

actnow
theatre

ANNUAL REPORT
2014





Chrissie Page in the clock by Emily Steel. Photograph by Juan van Staden.
Cover photo Tyson Wood, Alexander Ramsay and Adam Carter in Zero Feet Away. Photograph by Phil Brown

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.

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OUR HISTORY

ActNow Theatre was founded in 2007 by Edwin Kemp Attrill, the company's current Artistic Director. He and two high school friends wanted to create a street theatre performance about (then) Guantanamo Bay detainee David Hicks. Driven by an ambition to explore issues around injustice and oppression through theatre, Edwin formed the original ActNow ensemble with members of Urban Myth Theatre Company (where he was a member of the senior ensemble) and Amnesty International. This ActNow ensemble presented highly visual performances in public spaces, with a guerrilla approach to its unscheduled appearances and the agitprop content of the work.

In 2009 ActNow broadened its vision and began to create works for the stage, presenting a number of plays by established and emerging writers. At this time, ActNow also began to devise and present interactive, issues-based productions which have become the hallmark of its output.

Heavily informed by the work of Brazilian theatre director Augusto Boal the first of these issue-based productions was *Expect Respect*, a project designed to provide legal information about rape and sexual assault for young people. Developed in partnership with the Legal Services Commission of South Australia, *Expect Respect* also heralded a new model for ActNow's activity.

Since then ActNow has been committed to targeting specific need by collaborating with non-arts organisations to create artistically engaging work which illuminates current issues, outside the confines of conventional theatre forms and modes of presentation.



Top: Performers in *Project Guantanamo* (2007). Photography by Edwin Kemp Attrill.
Bottom: Kym Begg in *Feast Weddings in the Sky* (2008). Photograph by Heath Britton.



ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

As the company continues to grow, each year brings a new range of relationships, ideas, challenges and achievements. This has especially been the case in 2014, which is undoubtedly a landmark year in the company's development. This year has been defined by two things. The first is a deepened community engagement, through increased focus on communities of young people as the creative drivers of our work, especially projects such as Zero Feet Away, My Point of View and several school residencies. ActNow has always created a relationship with its audience for them to be contributors and drivers of the work we present, and with a strengthened community engagement throughout the development of projects this is even more the case.

The second defining feature of 2014 has been the innovation and diversification of techniques. As each project responds to the specific requirements of partnering organisations, and reflects the energy of participants involved, we've been exploring exciting new ways to engage with our audiences. This includes use of mobile phone technology to facilitate anonymous conversations (Zero Feet Away), integration of forum theatre across full day conferences (Responding to Racism), and exploring how public space and survival skills can be explored through theatre (How to Survive a Zombie Apocalypse in Christies Beach). We've continued to carve out a unique role in South Australia as a leader in innovative arts projects in partnership with non-arts organisations, creating significant community impact.

It's been a privilege to work with such passionate community members, tireless project partners, dedicated board members and excellent artists.

- Edwin Kemp Attrill

CHAIRPERSON

2014 was a year of significant growth and capacity building for ActNow as we continued to implement the 2013-15 Strategic Plan. The company reached greater audiences through increased schools bookings and community participation in projects.

One of ActNow's great strengths is in making partnerships with non-arts organisations to support development and delivery of projects. This community foundation again proved to be an essential element in our work, creating genuine connection and contributing to a sustainable business model.

Another company strength evident in 2014 was the differentiation of our work within the South Australian theatre landscape. We continued to explore innovative interactive theatre techniques such as Forum Theatre, demonstrating consistent impact and the effectiveness of theatre as a method of influencing social change.

To underpin ActNow's artistic output we established new volunteer and paid positions including two Online Content Managers to build our online presence and an Emerging Producer to assist the Artistic Director with promotion, bookings administration and production logistics. The company has been a particularly lean operation for most of its existence, so these additional positions gave a taste of the kind of internal structure we intend to build in coming years.

The ActNow Board was active in 2014. We developed and refined our suite of company policies, assisted with staff recruitment and performance evaluation and monitored company achievement against our Strategic Plan. We commenced a review of our constitution to reflect the company's current situation and to prepare us to seek DGR status, which will enable us to actively seek further philanthropic support. I thank the Board for their dedication and considered input to the company throughout the year.

I would also like to thank our Artistic Director, Edwin Kemp Attrill, whose provocative artistic vision and tireless effort continue to build ActNow's profile as a visible and important player in South Australia's cultural ecology.

- Peter Grace

ZERO FEET AWAY DEVELOPMENT

ABOUT: Where did you meet your first love? How would you describe yourself to a stranger? Where's the best place to be kissed? What do you never talk about in public? How do you find intimacy in a virtual world?

Following the rise of dating applications such as Tinder and Grindr, Zero Feet Away explores how we find intimacy in virtual spaces, and what actually happens in our heads, our hearts and our bedrooms. Created by a team of professional and community young gay artists, this is innovative, provocative, inspiring and honest theatre not to be missed.

After a series of creative development workshops with young gay men, general public audience members were invited to take part in this exciting work in progress interactive theatre experiment. Using their mobile phones to facilitate anonymous and safe conversation about sexuality, intimacy and identity, audience members were able to influence the live performance.

Co-directors Edwin Kemp Attrill and Charles Saunders
Co-producers Edwin Kemp Attrill and Ben Roberts
Devisors and cast Andrew Thomas, Adam Carter, Harry Tobias, Tyson Wood | Production Manager and Musician Ben Flett | Technician Alexander Ramsay.

Initial concepts were developed through workshops with 12 young gay men, and tested in a workshop with 6 young people of any sexuality. Total audience: 150.

Andrew Thomas and Harry Tobias in creative development of Zero Feet Away. Photography by Phil Brown.



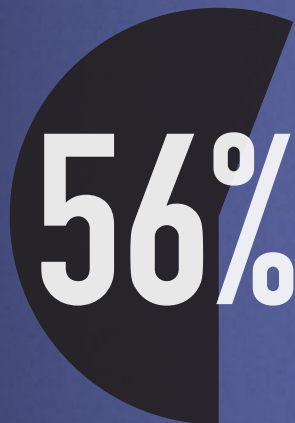
ZERO FEET AWAY
EVALUATION CONDUCTED BY
AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL RELATIONS



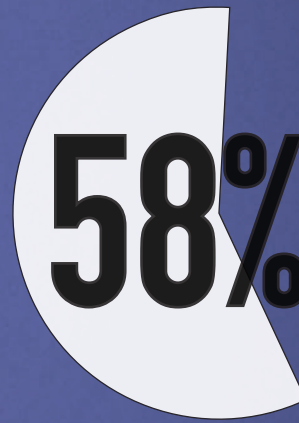
7.9/10 Average rating
on performance quality



8.3/10
Likelihood of recommending the
performance to someone else



56%
said the performance
encouraged them to
evaluate their testing
behaviours



58%
said that the performance
made them want to learn
more about PEP (post
exposure prophylaxis)

**“REALLY ENGAGING AND INTERESTING. BRAVE, BOLD
AND BY THE SEAT OF YOUR PANTS THEATRE”**
- Audience Member

**“HELPED [ME] REALISE I WASN'T ALONE WITH MY
EXPERIENCES AND THOUGHTS”**
- Audience Member



RESPONDING TO RACISM

ABOUT: In 2014, ActNow Theatre created Responding to Racism - an interactive theatre performance developed in partnership with Reconciliation SA to identify, respond to, and prevent racism.

The performance uses interactive forum theatre techniques to present the same scenario at various 'levels' of racism, ranging from completely overt abuse, to much subtler prejudices and inappropriate behaviour. In doing so, the performance is able to explore what's in the undercurrent of everyday racism.

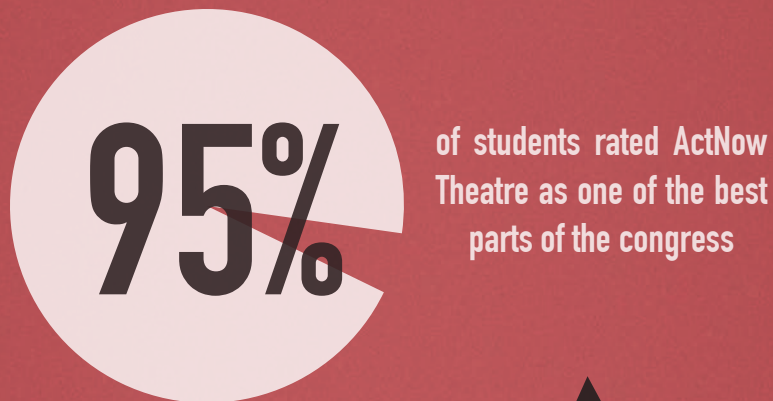
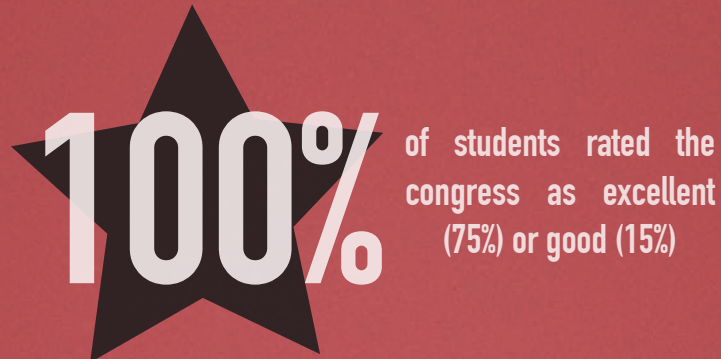
ActNow developed and presented Responding to Racism as part of Reconciliation SA's Schools Congress in Adelaide, Port Lincoln and Mount Gambier and also co-facilitated the day long events.

Director/Facilitator Edwin Kemp Attrill | Devisors and Rotating cast Manal Yonus, Nicole Orr, David Andri, Lochy Maybury.

The project was developed from an open workshop with 8 young people who had first hand experience of racism. Developed in partnership with Reconciliation SA. Total audience 360.

Lochy Maybury, Scott Rathman Jnr, Manal Yonus and Nicole Orr of Responding to Racism. Photograph by Edwin Kemp Attrill.

RESPONDING TO RACISM EVALUATION CONDUCTED BY RECONCILIATION SA



Students said the congress was very useful (64%) or useful (33%) at helping them to plan strategies to keep their schools culturally safe, with a total of:

97%

“FACILITATES DISCUSSION AS WELL AS A CALL FOR ACTION. IT RAISES AWARENESS OF ISSUES AND EMPOWERS PEOPLE TO BE PROACTIVE TO DRAW THE LINE ON RACISM.” - Teacher

“WE ALL KNOW WE COULD HELP, BUT SOMETIMES WE'RE TOO AFRAID TO. THIS SHOWED US IT IS BETTER TO ACT, WHEN TO GET INVOLVED AND WHAT TO DO.” - Student



SPEAK OUT

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 2014 audience in 300 (4,000 since
2013)



ABOUT: 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 effect it has on all students,
- Provide opportunities for students to explore strategies to respond to homophobia
- Provide take home information for students on issues raised in the performance and services available to Same Sex attracted students

FORUM THEATRE: In forum theatre, the audience is responsible for creating a positive social change through their interventions with the actors on stage. Speak Out uses this interactive forum theatre technique. 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 social change by replacing an actor on stage and changing the outcome of the performance. This forum theatre technique offers a sense of rehearsal for the real world. It empowers communities and individuals to take positive action when dealing with social issues.

SPEAK OUT EVALUATION



of students enjoyed the performance



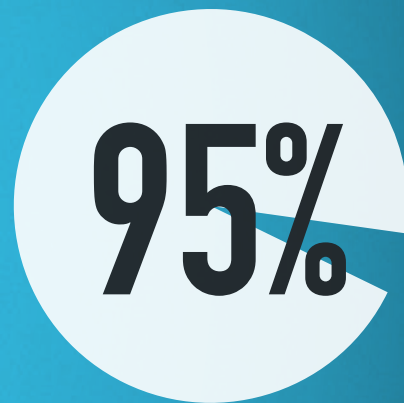
21%

volunteered an intervention



56%

of students said there are more likely to respond and help if they see homophobia at school after seeing Speak Out (20% said "maybe", 15% said "Do not know")



95%

were provided with at least 1 technique to prevent homophobia

"My students benefited greatly."
- Teacher, Salisbury High School

"We haven't stopped talking/thinking about it"
- General Public Audience Member

"Showed us how to recognize and how to act in certain situations... Thank you again"
- Student, Woodville High School



Patrick Frost in *The Clock* by Emily Steel. Photography by Jan Van Staden



Lochy Maybury in *The Clock* by Emily Steel. Photography by Jan Van Staden

THE CLOCK

Writer Emily Steel | Director/Producer Edwin Kemp Attrill | Cast Elizabeth Hay, Chrissie Page, Andrew Thomas/Lochy Maybury, Rory Walker | Project manager (RiAus) Lisa Bailey | Scientific consultant Professor Tracey McDonald | *The Clock* was commissioned by the Royal Institute of Australia, made possible through the Australian Government Inspiring Australia Fund. 2014 audience of 420 (740 since 2013).

ABOUT: Age is just a number...isn't it? *The Clock* is an engaging, insightful and humorous performance that examines and celebrates the ageing process.

Four actors tell interviewing stories of many characters at various stages of their lives. Engaging, insightful, humorous and at times confronting, *The Clock* celebrates the achievement of old age and exposes the myths and misconceptions of the ageing process.

The Clock is written by award winning writer Emily Steel and directed by Edwin Kemp Attrill. It is presented by four actors from their mid 20's to mid 60's.

The Clock was written in early 2013, with creative development workshops with actors. By May *The Clock* debuted through a regional South Australia, which included Mount Gambier, Victor Harbour and Port Augusta. In 2014, *The Clock* undertook a Riverland Tour to Wakerie, Renmark and Loxton, and performed at the Aged and Community Services Australia Conference.

"A wonderful performance...I'm so proud to be associated with it."

-Professor Tracey McDonald,
Professor of Ageing, Australian
Catholic University.

"One of the few public offerings that allows audience members to feel good about ageing, to actually feel proud to have aged."

- Dr PJ Rose, No Strings
Attached Theatre of Disability



OTHER PROJECTS

HOW TO SURVIVE A ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE (IN CHRISTIES BEACH)

ActNow Theatre partnered with Carclew's ExpressWay Arts to deliver a series of 3 Zombie Apocalypse survival workshops as the first stage development of a new project for cultural mapping and youth engagement. Total participants: 8 | Workshop leader: Claire Glenn

HALLETT COVE RESIDENCY

In partnership with Marion City Council, ActNow Theatre undertook a residency comprised of 4 workshops with Hallett Cove High School to explore their neighbourhood and perceptions that local businesses have of young people. Total participants: 10 | Workshop leaders: Claire Glenn and Simone Avramidis.

MY POINT OF VIEW

In partnership with the Legal Services Commission of South Australia, ActNow Theatre ran a series of 12 workshops at the Adelaide Flexicentre, for young people at risk of entering the criminal justice system, and a further 3 days of workshops in Youth Detention Centres as part of a new project My Point of View. Total participants: 28 | Writer: Emily Steel Workshop Leader: Edwin Kemp Attrill | Supporting Artist: Lochy Maybury. Funded by the City of Port Adelaide Enfield.

LARGS BAY RESIDENCY

Through an Artist in Schools partnership with Carclew, ActNow was in residence at Largs Bay Primary School, working with three year 7 classes over 11 weeks to develop trust, teamwork and school community. Total participants: 23 | Workshop Leader: Edwin Kemp Attrill | Supporting Artist Clara Slade. Funded by Carclew.

PROFIT AND LOSS

Income	2014	2013
Bookings		
Grants		
Partnerships and Sponsorships	\$9,225.00	\$34,046.00
Miscellaneous	\$32,525.23	\$11,550.00
Total Income	\$29,880.00	\$12,384.00
Gross Profit	\$152.05	\$83.13
	\$71,782.28	\$58,063.13
Expenses	\$71,782.28	\$58,063.13
Personnel Expenses	\$54,575.17	\$46,564.98
Production Expenses	\$6,468.46	\$861.58
Travel Expenses	\$829.15	\$6,655.10
Advertising & PR Expenses	\$1,936.43	\$443.90
Administration Expenses	\$5,259.96	\$2,546.56
Total Expenses	\$69,096.17	\$57,072.12
Net Profit / (Loss)	\$2,713.11	\$991.01

BALANCE SHEET

	2014	2013
Assets		
Current Assets	\$24,495.99	\$14,601.16
Non-Current Assets	\$3,013.63	\$361.15
Total	\$27,509.62	\$14,962.31
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities	\$16,159.10	\$6,324.90
Total Liabilities	\$16,159.10	\$6,324.90
Net Assets	\$11,350.52	\$8,637.41
Equity		
Current Earnings (YTD)	\$2,713.11	\$991.01
Retained Earnings	\$8,557.41	\$7,566.40
Historical Balancing Account	\$80.00	\$80.00
Total Equity	\$11,350.52	\$8,637.41

In the opinion of the ActNow Theatre Treasurer, the above Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet provide a materially true and fair view of ActNow's financial position for the relevant periods and dates.



Laura Gilbie
ActNow Treasurer
8 April 2015

2014 PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS



Reconciliation
South Australia



telstra shop
rundle mall

