

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2019**



**LET'S PLAY.**

# LET'S PLAY.

## Chief Executive Officer & Executive Producer

Helen Hristofski

## Artistic Director

Luke Kerridge



Development Partner

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Cover Image by Daniel Grant

*Fully Sikh*

Left to Right: Pavan Kumar Hari, Sukhjot Kaur Khalsa

ACN 052 424 683  
ABN 23 052 424 683

## COMPANY OVERVIEW

### Cause

Enriching children's lives.

### Vision

Children that are courageous, creative and culturally engaged.

### Mission

To be a locally cherished, nationally significant theatre company.

### Objectives

- Create exquisitely crafted theatre for children and family audiences;
- Ensure our theatre is accessible to the broadest range of young audiences;
- Strengthen the WA theatre industry and its artists;
- Showcase the company's work nationally and internationally;
- Inspire and encourage creative learning in primary teachers, students and the broader community;
- Be a well-governed professional organisation that embraces artistic risk, innovation and is financially stable well into the future.

### Values

**Curiosity:** Curiosity is the beginning of all creativity. We lean into the unknown to discover new ideas. We celebrate the unusual, the outsider, the 'other'. We are curious about other perspectives, other stories, other possibilities.

**Quality:** We prize the well-crafted, the rigorous, the detailed, the exquisite. We work with leading artists to tell incredible stories. When it comes to creating theatre for young audiences our motto is: for the smallest, only the finest.

**Respect for Children:** We acknowledge the agency and capacity of young people. We speak to the whole child, in the here and now – not to audiences, or citizens, of tomorrow. We listen to children's voices, consider the world from their point of view and build their perspective into the art we make.

**Leadership:** It takes courage to shape a new future. We embrace risk as an essential part of the creative process and moving a culture forward. We value legacy, take the long view and look to how leadership can be an act of service.



## A WORD FROM OUR CHAIR.

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### Bev East

Chair

In 2019, Barking Gecko Theatre celebrated 30 years of creative life by delivering an extraordinary showcase of children's theatre across Australia.

*A Ghost in My Suitcase* performed at the Sydney and Perth Festivals, *Fully Sikh* was co-produced with Black Swan State Theatre Centre and a remount and state tour of *My Robot* was delivered. We livened up the State Theatre Centre with a blaze of Gecko purple and the sound of happy young voices in the July school holidays and our Gecko Ensemble program continued to grow.

We laughed, cried, celebrated difference, friendship and courage and most of all we were left with a sense of hope. What a gift the 2019 Season was to us all.

The team in the Gecko engine room were busier than ever. It was a year of grant writing and working with supporters to renew or enhance our key funding agreements. We were excited to secure a partnership with the Crown Resorts and Packer Family Foundations that will ensure more children get access to our shows and importantly we will begin to measure the positive impact exposure to the arts have on young lives.

We celebrated our 30 year history in October by putting on our best shirts and going to afternoon tea at Government House for speeches and lots of birthday cake! All while

keeping our focus firmly on securing the company's future for the next 30 years.

It may have passed in a busy blur, but in hindsight 2019 was a standout year for BGT with many successes to celebrate.

Thunderous applause is due to the dedicated Gecko Team, led by CEO & Executive Producer Helen Hristofski and Artistic Director Luke Kerridge, the head office team, our teaching artists and all those who contributed throughout the year. Their commitment and passion for the work they do has never been more evident.

Thanks also, to the Barking Gecko Board who give their time because they believe in the importance of theatre and creativity in young lives. I know they are proud of the achievements and the team in 2019.

Finally, a heartfelt acknowledgement to those who sustain us financially, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, the Australia Council for the Arts, Woodside Energy, Healthway, Lotterywest, Tianqi Lithium, Hawaiian, UWA and our wonderful family of donors. Thank you!

We needed you to achieve our very best in 2019. We have so much more to offer – please continue to come on the journey with us in 2020 and beyond.

# A WORD FROM OUR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR.

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## Luke Kerridge

Artistic Director

2019 marked the beginning of my time as Artistic Director of Barking Gecko Theatre and a year full of business plans, deep thinking, sewing seeds, new collaborations and of course, extraordinary theatre for young audiences. The 2019 Artistic Program was a fitting finale to outgoing Artistic Director Matt Edgerton's tenure – a collection of diverse and timely works that marked the culmination of many years labour.

The year started with a bang with *A Ghost in My Suitcase* appearing in the Sydney Festival. It was delightful to see this ambitious new work take the stage at the iconic Sydney Opera House and so warmly received by both audiences and reviewers. The show then travelled home where it continued to thrill audiences as part of the Perth Festival. Matt and his team spent several years rigorously developing *A Ghost in My Suitcase* and it stands as a testament to what is possible when national festivals invest in works of scale for young audiences.

In July, *My Robot* returned to Perth for a sold-out school holiday season before setting off on a regional tour of WA. Alongside the season we launched a *Gecko Takeover*, activating the State Theatre Centre of WA with a carefully considered program of creative chaos. There were robot 'build and battle' workshops, backstage tours, an abundance of chalk drawings in the courtyard and BGT supported the final development of *Everyday Superhero*, a new work by local company Maybe ( ) Together that saw children and adults running amok to complete small but world-changing tasks.

Our premiere work for 2019 was *Fully Sikh* by Sukhjit Kaur Khalsa. This marked Barking Gecko's first co-production with Black Swan State Theatre Company in our 30 year history and the first Australia-Sikh story to hit our stages. Receiving glowing reviews and nightly standing ovations, this stunning new work shot straight to the heart. Sitting in a school matinee surrounded by teenagers who were hanging on Sukhjit's every word is an experience I'll remember for a very long time.

Whilst Matt rolled out the shows for this year, I set to work getting new projects into development, most notably our next premiere work, *HOUSE* by Dan Giovannoni.

Our Creative Learning programs continued to go from strength to strength, adding Bunbury to the lengthening list of *Gecko Ensemble* locations across WA and reaching the

largest number of students and teachers to date with *School Drama™*. 2019 saw a refinement of our *Gecko Ensembles* model, with Ensembles now responding to the same source materials our artists are exploring in the development of the company's new works. This casts our Gecko Ensembles in the role of 'creative consultants', creating a circular artistic process that begins and ends with children – a lived expression of our core value of respecting children and building their world view into our work from the ground up.

*Fresh Ink*, our mentorship program for emerging WA writers returned once again. Now in its third year, this unique program sure is leaving its mark on the Perth theatre scene. In 2019, several new works that were previously developed through *Fresh Ink* had their (much lauded) premieres at The Blue Room Theatre. Speaking of The Blue Room, we also supported the development of a new work for children as part of Winter Nights – this year, *The Children Grim & Wild* by Clare Testoni and Jeffery Jay Fowler.

Our ambitions to connect with diverse artists and organisations also took me across the seas to the bustling city of Kolkata. I attended the first Festival of Think Arts India, delivering workshops to local theatre-makers and children, and connecting with artists from across the globe.

The relationship with Think Arts is one we will continue to nurture in the coming years.

And as if all that wasn't enough, there was a very special birthday to celebrate. Barking Gecko's 30th was honoured in appropriate style, with a reception at Government House with past and present artistic directors, artists, supporters and friends. It was an opportunity to dust off old props, dig through the archives and reflect on the incredible legacy of this Company – as a centre for the creation of enduring Australian works, a pathway for incredible artists and most importantly, a beacon of creativity in the lives of young people.

So much has changed for Barking Gecko Theatre over the past 30 years, but some things remain the same. As we step into a new decade and the next chapter of Barking Gecko's history we will continue to tell stories to young audiences that confront the full complexity of the world they live in, whilst offering them hope, and a way forward. And our compass continues to be a deep respect for children and their fundamental right to access to high quality theatre, crafted especially for them.

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**“So much has changed for Barking Gecko Theatre over the past 30 years, but some things remain the same.**

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# A WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE PRODUCER.

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## Helen Hristofski

Chief Executive Officer & Executive Producer

Transition, reflection and renewal were guiding themes for Barking Gecko Theatre in 2019.

The succession of Luke Kerridge from Matt Edgerton as Artistic Director commenced in January, ensuring the time and space needed to inspire the next iteration of Barking Gecko's strategic plan, 2020-2023.

Reflecting on the company's progress over the past cycle, includes celebrating Matt Edgerton's artistic ambition and clear commitment to enabling and championing cultural diversity. For example, realising the award winning new Australian works *Fully Sikh* and *A Ghost in My Suitcase*. Barking Gecko also made strides in balancing our commitment to provide access state-wide for WA's children, alongside the business necessity of touring into larger national and international markets.

Matt's legacy also included expanding the footprint of Gecko Ensembles across WA in partnership with outer metropolitan and regional venues. Implementing a 'hub and spoke' strategy for Gecko Ensembles has not been without challenge, however Gecko Ensembles have a significantly positive impact on children's well-being, local venue activation and regional employment. We thank the Peter and Elizabeth Moore Foundation for supporting the expansion of Gecko Ensembles into regional locations.

The company finished the year in an exceptionally strong financial position with healthy reserves at 36%. Building financial reserves has been a deliberate strategy in recent years. Barking Gecko's financial footing is now assured. With self-confidence, over the next three years we will deliver world-class theatre, and provide access to our productions and programs, despite the incredibly dynamic environment we operate in.

The renewal of artistic leadership resulted in Luke conceiving a compelling program of future productions that entered creative development in 2019. Barking Gecko's commitment to rigorous development ensures well-crafted works that suit a number of *contexts*, including regional venues, capital city touring and festivals, and *audiences* of families and school children.

Barking Gecko Theatre is proud to be WA's leading provider of creative learning programs for primary children. Shaped by rigorous pedagogy and delivered by trained Teaching Artists, we nurture teachers' confidence in delivering creativity into their primary school classrooms. In addition, demand for highly subsidised matinee tickets and transport for students continues to grow and we are grateful for the support of Tianqi Lithium and Hawaiian who enabled children to attend professional theatre at the State Theatre Centre of WA, with 74% of the young audience being first time attendees.

In July 2019 we were advised that future demand from schools will be met through a significant new partnership with Crown Resorts Foundation & Packer Family Foundation under the Perth Arts Education Initiative. This partnership will deliver sustained engagement with 2,800 students, from 30 outer metro primary schools, every year for the next three years.

Our thanks to the Department of Local Government Sport and the Creative Industries for their renewal and a 10% increase to our operational funding for 2020-2022. Funding from Healthway will also continue with negotiations completed to move from annual to tri-annual support, aligned with the Act Belong Commit message. We also acknowledge and thank the Australia Council for their ongoing support of the company's operations as a Four-Year Funded organisation.

In November 2019, Barking Gecko Theatre's long-term corporate partner, Woodside, confirmed a 100% increase in their support of the company's vision going forward. Since 2016, Woodside's long-term and steadfast support of Barking Gecko cannot be understated. Woodside's investment has been integral to Barking Gecko's recent organisational development and we are deeply grateful for their past and future investment.

When celebrating our 30th anniversary in October, we reflected on Barking Gecko's extraordinary legacy; over 170 new productions, tours across 12 countries and reaching 1,000,000+ children. We salute and thank all those who contributed their creativity, imagination, money, ideas, time and attendance as audiences. Barking Gecko is proud to be WA's longest running professional theatre company.

The pages that follow detail our outstanding results for 2019. Continuing growth of Barking Gecko's reach and reputation is driven by strong organisational and artistic leadership combined with an extremely talented, adaptable and hard-working staff. My sincere thanks to our Chair, Bev East for her ongoing leadership of the Barking Gecko Theatre board and to our board members for their ongoing contribution to one of Australia's finest theatre companies specialising in productions for children and families.

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**“When celebrating our 30th anniversary in October, we reflected on Barking Gecko's extraordinary legacy; over 170 new productions, tours across 12 countries and reaching 1,000,000+ children.”**

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# 2019

## WHAT WE GOT UP TO.



### ON TOUR

Albany | Bunbury | Busselton  
Collie | Esperance | Karratha  
Manjimup | Mandurah  
Margaret River | Merredin  
Northam | Port Hedland | Sydney



### ON STAGE >>

1

NEW AUSTRALIAN WORK

3

PRODUCTIONS

76

PERFORMANCES



# 23,096

## CHILDREN & FAMILIES REACHED



## LET'S PLAY.

### SCHOOL DRAMA™



7

TEACHERS

196

STUDENTS

### DEVELOPMENT & CREATIVE

Creative Developments	04
Volunteer Board Members	06
Artists Employed	76
Generous Donors	23

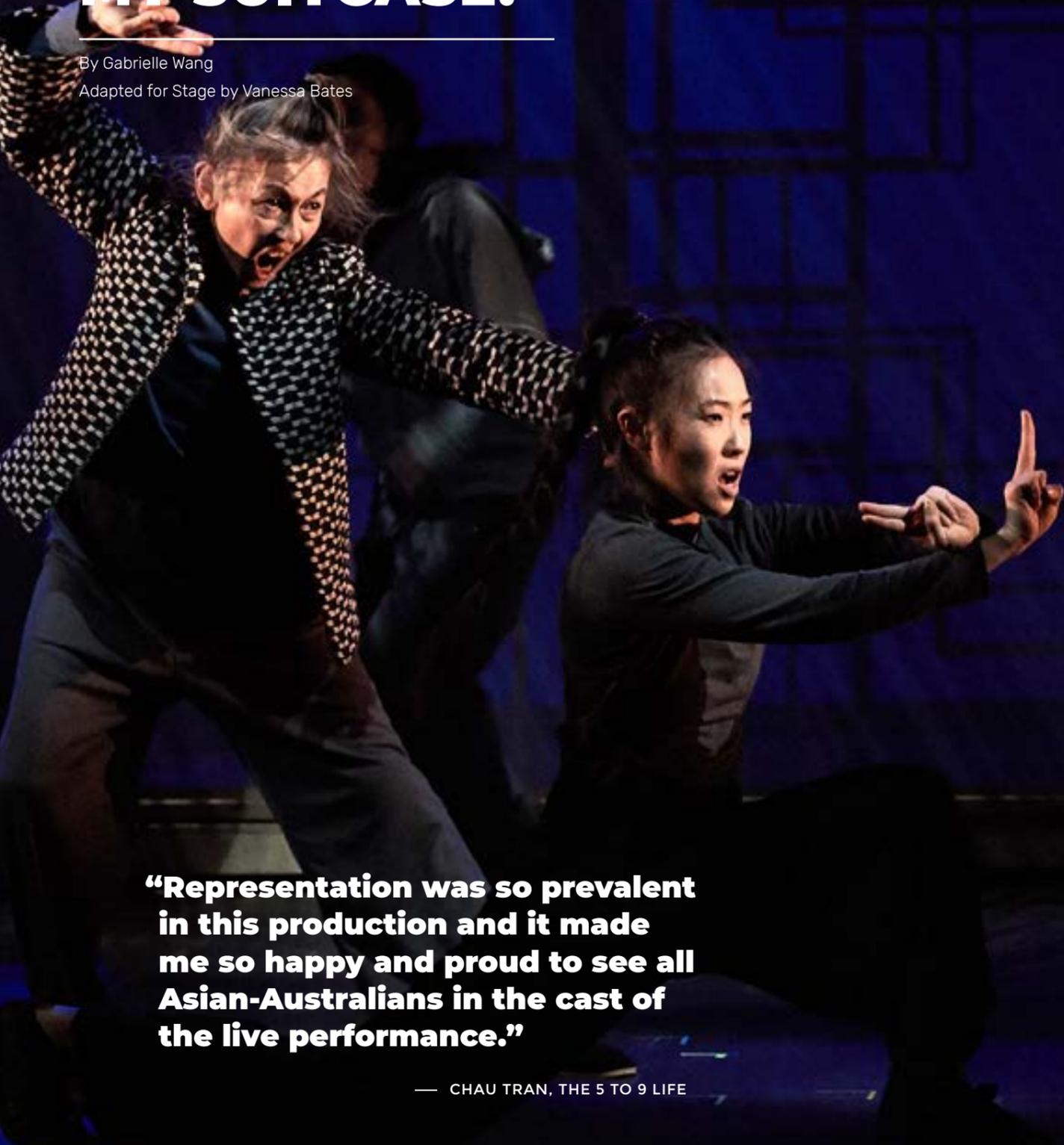
### ENSEMBLES

Workshop Teaching Hours	7,449
Gecko Ensembles	14
Participants	3,915
Metropolitan Perth Locations Nedlands, Subiaco, Kalamunda, Kwinana, Midland	05
Regional Locations Bunbury, Karratha, Kununurra	03

Barking Gecko Theatre presents

# A GHOST IN MY SUITCASE.

By Gabrielle Wang  
Adapted for Stage by Vanessa Bates



**“Representation was so prevalent in this production and it made me so happy and proud to see all Asian-Australians in the cast of the live performance.”**

— CHAU TRAN, THE 5 TO 9 LIFE

**“As a child of mixed race in Australia, at times I felt, or was made to feel, like my identity was nothing. To see Celeste’s strength as a Eurasian woman was stunning.”**

— AUDIENCE MEMBER

A *Ghost in My Suitcase* made its Sydney Festival and Perth Festival premiere to kick off the year for Barking Gecko. The visually spectacular show garnered a great response from children and families on both coasts.

Featuring a female-led ensemble of Asian-Australian actors, *A Ghost in My Suitcase* connected cultures and generations.

Thanks to support from the Major Festivals Initiative the production was able to travel to Melbourne, Sydney and Perth.

## Creative Team

<b>Author</b>	Gabrielle Wang
<b>Playwright</b>	Vanessa Bates
<b>Co-Directors</b>	Ching Ching Ho Matt Edgerton
<b>Set &amp; Costume Designer</b>	Zoë Atkinson
<b>Lighting Designer</b>	Matthew Marshall
<b>Composer &amp; Sound Designer</b>	Rachael Dease
<b>Media Artist</b>	Sohan Ariel Hayes
<b>Fight Director</b>	Andy Fraser
<b>Puppetry Consultant</b>	Michael Barlow

## Performers

<b>Celeste</b>	Alice Keohavong
<b>Por Por</b>	Amanda Ma
<b>Ting Ting</b>	Yilin Kong
<b>Female Ensemble</b>	Frieda Lee
<b>Male Ensemble</b>	
Sydney Festival	Immanuel Dado
Perth Festival	John Shrimpton

## Season Dates & Venues

### Sydney Festival Season

Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House  
9 January – 19 January

### Perth Festival Season

Heath Ledger Theatre, State Theatre Centre WA  
26 February – 3 March

### School Season

Heath Ledger Theatre, State Theatre Centre WA  
5 March – 8 March

<b>No. of Performances</b>	26
General Public	22
School Matinees	4
<b>Total Audience</b>	7,904

Supported by



*This project has been assisted by the Australian Government’s Major Festivals Initiative, managed by the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, in association with the Confederation of Australian International Arts Festivals Inc., Perth Festival, Melbourne Festival and Sydney Festival.*

Barking Gecko Theatre presents

# MY ROBOT.

By Finegan Kruckemeyer

Image by Daniel Grant

**“In a time of screen entertainment, my kids said it was awesome.”**

— AUDIENCE MEMBER

*My Robot* rolled into the Studio Underground again to play to excited school groups and children and families in the July school holidays.

This rambunctious production welcomed families into the State Theatre Centre to experience all that the theatre has to offer, with over a third of patrons partaking in other activities around the venue, supported by Lotterywest.

Thanks to the Regional and Remote Touring Fund we were able to send *My Robot* off on a grand regional WA tour to visit our friends all across the State.

## Creative Team

<b>Playwright</b>	Finegan Kruckemeyer
<b>Director &amp; Dramaturg</b>	Matt Edgerton
<b>Designer</b>	Isla Shaw
<b>Lighting Designer</b>	Chris Donnelly
<b>Composer &amp; Sound Designer</b>	James Luscombe
<b>Robot Designer</b>	Steve Berrick
<b>Costume Coordinator</b>	Nicole Marrington
<b>Set Construction</b>	Onstage Arts
<b>Scenic Artist</b>	Ruby Smedley

## Regional Tour

Princess Royal Theatre, Albany Entertainment Centre	19 July
The Cube Theatre, Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre	26 July
Fishtrap Theatre, Mandurah Performing Arts Centre	29 - 30 July
Cummins Theatre, Merredin	2 August
Matt Dann Theatre, Port Headland	5 September
Red Earth Arts Precinct, Karratha	9 - 10 September

## Performers

<b>Ophelia</b>	Marlanie Haerewa
<b>Dad, Otis, Orson, Ms Ogilvie</b>	St John Cowcher
<b>Olivetti the Robot</b>	Sarah Nelson

## Season Dates & Venues

<b>School Season</b>	Studio Underground, State Theatre Centre WA	1 July - 5 July
<b>Perth Season</b>	Studio Underground, State Theatre Centre WA	6 July - 14 July

<b>No. of Performances</b>	28
General Public	11
School Matinees	18
<b>Total Audience</b>	5,010

Supported by



Barking Gecko Theatre and  
Black Swan State Theatre Company presents

WORLD PREMIERE

# FULLY SIKH.

By Sukhjit Kaur Khalsa

**“She (Khalsa)  
is a master of  
wordsmith.”**

★★★★★  
— OUTINPERTH

**“Fully Sikh arrives,  
perfectly formed,  
at the intersections  
of culture, faith and  
humanity and asks  
that we listen.”**

★★★★★  
— ARTS HUB



**“Glittering  
originality.”**

— THE AUSTRALIAN

The first Aussie Sikh story to hit our stages, *Fully Sikh* delighted audiences, old and new, to a sensory feast full of music, dance, poetry and food.

This incredibly personal and unique show was accompanied with new experiences for our audiences that included the removal of shoes before going into the theatre, indulging in a little dance mid-show and a new way to end a performance, not with applause but with a prayer.

*Fully Sikh* is a heartfelt and hilarious poetic procession, that broke down barriers and enabled new conversations and people to connect.

## Creative Team

<b>Playwright</b>	Sukhjit Kaur Khalsa
<b>Director</b>	Matt Edgerton
<b>Dramaturg</b>	Clare Watson
<b>Composer</b>	Pavan Kumar Hari
<b>Set &amp; Costume Designer</b>	Isla Shaw
<b>Lighting Designer</b>	Lucy Birkinshaw
<b>Sound Designer</b>	Tim Collins

## Performers

<b>Performer</b>	Sukhjit Kaur Khalsa
<b>Musician</b>	Pavan Kumar Hari

## Season Dates & Venues

Studio Underground, State Theatre Centre WA  
12 October – 3 November

<b>No. of Performances</b>	25
General Public	22
School Matinees	3
<b>Total Audience</b>	4,708

Supported by



*This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body.*



Barking Gecko Theatre's

# GECKO TAKEOVER.

At The State Theatre Centre of WA

Alongside *My Robot*, Barking Gecko hosted a Gecko Takeover of the State Theatre Centre of WA. Throughout the July school holidays the venue was transformed into a hive of children's activities with robot battles, superheroes and backstage tours.

Thanks to the support of Lotterywest, all of these activities were completely free for patrons, and we were given the opportunity to enable local artists to create work specifically for children and families.

## Creative Team

<b>Robot Build &amp; Battles</b>	Steve Berrick
<b>Everyday Super Heroes</b>	Alex Desebrock
	Tanya Lee
	Nathan Gardiner
<b>Stage Manager</b>	Jessica Rogerson

<b>No. of Performances</b>	
Everyday Superhero Workshops	7
Robot Battles	16
Backstage Tours	6
<b>Total Audience</b>	783

Supported by



# SCHOOL DRAMA™

In partnership with Sydney Theatre Company

School Drama™ is a professional learning program for primary school teachers. The program demonstrates the power of using drama strategies with quality literature for improving English and literacy in children.

Now in its 10th year across Australia, School Drama™ increases teacher's confidence in using the Arts as a teaching tool. Evaluation of School Drama™ shows the program directly improves literacy outcomes in students.

Barking Gecko Theatre partners participating classroom teachers with one of our Teaching Artists over a school term and together the pair explores how drama strategies can be integrated into any area of English and literacy.

<b>Teachers</b>	7
<b>Students</b>	196



**“Drama engages children in the big questions in life.”**

— PROFESSOR ROBYN EWING AM

# GECKO ENSEMBLES.



**“This is drama!  
In Gecko Ensembles  
we play, create and  
discover.”**

— DYLAN (AGE 9)



Image by Louise Coghill

Gecko Ensembles is Barking Gecko Theatre’s flagship Creative Learning program for young people. Gecko Ensembles help young people explore their imaginations and tap into their creative potential. It’s where self-expression leads to self-confidence. Every week for 9 weeks of the school term, groups of children come together in a supportive and guided environment to learn new skills. It’s a place where they can stretch their imaginations, play, create and discover.

This year, Gecko Ensembles continued to evolve with the establishment of a new Gecko Ensemble in Bunbury and delivered close to 8,000 hours of workshops across 8 locations in metropolitan and regional WA.

## Little Geckos 5 - 7 years

The Little Gecko Ensembles are all about learning through creative play, exploring stories and characters and continuing to foster their curious and courageous imaginations. In this environment children develop confidence in their physical, vocal and imaginative expression through a creatively charged learning environment, as well as having a core focus on ensuring social and emotional wellbeing, building empathy and curiosity.

## Junior Geckos 8 - 12 years

The Junior Gecko Ensemble is the perfect place for participants to have fun and lose themselves in the joy of

drama skills. The Junior Geckos extend their mind, body and imagination as they work as an ensemble to develop new creative ideas and respond to topics presented by Barking Gecko’s Teaching Artists. The Junior Gecko Ensemble has a focus on exploring creativity, testing boundaries and ideas all while learning new drama skills.

## Senior Geckos 13 - 17 years

The Senior Gecko Ensemble has a fundamental focus on the discipline of professional practice. Over the course of the year the Senior Gecko Ensemble work on a variety of fundamentals including devising, performance techniques and character development. The Senior Gecko Ensemble is a place where like-minded young people come together and push their capabilities as an ensemble.

<b>Participants</b>	3,915
<b>Teaching Artists</b>	14
<b>Locations</b>	8



Barking Gecko Theatre's

# LIVING LECTURE: SHAKESPEARE'S TOOLKIT.

## In Schools Touring

Barking Gecko's *Living Lecture* series took a new angle in 2019 combining Shakespeare's most popular texts; *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet*.

Facilitated once again by the inimitable Matt Edgerton, *Living Lecture* included compelling staging of key scenes from each play with a detailed analysis of the language, historical context, performance history and themes in the play.

*Living Lecture: Shakespeare's Toolkit* not only did the rounds in metropolitan Perth but took the show on the road for the first time to visit schools in regional WA.

## Creative Team

**Facilitator** Matt Edgerton  
**Stage Manager** Emily Stokoe

## Performers

**Performers**  
Abbie-Lee Lewis  
Ben Mortley  
Nick Maclaine  
Jo Morris

## Season Dates

**Metropolitan Perth Tour**  
29 July – 11 August

## Regional Tour

12 August – 30 August

<b>No. of Performances</b>	20
Metro	11
Regional	9
<b>Total Audience</b>	2,511

**“We enjoyed being able to really explore how the play can be interpreted in different ways, to develop a new appreciation for Shakespeare’s language, and most of all the opportunity to see the play come to life in performance.”**

— TEACHER



Image by Louise Coghill

# WORKSHOPS.

## Specialist Workshops

Barking Gecko Theatre offers a range of Specialist Workshops to Primary and Secondary schools and organisations focusing on all aspects of drama. In 2019, we presented tailored workshops from exploring and developing original solo productions with local metropolitan schools to Laban's Eight efforts and approaches to Stanislavski with visiting schools from Geraldton.

This program provides Barking Gecko Theatre with further opportunities to engage with students and communities and to extend participants' creativity in a range of drama processes and techniques.

“I truly recommend this experience to all kids, my granddaughter 5 years old, was amazed, she really enjoyed every single moment. I asked her what she loved most, and she answered me ‘the imagination’.”  
– *Holiday Workshop Participant's Grandparent*

## School Holiday Workshops

During the school holidays, Barking Gecko Theatre offers young people the opportunity to participate in three days of fun drama workshops in a supportive environment. School Holiday Workshops are based on a particular theme, idea or question and had enrolments of children aged 5 – 12 years old.

These workshops provide a perfect access point for children that have often not participated in a drama class before as well as offering children who regularly engage with drama opportunities to continue to grow their imagination and creativity.

<b>Participants</b>	171
<b>Locations</b>	3

**Locations** 8

# FRESH INK.

Barking Gecko Theatre proudly partnered with Australian Theatre for Young People for the third year with Fresh Ink, our national mentoring program for emerging playwrights.

Fresh Ink is the only program of its kind in Australia and is designed to create opportunities for committed and talented playwrights to bridge the gap into professional practice.

Throughout the year the selected playwrights produced two short works, as well as attended monthly meetings with mentor Will O'Mahony to hone their skills and build their writing capacity.

Fresh Ink creates industry links by pairing emerging playwrights with an industry mentor for a series of workshops that result in a script delivered for rehearsal with a cast of actors.

## 2019 Fresh Ink

### Mentor

Will O'Mahony

### Participants

Isabelle McDonald

Jess Nyanda

Zachary Sheridan

Maddy Mullins

# WINTER NIGHTS.

Barking Gecko Theatre proudly supported a unique opportunity for Perth theatre artists to develop a theatre show for an all-ages audience in partnership with The Blue Room Theatre.

The partnership allowed for the presentation of a new work-in-progress showing during The Blue Room Theatre's Winter Nights Season. The creative development saw Clare Testoni and Jeffery Jay Fowler mentored by Barking Gecko Artistic Director, Luke Kerridge on their work *The Children Grim & Wild*.

Together, Barking Gecko and The Blue Room Theatre proudly supported WA artists to broaden the landscape of children's theatre makers in Perth.



# THANK YOU

## FOR GIVING THE GIFT OF THEATRE



Barking Gecko Theatre would like to thank our family of donors who demonstrated a deep commitment to Western Australian children and young people. Their gift enabled us to enrich lives, foster creativity and build empathy and understanding.

### \$10,000+

Tim & Leonie Baldock

### \$5,000+

Bev East

Peter and Elizabeth Moore Foundation

Mike Utsler

### \$1,000+

Hristofski Family

Tim & Carolyn McInnis

Margaret Sommerville & Dennis Gregory

### UP TO \$999

Greg & Kellie Caust

Chantel Dyball & Will Thompson

Crocker-Bisset Family

Janet Edgerton

Matt Edgerton

Barry & Helen Green

Aimee Hughes

Luke Kerridge

Peter Kift

Jo Malone

Rachel McDonald

Friends of Rani Middleton

Cherry Wild

Woodside Employees

Anonymous (4)

*This listing acknowledges donations received between 1 January and 31 December 2019.*

## PARTNERS.

*Barking Gecko Theatre celebrates the support of our valued partners.*

To learn more about our partnerships and to discuss opportunities for your business, contact [Monique.beaudoire@barkinggecko.com.au](mailto:Monique.beaudoire@barkinggecko.com.au) or call (08) 6212 9399.

### DEVELOPMENT PARTNER



### GOVERNMENT SUPPORT



### MAJOR PARTNERS



### COMMUNITY PARTNERS



### INNOVATION PARTNER



### BUSINESS SUPPORT



### ARTISTIC COLLABORATORS





## 2019 ARTISTS & TEACHING ARTISTS.

Zoë Atkinson, *Set & Costume Designer*

Jakob Bamford, *Media Artist*

Michael Barlow, *Puppetry Consultant*

Nicola Bartlett, *Performer*

Vanessa Bates, *Playwright*

Jessica Baxter, *Mechanist*

Steve Berrick, *Robot Designer*

Vicky Biorac, *Teaching Artist*

Lucy Birkinshaw, *Lighting Designer*

Etain Boseo, *Mechanist*

Emily Rose Brennan, *Performer*

Anna Brockway, *Teaching Artist*

Adriano Cappelletta, *Performer*

Danielle Chamberlain, *Teaching Artist*

Tim Collins, *Sound Designer*

St John Cowcher, *Performer*

Immanuel Dado, *Performer*

Rachael Dease, *Composer & Sound Designer*

Alexandra Desebrock, *Artist*

Isaac Diamond, *Performer*

Chris Donnelly, *Lighting Designer*

Matthew Edgerton, *Co-Director, Director & Dramaturg*

Luzita Fereday, *Vocal Coach*

Stephanie Fitz-Henry, *Teaching Artist*

Hamish Fletcher, *Puppetry Consultant*

Andy Fraser, *Fight Director*

Leigh Gardiner, *Mechanist*

Nathan Gardiner, *Artist*

Dan Giovannoni, *Playwright*

Liam Graham, *Performer*

Marlanie Haerewa, *Performer*

Michelle Hall, *Teaching Artist*

Pavan Kumar Hari, *Composer & Musician*

Sohan Ariel Hayes, *Media Artist*

Ching Ching Ho, *Co-Director*

Dana Ioppolo, *Mechanist*

Teresa Jakovic, *Teaching Artist*

Alice Keohavong, *Performer*

Luke Kerridge, *Director*

Sukhjit Kaur Khalsa, *Playwright & Performer*

Asha Kiani, *Teaching Artist*

Georgia King, *Teaching Artist*

Libby Klysz, *Creative Learning Resources*

Chelsea Knight, *Assistant Stage Manager*

Yilin Kong, *Performer*

Finnegan Kruckemeyer, *Playwright*

Charlotte Lane, *Set Designer*

Frieda Lee, *Performer*

Tanya Lee, *Artist*

Abbie-Lee Lewis, *Performer*

James Luscombe, *Composer & Sound Designer*

Amanda Ma, *Performer*

Nick MacLaine, *Performer*

Michael Maclean, *Production Manager*

Chanella Macri, *Performer*

Nicole Marrington, *Costume Coordinator*

Matthew Marshall, *Lighting Designer*

Matt McCabe, *Technical Manager*

Irma McCullen, *Teaching Artist*

Jennifer Medway, *Dramaturg*

Clare Moore, *Teaching Artist*

Jo Morris, *Performer*

Ben Mortley, *Performer*

Sarah Nelson, *Performer*

Jonathon Oxlade, *Designer*

Andrew Portwine, *Production Manager*

Jessica Rogerson, *Stage Manager*

Isla Shaw, *Set & Costume Designer*

Kerry Shaw, *Teaching Artist*

John Shrimpton, *Performer*

Christie Sistrunk, *Teaching Artist*

Ruby Smedley, *Scenic Artist*

Emily Stokoe, *Stage Manager*

Mark Storen, *Teaching Artist*

Gabrielle Wang, *Author*

Clare Watson, *Dramaturg*

Megan Wood-Hill, *Teaching Artist*

# BOARD MEMBERS.

## BEV EAST

Chair

Bev East works as a consultant supporting organisations with strategic planning, organisational and operational excellence. She is also currently the interim CEO of Arts Access Australia. Previously Bev spent four years as the CEO of St John of God Health Care's Social Outreach services which provide support and capacity building services across Australia and internationally to Timor-Leste and PNG.

Prior to that Bev worked with Woodside Energy, for nearly a decade, leading the company's Communities division, managing corporate affairs, risk and governance during the construction of the Pluto LNG Project, and managing state and federal government relationships.

She began her career as a print and radio journalist, before working in Federal and State political roles including as a Ministerial adviser for four years.

She has been Deputy Chair of the Boards of Volunteering WA and Women's HealthWorks. Bev holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Diploma in Employee Relations from Curtin University. She is a graduate of AICD and a member of the Leadership WA alumni.

## GREG CAUST

Deputy Chair

Greg Caust has been in the finance industry with Australia's largest financial services organisation, Commonwealth Bank of Australia, since 1990, leading finance professionals across most parts of Australia in corporate, regional and agribusiness, and Private Banking segments.

Greg recently joined University of Western Australia as Head of Service Delivery Centre, leading teams that support students to be successful in their studies and careers. Greg holds a Bachelor of Business in Accounting and Economics, and a Masters of Business Administration specialising in Finance.

## JEANETTE ROBERTS

Jeanette Roberts has more than 35 years' international experience in the oil and gas industry. Her experience encompasses the entire oil and gas value chain, delivering projects all over the world, including Africa, Europe, UK, Former Soviet Union and Asia.

She is an active participant in Australia's oil and gas industry and is passionate about developing Aussie home-grown talent in the industry. Ms Roberts is engaged in policy development and industry leadership at State and Commonwealth level.

## FRAN FERREIRA

Fran Ferreira has over 20 years of international experience in Fortune 500 companies such as Chevron, Repsol and BHP in leading teams, streamlining business drivers, attending community needs, prompting growth, pursuing safety excellence, increasing efficiency and achieving strategic imperatives towards Company's Vision. Fran recently joined the executive team of Foodbank as Financial Controller bringing her corporate experience into the not for profit sector.

Fran holds a Bachelors degree in Economics and Post Graduate degree in Economic Engineering. Fran has a passion for children's theatre and for the capacity to unleash the imagination of little audiences to instigate their inquisitive minds.

## RACHEL MCDONALD

Rachel McDonald is the Artistic Director of Freeze Frame Opera. For Freeze Frame she has directed *La Boheme*, *Pagliacci*, *Rusalka* and *Tosca*.

Rachel has directed for many of Australia's leading companies, with productions including *La Voix Humaine* for Opera Australia, *The Pianist* for Belvoir St Theatre/Sydney Festival, *The Taming of the Shrew* for Sydney Theatre Company, *La Traviata* for OzOpera national tour and *Queen Lear* for Melbourne Theatre Company.

Rachel has also directed extensively for WAAPA and Sydney Conservatorium and enjoys working with emerging artists. Writing credits include several projects for Musica Viva, the musical *Susanna's Wedding* and *The Little Mermaid*, an adaptation of *Rusalka* for children. Rachel lectures in design, directing and acting at WAAPA.

## TIM MCINNIS

Tim McInnis is a fundraising executive whose career has spanned three continents. Currently the Chief Advancement Officer at Curtin University, Tim has previously served as Head of Development for Telethon Kids Institute in Perth; Director of The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity (London); Director of Development and Alumni Relations at Durham University

(England); Assistant Dean of the University of Utah College of Humanities; and Senior Director of Development at Children's Miracle Network (Utah).

Tim and his wife Carolyn live in Fremantle, Western Australia. They have three daughters, two in the US and one in England.

# STAFF.

## CHAIR

Bev East

## BOARD MEMBERS

Fran Ferreira

Greg Caust (*Deputy Chair*)

Jeanette Roberts (*Company Secretary*)

Nicholas Creed (*until March 2019*)

Rachel McDonald

Tim McInnis

## CEO & EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Helen Hristofski

## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Matt Edgerton (*until March 2019*)

Luke Kerridge (*from January 2019*)

## FINANCE MANAGER

Joy Crocker

## PRODUCER

Sean Walsh (*from February 2019*)

## CREATIVE LEARNING MANAGER

Hannah Smith

## DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Sue Stepatschuk (*until August 2019*)

## MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Aimee Hughes

## PRODUCTION MANAGER

Michael Maclean

## STAGE MANAGER

Emily Stokoe

## TEACHING ARTISTS

Anna Brockway

Asha Kiani

Christie Sistrunk

Danielle Chamberlain

Georgia King

Kerry Shaw

Mark Storen

Megan Wood-Hill

Michelle Hall

Stephanie Fitz-Henry

Vicky Biorac

## THANK YOU

Dr Richard Walley

Andrew Portwine

Jo Malone

GM Consulting

Circuitwest

Perth Festival

Perth Theatre Trust

Alice Jorgensen and the

State Theatre Centre of WA team

## Thank you to the venues and staff that support our Gecko Ensembles:

The University of WA  
Kalamunda Performing Arts Centre  
Koorliny Arts Centre  
Subiaco Arts Centre

Red Earth Arts Precinct  
Midland Junction Arts Centre  
East Kimberley College  
Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre



# 2019 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR REPORT

Goal 1	To be a vibrant, creative company that ensures audiences from a young age access the finest theatre by challenging conventions, igniting conversations and embracing diversity.		
Strategies	KPI	Target	
Program an annual theatre season that has resonance at a local and national level	New Australian works	2	<i>Fully Sikh</i> commissioned and produced by Barking Gecko Theatre, written and performed by Sukhjit Kaur Khalsa, directed by Matt Edgerton and designed by Isla Shaw. Joining Sukhjit on stage was Pavan Kumar Hari. The second new work <i>Living Lectures: Shakespeare's Tool Kit</i> devised and directed by Matt Edgerton toured schools in metro and regional locations in August 2019.
	Number of productions presented	4	
	Number of tours beyond Perth premiere season	2	<i>A Ghost in My Suitcase</i> was remounted in January at the Sydney Opera House, and <i>My Robot</i> toured to regional WA venues in July & September 2019.
	Annually increase BGTC's reach	30,000	BGT's live performance audience was 20,133. Total reach 27,353.
Be recognised for exceptional productions	Number of capital cities / festivals invited to perform each year.	2	<i>A Ghost in My Suitcase</i> performed at the Sydney and Perth Festivals.
	Number of Reviews that rate productions highly	75%	95% of the critical reviews of <i>A Ghost in My Suitcase</i> and <i>Fully Sikh</i> rated the production highly, similarly the work was embraced by audiences.
	Average Culture Counts Platform	0.65	<i>Fully Sikh</i> exceeded 0.65 across all dimensions, total survey average 0.86. <i>My Robot</i> overall figure 0.79 and <i>A Ghost in My Suitcase</i> overall figure was 0.70.
	Annual Award Nominations	4	The Helpmann Awards for 2019 were cancelled, BGT received 7 PAWA Award nominations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best Supporting Actor (Female) Yilin Kong, <i>A Ghost in My Suitcase</i></li> <li>• Best Newcomer (Theatre) Marlanie Haerewa, <i>My Robot</i>,</li> <li>• Best Newcomer (Theatre) Sukhjit Kaur Khalsa, <i>Fully Sikh</i></li> <li>• Best New Work (Theatre) Sukhjit Kaur Khalsa, <i>Fully Sikh</i></li> <li>• Best Mainstage Director Matt Edgerton, <i>Fully Sikh</i></li> <li>• Best Mainstage Production <i>Fully Sikh</i></li> <li>• Best Composition or Arranging Pavan Kumar Hari, <i>Fully Sikh</i></li> </ul>
Secure collaborative partnerships with national arts organisations from diverse disciplines to create works of significance		1	<i>Fully Sikh</i> was a co-production with Black Swan State Theatre Company.

Goal 2	Be a sustainable organisation that embraces artistic risk, operates efficiently and effectively and is financially stable well into the future.		
Strategies	KPI	2019	
Engage in a variety of co-producing and presenting models in order to create, resource and tour new productions	Partnerships resulting in creative development and production	1	<i>Fully Sikh</i> was a co-production with Black Swan State Theatre Company.
	Investment % of pre-production expenditure in marketing and engagement activity to remount and tour productions	3%	BGT's investment of resources into community engagement with the Sikh community, added to the richness of the pre-performance experience, generated new knowledge in engaging this culturally diverse audience which will be applied to future presentation of the work. 7% of pre-production expenditure was invested.
Implement Barking Gecko's annual budgeting framework	Ratio Surplus/expenditure	3%	6%
	Company Reserves Ratio	20%	36%
	Self-generated Income/Turnover Ratio	45%	55%
Have a diverse mix of income	Annually increase Gecko Ensembles revenue	10%	It was a challenging year for Gecko Ensembles with an overall decrease in revenue of 30% from 2018 to 2019. As the program expands to outer metro, regional and remote areas BGT has experienced a decreased capacity for participant families to pay the fees.
	Achieve annual budgeted box office targets across all productions	60%	<i>Fully Sikh</i> season was extended and exceeded original budget by 90%. <i>My Robot</i> achieved its box office target. <i>Living Lecture</i> missed its box office target marginally by 8%.
	Proportion of corporate sponsorship & private giving to total income	35%	BGT achieved a result of 18% of corporate support to total income. In October 2019 Woodside announced a doubling of its investment for BGT from 2020.
	Renewal of triennial DCA and Australia Council operational funding		In October BGT's operational funding was confirmed by Dept. Local Government Sport and Creative Industries. BGT was granted a 10% uplift.
	100% acceptance rate of acquittals & reporting		All acquittals and reports accepted.
	Efficient and effective marketing that builds brand awareness and audiences	Ratio of marketing spend to Box office income	30%
	Number of publicity stories generated by Barking Gecko.	40	BGT achieved 53 publicity stories in print, radio and online in WA and national media outlets.
	Attend significant industry gatherings conferences annually	3	AD and CEO/EP attended IPAY conference in January Philadelphia to further develop BGT's presence in the international market. CEO/EP attended APACA conference in QLD.
	Annual increase website traffic to website barkinggecko.com.au	15%	Page users: Up 141% from 7,860 in 2018 to 18,930 in 2019 Sessions: Up 112% from 12,126 in 2018 to 25,648 in 2019 Page views: Up 37% from 47,608 in 2018 to 65,274 in 2019.
	Annual Increase of social media audience	15%	Instagram 1,415 followers; Twitter 1,525 followers; LinkedIn 167 followers.

<b>Goal 2</b>	Be a sustainable organisation that embraces artistic risk, operates efficiently and effectively and is financially stable well into the future.		
<b>Strategies</b>	<b>KPI</b>	<b>2019</b>	
Be an efficient organisation that has well integrated technology, skilled and highly motivated staff and board	Key operational infrastructure reviewed annually	Digital Strategy	Digital strategy review has been deferred to 2020.
	Annual staff reviews completed and training requirements identified	100%	All staff reviews completed in September 2019.
	Level of staff turnover	5%	3% after two years with BGT Sue Stepatschuk, Development Manager departed in August 2019.
	Successful recruitment of max number of board members	Max 8 Members	Board recruitment is a rolling process. In 2019, at the end of 2019 there were 6 board members.
	Annual board/governance view		In February 2019 a strategic planning day was held, which highlighted and discussed the importance of strong governance and increased focus on diversity at the board level. Formal review not completed.

<b>Goal 3</b>	To be a centre of excellence that supports, inspires and encourages creative learning in young people beyond the school gates and into the broader community.		
<b>Strategies</b>	<b>KPI</b>	<b>2019</b>	
Increase number and engagement of Gecko Ensembles	Regional Ensembles	6	Regional Ensembles are located in Kununurra, Karratha and Bunbury. Discussions with a venue in Mandurah were not successful.
	Metro Ensembles	5	Metro Ensembles are located at UWA Nedlands, Subiaco, Kwinana, Midland and Kalamunda.
	No. workshops/showings with Ensembles as part of creative development	2	Three creative developments for <i>HOUSE</i> in May and November, and <i>Little Prince, Big Prince</i> in August. Children's engagement with the creative process was re-calibrated around content explored during term 3 and 4, and their responses were fed directly into the creative process.
	Number of Ensembles within service organisations	1	BGT's successful engagement with Banksia Hill ceased in 2017 due to change of leadership at the centre. The partnership with Save the Children in Kununurra ceased in 2018. BGT went on to develop a stand-alone Gecko Ensemble in Kununurra.
Build the capacity of Teaching Artists	Annual Professional Training Sessions	1	Luke Kerridge with Hannah Smith conducted teacher training sessions in January 2019.
	Annual Performance Review & Feedback	Annual	With Luke Kerridge's commencement with the company in January 2019, an informal review was undertaken with the CEO/EP and Head of Creative Learning.

<b>Goal 3</b>	To be a centre of excellence that supports, inspires and encourages creative learning in young people beyond the school gates and into the broader community.		
<b>Strategies</b>	<b>KPI</b>	<b>2019</b>	
Engage with Education sector	Number schools attending productions	25	Reached 47 schools across metro and regional locations reaching 2,877 students from Yr 2-12.
	Deliver Living Lecture series of presentations	2	<i>Shakespeare's Tool Kit</i> was presented in 15 schools in metro and regional locations reaching 2,511 high school students.
	Participation at education conferences	2	BGT staff participated at 1 education conference in 2019, in addition Hannah Smith, Head of Creative Learning joined the Drama West board in 2019.





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