



THROUGH DIFFERENT EYES.



THROUGH DIFFERENT EYES

ANNUAL REVIEW 2012

ABOUT US

Milk Crate Theatre works with an Ensemble of artists who have experienced homelessness or social marginalisation to create theatre that creates change.

Our work embodies the experiences and artistry of the Ensemble and showcases their uniqueness as contemporary storytellers. Our work is the summation of the stories that we tell: stories that are brutal yet beautiful, savage yet seductive, tenacious yet tender. Above all else though, our work is real: born from the lived experiences of those who create it.

Milk Crate Theatre is a collaboration between artists, welfare services and community members working with passion, commitment and integrity. Together we:

- create authentic, high quality theatre that is transformative
- provide education, employment and leadership opportunities
- are ambassadors for inclusive arts practice

Milk Crate Theatre is committed to bringing people together to address issues of homelessness, to start a constructive debate and to solve complex social problems. Whilst it is important to work towards prevention, we believe it is also essential to provide people who have experienced homelessness and social marginalisation with a legitimate, creative space as storytellers — a space to build confidence and reconnect with the community.

CORE VALUES: AUTHENTICITY EXCELLENCE CREATIVITY INCLUSIVENESS

I CAN THINK OF NO OTHER COMPANY WORKING IN SYDNEY RIGHT NOW THAT HAS SUCH POTENTIAL TO CHANGE THE LIVES OF THOSE INVOLVED IN IT AS WELL AS THOSE WATCHING IT.

Jason Blake, theatre critic, Sydney Morning Herald



FROM 2006 TO 2011
THE NUMBER OF HOMELESS
PEOPLE IN AUSTRALIA
INCREASED BY 17%

THERE ARE OVER
20,000 PEOPLE
EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN
GREATER SYDNEY

FROM 2006 TO 2011
THE NUMBER OF HOMELESS
PEOPLE IN NEW SOUTH WALES
INCREASED BY 20%

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2011



HOMELESSNESS & SOCIAL INCLUSION

Homelessness is not just 'houselessness'. Experiencing homelessness means not having stable, secure housing or a place to call home.

Homelessness comes in many guises and people become homeless for a range of reasons. Informed by this, Milk Crate Theatre works across sectors towards a socially inclusive community. For us, working towards social inclusion means working with people who are at risk of homelessness or who currently experience social marginalisation. This includes but is not limited to people with physical or mental health problems; physical, intellectual or learning disabilities; low incomes; experience of the care and criminal justice systems; substance misuse and abuse; disrupted education; domestic violence and abusive relationships; refugee or asylum seeker status; and Indigenous Australians.

Sadly, homelessness is on the rise in Australia. As a result we have seen an increased need for our services from our current welfare partners. We have also seen an increase in new welfare services wanting to access our programs and a need that has expanded our geographical reach across Greater Sydney.

THE ENSEMBLE

The Ensemble cannot be easily categorised or described. As a starting point, the Ensemble self-identify as having experienced homelessness or social marginalisation, but this is merely the beginning. The depth and breadth of the experiences of the Ensemble is breath-taking and each and every point of difference adds to the diversity of artistry that the Ensemble brings to the Company. The Ensemble are a formidable group of artists who, if you haven't already met, you should make it your priority to do so.

179 INDIVIDUALS PARTICIPATED IN A
MILK CRATE THEATRE PROGRAM IN 2012

60% OF THE ENSEMBLE ARE MALE AND
40% ARE FEMALE

STEPHANIE

MILK CRATE HAS BEEN POSITIVE.
IT HAS GIVEN ME HOPE.

I don't mean this in any trite or cheesy way. Prior [to this] I was still struggling with minimal hope. Milk Crate showed me how the connection with others that accept you, teachers that are respectful and gentle with you without being patronising and believe in your [potential for] growth, begins the change. Performing, my great love after 20 years, has been so rewarding and at times exhilarating. /

Stephanie first encountered Milk Crate Theatre at a Sydney Homeless Connect event in 2011 where the Ensemble were running a drama game. At the time, Stephanie had just been discharged from hospital after a lengthy stay.

Today, Stephanie lives in a private rental, identifies as having a disability and her main source of income is the Disability Support Pension. She says that Milk Crate Theatre has contributed to a positive change in her life.

Stephanie is now studying a Bachelor's Degree in Inclusive Education and Disability Studies. She has experience in theatre and community services and would like to work as a Milk Crate Theatre facilitator in the future. She also aims to work as a disability advocate, empowering others and guiding decision making.

I really enjoyed the drama games, the sense of community, the laughs and basically I've not looked back. That was in the early months of September? I smile to myself remembering a new world opening up to me and how far I've come. /

I REMEMBER HOW PROFOUNDLY NERVOUS I WAS,
TRYING TO ACT IN FRONT OF PEOPLE FOR THE FIRST TIME.
NOT NOW - I LOVE TO ACT.

Ensemble



CHAIR'S REPORT

It is clear to me that Milk Crate Theatre is a special organisation; people are truly engaged. In a welcoming and safe creative space, people work together to explore important issues, learn, share and laugh.

Since 2010 I've been to many shows and each and every time I've learnt something new about the humour and resilience, the reality and desires of the Milk Crate Theatre Ensemble. It is absolutely inspiring to see the Ensemble's artistic development and to learn from them as proud storytellers and distinctive theatre makers.

Milk Crate Theatre has achieved so much in 12 months; productions in commercial arts spaces; new partnerships across the funding, welfare and arts sectors; high levels of Ensemble engagement; and artistic and strategic visioning. I emphatically congratulate all who have contributed to the Company in 2012! This year Milk Crate Theatre began working towards its four-year vision and commenced projects that lay the foundations for touring, advocacy and the diversification of artistic partnerships.

In November, the Company said farewell to CEO/Artistic Director Mirra Todd after two years of tireless contributions which saw the Company broaden its offerings to the Ensemble. We thank Mirra for his contributions to the Company and his energy and vision.

Mirra has been very ably supported by dedicated staff and volunteers. It is a privilege to Chair the Board of Milk Crate Theatre and I extend my gratitude to

the Directors for their considerable contributions. We welcomed Matthew Zander and Elizabeth Giles as new Directors in 2012 and Michael Sharp concluded his valued directorship at our final meeting.

Milk Crate Theatre's growing reputation as an organisation with extensive community impact was fittingly recognised at the end of 2012 when we were honoured to receive Macquarie Group Foundation's Social Innovation Award. This award recognises innovation in meeting an unmet need in the social services sector for our Community Shows program. On this occasion, we would like to especially thank the many people and organisations who work alongside us. This award would not be possible without the drive of so many, including the Ensemble; staff past and present; our welfare, arts and education partners; and, of course, our financial supporters.

The year ahead promises to be an exciting one for our Ensemble and audiences alike. I know the Company will continue to debate, confront and present stories that are informed by the lived experiences of the Ensemble. We look forward to welcoming you to join our community and become part of this conversation.

ANGUS WHITE
Chair

CEO/ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

ARTS REPORT – 2012 ANNUAL REVIEW

Engaging in all creative endeavours is a risk, especially when it is your heart and soul; your lived experience; that informs the work. To the Ensemble who collaborated with us in 2012, I want to personally thank you for your stories, your humour, your creativity and your generosity. The artistry that you brought to the Company was invaluable to the work we created.

Fearlessness was something often discussed at Milk Crate Theatre in 2012 – indeed it formed the basis and title for the company production we presented in partnership with Carriageworks. I feel very privileged to work with the Milk Crate Theatre Ensemble – people whose resilience, creativity, outlooks and experiences are a true testament to the ability to be fearless. In 2012, Milk Crate Theatre took bold steps into the unknown. We reimagined the methodology and framework of the Company's much loved Community Shows, retaining the strength of community problem solving through audience interaction, while also creating opportunities for the Ensemble to write, perform and stage manage three new shows; Secrets, Full Circle and Unfinished. With the support of Carriageworks, we produced the Company's largest performance to date – Fearless, a carefully constructed musical with a cast of 12, including a live band. Fearless left audiences entertained and importantly more aware of the complex issues surrounding homelessness.

We continued to nurture our Stage Door workshop program, expanding our partnerships with welfare services and reaching the highest number of participants in a Milk Crate Theatre program ever – 179 individuals throughout the year. We explored verbatim theatre through Belonging and established and tested the Back Stage program where the Ensemble engaged with leadership and advocacy opportunities. We developed a feasibility study and business plan for a social enterprise and presented our Red Ribbon Christmas Show to celebrate a year of artistic work and raise awareness around HIV/AIDS and World Aids Day.

All of these achievements were supported by the Milk Crate Theatre Board, staff, associate artists, workshop teachers and volunteers – a group of individuals with incredibly diverse and complementary skill sets, sharing a passion to affect change. At the conclusion of 2012 we farewelled Mirra Todd, who led in these achievements and we thank him for the vibrant and long-lasting artistic legacy he leaves with the Company.

The partnerships that we have within the welfare service sector, as well as the arts community, continue to allow us to work alongside the Ensemble to dream, generate, play, test and present works that speak to the very heart of our organisation – the lived experience of homelessness or social marginalisation.

To our welfare and arts partners – thank you for continuing to support us to run our programs. To the audiences who have engaged with us in 2012 (over 1,500 people – thank you for taking our stories into your hearts and out into the world.

We look forward to continuing to have the courage to explore stories and issues that are not often seen on Australian stages – stories that resonate, challenge and enliven audiences. We look forward to continuing to be fearless – for that is the true spirit of creativity.

MAREE FREEMAN

CEO/Artistic Director

CEO/GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

I am reflecting on the Company's 2012 theme of loneliness. Loneliness can mean solitude or time to regroup, but it is also a confronting and ever-present reality in a pulsing city like Sydney.

I WAS ABLE TO WITNESS THE PROFOUND EFFECT THAT MILK CRATE THEATRE CAN HAVE ON PEOPLE'S LIVES. I WAS ABLE TO SEE PARTICIPANTS REDUCE THEIR FEELINGS OF ISOLATION, INCREASE CONFIDENCE, DEVELOP NEW COPING SKILLS AND PATTERNS, EXPERIENCE POSITIVE INTERACTIONS AND DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS. /

Welfare Service Partner

In November, one of the Milk Crate Theatre Ensemble kindly offered to get me a fish to keep me company in the office. Simple gestures like this remind me of how grateful I am for the many connections I've made throughout the year and the many people who form an integral part of our community.

The 2012 strategic planning and operations have successfully supported the world in which Milk Crate Theatre works and creates. I have been surrounded by an immensely talented Board and team – with special thanks to Kate McBride, our Administration Coordinator, who has worked tirelessly to deliver everything from our marketing and bookkeeping to producing Fearless.

Sarah Trant, our Social Enterprise Manager forged a new research partnership with The University of Sydney's Business School, exploring a fee for service structure that measures and values the social outcomes of our work. Through Ensemble consultation, we have developed a social enterprise feasibility study and subsequent Business Plan, which has led to the development of our exciting new enterprise, The Milky Way. In 2013, The Milky Way will offer commissioned workshops and performances devised and delivered with the Ensemble for the education and advocacy purposes of customers.

2012 was the Company's biggest year to date, with more Ensemble, staff, programs, productions and operational deliverables than ever before. Our \$543,446 budget was made possible by the support of long-term philanthropic partnerships as well as growing government support and we secured new funding partnerships with Hunter Hall International Limited, StreetSmart Australia, Macquarie Group Foundation and the Harold Mitchell Foundation. Our 2012 operating profit of \$26,371 builds our cash reserves and contributes towards the ongoing sustainability of the Company.

Throughout the year we established human resource and financial systems, and policies and procedures to ensure greater transparency and best practice in our service delivery. This included establishing Public Benevolent Institute (PBI) tax status and a complementary salary sacrifice arrangement for staff.

To our long-term financial supporters we value your commitment and generosity through times of change, which year after year enables us to pursue our twin goals of creating great theatre and working towards social inclusion. And to our Ensemble and partners in the welfare and arts sectors, thank you for being at the heart of our community.

SIENA BALAKRISHNAN
CEO/General Manager

IT HAS BEEN AMAZING TO WATCH PEOPLE
COME TO LIFE TO PORTRAY CHARACTERS,
SHARING THEIR EXPERIENCES AND STORIES
WITH COMPASSION, BUT ALSO BEING OPEN
ABOUT THEIR LONELINESS, DEPRESSION,
HOPE OR REDEMPTION.

Welfare Service Partner

2012 ARTISTIC PROGRAM

In 2012, Milk Crate Theatre had 179 Ensemble members participate in the annual program, with 77% of people attending more than 50% of the time. We delivered 479 creative opportunities in partnership with 18 welfare partners, 12 arts partners and 29 associate artists. We held 21 performances for 1505 audience members.

We successfully delivered the following 3 programs alongside our organisational priorities of research, evaluation and organisational development.

STAGE DOOR

Stage Door is our inclusive workshop program. In 2012 it provided opportunities to develop theatre-based skills and knowledge including actor training as well as general life skills development, opportunities for imaginative play, ensemble building, literacy, social network building, personal development, general fitness, self-awareness and well-being. Projects in 2012 were our Workshop Hubs (Woolloomooloo, Newtown and Parramatta), Outreach Workshops, Taster Workshops, Street Salons (play reading workshops), Street Library, Playwriting Master Classes and Edge of Your Seat.

MAIN STAGE

Main Stage is our performance program. In 2012, the program was inclusive and open to Ensemble members who had shown a commitment and desire to expand upon their creative skills through performances at welfare services and for the general public. Projects in 2012 were the Community Shows, Company Production and the Christmas Show.

BACK STAGE

Back Stage offered extension beyond our Stage Door and Main Stage activities that were tailored to the interests and skills of the individual. Initiatives for 2012 were: Extension, Social Leadership, Information and the Social Enterprise Project.

99 INDIVIDUAL ENTRY LEVEL
WORKSHOPS IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH WELFARE SERVICES

10 EDGE OF YOUR SEAT **PERFORMANCES**
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
AFFILIATED THEATRE COMPANIES

12 **STREET** IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
SALONS LOCAL LIBRARIES

15 TASTER OUTREACH
WORKSHOPS
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WELFARE SERVICES
WITH CLIENTS WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS

STAGE DOOR

WORKSHOPS

In 2012, Milk Crate Theatre offered 99 workshop opportunities at our hubs in Woolloomooloo, Newtown and Parramatta and 15 taster workshops in outreach locations including MISHA (Mission Australia), Kirketon Road Centre, The Wayside Chapel, Edward Eagar Lodge, Psychiatric Rehabilitation Australia and Anglicare. We worked with 13 welfare partners, seven of which supported outreach delivery.

Our newly developed training modules provided structure to our processes and explored clowning, improvising and devising, approaches to acting, theatre forms and styles (Ancient Greek and Absurd), storytelling and creative interviewing.

We worked with 172 people in our workshop program, many of whom went on to take part in our performance and extension programs. Despite our programs being run as 'drop in drop out', 48% of Ensemble who attended a workshop had an attendance rate above 50%.

STREET SALONS

Twelve Street Salons were delivered in partnership with the Surry Hills and Parramatta Libraries and saw 23 members of the Ensemble delve into the genres of Australian naturalism, absurdism, monologues and Russian vaudeville theatre.

EDGE OF YOUR SEAT

Through the ten Edge of Your Seat performances, the Ensemble saw some of the best cutting edge theatre Sydney has to offer, including Namatjira at Riverside Theatres, Fools Island at Sydney Theatre Company and Miss Julie at Darlinghurst Theatre Company.

PLAYWRITING MASTER CLASSES

Delivered in partnership with PlayWriting Australia, six intensive professional development sessions were delivered to eight interested Ensemble to refine their storytelling and playwriting skills and generate a short script.

LOOKING BACK ON IT, I CAN HONESTLY SAY MY LIFE WOULD HAVE BEEN SO MUCH EMPTIER AND LESSENER, WITHOUT THE MANY COLOURFUL MOMENTS, JOYFUL TIMES AND DEAR FRIENDSHIPS THAT HAVE BEEN FOUND ALONG THE WAY.

Ensemble



MAIN STAGE

2012 saw the Ensemble challenged by several Main Stage projects. The performance program saw the delivery of 83 rehearsals and 21 performances in partnership with welfare services and professional arts spaces. 65 Ensemble performed as part of our 2012 performance program. Our shows are also a valuable space for our audiences to interact with the Ensemble and our stories, in 2012 we performed to 1505 audience members.

COMMUNITY SHOWS

The award-winning Community Shows provided a deeper Ensemble engagement with opportunities to write, act and stage manage. In 2012, we created three new shows; Secrets, Full Circle and Unfinished. Our first Community Show Secrets was directed by Mirra Todd; written by Bridget, Murray S Robertson, Mirra Todd and Robin; performed by Sean Barker, Chris Barwick, Catherine Davies, John and Rashelle McHugh. Our second Community Show Full Circle was directed by Maree Freeman; written by Bridget, Maree Freeman, Murray S Robertson and Stephanie; performed by Catherine Davies, Gabe Fancourt, Sophie Gregg, Owen and Wayne; and stage managed by Stephen. Our third community show Unfinished was directed by Maree Freeman; written by Maree Freeman, Murray S Robertson and Royce; performed by Carla, Lauren Clair, Catherine Davies, Davina and Sophie Gregg; with music by Natalya Bing.

All toured to three welfare venues; The Wayside Chapel, Parramatta Mission and Newtown Neighbourhood Centre with diverse audiences problem solving some complex social issues including depression, alcohol addiction, anger management, sleeping rough, social isolation and disengagement, and a fear of intimacy. A short documentary of Full Circle, including some behind the scenes footage of our process can be viewed on our website.

VISIBLE THEATRE

Belonging directed by Cristabel Sved; and performed by Alan, Davina, Graeme Rhodes, Margot Lichtenstein and Stephanie, saw the Ensemble create a new work presented to a packed studio space at Carriageworks. The project's foundation was to make all aspects of the work visible and utilised a verbatim theatre process to generate the content.

COMPANY PRODUCTION

Fearless was written and directed by Mirra Todd; performed by Sean Barker, Bridget, Ben Fink, Christa Hughes, Russell Keifel, David Manuel, Michael, Owen, Ray, Darryl Wallis, Wayne and Sarah Woods; stage managed by Asha Watson; lighting design by Ross Graham; set and costume design by Dylan Tonkin.

Fearless explored the many portals of loneliness through the eyes of nine complex characters. The primary success of Fearless was its national media coverage and the large scale advocacy it generated through a general public audience. Fearless is the first Milk Crate Theatre play to be published. This was made possible by Currency Press and can be purchased online.

CHRISTMAS SHOW

Linked in with the Back Stage program, the Red Ribbon Christmas Show, So This is Christmas, was performed at The Wayside Chapel, Emceed by Chris Barwick and was the celebration of a year of Ensemble creativity and engagement. It was an opportunity for Milk Crate Theatre to raise awareness and offer some targeted health promotions for HIV/AIDS through a partnership with World AIDS Day.

**I REALLY ENJOYED MEETING NEW PEOPLE AND WORKING WITH ACTORS.
THE FACT I GOT AN AGENT FROM BEING IN FEARLESS GAVE ME A REAL BUZZ.
I HOPE TO DO SOME EXTRA WORK NEXT YEAR.**

Ensemble



Wayne, Michael G, Bridget, John T, Owen and Ray; Fearless. Image: Tim Jones

BACK STAGE

The Back Stage program, which extends beyond Stage Door and Main Stage activities and is targeted to the interests and skills of individuals, was inaugurated in 2012. It provides extension, social leadership and information to the Ensemble through in-house traineeships, employment and advocacy opportunities and links to external creative opportunities. We are excited about building on the successes of the first year. Some of those successes included:

THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Recognising the untapped potential of our work to provide employment opportunities for the Ensemble, build audiences and generate income, Milk Crate Theatre has embarked on its first ever social enterprise.

A feasibility study and subsequent business plan were developed following Ensemble and stakeholder consultation. The result: The Milky Way, an enterprise offering commissioned training workshops and performances to the corporate, education, not-for-profit and government sectors. These workshops and performances utilise the strengths of the Ensemble to deliver theatre-based activities

alongside education around issues of homelessness and social inclusion, that are tailored to the needs of customers.

A funding partnership with the Westpac Foundation has enabled us to plan and pilot the project and we have already secured our first customer, Riverside Theatres who have programmed a remount of Full Circle for their schools and general public audience in August 2013.

The project will be evaluated in partnership with The University of Sydney's Business School, whose focus will be to research effective social enterprise business planning models, and as part of this will measure financial outcomes and social impact.

2 ENSEMBLE RECEIVING **SCHOLARSHIPS**
FOR FURTHER TRAINING AT NIDA AND
WITH ADRIAN JACKSON OF CARDBOARD
CITIZENS (UK) (THIRD WAY THEATRE)

5 **SOCIAL LEADERSHIP EVENTS**
INCLUDING SYDNEY HOMELESS CONNECT,
HOMELESS PERSONS' WEEK, COOGEE HOMELESS
SLEEP-OUT, MENTAL HEALTH MONTH AND NSW
INSTITUTE OF PSYCHIATRY'S FLOURISH FESTIVAL.

6 ENSEMBLE E-NEWSLETTERS OFFERING
80 CREATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

3 ENSEMBLE UNDERTAKING MENTORSHIPS
IN WORKSHOP FACILITATING, STAGE
MANAGEMENT AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

IMPACT

We define success in relation to transformation, be it incremental or substantial, within the Ensemble, welfare partners, our audiences and the wider community.

Milk Crate Theatre utilises the creative process to promote and advocate for social inclusion and a better understanding of people experiencing social marginalisation. We aim to inspire action on complex social issues on three levels:

- Individual - building self-esteem, self-belief and the capacity to make changes in life
- Relationships - increasing sense of community, group social skills and interpersonal cooperation, and working towards improved community dialogue
- Societal - Taking an active role in exploring social systems and dynamics, promoting social inclusion through high quality artistic productions that educate and engage the wider public on issues relevant to homelessness or social marginalisation

100% OF THE ENSEMBLE STATED THAT THEIR INVOLVEMENT WITH MILK CRATE THEATRE HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THEIR LIFE

72% OF THE ENSEMBLE STATED THAT THEIR INVOLVEMENT LED TO MAKING FRIENDS AND SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

68% OF THE ENSEMBLE STATED THEIR INVOLVEMENT HAD A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

I'VE CUT DOWN MY MEDICATION SINCE I'VE BEEN IN MILK CRATE AND I'VE STARTED STUDYING AT UNI AND TOOK RISKS IN OTHER AREAS AND RELATIONSHIPS IN MY LIFE.

Ensemble

2012

KEY LEARNING

Milk Crate Theatre conducts a twice-yearly Ensemble evaluation to better understand our impact and learn for the future.

CHALLENGING ACTIVITIES

Milk Crate Theatre activities were deemed by nearly all Ensemble to be challenging activities (91.7%). This is one of the reasons why people are drawn to them. When asked to give details about how and why people found the activities challenging, several key phrases were repeatedly used. The idea of “thinking on the spot” and “being out of your comfort zone” were encapsulated in several responses. These responses assist the Company to create an artistic program that is both challenging, and focused on high production values, as well as being individualised and well supported.

CHANGE

Milk Crate Theatre’s mission statement is centred on the idea of change; it is central to all of our work practices and artistic outputs. Theatre by its nature should always be a transformative experience for those who participate in it and those who watch it. At Milk Crate Theatre, the company strives to create opportunities for change by:

- providing opportunities for education, advocacy and training to the Ensemble
- creating theatrical performances that explore the lived experience of homelessness and social marginalisation to educate and involve audiences in these issues
- providing individualised mentoring and skills development based on the interests of the Ensemble
- being a place for professional arts practitioners to gain experience working within a unique community setting

From our evaluation, we have seen that positive change is a significant aspect of the Ensemble’s experience of taking part in a Milk Crate Theatre activity in 2012 (100%). The two reoccurring themes in people’s responses when asked what the positive change were that they experienced an increase in confidence and happiness.

Some responses also indicated that the flow-on effects of an increase in confidence and happiness is the ability to be more spontaneous, greater feelings of self-motivation and being less inhibited.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The Ensemble were asked if taking part in Milk Crate Theatre activities had resulted in positive changes to their health and wellbeing. These included:


**89.5% POSITIVE CONNECTION
TO THE WIDER COMMUNITY**

89.5% WELLBEING

**72.2% MADE FRIENDS AND SOCIAL
CONNECTIONS WITHIN ENSEMBLE**

68.4% MENTAL HEALTH

33.3% PHYSICAL HEALTH



I've been prompted to address some longstanding health issues and improve my diet, self esteem and [my] confidence [is] way up. I've got new clothes, plants to decorate and bring life to my home. I am more assertive in my relationships with others and more friendly to people I meet in the course of the day.

Ensemble

AUDIENCES

Audience engagement remains an integral part of our model for social change. As such, we value each and every person that offers their time and contributes their knowledge and stories to our theatre-making process.

In 2012, we had an overall audience attendance of 1505. Of these, 528 attended our Community Shows; Secrets, Full Circle and Unfinished; 195 attended Belonging; 718 attended Fearless and 64 attended So This is Christmas. We have held tight to our loyal audience base but also built a community of new faces who seem to really enjoy the work we are creating.

COMMUNITY SHOWS

REALLY WAS AWESOME; HIT ME IN MY HEART,
ENGAGING, VIBRANT PERFORMANCES, THOUGHT PROVOKING AND POWERFUL AND GREAT INTERACTION FROM THE MIXED CROWD,

We had a total of 187 attend the three Wayside Chapel shows in Potts Point, 129 attend the three Parramatta Mission shows in Parramatta and 212 people attend the three Newtown Neighborhood Centre shows in Newtown. Of those that completed evaluation forms (86% return rate on evaluation forms), 68% were new audience members to Milk Crate Theatre shows, 99% said they enjoyed the show and 93% said the shows provided them with an opportunity to engage with issues about homelessness and/or social marginalisation.

COMPANY PRODUCTION

IT WAS AN INCREDIBLY POWERFUL SHOW - THE CHARACTERS/ACTORS WERE SUPERB IN THEIR INDIVIDUAL DEPICTIONS OF LIFE IN ALL ITS SORROWS AND GLORIES. BLOODY MARVELOUS!,
CABARET STYLE WAS WONDERFUL WAY OF TALKING ABOUT HOMELESSNESS. SENSITIVE, INSIGHTFUL AND RESPECTFUL,

As our biggest advocacy show and with a key measure of success being audience development, Fearless truly delivered. We wanted people to be entertained but also informed and moved to take action. 718 people attended the preview and nine performances of Fearless. Of those that completed our audience evaluation (40% response rate), 70% were a new audience member to a Milk Crate Theatre show, 91% enjoyed the show and 86% said the show provided them with an opportunity to engage with issues about homelessness or social marginalisation.

PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

ASSOCIATE ARTISTS

The associate artists who work with us are a special kind of creative. They are people who are highly trained arts practitioners with a passion for community development. The work that we make is a testament to the skills of the associate artists as they work with the Ensemble to generate, enliven and distill the stories that we tell.

Associate artists learn and gain valuable skills and experience from the process of working with Milk Crate Theatre and the Ensemble. In 2012 we worked with 29 associate artists. For Fearless, we worked collaboratively with 16 associate artists as actors, musicians, stage manager, set and lighting designers and a composer. 100% of the associate artists we worked with in 2012 would recommend the experience to someone else. 100% felt the experience enabled them to make a positive connection to the wider community and 71% felt that their involvement with Milk Crate Theatre helped them to make significant changes in their life.

Milk Crate Theatre is a unique theatre company as it works with both arts companies and welfare organisations to generate the work that we make and the programs that we run. In 2012, Milk Crate Theatre continued to cultivate an exciting mix of welfare and arts partners.

WELFARE PARTNERS

Milk Crate Theatre works in the inner city and western suburbs of Sydney. We engage the Ensemble through the support of a complex network of welfare services. 2012 partners included: Parramatta Mission, Cardinal Freeman's Centre, Anglicare Bondi and Summer Hill, Glebe Community Church, The Wayside Chapel, Kirketon Road Centre, Psychiatric Rehabilitation Australia, MISHA (Mission Australia), Edward Eagar Lodge, Mission Australia Centre, Migrant Resource Centre, Ozanam Learning Centre, Newtown Neighborhood Centre, Community Linking Project, City of Sydney Library and Parramatta Library. We are also supported through our membership with Homelessness NSW.

ARTS PARTNERS

We are committed to artistic excellence and appreciate that this comes through strong creative partnerships. Our 2012 arts partners included Carriageworks, PlayWriting Australia, Sydney Theatre Company, Belvoir Street Theatre, Darlinghurst Theatre Company, Riverside Theatres, Griffin Theatre, NIDA (National Institute of Dramatic Art), Third Way Theatre, Information and Cultural Exchange (ICE) and Currency Press.

YOU HEAR ABOUT ISSUES THAT ARE
OFTEN DISMISSED BY WIDER SOCIETY
AND ARE PROVIDED THE SPACE TO
CHALLENGE YOURSELF PERSONALLY
FOR THE NEED FOR CHANGE.

Welfare Service Partner

FINANCIAL REPORT

2012 was a successful year for the company as we broadened our funding partnerships and in kind supporters to enable continued growth and sustainability.

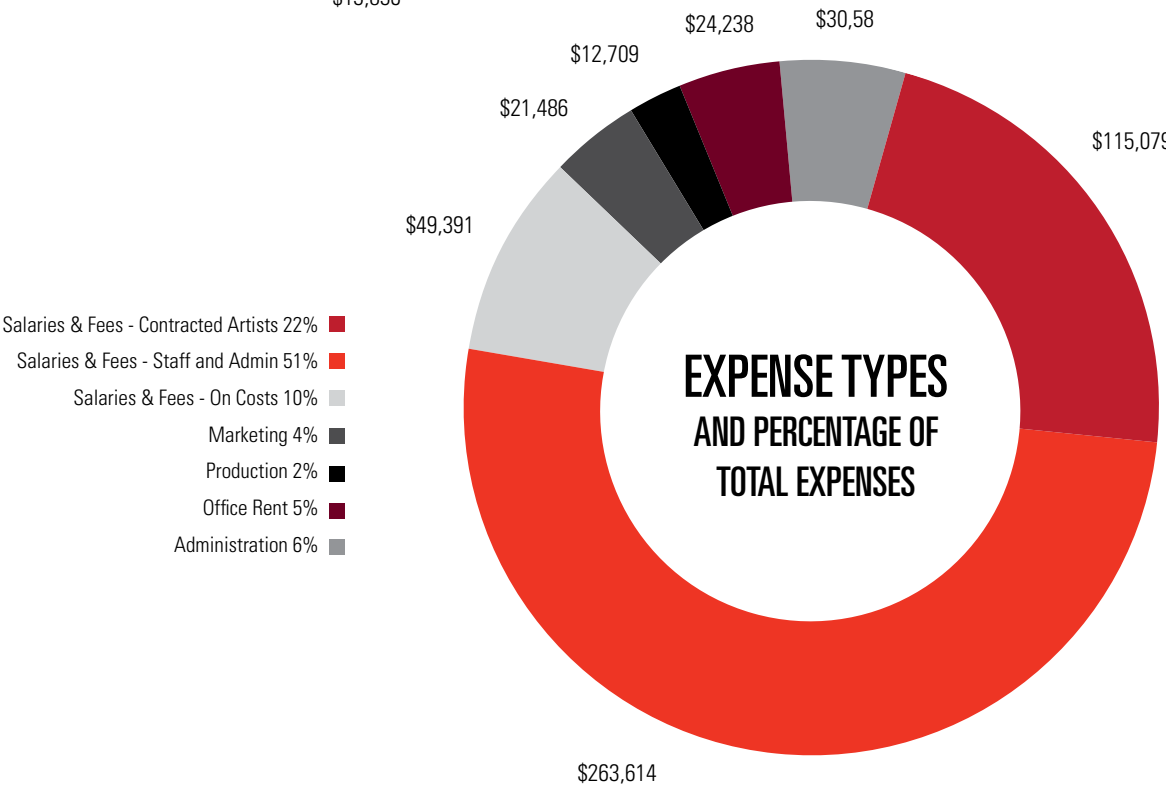
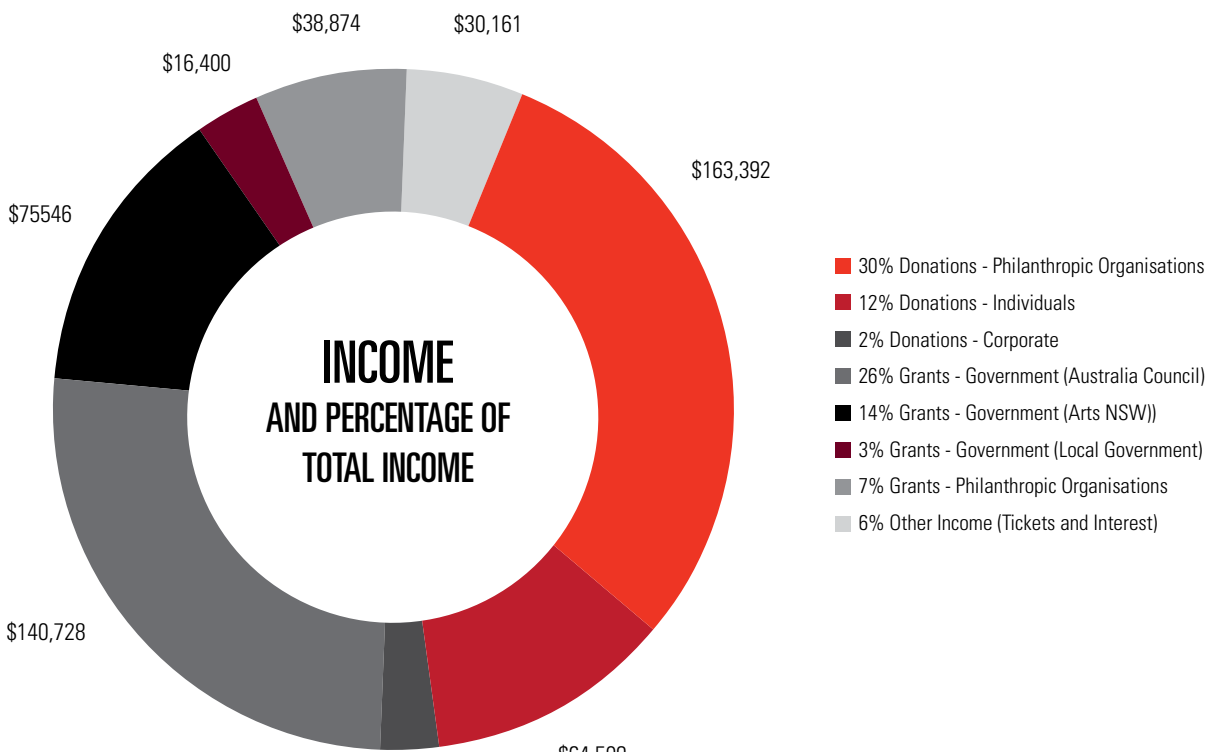
Total income for 2012 was \$543,446 and total expenses were \$517,075. With prudent financial management and the consolidation of our reserves a key goal for the Company in 2012, Milk Crate Theatre delivered a surplus of \$26,371.

INCOME

The main source of income for Milk Crate Theatre continues to be through philanthropic trusts and foundations including larger ongoing donations from the Nelson Meers Foundation, Thyne Reid Foundation, Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation and W & A Johnson Family Foundation. We also received significant grant support through the Australia Council for the Arts, Arts NSW and from the Westpac Foundation. A total list of financial supporters is available under ‘Our Supporters’. We also acknowledge that many of our welfare and arts partners contribute significant in kind support through the provision of staff, venues, marketing and catering.

INCOME	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Donations - Philanthropic Organisations	\$6,000	\$21,800	\$48,000	\$136,500	\$342,045	\$163,392
Donations - Individuals	\$800	\$50,350	\$50,000	\$51,490	\$54,156	\$64,509
Donations - Corporate	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$38,103	\$13,836
Grants - Government	\$52,710	\$29,930	\$52,500	\$95,560	\$138,227	\$232,674
Grants - Philanthropic Organisations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$40,000	\$38,874
Other Income (Tickets and Interest)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,500	\$11,696	\$30,161
TOTAL INCOME	\$59,510	\$102,080	\$150,500	\$289,050	\$624,227	\$543,446

Note: Information is provided based on the 2012 Financial Report as provided by Steven J Miller & Co., Independant Assurance Practioner, in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001.



EXPENSES

Milk Crate Theatre’s spending focuses on the delivery of both its workshop and shows programs with a majority of costs focused towards the payment of artists, arts workers and the core artistic staff at Milk Crate Theatre.

MILK CRATE THEATRE TEAM

BOARD

Angus White (Chair), Matthew Zander (Treasurer), Natalie Devlin, Liz Giles, Julie Rosenberg and Michael Sharp.

STAFF

Mirra Todd	CEO / Artistic Director (until Nov 2012)
Siena Balakrishnan	General Manager
Maree Freeman	Associate Director
Beck Ronkson	Special Projects Manager
Sarah Trant	Social Enterprise Manager
Jocelyn Payne	Financial Consultant
Kate McBride	Administration Coordinator

In December 2012, The Board of Milk Crate Theatre announced that a new leadership team would drive the company's mission moving forward; Maree Freeman was appointed CEO/Artistic Director and Siena Balakrishnan was appointed CEO/General Manager.

ASSOCIATE ARTISTS

Sean Barker, Maurie Barlin, Lucy Bell, Patrick Boland, Lauren Clair, Tony Cogan, Catherine Davies, Naomi Edwards, Gabriel Fancourt, Ben Fink, Julian Garner, Ross Graham, Sophie Gregg, Sarah Hone, Christa Hughes, Tim Jones, David Manuel, Rashelle McHugh, Danny Mills, Cindy Rodriguez, Graeme Rhodes, Adam Rosenberg, Cristabel Sved, Sarah Strait, Gill Thomas, Dylan Tonkin, Craig Walsh, Daryl Wallis and Asha Watson.

VOLUNTEERS

Sophie Cook, Melissa Dax, Elly Goodman, Laura Hanna, Carla Hedley, Zoe Hogan, Alice McCintock, Liz Pallas, Caitlin Scarr, Sybella Stevens, Hannah Strout and Emma Zaia.



ENSEMBLE

Abdul S, Adrian, Ahmed, Akira, Alan C, Alan J, Alan W, Allan S, Allan W, Ana, Andrew, Andrew W, Angelee, Anne, Brendan, Brian, Bridget, Brook, Carla, Caroline, Chani, Charles, Charlie, Charlotte, Cherie, Chi, Chris B, Chris Barwick, Chris M, Christian, Clarrice, Colin, Cybele, Dane, Daniel, Darren, Daryl, Dave, David, David F, David R, Davina, Daz, Debbie, Debbie A, Denis, Dennis, Di, Donald, Drew, Drummo, Elvira, Emily, Evan, Fabi, Fabiola, Falah, Farnaz, Fiona, Flora, Gary, Geoff, Georgina, Geraldo, Gerrard, Gina, Gina G, Gordon Broomham, Gordon S, Graeme, Graeme B, Graham, Heidi, Hugh, Ian, Inski, Jack, Jacqui, James, Jared, Jarrod, Jason, Joanne, Joe, Joe O, John, John B, John D, John M, John T, Joseph, Josh, Julie, Julz, Justine, Kamal, Karen, Kath, Kel, Kelly, Kenneth, Kevin, Kristopher, Leanda, Leanne, Liam, Luke, Luke C, Lynette, Mahesh, Malin, Marat, Margot Lichtenstein, Maria, Maria C, Mark, Marunta, Mary, Matt, Matthew, Max, Michael, Michael C, Michael E, Michael G, Michael L, Michael S, Michael W, Michelle, Mohammad, Monica, Murray S Robertson, Neville, Nick, Owen, Pablo, Paul, Paul M, Phillip, Phong, Phyllas, Piya, Ray, Rhonda, Richard, Rob, Robin, Rod, Royce, Rui, Rusty, Sahal, Sakiko, Sandra, Sara, Sarah, Scott, Shane, Stacy, Stephanie, Stephen D, Stephen M, Steven, Sunny, Terry, Tim B, Tim T, Tom, Tony, Tricia, Troy, Vierendra, Vilasona, Vince, Wayne, Will and William.

OUR SUPPORTERS



MEDIA

TV: Channel 10's The Project, Print: News Limited in particular the Sydney Morning Herald, The Australian Newspaper, The Big Issue, Central Magazine, The Inner West Courier, The Daily Telegraph, Green Left Weekly and Drum Media. Radio: ABC 702 Sydney, FBi Radio, East Side Radio and 2SER Radio. Online: ABC Arts Gateway, ABC 702 online, The Suburban, Art Almanac, Time Out Magazine, ArtsHub, BBM, The AU Review, Dumbo Feather, Mood of Monk, War-Cry (Salvation Army), Visit NSW, What's On Sydney, Themusic.com, Stage Noise, Australian Stage, Arts Access Australia, Bobby Six, The Thousands, Aussie Theatre, Limelight, and Teaspoon of Sugar.



YOUR HEART CREATES THE CHANGE

EACH YEAR MILK CRATE THEATRE WORKS WITH OVER 250 PEOPLE EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS.

We use a fun and creative approach to build confidence and social connection; to support people to make plans; to assist people to explore possibilities for education or employment and ultimately to help people move away from homelessness.

OVER 95% OF OUR WORK IS GENEROUSLY FUNDED THROUGH GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

We rely on the generosity of individuals, philanthropists and businesses that believe in the creative potential of our stories.

BY PROVIDING A DONATION YOU BECOME A PART OF A SOCIAL MOVEMENT TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS.

Regular contributions allow us to better plan for the future and reach our long-term goals.



Your gift to us, no matter how large or small, contributes to giving the following gifts back to our community:

UP TO \$100 PROVIDES RESOURCES, EQUIPMENT AND FOOD AT OUR WORKSHOPS

Up to \$1000 provides resources, equipment, travel and artist per diems for the Ensemble to perform in shows in arts and welfare venues across Sydney

YOUR TIME IS ALSO PRECIOUS TO US. IF YOU HAVE SKILLS TO SHARE, THEN PLEASE CONTACT US AND GET INVOLVED AS A VOLUNTEER, A CORPORATE VOLUNTEER OR AS A FUNDRAISER.

We are always interested in discussing how you may like to get involved in supporting our Company. If you are thinking of contributing a gift above \$1000 we would love to discuss this with you further and talk about how this contribution benefits the work we do.

Please contact Siena Balakrishnan,
CEO/General Manager

siena@milkcratetheatre.com
or Tel: (02) 9331 0555

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

Milk Crate Theatre acknowledges and respects the Indigenous peoples of Australia. We respectfully recognise that our activities take place on the land traditionally owned by the Gadagal people of the Eora nation and the Darug people.

ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Information can be provided in alternative formats upon request (i.e. large print and electronic). Please contact the National Relay Service, call: Type and read, type and listen, or speak and read:

133 677

Speak and listen (speech to speech relay)

1300 555 727

INTERPRETING ASSISTANCE IN LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH

The Translating and Interpreting Service, TIS National: **131 450** and indicate which language you wish to use.



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