Annual Report

For Year Ended 30 June 2010



Barking Spider Visual Theatre

www.barkingspidertheatre.com.au

Contact

Producer & Artistic Director
Penelope Bartlau
T: 03 9481 8849
M: 0419 590 630
penelope@barkingspidertheatre.com.au



Barking Spider Visual Theatre Annual Report Contents

- Philosophy and Objectives……3
- The Barking Spider Team……..4
- The Barking Spider Board……..5
- Barking Spider History……7
- Shows……9
- Future Developments……12

Financial Information

- Profit & Loss Statement……13
- Balance Sheet……14



Barking Spider Visual Theatre

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.



The Barking Spider Team

Artistic Director & Producer	Penelope Bartlau
Puppet Designer & Maker	Dan Goronszy
Set & Lighting Designer	Jason Lehane
Composer	Leah Scholes
Sound Designers	Simon Charles & Angie Grant
AV Designer & Stage Manager	Edward Dowling
Photographer & Performer	Sarah Walker
Production Manager	Erica McCalman
Puppet Maker & Performer	Justine Warner
Co-Creator & Performer	Chrissie Shaw
Production Consultants & Performers	Klari & Dashiel Agar



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.

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.

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.



Barking Spider History

•••

Over the past four years BSVT has developed and produced no less than 14 productions. In 2009, we had changes in our board, and with the growth of the company, made the decision to break our work into "branches": Theatrical works we call "Main Stage Production", plus we have Community Works, and Workshops.

Financial Year 2009-2010 has seen significant developments in all three branches.

The History below is written sequentially.

In 2007, we toured a *Hatch*, a puppetry work for children, to three major Arts Festivals in India, with support from DFAT/Australia Council, Visy and the Handspan Visual Theatre Travelling Scholarship.

In this year BSVT travelled to Europe where various company members collaborated with Czech puppeteers for a performance of *Windows* at the Prague Quadrennial.

Also in 2007, *Dispatch* received the RE Ross Trust Playwrights' Script Development Award. In '08 *Dispatch* toured to Adelaide for the ASSITEJ Festival & Brisbane for Brisbane Festival, supported by Myer Foundation. In February '10 *Dispatch* completed a very successful season at 45 Downstairs funded by City of Melbourne.

In 2008 we produced *The Keeper*, with Canberra artist Chrissie Shaw, funded by Arts ACT. *The Keeper* had successful seasons at Canberra's Street Theatre, La Mama, Melbourne, and is currently touring regional Victoria (RAV Funding) & NSW.

In June '08 we created two shows commissioned by the Immigration Museum: *Chinese Shadow Tales* for the focus on China (January) and *Bunraku Baby* for Japan Day (July).

Also in '08, Barking Spider was also instrumental in assisting indigenous artist Jacob Boheme obtain funds from Arts Victoria and City of Melbourne for his large-scale community project *Stories from the Birrarung*.

In 2009 we created The Biscuit Readings*, a one-on-one interactive theatre work which has performed at various festivals and events in regional Victoria, Melbourne,*

Sydney and Tasmania and WomAdelaide in February this year. In 2009 we created *Short Pants No Holes* for La Mama for Kids, interactive storytelling for kids with puppetry, which has ongoing city and regional performances this year.

In 2009 artists Jason Lehane and Penelope Bartlau toured to Wagga Wagga, NSW, to present 3 days of workshops in theatre-making, object puppetry, Bunraku puppetry and Bouffon, with Gearstick Theatre.

In 2009 we also developed, created, management and presented a large community-based project *Invisible Connections – The Wangaratta Heritage Theatre Project.* This project was researched and developed from local history and objects. We worked with kids and adults across the whole production and presentation, from the ground up in research, to the creation of an art installation, to developing performances.

In 2010 we collaborated with Hoa Pham in her presentation of “Silence”, creating the visual elements and puppetry for the production with two successful seasons at La Mama, and an outer-Melbourne regional tour.

*

barking**spidervisual**theatre



6 Creek Parade, Northcote, Victoria, AUSTRALIA 3070

Ph: +61 419 590 630

www.barkingspidertheatre.com.au

Main Stage Works

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.

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

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. Older children & adult audience. 2007-2010

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/watch?v=3xe6kDNmB0s

Performed Grant St Theatre 2007, Brisbane 2010.

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

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 (Arts Vic funding). Object Theatre, storytelling & balladry. General audience.

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

The Biscuit Readings – Presented at: The Village Fitzroy, The Village, Falls Festival Lorne '08 & Marion Bay Tassie '09, Channel V, B40 TV launch (Sydney), The Melbourne Comedy Festival '09, Nati Fringe '09, Knox Festival '10, WomAdelaide '10. Sponsored by Arnott's. Improvised one-on-one performance work for general audiences.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7SOQr5_EC4I

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. Work still in development. Adult audience

Short Pants No Holes – Interactive storytelling & puppetry for kids La Mama for Kids 09, ArtPlay Cabaret as part of the Melbourne Puppet Carnival 09, Northcote Kids 09, Invited to "Out the Box" Festival, South Africa '10, toured to Wodonga in '10; La Mama season Sept-Oct, and performed at National Gallery of Victoria, Oct "10. Next season at The Village, Fitzroy, Nov '10.

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

Community Work

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.

*

Future Developments

Community Works

Currently, we are developing two Melbourne-based community works, one with Newport substation and the other with Como House. We have successfully applied to present a community work with the City of Horsham in 2012, funding pending.

Main Stage

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.

The show will be housed in an hexagonal, wooden carousal-type structure, on a self-contained revolve. Each side of the hexagon will house a series of shadow screens, puppets, dioramas, lights etc. which can either tell a single story or rotate during shows - so audiences can see a variety of different shows in the one "arena". We plan that each show will run for only 10-15 minutes, and be limited to an audience of up to 12 - 20 (to be determined) in a tent-type structure ideally or some other small venue.

The centre-piece, the voice and eyes, of each story will be a talking, disembodied head - a freak that is imprisoned in the machine, yet is sustained by it. The person playing the head will operate some of the puppetry, while the Show Master will command and entreat the audience (like the medicine men of yore) - seducing audiences in. Additionally, the Show master will be available to operate other puppets and technical elements of the show.

The dynamic between the Head and the Master will be a source of intrigue and understated horror: who really has the control? This is the underlying tension in all the stories - nothing stated - all implied through performance/non-verbal cues.

We want to make some great, quirky art and take it regional - to travel Australia with what we love: a taste of the bizarre, with a beautiful aesthetic underpinned by stories that are engaging and have been structured to adapt to include local content (politics/town personalities/history etc). Rather than developing a single show and performing it again and again we want people to come to *Talking Head* without knowing what story they will hear or see but with a desire to experience and be immersed in the world we create.

For our first Creative Development the team is:

Jason Lehane - designer/director
Penelope Bartlau- writer/artistic director/producer
Danielle Goronszy - Maker
Sarah Walker - maker/documenter

We have support of Melbourne Workers Theatre at North Melbourne Town Hall Arts House May 16th - 29th, 2011

Workshops

We will be developing dedicated web pages to our existing workshops.

We are proposing to create a Children's Theatre Making Group, with whom we can develop and create works for children.