

Multicultural Arts Victoria and Theatreworks with the support of the Consulate General of the United States Melbourne present

DYNAMIC MOMENTS

An afternoon workshop and discussion with Nilaja Sun

For further information contact:

+61 (3) 9188 3681 office@multiculturalarts.com.au



Nilaja Sun

Nilaja Sun is an actor, playwright and teaching artist most known for her Obie award winning solo piece "No Child..." which had its initial off Broadway run at the Barrow Street Theatre from July 2006-June 2007 and was recently revived there in an extended run. For her creation and performance of No Child... and its subsequent national tour, Nilaja garnered 21 awards including: an Obie Award, a Lucille Lortel Award, two Outer Critics Circle Awards including the John Gassner Playwriting Award for Outstanding New American Play, a Theatre World Award, the Helen Hayes Award, two NAACP Theatre Awards, and was named the Best One-Person Show at the U.S. Comedy Arts Festival in Aspen. "No Child..." is published and has been licensed out to over 45 theatres nationally since 2008. In 2010, Nilaja was awarded the solo NOVA Award for Artist of the Year by terra NOVA Collective. She has also been seen on 30 Rock, Law & Order: SVU, Unforgettable, Louie, The International, Rubicon and in 2012, she will be seen in the independent films Nature Calls and Hairbrained. A native of the Lower

East Side, she is a Princess Grace Award winner and has worked proudly as a teaching artist in New York City since 1998.

PARTICIPANT PROFILES



Deng Makuei

Deng is an actor from South Sudanese background. He left South Sudan in 1986 and speaks English, Dinka, Swahili and Arabic. He has recently been involved with the Western edge youth centre, playback theatre, Screen Actors Australia and VCAM Centre for Cultural Partnerships. He has appeared in theatre performances, TV series such as Rush, Neighbors, and Slap Extra. He has also appeared in films such as THE TRAVELLER (2008), CHINJONI Lead Harlem (2007). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X3EMRiFS2CU>



Majid Shokor

Majid Shokor is an actor for stage and screen. Originally from Baghdad, he lives and works in Melbourne. Since his arrival in Australia in 2001, he has appeared in many plays, short films, TV series and the feature film Lucky Miles, for which he was also the cultural consultant. His performances have received critical acclaim and been honoured with two prestigious Green Room Award nominations for Best Actor in Independent

Theatre, in 2005 and 2009. Majid holds a Post-Graduate Diploma in Community Cultural Development (Honours) from the Victorian College of the Arts - Melbourne University and a Masters Degree in the same subject and university department. Majid is passionate about role of the art in creating a cultural dialogue. He believes that theatre is a place where justice and redemption could be found. Currently he is designing a cultural exchange project that includes young filmmakers from Baghdad and Melbourne to produce short films together.

Alice Garner

Alice Garner is a Melburnian musician, actor and historian, who has been performing since she was a child in film, theatre, television and radio. Acting credits include feature films *Jindabyne* and *Love and Other Catastrophes*, ABC documentary *Utopia Girls*, TV series *SeaChange* (ABC-TV) and *Secret Life of Us*. She plays cello in two groups: *Xylouris Ensemble* and *euphonia*. She co-founded actor-advocacy group *Actors for Refugees* in 2001, and performed for many schools and community groups. Alice has a doctorate in history, has worked as a research fellow at La Trobe and Melbourne Universities, and is now an Honorary Associate at La Trobe. She is currently enrolled in a Graduate Diploma of Secondary Teaching and is rediscovering the pleasures and challenges of the classroom.



Arnold Zable



Arnold Zable is a writer, storyteller, educator and human rights advocate. His books include *Jewels and Ashes*, *The Fig Tree*, and three novels, *Café Scheherazade*, *Scraps of Heaven* and *Sea of Many Returns*. His new book, *Violin Lesson*, 2011, continues his exploration of refugee journeys and themes of exile and displacement. Zable is the author of numerous stories, columns, features and essays, a co-author of *Kan Yama Kan*, a play in which asylum seekers tell their stories, and two storytelling shows: *Wanderers and Dreamers* and *Anytime the Wind Can Change*. His novel *Café Scheherazade* has been adapted for stage and performed at *Forty-five Downstairs* in 2011.

Zable has conducted writing workshops throughout Australia, and has worked with refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants, the homeless, the profoundly deaf, Black Saturday bushfire survivors, problem gamblers, at risk youth, and other groups using story as a means of self-understanding and healing. He has been a visiting lecturer in creative writing and human rights issues at Deakin, Melbourne, Monash, RMIT, La Trobe and Victoria universities. Zable is president of the Melbourne Centre of International PEN, a patron of the Victorian Storytellers guild, an ambassador for the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, a former member of the Victorian Immigration Museum advisory board, and has a doctorate from the School of Creative Arts, Melbourne University, where he is currently a Vice-Chancellor's fellow.

Tania Canas



Tania has performed as part of the Melbourne Fringe Festival, Next Wave and Amnesty International's ARTillery Festival. She has had her monologue script 'Untouchable' published through Currency Press and performed the piece as part of the Diversity on Stage and Screen event at ACMI. Tania presented her Master's research findings at the 18th Annual Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed conference at the University of California, Berkeley. Her first academic publication will be released September 2013 in the *Journal of Pedagogy, Pluralism & Practice*.

She was selected as an Emerging Cultural Leader by Footscray Community Arts Centre in 2012 and now works as the Arts Director at RISE Refugee whilst studying Community Cultural Development at the VCA.



Tariro Mavondo

Prior to commencing the Bachelor of Dramatic Arts at the VCA, Tariro Mavondo began a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Politics and Anthropology. During this time she was also working as an artist with international and nationally established bands at festivals such as the World Music Festival in Adelaide, Big Day out and the World Music Expo (Arts centre). Tariro got a taste of the theatre when she performed as an actor and dancer in Claudia Escobar's final VCA Animating piece **Play: Ground** (2008). At the VCA Tariro's major acting roles have been Nina in **The Seagull** 2009, Blair in **Perfume, Underwear and Crash**

Helmet (2010) and Ariel in **Shakespeare's the Tempest** (2011). Tariro has written monologues for Company 2011's group devised production **The Good People** and played Marcia in **A Mouthful of Birds** in her final third year production (2011). Tariro is the 2011 recipient of the **Irene Mitchell Award** (Outstanding Actor in their Third Year in Training).

Tariro is currently working on a performance therapy production called **Batagine/Baulkam Hill African Ladies Troupe** with Sydney Director Ros Horin (2011-current). Recently Tariro has been performing interactive version of 'Black Face, White Mask' with Western Edge Youth Arts theatre. Tariro was a state finalist at the 2009 Australian Poetry Slam. Tariro was a state finalist at the 2010 Australian Poetry Slam. Tariro was a national finalist at the 2010 Australian Poetry Slam. Tariro is completing a certificate in expressive arts therapy with internationally renowned facilitator **Soto** (Tamalpa Institute California).



Donna Dimovski Kantarovski

Donna is Australian born actress, script/song writer, director and a drama teacher. She studied and received a B.F.A (Bachelor in Acting) 1994 Skopje, Macedonia. Donna's acting career started as a student at Theatre of Drama in Skopje, Macedonia, where she played various roles leading female role, at Dramatic Theatre, Skopje. After completing her degree she returned to her home town in Bitola, where she was employed by Bitola National Theatre, (1994-1998) becoming the leading lady in many performances and many as plays for adults, children and TV series; The Beatles, Stories from around World etc.

In her early career she received awards for best young actor (1995) and the best acting realization (1996), at the National Theatre Festival, in Macedonia. Donna attended school here in Australia and received her Diploma in Arts (Small Companies and Community Theatre) 1996. She also holds a Graduate Diploma in Secondary Education (2003) specializing in Drama and LOTE Methodology.

Donna's work in the community is much regarded, as a Founder of the Performing Arts School Bodzilak for children and youth (2008-2012) Pinocchio, Christmas Wish, Red riding hood and Friends, Wizard of Oz. She also performs with MTG Boomerang, touring Australia and also overseas; America, Canada and New Zealand. In 2012 Donna performed at the BIT FEST, the longest cultural summer festival in Macedonia –Bitola, with her solo piece "Sarajevo Suite."

She performed professionally with various independent theatres. Donna was last seen in the ensemble performance "Sarajevo Suite" at LaMama Theatre (2011-2012)