



# **ACT NATIMUK**

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Annual Report **2019**

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Cover: Bee-Sharp Honeybee produced by Rae Howell, presented at Nati Frinj Biennale. Photo Theresa Harrison Photography

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*ACT Natimuk acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Land upon which we are located, the people of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Japagulk and Wergaia.*



4 | Here they Come! puppets coordinated by Black Hole Theatre and Ron Marks, leading the Nati Frinj Biennale Opening Parade.  
Photos Theresa Harrison Photography

# INTRODUCTION

## What is ACT Natimuk?

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

ACT Natimuk has an auspicious history as an organisation that has supported performing arts within the West Victorian community of Natimuk for many years. Traditionally an organisation that presented musical theatre, over the past 20 years ACT Natimuk has extended its vision to support contemporary arts including disciplines such as dance, visual arts, film, new media, projection, aerial performance and experimental works.

## People

In 2019, ACT Natimuk consisted of the following people:

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Sue Pavlovich** President  
**Martin Bride** Vice-President  
**Dave Jones** Secretary  
**Mary French** Treasurer

### GENERAL COMMITTEE

Cameron Abraham  
Anna Ferguson  
Anthony Schellens  
Tracey Skinner

### STAFF

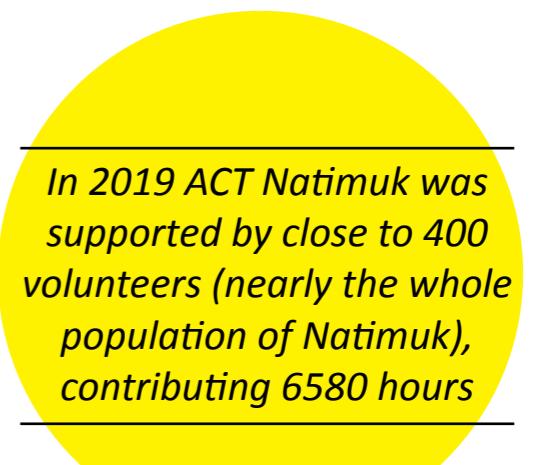
**Adam Demmert** General Manager  
(Greg Pritchard – General Manager to April 2019)

**Hannah French** Nati Frinj Biennale Director  
(Kate Finnerty – Nati Frinj Biennale Director to April 2019)

**Verity Higgins** MiN Producer

### MEMBERS

Jillian Pearce	Mary French
Sarah Natali	Carolyne Hamdorf
Elaine Uebergang	Kane Hendy
Lynne Quick	Verity Higgins
Ying He	Dave Jones
Cameron Abraham	Sean Keown
Martin Bide	Anna Loewendahl
Adam Demmert	D'Arcy Molan
Alison Eggleton	Sue Pavlovich
Anna Ferguson	Dr Greg Pritchard
Kate Finnerty	Anthony Schellens
Hannah French	Tracey Skinner



## 2019 Snapshot in Numbers:

\$205,951	in state and federal funding
\$54,600	in-kind support
\$27,277	in private and philanthropic support
26,745	audience reached
298	events, exhibitions and workshops across Regional Victoria
128	artists paid
6	major partnerships and collaborations

## Message from the Chair

The work of ACT Natimuk in 2019, through the Nati Frinj, MiN activities, Goat Gallery, Palais de Pixel, Goatfest and more, is impressive in scale and impact. My thanks to all our team who are contracted to deliver programs and to our amazing volunteers who ensure we run smoothly, safely, with verve and with passion.

I would like to acknowledge the individual artists and the companies that constitute ACT Natimuk. Their professionalism, pursuit of creative excellence, leadership and drive continue to create sustainable projects that enrich communities. It is your creative endeavour which distinguishes our region.

As a small community run, regionally based arts organization we have delivered mightily. I have noted some of what we have individually and collectively achieved throughout 2019:

In April Adam Demmert was appointed General Manager. He has continued to implement the long-term ACT Natimuk vision, and advocacy on behalf of ACT Natimuk to funding bodies and the wider regional arts community.

The Frinj Director baton was passed to Hannah French, the past Frinj Production Manager. Kate Finnerty and Hannah French made an efficient and seamless transition of directorship.

Adam Demmert stepped into the Frinj Production Manager role alongside his General Manager role. Volunteer Coordination for the festival was undertaken by Elaine Uebergang. This team delivered a superb program which was smoothly delivered and acquitted. The support of the treasurer, Mary French, is also acknowledged in this complex and popular festival.

Overall, the Frinj has been hugely successful, with a broader program than ever before. 120 individual shows/events occurring in Natimuk on 1, 2, 3 November 2019.

Made in Natimuk (MiN) was maintained by Verity Higgins, who consolidated the MiN offerings and has led MiN initiatives across Australia. Verity further developed the public face of MiN through developing a media and marketing workshop for MiN and ACT artists facilitated by Charee Smith from Horsham Town Hall.

The ACT Natimuk committee conducted regular, time-managed meetings, which were professionally implemented, providing timely transparent and accountable processes empowering the committee to guide and make decisions on behalf of the organisation.

ACT Natimuk had the support of our external bookkeeper, Alison White. ACT Natimuk manages sometimes complex project books and this ensures we are in an aware and compliant financial position at all times.

The sterling volunteer treasurer Mary French willingly and kindly continued in this role in 2019. We are grateful for her vigilant tracking, coding, following up, verifying, speedy and effective payment and quick contract turnarounds.

The Goat Gallery presented a full program. ACT Natimuk was successful in gaining a Horsham Rural City Council Community Grant for the Goat Gallery which has enabled the remit of strategic priorities to community, diversity and youth to be met in the first half of 2019 and managed the Goat budget to be able to continue to offer exhibition support to strategic priority groups in the second half of 2019.

Youth projects for primary and secondary aged young people were taken up on behalf of ACT Natimuk at the Goat Gallery, including exhibitions and workshops.

Palais de Pixel, twelve years strong, continued to meet the movie going needs of Natimuk and maintained an affiliation with the Federation of Victorian Film Societies. A highlight was the screening of the St Kilda Short Film Festival at the Natimuk Soldiers Memorial Hall in July.

ACT Natimuk artists, through MiN, continued with already developed and new projects. Dave Jones developed a puppet work for the Murtoa Stick Shed and he and Jillian Pearce led puppetry and projection community workshops, whilst Hannah French led community film workshops for this same event. Jillian Pearce maintained wide contacts with Australian and international aerial works and artists. This led to MiN supporting the presentation of Galaxias at Geelong After Dark.

The 2018 Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR) infrastructure fund provided Dave Jones with the opportunity in 2019 to implement 3D printing workshops at Natimuk Primary School, addressing sustainability and illustrating recycling practices in art making.

Anna Loewendahl is currently finalising her PhD thesis on the work of the ACT Natimuk through the lens of selected artists.

ACT Natimuk continued to implement and acquit the third year of the four-year agreement with Creative Victoria through the Organization Investment Program (OIP). We were delighted to find out in late December 2019 that the OIP funding has been extended by a year, making it a five-year agreement.

The advice and support from Victoria Jones from Creative Victoria guided policy and practice in our employment processes and has been greatly appreciated.

Many thanks to the executive, committee, members, staff past and present and our communities, which support ACT Natimuk to be a robust organization.

**Sue Pavlovich** Chairperson



Live Sketch Walking Tour led by Angela Williams. Photo Theresa Harrison Photography

## Message from the General Manager

2019 was a very big year for ACT Natimuk again, especially being a Frinj year.

In early May Y Space and ACT, through Made in Natimuk (MiN), were directly commissioned by Geelong City Council to develop and present the highly successful Galaxias at Geelong After Dark (GAD). This included creative producing and direction by Jillian Pearce of Y Space, Dave Jones' projections and shadow puppetry by Mary French. This has allowed us to build some good relationships in Geelong, which although we weren't successful for GAD 2020 will hopefully continue with these relationships in the future.

Murtoa Stick Shed put on a show with the help of Dave Jones, Jillian Pearce and Anthony Schellens, with the re-emergence of the giant Highly Strung Phoebe Sparkles (re-mounted as 'Matilda') puppet during the evening performances.

There was also a screening of short films produced through Hannah French's work with local school kids. It was again a successful night and one which will help to build a relationship between ACT Natimuk and Murtoa. This work also highlights the Murtoa Stick Shed as a new space in the region that can potentially be utilised in the future.

Following on from the Poppet show last year, Bendigo City Council engaged Anthony Schellens of Nati Access (local rope access company) to raise the screens again for another Poppet show in October. It was great to see the screens getting used again. The show also included projections from Dave Jones.

2019 was also a Nati Frinj year and with Hannah French now at the helm it was a hugely successful festival, with approximately 3.5-4.5 thousand people attending. The program was mind-boggling busy, with some old favorites but also many new performances and spaces. Some highlights included Styckx Theatre Playground, Bee-Sharp Honeybee, Hyperspace Dance Party, Vault, Once and for All and Parallax.

Y Space in partnership with Nati Frinj and ACT Natimuk was also successful in gaining Creative Victoria, Festivals Australia and Australian Communities Foundation Grants as well as a reasonable crowdfund boost to put on Styckx Theatre playground during Frinj.

This introduced a whole new generation and audience to Simon Barley and his Bambuco work. See the Styckx report for further details.

MiN producer Verity Higgins organized with marketing expert Charee Smith a very successful two-day marketing workshop, which will have follow up in 2020.

Hannah looked after the General Manager role while I was away in November – December completing the OIP report.

**Adam Demmert** General Manager

# PROGRAM

## Nati Frinj Biennale

natifrinj.com

The 2019 Nati Frinj was the biggest festival to date, with over 120 individual shows and events occurring in Natimuk on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd November 2019.

The Nati Frinj has evolved into a regional festival with huge impact, thanks to the development work by previous festival teams and the financial stability bought about by ACT Natimuk's participation in the Creative Victoria Organisational Investment Program.

Mentored by previous festival director Kate Finnerty, first-time director Hannah French worked closely with the ACT board, Production Manager and ACT GM Adam Demmert and Volunteer Coordinator Elaine Uebergang to bring together an excellent weekend of art, celebrating the creative spirit of Natimuk.

**Nati Frinj 2019 Snapshot:**  
66 local artists,  
and 80 visiting artists,  
120 events,  
across 31 locations.

### THE PROGRAMME

2019 featured an eclectic mix of theatre, random happenings, visual art, music, and workshops, drawn from the Natimuk community and further afield. Many festival favourites returned while many visiting artists engaged with the festival for the first time.

The curatorial principals behind the festival ensured:

- a balance between locally created work and work from visiting artists
- specifically acknowledged the diversity of culture and experiences of our region
- inclusive of work by people living with a disability
- accessible to children and young people,
- accessible to traditionally non-arts audiences. (The Fill the Main car show was an excellent example of this.)

The breakdown of events is as follows:

- 19 theatre performances - 5 locally produced
- 14 'other' events – 12 locally produced
- 21 visual art exhibitions and installations
  - 14 locally produced
- 8 musical performances – 4 locally produced
- 10 workshops and classes – 7 locally produced

An additional 8 known performances and 'random happenings' occurred over the festival weekend that were not part of the official programme, but are key in keeping the flavour and spirit of Frinj alive.

### IMPACT

Nati Frinj punches above its weight as a leading Regional Arts Laboratory for the development and presentation of new works. This demonstrates the long-term success of Frinj's inclusive guiding philosophy for nurturing and developing arts and experiences in Natimuk: *If you dare to call yourself an artist, you are one!*

2019 saw significant paid work for artists, major new work created and incredible experiences for audiences.

In 2019, Nati Frinj attracted:

- 5 companies, independently attracting \$108,114 of funding for 5 major new works which premiered at the festival.
- Nati Frinj secured \$45,000 of highly competitive Festival Australia funding for its partnership with Y Space/Styckx Theatre.
- the Styckx partnership alone had a total budget of \$105,000 which attracted additional philanthropic and crowd funding support.
- many more artists and companies who self-funded their attendance at the festival.

### PARTNERSHIPS

#### *... with Traditional Owners*

A strong emphasis was placed on establishing stronger relationships with local Traditional Owners and the local RAP, Barenji Gadgin Land Council. Visiting company Black Hole Theatre was instrumental in developing this relationship, working with Barenji Gadgin to secure funding for Traditional Owner Ron Marks to help coordinate three Black Hole Theatre projects – Here they Come! Leading the Opening Parade with Tchingal the Giant Emu and Les Medus puppets, Listen Up! Audio Tour of significant Indigenous sites in the local area (produced with Tracey Rigney) and the first development of theatre piece Vault. Ron Marks also presented Djagua Rarkee, a traditional earth oven, in which he cooked a feast which was shared in a tasting session on the Saturday night of Frinj.



The Procession led by Thomas and Wells at the Nati Frinj Biennale. Photo Theresa Harrison Photography

### *...with Funders*

The festival had five major supporters in the Horsham Town Hall, Horsham Rural City Council, Festivals Australia, Creative Victoria and Regional Arts Victoria. Two additional supporters were GrainCorp and Natimuk Primary School through access to their sites for key festival events.

### *... for Key Projects*

Several key partnerships were entered into by the festival, including with the Horsham Town Hall, Rae Howell with Bee-Sharp Honeybee and Y Space with Styckx Theatre Playground. For each partnership, the festival managed the securing of venues, audience movement and safety, general festival marketing, ticket sales, volunteer ushers and staff.

### TICKET AND AUDIENCE STATS

Frinj programming saw a mix of free and low-cost shows, with ticket sales being available online, at the Frinj hub box office and at the venue door. With many shows selling out prior to the festival, it is clear that the appetite for audiences to attend ticketed performances is strong.

91% of ticket sales were made by residents from Victoria. Of those Victorian ticket sales, 36% of those sales were made by residents of Natimuk, 7.5% by residents of Horsham, 4% from McKenzie Creek and 3% from Brunswick East.

For the bigger festival events, including the open capacity Styckx Theatre Playground, audience numbers were also strong. Over the three nights of Styckx Theatre Playground, approximately 1200 tickets were sold.

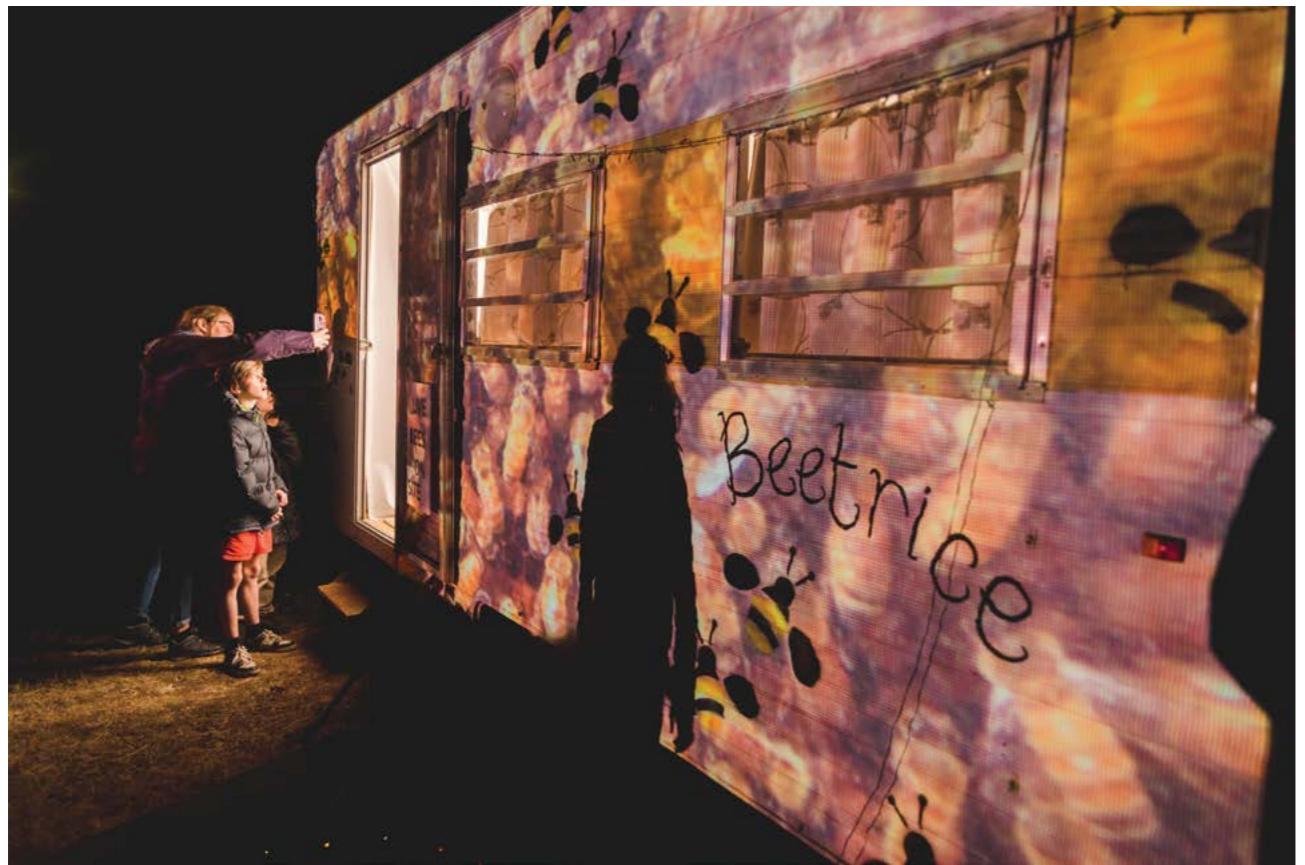
Frinj engagement/audience age demographic estimate:  
Ages 0 – 12 = 18%  
Ages 12 – 20 = 6%  
Ages 20 – 29 = 5%  
Ages 30 – 39 = 21%  
Ages 40 – 49 = 20%  
Ages 50 – 59 = 17%  
Ages over 60 = 13%

\*figures based on data gathered from Frinj surveys and Styckx reporting

*The most inspiring and eclectic Frinj yet.  
– S. Keown, festival attendee*



Real Hot Bitches Dance Class at the Nati Frinj Biennale. Photo Theresa Harrison Photography



Bee-Sharp Honeybee. Photo Theresa Harrison

#### COMMUNICATIONS

Marketing and promotion of the festival was conducted predominantly online, with Facebook, Instagram and electronic newsletters being sent to the 400+ subscribers to the Frinj mailing list. Media releases were periodically sent to local media outlets including ABC local radio, The Weekly Advertiser and The Mail Times. Each outlet covered the festival prior and after the Frinj weekend, with ABC radio conducting a live broadcast from Natimuk on the Friday morning before the festival.

#### THE TEAM

The festival was incredibly supported by a huge team, with a few paid and numerous volunteer staff. Key positions in addition to the Production Manager and Volunteer Coordinator were Production Support staff (3 paid, plus more volunteers), a volunteer waste officer, volunteer food vendor coordinators, volunteer OHS adviser and volunteer Hub managers. We were also lucky to have volunteers in the roles of ushers, hub staff, parade wranglers, working bee helpers, dishwashers, artist billets, bin fairies, door ticket sales and chair movers.

#### NEW INITIATIVES

2019 saw the introduction of several new initiatives for the festival, including box office ticket sales being tracked in an online ticketing system, Frinj waste coordination with compostable waste collection, introduction of no single use plastic targets and a dishwashing station for reusable crockery, a new child safe policy and the successful implementation of Glamping at the showgrounds site.

*If the town didn't have Frinj, it would be pretty bloody boring – festival attendee and Natimuk local*

#### ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement throughout the planning, development and delivery of the festival was vital in ensuring ownership and involvement at the grass-roots level. Monthly community catch ups at Nc2 allowed interested individuals access to find out what was in the works, and artists to share their ideas and plans for implementation. Often attendees at these meetings became volunteers for the festival and offered their support in key areas of expertise.

Many community groups in Natimuk were engaged with the festival. As a key example, the Natimuk Primary School community were engaged in a myriad of ways, including

through a market stalling selling Plastic Fantastic wares at the Sunday Farmers Market, through performing in Styckx Theatre Playground and hosting the Styckx structure, creating giant Bee lanterns for Bee-Sharp Honeybee, and creating street banners welcoming visitors to Natimuk.

#### FEEDBACK

Responses to the festival were extremely positive, with many expressing that 2019 was their favourite Frinj yet. When asked to respond to their sense of captivation, 75% of survey respondents strongly agreed. 80% of respondents strongly agreed that Frinj fostered connection, had a local impact and cultural contribution. Festival highlights for many were Bee-Sharp Honeybee, Styckx Theatre Playground, Toast Readings with Ophelia Sol, Once and For All, the Gin Palace and Powerhouse venues and the Final Frinj Flinj.

Key feedback was received in regards to scheduling and the fact that many people missed out on seeing Styckx Theatre Playground due to a previous show running 25 minutes late. More activation in the Verj and more music were also frequently mentioned in survey responses.

#### FRINJ FUTURE

Looking to the future, it would be excellent to further build on the festival's strengths, including the return of the 2017 festival highlights - Friday night Frinj Cutz Cabaret and Snail Racing – and seek further diversity in programming from our region. Building on the connection to Natimuk Creek and the Lake Foreshore camping area would be a fantastic avenue to explore, with programming and activities highlighting these assets to the township. More programming for children and young people would be excellent. For the future of Frinj it would be great to see stronger avenues for income be established, including the development of the Frendz of Frinj initiative, greater ticketing revenue (and some higher ticket prices), and perhaps more venue/bar revenue too.

To encapsulate the post-frinj rapture of 2019, included below is a thank you email extract from Fruity Legs spreader from the first-time-frinjers Real Hot Bitches Dance Troupe:

**“ Taking part in Natti (sic) Frinj was one of the most wonderful experiences I personally have had and I know that the other bitches feel the same way. From all of the bitches, I wanted to send you a giant thank you!!!!**

*What an amazing festival. We loved every minute of it and it was an honour to be there. The town was so welcoming and celebratory of every facet of Frinj exhibitions and were the absolute best crowd we have had where we have had the experience of teaching and performing...*

*Again, thank you so much for including us and we would be delighted to return anytime.*

*Lots of love and thrusts  
Xoxo  
Fruity Legs spreader*



Toast Readings with Ophelia Sol at the Nati Frinj Biennale. Photo Theresa Harrison Photography

## Made in Natimuk

madeinnatimuk.com

Made in Natimuk (MiN) is a suite of work created in and/or inspired by the small yet vibrant Victorian township of Natimuk. It is also a platform for the marketing and promotion of these works and associated artists to other regional and metropolitan centres both in Australia and overseas.

**2019 MiN projects attracted \$145,000 of direct commission, funding, philanthropic support, and box office resulting in \$100,000 of paid work for artists. MiN activities resulted in 98 community workshops held across Victoria, and an audience reach of 3,800 people**

### THE MIN BRAND

MiN is now a recognisable brand among presenters across Victoria and increasingly across Australia. The works that appear on the MiN website and Dance Card marketing collateral represent a wide range of works that are agile, scalable, and adaptable for presenters seeking works with excellent community engagement outcomes. Direct interest and activity have come from Geelong, Bendigo, Murtoa Stick Shed, Port Arlington, and Western Australia.

### ACTIVITY

A new work, Galaxias, was presented at Geelong After Dark. This large-scale site-specific, aerial, projection and shadow puppet piece included community engagement through workshops. This represented an adaption of a more affordable Space and Place residency model to a local government context.

Galaxias was commissioned by the City of Greater Geelong (COGG) and was the fruition of a 2-year partnership development between MiN and the COGG Arts & Culture Department. The project, which also involved a partnership with Barwon Water, was envisaged as a pilot project to be further developed in 2020 and towards this end MiN supporting the development of a funding application by COGG.

Artist-driven MiN works in 2019 also included the fourth stage development of Styckx, presented at Nati Frinj and the Murtoa Stick Shed Residency (please see full reports).

### MARKETING

Marketing activities for MiN included: attendance at Showcase Victoria, where MiN producer Verity Higgins participated in the Speed Dating session and followed up with all interested presenters, and attendance at the APAM roadshow. Verity responded to inquiries through the website and directly about MiN product. She also coordinated the development and production of the next version of the Made in Natimuk concertina 'Dance Card' and did a direct mail out to 150 National presenters from MiN contacts and the Performing Art Connection database.

Applications were made to Showcase, APAM and White Night.

### PARTNERSHIPS

#### *...with Local Government*

MiN collaborated with Horsham Town Hall on developing and facilitating a unique initiative which builds on previous MiNfo at Frinj Sessions. The inaugural 'Arts Unearthed' – as a regional artists/presenters forum session was presented as part of Nati Frinj 2019 and capitalised on the Presenter networks of the Horsham Town Hall. Please see the Partnerships section for more.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MiN producer Verity Higgins also initiated, planned and coordinated a two-day Marketing Kit development workshop for the MiN artists with local Arts Marketing practitioner Charee Lowe. This resulted in the development of quality marketing kits for many key MiN works, and also reaffirmed with MiN artists the importance of having such materials moving forward.

### MIN FUTURE

Currently, MiN is in the early development stages of two potential large-scale projects in Western Australia, one a silo-based project with a Grain Company, the other the re-ignition of an Illumination Festival.



Styckx Theatre Playground produced by Y Space and presented at the Nati Frinj Biennale. Photo Michelle McFarlane Photography

## Goatfest

Originally the brainchild of Edwin Irvine, the festival was started in 2002 as a way of raising funds for ACT Natimuk administration - more specifically the insurance. With Natimuk's strong history of climbing - the town itself placed next to world class climbing location Mt Arapiles - it was a vision that has seen the festival grow in popularity year after year. Traditionally held over the Easter long weekend, it takes advantage of the annual climbers Easter pilgrimage to Mt Arapiles. The weekend draws visitors from across the country and internationally and the event is always a sellout.

Affectionately known as Goatfest (goats being the name given by locals to climbers in the 80's), the event is a much loved festival on the climbing community calendar. It is an opportunity for climbers to create and view films (be they amateur or professional) and to enjoy the global camaraderie that is part of being a member of this great community. Run entirely by volunteers, Goatfest opens with an offering of a hearty meal, includes the film contest replete with prizes of climbing gear and the coveted Golden Goat award. Alongside a selection of both professional and amateur films, there is also a feature event which may be a film, a talk or presentation.

The 2019 Goatfest was as popular as ever, as the Natimuk Soldiers Hall reached capacity (200) and many keen folks had to be turned away. 25 volunteers supported the running of the event, and prizes were sponsored by the local climbing gear emporium, Arapiles Mountain shop.



Film still from Down Jacket, directed by John Fischer

10 excellent films were submitted to compete:

- Down Jacket, by John Fisher
- Mt Arapiles Highline Gathering, by Art Ho Baley
- The Road to 30, by Lucas Corroto
- Arapathieves, by Archie, Vince, Molly, Jarrah, Tom and Charlie
- Desert Crack, by Simon Madden
- The Biggest Rope Swing, by Brendon Plaza
- Nemesis, by Simon Carter
- Hooked In, by Brendon Plaza
- The Wheel of Life, by Becon Littleford
- Balls to the Wall, by Ado Lang

Out of Comp feature films: 3 films

- The Lorax Project
- Shadow of a Doubt
- Balls Pyramid

### Winners

Jury's Choice:  
Desert Crack

Audience Award:  
Balls to the Wall

Best Film Made by Kids:  
Arapathieves

The festival rounded off the evening with an information session with several climbing organisations talking about the unfolding access developments in the Grampians.

## Palais de Pixel

Held on the second Monday of every month from February to November, Palais de Pixel, aka 'Palais' aims to deliver a program of new and old films from around the world. Palais is run by a great team of volunteers, Lynne, Ying and Elaine.

Palais enjoyed another good year with an average of 20 people attending each month.

Membership remained at \$55 full membership (10 films) and was taken up by 24 people.

A \$25 trial membership for 3 films was also on offer, and was chosen by 10 people.

Visitors are also welcome to attend by making a donation, although this is capped at 2 visits per year.

Access to the Palais Lending library of past films is available for full members.

In 2019 Palais successfully hosted the St Kilda Short Film Festival Regional Tour in July, which was immensely popular.

The 2019 program, including attendance numbers and Star Rating (as voted by members) is as follows:

- **February** Mary Meets Mohamad, 28, 4.4 stars
- **March** Pride, 23, 4.5 stars
- **April** Hotel Rwanda, 17, 4.3 stars
- **May** Gurrumul, 24, 4.6 stars
- **June** The Divine Order, 23, 4.7 stars
- **July** City of God, 22, 3.6 stars
- **August** Memoirs of a Geisha, 27, 3.5 stars
- **September** Custody, 10, 3.7 stars
- **October** Terror Nullius, 19, 3.7 stars
- **November** 3 Billboards, 22, 4.3 stars



Palais volunteers Lynne Quick and Elaine Uebergang

## Goat Gallery

The Goat Gallery presented a successful full year program, which was supported by gaining a Horsham Rural City Council Community Grant. This has enabled the remit of ACT Natimuk strategic priorities to community, diversity, and youth to be met. Carefully balancing the Goat Gallery budget allowed the concept of the gallery funding shows addressing strategic priorities, after the completion of the Community Grant funding period on June 30, 2019.

These priorities, and how they were met are:

### COMMUNITY

- Ridges, crags and escarpments. X 2 exhibitions by local rock climbers (3 rock climber photographers)
- Jenny Peterson community printmaking workshops and exhibition (see diversity).

### YOUTH

- VCE Studio Arts St Brigid's & Horsham College
- VCE workshop show
- McKenzie Creek students show
- Mosaic exhibition
- Natimuk and Dimboola PS show including works by Natimuk PS students from plastic recycling project with Dave Jones.
- 2 x Middle Years 3D Art shows

### DIVERSITY

- A group exhibition by Wimmera artists and community members of diverse ages and backgrounds as a result of printmaking workshops led by Jenny Peterson held in the printmaking studio at Federation University, Horsham. The workshops were funded by Regional Arts Victoria by an artist grant to Jenny Peterson a Gippsland printmaker.

### CONTEMPORARY GROUP SHOWS

- Fifteen local Natimuk and surrounds artists
- Moulding at the Goat.
- Pauline Barnes/Mel Obst – painting

### CONTEMPORARY SOLO SHOWS

- Carolynn Hamdorf – A Year of Small Observances drawings
- Sue Pavlovich – participatory installation
- Mel Obst – paintings
- Andy Lambrogotas – mosaics exhibition

The ongoing in-kind support by the gallery building owner, Rob Grenfell through annual facility improvements, in 2019 entirely repainting the gallery, is most valued.

Lighting adjustment as required was kindly done by Frank Tagliabue and Alison Eggleton.

The Gallery was supported by a total number of 19 volunteers, equating to 250 volunteer hours.

The Goat Gallery publishes in the Art Almanac and ensures listings are records for the artists exhibiting.

*In 2019 there were 17 Goat Gallery Shows, resulting in 1809 visitors through the door.*



The Printed Garden. Photo Theresa Harrison Photography

# ACT NATIMUK PRESENTS



Styckx Theatre Playground. Photo Michelle McFarlane Photography

## Styckx Theatre

The Styckx Theatre project was an ambitious project led by Natimuk aerial theatre company Y Space and delivered in partnership with ACT Natimuk, the Nati Frinj Biennale and Made In Natimuk.

*What a magical experience! I loved the intricacy of the bamboo structure, the lighting and the creative sounds that added great depth to the rope climbers performance. It was particularly fantastic to see the active involvement of the local kids. A real highlight of the Festival! Thanks again - Lynne Hume - festival attendee*

### STRUCTURE

Styckx Theatre in itself is a giant Simon Barley (Bambuco) designed bamboo structure, originally commissioned by Y Space in 2006. The building of the bamboo structure occurred over seven days and became a performance event with the site having a constant flow of visitation. Out of the nine people employed as crew, seven were new to the bamboo construction techniques. The structure is built from 10 m lengths of bamboo and is 45 m long, 35m wide and 15m tall.

### WORKSHOPS AND PERFORMANCES

In this structure, Y Space presented three separate performances presented over three nights of the festival. Styckx Playground performances of Time, Space and Gravity involved physical theatre and aerial performance that emerged from the nature of climbing/playing and working with the bamboo in the structure. The performances were co-created with 90 community members including Wimmera Womens Circus, Horsham Dancers and Rock Climbers, Art Matters Shake N Groove dancers, Natimuk Primary School music students and Natimuk Gymnasts across 74 training and creation workshops.

### THE TEAM

The Y Space key collaborative devising team were Abby Watkins and Anthony Schellens and Director Jillian Pearce. Composer Russell Goldsmith was engaged to compose three sound scores and worked with the Natimuk Primary School music students for one of the performances.

### STRUCTURE AS VENUE

Styckx Theatre also became a festival venue for seven other Nati Frinj curated community generated performances and workshops including three performances of Black Hole Theatres work in development, Vault. This iteration of Styckx Theatre as festival venue for multiple performances became a useful laboratory to address the challenges and opportunities in the development of a model for future touring of the structure to other festivals. This was presented at the Arts Unearthed Forum.

*I've never participated in anything like this before. It challenged my perception of what I think I am capable of and gave me insight into how creative performances can be put together.  
- Styckx performer*

### PARTNERSHIPS

#### *...with Nati Frinj*

Nati Frinj was an integral part of the funding proposal process (and wrote the Festival Australia Proposal) and supported the crowd funding campaign. Nati Frinj also contributed to marketing the workshops and performances, programming into the Styckx venue and audience/event/box office management for the performances.

#### *... with ACT Natimuk*

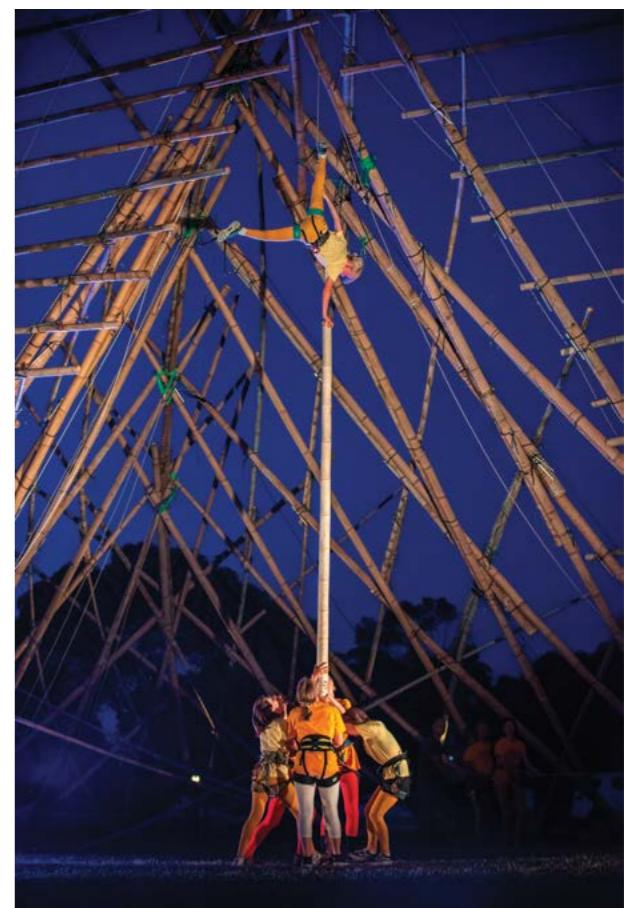
The volunteer committee who are the engine room behind ACT Natimuk, through the paid General Manager role, provided Y Space/Styckx Theatre Playground with support such as:

- a local auspice of funds
- access to DGR status and philanthropic support
- insurance cover for Public Liability, Public Indemnity and Volunteer insurance
- professional advice and support
- marketing outreach through their MiN

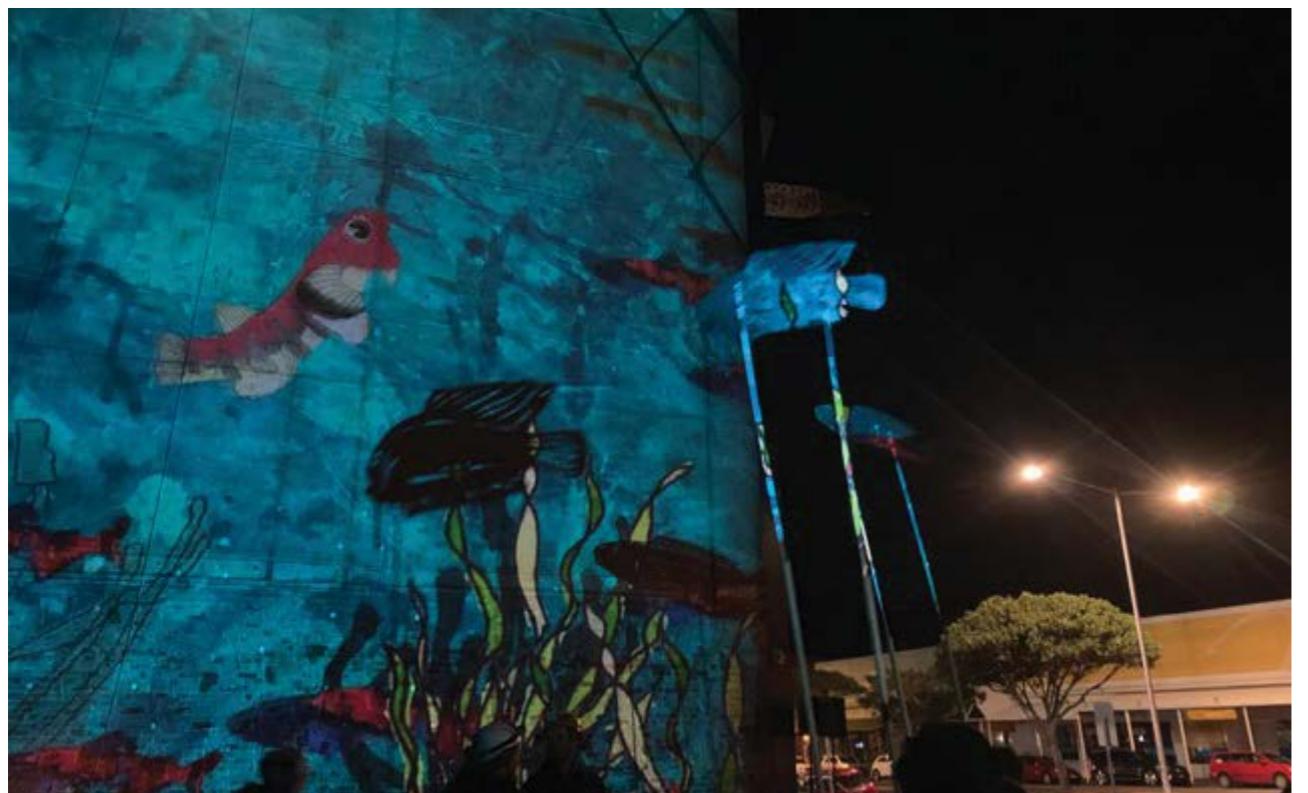
The ACT Natimuk General Manager played a vital role for the project in supporting the insurance investigations to cover this work in the festival and served as an ACT go to person regarding professional advice in meeting the project obligations to do with registrations.

#### *... with Made In Natimuk*

Made In Natimuk (MiN) producer Verity Higgins provided the forum for the project to be presented within the MiN/Horsham Town Hall Arts Unearthed program. MiN also provided an important Marketing Kit workshop that developed the press kit tool for the project including getting the funding from the Australian Community Foundation. Styckx Theatre Playground will become one of the suite of works to be communicated to other festival contexts through the MiN website and producer.



Styckx Theatre Playground. Photos Michelle McFarlane Photography



*Galaxias presented at Geelong After Dark. Photo Dave Jones*

## Galaxias

*A view beneath the surface from the sky. Small native fish living in the Barwon River.*

Galaxias was a site-specific performance for Geelong After Dark, presented on 5 May 2019 involving aerial dance, projection, shadow puppetry and community engagement.

Presented on the side wall of the Barwon Water building in Geelong CBD, Galaxias was formed around the theme of native fish that live in the waterways of the Barwon River.

Galaxias was developed through a one-week residency in Geelong, with two streams of lead up community workshops; fish animation led by Dave Jones with students from a local Special School and shadow fish puppetry company led by Mary French.

Audiences totalling 1800 people attended across the six 20-minute performances presented on the evening. Projection/sound installation and unique interactive community shadow puppetry was also presented between each performance event.

Galaxias represents a new iteration of the large Space and Place style production commissioned from the Made in Natimuk suite of works. The Galaxias company developed a new residency model at a more affordable price point for future presenters. (Total co-presented budget of \$70K with \$28K coming through Made in Natimuk)

## PARTNERSHIPS

Galaxias was made possible through partnership with Geelong Council, Geelong After Dark, Geelong Performing Arts Centre and Barwon Water.

## THE TEAM

The Galaxias Company comprised of:

- Creative Producer/Director – Jillian Pearce
- Animation Director – Dave Jones
- Shadow Puppetry Director – Mary French
- Y Space Aerialists – Bec Hopkins, Abby Watkins
- Y Space Riggers – Anthony Schellens, Adam Demmert
- Original Composition – Russell Goldsmith
- Sound – Outlook Communication
- Lighting – Geelong Performing Arts Centre
- Initial Producer – Verity Higgins, Made In Natimuk



*Galaxias. Photo Dave Jones*

## Plastic Fantastic Recycling Project



The Plastic Fantastic Recycling Project was led by Dave Jones, and saw the establishment of a small-town plastic recycling plant and maker's space at Natimuk Primary School.

Dave developed systems to convert used plastic items into material for 3D printers, and worked with the Natimuk Primary students to prototype the recycling machines, whilst also teaching them about the environmental problems of plastic and the ways such technology can be creatively harnessed for positive outcomes.

This project was supported by The Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR).



*Plastic Fantastic Recycling Project at Natimuk Primary School. Photos Dave Jones*

## Murtoa Stick Shed Residency

The Murtoa Stick Shed is the iconic, heritage-listed grain storage facility in the township of Murtoa. Built in 1941, it is now the last of its kind. The Stick Shed is a massive space, measuring 280m long, 60m wide and 19m high, with 600 whole tree trunks for support. The space is unique, like a rustic cathedral, with incredible acoustics. A team of ACT Natimuk artists conducted a residency to explore this space, re-imagine its potential from an artistic perspective and transform it with their vision.



*Murtoa Stick Shed Residency. Photo Dave Jones*

As part of the realization of this residency a 15m tall puppet, originally 'Phoebe Sparkles from 2011 show Highly Strung, re-named 'Matilda', was suspended from the rafters of the shed and ACT Natimuk artists worked with a team of young locals to operate it. These workshops culminated in a live performance during Murtoa's Big Weekend that attracted nearly 700 people and is being heralded as the Stick Sheds first step towards becoming an arts event space.

The residency took place in three stages:

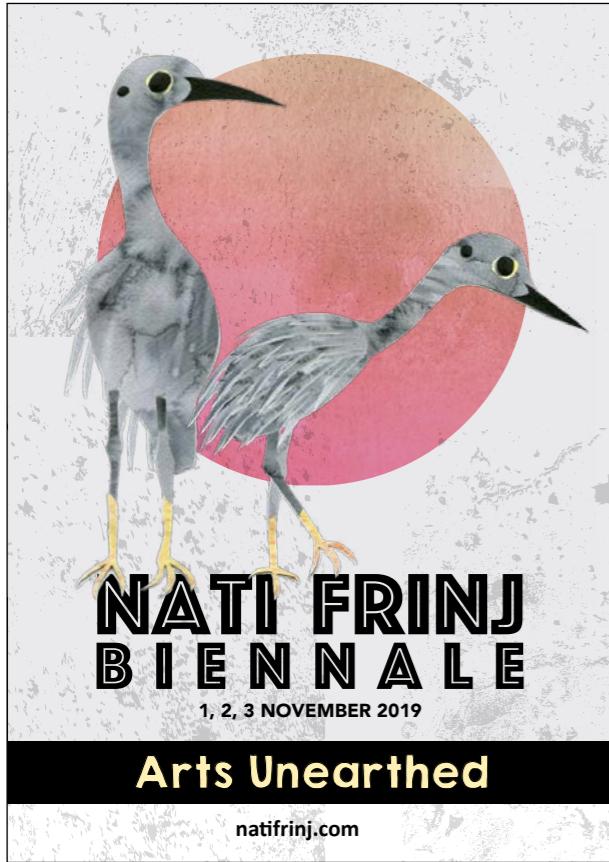
**Stage 1** – An initial period of exploration and experimentation by Natimuk artists where they looked into the possibilities for projection, lighting, aerial performance and large-scale puppetry.

**Stage 2** – A series of workshops with Murtoa community members to build their skills with projection, lighting and sound. The training up of local talent is a key part of this project, with the goal to ultimately enable the Murtoa locals to create and deliver their own works in the space.

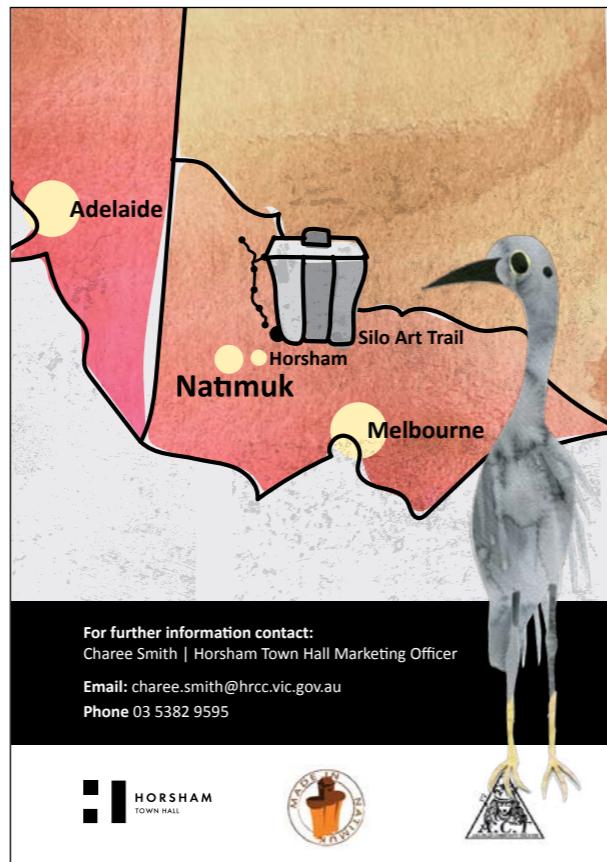
**Stage 3** – The creation and delivery of a new collaborative work by Natimuk artists and members of the Murtoa community. The presentation took place as a free public event on the night of October 5th during the Murtoa Big Weekend.

This project was made possible with the support of Regional Arts Victoria and the Regional Arts Fund.

# PARTNERSHIPS



Arts Unearthed flyer. Design Adelle Rohrsheim



Arts Unearthed Forum at Nati Frinj Biennale. Photo Theresa Harrison Photography

## Arts Unearthed

Arts Unearthed is a new initiative by the MiN section of ACT Natimuk for 2019, aimed at showcasing regional artists work, in a regional arts context. Presented at the Nati Frinj Biennale in partnership with Nati Frinj, MiN (Made in Natimuk) and Horsham Town Hall,

Arts Unearthed invited presenters such as the National Celtic Festival to come to Natimuk to see new works presented in regional Victoria, often in new and unusual spaces.

A market forum session took place during the Nati Frinj Festival weekend and highlighted the work of four Natimuk artists and four other predominantly regionally based artists. Arts Unearthed will be further developed by the three parties during 2020- 21.

The shows and artists that presented at this first forum were:

**Styckx Theatre** – Jillian Pearce *Natimuk*

**Face Off** – Dave Jones *Natimuk*

**Lantunda** – Mary French *Natimuk*

**Space & Place** – (various iterations from medium to large – including Poppet and Galaxias) – Jillian Pearce, Dave Jones & Mary French *Natimuk*

**Collective Swab** – Anthony Pelchen *Natimuk*

**Parallax** – Megan Beckwith *Melbourne*

**Bee-Sharp Honey Bee** – Rae Howell *Invermay*

**Once & For All** – Mark Penzak & Eliza-Jane Gilchrist *Castlemaine*

## Time\_Place\_Space Arts House Residency

Time\_Place\_Space is Arts House's mobile art laboratory, where artists join minds for a 10-day research-based residency. Between 27 November and 7 December, artists visited Byaduk and Natimuk.

For the 5th consecutive year, ACT Natimuk hosted the Arts House team and 24 Time\_Place\_Space residency artists for an evening of food and discussion. Held in the Soldiers Memorial Hall, the ACT Natimuk team presented a collaborative pizza making session, and the chance to meet and welcome the visiting artists to Natimuk.

ACT Natimuk members also attended some key sessions being run for the residency, including a cultural walk at Djurite (Mt Arapiles).



# FINANCIALS

## Finance Report

2019 saw ACT Natimuk manage and present the Natimuk Frinj Biennale.

The Natimuk Frinj Biennale saw five companies successfully receive funding to appear at Frinj, reducing our need to buy in shows.

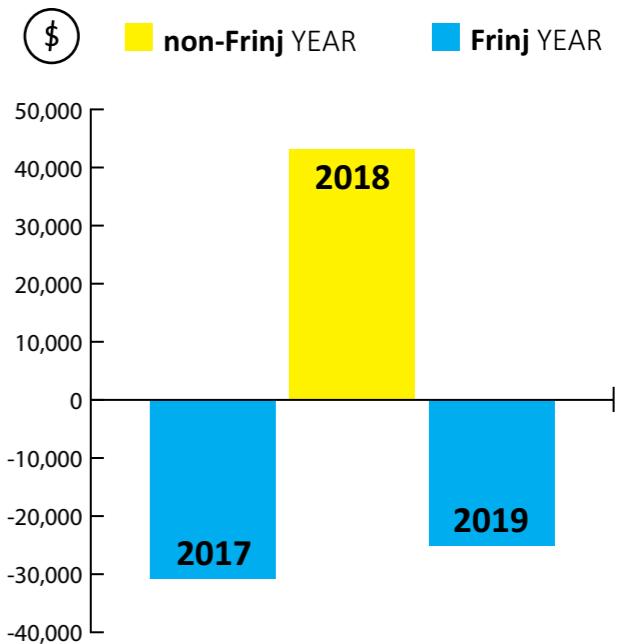
For the first time we ventured into the world of philanthropic funding, attracting \$5,000 from the Clack McClure Fund, through the Australian Communities Foundation. This supported key workshops focusing on the development of bamboo construction skills and aerial performance. A formal investigation of philanthropic funding is a focus for our 2020 year.

The ongoing support of Creative Victoria via the Organisational Investment Project has allowed us to engage three part time employees and continues to give us the security and freedom to explore innovative ways to consolidate and grow our organisation.

The Made in Natimuk initiative made a significant contribution to our 2019 finances, particularly through the Galaxias project for Geelong After Dark. Added to our 2018 Made in Natimuk fees received, this put us in an excellent position to develop and promote work created locally.

As 2019 hosted the Natimuk Frinj, the year finished with the balance reflecting a deficit. As agreed with Creative Victoria, our financial outcomes are spread over two years, incorporating a Frinj year when expenditure is greater, with an interim year when a profit is expected. This is illustrated in the graph to the right. We are working towards a reduction of the deficit in Frinj Festival years.

ACT NATIMUK ACCOUNT AT THE END OF 2019:	
Nati Frinj	\$9,350.98
ACT Main	\$30,812.38
MiN	\$17,587.71
DGR	\$3,640.23
Savings Account	\$71,109.92



**Arapiles Community Theatre****Arapiles Community Theatre****Income statement for the year ended 31 December 2019**

<b>Balance sheet for the year ended 31 December 2019</b>			
	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>	
	<b>Note</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Asset</b>			
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash at bank ACT 151903317		5,669	122,347
Cash at Bank Min 153041546		17,586	1,025
Cash at Bank FRINJ 149559122		12,089	13,110
Cash at Bank PUB 161871223		3,640	1,420
Sandhurst term deposit		70,881	0
		<u>109,865</u>	<u>137,902</u>
Trade Debtors		44,110	6,600
Income receivable		0	0
GST Input tax credit		4,122	14,777
Expenses Paid In Advance		0	0
		<u>48,232</u>	<u>21,377</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<u>158,097</u>	<u>159,279</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade Creditors		8,938	9,263
GST Payable			0
Income received in advance		37,500	12,596
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<u>46,438</u>	<u>21,859</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>111,659</u>	<u>136,820</u>
<b>Equity</b>			
Retained surplus		<u>111,659</u>	<u>136,820</u>
<b>Net worth</b>		<u>111,659</u>	<u>136,820</u>

		<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>Note</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Income</b>			
<b>Event Income</b>			
Activities & Services Income		32,592	8,217
Sponsorship			10,907
Donations		1,056	1,762
Fundraising		8,475	2,925
Foundations		17,746	
Interest Received		1,421	2,241
Sundry Income		2,600	
Brokerage fees (commissions)			
Creative Victoria operational grants	4	75,000	75,000
Local Government operational grants		29,879	10,726
Festivals Australia		45,500	
Project Grant Creative Victoria	3	40,000	266,000
Project Grants other Vic State Agencies		9,072	
Project Grants Local government		6,500	
<b>Total Income</b>		<u>278,058</u>	<u>369,551</u>
<b>Expense</b>			
<b>Allowances &amp; on costs wages &amp; fees</b>			
Artist develop & mentorship		22,426	18,250
Artist/musician fees		7,392	136
Community Education_projects		49,544	71,473
Creative Personnel		12,129	
Insurance		35,398	46,243
Legal, Finance & Governance		3,421	2,770
Management & Administration		2,156	908
Marketing & Business Development		55,459	46,237
Marketing & Promotions		16,542	5,349
Office consumables & resources		1,469	1,064
Production & Technical		80,528	69,163
Production & Exhibition stage costs			14,200
Rent & Running costs		5,043	2,561
Sundry expenses		409	12,072
Storage		3,606	
Travel & Touring costs		5,582	35,320
Travel for administration			
Venue & Exhibition space costs		985	700
Workshops, Classes & Seminars		1,130	
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<u>303,219</u>	<u>326,446</u>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>		<u>(25,161)</u>	<u>43,105</u>

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

ACT Natimuk would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of Creative Victoria through the Organisation Investment Program.



Nati Frinj Biennale and associated projects were supported by Creative Victoria, Festivals Australia, Horsham Rural City Council, Regional Arts Victoria and the Regional Arts Fund, Horsham Town Hall, Natimuk Primary School and GrainCorp.



Styckx Theatre Playground was made possible with the support of Creative Victoria, Festivals Australia, Nati Frinj Biennale, ACT Natimuk, Made in Natimuk, Y Space, Auspicious Arts Projects, bambuco, Transience, Roy B Hoskins and Associates, Bamboo Australia, Outlook, Clack McClure through Australian Communities Foundation, Natimuk Primary School and donors through the Australian Cultural Fund.



ACT Natimuk would also like to thank all of the volunteers and audiences that support our work.



Hyperspace Dance Party presented at Nati Frinj Biennale. Photo Dave Jones

