Annual Report

For Year Ended 30 June 2011

Barking Spider
VISUAL THEATRE

www.barkingspidertheatre.com.au

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Financial Information

- Profit & Loss Statement & Balance Sheet are attached in a separate Excel file

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Philosophy

Established in 2006, Barking Spider Visual Theatre is a Melbourne-based puppetry and visual theatre company that develops and presents work to diverse audiences across ages and cultures, in Australia and internationally. The company members are dedicated to excellence in the form and practice of theatre, with a collaborative creative process. With illusion and transformation as the guiding aesthetic, Barking Spider aims to generate beautiful and truthful work that challenges habits of perspective and which allows audiences to feel, to delight, to dream and to be inspired.

Objectives

Barking Spider Visual Theatre is a company aiming for excellence in form and practice and which seeks to work with artists from various backgrounds and disciplines.

Barking Spider's objectives are to:

1. To create excellence in the form and practice of theatre, with an emphasis on puppetry and visual theatre.
2. To foster an open, spontaneous and uninhibited atmosphere of creation.
3. To develop a holistic working process, which ensures all aspects of production work together to create pieces defined by harmony and excellence.
4. To develop, promote and present work to diverse audiences across ages and cultures, in Australia and internationally.
5. To create beautiful and truthful work which allows the audience to feel, to delight and to dream. To inspire wonder and awe.
6. To transport audiences into new, complete and extraordinary worlds, so that they may see their own with fresh eyes.

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The Barking Spider Team

Artistic director & producer, writer & performer	Penelope Bartlau
Designer, Maker & Performer	Dan Goronszy
Director, performer, set & lighting designer	Jason Lehane
Composer & performer	Leah Scholes
Photographer & Performer	Sarah Walker
Dramatrug & performer	Gilly McInnes
Production consultants & performers	Klari & Dashiel Agar
AV designer	Edward Dowling

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The Barking Spider Board

All board members are Melbourne-based and are the only members of the incorporated association.

Penelope Bartlau (Artistic Director & Producer) is a puppeteer, writer and director, who has worked professionally in film, television, theatre and radio drama for the last 18 years. Penelope trained for 6 months in Commedia Dell'Arte in residence at the Scuola Internazionale Dell'Attore Comico with Antonio Fava in Italy and for a year in Method Acting at the Lee Strasberg Institute in New York City. She also studied Professional Screenwriting at RMIT University and has a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and Political Theory from Monash University. In 2007 she completed a Masters in Puppetry from the Victorian College of the Arts.

Leah Scholes (Treasurer) is the composer for *Hatch*. Leah works as a freelance percussionist in many varied performance capacities. She has worked with the Malaysian Philharmonic, Melbourne Symphony and Queensland Orchestras, and in 2006 she was the principal percussionist in the Australian Youth Orchestra. Leah performs regularly as a chamber musician, and as a soloist she performed with the Melbourne University Percussion Ensemble in 2005. Currently, she is pursuing a passion for collaborative and theatrical performance, creating works with artists from varied disciplines such as puppeteers, circus performers and comedy actors.

Jason Lehane (Chair) is a designer & performer who has been involved with theatre since 1983, and has worked with a diverse range of professional arts groups including *All Human Theatre*, *Victorian State Opera* and the *National Gallery of Victoria*. He has been teaching acting since 1990 at *St Martin's Youth Arts Theatre* and the *Monash University Student Theatre* – where he has been employed for the last three years as the Technical Manager. He has directed a one-hour puppet show for the *Melbourne International Puppet Festival* and worked as a performer and maker on a variety of shows.

Sarah Walker (Secretary) is professional practicing photographer specialising in promotional and production photography. She has been involved with a diverse series of productions over the last three years including several shows for the *Monash University Student Theatre*, *Barking Spider Visual Theatre* and work at the *Malthouse*.

Danielle Goronszy is a performer/designer exploring puppetry, circus and physical/gestural theatre for the past seven years. A founding member of the *Machination Theatre Ensemble*, Danielle also works with *Polyglot Puppet Theatre,* and *Wind-Up Beanstalk* as a performer, workshop facilitator and designer.

Gilly McInnes is an artist with a long history in the performing arts, as a performer, writer, dramaturg and artistic director. One of the original members of Handspan, Gilly was also AD of Polyglot Theatre for a number of years. Most recently Gilly lectured in puppetry in the Post Graduate & Masters courses at the Victorian College of the Arts.

Elsea Bartlau JP has been actively involved in business management for over 32 years, having been a licensed real estate agent in Emerald, Victoria for most of this time. She is also a recognised specialist in antiques and collectibles and was principal of Nobelius Auctions over a similar time.

Lisa Speakman B.Mus (Hons) B.A. LL.B**,** Solicitor is a lawyer and composer.

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Barking Spider History

Over the past five years BSVT has developed and produced no less than 16 productions, and when counting additional co-productions, workshops and current works in development, the company's output to date comes to 31 works. (This number excludes Rapid Art Response Unit proposals and discontinued works in development). Many of these works have had continuing lives: with tours and subsequent presentations to their premieres.

In 2009, we had changes in our board, and with the growth of the company, made the decision to break our work into "branches". These branches have been further refined and defined over the last financial year, and now look like this:

1. Main Stage Works

2. Works for and with Children

3. Community Works

4. Roving Works

5. Works with Museums and Galleries

6. Workshops.

7. Rapid Art Response Unit

The following is a brief history of all works and divided into the above categories, and contain up-to date information relevant to the last financial year. The works are listed from most recent to oldest. Works in development are also included at the end of each category.

Barking Spider Visual Theatre: History

1. Main Stage Works

The Revolution Will Be Televised – BSVT artists collaborated with Melbourne Workers Theatre to create this filmed event, which took place in September 2010, and will be aired on Channel 31 in 2011.

Silence – BSVT artists collaborated on Hoa Pham's work *Silence*, which had two successful La Mama seasons (one in the last financial year & the first in the year preceding) and a *Six Pack* Tour.

Page Turner - Developed in conjunction with percussionist and performer Leah Scholes, *Page Turner* is a whimsical object puppetry and percussion work focused on books. Presented at Australian Percussion Gathering in Brisbane and La Mama Theatre for Black Hole Theatre in August '10, and at the Dog Theatre in September '10.

Match - Presented Short & Sweet 2008, Recipient Theatre Works Company Development Initiative Grant, sponsored by Northcote Pottery Supplies. 3rd Creative Development also supported by Theatre Works. Adult audience

The Keeper – Presented at Canberra's Street Theatre Feb'/March 2008 & Cape Otway Lighthouse Sept '08. Also at La Mama: May 6 – 17 '09. Touring Vic & NSW '10-11 (Arts Vic funding). Object Theatre, storytelling & balladry. General audience. This work is still touring Victoria and NSW.

http://www.youtube.com/user/barkingspidertheatre#p/u/3/3EJP2L-0Plc

Breakfast Serial - Developed in conjunction with percussionist and performer Leah Scholes, *Breakfast Serial* is a comic object puppetry and percussion piece, suitable for a general audience. Check it out on YouTube:

http://www.youtube.com/user/barkingspidertheatre#p/u/2/3xe6kDNmB0s

Performed Grant St Theatre 2007, Brisbane 2010.

Dispatch - Script winner R.E.Ross Playwright's Award 2007, Toured Adelaide ASSITEJ Festival, Brisbane Festival Under-the-Radar & presented at 45 Downstairs, 2010. Funded by Sidney Myer Fund & City of Melbourne. Rod & object puppetry. Young adult & adult audience. 2007-2010

http://www.youtube.com/user/barkingspidertheatre#p/u/4/0fWYFaHjRE8

Dispatch has attracted the attention of The Studio Theatre in Washington - to be confirmed for presentation in 2012-13.

Windows - Co-production with DAMU students in Prague presented at The Prague Quadrennial. Puppetry & physical theatre - General audience, 2007

Works In Development:

The Memorandium – Inspired by the theme of International Museums Day in 2011 "Memory", the Memorandium has had first successful showings at La Mama Theatre in August 2011. Next showings are at The National Gallery of Victoria for the 2011 7th biennial International Museum Theatre Alliance conference, and then The Village in November. We hope for a season at 45 downstairs in 2012 and are awaiting funding confirmation from Australia Council and Arts Victoria. If we are not successful with this funding, we shall present a season at La Mama next year, dates to be confirmed.

View the showing on You Tube:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZN4XNCklYg&feature=youtu.be

After Dark - Site-specific, storytelling through puppetry based on the history and local area of City of Brimbank – to take place in October 2011.

Talking Head - **A Storytelling Machine** - Using a travelling carnie-sideshow-circus aesthetic, harkening from the late 19th early 20th century. We will be creating a series of six to eight stories, which can be adapted to our touring location using the principles of Commedia Dell Arte. We had our first very successful development of this work in May this year at Arts House. This work's next development will occur in 2012, the focus for which will be writing and design.

2. Works for and with Children*

Short Pants No Holes – Interactive storytelling & puppetry for kids - Toured to Wodonga in August last year, and had a very successful season at La Mama Sept-October 2010. The work was also performed at National Gallery of Victoria in October and then at The Village, Fitzroy, November '10. Penelope pitched the work at the December YPAA conference held at ArtPlay, which resulted in BSVT having representation through Asia for this work. Additionally, the work was accepted into Showcase Victoria, and Penelope pitched the work with an excerpt. We did not attract a tour from the pitch, but did receive enquiries from other regional presenters about the work.

"You don't get that kind of mind-blowing originality at the MTC".
Anne Marie Peard, AussieTheatre.com

http://www.youtube.com/user/barkingspidertheatre#p/u/1/dps-Bo8oyAg

Hatch – Developed at VCA and toured the Ishara International Puppetry Festival circuit in India '07. Object & Physical Theatre for children. 2006-2007.Sponsored by VISY Specialties, supported by DFAT. Awarded Friends of the VCA and Handspan Touring Scholarships.

http://www.youtube.com/user/barkingspidertheatre#p/u/5/t9gd_VSve20

In Development:

X - We are collaborating with *Terrible Comfort* puppets, shadow puppetry and visual theatre/object manipulation to achieve the filmic, the epic and the impossible. Season 1 will be presented as part of Melbourne Fringe Festival 2011, with the aim of presenting the work at the Victorian Arts Centre in 2011.

***Please see works for Museums & Galleries for other works for children**

3. Community Works:

Invisible Connections: Created with the Rural City of Wangaratta, July – September '09. Object Theatre performance and art installation created with the local Wang community, from local history 2009.

http://barkingspidertheatre.com.au/shows/invisible-connections

In Development:

A Big Hand For Big West – A large-scale community-based puppetry project for the opening night of Big West Festival in November 2011, working with children from Footscray North Primary School. BSVT will collaborate with Snuff Puppets and the Melbourne Museum with the Federation Hand Bells.

See! Smell! Taste! Hear! Feel! - Extended School Residency through Arts Victoria with Dandenong West Primary School where Children will create a series of art installations and performances, which will be developed from exploration of a variety of sensory materials sourced from Dandenong market. The sensory materials will provide the springboards into puppetry, performance, voice, story creation & telling and installation creation workshops. From these workshops, the artists will guide the development of the final works, which will have a public display/performance outcome.

4. Roving Works

The Biscuit Readings – presented at various gigs including the Regional Arts Victoria AGM & Launch '11, and the opening of Kew Courthouse Arts Improvised one-on-one performance work for general audiences. Launched online 2011.

http://www.youtube.com/user/thebiscuitreadings

The Biscuit Readings Online - The biggest news this year for this work is its on-line launch in April. Over the past 6 months Penelope developed the project, as an experiment in using social networking media as both a performance and publicity platform.

Beardo - A Tableaux Vivant – A performance art work featuring a number of Victorian Ladies - with a difference. Premiered: Hawthorn Art Gallery, November '10

http://www.youtube.com/user/barkingspidertheatre#p/u/0/vGAIH2L_uNA

2010-11 - Beardo and *The Biscuit Readings* are now represented by Slack Taxi in Adelaide. *The Biscuit Readings* is represented by Jo Jo's Agency & Creative Universe – both in Melbourne.

Roving Works In Development:

Birdheads: or Elegantly Savage
Two beautifully attired bird creatures, dressed in an Edwardian style, stroll about, measuring people with strange instruments, making notes and comments to each other in Bird language. A quizzical roving art-performance event.

5. Works with Museums and Galleries.

That's My Turf – Commissioned by and presented at Scienceworks Museum Spotswood in April 2011, using giant insect puppets, presenting the world of insects you can find in your own backyard. 2-12 year old children. April 2011

http://museumvictoria.com.au/scienceworks/whatson/event/?event=563045

Home - Created for Albury Library Museum and Art Gallery, *Home* Integrated art and historical objects around the notion of what "home" is. The work combined interactive storytelling and art-creation activities for children and adults. November 2010. http://barkingspidertheatre.com.au/home-albury-museum-library-and-gallery-project

Bunraku Baby - Commissioned by the Melbourne Immigration Museum, focus on Japan: children's festival 2008. Bunraku puppetry.

Chinese Shadow Tales – Commissioned by the Melbourne Immigration Museum, focus on China: children's festival. Shadow Puppetry, 2008

Gallery/Museum Works In Development

Heide 30th Birthday Celebration Weekend – We are designing the event entertainment spots, around celebration themes "Art, Architecture & Landscape", to take place in November 2011.

6. Workshops

These workshops have been presented at various venues and with a number of presenters &/or theatre-companies over the course of the last year:

Object Puppetry

How To Make A Piece Of Theatre From Scratch

All Hands On The Puppet

Additionally, BSVT has developed a strong relationship with Heide Gallery, and we are generating workshops in response to artworks, exhibitions, specific artists or art movements. Each of these workshops is tailor-made and unique, and encompasses elements of theatre, storytelling and art-creation. They are presented for children or as professional developments.

In Development

Character Archaeology – (This workshop has bookings later in 2011)

Arts-To-Go

BSVT submitted six proposals to RAV's Arts-To-Go for 2011-12, and Character Archeology & All Hands On The Puppet were successful. This promises ongoing work for next financial year for BSVT artists.

7. Rapid Art Response Unit

This financial year we have generated a variety of proposals for various events and festivals, with budgets ranging from $14,000 - $1,400. These have included: Heide Gallery, Wodonga Festival, Kew Courthouse Arts, Wonthaggi Show, The Village and the Nati Frinj.

Parts of the proposal for Heide Gallery for the Wonthaggi Show have the green light for 2011-12.

2009 Melbourne International Fashion Festival - Giant Marionette at Signet Bureau Fashion Parade – BSVT artists worked to develop, design, direct and document this highly innovative fashion parade, held on site at Signet Bureau, Fitzroy.

BSVT Supporters, Awards & Sponsors

In the last financial year BSVT attracted in-kind support from law firm *Magnum IP Legal Services.*

Past BSVT Supporters, Awards & Sponsors

Arts Victoria
Regional Arts Victoria
City of Melbourne
Sidney Myer Foundation
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade
Australia Council
Handspan Visual Theatre Travelling Scholarship
R.E. Ross Playwright's script Development Award
Auspicious Arts Incubator
Friends of The VCA
Theatre Works
VISY Specialties

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