

## Our Work With You in 2020

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Over the last few months we have been doing two important things. Like everyone, we've been dealing with the circumstances brought about by COVID-19. We know that people and organisations are hurting, and we've been working on the best way to help. At the same time, we've been looking to 2021 and well beyond.

By some good grace, we're better placed than most arts organisations to adapt to these testing times. We're not reliant on box office, and our programs lend themselves to online delivery relatively naturally. And because we don't carry many costs in buildings or management, we can more easily deliver funds directly to the pockets of playwrights and other freelance artists in ways that are structured, sustaining, and creatively satisfying.

So that's what we're going to do.

We have constructed something for everyone. For playwrights in the city and those in the country, for those at the beginning of their career and those half way through it, for First Nations writers and writers with cultural identities of all kinds, for those thinking big, and for those who are part of several of these groups.

We'll commission and support seven major new works, and commission 50 mini works.

A new project – *Dear Australia* – is a direct response to our changed and changing world, a way for playwrights

to speak right now to what's happening around us. It's a collaboration with 25 small-to-medium organisations from across Australia.

We hope these initiatives will help stimulate us all into a future we can't yet quite imagine.

Meanwhile, thinking about the future, we are working hard and happily with our friends at Australian Plays to explore the creation of a brand new organisation combining the best of our two homes and adding something new, too.

We expect this new organisation to be operational in 2021.

This new home for Australian plays and playwriting will, we hope, and for the first time, walk side-by-side with playwrights throughout the life cycle of their plays. From the earliest discovery, through to development and towards production, then onto publication, promotion and licensing. Our relationships with producing companies will be stronger, as well as those with the education and community sectors. Advocacy will have a new focus.

As you will know by now, this work is a response to the independent REA Review, a product of very wide consultation with playwrights and people from across the theatre sector. You can read it in full here: <http://www.pwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/200217-rea-pwa-review.pdf>

We have been so heartened by the wonderful support expressed by so many. It's very clear that there is a common goal: to create the best possible environment for the nurturing and positioning of exceptional playwriting that reflects, refracts and refreshes the society in which we live.

We thank our supporters, funders, donors and partners so very much, along with every playwright, dramaturg, director, actor and colleague who has worked with us or will do so this year. There are exacting times ahead, but exciting times too, and with your backing we will work assiduously to prepare for the best future we can possibly imagine.

David Berthold  
Interim Executive Chair

## **Contact Details for Playwriting Australia**

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## **For Landmark Works – Ignition**

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Ignition sets out to enhance the ambition and diversity of Australian playwriting through the substantial commissioning and development of landmark works in partnership with producing companies.

Now more than ever, there's a need to dream.

In 2020, PWA will commission seven major new works. Each work will then be developed in partnership with companies, ahead of a prospective production. This close relationship with producing companies is also a long term goal of the new entity we are envisioning with Australian Plays.

PWA will provide each of the seven selected playwrights with a commissioning fee of \$16,000 as well as a development/living stipend of \$9,000 to help 'buy time' in the creative development phase.

Partner companies will be expected to invest in creative development, and in production costs in the future.

PWA will invite producing companies to each nominate up to two playwrights and their works. Individual playwrights who meet the eligibility requirements can also nominate and have the option of indicating an ideal producing company.

The nominations will be considered by two independent playwrights and the PWA team.

To be eligible for consideration, either as self-nominated or nominated by a producing company:

- The work must be an ambitious work of scale (we know this is ambiguous, but we invite you to think big); and/or
- The playwright must identify as a First Nations or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse person; and/or
- The new work is specifically for young or regional audiences.

Given current social distancing restrictions, creative development is likely to take place online via Zoom or similar platform. Face-to-face activity can resume when it is safe to do so.

Submissions close 11:59PM Australian Eastern Standard Time Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Eligible Individual Playwrights can submit here:

<https://playwritingaustralia.submittable.com/submit/162714/ignition-2020-playwright-self-nominations>

## **For our Nation – Dear Australia**

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This is a direct and urgent response to the COVID-19 crisis.

The project will be presented by Playwriting Australia working in association with 25 organisations from across Australia.

Each organisation has nominated two playwrights for commissioning. PWA will commission these 50 playwrights from across the nation to each write a two-minute monologue, to be performed by 50 actors. The results will be presented to a worldwide audience on our digital channels in June or July 2020. These snapshots will be a unique account of these times – a national, creative conversation led by our playwrights. Playwrights will address questions such as:

*What is happening right now?*

*What is being revealed about us?*

*What are we not paying attention to?*

*What do we want to be to one another?*

*What do we want our society to look like?*

*Where do we want to go next?*

*What is our postcard to Dear Australia?*

PWA will then work with partnering companies and individual playwrights on the casting and recording of the monologues.

The participating organisations are Australian Theatre for Young People, Barking Gecko Theatre Company, Contemporary Asian Australian Performance, Blue Cow Theatre, Brink Productions, Brown's Mart, Griffin

Theatre Company, Hothouse, Ilbijerri Theatre Company, Jute Theatre Company, La Boite Theatre Company, La Mama, Merrigong Theatre Company, Monkey Baa Theatre Company, Moogahlin Performing Arts, National Theatre of Parramatta, NORPA, PlayLab, Red Stitch, South Australian Playwrights Theatre, The Street Theatre, Terrapin Puppet Theatre, Theatreworks, Windmill Theatre Company, and Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company.

(*Dear Australia* is inspired by a project of the Abbey Theatre, Ireland)

## **For First Nations Writers – The Playwrights Retreat**

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This has been one of our most successful projects, but in 2020, the Retreat will look very different as a result of the public health situation. But our now well-rehearsed collaboration processes, guided by cultural protocols, will remain. We have consulted widely on the new shape of this retreat.

This year, 10 playwrights will be supported by 5 dramaturgs over two separate 15-day virtual ‘retreat’ periods. The 15 days will be spread out over a 4-week period: one week intensive, two weeks of more fluid work, one week intensive.

The structure of the retreat will be entirely flexible. Participating playwrights will themselves determine the shape of the schedule.

More artists will be supported through this project this year than in previous years.

We recognise that in remote and virtual collaboration, communications access and cost, self-isolation and care responsibilities will have an impact on creative processes. That’s one reason for extending the duration and spreading it out over 4 weeks.

The exact shape of the retreats will be determined by the participating playwrights in dialogue with PWA . Dramaturgical support available to each playwright from

virtually-resident dramaturgs, selected by the playwrights in collaboration with PWA.

Overall the retreat will focus on writing, as well as making a digital communal space for sharing work, exploring ideas, taking risks, mentoring and collaborating.

The virtual Retreats will be scheduled for between July and September 2020.

Post-Retreat, each playwright will have the support of a PWA staff member or affiliated professional to discuss the future needs of their work and potential pathways to production.

If you are interested in participating this year, please register your interest here:

<https://playwritingaustralia.submittable.com/submit/163776/first-nations-playwrights-retreat-2020-eoi>

Submissions due by 11:59PM AEST Sunday 24 May 2020

We encourage previous participants to express their interest again.

## **For Young Writers – Max Afford Playwrights Award**

The \$30,000 Max Afford Playwrights Award, offered by Perpetual in association with PWA, is an initiative of the late Thelma May Afford, whose will established a fund to offer a periodical prize in memory of her husband.

The biennial award was created “to promote interest in Australian drama and to encourage the writing of plays in Australia, to help and give incentive to young writers of plays.” For this award, young playwrights are between the ages of 18 and 40.

The award is \$30,000, which includes \$15,000 in prize money to the playwright and up to \$15,000 towards creative development with a director, dramaturg and a cast of actors facilitated by Playwriting Australia.

The creative development workshop will be undertaken via video conferencing facilities between July and December 2020. If social distancing regulations allow for in-person activities later in the year, that option will be considered.

To be eligible for the award the play cannot be produced, or have been scheduled for production before December 2020. It must be over one hour in duration and must not have received support from PWA in the past.

The full guidelines and information about the award are available here: [http://www.pwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/terms-and-conditions\\_max-afford-2020-final.pdf](http://www.pwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/terms-and-conditions_max-afford-2020-final.pdf)

Entries close 9:00AM Australian Eastern Standard Time  
Thursday 28 May 2020

Submit Here:

<https://playwritingaustralia.submittable.com/submit/162066/max-afford-playwrights-award-2020>

### **Previous Award Winners:**

2018 Winner:

*Whale* by Fleur Kilpatrick

2018 Highly Commended:

*Mate* by Ang Collins

*For Unknown Reasons* by Zoe Cooper

Read our 2018 announcement here:

<http://www.pwa.org.au/fleur-kilpatrick-wins-2018-max-afford-playwrights-award/>

2016 Winner:

*Pedagogy* by Chris Summers

2016 Highly Commended:

*The Bees are all Dead* by Kit Brookman

2014 Winner:

*The Silver Alps* by Maxine Mellor

2014 Highly Commended:

*Sunshine* by Tom Holloway

*Kill Climate Deniers* by David Finnigan

The Max Afford Playwrights' Award is offered by  
Perpetual as Trustee

## **For Regional and Remote Playwrights – Erin Thomas Playwright Fund**

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This fund commemorates playwright Erin Thomas' optimism, her creative talent and further her generous contribution to the arts by helping emerging writers to pursue their dreams.

The Fund ordinarily supports travel for the career development of emerging regional playwrights. With the permission of the Thomas Family, The Erin Thomas Playwright Fund will be offered differently in 2020. In 2020, up to six emerging playwrights from regional or remote areas will be supported to work with a dramaturg or director on a new work via digital platforms, for a total period of eight hours. Both the playwright and the collaborating artist will be paid.

Submissions due 11:59PM Australian Eastern Standard Time Sunday 31 May 2020

You too can donate to the Erin Thomas Playwright Fund, tax deductible donations can be made through Playwriting Australia's secure giving portal:  
[www.pwa.org.au/about-us/donate/](http://www.pwa.org.au/about-us/donate/)

Or contact us for more information on donating:  
[leila@pwa.org.au](mailto:leila@pwa.org.au)

Submit Here:  
<https://playwritingaustralia.submittable.com/submit/163774/erin-thomas-playwrights-fund-2020>

## **For CALD Playwrights – Rapid Fire**

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Rapid Fire is a one-day workshop or roundtable discussion and analysis of a new play, involving a team of artists, actors, thinkers and other professionals of the playwright's choice.

This year, it will be delivered via a video-conferencing facility. We're all getting much more used to that.

This program is open specifically to culturally and linguistically diverse playwrights across the country. In recognition of the challenges of virtual workshopping and roundtables, playwrights will receive 1.5 days of financial support. The workshops can also be broken up into 2 four-hours sessions.

After a Rapid Fire, each playwright will have the support of a PWA staff member or affiliated professional to discuss the future needs of their work and potential pathways to production.

Up to 10 plays will be selected by a panel of artists and virtual workshops will be scheduled between June and December 2020.

Submissions close 9.00AM Australian Eastern Standard Time Tuesday 19 May 2020

Submit Here:

<https://playwritingaustralia.submittable.com/submit/162072/rapid-fire-2020>

## **For Mid-Career and Established Playwrights – Duologue**

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Duologue supports up to eight collaborative relationships and new work developments for mid-career and established playwrights over an eight-month period.

Playwrights choose a collaborator, and PWA provides for face-to-face or direct working time, with both playwright and collaborator supported for three, paid hours per month between June and December 2020. \$300 in expenses is also available to each duo. The structure is self-determined, and focus can be on a single work or multiple works.

We expect that participating artists will initially use digital communications until social distancing regulations are relaxed.

Up to eight duos will be chosen by a panel of three artists.

Applications close 9.00AM Australian Eastern Standard Time Thursday 14 May 2020

Submit Here:

<https://playwritingaustralia.submittable.com/submit/162063/duologue-2020>

## **For Everyone – This is How We Do It Podcast**

Five playwrights have interviewed five notable Australian playwrights and asked, “how do you do it?”. The conversations are revelatory.

No. 1: Declan Greene x Vidya Rajan. Listen Here:  
<https://open.spotify.com/episode/1dQX7Jf8Dgzf6HI5Oa7Vdk>

No.2: Paschal Daantos Berry x Peter Polites. Listen Here:  
<https://open.spotify.com/episode/6nT7Q2srwEnG63pOpwhufl>

No. 3: Lally Katz x Amelia Newman. Listen Here:  
<https://open.spotify.com/episode/68gvq1Mgx4w5ZkBxec1mOE>

No. 4: Kate Mulvany x Jamila Main. Listen Here:  
<https://open.spotify.com/episode/3se7Qu2vx2WobOwhSLKceS>

No.5: David Finnigan and Noemie Huttner-Koros. Listen Here:  
<https://open.spotify.com/episode/0shcTRUANWJ6o1wWzdRdmx>

Check out their detailed bios here:  
<https://www.pwa.org.au/news/pwa-podcast-participants-announcement/>