

PLAYLIST

Created and Produced by PYT Fairfield



ARTIST BIOS

Karen Therese – Director

Karen Therese is an interdisciplinary artist and cultural leader with a practice grounded in performance, political activism and community building. Karen grew up on Darug land in Mt Druitt, Western Sydney. Currently she is the Artistic Director of PYT Fairfield, establishing a dynamic new arts program for the Western Sydney region. Most recently with PYT Karen directed the Helpmann nominated PLAYLIST, which premiered at PYT Fairfield in 2018, was selected for Festival UnWrapped at the Sydney Opera House 2019, and will tour nationally in 2020. Her other works for PYT include TRIBUNAL presented at PYT Fairfield, Griffin Theatre, Museum of Contemporary Art, ArtsHouse Melbourne, Sydney Opera House and CarriageWorks for the 2018 Sydney Festival. Karen Co -Curated WOMEN OF FAIRFIELD in collaboration with the Museum of Contemporary Art, Winner of the Sydney Myer Arts & Cultural Award (FBiSMAC) for Best Arts Program 2016, and LITTLE BAGHDAD a four - year cultural engagement with the Iraqi- Australian community.

Currently she is researching practices of matriarchal leadership, empowerment and activism in collaboration with the Parramatta Female Factory Precinct to establish the National Women's Arts and Cultural Centre in Parramatta.

In 2013 she developed and presented the Mt Druitt based project FUNPARK for Sydney Festival 2014. Karen was the recipient of the inaugural Cultural Leadership Grant from the Australia Council to work as Creative Producer at PS 122 New York in 2011. Karen was a key facilitator on the Time _Place _Space laboratory from 2015-2017, her work continues to extend both nationally and internationally, currently she part of the 2019 Australia Council's Leadership Program.

Larissa McGowan – Choreographer

Larissa McGowan joined ADT in 2000 with whom she toured extensively worldwide. In 2008 she was named Associate Choreographer by Garry Stewart, and also Co-choreographer of *Habitus* (Adelaide Festival 2016). In 2003 she won the Green Room Award for Best Female Dancer, and in 2004 she won the Helpmann's Best Female Dancer in a Ballet or Dance Work and the Australian Dance Award for Outstanding Performance by a Female Dancer.

Choreographic credits include *Zero-sum* (WOMADelaide 2009), *Slack* (Sydney Dance Company's New Breed season, Sydney Opera House and remounted for Link Dance Company 2012), *Transducer* (Tasdance's double bill 'Voltage' and remounted as part of Co:3's premier launch), Australian Dance Award nominated *Skeleton* (2013 Adelaide Festival, Dance Massive, Dublin Dance Festival), *Fanatic* (on Sydney Dance Company, for Spring Dance, *Contemporary Woman* and toured nationally as part of SDC's triple bill season *De Novo*) and *Mortal Condition* (Adelaide Festival Centre 2016, Adelaide Fringe Festival 2017). Larissa recently choreographed *Playlist*, PYT Fairfield and premiered her solo work *Cher* at the 2019 Adelaide Cabaret Festival.

Mara Knezevic – Performer/Devisor

Mara Knežević is a singer, songwriter and teacher. She has a background in classical voice which she trained from a young age and continued to whilst studying at the University of Sydney. Mara's practice is driven by collaboration and the sharing of knowledge and experiences. She co-creates music under MARA DUKE and has released music on major platforms since 2015. She is an ongoing member of the female/non-binary collective All Girl Electronic based in Parramatta. She was also a member of the PYT Ensemble in 2017. She lives in Sydney.

Tasha O'Brien – Performer/Devisor

Tasha O'Brien graduated from the University of Wollongong with a Bachelor of Performance (Acting). She has performed at venues including PACT, Old 505, Shopfront Arts Co-Op, Belvoir's Downstairs Theatre, Merrigong Theatre Co. and KXT. Her most recent theatre credits include: *Alison's House* (The Depot Theatre), *The Carousel* (Pip and Han Inc.), *According to Otto* (Tunks Productions), and *Europe Won't Fix You* (The General Public Theatre Co.). She has just finished filming her feature film debut *According to Otto* and is set to appear in Season 2 of multi-award winning web-series *After Nightfall*.

Neda Taha – Performer/Devisor

Growing up with mixed cultures Neda Taha grew a fondness for the creative arts in her early years when her father would finger pick Spanish Flamenco tunes on his guitar. Combining her love for the guitar and 90s rap, Neda fell in love with both instrumental and lyrical music quickly throwing herself into the world of dance. In dance Neda has represented Australia with her award-winning dance crew The Pioneers at Hip Hop International in Las Vegas at the age of 16. Neda recently graduated a Cert. IV in music at EORA College and is still competing with The Pioneers both nationally and internationally.

May Tran – Performer/Devisor

Mây Trần is a Bankstown-based, Vietnamese-Australian poet, activist and theatre-maker. In 2018, she supported musician and poet, Odette, at an intimate gig at Brighton Up Bar, featured in Approachable Members of Your Local Community's music video for Only Friend and competed at the Bankstown Poetry Grand Slam. Her 2019 credits currently include: *Project Bestfriendship: A Heart Comedy in Three Nice Acts* (dir. Charles O'Grady) and *Being Debra* (dir. Katrina Douglas). Outside of the theatre, she regularly performs poetry around Sydney and is furiously attempting to decolonise both herself and the creative spaces she occupies.

Ebube Uba – Performer/Devisor

Ebube Uba is a Nigerian born emerging Afro-Australian performer, theatre maker and filmmaker based in Western Sydney. As a performer, Ebube has worked with the likes of The Q Theatre (Joan Sutherland PAC), PYT Fairfield and Sydney Opera House. On the screen Ebube has featured in films such as *Embedded* (Simon Sewell), *MYTH* (Shakthi Sivanathan), *The Taint* (Tessa Muskett), *Painting August* (IY Choi), *The Beehive* (Zanny Begg), and more. Additionally, Ebube is one of six within the Afro Sistahs Collective (*supported by Information + Cultural Exchange*), working to develop a self-titled web series which attempts to capture the diversity of the Black community in contemporary Australia.

PYT Fairfield

PYT Fairfield has a reputation as a brave and transformative theatre company who make urgent work that explores the critical issues of our times. We challenge the conventions of traditional theatre and respond to the needs and aspirations of the next generation of artists and our local community. We do this by creating innovative performance and social artistic experiences in theatre spaces and across diverse urban sites of Fairfield, Western Sydney and beyond, and with a key focus on cultural diversity.

PYT's most recent works have explored important topics that resonate with our community; Australia's refugee and First Nation policies (*TRIBUNAL* 2016), gender and intersectional feminism (*PLAYLIST* 2018) and the need for young CALD people to find their own freedom within a complex city (*JUMP FIRST, ASK LATER* 2015).

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