

TASMANIA PERFORMS
PROUDLY PRESENTS
MUDLARK THEATRE'S
PRODUCTION OF

CROSS

BY STEPHANIE BRIARWOOD



In partnership with

Lighthouse Regional Arts and George Town Council

Project Queenstown Inc

Devonport Entertainment Centre

Stanley Town Hall Committee

The Rotary Club of Scottsdale

Brighton Council and Brighton Arts Committee

Arts Deloraine

The Hobart performance has been

supported by the Salamanca Arts Centre

HOT WHITE LINES AND SCORCHING SIBLING RIVALRY
TWO SISTERS ON THE ROAD-TRIP OF A LIFETIME
A NEW AUSTRALIAN STORY WITH
SOME UNEXPECTED TWISTS

TASMANIA PERFORMS

About Tasmania Performs

Tasmania Performs began in 2006 as a state government performing arts initiative and works in partnership with artists and regional communities to present fine Tasmanian productions across the state.

Tonight's production of CROSS is touring to 8 communities from the 25 July to 8 August 2009.

CROSS is recommended for those 15+
It contains occasional coarse language.

If you would like to discuss the possibility of hosting a fundraising performance for your organisation or wish to send feedback to the artists about the play please contact...

Annette Downs at Tasmania Performs
annette.downs@artsatwork.com.au phone 03 6233 5935.
We love to hear feedback.



Tasmania
Explore the possibilities

Tasmania Performs is supported by Tasmania's Minister for the Arts through Arts Tasmania

Tasmania Performs thanks

Tasmania Performs thanks Robin Lohrey and Theatre North for their role in seeding this new Australian play, the University of Tasmania especially Janet Crack and Peter Hammond for rehearsal space, Wendy Blacklock and the team at Performing Lines who manage the project, Tasmanian Regional Arts, Ten Days on the Island and arts@work for their ongoing support. Many thanks to our Tasmania Performs touring partners we couldn't do it without you...

- Lighthouse Regional Arts, George Town Council, Lorraine Wootton, George Town Dry Cleaners, George Town Guides, Tamar FM, everyone who assisted with promotion and to everyone who has come along!
- Project Queenstown Inc committee members including Megan Crump and Travis Tiddy, and thank you to the West Coast Council for supporting the event.
- Devonport Entertainment Centre and Debbie Kershaw
- Stanley Town Hall Committee, Circular Head Council and Caroline Gillam
- The Rotary Club of Scottsdale, Jan Hughes and Roses Newsagents
- Salamanca Arts Centre Inc, Rosemary Miller, Kate McDonald, Jason James and the Hobart City Council for their support
- Arts Deloraine, Diana Tuleja, Annie Robinson
- Brighton Council, John Klug, the Brighton Arts Committee and Brighton Post Office

Plus our gratitude to the various businesses that have generously provided ticketing outlets across the state.

If you enjoyed the show and had a great night out... feel free to buy the people above a drink, they've earned it!

CROSS

MUDLARK

About the Company from the Artistic Director Stuart Loone

Mudlark Theatre Inc is a proud Tasmanian Company, generating exhilarating and first-class contemporary work for the Australian stage. Committed to staging professional and independent work for its regional audience, Mudlark is operated by five experienced theatre artists: Stuart Loone, Jane Johnson, Carrie McLean, Stephanie Briarwood, and Darren Willmott, with the support of innumerable practitioners, both Tasmanian and national, and community members. Since forming under the moniker 'syzygy theatreworks' in 2005, Mudlark has staged a wide variety of work, reflecting the diverse interests of the Tasmanian community: *What is the Matter with Mary Jane?*, *Underneath the Lintel*, and *Rooted*; original works *Café* (by Carrie McLean), *Junk Rooms* and *Cross* (by Stephanie Briarwood), works-in-development *The AsteRisk Project*, *Infraction* and *Stained Glass* as well as presenting Donna Cameron's stunning solo show *The Flowering*. Works currently in development include the epic national collaboration *200Ks*. The company has gained a national reputation for exposing local artists to excellent work practice. 'Cross is something very special for Mudlark', said Mudlark's Artistic Director Stuart Loone. 'It's the culmination of all our strengths: the writing, the design, the performances and the technical are all home grown. Cross epitomises where we want to head as a company. In our work, we want to reflect the place we come from, the places we could go. We want to stage exhilarating, professional theatre and are stoked that *Cross* is hitting the road in our own home state'.



Mudlark Theatre Inc is proud to be an organisation affiliated with Tasmanian Regional Arts

ABOUT CROSS

CROSS by Stephanie Briarwood

Regina is a talented photographer travelling the vast Australian continent taking pictures of an array of roadside shrines for an art exhibition. Her wayward and kooky sister Erica is along for the ride, bringing along her puppet 'friends' in the shape of a snake and a moth. By delving into the rather macabre stories of strangers on the edge of the road, the sisters' discover the beauty within their relationship and life. A magical piece of theatre filled with humour, heartbreak and joy.

Originally presented as part of Theatre North's 2008 subscription season in Launceston at the Earl Arts Theatre, *Cross* has undertaken a second development stage, with the generous support of Tasmania Performs.

Credits

Playwright and Production Design: Stephanie Briarwood

Director: Carrie McLean

Technical Design and Production: Darren Willmott

Dramaturg: Peter Matheson

Directorial Support: Robert Jarman

Technical Design Consultant: Greg Methé

Tour Manager: Jen Cramer

Crew: Richard Causby

Cast: Emma Hardy and Jane Johnson

2008 original production team credits

Stage Manager: Stuart Loone

Design Assistant/Assistant Stage Manager: Morwenna Schenck

Set Construction: Terry Harper (Weldrite), Des Willmott and Morwenna Schenck

Voice Over: Jane Bowles, Carmen Foon, Kimbal McMahon, and David Quinn

Poster photo credit: Carrie McLean

ABOUT CROSS

About the Play from playwright Stephanie Briarwood

We've changed the way we grieve. In past times we'd dress in black and mourn actively. We'd visit graves, bowing our heads. Nowadays we erect shrines in the place where loved ones have passed on, wreathing them in garlands of plastic flowers. *Cross* began as a curiosity in an increasing phenomenon that has been labelled 'road side shrines'. We have all seen the crosses erected on the sides of roads and highways that indicate that someone died there. Mostly these crosses are simple, white and wooden with a name on them, but they can be very elaborate with flowers and other memorabilia.

I found myself wondering at their purpose. What were they for? Were they a warning for drivers to slow down? Were they an uncalculated and instant outpouring of grief? Why mark such a public place ...a place where an accident occurred, an accident of supposedly violent proportions? And they're created without rules, regulations as an honest outpouring of memory of the loss and desolation. The research I conducted took me on a journey rich with emotions and love, where I was humbled by the magnitude of humanity and enjoyed (yes enjoyed!) touching the lives of people who had come through these experiences. The play is not a paean of death but a celebration of life. It's full of fun and hilarity and all the full mosaic of emotions that make us such remarkable beings. I have been fortunate that the story has captured the attention and interest of peers and the public and has been championed by such organisations as Theatre North, Mudlark Theatre and Tasmania Performs. With their involvement in its development *Cross* has grown into a rounded and affecting piece of theatre.

From the Director Carrie McLean

The journey with *Cross* began for me a few years ago when I read the part of Regina in a public reading for Theatre North's Prologue for Potentials. I immediately had strong visions of the play on stage, and it creatively inspired me in many ways; through its poetic and naturalistic language, the inherent physicality of the piece, the visual appeal of puppetry, and the scope to give the audience a true sensory ride.

Emotionally, the play touched a nerve with its rawness and sincerity. While we may not all be as eloquent as a character in a play when it comes to saying goodbye to a loved one, we've all experienced loss to some degree. What I have recognised throughout this creative process is the importance of rituals, whether that be having a beer for the deceased on their birthday or visiting their grave with freshly cut flowers, or simply remembering them when a song plays.

The Australian landscape, the heat and the long road is the backdrop for this epic road journey that deals with that huge theme of death... and consequently life. *Cross* asks the questions... how do you survive, and in fact live after the loss of a loved one, after the loss of someone who has helped shape you, made you who you are? Is it better to hang onto things, remembering them dearly, or to just accept and let go? The sibling rivalry between the two sisters, Erica and Regi, is so very tangible — it makes the temperature in the room rise. They have such polar opposite personalities and cope with knocks in completely different ways. However, the tie that they have is so strong. They understand each other completely, all their quirks, their smells, their irritating behaviours, and while they may hate each other at times, they love each other more. As their grandmother always used to say '...we had magnetic personalities, always presenting our negative sides to our negative sides. And our positive to our positive' – Erica.

My sincere hope is that you are able to laugh along with Regi and Erica, cry with them, bop up and down as they 'dance', breathe in the silences... and find a sense of hope and/or healing in their journey.

CROSS

CREDITS



Stephanie Briarwood
Playwright & Production Design

Stephanie graduated from the University of Tasmania in 1994; on the Deans Academic Roll of Honour. She has an Associate Diploma in Theatre, Bachelor Performing Arts. Stephanie is an actor, director, playwright, designer, props maker, and puppet maker and has worked with the following companies; Centre Stage (Launceston) Baystreet Productions (Vic. With Alan Hopgood) JUTE (Cairns) Queensland Theatre Company (Brisbane) Woman on a Shoestring (Canberra) and The Street Theatre (Canberra). Stephanie's work as a playwright include; *Junk Rooms*, *One Talk*, *Cold Cuts* (public reading), *Sad Mouth* (public reading), *Thunder Chairs* (non verbal theatre piece for the cerebral Palsy League QLD), *Romancing the World* (also cerebral palsy league), *Dead Kiss*, *In The Lights*, *F-emails*, and *Cross*. She is currently writing *A Thousand Cranes* and *Wake Up Dead*.



Carrie McLean
Director

Since graduating from UTAS with a Bachelor of Performing Arts in 1997, Carrie McLean has had twelve years experience performing, directing and writing in regional Tasmania. Mudlark Theatre began in 2005 when she directed fellow co-Artistic Director Jane Johnson in Wendy Harmer's *What is the matter with Mary Jane?* which toured to twenty high schools and colleges on the island state. Other directing credits include *Gizmo*, by Alan Ayckbourn, co-directed with Stuart Loone for Second Storey Youth Theatre, *Picasso* at the Lapin Agile by Steve Martin for BITco, and several short films. Her writing credits for theatre include *The Fools of Fire* produced by Mudlark Theatre in their 2008 season as part of One Day 6; *Cafe*, for Mudlark Theatre in 2007; and *Danger # 31* as part of One Day 4. Most recently Carrie directed and performed for Tasmanian Theatre Company's *Two Pairs of Shorts*.

CREDITS



Emma Hardy **Performer**

Emma graduated from the University of Tasmania with a Bachelor of Contemporary Arts in 2007. Acting credits in 2008 included Robert Lewis' *Undercurrent* (Mudlark) and Wayne Tunks' *The Bridesmaid Must Die* (Centr Stage) as well as television advertisements and corporate theatre work. While at the School of Visual and Performing Arts, Emma appeared in such productions as *The Mule's Foal*, Neil La Bute's *A Gaggle of Saints*, *Kayak*, *Scarecrow*, *On The Death of Character*, *A Sense of Place*, *Bang on the Nerve*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, *Marat/Sade* and *Tamar Tidings*. Emma also was a co-director on *The Mules Foal*, co-devised *A Sense of Place* and stage managed Centr Stage's production of *The Squaddies Shrew*.



Jane Johnson **Performer**

Jane holds a Bachelor of Performing Arts from UTAS. She is currently the Artistic Director of Second Storey Youth Theatre and an Artistic Associate with Mudlark Theatre. Jane works primarily as an actor, director and tutor and has worked with companies including; Tasmania Performs, TasDance, Theatre North, Tasmanian Regional Arts, The Australian Script Centre, Second Storey Theatre Productions and Centr Stage. Acting credits include: *Rooted* and *What is the Matter with Mary Jane?* (Mudlark Theatre), *Our Path* (Theatre North), *Timon of Athens* and *One Day Projects* (independent), *F:emails*, *Hit and Run*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Crazy Brave*, *A Doll's House* (Centr Stage) *The Coming of Stork*, *Leaving* (Second Storey Theatre Productions). Directing credits include: *Café* (Mudlark), *A Number* (Centr Stage), *Our Path* (Theatre North - associate director), *The Kid who Talked to Penguins* and *The Comedy of Errors* (SSYT). Most recently Jane directed and performed for Tasmanian Theatre Company's *Two Pairs of Shorts*.

CROSS



Darren Willmott **Technical design and production**

Since graduating with a Bachelor of Performing Arts, University of Tasmania, Darren has worked extensively in theatre production as stage manager and operator, production and operations management, lighting, set and sound design. Darren is currently the Production Manager and Lighting Designer for TasDance, recent productions including *One for Sorrow*, *Two for Joy*, *Parenthesis*, and *Mercy: a dance for the forgotten* which premiered for Ten Days on the Island 2007, and has toured to Melbourne, Sydney, Regional Tasmania/Bass Strait Islands/Victoria and New Zealand. Previous roles include, Scotch Oakburn College's Performing Arts Centre Coordinator, Production Manager (UTAS School of Visual and Performing Arts), Head Technician/Operations Manager (Devonport Entertainment and Convention Centre), Production/ Company Manager (Ten Days on the Island), Lighting Designer and Technical Direction (Slipstream Circus, Circus Risque, Three River Theatre, Second Storey, Mudlark).



Jen Cramer **Tour Manager**

A graduate of National Institute of Dramatic Art, Jen has 13 years experience as a production manager, stage manager, tour manager and teacher of technical theatre. Jen spent 5 years in Sydney where she worked with Company B Belvoir St, Theatre of Image, Fox Studios Australia and Ceremonies for the 2000 Sydney Olympics. Since returning she has worked with every professional theatre company in Tasmania including Theatre Royal, Is Theatre, Terrapin, TasDance as well as many local community and amateur companies. She is a trainer and assessor for the Salamanca Performing Arts Centre Course in Entertainment and most recently stage managed *Les Miserables* for the Tasmanian Theatre Unit Trust and production managed *Bombshells* for the new Tasmanian Theatre Company. She is currently production manager for the Ten Days on the Island Festival.

COMING SOON

**Keep an eye out for the next Tasmania
Performs tour starting 28 September 2009
and coming to a town near you.**

Helena and the Journey of the Hello

Co-design and Direction by Frank Newman

Written by Finegan Kruckemeyer

Helena Bugosi's mum is always on the phone — because she lives in it!

Helena and the Journey of the Hello is a kid's picture book tale in a crossed line conversation with contemporary times. The old world charm of the illustrated story is given a theatrical twist as unexpected parts of the set and costumes open like pages in a book. As the audience sits inside the fantasy world of Helena Bugosi, children and adults alike are amazed at what is possible with a mobile phone, a coat and an old iron bed as they are taken on the Journey of the Hello.

Terrapin's naughty new show is narrated by three mischievous animals that could be straight out of the midsummer night forest. They croon and wail in a waltz playing band; they fumble with puppets and fiddle with phones, weaving the audience through a thicket of stories about Helena and her mother who lives in a phone!

Theatre for the whole family (recommended 5+)

TERRAPIN PUPPET THEATRE

