

PRESENTED BY VITALSTATISTIX

# We All Know What's Happening

*Samara Hersch  
and Lara Thoms*



Image: Bryony Jackson



**9 & 10 FEBRUARY**

The Vitalstatistix board and staff acknowledge that we, and our home Waterside, are on Kaurna country, its sovereignty never ceded. We acknowledge the Kaurna people as the continuing custodians of the Adelaide Plains. We honour their spiritual relationship with this land, and we thank them for welcoming us. We pay respect to the Kaurna Elders and through them to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## Creative Team

CO-CREATORS **SAMARA HERSCH AND LARA THOMS**

ORIGINAL CONCEPT **SAMARA HERSCH**

SHOW DIRECTOR **CASSANDRA FUMI**

SOUND DESIGN AND COMPOSITION **MARCO CHER- GIBARD**

PIANIST AND ADDITIONAL SOUND DESIGN **GRACE FERGUSON**

PERFORMED AND CREATED WITH **ALLEGRA DI LALLO, LAZAR FELDMAN, FINN OWEN, TOVE DUE, VENU ELISAIA, CASPER PLUM AND THEO BOLTMAN**

LIGHTING DESIGN **JEN HECTOR**

STAGE MANAGER **TENNESSEE MYNOTT-RUDLAND**

DESIGN **ROMANIE HARPER WITH LARA THOMS**

ORIGINAL CAST MEMBERS AND COLLABORATORS **BRIDIE NOONAN AND EVE NIXON**

MELBOURNE PRODUCING SUPPORT **JO PORTER**

**WE ALL KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING PREMIERED AT ARTS HOUSE,  
SUPPORTED BY CREATIVE VICTORIA AND SAVE THE CHILDREN.**

Welcome to *We All Know What's Happening* by Samara Hersch and Lara Thoms, Vitalstatistix's first presentation for 2019.

When I saw this show at Campbelltown Arts Centre, NSW, late last year, I knew that Vitals had to present it and to do so as early as possible in 2019.

*We All Know What's Happening* is partly about the utterly bizarre history of Nauru and colonialism; however more broadly it reveals powerful truths about childhood, human rights, privilege and social change.

We present this show just as our Federal Parliament returns for its final sitting before a not too distant Federal election later this year. We can expect that the Member for Wentworth Kerry Phelp's Urgent Medical Treatment Bill will be debated in the Lower House this week. Its passing will require the urgent medical transfer of any asylum seeker, child or adult, who is ill and unable to be treated offshore. Last week it was announced that the final four children currently held on Nauru will be resettled in the U.S with their families. The Australian Government has been dragged kicking and screaming to this outcome – and there is much still to do to change Australia's shameful treatment of asylum seekers and refugees, for which both major parties are responsible for.

As with the climate change emergency, in the last few years we have seen that it is children that are prepared to lead the radical, compassionate change needed in our society. This show powerfully represents that hope. Performed by seven children who collaborated with Lara and Samara to make this work - which won Best Production, Contemporary and Experimental Performance at the 2018 Green Room Awards - we hope it inspires activism in adults and children alike.

**EMMA WEBB  
DIRECTOR, VITALSTATISTIX**

# From The Artists

From very early phosphate mining to current negotiations around refugee detention centres, our country has been literally placing itself in the middle of this tiny pacific island, adding to a long list of complex and absurd injustices.

## **WE ALL KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING IS A RESPONSE TO AUSTRALIA'S ONGOING COLONIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH NAURU.**

Within the school system, Australian children have only recently begun to learn about Australia's own history of invasion and exploitation towards our First Nations People. This work hopes to extend the awareness of our country's questionable behaviour across the Pacific and our violation of basic human rights toward asylum seekers.

This work premieres more than four years since the Australian government announced that *"Asylum seekers who come here by boat without a visa will never be settled in Australia."* With the recent sudden removal of all doctors from the island and the outbreak of traumatic withdrawal syndromes experienced by refugee children there, there is no doubt that pressure is intensifying on the government to stop this cruelty. Whilst some children are now in Australia seeking treatment, we, like many others, want to keep this conversation on the table and end this unnecessary cycle of trauma and uncertainty that is happening in our name.

Although we often feel the need to protect children from atrocities performed by our country there is a particular tension when this involves other children their own age. Throughout this process we have worked with seven incredible young people who are thoughtful, political and deeply concerned, some of whom have even created their own organisation dedicated to children's rights called Children for Children.

Whilst We All Know What's Happening plays with traditional and sometimes satirical forms such as the musical and school history lesson, the politics of this work are intentionally palpable. What we didn't expect was that the despair we felt at the beginning of our process has shifted to inspiration as we witness young people dedicated to changing Australia's policies and seeing children their age find justice.

# Creative Team

## **Finn Owen**

Finn is a 13 year old from Melbourne with a passion for the creative arts. He enjoys acting, playing music, and interacting with his friends and family.

## **Casper Plum**

Casper has past experience in drama and dance with Castlemaine Theatre Company 2015 – 2018 and Movement Zone Castlemaine 2016 – 2018. He is a self taught hip hop dancer with a strong passion for popping and locking and currently attends dance tuition at Passion Dance Studios in Melbourne. He performed in Fraught Outfit's *Book of Exodus Part II* in 2017 and currently attends weekly drama workshops with *House of Muchness*. Casper has performed at many *Minus 18* events over the past year.

## **Tove Due**

Tove is a university student, studying theatre, philosophy, and literature. She has appeared in devised works *On the Bodily Education of Young Girls* (MTC Neon 2013) and *The Bacchae* (Melbourne Festival 2015, Dark Mofo 2016), and last year worked as a director's secondment on *Book of Exodus - Part I* (Theatreworks/Fraught Outfit).





### Theo Boltman

Theo is 13 years old and has been dancing classical ballet for 4 years. He thoroughly enjoys musical theatre and being on stage as well as reading fiction and vogue magazines.

### Lazar Feldman

Lazar is a young performer from Melbourne who is 15 years old. He is passionate about social justice and has been involved with the *Crossage Ensemble* at St Martins Youth Arts Centre as well as performing in *We All Know What's Happening* at Arts House.

### Allegra Di Lallo

Allegra is 12 years old from Melbourne who is excited to be performing in Adelaide. She enjoys drama, tennis and making a positive change in the world.

### Venu Elisaia

Venu is 12 years old from Melbourne. *"I really like acting and it's something I am passionate about. It's really nice getting to know other people and communicating with them. I'm also into dance and practice quite a bit. I'm just keen on performing in general."*



### Cassandra Fumi

Cassandra is a theatre director & stage manager, recent directing credits include; *Dog Show* (Melbourne Fringe Hub- Winner Best New Ensemble & Falls Festival), *The Places You'll Go* (Adelaide Fringe- Winner Best Theatre - Week 3), *Nadja after André Breton* (The Cockpit Theatre & Hornsey Town Hall Arts Centre, London), *An Act Of Self-Destruction* (VAULT Festival & Ply Gallery), *Wednesday Addams* (Melbourne Fringe), *Poker Face* (Kings Head, London & Trieste & Milan International Arts Festival) and Assistant Director of *The House of Bernarda Alba* (Melbourne Theatre Company). Recent SM credits include; *Broken* (Susie Dee for Lab Kelpie), *Lone* (The Rabble - Arts House), *We All Know What's Happening* (Campbeltown Arts Centre), *Strangers In Between* (Cameron Lukey - Seymour Centre & fortyfivedownstairs) *Book of Exodus P2* (Fraught Outfit - Theatreworks), *Angels in America Part 1 & Part 2* (Cameron Lukey & Dirty Pretty Theatre - fortyfivedownstairs), *Thérèse Raquin* (Critical Stages Australian Tour), *Thebes Land* (Arcola Theatre, Lon- Off West End Best Production Award 2017), *Sleepless* (Analogue Theatre, Shoreditch Town Hall & European Tour) and *Kieran Hodgson's Lance* (UK Tour, Soho Theatre, Edinburgh Fringe Festival), [www.cassandrafumi.com](http://www.cassandrafumi.com)

### Samara Hersch

Samara is a theatre maker, director and teaching artist whose practice explores the intersection of contemporary performance and community engagement. She is currently studying her Masters at Das Theatre in Amsterdam. She is interested in radical modes of listening and public acts of intimacy, particularly through imagining new performative frames for non-professional performers and audiences to inhabit. In 2018 Samara presented *Dybbuks* with Chamber Made and is currently developing a new work with teenagers called *Body of Knowledge*, for SICK! Festival in Manchester. Samara was mentored by Bruce Gladwin, from Back to Back Theatre Co. through the JUMP National Mentorship Program and later worked as a show director on their production of *Super Discount*. In 2015 Samara was a director in Residence at Malthouse Theatre.

### Lara Thoms

Lara is interested in socially engaged, site-specific and participatory possibilities in contemporary art and performance. Elements of exchange, politics and humour are an important part of her work. Her most recent work *The Director* premiered at Artshouse and was in collaboration with an ex-funeral director and interrogated the death industry. Her work has been presented nationally and internationally including with Perth International Arts Festival, Artshouse, Melbourne Festival and The Malthouse.

### Grace Ferguson

Grace is a pianist, composer and sound designer who collaborates with artists on a variety of music, theatre and film projects. Her solo practice is strongly influenced by her classical music training but she now prefers to approach music making in a more improvised and experimental manner. Her affinity with the piano is often integrated with electronics, field recordings, spoken word and various lo-fi techniques such as tape collage and reel-to-reel manipulation.



### Tennessee Mynott-Rudland

Tennessee graduated from her Bachelor of Performing Arts at Monash in 2015. While there she was heavily involved in student theatre, managing a number of their productions. She has since worked in arts management and facilitation roles with companies including Melbourne Fringe, The Village Festival, Footscray Community Arts Centre, St. Martins Youth Arts, and These Are The Project We Do Together. She also co-founded and co-curates the website *Girls Will Be Girls*.

### Romanie Harper

Romanie is a theatre maker and Designer. Design credits include *Trustees* (Malthouse, 2018), *Contest* (Darebin Speakeasy, 2018) *Little Emperors* (Malthouse, 2017), *We All Know What's Happening* (Arts House, 2017), *Conviction* (ZLMD Shakespeare, 2016, Green Room award for Design), *M+M* (Daniel Schlusser Ensemble, Melbourne Festival 2013, Greenroom Nomination for Design) and *The Sovereign Wife* (Sisters Grimm, NEON 2013, Green Room nominated for Design). She has worked with The Wooster Group, and co-designed Radiohole's *Inflatable Frankenstein* (The Kitchen, NYC, 2013). She has co-directed and designed *The Collected Works of Victor Bergman* (Fortyfivedownstairs, 2014) by The Family, and *Calamity* (NEON 2015) by ZLMD Shakespeare.



### Marco Cher-Gibard

Marco is an artist working through sound. His practice foregrounds live process and often uses custom software and DIY approaches to sound making. Marco is a constant collaborator in performance contexts where contributes as a sound designer, composer and infrequent performer.

### Jennifer Hector

Jennifer recently designed the set and lighting for Jo Lloyd's *Overture*, Jodee Mundy's *Personal* and lighting for Sydney Chamber Opera's *Howling Girls*. She was the lighting designer for the 2108 Keir Choreographic Awards, designed the Hub for 2017 Yirramboi- The First Nations Arts Festival and both her set and lighting designs for *Blood on the Dance Floor* and Jodee Mundy's *Imagined Touch* were part of the 2017 Sydney Festival. Other lighting credits included Sam Halmarack and Joseph O'Farrell's *We Are Lightning*, Nat Cursio's *Loop*, Fraught Outfit's *Exodus II*. Jenny developed the residential light installation *How Are You?*; and designed lighting and collaborated alongside the likes of Aphids, Chamber Made Opera, Dark MOFO, Maddy and Frankie Dance Madeleine Flynn and Tim Humphrey, Back to Back Theatre Company and Rimini Protokoll. Jenny Hector is the recipient of two Green Room awards and received the 2017 Green Room Award for Technical achievement.



## Vitalstatistix

Vitalstatistix is a South Australian arts organisation based in Port Adelaide. We are a vibrant home on the Port River for Australian artists who are changing the world through contemporary culture, art, performance and progressive commentary. We support the development and presentation of live, multidisciplinary artworks and we promote artistic practices that experiment with ideas, form and engagement.

We aim to provide a leading site for big ideas and intimate experiences, for long-term creative development and hothouse intensity, as an artist-centred organisation advancing the future of contemporary art and community life in South Australia.

VITALSTATISTIX DIRECTOR **EMMA WEBB**

VITALSTATISTIX PRODUCTION MANAGER **EMMA O'NEILL**

VITALSTATISTIX OPERATIONS MANAGER **TOBY NEVILL**

VITALSTATISTIX PROGRAM AND COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR **ISOBEL MOORE**

SEASON FRONT OF HOUSE/HOSPITALITY COORDINATOR **MEG WILSON**

BRANDING AND GRAPHIC DESIGN **FREERANGE FUTURE**

## Thank You

**FELICITY MARTIN, SOPHIE HAYWARD, HUDSON WHITLOCK, JASON LEHANE, JAMES JACKSON, COLETTE BRENNAN, ABBOTSFORD CONVENT, OSMONDS ELECTRICAL, STATE THEATRE COMPANY AND JAMES SWEENEY.**

[riserefugee.org](http://riserefugee.org)

[welcometoaustralia.org.au](http://welcometoaustralia.org.au)

[asrc.org.au](http://asrc.org.au)

[endchilddetentionoz.com](http://endchilddetentionoz.com)

[doctors4refugees.org](http://doctors4refugees.org)

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