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# SHE CONJURED THE CLOUDS





We pay our respects to the Dharawal people who are the traditional custodians of the land, whose deepening connection to culture and customs have cared for this country for over 60,000 years. We acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging for their immense spiritual connection to place which was never ceded.

Dharawal land has always been recognised as a meeting place for people from other lands, and in this spirit we respectfully continue this tradition through the bringing together of our communities through arts and culture.

Always was and always will be Aboriginal land.



# FOREWORD

We are thrilled to be starting off Campbelltown Arts Centre's 2020 artistic program with the world premiere of *She Conjured the Clouds* by Justene Williams. Placing artists at the forefront has always been the anchor when developing our program, to challenge and change artistic structures focusing on artist-led contemporary projects. Justene is a major part of the Western Sydney artistic landscape, as she was a graduate from the illustrious University of Western Sydney and exhibited in Campbelltown in 1996. I have been a massive fan of her since 1997, when I saw her work in the group exhibition *Fibro - A devotion to suburb, a part of Australian Perspecta* at Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre.

At a time when the world is in an anxious state, where binary politics are normalised, complex ideas fought out online through series of characters and opinion rules over fact, Justene provides a moment time, a space to look at the world through an absurd lens challenging these notions. Art has the power for us see the magic that exists in this world and for us to eat as much fairy floss as we want.

I hope you enjoy *She Conjured the Clouds*.

Michael Dagostino – Director

**Performance Dates:** 16-18 January 2020

Thursday 16 January, 8.00pm

Friday 17 January, 1.30pm and 7.30pm

(matinee includes Audio Description, Tactile Tour, Relaxed Performance)

Saturday 18 January, 1.30pm and 7.30pm

Duration: 40 minutes







# ABOUT

Campbelltown Art Centres is proud to present a world premiere work by critically acclaimed artist Justene Williams, as part of Sydney Festival 2020. Blending live-performance and installation, this spectacular artwork aims to shift the conventions of visual arts and theatre to encourage new audiences to experience contemporary art practice.

*She Conjured the Clouds* has been designed for audiences of all ages and abilities, including those in the Deaf and hard of hearing communities by incorporating Auslan into the performance. Expect a world where audiences can touch – and sometimes eat – the kaleidoscopic scenery. A journey of the senses, this is a place where the imagination is celebrated and otherworldly adventure awaits. This new work combines installation with theatre drawing on the magical and transformative worlds conjured in traditional folklore and fairy tales. Blurring the boundaries between performer and audience, *She Conjured the Clouds* invites everyone into a playful, colourful world of touch, sound and vivid imagery.

Promising a feast of the senses, artist Justene Williams brings to life a dynamic series of characters that communicate through vibrant costumes: from a gang of revving native motorbike frogs to flying carnivorous bats and the beekeeper. The work features video animation, recorded and live music using architectonic costumes, dance, aerial performance, sculptural objects with kinetic elements, as well as the smell and taste of popcorn and fairy floss. Adding further drama, the story is framed by fairy floss trees and a ceiling of clouds.

Justene Williams' practice aims to reimagine the boundaries of arts, breaking apart conventions to allow the black box or white cube space to be more experimental, playful and accessible to all.

Justene Williams – *She Conjured the Clouds* was commissioned by Campbelltown Arts Centre and co-presented by Sydney Festival. It was supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW and by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

# FROM THE MOON AND BACK

In a land a bit like ours cursed with no rain, a young girl called Nefelibata sets out to find her missing father. He has disappeared into the forest to forage for special baking ingredients— magical baking is his speciality. Nefelibata's quest to find him takes her well beyond her comfort zone of home and school, and along the way she meets both wise and wicked characters: oppressive Malaise, Blue Moon, Maize Men, Beekeeper, Carnivorous Bats, Bird Witches, Motorbike Frogs, even her own double. These encounters tell her a little bit more about the terrible state of the forest while also drawing out aspects of herself. Indeed, quests are always as much inner journeys as outer ones and in the fantastic places Nefelibata visits her inner emotional landscape is hard to separate from the outer one. Her hopes and fears take on fantastic forms as she is tested and challenged. At the end, our heroine

triumphs, finding in herself the confidence to conjure the clouds to release her father. She learns about clouds that store and clouds that capture, but most importantly she discovers that loss can stretch and instruct and that her father was right. Here, she circles right back to the beginning discovering the truth of her father's words: the real magic is inside just waiting to be found.

This is the story of Justene Williams' new work for Campbelltown Arts Centre and Sydney Festival, *She Conjured the Clouds*. Trained as a visual artist, Williams has worked across video, sculpture, installation and performance, blending traditions of high and low to create historically informed yet raw and visceral productions. The theatrical presentation of performance is now a format she has used several times. Indeed, undoing the presumed incompatibility of performance art with theatrical





traditions is a key feature of her practice. She Conjured the Clouds combines the wild costuming of early twentieth-century avant-garde performance with the synchronised choreography of the musical and the humour of pantomime. Into this potent mix are added contemporary music and sculptural set design, acrobatics and Auslan. Auslan is shown to be a language rich with choreographic potential. The

result of these incredibly diverse blendings and borrowings is a true gesamtkunstwerk (the total work of art)—a synthesis of the arts that delivers Nefelibata's kind of magic.

Prof. Susan Best | FAHA  
Queensland College of Art | Griffith University

# CREATIVES

**Lead Artist**

Justene Williams

**Accessibility Consultant**

Sue Jo Wright

**Community Consultant**

Renee Allara

**Sound Design & Composition**

Jonathan Boulet and Kirsty Tickle  
(Party Dozen)

**Lighting Designer**

Alexander Berlage

**Choreographer**

Emma Watkins

**Aerial Choreographer**

Melise Avion

**Dramaturg**

Lily Balatincz

**Animator**

Andres Bounti

# PERFORMERS

**Papa/Blue Moon/Mirror**

**Nefelibata**

**Carnivorous Bat/Motorbike Frog**

**Carnivorous Bat/Motorbike Frog**

**Maise Man/Lead Bird Witch/  
Dancer**

**Maise Man/Bird Witch/Dancer**

**Beekeeper/Fairy Floss Hag**

**Bird Witch/Fairy Floss Hag/  
Cloud Walker**

**Cloud Singer/Cloud Walker**

**Malaise/Cloud Walker**

**Violin**

**Cello**

**Cello**

**Cello**

Elvin Lam

Emma Watkins

Paul Nunnari

Carissa O'Connor

Nicola Bruni

Isabella Fitzpatrick

Billee Paige Harris

Charmaine Sharp

Laila Campbell

Simon Peart

Ben Adler

Freya Schack-Arnott

Jack Ward

Antonio Aguilar







LEAD ARTIST  
JUSTENE WILLIAMS

Justene Williams is known for her spectacular, large-scale installation works encompassing video, photography, sculpture and performance. Originally from Western Sydney, Williams uses found and recycled materials to create vivid and elaborate environments and costumes anchored in dazzling pattern, colour and movement. Now based in Brisbane, she has been a practising artist for more than 30 years. Williams' recent work includes the psychedelic proto-science fiction saga *Victory Over the Sun* in collaboration with Sydney Chamber Opera, and the hypnotising, 'performative' sculptural and video installations *The Curtain Breathed Deeply* co-presented by Artspace, Sydney, and Performa, New York City.

Recent career highlights include: Mondspiel – Bauhaus Now, Buxton Contemporary, Melbourne; The National 2017- New Australian Art, Carriageworks, Sydney; Under The Sun, National Library Sydney & Monash Gallery Of Art, Melbourne; Call Of The Avant-Garde Heide Museum of Modern Art, Victoria; The 20th Sydney Biennale-The future is

here it's just unevenly distributed; Dancing Umbrellas Heide Museum; Performa 15 Biennale- Australian Pavilions Without Walls, New York, United States; Pleasure and Reality, National Gallery of Victoria; No Mind, Sarah Cottier Gallery, The Curtain Breathed Deeply, touring 11 venues Australia; Hiding in Plain Sight: A selection from the Michael Buxton Collection, Bendigo Gallery, Victoria ;The Curtain Breathed Deeply, Artspace Sydney; VIDEO FOREVER 19-birds Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature Museum Paris; Behaving Bodies, UP Film Institute The Phillipines; Contemporary Australia: Women, Gallery of Modern Art, Queensland Art Gallery. Her work is held in national and international collections such as Tate Modern; Art Gallery of New South Wales; Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; MUMA Melbourne and Auckland Art Gallery.

Justene Williams is represented by Sarah Cottier Gallery Sydney, Australia

# PRODUCTION TEAM

**Project Director**

Michael Dagostino

**Creative Producer**

Lily Balatincz

**Assistant Creative Producer**

Matthew Prest

**Assistant Creative Producer**

Nikoleta Minns

**Production Manager**

Justin Phan

**Marketing Officer**

Danielle Farrugia

**Designer**

Ashley Murray

**Lead Fabricator**

Ben Hudson

**Lead Studio Assistant**

Natalie Houston

**Head of Wardrobe**

Kate O'Boyle

**Rigger**

Stuart Christie

**Sound Operator**

Jonathan Boulet

**Lighting Operator**

Nathan Moore

**Audio Description**

Jo George

**Costume Makers**

Jo Woodcroft, Lucy Nias, Melanie Gillbank, Catherine Stait-Gardner

**Costume Assistants**

Maria Guzmán, Sue Wallace

**Studio Assistants**

Hannah James, Laila Campbell

**Backstage Dressers**

Siobhan O'Hanlon, Amy Jackson, Corinne Harris, Michael Ianni, Maya Ascaino

**Volunteers**

Lilian Cao, Emma Moser, Evan Anderson



# STAFF LIST

<b>Director</b>	Michael Dagostino
<b>Business Coordinator</b>	Mouna Zaylah
<b>Acting Senior Curator</b>	Adam Porter
<b>Acting Curator Contemporary Visual Art</b>	Emily Rolfe
<b>Creative Producer – Contemporary Music</b>	Kiri Koubaroulis
<b>Creative Producer – Contemporary Performance</b>	Lily Balatincz
<b>Acting Creative Producer – Contemporary Dance</b>	Matt Prest
<b>Assistant Producer Contemporary Performance</b>	Nikoleta Minns
<b>Collections Officer</b>	Hannah James
<b>Production Team Leader</b>	Paul Welch
<b>Production Assistant</b>	Nathan Moore
<b>Education Officer</b>	Edwina Hill
<b>Creative Learning &amp; Engagement Officer</b>	Timothy George
<b>Arts &amp; Cultural Liaison Officer</b>	Brenden Broadbent
<b>Media and Communications Officer</b>	Danielle Farrugia
<b>Digital Content Officer</b>	Ashley Murray
<b>Administrative Assistant</b>	Sharon McAndrew
<b>Visitor Services Team Leader</b>	Zana Lopez
<b>Business Administration Trainee</b>	Jess Ring
<b>Visitor Services Officers</b>	Louise Snowdon, Julie Finch, Laura Brunick, Cindy Fabian, Tina Wheatley, Eva Hampel

# THANK YOU FROM JUSTENE WILLIAMS

I would like to thank Director of C-A-C Michael Dagostino for his insight and guidance, C-A-C Creative Producer of Contemporary Performance, Lily Balatincz for her passion, determination and commitment to this project, C-A-C Business Coordinator Mouna Zaylah for her support and going the extra mile, the entire *She Conjured the Clouds* team and the dedicated staff at C-A-C.

I would also like to thank Sue Best from Griffith University for her advice, Dr Jess Olivieri and Jenn Blake for their support early on in the project, the Australia Council for the Arts for their generous support and for providing Audio Description equipment, L'Estro Armonico String Orchestra and Director Janette

Ghuntous, Audio Describer Jo George, Australian Ramp Design Pty Ltd and Dion Kirk for their custom BMX ramps, and Sue Jo Wright for her dedicated work throughout the development of the show.

Finally thank you to my partner Ben and our daughter Honore, who inspired me to reach up into the clouds.

## **About Campbelltown Arts Centre**

Located on the edge of Sydney, Campbelltown Arts Centre is in a unique position to forge collaborative exchanges between artists, disciplines and communities through the creation of new curatorial situations and challenging streams of practice.

Using the edge as a starting point, Campbelltown Arts Centre creates a secure platform for communities and artists to take risks, challenge perceptions, confront issues and raise questions through the commissioning of new works. These new works invite collaboration, partnership, local, national and international dialogue, the juxtaposition of new and traditional techniques and cross-disciplinary approaches. Contemporary artists are at the forefront of Campbelltown Arts Centre's programming and through consultation with communities, we deliver a program that profiles contemporary visual arts, performance, dance, music, live art and emergent practices.

Campbelltown Arts Centre is a cultural facility of Campbelltown City Council and located on Dharawal land. Campbelltown Arts Centre is assisted by the NSW Government through Create NSW and by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its funding and advisory body, and receives support from the Crown Resorts Foundation and the Packer Family Foundation.

Campbelltown Arts Centre  
One Art Gallery Rd Campbelltown  
Open daily, 10am – 4pm  
02 4645 4100  
C-A-C.com.au



Create NSW  
Arts, Screen & Culture



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