



BELVOIR



ANNUAL REPORT 2017



Nikki Shiels in *The Rover*. Photo: Brett Boardman.

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BELVOIR 

2017

AT A GLANCE

99,197



ATTENDEES

TO 2017 PRODUCTIONS
AT BELVOIR ST THEATRE



7.5

FEMALE DIRECTED
PRODUCTIONS

6.5



MALE DIRECTED
PRODUCTIONS



226,785
UNIQUE WEBSITE
VISITORS

9 THEATRE
AWARDS 
4 = HELPMANN AWARDS
5 = SYDNEY THEATRE AWARDS

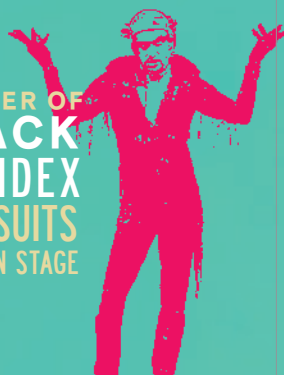


11
WRITERS
UNDER COMMISSION

5,632 SOLD
SUBSCRIPTIONS

139% OF CORE GOVERNMENT
FUNDING
SPENT ON ACTORS,
CREATIVES &
TECHNICAL WAGES

1 NUMBER OF
BLACK
SPANDEX
BODYSUITS
WORN ON STAGE



2,743 ATTENDEES
TO UNWAGED
PERFORMANCE

28 WORK
SHOPS
FOR **528** STUDENTS
IN WESTERN SYDNEY

4,639 
NEW SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWERS

\$4,245,729
BOX OFFICE
REVENUE



5,756
STUDENTS & THEIR TEACHERS
ATTENDED A
SCHOOLS
OR EVENING PERFORMANCE

1,009
STUDENTS
ATTENDED A
SCHOOL PERFORMANCE
FREE OF CHARGE
THANKS TO OUR
ACCESS PROGRAM

2,730 
STUDENTS
PARTICIPATED
IN A WORKSHOP
WITH 47 HOSTED IN REGIONAL SCHOOLS

154
ARTISTS
EMPLOYED

NATIONAL
PERFORMANCES
480



NEW
AUSTRALIAN
PLAYS

CHAIR'S REPORT

Sam Meers



It is an extraordinary privilege to be the chair of this much-loved theatre company. On the many occasions in which I sit in our iconic theatre, surrounded by our loyal subscribers and newer audience members, I consistently

find myself marvelling at the contribution Belvoir makes to the artform, the community and the national discourse.

2017 was characterised by significant change, challenge and achievement. We farewelled the fearless Brenna Hobson after ten years as Executive Director, and our indomitable Chair, Andrew Cameron AM, after nine years. Both built on the company's strong foundations. We welcomed (back) Sue Donnelly as Executive Director, following a robust recruitment process and a strong field of candidates. Sue has an exceptional reputation as one of the most experienced and successful theatre Executive Directors in the country. Her passion and vision for the company made Sue an ideal choice at this important time.

The costs associated with presenting bold, high quality theatre continue to challenge the sector. Notwithstanding these challenges, our artistic successes in 2017 were many. We delivered a strong and diverse season, acknowledged by solid audience numbers and a slew of Helpmann Awards, and five Sydney Theatre Awards.

The success of the 2017 season, and those of the many other Belvoir programs that are articulated throughout this Annual Report, are not reflected in our disappointing financial result for the corresponding period. Our well-intentioned set building enterprise, which delivered affordable sets for other theatre-makers throughout Sydney for a number of years, proved unsustainable and is largely responsible for the loss recorded in the 2017 financial year. We have taken action to close this activity. With the opportunity

that the recruitment of a new Executive Director brings, we are undertaking a strategic review of operations to identify efficiencies through new approaches, with a sharper focus on business planning and long-term sustainability. Whilst the 2017 loss is unsatisfactory, I am comforted by the fact that the underlying creative program is strong, and by the concerted efforts at Board and management level to recalibrate the business, both from a governance and financial perspective, to better support the company's creative capacity and ambitions.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge each of the talented and dedicated staff at Belvoir for their support and extraordinary commitment to the company, particularly in this time of transition. I would also like to pay special tribute to our remarkable Artistic Director, Eamon Flack, who inspires us all, and continues to make and champion work that both extends us, and has extraordinary reach and impact.

We remain enormously grateful for the support we receive from government at State and Federal level, through the Australia Council and Create NSW. Belvoir also has an exceptionally committed tribe of donors, partners, supporters and subscribers, without whom we could not do the work we do: my deep thanks go to each and every one of you for your faith in us.

I thank the Belvoir Board for their energy, commitment and support. In 2017 we farewelled the brilliant Anne Britton, whose dedication and passion for Belvoir has sustained the company for many years. Two new directors joined us in 2017, Patty Akopiantz and Michael Lynch AO CBE. I also thank and acknowledge the Board of Company A Limited, led by Angela Pearman, for their unwavering support.

With strong leadership in place, a bold artistic vision, and loyal and adventurous audiences, Belvoir's future is an exciting one. I look forward to seeing you at the theatre.

Sam



Benedict Hardie & Sheridan Harbridge in *The Dog/The Cat*. Photo: Brett Boardman.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Eamon Flack



This was a year of new stories.

We aimed for an upbeat year and we had an upbeat year: celebratory, joyous, defiant. Our shows refused to put up with the bleakness of the world and they refused

to succumb to cynicism. If I had to pick one show that exemplified this idea it would be Tommy Murphy's *Mark Colvin's Kidney*, the story of a member of the Conservative party in the UK who donated her kidney to the journalist Mark Colvin. Its sense of human frailty and human generosity cut through in weird, divided times and touched audiences.

We continued the relished task of breaking down the homogeneity of our national arts culture. A good third of our season was led by artists and stories outside the cultural centre. We developed a double-strategy for this. On the one hand we pumped time and resources into new storytelling – Katie Beckett's *Which Way Home*, *Barbara* and *the Camp Dogs* by Ursula Yovich and Alana Valentine. And we gave existing shows a second chance – Future D. Fidel's *Prize Fighter* was given a new draft and a second production, and we brought back *Jasper Jones* and *The Dog/The Cat*. This strategy is good for artists, good for the Australian repertoire, and good for audiences.

For the first time in a very long time, perhaps ever, we had two American plays at the centre of the season. One, a dystopian light opera based on *The Simpsons*, of all things, which brought in eager new audiences in droves. The other, a classic American family drama with a queer twist, *Hir*, which gave Helen Thompson a role to relish, and introduced Kurt Pimblett, the first trans actor to play at Belvoir. These were both wild, original stories about the 21st century. You could put Lally Katz's *Atlantis* in the same group – all are tales of American dysfunction taking over the world,

and individuals finding mad, creative ways to outwit the horror. All three were celebrations of storytelling and imagination. Celebrations of theatre itself, really.

They weren't all new stories. The old stories (not pejorative) were both women's stories: Aphra Behn's *The Rover* and Ibsen's *Ghosts*. *The Rover* was a show of outright playfulness, and you can palpably feel the sudden appearance of a new account of womanhood in this play – the first by a professional woman playwright. Megan Wilding, Nikki Shiels and Taylor Ferguson owned the stage. *Ghosts*, on the other hand, is a restrained work that gradually fills until it bursts. Our production was exquisitely crafted. Pam Rabe was magnificent as Mrs Alving.

All in all? Stories about strong, difficult, unidealised women. A rich variety of shows – some formally adventurous, some adventurous in their content. A lot of Australian work – we're on a mission with new work (watch this space). A strong sense of the weirdness of the historical moment – the fear and confusion, the new kinds of families, the accumulation of historical rage, the sense that we have to think our way out of trouble.

We continued to rebuild our relationship with our audience without sugar-coating or popularising. We took artistic risks and pulled them off. We have pushed on with our recovery without shrinking the scope of our artistic work, without hiring fewer artists, without reducing our ambitions.

It was a good, rich year of theatre, in which we held our nerve.

I'd like to thank Chair Sam Meers for her unshakable support in her first year; Sue Donnelly for coming back home to Belvoir; all the staff of Belvoir, who work beyond their limits, especially this year between Executive Directors; and most of all the artists who held back nothing and kept the whole shebang alive for another year. Long may they reign.

Eamon



Tom Conroy & Pamela Rabe in *Ghosts*. Photo: Brett Boardman.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Sue Donnelly



It was with great delight that I returned to Belvoir in September, initially on a part-time basis, after an 11-year absence. The feeling was very much like 'returning home', except that someone

had come in and totally redecorated a number of rooms and I couldn't find the cups or plates. The company has both grown, and grown-up, in those intervening years and I pay tribute to my predecessor, Brenna Hobson, for steering the company through a great period of change and her determination in expanding Belvoir's horizon beyond Australia, thus cementing a truly international reputation.

I am thrilled to work again with Artistic Director, Eamon Flack, and with Sam Meers, Belvoir's energetic and enthusiastic Chair, along with all the other committed Board members. They work assiduously to support Belvoir's many activities.

The output of Belvoir is staggering for a relatively small company that punches well above its weight. When you review the scale and number of productions achieved, it is impressive. Fourteen different productions at Belvoir in 2017 and four tours, including one to London, resulted in over 135,000 people seeing one of our shows. Added to that is the diversity of both the work and the casting of performers.

Belvoir has never been shy to push boundaries and raise political and social issues on our stage, as well as promote artists from other cultures. Belvoir was at the forefront of supporting and presenting Indigenous work and is also a leader in bringing stories of cultural

and social diversity to the stage – with five productions in 2017. We are able to accomplish this through the developmental work we have always done which includes in-house creative developments as well as workshops with other organisations to inspire and develop new writers, creatives and performers.

Belvoir believes that the participation in, and appreciation of theatre is for all people. The quiet achiever at Belvoir, our exuberant Education team, continued to deliver outstanding drama workshops to schools throughout the state, with 2,700 students participating. A further 5,800 school students attended our productions, of whom just over 1,000 were supported through our Access Program which is fully funded through sponsorship and philanthropy.

Belvoir's famous Unwaged performances continued throughout 2017, thanks to support from our new official airline partner Virgin Australia Airlines. These free shows ensure that people from disadvantaged circumstances can also see first-class theatre.

A very big thanks to all our very generous donors and subscribers, our true believers, who continue to support the company so that we can provide access to our programs, develop new work and talent, and tell meaningful stories that delight, inspire and challenge us.

Finally I want to thank the wonderful Belvoir staff who work tirelessly in their pursuit of making Belvoir the best theatre company in Australia.

Sue



Elaine Crombie & Ursula Yovich in *Barbara and the Camp Dogs*. Photo: Daniel Boud.



2017 SEASON AND TOURS



Pacharo Mzembe, Gideon Mzembe & Kenneth Ransom. Photo: Brett Boardman.

PRIZE FIGHTER

2 – 22 January Upstairs

Statistics

Performances	18
Total Audience	6,050
Box Office Income	\$253,213.32

Written by
Future D. Fidel

Director
Todd MacDonald

Dramaturg
Chris Kohn

Designer
Bill Haycock

Lighting Designer
David Walters

Assistant Lighting Designer
Christine Felmingham

Composer
& Sound Designer
Felix Cross

Music Remix
Busty Beatz

Video Designer
optikal bloc

Movement
& Fight Director
Nigel Poulton

Stage Manager
Heather O'Keefe

Assistant Stage
Manager
Ariana O'Brien

With
Margi Brown-Ash
Thuso Lekwape
Gideon Mzembe
Pacharo Mzembe
Zindzi Okenyo
Kenneth Ransom

A La Boite Theatre
Company and Brisbane
Festival production in
association with Sydney
Festival

One of the most intelligent,
dramaturgically sound and surprisingly
uplifting plays I've seen in years. ★★★★★1/2

DAILY REVIEW

Prize Fighter is an early
contender for best new work
of the year. ★★★★★

TIMEOUT SYDNEY



Katie Beckett & Tony Briggs. Photo: Brett Boardman.

WHICH WAY HOME

11 January – 5 February Downstairs

Statistics

Performances	27
Total Audience	2,372
Box Office Income	\$82,102.67

Written by
Katie Beckett

Director
Rachael Maza

Dramaturg
Jane Bodie

Set & Costume Designer
Emily Barrie

Lighting Designer
Niklas Pajanti

Sound Designer
Mark Coles Smith

Creative Producer
Ben Graetz

Technical Assistant
Nick Glenn

Stage/Production Manager
Kallie Jayne Chambers

With
Katie Beckett
Tony Briggs

An ILBIJERRI
Theatre Company
production presented
in association with
Sydney Festival

Indigenous theatre at
Belvoir is supported
by The Balnaves
Foundation

Theatre exists to show us who we are, to remind us
of our collective dignity, humanity, and capacity for
empathy. *Which Way Home* delivers on all fronts. ★★★★★

TIMEOUT SYDNEY

...beautiful, intimate and
often very funny.

DAILY REVIEW



Tom Ballard. Photo: Richard Hedger.

TOM BALLARD: BOUNDLESS PLAINS TO SHARE

13 – 15 January Upstairs

Statistics	
Performances	4
Total Audience	1,305
Box Office Income	\$47,847.95

Written by
Tom Ballard

Director
Scott Edgar

With
Tom Ballard

Presented by the
Brian McCarthy
Moosehead Awards

Inspiring, intensely powerful, and laugh-out-loud hilarious, this show should be compulsory viewing for all Australians.

ARTSHUB

Brave, brutal and frankly brilliant comedy

THEATRE PRESS



Tom Conroy & Guy Simon. Photo: Jack Saltmaris.

JASPER JONES

25 January – 19 February Upstairs

Statistics	
Performances	30
Total Audience	9,713
Box Office Income	\$433,147.83

Based on the novel by
Craig Silvey

Adapted by
Kate Mulvany

Director
Anne-Louise Sarks

Set Designer
Michael Hankin

Costume Designer
Mel Page

Lighting Designer
Matt Scott

Composer & Sound Designer
Steve Toulmin

Fight Choreographer
Scott Witt

Choreographer
Sara Black

Indigenous Advisor
Jada Alberts

Stage Manager
Isabella Kerdijk

Assistant Stage Manager
Jennifer Parsonage

With
Kate Box
Tom Conroy
Steve Le Marquand
Matilda Ridgway
Guy Simon
Charles Wu

Thoroughly engaging and emotionally challenging – Belvoir’s best-selling production cements its credentials in this month’s return to stage. ★★★★★

TIMEOUT SYDNEY

[A] big fat, satisfying, thought-provoking, laugh-making, tear-jerking smash hit.

STAGE NOISE



Sarah Peirse & Peter Carroll. Photo: Brett Boardman.

MARK COLVIN'S KIDNEY

25 February – 2 April Upstairs

Statistics

Performances	41
Total Audience	11,098
Box Office Income	\$514,053.59

Written by
Tommy Murphy

Director
David Berthold

Set Designer
Michael Hankin

Costume Designer
Julie Lynch

Lighting Designer
Damien Cooper

Composer &
Sound Designer
Nate Edmondson

Projection Design
Vexran Productions

Movement Director
Scott Witt

Stage Manager
Luke McGettigan

Assistant Stage Manager
Keiren Smith

With
Peter Carroll
Kit Esuruoso
John Howard
Sarah Peirse
Christopher Stollery
Helen Thomson

Supported by Macquarie
Group Syndicate and
the Macquarie Group
Foundation

Murphy's exceptional play ... shouts about compassion and a courage that transcends the need for enemies. ★★★★★1/2

THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

...a powerful and engrossing story, told with clarity.

DAILY REVIEW



Xavier Samuel. Photo: Brett Boardman.

THE DOG / THE CAT

13 April – 7 May Upstairs

Statistics

Performances	25
Total Audience	7,455
Box Office Income	\$314,205.51

The Dog written by
Brendan Cowell

The Cat written by
Lally Katz

Directed by
Ralph Myers

Redirected by
Anthea Williams

Set Designer
Ralph Myers

Costume Designer
Mel Page

Lighting Designer
Damien Cooper

Composer &
Sound Designer
Stefan Gregory

Associate Composer &
Sound Designer
Riley McCullagh

Stage Manager
Isabella Kerdijk

Assistant Stage Manager
Katie Hankin

With
Sheridan Harbridge
Benedict Hardie
Xavier Samuel

Looking for a date-night icebreaker at the theatre? Swipe right, 'cos this is the one. ★★★★★

TIMEOUT SYDNEY

The hit rom-com double is back and it's as sweetly charming as ever. ★★★★★

LIMELIGHT MAGAZINE



Jacob Rajan. Photo: Robert Catto.

GURU OF CHAI

16 May – 4 June Downstairs

Statistics

Performances	23
Total Audience	1,912
Box Office Income	\$63,655.45

Written by
Jacob Rajan & Justin Lewis

Director
Justin Lewis

Dramaturg
Murray Edmond

Set & Costume Design
Concept
John Verryt

Lighting Designer
Cathy Knowsley

Composer & Sound Designer
David Ward

Musician
Adam Ogle

With
Jacob Rajan

**An Indian Ink Theatre
Company production**

For anyone interested in the art of storytelling, *Guru of Chai* is essential viewing. ★★★★★

TIMEOUT SYDNEY

Rajan tells the story with extraordinary clarity and warmth.

DAILY REVIEW



Jude Henshall, Brent Hill & Jacqy Phillips. Photo: Brett Broadman.

Mr BURNS

19 May – 4 June Upstairs (Belvoir) & Space Theatre
(State Theatre Company of South Australia)

Statistics

	Belvoir	State Theatre Company
Performances	42	22
Total Audience	12,448	3,701
Box Office Income	\$ 516,658.36	\$207,864

Written by
Anne Washburn

Score by
Michael Friedman

Lyrics by
Anne Washburn

Director
Imara Savage

Musical Director
Carol Young

Set & Costume Designer
Jonathon Oxlade

Lighting Designer
Chris Petridis

Sound Designer
Jeremy Silver

Choreographer
Lucas Jervies

Fight Choreographer
Scott Witt

Dialect Coach
Paige Walker

Stage Manager
Natalie Moir

Assistant Stage Manager
Vanessa Martin

With
**Paula Arundell
Mitchell Butel
Esther Hannaford
Jude Henshall
Brent Hill
Ezra Juanta
Jacqy Phillips**

**A co-production with
State Theatre Company
South Australia**

Mr Burns is almost certainly the most unusual, original and intelligent piece of writing to premiere on a Sydney stage this year. ★★★★★

DAILY REVIEW

Director Imara Savage, one of the sharpest talents on Australian stages, has created a production that crackles and burns. ★★★★★

THE GUARDIAN



Toby Schmitz. Photo: Anna Kucera.

THE ROVER

1 July – 6 August Upstairs

Statistics

Performances	40
Total Audience	11,213
Box Office Income	\$487,364.11

Written by
Aphra Behn

Director
Eamon Flack

Set & Costume Designer
Mel Page

Lighting Designer
Matt Scott

Composer &
Sound Designer
Steve Toulmin

Dramaturg
Charlotte Bradley

Choreographer
Cameron Mitchell

Movement Director
Scott Witt

Associate Designer
Chloe Greaves

Personal Assistant &
Access Support Worker
Kerry Stamell

Stage Manager
Luke McGettigan

Assistant Stage Manager
Jennifer Parsonage

With
Gareth Davies
Taylor Ferguson
Leon Ford
Nathan Lovejoy
Elizabeth Nabben
Toby Schmitz
Nikki Shiels
Kiruna Stamell
Andre de Vanny
Megan Wilding

Supported by the
Nelson Meers Foundation

This rollicking production of Aphra Behn's great Restoration comedy *The Rover*, directed by Eamon Flack, is enormous fun.

THE AUSTRALIAN



Helen Thomson & Greg Stone. Photo: Brett Boardman.

HIR

12 August – 10 September Upstairs

Statistics

Performances	32
Total Audience	8,329
Box Office Income	\$338,408.86

Written by
Taylor Mac

Director
Anthea Williams

Set & Costume Designer
Michael Hankin

Lighting Designer
Sian James-Holland

Composer & Sound
Designer
Steve Toulmin

Associate Artist
Lucky Price

Voice & Dialect Coach
Paige Walker

Movement Director
Scott Witt

Design Assistant
Jeremy Allen

Stage Manager
Isabella Kerdijk

Assistant Stage Manager
Keiren Smith

With
Kurt Pimblett
Greg Stone
Helen Thomson
Michael Whalley

Supported by Belvoir's
Creative Development
Fund

Hir is an unstoppable, overwhelming, genuinely exciting play. It's a family story for the 21st century, a riot of ideas, a socio-political tragicomedy. It's unmissable. ★★★★★

TIMEOUT SYDNEY

There are few productions that manage to be both as entertaining and thought-provoking as Belvoir's *Hir*. ★★★★★

DAILY REVIEW



Ralph McCubbin Howell. Photo: Brett Boardman.

THE BOOKBINDER

26 September – 8 October Downstairs

Statistics

Performances	23
Total Audience	1,763
Box Office Income	\$48,601.95

Based on a story by
Ralph McCubbin Howell & Hannah Smith

Written by
Ralph McCubbin Howell

Director & Designer
Hannah Smith

Composer & Sound Designer
Tane Upjohn-Beatson

With
Ralph McCubbin Howell

A Trick of the Light
Theatre production

Spellbinding storytelling at its purest and best

THEATRE REVIEW

...incredibly charming.

THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD



Pamela Rabe & Robert Menzies. Photo: Brett Boardman.

GHOSTS

16 September – 22 October Upstairs

Statistics

Performances	40
Total Audience	10,612
Box Office Income	\$467,529.26

Written by
Henrik Ibsen

Adapted & Directed by
Eamon Flack

Set Designer
Michael Hankin

Costume Designer
Julie Lynch

Lighting Designer
Nick Schlieper

Composer & Sound Designer
Stefan Gregory

Assistant Director
Carissa Licciardello

Stage Manager
Luke McGettigan

Assistant Stage Manager
Kaytlin Petrarca

With
Tom Conroy
Taylor Ferguson
Robert Menzies
Colin Moody
Pamela Rabe

Supported by the
Nelson Meers Foundation

This is a blisteringly contemporary play. ★★★★★

DAILY REVIEW

Pamela Rabe delivers an acting masterclass.

THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD



Amber McMahon & Lucia Mastrantone. Photo: Daniel Boud.

ATLANTIS

28 October – 26 November Upstairs

Statistics

Performances	33
Total Audience	7,256
Box Office Income	\$262,223.26

Written by Lally Katz	Dialect Coach Paige Walker	Amber McMahon Hazem Shammass Matthew Whittet
Director Rosemary Myers	Movement Director Sara Black	Supported by The Hive and The Honey Bs
Set & Costume Designer Jonathon Oxlade	Stage Manager Keiren Smith	
Lighting Designer Damien Cooper	Assistant Stage Manager Georgiane Deal	
Composer & Sound Designer Harry Covill	With Paula Arundell Lucia Mastrantone	

An enchanting, inventive and very funny production. ★★★★★

THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

A joyous epic of self-discovery with plenty of heart. ★★★★★

LIMELIGHT



Elaine Crombie & Ursula Yovich. Photo: Daniel Boud.

BARBARA AND THE CAMP DOGS

2 – 23 December Upstairs

Statistics

Performances	24
Total Audience	7,671
Box Office Income	\$325,575.17

Written by Ursula Yovich & Alana Valentine	Sound Designer Steve Toulmin	With Troy Brady Elaine Crombie Ursula Yovich
Director Leticia Cáceres	Musical Rehearsal Director Adm Ventoura	Musicians Jessica Dunn Musical Director & Bass Guitar Michelle Vincent Drums Debbie Yap Guitar
Songs by Alana Valentine, Ursula Yovich & Adm Ventoura	Stage Manager Luke McGettigan	Produced in association with Vicki Gordon Music Productions Pty Ltd
Set Designer Stephen Curtis	Assistant Stage Manager Cecilia Nelson	Indigenous theatre at Belvoir supported by The Balnaves Foundation
Costume Designer Chloe Greaves	Rehearsal Stage Manager Brooke Kiss	
Lighting Designer Karen Norris	Rehearsal Assistant Stage Manager Bronte Axiom	

Barbara and the Camp Dogs is a rare piece, one that slaps you in the face then brings you to your feet. Powerful stuff. ★★★★★

AUDREY JOURNAL

This is a wonderfully stirring show, funny and moving. It enriches the heart.

THE AUSTRALIAN



Michael Feast, Roger Sloman & Mike Grady. Photo: Tristram Kenton.

SEVENTEEN

The Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, UK 4 March – 8 April

Statistics

Performances	37
Total Audience	7,966

Written by
Matthew Whittet

Director
Anne-Louise Sarkis

Designer
Tom Scutt

Lighting Designer
Paule Constable

Sound Designer
Nick Manning

Movement Director
Imogen Knight

With
Sarah Ball
Michael Feast
Mike Grady
Diana Hardcastle
Margot Leicester

[A] striking portrait of youth. ★★★★★

THE GUARDIAN

Completely joyous.

THE STAGE



Matilda Ridgway & Tom Conroy. Photo: Jack Saltmaris.

JASPER JONES

Merrigong Theatre Company 22 – 25 February

Statistics

Performances	6
Total Audience	2,582

Civic Theatre Newcastle 1-4 March

Statistics

Performances	5
Total Audience	2,998

Based on the novel by
Craig Silvey

Adapted by
Kate Mulvany

Director
Anne-Louise Sarkis

Set Designer
Michael Hankin

Costume Designer
Mel Page

Lighting Designer
Matt Scott

Composer & Sound
Designer
Steve Toulmin

Fight Choreographer
Scott Witt

Choreographer
Sara Black

Indigenous Advisor
Jada Alberts

Stage Manager
Isabella Kerdijk

Assistant Stage Manager
Jennifer Parsonage

With
Kate Box
Tom Conroy
Steve Le Marquand
Matilda Ridgway
Guy Simon
Harry Tseng
(Civic Theatre Newcastle)
Hoa Xuande
(Merrigong Theatre
Company)



John Howard & Sarah Peirse. Photo: Brett Boardman.

MARK COLVIN'S KIDNEY

Lennox Theatre, Riverside Theatres 5-8 February

Statistics

Performances	5
Total Audience	671

Written by
Tommy Murphy

Director
David Berthold

Set Designer
Michael Hankin

Costume Designer
Julie Lynch

Lighting Designer
Damien Cooper

Composer &
Sound Designer
Nate Edmondson

Projection Design
Vexran Productions

Movement Director
Scott Witt

Stage Manager
Luke McGettigan

Assistant Stage Manager
Keiren Smith

With
Peter Carroll
Kit Esuruoso
John Howard
Sarah Peirse
Christopher Stollery
Helen Thomson



Colin Friels. Photo: Brett Broadman.

FAITH HEALER

Melbourne Theatre Company 4 March – 8 April

Statistics

Performances	40
Total Audience	16,835

Written by
Brian Friel

Director
Judy Davis

Set Designer
Brian Thomson

Costume Designer
Tess Schofield

Lighting Designer
Verity Hampson

Associate Lighting
Designer
Daniel Barber

Composer & Sound
Designer
Paul Charlier

Stage Manager
Whitney McNamara

Assistant Stage Manager
Roxzan Bowes

With
Paul Blackwell
Colin Friels
Alison Whyte

...rich, poised performances that excavate all the beauty and brutality of this modern Irish classic. ★★★★★

THE AGE

Theatre this fine, this pulsing and piteous, is worth seeing in anyone's language.

TIMEOUT MELBOURNE



Katie Beckett in *Which Way Home*. Photo: Brett Boardman.

BELVOIR 2017 IN REVIEW

THEATRICALITY. VARIETY OF LIFE. FAITH IN HUMANITY.

Belvoir is a theatre company on a side street in Surry Hills, Sydney. We share our street with a park and a public housing estate, and our theatre is in an old industrial building. It has been, at various times, a garage, a sauce factory, and the Nimrod Theatre. When the theatre was threatened with redevelopment in 1984, over 600 people formed a syndicate to buy the building and save the theatre.

More than 30 years later, Belvoir St Theatre continues to be home to one of Australia's most celebrated theatre companies.

Belvoir is a traditional home for the great old crafts of acting and storytelling in Australian theatre. It is a platform for voices that won't otherwise be heard. And it is a gathering of outspoken ideals. In short: theatricality, variety of life, and faith in humanity.

Audiences remember many landmark productions including *The Drover's Wife*, *Angels in America*, *Brothers Wreck*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Neighbourhood Watch*, *The Wild Duck*, *Medea*, *The Diary of a Madman*, *Death of a Salesman*, *The Blind Giant is Dancing*, *Hamlet*, *Cloudstreet*, *Aliwa*, *The Book of Everything*, *Keating!*, *The Exile Trilogy*, *Exit the King*, *The Sapphires*, *The Rover*, *Faith Healer* and many more.

Today, under Artistic Director Eamon Flack and Executive Director Sue Donnelly, Belvoir tours nationally and internationally, and continues to create its own brand of rough magic for new generations of audiences.

Belvoir receives government support for its activities from the Federal Government through the Major Performing Arts Board of the Australia Council and the state government through Create NSW.

OUR VISION

To create work that questions and affirms all aspects of our culture, to extend and develop our artists and engage audiences with experiences of imaginative daring and emotional depth.

OUR GOALS

GOAL 1: CREATE EXCEPTIONAL THEATRE

GOAL 2: INSPIRE, EXCITE AND GROW BELVOIR'S AUDIENCE

GOAL 3: BE A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE COMPANY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation who are the traditional custodians of the land on which Belvoir St Theatre is built. We also pay respect to the elders past and present.

GOAL 1: CREATE EXCEPTIONAL THEATRE

Create and develop new and classic work

Provide the best possible environment for artists

Share the work broadly

2017 was a year that welcomed new audiences to Belvoir with bold new productions, as well as consolidating our reputation for excellence with our loyal audience.

The Upstairs programming included four new Australian works and two revivals of successful Australian productions, two cutting edge new international works, new interpretations of two thorny yet vital classics, and collaborations with both La Boite and State Theatre Company of South Australia. The Downstairs Theatre programming featured an internationally acclaimed work from Indian Ink, alongside a nationally celebrated children's work, a politically pointed comedy and a heartfelt Indigenous story about family.

The Artistic and Programming team continued to work across 2017 preparing the 2017/18 seasons for production, including several developments on *Barbara and the Camp Dogs* and *Atlantis*, along with two readings of *The Sugar House* and a full week of development on *An Enemy of the People* for 2018. The team continued to work on a large-scale adaptation of a classic Australian novel, led by Eamon Flack. 2016 Parsons Award Winners Jo Turner, Holly Austin and Adriano Cappelletta, completed a two-week exploration of the first draft of their puppet-driven, family epic *Under The Same Sky*.

Belvoir currently has 11 writers under various stages of commission, including Tommy Murphy, Julia Rose-Lewis, Ursula Yovich and Steve Rogers, as well

as several ongoing commitments to develop work with companies including CuriousWorks. *A Counting and Cracking* is in the final stages of development. This large-scale work, by S. Shakthidharan, is about post-colonialism, civic society and emigration in Sri Lanka and Australia. It is set to be directed by Belvoir Artistic Director, Eamon Flack, in the 2019 season.

2017 saw Belvoir partner with the Sydney Writers' Festival and The Wheeler Centre to present a series of hybrid 'conversation' events with a performative Belvoir twist in the second half of the year. *Monday Conversations*, led by hosts Benjamin Law and Kate Jynx, featured panellists including Claudia Karvan, Wendy Harmer, Julian Burnside, Kat Armstrong, Tim Rogers, as well as Belvoir favourites Gareth Davies, Megan Wilding and Nikki Shiels. The events traversed a range of topics including performance anxiety, alcohol, justice and anaesthesia, all aimed to centre Belvoir as a place for the rigorous discussion of challenging topics beyond our theatrical presentations.

Through our partnership with dance-theatre company Force Majeure, we offered a series of skills development workshops to more than 60 artists from culturally diverse backgrounds. A smaller group of 16 actors participated in a secondary workshop, and the relationship between our companies and artists will form the basis for a future development in 2018.

In 2017, Belvoir hosted a year-long artist 'workshop', featuring 14 emerging practitioners from a variety of backgrounds including directors, actors, designers, writers and theatre-makers, with a strong representation of western Sydney artists. Functioning as a series of skills sharing events, collaborative exchanges and salon-esque gatherings, the company provided free rehearsal space where possible, and the artists were encouraged to explore and expand



Amber McMahon & Lucia Mastrantone in *Atlantis*. Photo: Daniel Boud.



Sarah Peirse in *Mark Colvins Kidney*. Photo: Brett Boardman.

GOAL 1: CREATE EXCEPTIONAL THEATRE CONTINUED...

their creative practice. This initiative informed much of the planning for a new independent program, which will be rolled out in 2018.

Now in its sixth year, the Balnaves Foundation's Indigenous Playwright's Award continued to gain momentum as the leading Indigenous playwriting award in the country with 16 applicants (four times more than the previous year). This year Indigenous judges Eva Grace Mullally and Isaac Drandich, joined Anthea Williams and Tom Wright to assess the largest and strongest pool of candidates in the award's history, with Megan Wilding the 2017 recipient.

Belvoir's Parson's fellowship was awarded to Emme Hoy, who emerged successful from a pool of over 30 strong candidates. The fellowship was awarded after a rousing memorial lecture delivered by Australia's leading lighting designer Nick Schlieper who examined the state of arts funding in Australia and challenged us to consider a world without subsidy.

A total of 5,756 students and their teachers attended one of the 17 schools' or evening performances of Belvoir productions, both in our Upstairs and Downstairs Theatres. Students came from government and non-government, local schools and schools in regional NSW and the ACT. Of these, 1,009 attended through our Priority Schools Program – a free ticket program, designed to make Belvoir's work accessible to schools identified as having the majority of students from a low socio-economic background or geographically remote. Schools ranged from south-west and western Sydney, to regional NSW. Eight students from Woodenbong Central School travelled 1632 kilometres return to see *Jasper Jones*!

In 2017, 268 students and their teachers participated in our Theatre Enrichment Program – a fully subsidised program

offered to students at government high schools in western and south-western Sydney and regional NSW, attending a performance of *Mr Burns* or *Atlantis*. Belvoir also delivered 28 workshops at 19 different high schools, reaching 528 students at schools.

Belvoir's Youth Express, an outreach program for at-risk young people, is now in its 13th year. The program saw more than 60 young people participate in workshops, with 22 young people performing on stage in the Downstairs Theatre, including a 16-week program of drama workshops. Youth Express also ran a series of drama workshops at the Kool Kids Club, run by Weave Youth and Community Services in Maroubra, where more than 85 per cent of the children identify as Aboriginal.

We also engaged with our much younger audience members in 2017. Belvoir's season of *The Bookbinder* in the Downstairs Theatre during the September school holidays gave us the chance to try two new initiatives. Belvoir's Education team ran art activities in the foyer after each matinee performance of *The Bookbinder*. Children's author and illustrator Tina Matthews taught 217 children to make and bind their own books. This event was an outstanding success, with overwhelmingly positive feedback, one participant saying, "The after-show craft activities were such a bonus and make me want to return".

The other new initiative was a partnership with the Story Squad for our first ever school holiday program. Held over two days, it was a creative writing workshop for children aged 9 to 12 in our Downstairs Rehearsal Room. These two day-long school holiday workshops were fully booked, with 20 children attending each workshop.

Students continue to access Belvoir's history and past productions. In 2017, 69 students went on backstage tours and 509

GOAL 1: CREATE EXCEPTIONAL THEATRE CONTINUED...

students watched an archival recording of one of Belvoir's productions. Popular recordings included *Stolen*, *Parramatta Girls*, *Neighbourhood Watch* and *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* – all set texts on the HSC Drama syllabus.

Belvoir offers young people the opportunity to better engage with our company through work experience. Throughout the year we welcomed 15 high school students of whom 11 were Year 10 students completing one week of work experience, and four students completed a work placement as part of their Vocational Education and Training Entertainment Certificate.

In addition to programs specifically designed for students, two professional development workshops were held for teachers. These full-day weekend workshops, with 26 teachers attending, are a great way for Belvoir to meet with educators face-to-face to learn about how we can better support their teaching. Topics included Teaching Group Devising, and Teaching Costume Design. Our tutors shared their professional experience and processes with teachers, and explored approaches to working with students through practical activities.

Now more than 20 years old, Belvoir's Unwaged Performance program continues to attract a wide range of theatre lovers from across Sydney. Unwaged members of the community are invited to attend a Thursday matinee performance of each Upstairs production in our season. Three hundred and twenty tickets are available to people holding pensioner, health care, veterans' affairs, MEAA or equity cards.

This program is a vital part of Belvoir's commitment to providing access to quality theatre for all people, regardless of their financial status.

Belvoir fostered numerous partnerships with other arts organisations in 2017, including performances of *Prize Fighter* as part of Sydney Festival, *Jasper Jones* touring to both Newcastle and Wollongong, and 40 performance of *Faith Healer* at Melbourne Theatre Company.

Internationally, Belvoir further established its reputation as one of Australia's most innovative and acclaimed theatre companies with performances of *Seventeen* at the Lyric Theatre in London.



Taylor Ferguson & Toby Schmitz in *The Rover*. Photo: Brett Boardman.

GOAL 2: INSPIRE, EXCITE AND GROW BELVOIR'S AUDIENCE

Ensure every interaction with an audience member is positive

Rebuild audience confidence

Belvoir welcomed 99,197 people to our theatre in Surry Hills in 2017, and more than 40,000 to our touring productions and education workshops across Australia, reaching a total of approximately 140,000 people throughout the year.

Whilst our subscriptions were slightly down with 5,632 people subscribing to Belvoir's 2017 season, overall ticket sales were up by three per cent with 79,612 tickets sold.

The success of Belvoir has always been based upon its work. Productions such as *Mr Burns: A Post-Electric Play* and *Mark Colvin's Kidney* presented opportunities to reach out to people who may not regularly attend the theatre – 30 per cent of the audience for *Mr Burns* were new to Belvoir and 17 per cent for *Mark Colvin's Kidney*. Belvoir established relationships with organisations such as Donate Life, World Kidney Day and the ABC for *Mark Colvin's Kidney* and connected with *The Simpsons'* pop-culture fan clubs for *Mr Burns* to extend our marketing reach and engage with contemporary issues and new audiences.

Eamon Flack directed new adaptations of classics, *The Rover* and *Ghosts*, with both these productions delighting the Belvoir heartland, while the award-winning *Hir* captivated a younger audience with its inclusion of trans-gender issues, providing an opportunity to discuss the importance of inclusion and representation in the theatre.

Lally Katz's *Atlantis* positioned itself on female driven issues – fertility, partnerships, family pressures and the search for identity. While our final play

for the year, *Barbara and the Camp Dogs*, with its unique combination of dialogue and music, explored the female, Indigenous perspective and filled the theatre nightly, including standing ovations after every performance.

We welcomed another group of new audience members to Belvoir in 2017 through our inaugural Young Belvoir Theatre Club. Forty-five high school students from Years 10 to 12 joined the Club, which met in the Green Room on six Wednesday evenings. At each meeting a member of the Belvoir staff or an associated artist spoke to the group, after which they attended the 6.30pm performance. Members gathered in the foyer after the show with the cast joining them, where possible, for an informal chat about the production and the industry. The Club aims to foster a culture of independent, ongoing theatre attendance among young people, while also encouraging members' families and friends to attend Belvoir shows – 107 additional discounted tickets were sold through club members. Club members came from all over the Sydney metropolitan area, as well as two from regional NSW – Goulburn and Maitland.

We strengthened our partnership with Currency Press in 2017, presenting full scripts in five of our Upstairs theatre programs. This deluxe publication enhances audience enjoyment of the production, allowing them to revisit their experience at Belvoir well beyond the performance.

We made significant bespoke enhancements to our online ticketing portal, TNEW, throughout 2017 which increased our ability to offer more choice to our customers when purchasing subscription packages, gift vouchers as well as smoothing the ticketing process. These system enhancements have seen our Tessitura online products recognised as an industry leader in the Tessitura network.



Kurt Pimblett & Michael Whalley in *Hir*. Photo: Brett Boardman.



Jude Henshall in *Mr Burns*. Photo: Brett Boardman.

GOAL 2: INSPIRE, EXCITE AND GROW BELVOIR'S AUDIENCE CONTINUED...

The combination of more targeted outdoor and improved digital marketing, in combination with our increasingly sophisticated social media marketing allowed us to build more data on our audience's needs and interests and use this to inform decisions on various issues including pricing, show times, food and beverage.

The enhancement of Belvoir's Customer Service team was a direct response to patron feedback. The team is responsible for delivering a positive experience to all of Belvoir's audiences and guests, whether that is purchasing tickets, attending a performance, making enquiries at the office, spending time in the foyer or at the bar, or attending an event or corporate hire. The focus is on the whole customer experience rather than sections of it.

Belvoir's Front of House staff play a vital role in managing our guests' experience. In addition to providing hospitality in the foyer, the theatre and at events, they also act as first aid wardens and workplace health and safety officers.

In 2017, Belvoir continued to promote our theatre and warehouse space as a destination rather than just a location before a show. Belvoir has expanded its premium food and beverage options, introducing new partners Archie Rose and Handpicked Wines, focussing on working with small local businesses, demonstrating Belvoir's commitment to engaging with and supporting our community. We regularly refresh the menu with an interesting and diverse range of food and drink, and plans are ongoing to reinvigorate the space long-term.

Social media continues to be a key communications tool and our subscriber numbers on Facebook, our key networking tool, increased by 10 per cent (to 27,584), and on Instagram to

over 10,000. We also increased our engagement and performance within Facebook through organic and paid reach, reactions, comments and shares.

In 2017, through the Google Grant program, the number of sessions on our website increased to 38,475. This also improved the number of new sessions on the Belvoir site by 14 per cent, the number of pages visited per session by 38 per cent and the number of new users by over 16 per cent.

To develop our season imagery for 2017, we commissioned pictures that were evocative of the energy and new ideas present in each of our plays, extending the visual language of previous seasons into something that was at once reflective of Artistic Director Eamon Flack's vision, and the strong Belvoir brand. The result was a season identity that was instantly recognisable in Sydney's performance landscape and contributed to a strong result in our single ticket campaigns across the year.

We continued to deepen and enhance our digital marketing efforts in 2017, working to optimise our online targeting and reporting. We made several challenging technical advancements in 2017, building new capacity to track our customer journey across the internet; gain new levels of insight into their online behaviour; apply those insights to our marketing strategies; and then accurately report on the success of those strategies moving forward.

GOAL 3: BE A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE COMPANY

Ensure financial stability

Ensure staff satisfaction

A theatre company relies on a mix of income generators including box office, grants, commercial revenue, philanthropy and sponsorship. Box office generated in 2017 was healthy and six per cent above 2016, partly attributed to the use of dynamic pricing on more popular shows. The year was challenging in other areas including venue hire and costs associated with set building, both internal and external, and Board and staff turnover. The end result was a deficit of \$350,000. However, the Board and management are confident this can be turned around in 2018 due to new management and systems, implemented from October 2017, and which will be consolidated in 2018.

Belvoir has an ambitious fundraising target of 20 per cent of our turnover. This ensures creative development and commissions new works. And our extensive Education program supports the overall vision of the company. In 2017 Belvoir generated \$2 million through private sector gifts, sponsorship and grants which was a two per cent decrease on 2016 fundraising due to a smaller number of activities undertaken in 2017. However, there was an overall increase of 27 per cent in gifts from Trusts and Foundations.

In June, Belvoir's Rehearsal Room was transformed into a 1920s 'den of iniquity' for our annual fundraising event – this time in the form of a old fashioned Speakeasy. This evening introduced new faces to Belvoir and was strongly supported by Belvoir artists who donated their time, adding another dimension of vibrancy to the evening.

Our Rehearsal Room events generated

many new supporters to Belvoir. Held across seven productions throughout the year, visitors to the Rehearsal Room were able to see first-hand how a show is transformed from page to stage.

We rely on the generous support of our donors, many of whom have been part of the Belvoir family since its inception. Our philanthropic programs, including the B Keepers, Creative Development Fund and Education, continued to flourish in 2017, and we expanded this ever-growing list with two new donor initiatives.

The Balnaves Foundation, which supports Belvoir's presentation of the best Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander work, is our most significant foundation supporter. Their long-term support, including The Balnaves Foundation Indigenous Playwright's Award (won by Megan Wilding in 2017), has ensured these Australian stories are heard.

Belvoir also received generous project grants from the Gandevia Foundation, The Greatorex Foundation, the Copyright Agency Cultural Fund, Teen Spirit Charitable Foundation, Macquarie Foundation and the Nelson Meers Foundation.

We were also fortunate to acquire the support of two private family foundations for two artistic positions at the theatre in 2017 – an Assistant Director on *Ghosts* and the creation of a new fellowship.

Six new partnerships were formed in 2017: Virgin Australia Airlines joined as our Official Airline; Formaggi Ocello, Zeus Street Greek, Handpicked Wines and Archie Rose came on board as hospitality partners; Concrete Playground became our media partner; and Egon Zehnder is now a supporting partner.

2017 saw an increase of more than \$100,000 in revenue generated through bar and food sales, whereas theatre and venue rental revenue decreased by



Ursula Yovich in *Barbara and the Camp Dogs*. Photo: Daniel Boud.



Mitchell Butel in *Mr Burns*. Photo: Brett Boardman.

GOAL 3: BE A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE COMPANY CONTINUED...

almost 25 per cent. The decrease was partly due to increased use of venues for creative developments, readings and rehearsals by Belvoir and also small to medium companies and independent artists, who access the spaces at minimal cost. In 2017 Belvoir provided support to 47 artists/companies for periods ranging from one day to four weeks.

There were significant staff changes in 2017 with four long term employees departing to pursue other opportunities: Executive Director, Brenna Hobson, Artistic Administrator, John Woodland, IT & Operations Manager, Jan Goldfedder and Associate Director – New Work, Anthea Williams. In October, Sue Donnelly, was appointed as Executive Director.

Belvoir provides opportunities for its staff to attend a variety of relevant training and conferences throughout the year to ensure that staff are familiar with industry trends and remain engaged in their roles within the organisation. Belvoir also actively encourages its employees to work with line managers on career development, again, promoting staff satisfaction.

In 2017, several staff members attended a two-day Tessitura workshop in Melbourne. While other Belvoir employees attended the National Play Festival, undertook training at St John Ambulance Australia for occupational health and safety compliance, as well as our front of house staff updating their responsible service of alcohol training at the Hospitality Institute of Australasia.

Workplace health and safety is a huge issue at all theatre companies and in late 2017 we revised the processes we have for supervising this. Deputy Executive Director, Aaron Beach, was appointed Chair of the Workplace Health and Safety Committee committee and has instituted a new system of accountability.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Belvoir's mission is to create exceptional theatre; inspire, excite and grow its audiences; and be a strong and sustainable company.

We believe that excellence in corporate governance is essential for the longterm performance and sustainability of our company and the delivery of our strategy. This Corporate Governance Statement outlines Belvoir's corporate governance practices and addresses the Essential Governance Practice Principles published and monitored by the Australia Council for the Arts. These principles are based on recommendations published by the ASX Corporate Governance Council.

PRINCIPLE 1: LAY SOLID FOUNDATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT

As a Board, we believe that sustainability encompasses a broad range of matters including community engagement, people and workplace, responsibility to the sector and its participants, corporate responsibility and environmental management. Our governance framework is predicated upon these philosophies.

Throughout 2017, we reviewed the company's governance model to provide greater clarity over the roles and responsibilities of management and the Board and to improve governance efficiency and effectiveness.

In the latter half of 2017, a new Executive Director, Sue Donnelly, was recruited after a diligent and transparent search process, using Egon Zehnder as the company's pro bono executive search firm. Since her appointment, Ms Donnelly, with the support of the Board, has restructured her management team to improve accountability and focus.

PRINCIPLE 2: STRUCTURE THE BOARD TO ADD VALUE

In 2017, the Board continued to operate in line with the principles and practices outlined in Belvoir's Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020.

A revised Board Charter was introduced in 2017, setting out the duties and responsibilities of the Board with regard to Belvoir's strategy development, operations oversight, and risk and compliance monitoring.

The Board now has four committees to assist in the execution of its responsibilities. In 2017, the Board enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing committee structure (Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and Development Committee) by creating two new committees, an Audience Engagement Committee and a Nominations & Governance Committee.

The committees each consist of at least three non-executive directors and focus on different areas, making recommendations or decisions as necessary. Each committee has its own chair, charter, and annual program and meets at least four times per year.

The Board regularly reviews the membership of its committees, particularly as new directors join the Board, to ensure they continue to have the optimum mix of skills and experience to support the Board. Periodic changes to committee appointments allow directors to make different contributions to the Board throughout their tenure.

Belvoir is committed to having a Board of appropriate size, diversity and commitment to effectively acquit its responsibilities and duties. Evaluation of the Board is undertaken on an annual basis to ensure its continued effective support of the company.

The Nominations & Governance Committee is responsible for ensuring the Board comprises directors who collectively have the relevant experience, knowledge, diversity and skills required to effectively support Belvoir in the execution of its strategy. To assist in ensuring Belvoir maintains the optimum mix of directors, the Nominations & Governance Committee and Board implemented a skills matrix in 2017 which identifies the skills and experience needed to support Belvoir in achieving its strategic objectives. The skills matrix is one of several important tools when considering potential director candidates.

All key areas in the skills matrix are well represented on the Board as a whole. Belvoir's Board of Directors have a range of capabilities and experiences including theatre administration, creative development and artistic excellence, finance and accounting, law, business, human resources, strategy and marketing. Their skills and expertise are outlined in their biographies, published in the Annual Financial Report and on our website.

In 2017, the Board's skills and experience were enhanced with the appointments of Patty Akopiantz, Michael Lynch AO CBE and new Executive Director Sue Donnelly. Patty brings deep experience as a professional company director on many boards, including Ramsay Healthcare. Michael is regarded as one of the country's leading arts administrators with national and international experience running large arts organisations (Sydney Opera House, Southbank UK, West Kowloon Cultural Precinct). Sue is one of the most experienced and successful Theatre Executive Directors having run Queensland Theatre Company for the last six years and Belvoir for two years in 2004-06. These appointments underline the integrity and strength of the Board's nomination and succession planning processes.

In 2017, a Board Induction program was also introduced for new directors.

PRINCIPLE 3: ACT ETHICALLY AND RESPONSIBLY

We know that every decision we make has an impact, not only on the long-term success of our business and creative output but also on our staff, creative teams, business partners, audience members and stakeholders. We are committed to acting with professionalism, honesty and integrity so all our stakeholders know they can trust us to do the right thing.

Belvoir is committed to creating an ethical and responsible workplace culture. The attitudes, values and behaviours articulated in our Strategic Plan are those that we bring to our day-to-day operations. Belvoir recognises that a sound workplace culture, which is embraced by the Board and the leadership team, drives the right behaviour and conduct within an organisation. Belvoir is committed to ensuring an ethical and responsible culture forms part of its decision-making framework, and to monitoring its culture to keep pace with community expectations.

We work hard to ensure our workplace culture provides an avenue for our people to report suspected unethical, illegal or improper behaviour. Belvoir has an objective, independent and confidential process for reporting and investigating actual, suspected or anticipated improprieties.

In 2017, we introduced a Company Code of Conduct which articulates our values and behaviours and is supported by our Employee Policies. The Belvoir Code of Conduct is signed by all Board members, staff and contractors.

Belvoir is committed to providing a workplace where all staff are able to work free from unlawful discrimination, bullying and/or sexual harassment. The company is part of the Confederation of Australian State Theatres (CAST)

and has adopted the National Code of Behaviour which specifically addresses discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment. By upholding a consistent industry-wide standard, Belvoir can work alongside the other state theatre companies to eradicate sexual harassment and bullying in the workplace and ensure we move forward as a collective, safe and supportive industry.

PRINCIPLE 4: PROMOTE DIVERSITY

Belvoir is committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse workplace, including but not limited to gender, age, ethnicity, disability and cultural background. The company's policies promote this culture.

Belvoir ensures fair and open recruitment and selection practices at all levels of the organisation. No form of workplace discrimination, harassment, vilification or victimisation is tolerated.

Gender equality is a clear priority and women hold 40 per cent of Belvoir Board (including Chair and deputy chair) and 63 per cent senior executive positions. We remain committed to increasing gender representation at all levels and to a range of broader inclusion and diversity goals and initiatives. Belvoir is also committed to diversity in its storytelling, particularly stories of women and immigrants.

We value different ways of thinking, and everyone is encouraged to share their thoughts and experiences to deliver better business decisions and solutions. We believe that an inclusive and diverse workplace delivers better results for our employees, stakeholders, business partners and communities, both on and off the stage.

PRINCIPLE 5: SAFEGUARD INTEGRITY IN FINANCIAL REPORTING

We are committed to ensuring the long term financial sustainability of the company.

One of the goals of the Belvoir Board is to grow and maintain the financial reserves underpinning the company's future endeavours. The Board's Finance, Audit and Risk Sub-Committee, chaired by Board member Peter Wilson, meets eight times annually to:

- Review the annual budget and monthly accounts and forecasts
- Review all financial reports and statements in the statutory accounts, and recommend actions to the Board
- Monitor and review the reliability of financial reporting
- Assess the company's risk management and investment policy

In 2017, Belvoir restructured the finance department and strengthened the internal accounting and control systems to ensure more timely and accurate reporting of performance. A review of accounting packages was also undertaken.

PRINCIPLE 6: ENGAGE WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The Belvoir Board recognises and respects the legitimate interests of the many stakeholders and meets regularly with our funding stakeholders. Belvoir welcomes the opportunity to meet with our shareholders and encourages them to join us for our annual general meeting each year. We are in regular dialogue with our partners, donors and sponsors, who are listed and recognised on season programs and in company marketing material. Belvoir has highly developed social media and online communication to support all audience and stakeholder engagement.

PRINCIPLE 7: RECOGNISE AND MANAGE RISK

We recognise that risk is inherent in our business. The Board values effective risk management as fundamental to Belvoir's long-term sustainability and reputation. The Board and Management believe that effective risk management requires a risk-aware culture amongst all employees, and in 2017, a Risk Management Framework was introduced to further embed risk awareness into Belvoir's broader culture and decision making. The Risk Management Framework articulates how Belvoir identifies, measures, monitors and optimises risks, and the amount and nature of risk Belvoir is willing to accept in the pursuit of its strategic and creative objectives.

A Situational Analysis is included in Belvoir's five-year Strategic Plan, which identifies the company's operational strengths and opportunities versus weaknesses and threats.

The Board's oversight, review and monitoring of the effectiveness of Belvoir's risk management is supported by management and recommendations made by the Finance, Audit and Risk Sub-Committee.

PRINCIPLE 8: REMUNERATE FAIRLY AND RESPONSIBLY

The Nominations and Governance Committee, reporting to the Board, approves remuneration arrangements for the Executive Director and the Artistic Director who are co-CEOs, and reviews remuneration strategies with reference to both performance and industry standards on an annual basis. Base salary levels and any increments are determined by experience, skills, marketplace considerations and industry comparisons.

In 2017, we commenced a review of all contracts and terms of employment to ensure consistency and fairness.

Non-executive directors are volunteers and receive no compensation for their work. The Artistic Director and artists on the Board may receive payment from the company for creative work (eg performing in a production).

COMPLIANCE:

We take seriously our responsibilities to all our stakeholders, including our employees, business partners, audience members and the broader community and place great importance on maintaining the highest standards of governance. This corporate governance statement is up to date as at publication date and has been approved by the Board.



Sam Meers
Chair

AWARDS

Belvoir won nine industry awards in 2017

Sydney Theatre Awards

Best Mainstage Production
Hir

Best Direction of a Mainstage Production
Anthea Williams (Hir)

Best Female Actor in a Supporting Role in a Mainstage Production
Elaine Crombie (Barbara and the Camp Dogs)

Best Stage Design of a Mainstage Production
Michael Hankin (Hir)

Best Costume Design of a Mainstage Production
Jonathon Oxlade (Mr Burns)

Helpmann Awards (awarded in May for the 2016 Season)

Best Direction of a Play
Leticia Cáceres (The Drover's Wife)

Best Male Actor in a Play
Mark Coles Smith (The Drover's Wife)

Best Play
The Drover's Wife

Best New Australian Work
The Drover's Wife, Leah Purcell

Helen Thomson in *Hir*. Photo: Brett Boradman.

BOARD AND STAFF

BELVOIR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Patty Akopiantz
(appointed 07.02.17)
Anne Britton
(resigned 28.05.17)
Mitchell Butel
Andrew Cameron AM
(resigned 28.05.17)
Luke Carroll
Sue Donnelly
(appointed 30.10.17)
Tracey Driver
Eamon Flack
Brenna Hobson
(resigned 28.05.17)
Ian Learmonth
Michael Lynch AO CBE
(appointed 08.05.17)
Samantha Meers
Peter Wilson

ARTISTIC & PROGRAMMING

Artistic Director
Eamon Flack
Executive Director
Brenna Hobson
(resigned 28.05.17)
Sue Donnelly (appointed 30.10.17)
Artistic Associates
Tom Wright
Associate Director – New Work
Anthea Williams (resigned 17.11.17)
Associate Producer
Dom Mercer
Associate Artist
Nell Ranney
Tessa Leong (01.05.17 – 21.12.17)

ADMINISTRATION

Acting Company Manager
Matt Rossi (03.07.17 – 10.11.17)
Artistic Administrator
John Woodland
(resigned 05.05.17)
Office Manager
Jessica Vincent

EDUCATION

Education Manager
Jane May
Education Coordinator
Simone Evans
(resigned 06.08.17)
Sharon Zeeman
(appointed 31.07.17)

FINANCE & OPERATIONS

Company Accountant
Komal Rabadiya (on leave 06.09.17)
Barbara Lewis (Acting)
(appointed 13.06.17)
Acting Finance Manager
Shyleja Paul (appointed 16.11.17)
Accounts Administrator
Susan Jack (resigned 23.11.17)
IT & Operations Manager
Jan S. Goldfeder (resigned 31.05.17)
Venue Hire Manager
Caitlin Porter

MARKETING

Head of Marketing
Amy Goodhew
Marketing Coordinator
Georgia Goode
Communications Coordinator
Cara Nash

DEVELOPMENT

Deputy Executive Director & Head of Development
Nathan Bennett (resigned 11.01.17)
Aaron Beach (appointed 27.02.17)
Philanthropy Managers
Joanna Maunder
Liz Tomkinson
Development Coordinator
Kseniia Grishilova

PRODUCTION

Head of Production
Sally Withnell
Technical Manager
William Jacobs
(resigned 03.03.17)
Aiden Brennan
(appointed 16.02.17)
Deputy Production Manager
Roxzan Bowes
(appointed 23.01.17)
Production Coordinator
Eliza Maunsell (resigned 09.06.17)
Senior Technician
Raine Paul
Resident Stage Manager
Luke McGettigan
Construction & Staging Assistant
Brydie Ryan

Construction Manager
Penny Angrick

Costume Coordinator
Judy Tanner

Commercial Business Manager
Simon Boyd
Brett Wilbe

FRONT OF HOUSE

Front of House Manager
Ohmeed Ahi (resigned 31.03.17)
Scott Pirlo (acting)
Assistant Front of House Manager
Luke Martin (acting)

Front of House Assistants
Lorena Arancibia, Michael Becker,
Alison Benstead, Stella Encel,
Michael Gosden, Felix Grech,
William Hickey, Robert Johnson,
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Mitchell Parham, Cecelia Peters,
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Emma White

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We would like to acknowledge Cajetan Mula, Len Armfield and Geoffrey Scharer. They will always be remembered for their generosity to Belvoir.

We also thank our Life Members, who have made outstanding contributions to Belvoir over more than thirty years. They have changed the course of the company and are now ingrained in its fabric: Neil Armfield AO, Neil Balnaves AO, Andrew Cameron AM, David Gonski AC, Rachel Healy, Louise Herron AM, Sue Hill, Geoffrey Rush AC, Orli Wargon OAM and Chris Westwood.

These people and foundations supported the redevelopment of Belvoir St Theatre and purchase of our warehouse.

Andrew & Cathy Cameron
(refurbishment of theatre & warehouse)

Russell Crowe
(Downstairs theatre &
purchase of warehouse)

The Gonski Foundation
& The Nelson Meers Foundation
(Gonski Meers Foyer)

Andrew & Wendy Hamlin
(Brenna's office)

Hal Herron
(The Hal Bar)

Geoffrey Rush
(redevelopment of theatre)

Fred Street AM
(Upstairs dressing room)



Lally Katz in *Atlantis*.



Robert Menzies in *Ghosts*.

IN THE REHEARSAL ROOM



Thuso Lekwape in *Prize Fighter*.



Mr Burns.
Photos: Brett Broadman.



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For more information on partnership opportunities please contact our Development team on 02 9698 3344 or email development@belvoir.com.au

Correct as at 31 December 2017



Atlantis
Photo: Daniel Boud.

Design
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Belvoir is proud to be a member of the Australian Major Performing Arts Group (AMPAG)



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Front cover: Brent Hill & Jude Henshall in *Mr Burns*.
Photo: Brett Boardman.