re:group performance collective

POV



Image: Taylah Chapman

PERTH FESTIVAL

Founding Partner UWA

Principal Partner lotterywest

Perth Festival acknowledges the Noongar people who continue to practise values, language, beliefs and knowledge on kwobidak boodjar.

Noongar people remain the spiritual and cultural birdiyangara of this place and we honour and respect the caretakers and custodians and the vital role Noongar people play for our community and our Festival to flourish.

We also acknowledge all First Nations people, whose contributions make our Festival culturally and artistically richer.

Our hearts are happy that you are here, on the traditional lands of Whadjuk, part of the Bibbulmun nation and its people.

Perth Festival Noongar Cultural Authority Council
Roma Yibiyung Winmar, Vivienne Binyarn Hansen, Richard Walley, Barry McGuire & Mitchella Waljin Hutchins

Contents

2 **Welcome**

3 **Show Details**

4 **Creative Notes**
Writer's Note
Director's Note

6 **Credits**

7 **Biographies**
About re:group collective
Creative Team

10 **Acknowledgements**

Welcome

What I love about *POV* is that it is a work that takes young people seriously – not as subjects to be explained, but as thinkers, makers and truth-tellers in their own right. At a time when young voices are often spoken about rather than listened to, this work hands over agency and trusts what emerges. It's extraordinary and special to witness.

POV also explores how we might navigate difficult, everyday conversations within families – the ones shaped by care, tension, misunderstanding and love. It doesn't offer neat resolutions or moral lessons. It cleverly creates this shared space where the complexity of a family dynamic can be held without judgement.

I think for our Perth Festival audiences the work resonates because it reflects real life as it is lived: messy, intimate and unfinished. It invites us to consider how we speak to one another across generations, how we share power and how empathy can be built through curiosity rather than certainty.

Anna Reece
Artistic Director



re:group performance collective

POV

AUSTRALIA

10 – 15 Feb

Subiaco Arts Centre
Wandaraguttagurrup / Subiaco

Duration 70mins

Tue – Fri 7.30pm
Sat 2 & 7.30pm
Sun 6pm

Join us after the show on Wed 11 Feb for a Q&A session. Hear directly from the artists and creators of the work.

- Auslan performance Wed 11 Feb
- Tactile tour and audio described performance Fri 13 Feb

Contains coarse language and discussions of mental illness, Bipolar Affective Disorder and themes of suicide

Suitable for ages 15+



Writer's Note

Onstage tonight you will see two adults talking with a child about mental health. The adults will be unprepared and unrehearsed. The child will guide them through the experience, in charge and in control. How often is it like this? How often do children have the space and agency to be in charge on these topics? To run things, set the scene, call the shots?

In our show, Bub is a documentary filmmaker, making a documentary about her family. But it's about our families too. There is no family, no person, unaffected by the complex, intersecting issues of mental health and wellbeing. In making the show, our challenge was to talk about this difficult topic in a way that was safe for a young person, that adhered to Live Performance Australia's Guidelines for Child Safety and that two adult actors could make their way through without rehearsal. We've made the show this way because in real life we are rarely prepared. These conversations are always fraught, makeshift and done under pressure. We didn't want to write ABOUT these conversations, we wanted to HAVE these conversations.

We hope the show encourages more of them.

Mark Rogers

Director's Note

My mum has bipolar. But this show isn't about her or me directly. Maybe the show is like a letter from me to her. Or a letter from old me to young me and my sisters. Or a letter from me to my mum through Mark. Or from me to a young kid who is going through what we went through. But none of us are represented in it. We are represented through it, through a young person trying to grapple with big ideas.

It's a very messy thing to talk about. A parent being mentally unwell. I still struggle with it. But I have always thought that young people seem to be able to deal with these ideas as well as adults, and sometimes even better. A young person's capacity for empathy and care always astounds me.

Mark came to me a few years ago with an idea. What if we did a show with just a kid on stage. Trust them with a whole show. Give them all the support re:group can offer, but let them do the whole thing. An hour-long monologue by a single child on stage. I was sold.

I think that trust is the principal focus of our process of making *POV*. Trusting that the young person can do this, trusting they can learn their lines, trusting them to deal with the emotional weight of the show and trusting them to artfully boss two new adult actors around each night.

Through this work, I hope we have found a way for there to be a real conversation between a child and an adult onstage. It couldn't all be scripted. We had to leave it open for a real moment to happen in the theatre. That's our take on the idea of a documentary.

Solomon Thomas

Credits

Director
Solomon Thomas

Writer
Mark Rogers

Co-creators
Mark Rogers,
Solomon Thomas,
Malcolm Whittaker,
Steve Wilson-Alexander,
Carly Young

Performers
Yuna Ahn & Grace Tione

Guest Performers
Michael Barlow,
Nicola Bartlett,
Humphrey Bower,
Matt Edgerton,
Andrea Gibbs,
Arielle Gray,
Chris Isaacs,
Sukhjit Kaur Khalsa,
Amy Matthews,
Ben Mortley,
Jo Morris,
Gibson Nolte,
Will O'Mahony,
Maitland Schnaars,
Alexandria Steffensen,
Haydon Wilson

Sound Designer
Ashley Bundang

Chaperone
Laura Caesar

Stage Manager & Operator
Justice Georgopoulos

Production Assistant
Daniel Bailen

Creative Producer
Malcolm Whittaker

Administration
Intimate Spectacle

Images
Ashley Caygill,
Taylah Chapman,
Lucy Parakhina

POV is supported by Creative Australia, Shopfront Arts Co-op and the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies at University of Sydney.



About re:group performance collective

re:group performance collective is Mark Rogers, Solomon Thomas, Malcolm Whittaker, Steve Wilson-Alexander and Carly Young. We are a group of friends based between Sydney and Wollongong NSW who create work by engaging other friends on a project-by-project basis.

Inspired by the highs and lows of pop culture, we mash theatre and movie making together to create 'live cinema'. Our aim is to turn the typically comfortable and passive movie-going experience into something immersive, irreverent, sweaty and live. We are passionate about creating innovative work that questions the role and meaning of art in society, where the technology we use is core to the ideas in each work we make, which is ironic and sincere, and accessible and experimental, all in equal measure.

POV is the latest work that captures re:group's interest in inhabiting and remaking popular cinematic forms for a theatre context. Following sci-fi (*UFO*, Griffin 2023) and nostalgic indie movie (*Coil*, Opera House 2022 and a 2023 national tour), *POV* centres the least fashionable and most maligned aspect of documentary filmmaking – the dramatic re-enactment.

Creative Biographies

Mark Rogers Writer

Mark is a multi-award-winning playwright, screenwriter and theatre-maker who lives on Dharawal Land. In 2019 he won both Sydney Theatre Company's Patrick White Award and the Griffin Award for New Australian Writing for his play *Superheroes*. His play *Naked & Screaming* won Best Production at the 2022 Matilda Awards. He was awarded Screen NSW's Short To Feature Fast Track Initiative for a new project with director and co-writer Aaron Lucas, which premiered at SXSW Sydney and screened at the Adelaide Film Festival in 2024. He has feature length projects in development with Closer Productions and Cosmic Scream, supported by Screen Australia.

His work as a playwright includes *Naked & Screaming* (La Boite Theatre), *Superheroes* (Griffin Theatre Company), *Tom William Mitchell* (Merrigong-X), *Plastic* (Old 505 Theatre), *Soothsayers* (Brisbane Festival: Under The Radar), *Blood Pressure* (Rock Surfers, Old Fitzroy Theatre) and *Gobbledygook* (PACT, AC Arts Adelaide). His work with the independent companies re:group performance collective and Applespiel has been staged at Belvoir, Darwin Festival, MONA:FOMA, Next Wave, PACT, Performance Space, Metro Arts, Malthouse Theatre, La Mama, Merrigong Theatre Company, Shopfront Arts Co-Op, Arts House and the Sydney Opera House. He holds a PHD from the University of Wollongong.

Solomon Thomas Director

Soloman is a theatre-maker and video artist. His work explores the intersection between the physical and digital in theatre, experimenting with how theatre and film can co-exist in a live context. He works as a director, performer, puppeteer and video designer and is driven by how these practices meet formally. His recent works include *AUTO-TUNE* (Opera House 2024), *POV* (Belvoir 2024), *Oh Deer!* (Rising, 2023), *Sex Magic* (Griffin 2023), *UFO* (Griffin 2023), *The Sucker* (Brand X, 2021) and *What the Ocean Said* (Opera House, 2022). Solomon is a core member of re:group performance collective, who's work *Coil* was presented at the Opera House, Mona Foma, PACT and Next Wave. Solomon has also worked with Branch Nebula, My Darling Patricia, Nick Cave, Applespiel, Studio A and Chiara Guidi. Solomon was artistic associate with Erth Visual & Physical Inc (2014 – 24) and has toured with them throughout the UK, UAE, Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia and Japan.

Steve Wilson-Alexander Creative Team

Steve is a theatre-maker living on Dharawal Land. He is a founding member of re:group performance collective and FAST PRINCESS, the resident film-making collective at Cerebral Palsy Alliance 2016 – 18. He was Youth Artist in Residence at Wollongong Youth Centre 2012, a member of PACT Collective 2015, a part of International Visiting Artists Week at Back to Back 2017 and a participant of the Artist Farm residency at The Theatre Practice, Singapore in 2018. He worked on Ben Tre Festival of the Coconut and Hue Festival in 2012 and Santiago A Mil International Theatre Festival in 2019. He assistant directed/video designed *Something that Happened* with Strangeways Ensemble (2023). His theatre work with re:group includes *Route Dash Niner* at Merrigong Theatre Company (2016 – 17) and the national tour of *Coil* (2022 – 23), *POV* at Downstairs Belvoir (2024), *KEEP YOUR HEAD UP* for Festival of Dangerous Ideas at Carriageworks (2024) and *AUTO-TUNE* at Sydney Opera House (2024).

Carly Young Creative Team

Carly is a theatre-maker and producer living on Dharawal Land. As a founding member and artist in re:group performance collective, she has created film, video and performance works across Australia and internationally. Key projects include *Coil* national tour (2022 – 23), *Route Dash Niner: Part 1* and *Route Dash Niner: Part 2* for Merrigong Theatre Company, Wollongong (2016 – 17), *Hotel Obscura* with Triage, Die Fabrikanten, Mezzanine Spectacles & Ohi Pezoume at FAI AR, Marseille (2015); *LOVELY* at PACT, Sydney (2014), *Carly and Troy do 'A Doll's House'* at Crack Theatre Festival, Newcastle (2013), Adelaide Fringe Festival (2014), You Are Here Festival, Canberra (2014), La Mama Theatre, Melbourne (2016) and durational performance work *YOWZA YOWZA YOWZA* with Deborah Pollard for Performance Space at the University of Wollongong (2014). Carly works as a creative producer across visual arts, music and theatre, and was an inaugural participant in *All The Things We Couldn't Say*, a three-year collaboration between Salamanca Arts Centre in Australia and Checkpoint Theatre in Singapore.

Malcolm Whittaker Creative Team

Malcolm works as an artist, writer, researcher, performer, producer and teacher in solo pursuits, as a member of re:group performance collective and Shammgods, and in collaboration with other artists and non-artists on a project by project basis. His projects have taken the form of theatre and gallery situations, site-specific and public interventions, performance lectures, film shoots, phone calls, support groups, radio programs, elevator rides, teeth-brushing services, walks in the park, games of chess, gift shops, handshakes, newspapers, fashion labels, letters in the mail, digging holes in the dirt and the borrowing of books from the library. He has made and presented work extensively across Australia, the UK and Europe through a range of initiatives and organisations. Malcolm holds a PhD from The University of Wollongong, where he has also worked as a sessional teacher of art theory and practice since 2014. He has been a member of the Artistic Directorate of PACT Centre for Emerging Arts since 2020.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to our Partners

Founding Partner

Principal Partner

City Events Partner

Boorloo Contemporary Partner

Premier Partners

Major Partners

Associate Partners

Festival Partners

Alex Hotel | Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions | Heritage Council of WA
Paramount Security Services | RTRFM 92.1 | The Backlot Perth | The Embassy of France in Australia

With thanks to State Theatre Centre of WA staff, management and board

Thanks to our Donors

We thank our community of donors for helping us achieve our bold artistic vision and for making an impact on the cultural narrative of our State.

Leadership Partners

Patrons

Adrian & Michela Fini

Trusts & Foundations

Chair's Circle $20,000+

John & Linda Bond*
Margrete Chaney &
Michael Chaney AO
Jock & Kathryn Clough
Marco D'Orsogna & Terry Scott*
Paul & Didi Downie
Adrian & Michela Fini
Greg Lewis & Sue Robertson*
Ben Lisle
James Litis
The Mack Family
The McClements Foundation
Paula Rogers & Phil Thick
Tim & Chris Ungar*

To review Perth Festival's complete donor acknowledgement please **visit our website**.

Find out more about how you too can join our community of donors and support Perth Festival.

perthfestival.com.au