VULCANA

CASHLESS & Care-free



An immersive promenade circus performance
uncovering the unseen labour of care

6:30PM 20-22 Nov ~ Vulcana Arts Hub

All shows are surtitled

GET TICKETS
vulcana.org.au

This project was supported by Creative Sparks. Creative Sparks is an initiative of Brisbane City Council in partnership with the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.

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Welcome to Country by Aunty Dawn Daylight (Friday Premiere)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

VULCANA ACKNOWLEDGES THE JAGERA AND TURRBAL PEOPLES, THE CUSTODIANS OF THE LANDS AND SEAS ON WHICH WE LIVE AND SEEK INSPIRATION. WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO ALL ELDERS PAST, PRESENT, AND EMERGING. WE RECOGNISE THAT THIS LAND NOW CALLED AUSTRALIA ALWAYS WAS AND ALWAYS WILL BE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER LAND AND THE GREAT PRIVILEGE IT IS TO CREATE AND HOLD COMMUNITY HERE TODAY.

PERFORMING CAST

CORE CAST

Rosie Albina
Narnie Arkell
Bena Brown
Eli Free
Em Holt
Tempest Knight
Alastair Lette
Maggie Summers
Jazlyn McClellan
Bianca Reynolds
Annika Strand
Luz Maria Vallejo
Lauren Watson
Sally Walker
Helene Windels



WAW DANCE

WaW Dance is a contemporary performance ensemble of women aged 50+ creating provocative work about the world we live in. Socially engaged, artistically ambitious and unapologetically alive, WaW celebrates the creativity, resilience and wisdom of older women while challenging assumptions about age and contemporary culture.

"The Procession"
A structured improvisation created collaboratively by Wendy McPhee and performers:
Beverley Giles, Shona McKenzie, Sally Corbett, Margaret Clifford, Jaya Healy, Heather Henderson, Jen Price and Alice Owen.

Drawing on the performers' individual experiences and contributions, the work explores care as an expression of our shared humanity and the connections that hold us together.

With special thanks to Danielle for her beautiful live music.

AQUALINA

Ana Varayud. Bella Faoro (synchronised swimmers & Ellen McIlwain (Coach)



MUSICIANS

Dr Danielle Bentley
Dr Bentley is an award-winning cellist, curator, and educator. She is a recipient of the APRA-AMCOS Art Music Award for Excellence by an Individual (2014) and the Australian Arts Fellowship at Omi Music Residency (2018, New York). Danielle has performed with flagship companies including Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Opera Australia, Queensland Ballet, Opera Queensland, and Camerata, and has collaborated with over 100 major artists such as Megan Washington, Imogen Heap, Hans Zimmer, Jimmy Barnes, Harry Connick Jr, and Diana Krall. As a director of Collusion (2011–2018), she performed in three acclaimed new chamber ballets, co-commissioned over 40 Australian works, and fostered new interdisciplinary collaborations. Dedicated to connecting young audiences with music, Danielle has worked with Musica Viva in Schools (Collusion), Powerkids (Brisbane Powerhouse), and in Sound Across Oceans/QPAC community workshops in regional Queensland. She performs through Live Music at Open Conservatorium, teaches at Young Conservatorium and serves as an AMEB examiner. Her curatorial work includes festivals like Restrung (Brisbane Powerhouse), and, for the Queensland Conservatorium, she co-directed two editions of Crossbows chamber music festival and managed the International Music Council's 5th World Forum on Music.

Alex Merrett
Alex, a member of the Queensland Youth Orchestras, is also the cello section leader for his school's Advanced String Orchestra. At 15yo, Alex has been playing cello for more than half his life, and he always practises when his parents tell him to do so.
He doesn't have a favourite composer but says that Beethoven is "ok".

Micah Kelly
Micah is 16, the 7th out of 10 children and homeschooled. He began cello aged 7. He enjoys playing with other musicians, and has done so in duets, trios, quartets and the Queensland Youth Orchestra 3.

Chloe Deng
Chloe is an 11 year old currently in Year 5. She began learning cello at age of six and successfully completed her AMEB Cello Grade 8 last year. She also has been part of QYO Orchestras since 2023. Chloe is passionate about cello and enthusiastic about sharing her love of music with others.

Innes McLeod
Innes McLeod is in Year 4 at Coorparoo State School. He has been learning cello for 5 years.



CREATIVE TEAM

Co-Directors – Allie Wilde / Barbara Lowing
Wordsmith & Creative Producer - Angela Peita
Stage Manager - Mayu Muto
Assistant Stage Manager - Pip Scott
Lighting Designer – Winter Cyan & Briana Clarke
Sound design – Winter Cyan & Freddy Komp
Props & Set - Emma Aitchinson, Eli Free, Tempest, Chris
Projection assistant - Deb Cleland
Lighting & Sound operator – Briana Clarke
Creative Captions/Video Design - Freddy Komp
Documentation – Paris Owen / Jade Ellis
Poster - Chloe Callistimon (Image) & Grace Law (Design)
Rehearsal documentation - Laurene Cooper-Fox
Specialty trainers - Miku Ferguson, Lauren Watson, Nick Cilento & Emma Aitchison

CO-DIRECTORS' NOTES

In Australia, women continue to undertake significantly more unpaid care and domestic work than men, yet so much of this work remains unseen and undervalued. Cashless & Care-Free grew from a desire to explore the economics and politics of care, but also its humanity — the love, exhaustion, humour, generosity and resilience that sustain our families and communities.

The creation of this immersive work has been a wonderfully collaborative process. We interviewed people, gathered stories, wrote, questioned, experimented, laughed and cried together. Every performer brought their own experiences, ideas and skills. From first-time performers to seasoned artists, we've learned from one another, taken creative risks and grown together.

Along the way, we have supported one another, shared our strengths and aspirations and, in many ways, lived the very ideas of community and mutual aid that inspired this work.

I feel deeply honoured to have co-directed this work alongside the wonderful Barbara Lowing, with whom I've hoped to collaborate for many years. I am enormously proud of our committed, brave and inspiring ensemble and of what we've all created together. My heartfelt thanks to our incredible creative team and collaborators for their artistry, imagination and generosity.

Made with love, courage, laughter and care, we hope Cashless & Care-Free moves you, makes you laugh, and leaves you thinking about whose care sustains your world — and how we might, perhaps, better value, celebrate and honour it.

Allie Wilde | Co-Director, Cashless & Care-Free
and Artistic Director, Vulcana

As a 'non circus performer', being asked by Allie to co-direct Cashless and Carefree was incredibly exciting. Even more exciting, was watching the development of the artists who are performing in the show. The strength, the dedication, the bravery, the enthusiasm and the power that they bring to their art form is awe-inspiring. I am so proud to be a part of this incredible group of talented and exciting artists. Their insight into what it takes to 'care' has been thought-provoking and enlightening.
Cheers to all and take care.

Barbara Lowing | Co-Director, Cashless & Care-Free

CAST BIOS & COSTUME NOTES

Costume Note: Each costume has been created by the individual performer using materials that hold memories of care

Rosie Albina is a young emerging artist and passionate member of the circus and physical theatre worlds who is drawn to the strength fostered in communities through art and storytelling. She works with lyra, tippy hoop and chandelier, hula hoops, stiltwalking and ground movement, with physical theatre and Butoh training adding a distinctive and enchanting edge to her practice. Inspired by her mixed cultural background and her fascination with the humanities, Rosie's ethos as a performer views circus as a herald of stories and knowledge which can bring communities together.

My pants are an item of clothing that survived a house fire at my family home almost two years ago. Though they've been through the wash many times, the smell of smoke and a stain from my charred ceiling fan remain stuck to them.

Though the aftermath of the fire was a time of grief and intense distress, I saw people show up for me and my family in ways that I will never forget.

The patches I have sewn onto my pants pay homage to what the house fire taught me - how deeply powerful the connections are that bind communities together in care.

Alastair Lette (they/them) is an Magandjin based, emerging artist who specialises in contemporary experimental circus. Their works grow in a transformative world that blurs the intersection of reality and imagination, where they thrive in the abnormal, while exploring how the vibrancy of human emotion intertwines with intricacies of the mind. Intersecting physical potential, endurance and what it is to be human, their performances create an intrinsic connection between audiences and artists.



Their costume is a collection of items belonging to individuals in their life that inspire them. These people have left imprints on their life, enabling them to believe in their potential demonstrating the beautiful relationship of learning between people.



Bianca Reynolds is a First Nations performer who also lives with physical and a hidden disability, or ‘sunflower’. Disability people need to be seen and heard and while also trying to create more opportunities for mob and disability to be in the arts.

My costume is made from tie-dye on my tank the lace come from Grandma’s old collection.

While my fabric also represents her as a kookaburra, as she did promise to come back as a kookaburra and I do see her every day also as a kookaburra.

Always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

Luz Maria Vallejo: I'm Luz , born and raised in Argentina.

I discovered the joy of movement and circus arts about 9 years ago through AcroYoga. It quickly blended with my social change values and took me to performances in rural and remote areas.

Since moving to Australia, my spoken language has changed significantly, but my language of movement has expanded — now including Contact Improvisation and Physical Theatre.

Today's costume features a significant piece of embroidery. It's a throwback to my activist years, advocating for reproductive rights and the campaign to decriminalise abortion. It intertwines with this thread of collective care, which I cherish and practice.



Em Holt is a disabled, neurodivergent, non-binary human and a newcomer to the circus community. They've been training in aerials at Vulcana for about 18 months and have a deep appreciation for the support and encouragement they have found there. Cashless & Care-free has given them the opportunity to explore and showcase their personal journey in going from someone who was typically the caregiver to learning to accept care and help.

Their costume features fabric flowers which were made using pieces of clothing gifted to them from their loved ones. This includes their biological family from the other side of the world, who they miss every day; and their found family here in Australia.

Tempest is a queer & trans artist living, working, playing & creating in Magandjin. He has a professional background across the sex work industry & more recently in sex worker advocacy & education. Creatively he has worked mostly with layered film photography, abstract self-portraiture, circus & performance art, but dabbles in light sculpture, collage, costume & prop design, divination & dance.

Tempest sees the fountain of care & its keeper as a symbolic materialization of the endless, inexhaustible generosity embodied by the women of our world. The mothers, daughters, Grandmothers, sisters, aunties, support workers, neighbours, nurses, fierce & unflinching protectors, sustainers, preservers & enhancers of life. The women & feminine figures who recognise when care is necessary, identify how to bring it forth & in their numinous wisdom, do what needs to be done for their communities. If you look for them, they are always there, making everything possible.

Lauren Watson is a multidisciplinary performing artist, contemporary circus practitioner and Artistic Director working across Meanjin and Yugambeh Country. Her practice explores disability, identity and the possibilities of the physical body through movement and performance. Her career includes collaborations with Back to Back Theatre, Circa, Vulcana, Restless Dance Company and Rodney Bell, alongside performances at the 2018 Commonwealth Games Festival and her original solo work Nerve. She received the 2019 Access Arts Achievement Award and the 2020 National Award for Disability Leadership (Social Impact).

In 2023, Lauren co-founded Chimera Arts, a disability-led performing arts company championing professional disabled and d/Deaf artists. As Artistic Director, she developed 6 Degrees, which premiered at Undercover Artist Festival in 2025 and toured to South Korea in 2026. Her emerging directorial practice challenges traditional circus conventions through unconventional movement, experimental dramaturgy and collaborative storytelling, creating new artistic possibilities for disabled performers.

Lauren will wear a red dress, and light red corset made from her hospital notes 26 years ago, showing the handwriting of all the nurses to helped keep her alive in her most vulnerable moments. The corset symbolises a brace worn to keep the spine straight in spinal cord injuries and will have bits of yarn attached to the corset and props used. The red and blue yarn is a visual representation and the nervous system through vulnerable moments we experience and how connection, even small is significant to us as humans.

Eli Free (She/They) is a queer, Māori Australian multidisciplinary artist working and creating in various spaces around Magandjin as a theatre creative, life model and drag clown. She has created set pieces, props and written for the Cashless and Carefree season. Eli plays the Narrator Maiden and puppets the Crone/Grandma.

Eli's costumes is a borrowed dress from her best friend that she has hand stitched cut outs from thrifted curtains their partner bought her that represent her late Grandma in lieu of cutting up her Grandma's curtains. They have also crocheted a cane holder from yarn their mother gave them the last time they visited home. The Crone/Grandma is a mask and puppet Eli made by hand decorated with repurposed white fabrics from past theatre shows and the same thrifted curtains adorning the red dress. Eli uses a cane that is on loan from director Barb because Eli recently dislocated her patella.

Annika Strand is a Swedish Australian emerging artist living in Meanjin. Her multidisciplinary practice explores her life, identity and belonging through Visual Arts and, more recently, physical movement, poetry, and performance.

For Annika, art is home and a challenge—a playful struggle. Using colour, layers, humour and personal stories, she invites people to look closer and reflect on their own identity and place in the world.

My costume is a linen shirt that my grandpa (Morfar) used to wear. My grandparents used to be missionaries in India in churches. They were very well known for all the work that they have done for the people of the churches. In India the climate is very hot, this linin shirt became my morfar's go to lounge wear as he found it cool and comfortable. Growing up when he came to visit us here in Australia I always remember him wearing the linen shirt to bed. I wear this in the love and care that I have for my Morfar. I miss him every day.

Sally Walker fell in love with circus in 2003 and has trained with Vulcana Women's Circus in Brisbane, plus the National Centre for Circus Arts and My Aerial Home in London. With Vulcana, she has devised and performed in Body Code, As If No-One is Watching, Inertia, and the drive-in circus show Rear Vision. Sally also has a long history in theatre, including Our House and X-Files: The Musical at Brisbane Arts Theatre, plus many children's productions. Off stage, she juggles a day job in spreadsheets and radio with caring for her family and her dog. She's delighted to be part of Cashless and Care-free.

Sally's costume features the colour red, which represents the connection between generations of women. Her red velvet jacket belonged to a much-loved member of the Vulcana community who is no longer with us. The button embellishments recall the hours Sally spent as a child playing with her grandmother's jars of buttons.



Maggie Summers: What about Maggie as a performer? Well, I should start by telling you I have particular fondness for circles. Not in a weird way, just the hyper fixation that all my apparatus are round. My main disciplines are Lyra and Hula Hoop (sometimes at the same time!) but tonight I am debuting my work on the Lollipop for the first time to audiences in Cashless and Carefree. I love circus because I find it a space for experimentation, individuality and connection. I enjoy creating work that doesn't take itself too seriously, while still celebrating the athleticism, discipline and artistry.

I am a seasoned performer and can be seen spinning around Brisbane with the Sparkle Society team, and I have showcased works at the Kalbar Sunflower Festival, Vulcana's Tipping Point and Agitate Cabarets, and performed as a guest at City Cirque and Aerial Athletic showcase evenings. I've also my done my fair share of competitions, performing as a finalist for Bend the Air, La Folie, Miss Lyra and Aerial Wonderland.

Beyond performing, costume making is a significant passion and creative outlet for me. I just love to make sparkly things. I especially like to upcycle old things into glorious and sometimes over the top outfits that I feel fantastic in.

Tonight's costume used to be an old Christmas one, and yes, I'm talking like the one from Mean Girls. Now it's a new one inspired by my cast mates. This red and blue flannel came from Alister and really just spoke to me. Tempest wore a scarf one rehearsal and I knew I wanted to one too. The patchwork is inspired from Rosie's pants and the buttons got added because of Sally and Narnie's fondness of them. The bling comes from me, it's a collection of pretty things I have accumulated over the years of crafting. What better excuse than to use it in this show. I hope you as the audience finds joy watching me perform in it as much as I did making it.

Narnie (they/them) is an acrobat and emerging artist based in Magandjin. They have a extensive background as an artistic and acrobatic gymnast, and fell in love with circus community after retiring from the sport. Narnie loves the intersection between teamwork and strength that acrobatics provides especially enjoying exploring movement in an artistic and creative way.

Narnie's costume consists of their fathers old flannels that was gifted to them and their costume is handmade with the knowledge gifted to them by their mother.



Jazlyn McClellan: My name is Jazlyn and I am very excited to be apart of Cashless and Carefree. I am studying social work and this work is close to my heart. I am passionate about all things upside down and feel honoured to be able to share the stories of care through movement.

A dear friend of mine gave me a pink strawberry top, which reminded her of me. This top is special to me and has been added carefully into my costume by Narnie, representing to me the care within friendships.

Helene Windels: Circus became part of Helene's life when she was caring for young kids and was looking to find time for herself. At Vulcana, she discovered a welcoming community, grew stronger, and gradually allowed herself some time 'away' without guilt. Today she still spends a lot of time caring for people but has learnt to share the load and appreciates being cared for too.

The mix of pieces, fabrics and colours reflect 'care' but also 'self-care', they are flexible, soft and light. I have had the blue shirt for years and always wear it on holidays at the beach or hiking. I added some drops to it displaying the warm colours of 'care'. Caring provides warmth and love for people one drop at a time.

Bena Brown: Bena is a long-term Vulcanista who deeply loves the community that Vulcana creates. She has performed in a number of cabarets and community shows since she discovered circus 10 years ago.

Her costume is shared with her friend Helene with matching yellow pieces. Her loved ones all cut shapes for her to sew onto her costume. Her shirt is a long-time costume piece at Vulcana, having been worn by both her sons before the season of Cashless and Carefree

CASHLESS & CARE-FREE SUPPORTERS

Thank you to all who have support this performance, We could not made Cashless and Carefree without the help from:
Molly Flanagan, Nick Cilento, Helen Cassidy, Miku Ferguson, Chris, Laurene Cooper-Fox, Stefan Cooper-Fox, Graham Rose, Max Rose, Flipside Circus, Leah Shelton, Counterpilot, Tnee Dyer, Mali Wardle-Rogerson, Colmslie Pool, Bena Brown, Stevan. Aqualina, Alastair, RJ, Serena Andreini, Trina Massey, Polytoxic, Jack McKenna, all the volunteers and the Vulcana staff.



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