



BRETT & WENDY

A LOVE STORY BOUND BY ART

A NEW AUSTRALIAN WORK

by Kim Carpenter

Theatre Of Image

My creative life has been shared between a love of art and theatre. I chose collaboration against the comparatively lonely life of a painter. This project is an opportunity to unearth all the thoughts, feelings and observations I have made through my life on the solitary activity of a painter – living inside your own heart and mind - and to distil them into one whole piece of theatre about Brett & Wendy Whiteley

I have known and engaged personally with 20th century Australian masters John Olsen and Arthur Boyd but it is my two encounters with Brett that are indelible - long, heady and intense conversations with rapid-fire and inventive language from him – (Brett-speak)

BRETT & WENDY's tumultuous life together – from when he was 17 and she 15 – is filled with incredibly stark highs and lows. It's a great love story bound by art. Brett's magic as an artist and charismatic personality made him a superstar public figure in his short lifetime. Wendy, an artist in her own right, became Brett's goddess, model, muse, wife and confidante.

Together they made a spectacular image in the Australian art scene

24 years after Brett's death Wendy (now 75) represents Brett's world in her iconic tower home filled with his work she has impeccably curated around her. She looks out onto the harbour he so sensuously immortalised in the ultramarine blue Lavender Bay series.

Below the house is her work – a large extraordinary exotic award-winning public garden (originally unused land filled with rubbish) she created on public land as an homage to Brett and daughter Arkie – where their ashes are scattered. In distress and rage she started at one end

and didn't stop until she got to the other end

Lloyd Rees, the grand old master of 20th century Australian art, was Brett's mentor. Brett idolised Lloyd. I will explore their relationship from Brett's first schoolboy sighting of Lloyd's "The Road To Berry" to the impact on his future work and their exchange of letters when Lloyd was near death. Although both were compassionate men who dreamt big, it was a curious relationship given their seemingly opposite tastes and lifestyles.

Restless risk-takers, they were both social animals with big personalities, with a love of nature. Battling their demons – Brett with fame and heroin (the ape on his back), Lloyd with clinical depression was fighting blindness in his last years - both struggled for understanding, acceptance and against a fear of abandonment. Brett seemed to travel from light into darkness. Lloyd travelled into the light with a belief in divine intervention

We will explore the metaphysical world of the artist in his studio using dance and digital video to find a heightened theatrical way of capturing the immediacy of the gestured sweep of line that makes a river or a nude body in a few searching strokes of paint or charcoal.

Using resource material from my interviews and research, the performers will inhabit the psychological and personal relationships of the characters expressed through internalised performances with minimal text.

A largely percussive score will link well-known music, historically denoting time and place from Dylan to Hendrix and Vivaldi - an example of the essential theme of dichotomy that framed Brett's life and work.

Kim Carpenter – Artistic Director of Theatre of Image

“Theatre of Image holds a special and unique place in the Australian theatrical landscape. As the title suggests, this company was founded by Kim Carpenter – a gifted designer as well as Director – it explores more than any other company does the visual element in story telling on stage”

Sydney Morning Herald.

In 1988 Kim Carpenter realised his dream of creating the first visual theatre company in Sydney, when he founded **Theatre of image**. Using his connections as an established mainstream theatre deviser, director and designer Carpenter was able to enlist the services of top Australian creative and performing artists to work on his vision for bringing vibrant and intricate productions to the stage. **Theatre of image** would allow audiences to experience the theatre in a way not seen before bringing colourful, engaging shows to life.

The evolution of **Theatre of image** began with the success of *The Happy Prince* in 1993, when Carpenter decided that the company would focus on works specifically for families. They continued on this course until 2010, when the success of *The Book of Everything* – in the very adult setting of Belvoir Theatre – proved that creating work for both adult and family audiences would take theatre of image to greater heights.

Spanning the last 20-plus years, **Theatre of image** has found success touring regionally, nationally and internationally, with multiple productions and has successfully collaborated with major performing arts companies here in Australia, Canada and Japan

AWARDS & HIGHLIGHTS - 2000-2015

- 2015 MONKEY...JOURNEY TO THE WEST MAJOR AUSTRALIAN TOUR
- 2014 THE BOOK OF EVERYTHING WINS 2 GREEN ROOM AWARDS
- 2013 KIM CARPENTER IS MADE A MEMBER OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA (AM)
KIM CARPENTER RECEIVES THE CAMERON CRESWELL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO DESIGN
FROM THE AUSTRALIAN PRODUCTION DESIGNERS GUILD
- 2012 THE BOOK OF EVERYTHING OPENS TO CRITICAL ACCLAIM ON BROADWAY
SYDNEY THEATRE CRITIC'S AWARD FOR SNOW ON MARS (WITH SYDNEY FESTIVAL)
ARTS HUB CRITICS' AWARD FOR THE BOOK OF EVERYTHING
- 2010 THE BOOK OF EVERYTHING (WITH BELVOIR) NOMINATED FOR 5 HELPMANN AWARDS
- 2006 HELPMANN AWARD - FOR STELLA & THE MOON MAN (WITH AUSTRALIAN YOUTH ORCHESTRA AND SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY)
AWGIE (AUSTRALIAN WRITERS' GUILD AWARDS) FOR STELLA & THE MOON MAN
- 2004 HELPMANN AWARD - FOR THE HAPPY PRINCE
- 2002 HELPMANN AWARD NOMINATION - FOR MAD BAD & SPOOKY
IT WAS ALSO THE CRITIC'S CHOICE AS A FESTIVAL HIT IN THE 2011 SYDNEY FESTIVAL
- 2000 AWGIE FOR THEATRE FOR GRANDMA'S SHOES (WITH OPERA AUSTRALIA)

Patrons Peggy Yeoh
Adele Weiss
Ambassadors Hugo Weaving
Miranda Otto

Chair Prof Di Yerbury AO
John Kitney Brent Duffy
Ruth Wetmore Rob Adams
George Paramanathan Katherine Raskob



David Malouf's
The Empty Lunch-tin



David Malouf's
An Imaginary Life



Robinson Crusoe

THE TEAM

KIM CARPENTER

Kim Carpenter AM is the founder and Artistic Director of Theatre of Image. His designs have embraced puppetry and digital arts as well as conceptual sets, props and costumes. Kim is a former Co-Artistic



Director of Nimrod Theatre (now Belvoir) and former Head of Design, National Institute of Dramatic Art. He now makes medium-to-large scale distinctive visual theatre for children and families – often in collaboration with other companies including the AYO, Opera Australia, Kageboushi Theatre Company (Tokyo), Manitoba Theatre For Young People (Canada), Belvoir and STC. He is a Churchill Fellow, recipient of 2 Helpmann Awards, holder of a Centenary Medal, 2 Sydney Theatre Critics Awards, 3 AWGIEs and 2013 APDG Award for Outstanding Contribution to Design.

PETER KENNARD

Peter is a composer, producer and musical director with a career spanning 20 years. He has composed and recorded countless soundtracks, and has created sound designs and musically directed



live performance for many of Sydney's major theatre companies and high profile public events. Clients include Darling Harbour (SHFA) NYE and Australia Day Fireworks – Sydney Olympic Park, Theatre of Image, Legs On The Wall and Q Theatre. His compositions and performances have been heard throughout Australia in productions for Sydney, Adelaide, Perth and Brisbane Arts Festivals as well as extensive international touring through major arts festivals in Europe, Asia and South America.

TOM WRIGHT

Tom has written a number of plays or adaptations, including Lorilei (winner of Gold Drama Award, British Radio Academy and BBC Radio Drama Award, 2007), Babes in the Wood, The Lost Echo



(winner of five Helpmann awards in 2007, including Best Play), Criminology (with Lally Katz), The War of the Roses (winner of six Helpman Awards) and Black Diggers (winner of the 2015 Premier's Literary Award for Best Play). His work has been seen at the MTC, STCSA, STC, Company B, Bell Shakespeare, Chunky Move, Black Swan, Chamber Made Opera and the Adelaide, Sydney, Edinburgh, Vienna, Perth, Brisbane and Melbourne Festivals. He was Associate Director of Sydney Theatre Company 2004 to 2012.

GAVIN ROBINS

Gavin Robins is an internationally acclaimed director of physical theatre, circus and aerial performance. His work combines daring physical performance with new technologies. Gavin has worked as Movement



Director for many award winning theatrical productions, events and screen productions. He was awarded a Helpmann, for Outstanding Theatrical Achievement for his movement direction of King Kong and was recently appointed the Head of Movement at the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA) in Sydney. From 1994 to 2000 Gavin was a core member of Legs On The Wall. He has also undertaken several successful collaborations with Director Nigel Jamieson including the Dreamworks Arena Spectacular How to Train Your Dragon.

FABIAN ASTORE

Fabian Astore is a digital media artist and motion graphics producer working in the fields of multimedia, performance, theatre, and video art and has exhibited both in Australia and Internationally.



From 1997 - 2007 he produced motion graphics for nine major main stage productions with Theatre of Image. In his professional capacity as a multimedia producer for Macquarie University he has worked in close collaboration with numerous academic sta to produce a number of significant CD-Rom publications, most notably The House of Aboriginality. In 2012 he was the joint winner of the prestigious Blake Prize.

Kim Carpenter Background/Highlights

TRAINING:

Under painter John Olsen (mentor)

NIDA graduate (production course: directing, designing, technical theatre)

1-year post-graduate design course Sadlers Wells under legendary British designer, Motley

First Aust Artist in Residence at Atelier Artistique de Seguret, France

Churchill Fellowship (puppetry & object theatre) France & Japan

DESIGNED AND/OR DIRECTED AND/OR DEvised works for Australian theatre, opera and dance companies eg:

Melbourne Theatre Co

Sydney Theatre Co

SA Theatre Co

Opera Australia

Aust Dance Theatre

Sydney Dance Co

APPOINTMENTS:

NIMROD Co-Artistic Director with Neil Armfield & John Bell, providing opportunity to create own work starting with SLICE

Head Of Design, NIDA

Board Of Studies, NIDA

Assistant to Robert Wilson on Medea by composer Gavin Bryers NYC. Robert inspired me to found...

THEATRE OF IMAGE (Artistic Director) - a project-based visual theatre co. which became dedicated to commissioning and creating original high-quality mainstage work for children & families

TOI WORK PRESENTED OR COMMISSIONED BY the following festivals:

Sydney x 3

Melbourne x 2

Perth x 2

Adelaide

Brisbane

INTERNATIONAL TOURS AND/OR COLLABORATIONS:

Caracas Festival

Canada

NZ

New York City

Japan

WORKS on the themes of VISUAL ARTISTS and their worlds within the context of TOI:

SWIMMING IN LIGHT...the world of Lloyd Rees (Melbourne Festival, Canberra, Sydney, Caracas)

Site-specific chamber works (40mins):

WHITE HEAT: Arthur Boyd Retrospective Exhibition, AGNSW

Arthur became the Patron of TOI as an outcome of developing this work with him

PIXEL & FRIENDS...The Colour Show: commissioned by Powerhouse Museum about science and design – a journey through the colour spectrum, meeting all the elements of design;

LITTLE BEAUTY: commissioned by National Portrait Gallery - About the Australian identity, reflecting their collection

EXHIBITIONS:

Holdsworth Gallery Sydney x 2

Lulie The Iceberg: Japan Foundation Gallery

Pixel & Friends: Powerhouse Museum

Art For The Theatre: Depot Gallery Sydney

AWARDS:

Order of Australia (AM), Centenary Medal, Helpmanns, AWGIEs, Green Room Awards, Sydney Theatre Awards, Australian Production Designers' Guild Award for Outstanding Achievement, Loudon Sainthill Award

August 28th, 2015

To whom it may concern,
Re: the proposed theatre project
"Brett and Woody" to be developed by Kim
Carpenter

I have known of Kim Carpenter's work,
through friends Lyn Clark and Jennifer
Claire and many years ago seeing,
with Brett, his production "Rapunzel
In Suburbia"

Recently, Kim has visited my home
in Cloverden Bay, we talked at length
about this, and past projects, especially
the work "Swimming In Light" the
world of Lloyd Rees. I think it is fair
to say we enjoyed these conversations &
getting to know each other. I feel Kim
has an empathy and feel for the life &
work of visual artists. I am happy
to contribute my time and experience and
am curious to see what Kim and his
creatives come up with. I look forward
to the on-the-floor workshops later
next year.

Sincerely

Wendy Whiteley