

act now theatre



ANNUAL REPORT 2015

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ABOUT ACTNOW THEATRE

ActNow Theatre creates youth lead, socially conscious theatre projects. Based in Adelaide, we collaborate with young people and community groups to create projects that are innovative, informed, inspiring, and often confronting, but never conventional.

Our projects have been critically acclaimed, commended in South Australian Parliament, and highly praised by audiences, participants and community organisations.

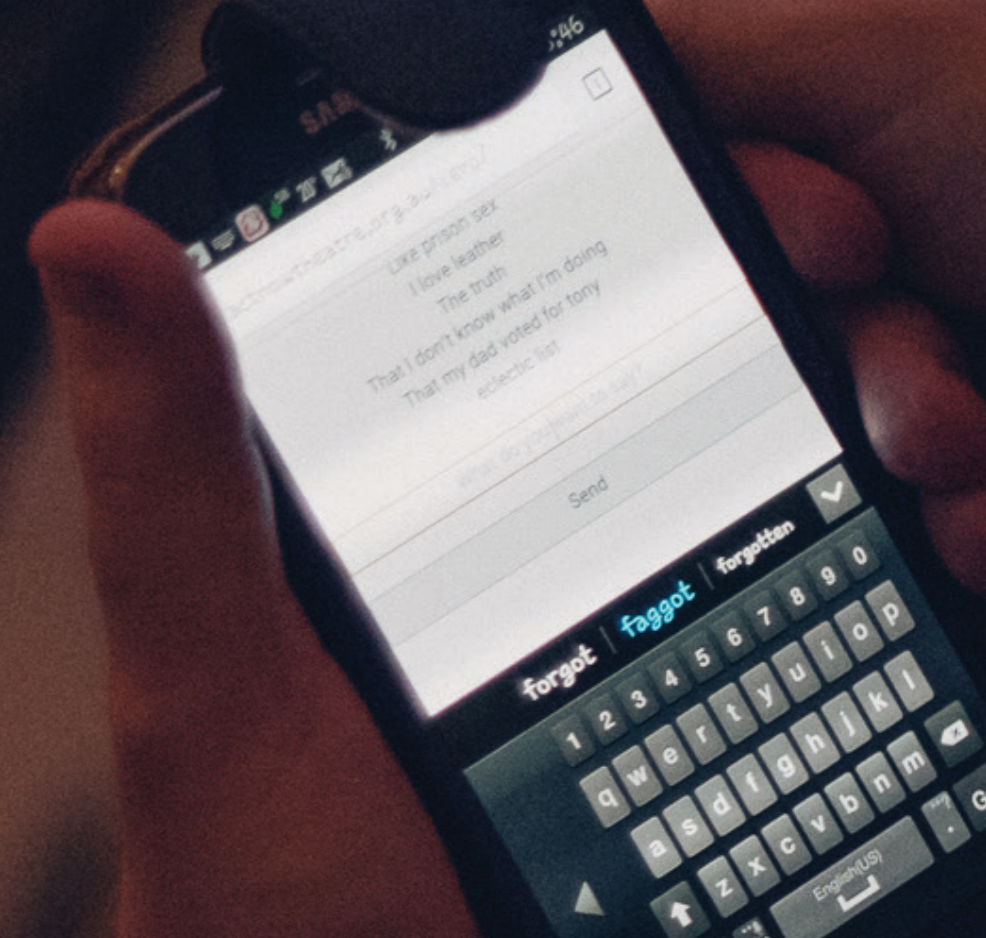


VISION

Theatre is a conduit for public discourse and a catalyst for social change.

MISSION

ActNow Theatre creates collaborative and socially conscious performance projects. We work in partnerships to engage diverse communities in conversations around challenging contemporary issues.



OBJECTIVE 1 – Audience and Business Development
Build strategies for audience engagement and partnership development with a focus on high schools and NGOs.

OBJECTIVE 2 – Program Excellence and Impact
Demonstrate artistic excellence and cultural leadership. Create a positive legacy through our programming.

OBJECTIVE 3 – Organisational Capacity
Strengthen the company's governance and management.

2016–2018

In 2015, ActNow Theatre's Board of Management undertook review of 2013-2015 strategic plan. This process was followed by the development of a subsequent strategic plan. [possibly reword]

PRINCIPLES

Imagination.

For us, creating a better world starts with imagination. We use art as a bridge between what is and what could be. Our work creates spaces for audiences, participants and artists to imagine a better world and build it.

Participation

Empowerment starts by taking part. We believe that in theatre, as in democracy, representation isn't enough. We need direct participation in political processes and universal access to arts as part of daily life. We break down barriers to participation by creating work in schools, workplaces, and in public spaces. Our work is participatory democracy in a theatrical form, and we want it to help make education more engaging, activism invigorating and citizenship empowering.

Openness

We are open to learn, open to share, open to collaborate, open to conversation, and open to uncertainty. We don't know the future or hold the answers. Culture, identity, storytelling and relationships are things to explore, share and cultivate, not to own or solve. We see our work as building the conversations that matter to people, not ending them.

ARTISTIC DIRECTORS REPORT



The past year has placed us in a very strong position. Our work is becoming increasingly recognised and praised for its unique position between arts, education, and community development.

I'm particularly interested in two new developments from the 2015 program. The first is our increasing engagement with adult audiences. We're starting to present our school shows in workplaces, unions and community centres. In doing so, we're moving the conversations from classrooms and schoolyards into the broader community. Our work is engaging with parents, teachers, social workers and medical staff, union organisers, and the general public on important social issues.

Secondly, we've begun integrating games into our work; drawing on the elements of storytelling, representation and play in theatre, but employing them in new ways. This has been a very artistically exciting process.

2015 was a turbulent year for the arts industry, with uncertain funding and disastrous arts policy. No arts company was unaffected. This contributed to a financially challenging year. Fortunately, we managed to strengthen our work and amplify its impact. It continues to be an absolute pleasure to be involved with this company.

Edwin Kemp Attrill. Artistic Director



CHAIRPERSON REPORT

2015 was a year of considerable turmoil in the Australian arts industry, with the impact of uncertainty around federal arts funding reverberating through organisations across the country. ActNow's decision to not pursue the Australia Council's multi-year operational funding meant that the company was able, in some ways, to distance itself from the industry unrest which characterised the year.

In 2015 the ActNow Board invested considerable time in strategic thinking and planning. We revised the company's vision and mission to create more concentrated statements of intent and undertook a scenario planning process to examine risk and possibility in relation to the company's future. Excitingly, this process revealed opportunities for the company to develop a social enterprise business model that matches well with its programming agenda. This process also allowed us to identify pressure points and consider mitigation strategies to address them.

The Board completed an update to ActNow's constitution in 2015. This enabled the company to apply for Deductible Gift Recipient status in anticipation of greater exploration of philanthropic funding avenues.

The company was pleased to welcome Jo Coventry to the Board in March 2015. Jo comes with a wealth of arts management and finance knowledge and has taken on the role of Treasurer for the ActNow Board.

Board members Kym Begg and Mimi Crowe were farewelled during the year. Kym was a foundation member of the Board and Mimi a more recent recruit. I thank them both for their enthusiastic service and genuine commitment to the company's philosophy.

Company highlights for 2015 include profile building through event facilitation such as the Reconciliation SA Congress, which won a Governor's Multicultural Award. Our exceptional Artistic Director, Edwin Kemp Attrill, was recognised with the 2015 Geoff Crowhurst Memorial Ruby Award. Success in the inaugural round of the Arts South Australia Community Arts & Cultural Development Project Funding for Organisations program has ensured a welcome underpinning for ActNow's 2016 artistic program.

With a new iteration of the company's strategic plan in place, we will continue to build the company's capacity and presence in state and national cultural landscapes. I thank everyone involved with ActNow for their dedication and energy.

Peter Grace Chairperson



PROFIT AND LOSS

INCOME	2015	2014
Booking	\$22,475	\$9,225.00
Grants	\$10,971.25	\$32,525.23
Partnerships and Sponsorships	\$27,942.11	\$29,880.00
Miscellaneous	\$6,326.90	\$152.05
Total Income	\$67,540.53	\$71,782.28
Gross Profit		
EXPENSES		
Personnel Expenses	\$57,528.13	\$54,575.17
Production Expenses	\$1,032.16	\$6,568.46
Travel expenses	\$565.29	\$830.06
Advertising and PR Expenses	\$1,732.68	\$1,936.43
Administration Expenses	\$7,464.63	\$5,245.67
Total Expenses	\$68,322.89	\$69,155.79
Net profit / (Loss)	-\$782.36	\$2,626.49

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS	2015	2014
Current assets	\$98,170.74	\$24,495.99
Non-Current assets	\$1,302.31	\$3,013.63
total	\$99,473.05	\$27,509.62
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities	\$88,771.51	\$16,159.10
Total Liabilities	\$88,771.51	\$16,159.10
NET ASSETS	\$10,701.54	\$11,350.52
EQUITY		
Current Earnings (YTD)	-\$782.36	\$2,713.11
Retained Earnings	\$11,403.90	\$8,557.41
Historical Balancing Account	\$80.00	\$80.00
Total Equity	\$10,701.54	\$11,350.52

RESPONDING TO RACISM

Responding to Racism is an award winning interactive theatre performance developed in partnership with Reconciliation SA in 2014 to identify, respond, and prevent racism. In 2105 ActNow was awarded the 2015 Governor's Multicultural Award in the category of Youth Organisation for Responding to Racism.

Responding to Racism follows the character of Mik, a young aboriginal student who is putting up with constant racism from his friend and football teammate, Chris. Meanwhile, a new student has arrived at school, Ashlee, who is being stereotyped and discriminated against for wearing a headscarf.

This narrative framework allows the show to explore how racism affects people on a daily basis and, through the use of forum theatre techniques, invites the audience to support the characters deal with the problems of racism.

Consequently, this project aims to simultaneously help participants identify various forms of racism while also presenting the audience with prevention and intervention strategies.

Since 2014 over two thousand people have seen performances including participation in two annual Reconciliation SA Schools Congress', with eight full-day events for year 8-11 students that included the Responding to Racism performance and other games and exercises co-facilitated by ActNow Theatre artists, in metropolitan Adelaide and regional South Australia.

DIRECTOR/FACILITATOR: EDWIN KEMP ATTRILL
ROTATING CAST: MANAL YONUS, NICOLE ORR, DAVID ANDRI, LOCHY MAYBURY.
KEY PERFORMANCES: RECONCILIATION SA BREAK-FAST
TOTAL AUDIENCE IN 2015: 2,900



“An excellent and authentic way to have young adolescents engage in dialogue and to accept the complexities and possibilities for compacting racism.”

– Teacher

“really made me reflect on racism and the way it is normalized in our culture. I would personally like to make a difference and assist in the eradication of racism.”

– Student

HOSPITAL PROJECT

In 2015 ActNow, in partnership with The Community Engagement Unit of Women's and Children's Health Network, hosted three ninety-minute development workshops. The training workshops aimed to build the capacity of staff to challenge individual and societal core beliefs associated with partnering with consumers in health care. It was offered to three distinct staff groups; clinical and non-clinical staff from Surgical Services Division, staff from Women's and Babies Division (predominantly midwives), and staff from Paediatric Medicine Division. Consumers and Executive Directors also attended the sessions.

DIRECTOR / FACILITATOR: EDWIN KEMP
ATTRILL

DEVISORS / PERFORMERS: ASHTON MALCOM, MANAL YOUNUS, DARCY CROUCH,
EDWIN KEMP

ATTRILL, SAMUEL WILLIAMS

WRITING CONSULTANT: SAMUEL WILLIAMS

TOTAL AUDIENCE IN 2015: 100

UNDEAD ADELAIDE

Undead Adelaide is an ongoing experimental, real world gaming project about the Zombie Apocalypse. Through collaboration and consultation with artists, game designers, young people and zombie enthusiasts this project aims to create an engaging game based in the Adelaide CBD and, more broadly, better understand game development. This project is a new and exciting direction for ActNow as it is decidedly non-theatre.

In 2015 Edwin, Claire and Zoe ran five consultation workshops with a group of young people and non-young zombie fans to explore narrative ideas and gaming concepts. During the workshops the group experimented with creating a Zombie Survival Plan using the software that runs Wikipedia (www.undeadadelaide.com/wiki). This allowed the group to collaborate through the contribution of information and easily compile content from the workshops. The group also experimented with the web app in its alpha stage.

The project is ongoing and further consultation and development will continue in 2016.

DIVISORS: CLAIRE GLENN, ZOE BOGNER,
EDWIN KEMP ATTRILL





SPEAK OUT

Speak Out is an interactive theatre performance tackling homophobia in high schools. Presented by young professional actors and a facilitator, Speak Out aims to explore various forms of homophobia and the affect it has on all students.

The performance provides opportunities for students to explore strategies to respond to homophobia through the use of forum theatre techniques. In forum theatre, the audience is responsible for creating a positive social change through their interventions with the actors on stage. In Speak Out the audience first watches the performance without interruption. Then, they are given the power to interrupt and freeze the repeat performance so they can make a positive change by replacing an actor on stage and changing the outcome of the performance. This offers a sense of rehearsal for the real world by empowering communities and individuals to take positive action when dealing with social issues.

DIRECTOR/FACILITATOR : EDWIN KEMP ATTRILL

ROTATING CAST: MATILDA BAILEY MATT CROOK, DARCY CROUCH, DAVID GEDDES, MATTHEW

GREGAN, ELIZABETH HAY, JIMMY SMITH, ANDREW THOMAS

INITIAL RESEARCH AND EVALUATION : HENRIETTA KARMEL

DEvised BY : MATILDA BAILEY, HENRIETTA KARMEL, EDWIN KEMP ATTRILL, ANDREW THOMAS

TOTAL AUDIENCE IN 2015: 400

“ActNow Theatre’s Speak Out performance open minds, is engaging & interactive, thought provoking, inclusive and powerful in getting young people thinking about how to be respectful of others and that name calling is hurtful and harassment is not okay.”

-Youth Worker

“I was also impressed by my students who really tackled the big ideas and ‘stood up’ for equality. There is something very special about standing in someone else’s shoes to empathise and to change one’s perception, and perhaps our world, little by little. Forum theatre is certainly a great catalyst for this type of change. What a great job! The company are doing very important work and my students benefited greatly.”

-Teacher

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