked discussions, empathy, and a newfound appreciation for the theatre and drama among our students.’**

TEACHER, WESTERN PORT SECONDARY COLLEGE

# Education reach



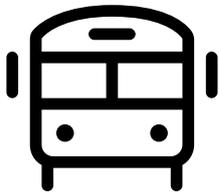
**3,136**

subsidised school tickets



**119**

schools attended  
live theatre in Melbourne



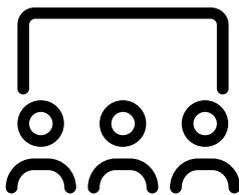
**910km**

travelled on the *I Wanna Be Yours*  
regional tour



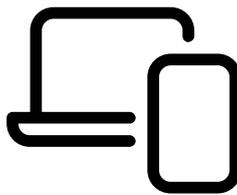
**507**

participants in workshops and  
engagement programs



**424**

participants in  
live online events



**7,227**

unique visits to our  
digital education resources

**DRAMA  
VICTORIA  
AWARDS**



Excellence in the Digital/  
Online Delivery of Drama:  
Script Notes video series

# Education production

Eleanor Barkla and Oz Malik.  
Photo: Tiffany Garvie



## I Wanna Be Yours

By Zia Ahmed  
Directed by Tasnim Hossain  
Cast Eleanor Barkla and Oz Malik  
Southbank Theatre, The Lawler  
11–27 May 2023

A modern-day romance for teen audiences, *I Wanna Be Yours* is the widely acclaimed debut play from London Laureate and poetry slam champion Zia Ahmed. This was the first time the play had been produced outside of the UK, and the play's universal themes of identity, love and culture resonated deeply with school audiences.

We presented 20 performances at Southbank Theatre, including two education-focussed performances with pre-show talks and post-show Q&A sessions with the cast.

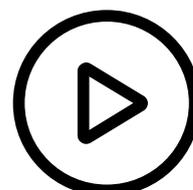
### REGIONAL TOUR

We were thrilled to return to regional Victoria in 2023, taking the full production on the road to four venues across the state: Bunjil Place (Narre Warren), The Potato Shed (Drysdale), Gippsland Performing Arts Centre (Traralgon) and Ulumbarra Theatre (Bendigo). Over 400 students and young people attended five performances on tour and participated in a Q&A session with the cast and crew after every performance.

This year, we produced a mini-documentary of the 2023 Regional Tour including a special shout-out to our Donors.

**'We are so grateful to everyone at [Melbourne Theatre Company] for making the effort to visit Drysdale. Usually, we miss out on all the good things from Melbourne so this was really special.'**

STUDENT, BELLARINE SECONDARY COLLEGE



Watch the video at  
[mtc.com.au/backstage/i-wanna-be-yours-on-tour](https://mtc.com.au/backstage/i-wanna-be-yours-on-tour).

Regional tour supported by Linda Herd  
and the Education Giving Circle

# Education production

*I Wanna Be Yours* Livestream,  
Southbank Theatre, The Lawler.  
Photo: Emily Doyle.



## I Wanna Be Yours

### LIVESTREAM PERFORMANCE

We enabled over two hundred isolated students to watch a performance of *I Wanna Be Yours* in the Lawler via a livestream on the Melbourne Theatre Company website. The livestream was produced in partnership with Arts Centre Melbourne Broadcast & Digital and provided access to students unable to attend theatre due to distance, disability or medical and social factors. Livestream audiences were able to participate in the post-show Q&A via an online chat window and send virtual applause to the cast and crew.

### DIGITAL RESOURCES

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) included *I Wanna Be Yours* on the VCE Playlist for Drama, requiring students to watch a performance and then analyse the production in school-based assessments and the end-of-year VCE exams.

To support student study and achievement, we created a comprehensive suite of curriculum-based digital resources for classroom use and at-home study of *I Wanna Be Yours*. These included interactive pre-show resources, a two-part education pack, video interviews with the cast and creatives, and a series of video rehearsal diaries.

See the resources in our Education Hub (login required for select resources) at [mtc.com.au/education-hub](https://mtc.com.au/education-hub).

**'What is most valuable is that these are coming from a professional theatre company. I can guarantee that Melbourne Theatre Company materials will be of quality.'**

TEACHER, ELTHAM COLLEGE

**'Melbourne Theatre Company is to be commended for its unique digital education such as the livestream and virtual tours, helping some of Victoria's most disadvantaged young people to experience the arts.'**

TEACHER, VIRTUAL SCHOOL VICTORIA

Melbourne Theatre Company acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government Department of Education through the Strategic Partnerships Program.

MTC Digital Education supported by the Ian Potter Foundation



Department of Education



# Enhanced learning

Nick Tranter, Learning Manager.  
Photo: Emily Doyle



When attending a Melbourne Theatre Company performance, students are supported in a number of ways to promote deeper learning and engagement.

## EDUCATION PERFORMANCES

Students gain unique insights into professional theatre through pre-show talks and post-show Q&As at designated Education performances. These talks directly address the relevant VCE Study Design and are a unique opportunity for students to explore key aspects of the curriculum ahead of seeing a show. Pictured above is Nick Tranter, Learning Manager, sharing details on the design and making processes on *Bernhardt/Hamlet* – complete with a costume from the show.

## REVISION WEBINARS

To support students in preparing for the VCE exams, we offer online revision webinars with cast and creatives from our VCE Playlisted productions ahead of the examination period. These online events revisit key moments from the production (as months have passed since students saw the play onstage) as guest artists reflect on their role and artistic choices.

## HQ & SOUTHBANK THEATRE TOURS

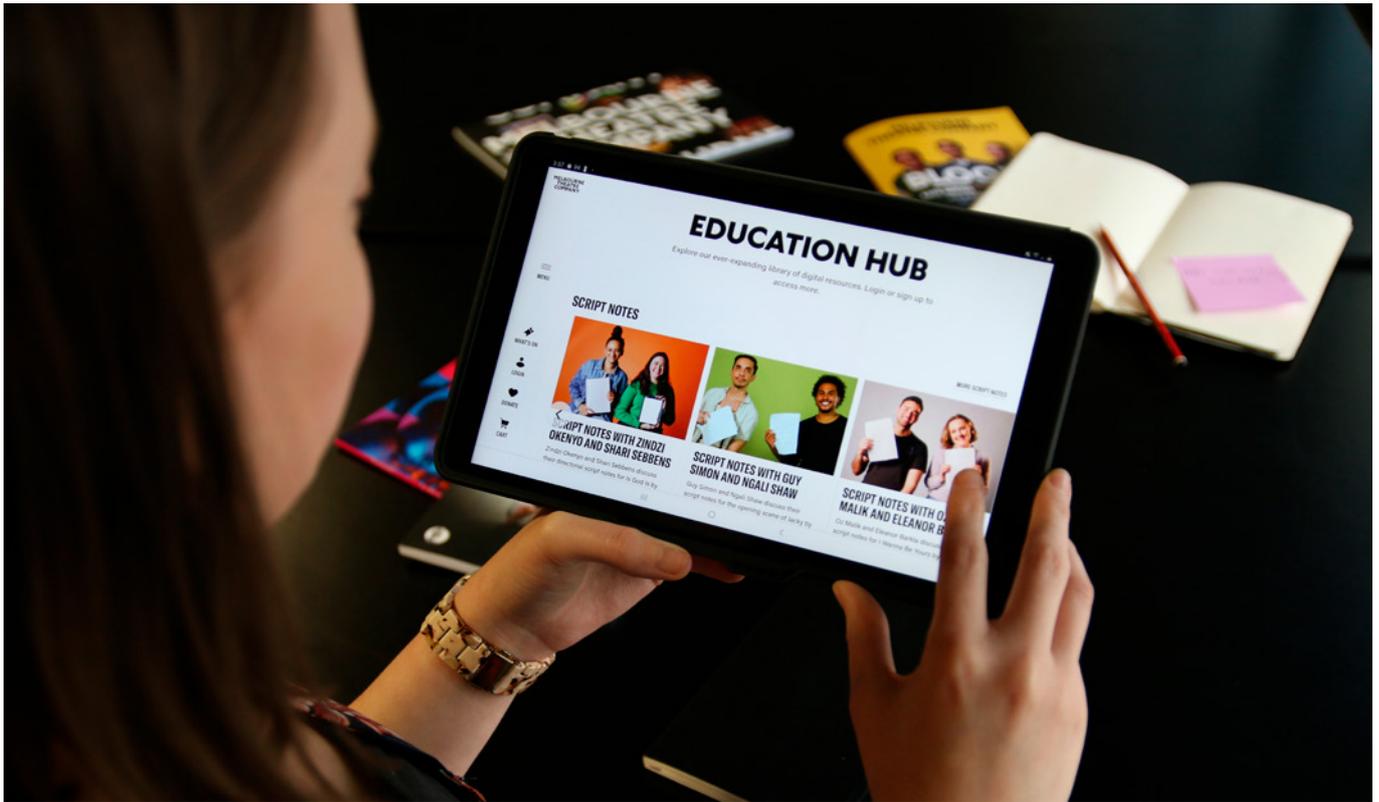
This year we welcomed 300 students into the Melbourne Theatre Company Headquarters and Southbank Theatre buildings on backstage tours, giving them a behind-the-scenes insight into how theatre is made. Our tours include visits to our set and prop building workshops and our costume making department, and often highlight pathways into theatre careers that students might not otherwise be aware of.

**‘We’d like to thank Taylor for guiding us through your headquarters, and all the wonderful makers who took time out of their workday to explain their roles. We now have some aspiring milliners and scenic artists in our class!’**

TEACHER, ROWVILLE SECONDARY COLLEGE

# Education Hub

Photo: Emily Doyle.



In 2023 we launched the Melbourne Theatre Company Education Hub, an ever-expanding library of digital resources to support performing arts education for students, teachers and self-directed learners.

The Education Hub includes our award-winning Script Notes series of video interviews with cast and creatives from Melbourne Theatre Company productions – including *Bloom*, *Jacky* and *My Sister Jill* – revealing the secrets of their creative process.

Other highlights include new interactive short courses, virtual onstage and backstage tours, immersive 360° videos of *Laurinda* in rehearsal and performance, and a comprehensive visual glossary of theatre terminology.

Integrated with MY MTC, teachers can simply add an Education Hub membership to their account to access additional content and share locked resources with their students. With over 100 memberships by the end of 2023, we are on track to building an online community of educators, students and curious theatre-lovers.

Dr Richard Sallis and Dr Christopher Summers from the Faculty of Education are conducting rigorous benchmarking and evaluation of the Education Hub. Their feedback underpins our reporting to our government and philanthropic funding partners and enables us to improve the content and delivery of digital education resources.

Explore the Education Hub and share with your teacher friends at [mtc.com.au/education-hub](https://mtc.com.au/education-hub).



Scan the QR code to get a taste of the Hub from our 30 second trailer on YouTube.

Melbourne Theatre Company acknowledges the support of the Department of Education Training, Victoria, through the Strategic Partnerships Program and the Victorian Challenge and Enrichment

MTC Digital Education supported by the Ian Potter Foundation and Telematics Trust



# Engagement programs

Deadly Creatives Emma Salmon and Brodie Murray with Makeup Artist Shanice Osita Chuku (centre). Photo: Brodi Purtil.



Our engagement programs are tailored opportunities for young people to collaborate with their peers in performing arts activities, enrich their study, and overcome barriers to their participation.

## CAREERS WEEK & WORK EXPERIENCE

Through our online Careers Week course, 25 Victorian students in Years 10–11 discovered the inner workings of Melbourne Theatre Company. Teaching artists Bernard Sam (*Hungry Ghosts* cast) and Izabella Yena (*Bernhardt/Hamlet, Home, I'm Darling*) co-facilitated the week-long program, which included guest artists from across the company.

We also hosted six students for in-person high school work experience in 2023. The students were attached to productions including *Is God Is, Bloom, A Very Jewish Christmas Carol* and *Seventeen*, and our Wardrobe and Theatre Technical Services departments.

## DEADLY CREATIVES

Deadly Creatives is a free creative learning program for young First Nations people interested in the arts. The program's alumni, teaching artists and new participants all work together to explore ways of telling stories for the stage.

In 2023 participants performed their original production *ONE DAY* at The Irene Mitchell Studio Theatre to sold out audiences as part of YIRRAMBOI and program alumni presented a reading of devised work *Intertwined* at MPavillion. Deadly Creatives also explored a series of three professional development workshops with guest creative artists and Melbourne Theatre Company production staff.

[Watch a trailer for \*ONE DAY\* on our YouTube channel.](#)

**'It has opened my eyes to the incredible scope and diversity of opportunities in theatre and the performing arts and this has been invaluable as I look to the future.'**

AMELIE, 2023 CAREERS WEEK PARTICIPANT

Careers Week and Work Experience supported by the Education Giving Circle

Deadly Creatives supported by



**YIRRAMBOI  
WILIN.**

# Engagement programs

Swan Hill College. Photo: Emily Doyle



## IGNITE

At Melbourne Theatre Company, we believe that theatre is for everyone. In 2023, we launched IGNITE – a program to remove financial barriers, give students an experience they’ll never forget and spark a lifelong love of theatre.

Eligible schools can access \$5 IGNITE tickets to Melbourne Theatre Company productions at Southbank Theatre and Arts Centre Melbourne and cash subsidies to assist engaging relief teachers on the day of the excursion. All regional schools can apply for a travel subsidy. Eligibility is determined by a school’s ranking on the Australian government’s Index of Community Socio Educational Advantage (ICSEA).

In 2023, 700 students received \$5 IGNITE tickets to see *Bloom*, *My Sister Jill* and *A Very Jewish Christmas Carol*, and schools received \$3,400 worth of travel and teacher subsidies.

## GERALDINE LAZARUS REGIONAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

To make creative experiences accessible to all students in Victoria, a suite of on-demand workshops is available exclusively to schools in regional Victoria with workshop topics including Acting, The Lifecycle of a Production and Exploring Shakespeare.

Companion workshops to *I Wanna Be Yours* were offered to regional and outer metropolitan schools that were attending the show at their local venue. We also delivered online workshops exploring *SLAP. BANG. KISS.* through MTC Digital Theatre. We piloted VR workshops at Swan Hill College with students using VR gaming headsets to meet theatre artists in an online virtual rehearsal room.

In 2023, we reached 315 students through 17 workshops, delivering topics in person and online.

**‘The Year 9s were so happy to be involved and their confidence blossomed under the Teaching Artist’s encouragement. Their manner with the kids was always supportive and kind, while also encouraging them to be critical thinkers in their performing.’**

TEACHER, GLENEAGLES SECONDARY COLLEGE

IGNITE Supported by Krystyna Campbell-Pretty, Anonymous (1)

Geraldine Lazarus Regional Enrichment Program supported by

The Gailey Lazarus Foundation

# Engagement programs

Students with the Seventeen company.  
Photo: Joshua Vickery-Stewart



## VICTORIAN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS SECONDARY SCHOOL

Since 2021, Melbourne Theatre Company has partnered with the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School (VCASS) to deliver a semester-long course for Year 11 Theatre Arts students that complements and enhances the study of VCE Drama and Theatre Studies.

The 2023 course was led by Katy Maudlin (*Meet Me At Dawn*) with guest artists including actors Sarah Fitzgerald, Conor Leach and Tsungirai Wachenuka (*SLAP. BANG. KISS.*), set and costume designers Anna Cordingley (*Jasper Jones*), Kate Davis (*SLAP. BANG. KISS.*) and Jacob Battista (*A Very Jewish Christmas Carol*), lighting designer Amelia Lever-Davidson (*Bernhardt/ Hamlet*), voice coach Matt Furlani (*& Juliet*), movement director Xanthe Beesley (*Laurinda*) and intimacy coordinator Isabella Vadiveloo (*I Wanna Be Yours*).

In 2023, we introduced a series of after-school events for Year 12 Theatre Arts students at Southbank Theatre.

## VIRTUAL SCHOOL VICTORIA

Melbourne Theatre Company has been working with Virtual School Victoria, the key provider of distance education statewide, since 2017 to deliver an innovative Year 8 Drama course over terms three and four. Students work with professional theatre artists to devise, write, design and perform a live web-based anthology performance titled *In and Out of Worlds*.

In 2023, playwright Morgan Rose led students through the script devising and writing process, and designer Justin Gardam supported students to design and produce the online performance. Guest artists joined online lessons to inspire students in specific production areas including actor Oz Malik and composer Mufeez Al Haq (*I Wanna Be Yours*), designer Karine Larché (*Laurinda*), actor Sarah Fitzgerald (*SLAP. BANG. KISS.*), lighting technician Spencer Herd (*My Sister Jill*) and Marketing Manager Ashlee Read.

**'I learnt about so many specific areas in the industry that I didn't know existed. The work we did also helped me to break down a script and better understand my character's intentions, thoughts and feelings.'**

VCASS STUDENT

A partnership with Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School

**VCA** Victorian College of the Arts  
SECONDARY SCHOOL

A partnership with Virtual School Victoria

**V** VIRTUAL  
SCHOOL VICTORIA

# Engagement programs

Youth Scholarship Course. Photo: Jacinta Keefe



## YOUTH AMBASSADORS

In this yearlong program, a select group of Year 11 students from across Victoria develop their theatre skills through attending productions and in-person seminars with artists and staff such as set and costume designer Kat Chan (*I Wanna Be Yours*), playwright Declan Furber Gillick (*Jacky*) and lighting designer Paul Lim (*Happy Days*).

The 16 Youth Ambassadors included students travelling from Ballarat and Western Port, seven students from government schools, five students from regional or outer metropolitan schools, four students from disadvantaged schools, four students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and three students who identify as living with a disability.

## YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP COURSE

Targeted for young people aged 14–16 years with limited access to the arts, the course enables participants to develop their creative skills and work collaboratively with like-minded peers. Teaching Artists Katrina Cornwell and Morgan Rose, and Support Artist Sarah Hosford, returned to direct the course for the third time with Sarah Fitzgerald (*SLAP. BANG. KISS.*) joining as Associate Teaching Artist.

This year's cohort will be the first to participate in a 'second act' of the course in May 2024, with a tour of our production headquarters, a drama workshop and a performance of *World Problems* at Southbank Theatre. Dinner will be provided and the students from regional Victoria will once again be offered accommodation.

**'Everything about this program has been really rewarding. I've learnt so much in the workshops with artists and being able to see every show has been such a privilege.'**

ENHUI, YOUTH AMBASSADOR

**'Thank you for making it possible for students who may not otherwise get this rich exposure and experience of theatre.'**

TEACHER OF A PARTICIPANT

Youth Ambassadors supported by the Education Giving Circle.

Youth Scholarship Course supported by the Newsboys Foundation and Accommodation Partner Quest

**NEWSBOYS  
FOUNDATION**

**QUEST**  
SOUTHBANK

# Education Giving Circle 2023

ONE DAY devised and performed by Deadly Creatives. Photo: Emily Doyle.



Thank you to all our 2023 Education Giving Circle Donors.  
Together, we continue to transform young lives through theatre.

## LEADING EDUCATION DONORS

Alan & Mary-Louise Archibald Foundation	Linda Herd
Joanna Baevski	Anne & Mark Robertson OAM
Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM	Andrew Sisson AO & Tracey Sisson
The Cordiner Family	Rob Stewart & Lisa Dowd

## EDUCATION GIVING CIRCLE DONORS

Judy Bourke	The Myer Foundation
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Mark & Jennifer Hayes	Walter & Gertie Wagner
Neil Jens	Kaye & John de Wijn
Larry Kornhauser & Natalya Gill	Ann & Alan Wilkinson
Leg Up Foundation	Anonymous (3)
Heather & Simon McKeon	

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*I Wanna Be Yours* cast Oz Malik and Eleanor Barkla.  
Photo: Tiffany Garvie



MTC IS A  
DEPARTMENT  
OF THE UNIVERSITY  
OF MELBOURNE



MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY IS ASSISTED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT THROUGH CREATIVE AUSTRALIA, ITS PRINCIPAL ARTS INVESTMENT AND ADVISORY BODY, AND BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT OF VICTORIA THROUGH CREATIVE VICTORIA.