

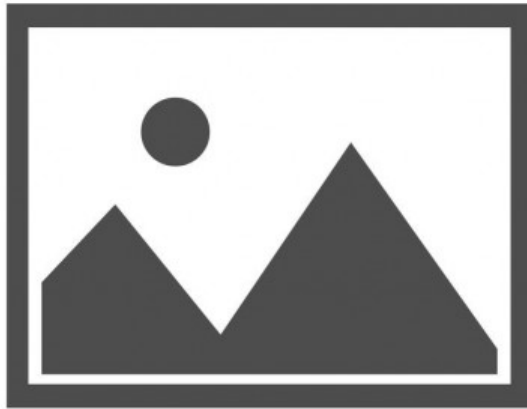


KNACKZINE

VOL. 01

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ARTIST PROFILE

maroussia vladi

GETTING CREATIVE

'malicious compliance'

by michael taylor

MEET THE KNACK

vincent pidal

FEATURE ARTICLE

'rugged, honest, and creative land'

by naomi cardwell

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CONTRIBUTORS

Thomas Gregory
Lourdes Zamanillo
Maroussia Vladi
Michael Taylor
Naomi Cardwell

SUBMIT TO US!

Got something creative that you'd like to share? Maybe it's a short story, essay, comic, poem, art, etc.

Use the subject header 'Getting Creative with The Knack' and send it to theknacktheatre@gmail.com and we might put it in our next issue!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Knack acknowledges that we live and work on the stolen land of the Kulin Nation and pay our respects to the elders past, present and emerging.

NOTES FROM THE KNACK

Back in 2020, when Steve and I had the crazy idea to found a theatre company, I dreamt of creating a vibrant performing arts hub, buzzing with ideas and creativity. We thought we'd slowly make money to fund this hub by staging high-quality local work – surprising audiences with the quality of the works the emerging theatre industry in Melbourne had to offer.

Well, as life has it, the surprise was on me. The fact that we founded a theatre company, not at the end but in the midst of a pandemic, made sold-out shows a chimera. And yet, something else happened.

In response to current limitations, we decided to start a table-read service so that local playwrights got to hear the dialogue of their script come to life and got feedback from industry professionals and audience members alike. Now, I expected the table reads to be useful. What I did not expect was for our panel members to share their feedback so whole-heartedly. I did not expect actors to excitedly ask us 'when's the next one? Where can I sign up?' even before the evening is done. And I did not expect the events to run for more than two hours over drinks and laughter.

Turns out we don't need sold out seasons. We already have a vibrant creative hub. One of the scripts we've workshopped in our table-read series is 'The Jasmine Suite', by Michael Olsen, which I'm happy to say we're looking forward to produce next year. And we only needed a pub (hats off to The Last Jar) and a whole-lot of passion sitting around a table to make the magic happen.

I constantly feel humbled and privileged by the amount of trust we've been gifted by so many talented local playwrights for this series. Thanks to all, and see you at the next one! ~LZ

WHAT'S HAPPENING

KNACK-WISE

***Nothing Is Wrong
(table read)***

by James Robertson
10 November
The Last Jar

To round out a stellar year for our table read events, we are excited to have James Robertson return with the highly anticipated "Nothing is Wrong". Come be a part of an inclusive workshop and get a behind-the-scenes look at how the best theatre in Melbourne is created.

The Weight of Dreams

by Lourdes Zamanillo
16-26 November
The Butterfly Club

When two old friends re-unite for a "writing workshop", they must come to terms with the struggling relationships they left at home. With actors swapping roles throughout the season, this compelling and challenging play by Lourdes Zamanillo should not be missed.

ELSE-WISE

The Year of Our Lord

17 - 22 October
The MC Showroom

Part Medieval Allegory, Part Verbatim theatre, the Plain English Theatre Company presents a comic look at where our political landscape may be taking us.

***I Would Die For You
(Just Not Yet)***

18 - 23 October
Bluestone Church Arts Space

A vampiric black comedy celebrating the strangeness of life, death and all those moments in between.

Brittany & the Mannequins

17 - 26 November
Northcote Town Hall

Callum Mackay's bold new work follows the cult-like world of the Chisala yoga store, reunited friends, and gruesome murder.

MALICIOUS COMPLIANCE

BY MICHAEL TAYLOR

Colin, I don't care that it's quicker to come to my office. If it's worth asking, submit an information request. Eventually it'll reach my to-do list. It doesn't matter that it's just two minutes. There are processes.

You're still new. Here, we do everything by the book. It's a very long book, leisurely reading. How lucky the humane way is the prescribed way. We are the cogs of savagery and I refuse to oil up.

You see Noel there? Eager, like yourself. With his own hands he'd strangle a fifteen-year-old wearing enemy colours, but as a spreadsheet operator he's divinely negligent.

Come here. You see there, the entry for the P53 Lionel rifle... the cost, banal enough. Yet, follow the cell's umbilical cord through five sheets and — inflation. Noel has halved when he should have quartered!

The impact? Oh, nought point nought percent.

But, for his little slip we'll need to delay the whole process for around ten days. Five days for me to officially notice the error, five days for me to correct it. What other slips shall he make? Noel would gladly fire one of these

rifles into a crowd to slaughter just one combatant, but, because of Noel, the actual firers will have to do without their firearms a little longer.

I won't correct it right now, Colin, nor any other error. Don't be helpful. Remember who you're helping. Efficiency is complicity. Certainly, we can stop nothing grand with our little precision strike incompetencies, but a slowness — an entirety by the book, unpunishable slowness — can do what God has given up trying.

Don't believe, Colin, we are far from the trigger. Everything is closeby. I first realised that some years ago, wet and green as you. This P53L rifle... I saw — there are recordings of everything — I saw it fire through a teenager's head. Had I anything to do with it? I was nowhere near the trigger, but firing squads had many shooters so each man could believe that his bullet was not the fatal blow. Not so for me or any man with an imaginative conscience. The possibility of guilt is guilt.

I don't care that you don't care. How awful when youthful zeal is career-directed. You want to flap up higher, Colin? Want to work lickety-split to get the eye of the Board? Oh, the Board has eyes

that see like hawks' — from far above. You are as large to them as a pixel on a drone-operator's screen. Do you think they'll see your toiling sweat?

They see through me. They open their jaws like baby birds and swallow my reconnaissance. They think well of Noel. What shall they think of you, new boy who shirks proper processes?

Yes, that's better. I shall get to your information request once it

works its way to the top of my pile. We work slowly here, Colin, slow enough to think about what we're doing.

Michael Taylor is a lapsed economist and relapsed short-story writer. Occasionally, he writes blogs at robin-alan-berry.medium.com. He co-hosts the monthly podcast *Shakespeare and Pals*, discussing Shakespeare's plays in chronological order.

the weight of dreams

by lourdes zamarillo



AT CLUB VOLTAIRE

16-25 NOVEMBER 7:00PM / 26 NOVEMBER 9:30PM

ARTIST PROFILE

MAROUSSIA VLADI



Maroussia studied Theatre and Film at Flinders University Drama Centre in Adelaide, Australia. Upon graduating with

Honours, she continued her studies in Paris at the renowned physical theatre school, École Jacques Lecoq. She founded her own theatre company, called: "Keep It Moving Theatre" and, together with a carefully selected troupe of creatives, toured France, and even took a show to London and performed it off the West-End for a season in 2019.

WHAT GOT YOU STARTED IN THE THEATRE?

Having moved as a young child to Australia with my immigrant family, I soon realised that my number one ticket to entering social circles at school was through "story-telling". Due to my difference in appearance and culture, I was going to be made 'the bud of the jokes' at school regardless, so started coming up with the jokes about myself before anybody else did. As I grew older, I realised that telling quirky stories had become my greatest skill. I went on to study

Drama at University, and later I completed a Masters in Clown College in Paris at Ecole Jacques Lecoq.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS TO REBEL AS AN ARTIST?

Just 'being an artist' means you are rebelling; you are rebelling from the social construct that offers you a 9-5 office existence. To me, what it means to rebel as an artist, is to follow your own thread of advice, and to avoid being persuaded by what the "mass" is doing. It means constantly discovering new ways to live, to survive, and thrive. It means challenging familiar definitions of "success". It, essentially, means doing what most people would advise you not to do because it's too uncertain.

IF THERE WAS AN ARTWORK OR PERFORMANCE FROM HISTORY THAT YOU COULD HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN, WHAT WOULD IT HAVE BEEN?

I am an ardent lover of Shakespeare. I am mesmerised by the heightened drama that is created through Shakespeare's use of poetic verse. As a girl in my late teens, I of course wanted to play Juliet. Nowadays, in my

thirties, my dream role would be to play Lady Macbeth. Thus, my answer to this question would be any performance on a major stage in London where I am cast as Lady Macbeth.

WHERE DO YOU SEE THE ARTS IN AUSTRALIA HEADING? WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE IT TO HEAD?

Oh, I think we have a loooong way to go getting Australians interested in the arts as much as they are interested in football.

I want theatre tickets to sell out as fast as tickets to the MCG. In order to make this a reality, I think that the arts in Australia need to become more of a form of sheer entertainment. As opposed to Europe, where I lived for many years, theatre in Australia is used as a vehicle for "educating and informing" the audience. That's all well and good, but if the story or form is not "entertaining" first, the 'lesson' will never be absorbed by the audience. Ah, if only Oscar Wilde was still alive and living in Australia!

MEET THE KNACK

VINCENT PIDAL



New to The Knack's Brainstrust is Vincent Pidal! Vincent started working with The Knack on our 2022 production of *Lenore: A Tale of Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance*, and really hasn't left our side since then.

He's been part of our Roundtable Reads series and will appear in the upcoming production of the *weight of water* in November.

Vincent graduated from Federation University's Arts Academy (formerly BAPA) in 2019 with a Bachelor of Acting for Stage and Screen. He has appeared in various film and theatre productions including *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (2019) by Bertolt Brecht, and Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* (2019). In 2020, Vincent began studying The Method under Peter Kalos at the Melbourne Actors LAB. Vincent is currently continuing to refine his skills as an actor through consistent study and work in the industry.

RUGGED, HONEST AND CREATIVE LAND

MELBOURNE'S DISSOLVING SCULPTURES AND STUCK-ON PLAYS.

By Naomi Cardwell

An all-too-familiar sense of tackiness threatened to overwhelm me as I read that Fitzroy Gardens were once littered with plaster copies of famous Greek and Roman sculptures. Apollo, Diana, Cupid – casts of all the greats were shipped Down Under in the mid-1860s, often arriving smashed apart by the long voyage from London.

The transposition of Greco-Roman mythos to Australia through a Colonial lens is only one small (but deliciously cringy) example of our repeated failed attempts at stuck-on culture. Most of us have at some point endured big, bums-on-seats productions of some imported play or another – and many of us have earned a reliable income from some involvement with their staging. Melbourne's larger theatre companies make no bones about drumming up repeat business with bums-on-seats theatre, feeding ticket sales into locally written works.

So what's the harm, then, in an import? It's admittedly a whole other kind of ignorance to disregard the canon. And our industry needs bums on seats,

now especially. Only that familiar residual cringe lingers as we regurgitate it with so little local digestive process and it comes out so – out of place. Why here? Why now? seem to be questions we avoid, as Melbournians stage Shakespeare styled as Hollywood blockbusters and Arthur Miller plays replete with hapless New Yawk accents.

Following the defeat of Australia's 1999 republic referendum, the late Queen Elizabeth II famously declared that she "felt a part of this rugged, honest and creative land," - a valiant attempt to rhetorically reconcile the smashed-apart components of this place in three adjectives. Oh, we're a rugged cultural palimpsest, all right. We keep scribbling and overwriting, effacing truths and then rubbing out our work and trying again. The Queen's words were delivered on the steps of the Sydney Opera House – arguably our most venerated setting for bums-on-seats theatre. Can we really claim to be honest or creative as we stage theatrical equivalents of plaster reproductions whose heads or arms we've hastily reattached?

The Fitzroy Gardens' sculptures were dutifully put back together again by Charles Summers of

Burke and Wills sculpture fame. The vision for the Gardens was one of Parisian public edification, with geometric pathways guiding observants from statue to statue, for the betterment of all colonials so far from "civilisation". Awkwardly, the repaired casts soon began to disintegrate as they were alternately drenched and sunburnt under the mercies of Melbourne's fickle weather.

Marcus Aurelius, in his Meditations, deems the avoidance of pain to be an "impiety" – a failure to properly respect something profound and sacred. Kitsch plasters stuck onto demonstrably

colonised landscapes; doggedly orthodox theatre reproductions – both are inadequate deifications of stuck-on culture, attempts at a clean slate we'll never have. Why can't theatre let the seams and the broken bits show?

Following a bit of argy-bargy about whether Fitzroy Gardens' dripping, chipped facsimiles could possibly be construed as fashionable "ruins", the Melbourne City Council had had enough. The sculptures were quietly removed overnight in the early 1930's and destroyed. Melbourne 1, Civilisation 0, I suppose.

FRIENDS OF THE KNACK

**THE
LAST
JAR**

thelastjarmelb@gmail.com

info@thebutterflyclub.com



The Butterfly Club

**ROSE
CHONG**
Costumiers

shop@rosechong.com

CLUB

manager@clubvoltaire.com.au

Voltaire

SUBMIT TO US

Have you got a play you'd like to see staged?

The Knack prides itself in producing original work from emerging writers and we are always on the lookout for new work that pushes boundaries.

Or maybe you just want some feedback?

We also run a monthly table read series where you can hear your work read aloud by actors and get feedback from industry pros.

We accept submissions from everyone and anyone. We let your work speak for you.

If any of this sounds like your thing, get in touch with us at theknacktheatre@gmail.com or check out our website.

theknacktheatre.com

FUN PAGE

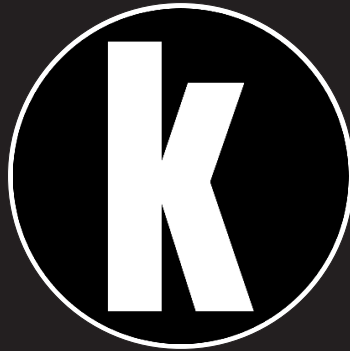
*HENRY ROLLINS HAS LOST HIS TATTOOS!
DRAW SOME NEW ONES TO CHEER HIM UP!*



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PUNK ROCK IS AN ATTITUDE, AND THE ESSENCE OF
THAT ATTITUDE IS 'GIVE US SOME TRUTH'".

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