

The Blue Room Theatre presents

# WINTER NIGHTS

A mid-year festival of experimentation and ideas

Application Information

## 2020

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Winter Nights is a festival created by The Blue Room Theatre to foster artistic exploration and dialogue around the practices of Western Australia's theatre artists. After two formative years, 2020 will see the third iteration of a program take over performance spaces at The Blue Room Theatre and rehearsal spaces at State Theatre Centre of Western Australia over two weeks, from 21 July – 1 August.

Through a series of opportunities to present and converse, Winter Nights places the development of new work alongside broader conversations around artist and sector development, and exciting new theatrical experiments that suit a short form outcome. It provides a creative space for artists to share, engage and discover their practice in form, craft and process, and is a testing ground to sample work and establish early engagement with active, eager audiences.

In 2020, the program will be presented in three streams of activities: Supported Creative Developments, Talks and Ideas, and Experimental New Works.

Artists with a new collaboration, work, idea or approach to making theatre and performance are invited to submit an application to be part of Winter Nights 2020. Check out the offers below and application details at the end of this document and let your imaginations run wild.

## Ground Up

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Ground Up is a space to enact, envision and evolve new work in real time. Each project will present two sessions: one at the beginning of the festival and one at the end, using the time and space in between to explore and respond to the experience of the first presentation. It's an iterative process in which artists meet audience in the development of work with the freedom to experiment, develop and refine the ideas, form and content of their work in response to the feedback of their audience and peers.

Three projects will receive \$2,000 upfront support along with dedicated rehearsal room space and time in the venue ahead of each presentation. Each session will consist of 20-30 minutes of creative content, along with 30-40 minutes of audience response with Philippa Maughan and Katt Osborne using the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process. The Critical Response Process is a structured approach that enables a respectful dialogue between artist and audience about the work centred on a particular aim or question – [head here for more information](#). On application, artists should articulate their interest in engaging with the Critical Response Process.

## Playing Up

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A pathway and supportive opportunity for plays in development, Playing Up will foster and champion new Australian stories from local emerging playwrights. Four unproduced scripts will be selected for a guided script development process with mentoring from Chris Isaacs, playwright, deviser and performer at The Last Great Hunt, from May – July. Each project will receive a \$500 seed fund and will present a self-produced public playreading as part of the 2020 Winter Nights season.

Applicants should be within their first five years of professional practice and will be required to submit a full draft script as part of their application.

## All Ages Theatre Development

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We're thrilled that Barking Gecko Theatre will partner with Winter Nights for the third time to support the development of a new theatre work for an all-ages audience. Through this collaboration Barking Gecko hopes to encourage independent WA artists to explore the possibilities in creating work for children and families.

The selected project will receive \$5,000 towards creative costs; up to 25 hours of in-kind rehearsal space at The Blue Room Theatre; project guidance from BGT Artistic Director Luke Kerridge; plus an additional 20 hours funded mentorship for the development from a mentor of the team's choice. On application, applicants should be clear about their creative process, and how they anticipate using mentorship from both Luke and the project mentor.

## Short Works Programs

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Winter Nights will host two programs, Winter Shorts and 900 Seconds, allowing artists the freedom to trial and present a smaller stage outcome through a short form presentation as part of a greater series of small performances.

Winter Shorts is presented in collaboration with STRUT Dance as one part of their And Then Some Program for the development and presentation of original contemporary dance. Winter Shorts is especially looking to build on works presented as part of *Short Cuts* and *MicroMove*, which are encouraged to apply, however Winter Shorts applications for new developments are also welcome.

900 Seconds is a new initiative building on The Blue Room Theatre's notorious 600 Seconds program presented in Summer Nights, and is for theatre-based works.

Both programs will see four projects at approximately 15 minutes each receive a \$250 seed fund, up to 6 hours of in-kind rehearsal room hire, and four hours of mentoring from an industry professional of their choice to contribute towards the development.

## Winter Words

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Artists are invited to curate their own panels, forums and conversations addressing their burning questions, provocations or inspirations in theatre and performance. Whether local or global, about craft or culture, Winter Words will profile timely conversations relevant to our here and now.

Over the past few years we have talked about queer visibility, diversity on stage, mental health in the arts and the state of physical theatre! Applicants may wish to further these conversations; talk more about theatre craft, how theatre is engaging with the global and local issues of the day, or take on stories about the personal or social significance of theatre. We encourage applicants to think about who can bring unexpected perspectives to these conversations, such as experts from outside immediate theatrical circles or artists and activists from around the world who could be skyped in.

Five projects will receive \$500 funding each in support of research and payment of panellists, facilitators and/or speakers. This program is funded by the City of Perth.

## The Unexpected

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An opportunity for artists to set their spirits free and trial their experiment in live performance as part of the Festival. Be it a performance, an event, an interaction, a happening; from a one-off event to a mini-season, from sacred to profane, artists are encouraged to blur the boundaries, innovate artform and challenge conventions. Get something in front of an audience and see if it sticks.

Artists will receive 90% of the Box Office for their performance or event, up to 10 hours of in-kind rehearsal space, and time in the venue ahead of their presentation. Applicants interested in multiple presentations as part of the Festival should indicate in their application form how many sessions are ideal, and why the project would benefit from extra presentation opportunities.

## Professional Development

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Winter Nights is proud to host a series of workshops across State Theatre Centre of WA and The Blue Room Theatre as part of the Festival. Emma Valente is our guest artist and will facilitate a two day workshop, along with project mentoring and public events:

Emma is the Co-Artistic Director of THE RABBLE and a freelance director, dramaturg and lighting designer. THE RABBLE is a group of visionary women who have consistently produced bold, provocative and visually stunning theatrical experiences. The company has forged an unrivalled reputation for producing experimental theatre of the highest quality – theatre that interrogates the human condition through a combination of surreal and visceral aesthetics, a feminist sensibility, and the application of intellectually rigorous research. The results have changed the paradigm of what is possible in theatrical culture in Australia.

### **Lead Artist Workshop with Emma Valente**

Tuesday 28 – Wednesday 29 July, 10am – 5pm

Emma will provide an introduction to her practice as a feminist artist and will work with artists to develop their own performance ideas and methodologies. The workshop introduces artists to a range of techniques for generating material for performance. It offers participants a chance to get feedback and to develop their own ideas.

This workshop is geared towards lead artists of all disciplines (directors, writers, performance makers, designers, composers, choreographers etc) who are interested in learning more about devising, dramaturgy, material generation and feminist practice. Emma is committed to equality of opportunity and diverse candidates are encouraged to apply.

## Professional Development

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### **Project Intensive with Emma Valente**

Thursday 30 – Friday 31 July, 10am – 5pm

This unique exploratory and generative workshop opportunity will offer one creative team the chance to develop a project for two days in an in-depth way, with Emma as an outside eye and facilitator of exercises to fuel the creative development and design of the work.

The creative team will come to the workshop with a concept or story and a clear sense of what they want to explore about it. They should have questions about their creative process that can be explored alongside the exploration of the concept or story and the creation of material.

The team will be asked to lead their own creative process, but allow for, and be responsive to, advice from Emma and open to exercises she proposes that will open ways to create material relating to the content. Emma will also lead a generative design workshop within the two days that builds from the work 'on the floor'.

This workshop is likely to be useful for artists who have discussed ideas for work they would like to develop in collaboration, or have even done some preliminary creative development on, but are looking for impetus to further that idea and a methodology for working together. It would also suit artists who have a more established history of working together, but are looking for ways to broaden the ways they work together, create content and realise their designs.

A group should be at least two people, but no more than ten people. The creative lead on the project will be responsible for managing the engagement and participation of the team. All team members will be required to be members of The Blue Room Theatre prior to the commencement of the workshop.

Expressions of interest for both these opportunities with Emma Valente will close on 7 April 2020.

## Other Workshops

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Winter Nights will also play host to a series of workshops in conjunction with Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company and the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. Yirra Yaakin will continue their Ode to the OP poetry initiative, along with a second workshop providing a safe space to ask stupid questions for performance makers about working with First Nations artists. WAAPA's Bachelor of Performing Arts Course will provide performance practitioners with professional development in voice, movement and devising to refresh and extend their skillset. Details, schedule and registrations for these workshops will be released in April.

Stay tuned.

## The Nitty Gritty Details

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All projects presenting as part of The Unexpected, Playing Up play readings, Winter Words panels and talks, and the All Ages Theatre Development will have one hour to present their performance or content for their session at Winter Nights. Ground Up projects will have one hour for their presentation, including the 30-40 minute facilitated Critical Response Process. The short works projects will have approximately 15 minutes each as part of a greater hour long program.

The venue will have a limited festival style technical set up; while Winter Nights will provide a Production Manager to supervise the festival, it is the responsibility of each project to provide their own operator/designers where needed. Each work will be allocated a proportionally appropriate amount of time in the venue for tech ahead of their public session/s.

The Unexpected projects will receive 90% of box office income; The Blue Room Theatre will retain the box office from sessions that receive up-front support, with ticket prices set at the lowest possible prices to encourage participation. The Blue Room Theatre will coordinate bookings and front of house during the Festival, and will promote the overall Winter Nights season alongside marketing support for each individual project. All participants will be required to be members of The Blue Room Theatre before their presentation, talk or workshop.

Artists will be required to answer questions relating to the marketing and communication of their project as part of the application form for Winter Nights. This information is not considered in the selection process, but is provided to streamline and accommodate the turnaround of the marketing for the Festival, and applicants will have the opportunity to revise this content if successful.

## The Nitty Gritty Details cont.

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A panel consisting of two theatre industry peers and The Blue Room Theatre representative will assess Winter Nights Proposals in consideration of the following criteria:

### VIABILITY

- The skills and experiences of the participating team are artistically, professionally and culturally appropriate for the proposed activity.
- Realistic and achievable management and planning for the creative process.
- Confidence in the applicant to deliver the project as outlined in application.

### TIMELINESS AND RELEVANCE

- Explores timely themes relevant to contemporary Australian culture and beyond.
- Contributes to the ongoing professional development of the key artists involved and delivers benefits for the artistic practice of all participants.
- Considers participants and audiences from diverse experiences.

### ARTISTIC EXPERIMENTATION AND RISK

- Develops new ways of making work or contributes to the diversity of contemporary artistic practice in Australia
  - New ideas presented in innovative ways
- Provides audiences and participants with new experiences

# WINTER NIGHTS

## How to apply

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Applications for Winter Nights are to be completed online and received by 5pm, Tuesday 7 April 2020.

To apply for a Ground Up, Winter Words, All Ages Theatre Development, Playing Up, Winter Shorts, 900 Seconds or The Unexpected, please complete this application form.

To register your interest for professional development opportunities with Emma Valente, complete this EOI form.

## Contact

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Whether you'd like a little more information about the Winter Nights offer, would like to chat about your project idea or are experiencing technical difficulties, please feel free to contact;

Producer Harriet Roberts at [harriet@blueroom.org.au](mailto:harriet@blueroom.org.au) or call the office on (08) 9227 7005.

## Partners

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**The  
Blue Room  
Theatre**



Winter Nights Founding Partner



City of Perth