



THEATRE REPUBLIC

Annual Report
2023



**THEATRE REPUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGES THE KAURNA
PEOPLE AS THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THE
ADELAIDE REGION AND RESPECTS THEIR SPIRITUAL
RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR COUNTRY.**

**WE ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR CULTURAL AND HERITAGE
BELIEFS AND THEIR CONTINUING CONNECTION TO LAND,
WATERS AND COMMUNITY.**

**THEATRE REPUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGES OTHER TRADITIONAL
OWNERS OF COUNTRY ACROSS AUSTRALIA.**

**WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO THEM, THEIR CULTURE AND TO
ELDERS PAST AND PRESENT.**





THEATRE REPUBLIC TELLS NEW AUSTRALIAN STORIES THAT REFLECT A COMPLEX AND EVER-CHANGING WORLD. NEW PLAYWRITING IS THE MOTOR OF OUR WORK AND THE SOURCE OF OUR INSPIRATION. OUR THEATRE BEGINS WITH THE WRITER'S WORDS. THE PLAYWRIGHT SITS AT THE CENTRE OF ALL THAT WE DO, FROM FIRST DRAFT TO OPENING NIGHT. THEATRE REPUBLIC IS COMMITTED TO ENRICHING THE WORK AND LIVES OF LOCAL ARTISTS AND CREATIVES IN A COLLABORATIVE AND INCLUSIVE COMPANY

WE HAVE A **VISION** FOR AN EMPOWERED, COMPASSIONATE AND UNITED SOCIETY, INSPIRED BY THE POWER OF THEATRE.

TO ACHIEVE THIS, OUR **MISSION** IS TO CREATE POWERFUL, SURPRISING AND EVOCATIVE AUSTRALIAN THEATRE THAT CAPTURES OUR ESSENTIAL HUMANITY AND IS A FORCE FOR POSITIVE CHANGE IN OUR COMMUNITY.



ANNABEL MATHESON
PRODUCER

COREY MCMAHON
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR/CEO

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR



This has been a big year for Theatre Republic: a year of sadness, replenishment, growth, and renewed focus on the company's medium- and long-term goals.

In November 2022, the brilliant Roz Hervey regrettably resigned from the board, and in December of that year, the much-loved chair of the company, Jamie Anderson, died suddenly. Both made an enormous contribution over their years of service. Roz remains a valued supporter, and Jamie is greatly missed.

It was an honour to be invited to join the board as chair, having spent four years on the board of Sydney's Griffin Theatre Company, and nine years on the board of State Theatre Company of SA. In obvious ways, the latter experience is more relevant to an Adelaide-based company, but in fact it is my time with Griffin that I lean on in this role, it being a small company with the most noble of theatrical ambitions: to present 100% new Australian work.

The company celebrated its fifth year of existence and Manda Flett, the company's indefatigable Company Manager, chose that milestone to depart the company to pursue the other in-demand professional and personal elements of her life. Manda's departure provided the company with the opportunity to restructure operations. The role of Company Manager was split into two new positions: Producer and Finance Officer. Stepping into the role of Producer is another theatre artist and administrator, Annabel Matheson, who has brought new focus and energy to the steerage of the company as artistic director Corey McMahon's chief operational partner, with the company's financial operations now managed by arts accountant Will Traeger.



We have also welcomed three new board members: Liz Gogler, Catherine Bauer, and Daniel Stirling-Brown. All three bring lots of new drive and determination to guide Theatre Republic toward its goals as an important stay (and stayer!) of South Australian theatre.

The company employed more artists than ever before; produced a major new commissioned work, *The Garden*; undertook a third-stage development of Anthony Nocera's new work of scale, *Log Boy*; presented an enhanced and very entertaining *Future:Present* which—aside from being a terrific night of raw theatre—represents our determination to be a nurturing developmental presence in the theatre of Adelaide; Corey is working tirelessly on new institutional and artistic partnerships and new works; and we are in the early stages of carefully developing our Reconciliation Action Plan, a crucial foundation for our ambitions as an inclusive company resident on beautiful Kaurna land.

We are extremely grateful for the support of our generous donors, the enthusiasm of a growing audience, the goodwill and encouragement of local artists, and—of course—the financial support of the Government of South Australia.

TERENCE CRAWFORD
CHAIR OF THE BOARD



ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2023 was a mixture of celebration, achievements and challenges. We celebrated the company's 5th birthday; a significant milestone for a micro-organisation such as ours! To mark the occasion (and aid in our fundraising program), we created a featurette and invited Theatre Republic alumni to share their experience of working with the company. The clip can be viewed [HERE](#)

Our 2023 program focused solely on the presentation and development of new local writing. All three projects supported the work of local playwrights and provided vital employment opportunities to local artists and creatives. In 2023 we presented two major productions: *Future:Present 2.0* at the Goodwood Theatre and *The Garden* at the Space Theatre, presented in association with the Adelaide Festival Centre. A last-minute addition to our program was undertaking the third stage development of *Log Boy* by Anthony Nocera, a new work of scale we have been developing for last couple of years. The development was made possible thanks to an out-of-round grant secured through Arts SA.

2023 saw the company continue to punch above its weight. Three projects for a small company such as ours, with a combined core staffing total of 0.6 FTE, was no small achievement. Support through the Program Support Grant enabled us to continue to extend our engagement with local artists and grow our artistic program. This resulted in a marked increase in the number of artists we employed across the year. In 2022 we provided employment opportunities to 17 people. In 2023, the company supported 32 artists, creatives, technical and stage management crew (an increase of 88%). These results illustrate just how far we have come from our humble beginnings, presenting our first production at the Bakehouse Theatre in 2018.

As noted in the Chair's Report, the year began with the company coming to terms with the sudden loss of Jamie Anderson, who served as Chair of the Board for 2 years. Jamie's passing was felt deeply within the company. In January 2023 we were incredibly fortunate to have Dr Terence Crawford step into the role of Chair. Terence has been a reassuring and decisive presence and his ascension to the role provided the catalyst needed to invite a number of new Directors to serve on the board.

With a new team and refreshed board there's a new energy and focus within the company. We have started work on the development of a First Nations' framework and Reconciliation Action Plan, we have expanded our engagement with local artists, and we continue to expand our donor base to diversify the company's income streams. This expansion will enable us to provide more opportunities for local theatre makers into the future.

Our sincere thanks and gratitude to our small band of committed donors and to the team at Arts SA who continue to provide support and guidance to the company.

COREY MCMAHON

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND CEO



FUTURE:PRESENT 2.0.

2023 kicked off with the return of *Future:Present*, our new writing incubator project. The inaugural season took place in 2021. *Future:Present 2.0* assembled a team of 18 playwrights, directors, actors and creatives, production and stage managers to present four new short plays, written and staged in response to a compelling topic or theme, relevant to the times we are living in.

In 2023 *Future:Present* challenged the team to rapidly create their plays in response to the theme of democracy.

The four plays presented were:

***The Worst* by Emily Steel**

directed by Connor Reidy
featuring Eddie Morrison and Elizabeth Hay

***Wide Awake in Limbo* by Samuel Lau**

directed by Shannon Rush
featuring Eddie Morrison and Juanita Navas-Nguyen

***Unit Seven* by Sarah Peters**

directed by Clara Solly-Slade
featuring Adam Ovadia and Juanita Navas- Nguyen

***Black Widow Pussy* by Anthony Nocera**

directed by Annabel Matheson
featuring Adam Ovadia and Elizabeth Hay

The 2023 season of *Future:Present* was a great success. It is a bold experiment that challenges playwrights, actors, directors and creatives to draw on their skills and talent to produce four new local plays, in record time; plays that are edgy, raw, thought-provoking and entertaining. We once again enjoyed a strong response at the box office, beating our target, and playing to a very enthusiastic and boisterous audience.

**UNIT SEVEN
BY SARAH PETERS**



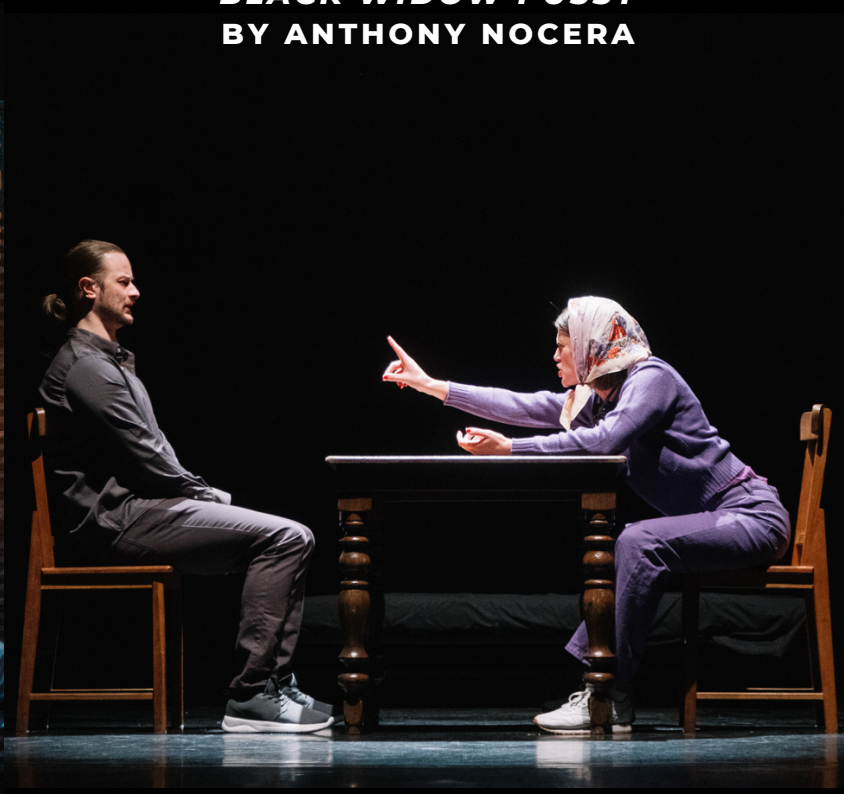
**THE WORST
BY EMILY STEEL**



**WIDE AWAKE IN LIMBO
BY SAMUEL LAU**



**BLACK WIDOW PUSSY
BY ANTHONY NOCERA**



Future:Present 2.0 took place over two weeks from 26 June to 29 June 2023 (writing) and 10 July to 14 July 2023 (rehearsal and presentation), with rehearsals and performance taking place at the Goodwood Theatre and Studios.

THE GARDEN BY EMILY STEEL.



Future:Present 2.0 was followed by the world premiere of *The Garden* written by Emily Steel. The play was commissioned, developed and produced across the latter half of 2022 and across 2023. Following the creative and critical success of *How Not To Make It In America*, Emily's first commission for Theatre Republic in 2021, it was agreed that a new play, tapping into some of the most topical issues facing the planet would be commissioned for production in 2023.

Based on Emily's short play written for *Future:Present 1.0*, *The Garden* was an examination of inequality, climate change and poverty, explored using the metaphor of a community garden.





The Garden, presented in the Space Theatre, was a creative success with all of the elements – direction, acting, set and lighting design, composition – coming together to create a successfully rendered and professional production. *The Garden* told an important story and explored some potent and relevant themes. The production represented everything that Theatre Republic is about: working with local artists to create new, politically charged, Australian plays that engage with the conversations we are having about our world – right now.

Rehearsals for *The Garden* took place from 11 September to 6 October 2023 with bump-in and performance at the Space Theatre from 9 October to 14 October 2023.



LOG BOY DEVELOPMENT.

In between *Future:Present 2.0* and *The Garden*, we undertook the third stage development of *Log Boy* by Anthony Nocera. *Log Boy* is a new theatrical work of scale that is bold, formally ambitious and highly theatrical. Theatre Republic has been developing the play with Anthony over the last 2 years. *Log Boy* explores the inter-generational tension between gay men arising from the AIDS crisis, bringing a cast of queer characters to the stage to explore the theme of gay shame and its relationship to the AIDS epidemic which - after almost 40 years - continues to haunt the generation of gay men who survived it. Anthony Nocera is one of South Australia's most exciting new voices. His writing is whip-smart, combining a knack for writing clever, witty dialogue with an uncanny insight into what makes us humans tick.

The development for *Log Boy* took place from 14 to 18 August 2023.



Cast and creative team LtoR: Matt Crook, Elena Carapetis, Corey McMahon, Anthony Nocera, James Wardlaw, Chris Asimos, Paul Reichstein.

4

brand new Australian plays

seen by

705

people

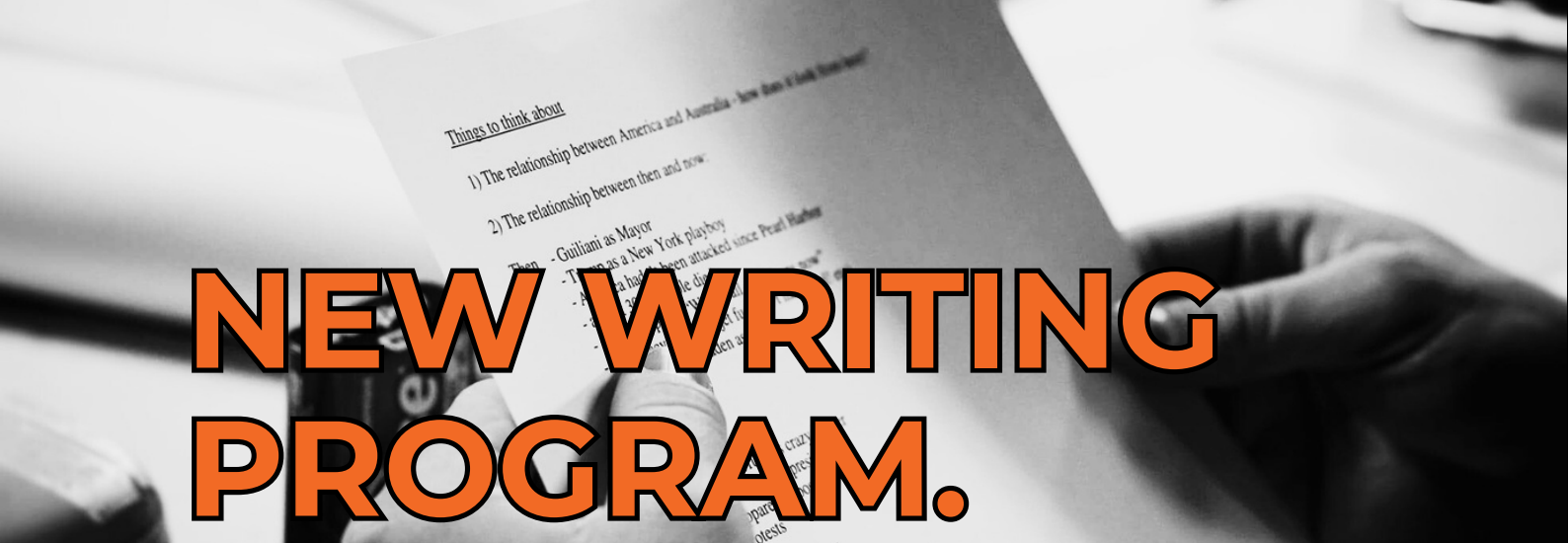
32

artists were
employed by Theatre
Republic in 2023

88%

increase on
employment from
the previous year





NEW WRITING PROGRAM.

THEATRE REPUBLIC IS A PLAYWRIGHT'S THEATRE COMPANY.

WE TAKE OUR INSPIRATION FROM THE WRITER'S WORDS.

Our new writing development program is designed to develop and ultimately produce one new local play every two years. This timeline means we can devote the right amount of time to nurturing the creation of a new play and to supporting the playwright to do their best work.

Theatre Republic does not accept unsolicited submissions. Instead, our approach starts with a conversation and with one simple question:

What would you like to write about?

We're committed to empowering the writer, so they tell the story they want to tell.

Our new writing program operates across two strands:

- Commissioning a playwright to write a new, full-length play
- Our new writing incubator project, *Future:Present*, that provides playwrights with the opportunity to write a new short play, tested in the rehearsal room and on-stage in front of a live audience. *Future:Present* is designed to be a gateway for further development of selected works into a full-length play.

Since 2018, we have developed and presented two new full length plays and have seen the writing and presentation of eight new short plays as part of *Future:Present*, with two of the short plays selected for development into full-scale works.

A black and white photograph of a hand holding a pen, poised to write on a document. The document has some faint, illegible text on it.

IN DEVELOPMENT.

COLLEGIALITY

BY MATT CROOK

Local actor, director and theatre maker, Matt Crook has created a disturbing new play that exposes the dark underbelly of elite private boy's schools. *Collegiality* examines the relationship between class, entitlement, accountability and power.



LOG BOY

BY ANTHONY NOCERA

Anthony Nocera's wickedly dark comedy explores the intergenerational tensions that exist between survivors of the AIDS epidemic and today's generation of care-free queer people. *Log Boy* is an epic work of scale that sees the past and present collide in a battle over who gets to own queer grief and shame.



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION as of 30 June 2023		
	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	131,526	102,966
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	131,526	102,966
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Trade and Other Payables	2031	1970
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	2031	1970
Net Assets	129,495	100,966
Equity		
Retained Earnings	129,495	100,966
TOTAL EQUITY	129,495	100,966

This is an extract from our audited statements, prepared by KPMG.

A full record of Theatre Republic's financial reporting can be found at the [Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits website](#).

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



Government of South Australia

Arts South Australia



Australian Government



SUPPORTING PARTNERS



PRINCIPAL DONORS

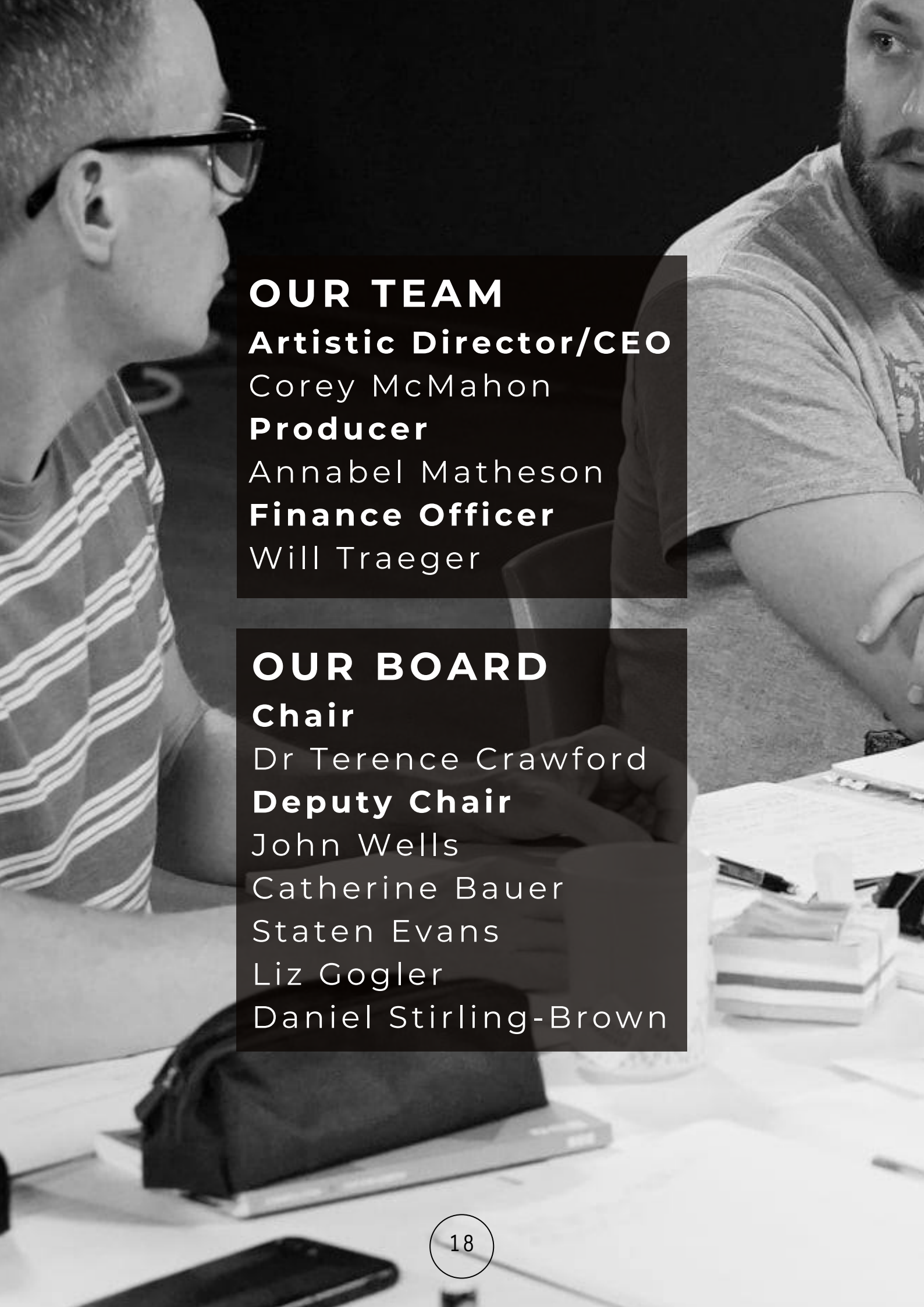
Lesley Forwood

Sam Harvey

Diané Ranck

Roger and Helen Salkeld

FWH Foundation



OUR TEAM

Artistic Director/CEO

Corey McMahon

Producer

Annabel Matheson

Finance Officer

Will Traeger

OUR BOARD

Chair

Dr Terence Crawford

Deputy Chair

John Wells

Catherine Bauer

Staten Evans

Liz Gogler

Daniel Stirling-Brown

FUTURE:PRESENT 2.0

Cast, creative and production team:

Shannon Rush	Lead Creative/Director
Annabel Matheson	Director
Connor Reidy	Director
Clara Solly-Slade	Director
Emily Steel	Playwright
Sarah Peters	Playwright
Samuel Lau	Playwright
Anthony Nocera	Playwright
Elizabeth Hay	Actor
Eddie Morrison	Actor
Juanita Navas-Nguyen	Actor
Adam Ovadia	Actor
Kathryn Sproul	Designer
Nic Mollison	Lighting Designer
James Oborn	Composer/Sound Designer
Françoise Piron	Production Manager
Nam Nguyen	Stage Manager
Manda Flett	Producer

LOG BOY BY ANTHONY NOCERA (DEVELOPMENT)

Cast and creative team:

Anthony Nocera	Playwright
Corey McMahon	Director
Elena Carapetis	Dramaturg/Actor
Matt Crook	Actor
Paul Reichstein	Actor
James Wardlaw	Actor
Chris Asimos	Actor
Manda Flett	Producer

THE GARDEN BY EMILY STEEL

Cast, creative and production team:

Emily Steel	Playwright
Corey McMahon	Director
Meg Wilson	Designer
Chris Petridis	Lighting Designer
Jason Sweeney	Composer
James Oborn	Sound Designer
Elizabeth Hay	Actor
Rashidi Edward	Actor
Isabella Strada	Production Manager
Nam Nguyen	Stage Manager
Manda Flett	Producer

PROMOTIONAL PHOTOS OF *THE GARDEN* BY
THOMAS MCCAMMON (PAGES 6 & 20)

PRODUCTION PHOTOS OF *THE GARDEN* BY
MORGAN SETTE (PAGES 1, 7, 10, 11, 13, 19)

PRODUCTION PHOTOS OF *FUTURE:PRESENT 2.0*
BY THOMAS MCCAMMON (PAGE 8-9)

OTHER IMAGES: SUPPLIED.

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