

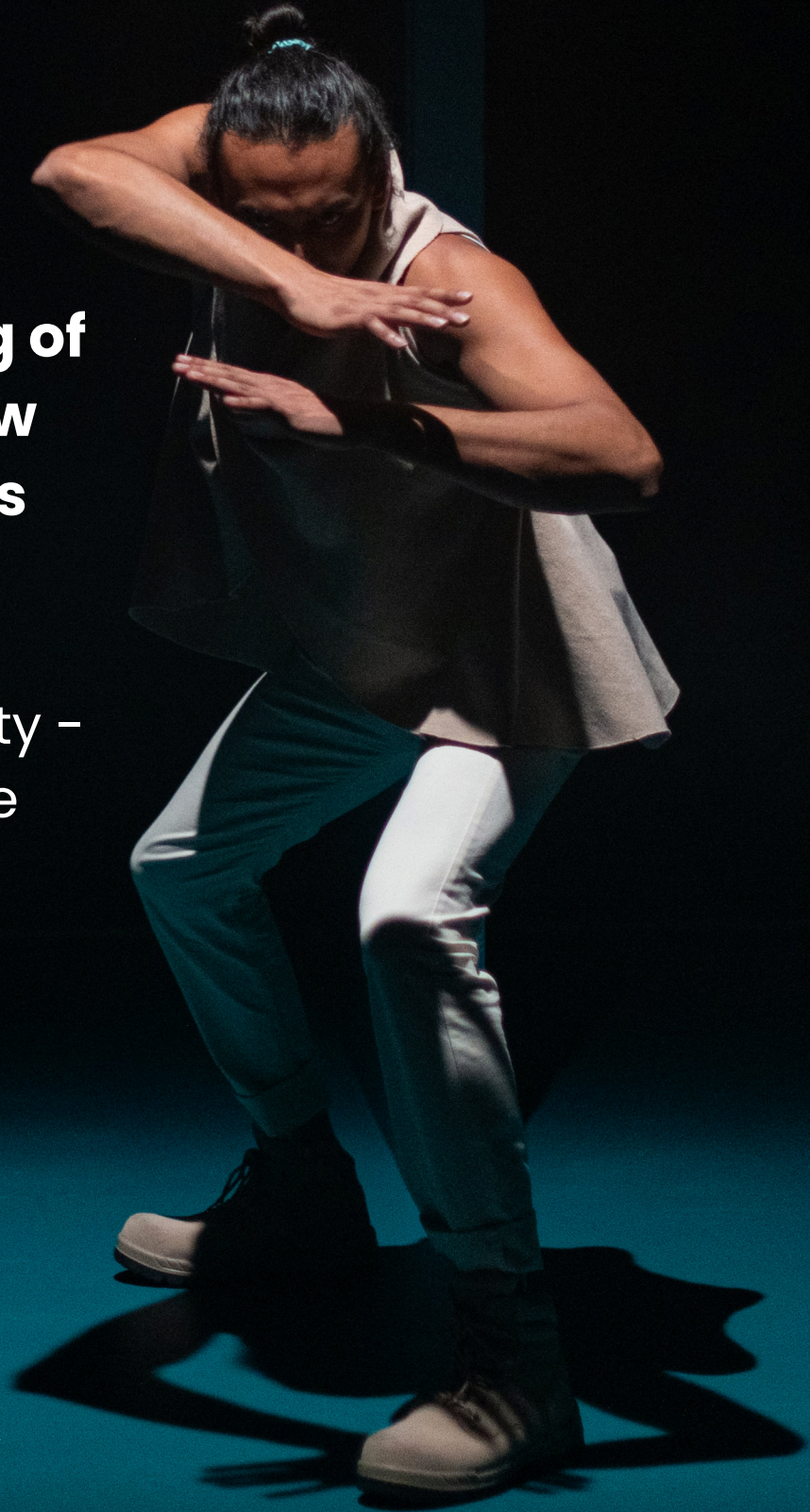
# COLLECTIVE

Milk Crate Theatre Developing Artist Program

**An intimate showing of  
four audacious new  
works-in-progress**

July 6, 2025

The Centre for Creativity –  
Sydney Opera House



Milk  
Crate  
Theatre



# ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

In all that we do, we would like to acknowledge that the foundations of Milk Crate Theatre are on Gadigal Land of the Eora Nation and that wherever we create, we walk in the footprints of the ancestors that were here before us. We pay homage to the tradition of storytelling and practiced by the earth's longest living culture and embrace those stories of the past and continue to share stories of the now.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and to walk side by side, hand in hand for a healing future. Sovereignty was never ceded, and we acknowledge those who have nurtured and respected the land for generations before us.

**MILK CRATE THEATRE PRESENTS**

# **COLLECTIVE**

**Milk Crate Theatre's Developing Artist Program.  
Created and Performed by Milk Crate Theatre  
Collaborative Artists.**

**DIRECTED BY** Margot Politis

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR** Bethany Simons

**COLLABORATIVE ARTISTS**

Kerry Bashford, Owen Gill, Tejas Lorencio, Kamini Singh

**MENTORS**

James Brown, Natalie Rose, Hayden Wright, Charles Wu

**MCT PRODUCER** Jessica Saras

**MCT PRODUCTION MANAGER** Tammy Dang

**LIGHTING DESIGNER** Tammy Dang

**SET AND COSTUME DESIGN** Margot Politis & Collaborative Artists

**SOH PRODUCER** Baptiste Cornillier

**SOH PRODUCTION COORDINATOR** Monte Sheppard

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## **ABOUT MILK CRATE THEATRE**

Milk Crate Theatre effects social change through the power of performance. We provide opportunities for people to engage in artistic practice to build confidence, skills and connections. We share bold and resonant stories to build empathy and break down barriers.

Our Community of Collaborative Artists are people whose voices are under-represented. They are generally living with, have experienced or are at risk of homelessness; living with mental health or disability support needs; have experienced domestic violence or come from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

We value artistry, respect, belonging, and collaboration.







# MILK CRATE THEATRE'S DEVELOPING ARTIST PROGRAM

Our Developing Artist Program (DAP) offers people with lived experience of homelessness, mental health challenges and disability, rightful access to skills development as makers. Collaborative Artists delve deeper into their artistry and develop their own projects. via a trajectory of multiple stages.

- **Stage 1: HEADWAY** Artist Skills Development Program focusing on devised performance making within a CACD framework, and confidence in defining self as an artist.
- **Stage 2: GENERATE** Maker space program with weekly skills development sessions, working towards self-directed creation, culminating in an in-house sharing of works-in-development.
- **Stage 3: COLLECTIVE** Further development with an industry mentor, to present next level work-in-progress at public venue.
- **Stage 4: MOMENTUM** Explore possibilities for next stages of the works-in-progress, through partnership building, pre-existing development pathways hosted by larger organisations, as well as co-designing initiatives that are most accessible and easily tailored to specific support requirements.

## About COLLECTIVE

COLLECTIVE is the third stage of Milk Crate Theatre's DAP, where four Collaborative Artists are supported by individual mentors to produce their own new performance works.

These works will comprise performance, spoken word, and sound; and will be curated into an installation format, with each piece last 15 minutes.



# COLLECTIVE

## A note from the Director, Margot Politis

Milk Crate Theatre does a lot of awesome things, but our Developing Artist Program (DAP) is its own brand of brilliant.

It is one thing to be creative in a group – it is another thing entirely to work on your own ideas, and have the bravery to put them forward for others to see. It's a process where we face a whole set of very new feelings that not only challenge our sense of artistry, but also force us to face ourselves as humans. It can be pretty intense!

In COLLECTIVE 2025, our four Collaborative Artists have done all of the above, and for this alone I believe they are incredible. Our artist Mentors have been exceptional in their creative care and bold encouragement. Each pair has made stunning, hilarious and affecting works-in-progress that will hopefully one day be developed into to full length works!

Thank you to everyone who has been a part of this project – as ever, it has been an absolute honour to work with you, and to be a little part of this big world of artistic manifestation.

Margot Politis  
June 2025



*Artistic Director Margot Politis, and Assistant Director Bethany Simons*



# PRESENTED

## WORKS-IN-PROGRESS

### UNHOLY HYMNS

**By** Kerry Bashford

**Mentored by** James Brown

*A tender musical sermon with a queer country vibe.*

### WINKLEPICKERS

**By** Owen Gill

**Mentored by** Hayden Wright

*A series of sketch comedy scenes complimented by live music.*

### THREE PEOPLE, ONE APARTMENT

**By** Tejas Lorencó

**Mentored by** Charles Wu

*A layered narrative work exploring character.*

### GLIMMER

**By** Kamini Singh

**Mentored by** Natalie Rose

*A woman's journey through love, loss and line dancing.*

**Help us understand our impact!**

Scan the QR code or [click here](#) to complete a quick survey. Your feedback helps us better support our community and audiences.





# Developing Artist: **Kerry Bashford**



Kerry Bashford (he/him) is a writer and performer from Awabakal land, up Newcastle way. He's a semi-retired journalist but these days writes for performance, with a leaning towards creative non-fiction. A regular contributor to Queerstories, his most recent works have featured at the Naughty Noodle Fun Haus and the revival of CLUB bENT as part of the Performance Space retrospective at 2023 Liveworks. He came to Milk Crate Theatre through their queer elders program and found himself at the age of 60, taking to the stage professionally for the first time in SOLACE (2023), and again with Milk Crate Theatre in co-production with Shopfront Arts Co-op, *"Hello, Are You Still There?"* (2024)

## Mentor: **James Brown**



James Peter Brown is a composer, sound designer, and theatre maker known for his evocative and diverse music scores. His practice investigates emotive experiences that explore character and aid storytelling. He has worked across a range of forms, from experimental to mainstage theatre and contemporary dance to film, documentary, animation, video games, and virtual reality. His processes often involve creating music and sound simultaneously with the development of a project, building connections between performance material and sound.



# Developing Artist: **Owen Gill**



Owen Gill is an actor, musician, composer and poet living in Sydney. His theatre credits include: *The Glass Menagerie* (The Drama Studio), Farndale Avenue's *Macbeth* (Darlinghurst Theatre Company), *One of Nature's Gentlemen* (New Theatre); and for Milk Crate Theatre: *Natural Order* (2019), *Surely Shirley* (Writer, Director 2018), *Wasted* (2016), *Under Construction* (2016), *No Place Like* (2015), *You Are Here* (2014), *Full Circle* (2013) and *Fearless* (2012). For the latter, Owen was a key lyricist and collaborator on the iconic song, '*The Hell Room*', which is currently published for use in the HSC curriculum.

Owen also appeared as the priest in *Looking For Alibrandi* (2000). Owen has a great love for music, storytelling, and words, and the power they have to improve the world.

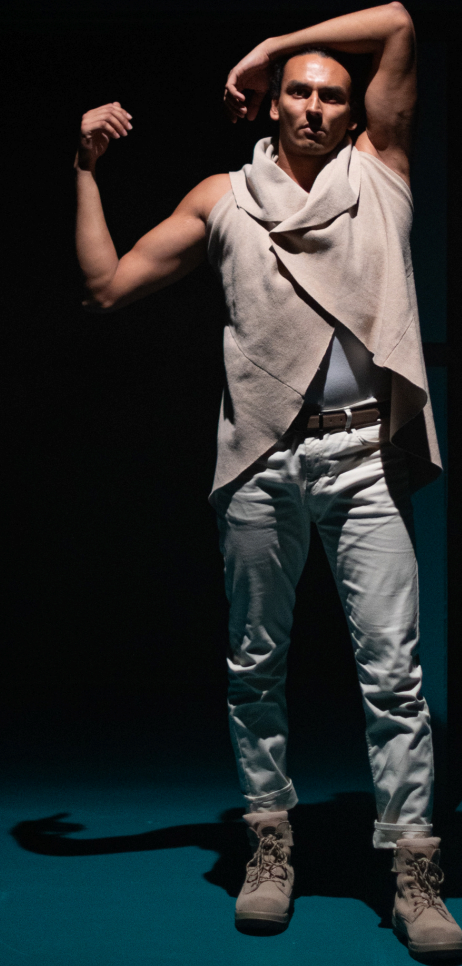
# Mentor: **Hayden Wright**



Hayden Wright (he/him) is a comedy writer, performer, and producer with training from theatres in New York, Chicago, LA, and all across Australia. He performs regularly in TINYPROV, a two-person improv comedy showcase, and teaches at Improv Theatre Sydney.



# Developing Artist: **Tejas Lorenzo**



Tejas has done various bits of acting work since high school, with most of his experience on screen. More recently he has expanded his skill set, working with a variety of different art forms. He has been involved with companies such as The Genesian Theatre, Shopfront Arts Co-op and Milk Crate Theatre. He was very excited to take to the stage in the 2024 productions *'Hello, Are You Still There?'* with Shopfront Arts Co-op and Milk Crate Theatre and Shopfront's Young Company production *'Dignified Exit'*.

## Mentor: **Charles Wu**



Charles Wu is an award-winning actor, musician, and writer. He graduated from the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) in 2014 and has featured on stage for Sydney Theatre Company, Belvoir, Melbourne Theatre Company, Griffin Theatre Company, Darlinghurst Theatre Company, and State Theatre Company of South Australia. He is well known for his role on the popular series *Doctor Doctor*. Charles won a Green Room award for Best Actor in 2021 and was a finalist for the Heath Ledger Scholarship in 2024. He is the lead singer/songwriter of Sydney band Earthquake Magnificent and is currently co-writing his debut feature film.



# Developing Artist: **Kamini Singh**



Kamini Singh is a performer, visual artist, singer-songwriter and major line-dancing enthusiast. Kamini's first show with Milk Crate Theatre was 2016 forum show the LINK Housing Project, and she was then deviser/performer for *That's the Spirit* in 2017. In 2022 she originated the key role of Elixir in Milk Crate Theatre's major show DUST, performed at The Richard Wherrett Studio, Sydney Theatre Company.

She has a background in painting and photography, has exhibited artworks at Deutsche Bank and Australia Square, and received a scholarship at Point Light Gallery for photography. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Communications from UWS, majoring in mass media and creative writing, with a minor in Australian history. Kamini is a qualified English teacher currently teaching at TAFE and studying Law. Born in Canada, Kamini is a proud dual national. She is a proud mother and auntie, and an ecstatic grandmother and friend. She sees life as precious and each day of life as a gift.

# Mentor: **Natalie Rose**



Natalie Rose (she/her) is one third of the performance collective POST, Creative Director/CEO at Shopfront Arts Co-op, and has been involved in Australia's Contemporary Arts scene for the past 24 years. Her work has been seen nationally and internationally at Sydney Festival, Belvoir, Sydney Theatre Company, and Cambridge Junction (UK). Nat has facilitated workshops for the past 24 years for Young People and emerging artists with and without disability. Most recently, she devised *The Lies We Were Told* with an ensemble of Young People. This production was awarded the 2023 Sydney Theatre Award for Best Production for Young People. Nat has a Bachelor of Arts (Theatre-making) from the University of Western Sydney, Nepean and has previously trained at PACT and Urban Theatre Projects as a member of their ensembles. She is on the Board of Directors for Voices of Women and a Board Member on Create NSW's Community Arts and Cultural Development Panel.



# Creative Team

## Director **Margot Politis**

Margot Politis is an impassioned artist, leader and Community Engagement practitioner working in Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) best practice. For over 20 years, she has worked as a performer, director, choreographer, film director, and deviser of interdisciplinary and immersive performance works comprising theatre, movement, set, costume and spatial design.

Margot was appointed Artistic Director of Milk Crate Theatre in 2018, co-designing and directing the company's major productions *Natural Order* (2019), *Tiny Universe* (2021) with Natalie Rose/Shopfront Arts, *MCT: A Retrospective* (2022), *DUST* (2022), *SOLACE* (2023) with Box of Birds, and *Hello, Are You Still There?* (2024) with Natalie Rose/Shopfront Arts. Prior to this, she served for 8 years as the Accessibility Director at Shopfront Arts Co-op, and in 2016 premiered independent work, *The Forest Unyielding*, a 2 year multi-faceted project addressing mental health and addiction. She is currently deeply engaging with set design, aesthetics, space, DIY and ASMR for experiential accessibility of performers and audiences.

## Assistant Director **Bethany Simons**

Bethany Simons is an award-winning writer, actor and director. Her original works *The Weather and Your Health* and *Reception: The Musical* were both selected for the VCAA Drama Playlist and have toured to more than sixty venues across Australia. Raised in regional NSW, Bethany is currently based in Sydney as a freelance creative and teaching artist across various community, arts and education programs including Milk Crate Theatre, National Institute of Dramatic Art and Australian Theatre for Young People.

# Creative Team

Producer (Milk Crate Theatre) **Jessica Saras (she/her)**

Jess is a professionally trained and working Actress with over 15 years experience in this field. Currently MCT's Creative Producer, Jess is pivotal to mounting MCT's major productions and projects, whilst also implementing & managing MCT's Adult workshop programs.

Producing highlights include: WATERLOO short film suite (2022), DUST, Richard Wherrett Studio, Sydney Theatre Company (2022), SOLACE, Darling Quarter Theatre (2023). Jess also served as Assistant Director and co-producer for the co-production *"Hello, Are You Still There?"* with Shopfront Arts Co-op (2024). She was also creator, producer and host of Milk Crate Theatre's first podcast series *"The New Stigma?"* (2024)

Production Manager (Milk Crate Theatre) **Tammy Dang**

Tammy is a multidisciplinary artist working in both theatre, film and community work with degrees in Law and Media (Screen & Sound Production). In 2023, she was awarded the winner of the Fairfield Mayor's Award for Creative Arts as a recognition of her commitment to the field. Tammy trained in theatre, production design & tech, acting, directing and producing at PYT Ensemble.

Tammy also co-runs My Tiger Production, a film and photo production business. She has directed and produced numerous music videos, including some being selected at the Clipped Festival; worked as a producer and second unit director on some feature films, including *'From All Sides'* (dir. Bina Bhattacharya) and *'It's Our Time'* (dir. Joy Hopwood); and photograph at events like Vogue and have editorial pieces that have been showcased at exhibitions.



# Thank you's and acknowledgements

Milk Crate Theatre thanks the entire production team at the Sydney Opera House's Centre for Creativity for their support in making this Create Space Residency happen. In particular, we wish to thank Claire Gammon, Baptiste Cornillier, Peter Loxton and Monte Sheppard.

Milk Crate Theatre celebrates the support of our valued partners for this production:



[Funded/Supported] by the  
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This [Project/Organisation] is  
supported by the NSW Government  
through Create NSW

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## **MILK CRATE THEATRE TEAM**

CEO Jodie Wainwright

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Margot Politis

CREATIVE PRODUCER Jessica Saras

SOCIAL IMPACT MANAGER Jessica Pantano

CREATIVE PRODUCER – YOUTH Olivia Aleksoski

SOCIAL WORKER Laura Hurstfield

FINANCE MANAGER Dale Hollingsworth

## **MILK CRATE THEATRE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Susan Bannigan (Chair)

Richard Levine (Treasurer)

Lauren O'Shaughnessy

Katina Velkou

Katherine Sivieng

Leila Enright

Ross Johnston

Melinda Graham

Hannah-Jayne Shilling

Grace Logvyn (Company Secretary)