

Flying Fruit Fly Circus

JUNK

Creative Biographies

Jodie Farrugia Artistic Director

Currently the Artistic Director of Australia's celebrated national youth circus, the Flying Fruit Fly Circus, Jodie has also directed and choreographed works for Legs on The Wall, Circus Oz, QL2 Youth Dance Company, Contact Dance Company (Europe), Tasdance, Acrobat, NICA, The Australian Choreographic Centre, Circus Monoxide, Deakin University and The Victorian College of the Arts.

As an independent theatre maker Jodie has created and toured several works throughout Australia, Asia and Europe. Jodie has been awarded the 2009 Helpmann Award for Best Production for Children (The Promise FFFC), a Green Room Award for Emerging Artist in Dance, the Canberra Critics Award, the Drovers Award for Artistic Excellence and the Dance Australia Critics Choice Award.

Jodie has created a number of successful works for the Flying Fruit Fly Circus over the past 12 years including: *Skipping on Stars* (National Australian tour), *Circus Girl* (National and Regional Australian tour) *The Promise* (National Tour), *Control Alt Delete* (Regional Australian tour), *Circus Under My Bed* (Sydney Opera House, Arts Centre Melbourne, Canberra Theatre, Zorlu Centre Istanbul, Regional Australian tour) and currently *JUNK* (Sydney Opera House, Arts Centre Melbourne, The Cube Wodonga, Auckland Festival and regional tour).

Circus Under My Bed received a Helpmann nomination for best visual & physical theatre production for 2014 and a Sydney Theatre nomination for Best Production for Children. *JUNK* recently won the 2017 Sydney Theatre Award for Best Production for Children. Jodie's strong creative history with the company, circus trainers, creative team and young artists at the Flying Fruit Fly Circus, and her skills and sensitivities to performance-making will allow her to continue conducting a process that is pushing this iconic, much-loved company into new and exciting territories.

Bec Matthews Sound Designer

Bec is a percussionist, drummer, performer, composer, teacher, musical director and noise-maker. She is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts where she studied orchestral percussion. Bec toured as a permanent member of the Circus Oz ensemble from 2010 to 2014, swinging in the air from Arnhem Land to New York she is the drummer who hits every mark and marks every hit.

Bec was previously the Musical Director for the Women's Circus and has been an integral performer and collaborator with multi-award winning act Yana Alana and Tha Paranas since their first show in 2007. Bec is co creator of the most recent Yana Alana offering, *Tears Before Bedtime*, which was commissioned by Theatre works and presented at the Festival of Live Art in 2014. She was Musical Director for the Melbourne Workers Theatre commissioned work *Every Angel is Terrible* in 2009-2010.

Bec has worked playing live film scores with George Dreyfus and Silent Box and has toured with Musica Viva percussion ensemble *WOOF!* at schools across Victoria. She was a member of infamous Melbourne band The Spoils from 2009 to 2011 and toured to New Caledonia with Lou Bennett and the Sweet Cheeks in 2008.

Alongside Bec's career as a musician and theatre maker she is also a highly regarded percussion teacher, community music facilitator and mentor. She uses traditional instruments, found objects and the body in her teaching practice and believes that music can be found everywhere and created by anyone. Bec has over 12 years' experience teaching in schools and in community contexts. She has brought her dynamic and imaginative style of teaching to schools throughout Victoria, including 10 years at the Peninsula School where she was Head of Percussion. Bec is a strong believer in the potential for personal development and building community through arts education and participation. She uses percussion as a vehicle to express a greater message about resilience, self-belief, determination and an opportunity to laugh and be present in the body. It is this approach she takes with her as she teaches from schools to regional camps, from the annual border music camp in Albury to remote Aboriginal communities, gaining trust in all whom she teaches, igniting a passion for those just learning and re-inspiring those who have been learning for years.

Tom Willis Lighting Designer

Tom is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts, where he studied lighting design under John Comeadow and Nick Schlieper. Since graduating in 2008, he has established himself as a successful freelance designer, working on a wide range of projects spanning traditional theatre, puppetry, dance, circus, opera, musical theatre and cabaret. His work has been nominated for two Green Room Awards, most recently for Life Like Company's *City of Angels* in 2015 and 4 Larks' *The Temptation of St. Antony* in 2012.

As a lighting designer, notable projects include: *Junk* (Flying Fruit Fly Circus), *The Light in the Piazza*, *City of Angels* (Life Like Company), *Mother* (IF Theatre / Regional Arts Victoria), *Money Shots* (Sydney Theatre Company), *The Plague Dances* (Malthouse), *Hollywood Honky Tonk* (Michael Ralph/Giving Productions), *Orpheus*, *The*

Temptation of St. Antony, Undine, Peer Gynt (4 Larks), The Ugly One, The Pigeons (Griffin Independent), Pale Blue Dot (OpticNerve), Exodus (Bone Marrow Theatre), DasShoku Shake! (Yumi Umiumare), Dying City and Purgatorio (Hoy Polloy), Sweeney Todd, Rhinoceros (Union House).

As an associate designer, notable projects include: *Model Citizens (Circus Oz), Circus Under My Bed (Flying Fruit Fly Circus), Pompeii LA, Baal (Malthouse), Assembly (Chunky Move), The White Guard, The Serpent's Teeth, Year of Magical Thinking (Sydney Theatre Company), Realism, Moonlight and Magnolias (Melbourne Theatre Company), Measure for Measure (Company B), L'incoronazione di Poppea (Victorian Opera).*

Loic Marques **Master Trainer**

Loic is a French National sports acrobatic champion and former trainer at the Ecole de Cirque de Quebec - a circus school established in Paris. Loic specialises in acrobatic disciplines and is a great tramp teacher. He is passionate about circus and acrobatics and has been working with high profile schools in Canada and France.

Loic possesses a vast knowledge in biomechanics and analyses of acrobatic movement; ability to coach on a large range of apparatus to a high technical level (trampoline, teeterboard Korean and Hungarian, Russian bar, hand to hand, banquine, handstand); expertise in practical and theoretic physical preparation; ability to combine artistic development with circus technique according to the students and/or organizational needs.

Loic has been Master Trainer at the Flying Fruit Fly Circus since 2015.

Sarah Kriegler **Dramaturge**

Sarah Kriegler is an award winning puppeteer, director & writer for visual theatre. She trained at the V.C.A, School of Drama (Animateuring), & is the co director of Lemony S Puppet Theatre. With Lemony S, Sarah has created & directed many works including the award winning *Foxy's House of Horror, Picasso and His Dog, One Night The Dog and Apples and Ladders*. Sarah currently is Artistic Associate of Chamber Made Opera. Sarah was also part of the creative team on the FFFC production *The Promise* as co-puppet director and performer. Sarah brings to this project a strong connection with all artists involved in *JUNK*. As a visual theatre writer and director she has developed strong skills in dramaturgy for interdisciplinary visual theatre.

Simon Yates **Rigging Design and Construction**

Former Fruit Fly, Simon Yates, is the co-creator of one of Australia's most respected and creatively courageous companies, *acrobat*, with his partner Jo Lancaster. *acrobat* are well known for their performances that portray a raw and honest vision of modern society delivered with dry humour and incredible physicality. Funny, shocking, intensely ingenious and utterly original, *acrobat's* latest work after their hugely successful *Propaganda* in 2010 is *It's Not For Everyone* which premiered at HotHouse Theatre in 2015 before a 2017 international tour and season at 2018 Sydney Festival. Simon is also in-house Rigger at the Flying Fruit Fly Circus.

Chelsea McGuffin **Circus Associate**

Chelsea McGuffin has worked extensively within the circus industry in Australia and Internationally for over 17 years. Originally training in dance at the Centre for Performing Arts, Adelaide before moving into circus and working with companies including Circa, Circus Monoxide, Tony's Imaginary Circus, Queensland Theatre Company and as Artistic Director with Vulcana Women's Circus. Most recently Chelsea has been performing and co creating *Scotch & Soda*, a Spiegel tent show which is now successfully touring the world and other acclaimed works with Company 2.

Ben Lewis **Circus Associate**

Ben began his career in the circus at the age of seven with the Flying Fruit Fly Circus, completing ten years with the company 1992 – 2001. Already a consummate performer he was accepted into the three year Bachelor Degree program at the National Institute of Circus Arts 2002 – 2004. At NICA Ben specialised in aerial straps, hoop diving and Chinese pole but is well known for being an all rounder and is an accomplished acrobat with high skills in tumbling, handstands, hand to hand and teeterboard. Graduating from NICA in 2004 Ben became one of Australia's most prolific circus artists forging a successful freelance career performing all over Australia and the World. Ben has also been a member of many renowned companies such as Circus Oz, Circa, Dislocate and La Clique. For several years Ben was an integral part of Aussie super group The Tom Tom Crew. The Tom Tom Crew has been a huge international success wowing audiences over the world with its unique brand of pumping tunes and hard-core acrobatics. Most recently, Ben has performed with La Soiree and is a cast member of the successful new show Club Swizzle.

Shane Witt **Circus Associate**

Specialty areas: straps, acrobatics, tumble, and teeterboard. Shane joined the circus in 1990 when very young. He has been on many tours nationally and internationally, including New York, Canada, Singapore and New Zealand. Since graduating in 2000 he has been a freelance artist, establishing Tension Extreme Circus with fellow Fruit Fly graduate Daniel Catlow in 2004. Shane has also one of the principals of hip hop circus show 'Tom Tom Crew' that had sell out seasons at Sydney Opera House, the New Victory Theatre in New York and Edinburgh Fringe. Most recently he was the senior acrobatic trainer and ensemble member with Circus Oz wowing audiences with his hard core acrobatics.

Alex Mizzen Circus Associate/Trainer

As a trained gymnast and a graduate from the National Theatre Ballet , Alex has worked as a contemporary dancer, honing both her physical and performance skill before turning her eye to circus. Now as an established circus artist with specialities in both hand balance and aerial chair, Alex has worked with some of the leading Australian and international companies including Les 7Doigts de la Main, Company 2, Cantina, CIRCA, Legs on the Wall, La Soiree, Tanssiteatteri Hurjaruuth and La Grand Cirque.

Simon McClure Circus Associate

At age 10 Simon started down his acrobatic path and joined the Flying Fruit Fly Circus in Albury. After seven years of training he went on to tour as a technician with the company Acrobat, while also teaching acrobatics at FFFC. Simon has performed a number of acts in a variety of cabaret settings before joining Gravity & Other Myths in 2014 specialising in tumbling and group acrobatics.

Richard Hull Executive Director/Producer

Richard has extensive experience working in theatre and the performing arts in Australia and the UK.

In London he managed a number of commercial West End theatres, including the Comedy, Vaudeville, Wyndham's and Piccadilly, and most notably re-opened the Donmar Warehouse, with Artistic Director Sam Mendes, establishing a new producing house for London in Covent Garden. He was also General Manager of the Prince Edward Theatre for the world premiere season of the Disney and Cameron Mackintosh musical, Mary Poppins.

For 14 years Richard was closely associated with Assembly in Edinburgh, one of the flagship venues on the Festival Fringe. Through Assembly, and with his own independent production company East Village Associates, Richard presented a variety of comedy, cabaret, musical and theatre shows, winning several awards. Many of these shows toured the UK and internationally.

Richard moved to Australia in 2006 and was appointed Head of Customer Services at the Sydney Opera House, a role he held for three years. In 2011 he was offered the position of Festival Director with the recently established Sydney Fringe.

Since July 2012, Richard has held the position of Executive Director/Producer with Australia's celebrated national youth circus, the Flying Fruit Fly Circus.