



THE BIG ANXIETY

THE BIG ANXIETY QLD PRESENTS

THE BIG REACH

26-27 MAY, 2022, QUT GARDENS THEATRE
GARDENS POINT PRECINCT, BRISBANE

+ 2022 PROGRAM

Arising from concerns about the limited reach of formal support for mental health, trauma and suicidality, The Big Reach explores the potential of creative engagements to connect with people in challenging circumstances—from trauma-informed media and co-designed immersive technology, to live art, performance and psychosocial design.

Join us for two days of creative engagements, in-depth conversations, sideshows and workshops, reimagining the future of mental health and emotional wellbeing through a creative lens.

The Big Reach is designed for anyone interested in arts, mental health, trauma, suicide prevention and general wellbeing from a lived experience, creative or professional point of view.

This experience-focused event is intended to be inspiring, stimulating, uplifting, deep, challenging, practical and, at the same time, enjoyable.

The format offers participants the chance to engage with ground-breaking arts practice, to share expertise and insights through curated conversations, and to establish new connections and collaborations.

We welcome anyone who would like to be part of the conversation.

DISCOVER AND SHARE

- + innovative methods for working creatively with trauma, anxiety, mental distress, suicidality and crisis
- + creative tools and practices for enhancing personal and community mental health
- + opportunities for collaboration between health workers, communities and artists
- + ways to extend the reach of mental health support -- and design for a better future

DAY 1

Creative/cultural approaches to mental health, lived experience, trauma and survival

DAY 2

Making change – rethinking systems, services, interventions and imagining the future

INCLUDES:

- + simultaneous creative workshops, demonstrations and sideshows
- + performance-presentations by innovative creative thinkers working at the intersection of arts, health and lived experience
- + dynamic conversations in relaxed and engaging formats

DAY 1 CREATIVE/CULTURAL APPROACHES

MC - Jo Lincolne - ceremonialist, end of life Doula

9.05 - Welcome to Country with Shannon Ruska

9.10 - Ivan Frkovic, QLD Mental Health Commissioner

9.20-9.40 - Introducing The Big Anxiety and the workshops - Jill Bennett (ARC Laureate Professor, UNSW; founding Director, The Big Anxiety)

9.40-10.40 - Enactments: Minola Theatre, led by Kat Dekker & Kat Bhatena (Arts For Inclusion)
Designed to communicate the lived experience of diverse local communities, these Forum Theatre enactments (developed in community workshops, convened during 2021) will be presented as a catalyst for discussion and creative problem solving, followed up on day 2 with 'machines for change'. (main stage presentation)

10.45-2.15 WORKSHOPS & SIDE-SHOWS:

3 hours of simultaneous events with lunch-boxes provided, so you can wander at your own pace between events or take a break in the gardens

WORKSHOPS DAY 1 INCLUDE:

+ HOLDING GRIEF

[Main stage. 10.45-11.15]

A conversation with **Rebecca Moran** (Big Anxiety lived experience research fellow) using creative writing/drawing to sit with grief arising from bereavement, childhood suffering, loss of relationships, or other experiences.

+ MARIANNE WOBCKE: ROAD TRIP

[Main stage. 1.5 hr workshop 11.15-12.45]



With maternal connections to Girimay mob from North Queensland, born on Turrbal land, **Marianne Wobcke** is a nurse, midwife and award-winning artist. Her program of culturally connected birthing practices and trauma recovery is grounded in radical creativity, aiming to break the cycles of trauma that are the inheritance of colonial violence in Indigenous Australian communities.

Marianne is the 2021 recipient of the Australia Council Ros Bower Award for Community Arts and Cultural Development. She is a PhD candidate with Griffith University's School of Health Sciences & Social Work and QCA - conducting arts/health based research. Marianne is bringing her innovative, rejuvenating Road Trip workshop that engages the unconscious, through relaxed, mindful awareness to reignite creativity.

+ INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE WRITING AS SELF-CARE



[1 hour 1.15-2.15]

A workshop activity with Emeritus Professor **Judy Atkinson**, AM; Jiman (central west Queensland) and Bundjalung (northern New South Wales) woman; Founder of We Al-li and author of Trauma Trails.

+ BODY-MAPPING

[Foyer. 10.45 & 12.45, 2 x 1.5hr workshops]

Led by Dr Priya Vaughan from Black Dog Institute.

Body mapping is an arts-based research tool, focused on exploration of bodily and psychological feelings. Used extensively in a research program at the Black Dog Institute, which is led by Prof Katherine Boydell, body mapping involves tracing around a person's body to create a life-sized outline, which is then filled in during a creative and reflective process, producing an image that reveals aspects of embodied experience.



+ BOWEN MASSAGE TABLE

Heather Graham, Bowen Therapist, providing complimentary massage.

+ HARD PLACE/GOOD PLACE

[Cube]



Workshop using augmented reality as a trauma-informed process of digital story-telling in diverse community settings and challenging environments digital-story telling platform - by **fEEL Lab** (Jill Bennett; Volker Kuchelmeister, immersive media artist; Gail Kenning, participatory designer-researcher; Lydia Gitau, refugee trauma specialist/counselling psychologist) with QLD filmmaker **Steph Vajda** (The Big Reach includes extension of this work in regional QLD/Darling Downs).

SIDESHOWS INCLUDE:

+ EDGE OF THE PRESENT



[Studio, level 1. 10 min immersive experience]

A 'mixed reality' (virtual and physical) environment designed to cultivate future thinking. Inspired by neuropsychological research into the workings of memory and imagination, and made in collaboration with psychologists, mental health specialists and participants with lived experiences of suicide survival, this compelling immersive experience invites us to 'invent the next ten minutes' - something that is a challenge when we find ourselves inhabiting the 'edge of the present'. Edge of the Present is presented in association with a study by UNSW, Black Dog Institute and Metro South Health, funded by Suicide Prevention Australia. Peer-care worker support by Roses in the Ocean.

+ EMBODIMAP

[Cube]



Virtual Reality experience for working with trauma, anxiety and emotion regulation -- with artists, designers, clinicians, and users on hand to share insights. Dr Gail Kenning and Dr Lydia Gitau [fEEL] demonstrate and discuss the applications of this platform with different community groups, including young people from refugee backgrounds and trauma survivors.

+ WAUMANANYI: THE SONG ON THE WIND

[Cube]

By Uti Kulintjaku (with fEEL) - an Anangu-led response to the experiences of constraint, entrapment, and depression through the traditional story of 'The Man in the Log'. Waumananyi is an innovative VR artwork used in remote communities in the APY Land (with artists, Volker Kuchelmeister and Uti Kulintjaku).

+ PARRAGIRLS PAST, PRESENT

[Cube]

A deeply moving 3D immersive experience, unlocking memories of institutional 'care' by former residents' visions of the Parramatta Girls Home. The project will be a catalyst for discussion of art and trauma work.

+ AWKWARD CONVERSATIONS

One-on-one conversations in experimental formats, tackling anxieties, mental health, neurodiversity and suicide (book online).

Co-curated by Daniele Constance & Nathan Stoneham, the conversationalists include artists speaking from lived experience perspectives:

Karen Lee Roberts - performer, writer and singer

MJ O'Neill - musician and sound artist

Ruby Donohoe - performer and interdisciplinary performance-maker

Rebecca Dostal - multidisciplinary performing artist and storyteller with a penchant for puppetry

M'ck McKeague - working at the intersection of transness and mental health

Mark du Potiers - visual artist and (allegedly) a weirdo

Naavikaran - spoken word artist, dancer and community activist

Dr Ally Nicolopoulos - lived experience researcher (talking about suicide)

Lauren Watson - performing aerial artist living with a disability

Anisa Nandaula - poet, comedian and author

Tammy Law - photographer, whose work documents the experience of Asian/Australianess

AFTERNOON

Short presentations of experiential artworks related to trauma [main stage]:

2.30 - AARON (DHURIL) BLADES

A proud Mandandanji man from the Balonne river, SW Queensland, Aaron will talk about the impacts of institutional abuse, and how he has healed by using culture, art and finding connection to Country.



2.40 - Rick Maher, QUT Doctor of Creative Industries candidate whose professional background includes 32 years' service as an Army Aviation Officer -- examines the role of Dance in enhancing Quality of Life for Australian Combat Veterans with a history of trauma related psychological injuries (film extract).

2.50-3.00 - Pathways to healing: Project examining long term outcomes of First Nations culturally informed and trauma integrated practice approaches in health and human services – introduction to the work of **We Al li:** Naomi Sunderland, Judy Atkinson and Carlie Atkinson and Dr Kerry Hall (Griffith) (short video/sound).

Emeritus Professor Judy Atkinson is Founder of We Al-Li; a Jiman (central west Queensland) and Bundjalung (northern New South Wales) woman, she is author of Trauma Trails and collaborated on Listen_Up with r e a for The Big Anxiety, 2019.

Dr Carlie Atkinson is a Jiman (Central west Queensland) and Bundjalung (northern New South Wales) woman. She CEO We Al-li, an Indigenous Organisation which provides culturally informed trauma integrated healing and trauma specific programs.

Moving into...

3.10-4.40 - - TRAUMA WORK: LONG TABLE (see description p5*)

[Foyer. With tea and Bowen massage & Art Table available]

Inviting audience members to join the initial group of featured artist/presenters – Judy Atkinson, Rebecca Moran, Carlie Atkinson, Rick Maher, Marianne Wobcke, Linda Hassall (Griffith), Aaron Dhuril Blades. exploring the work presented in this session and experiences from earlier workshops.



5.00-6.00 - LIVE Performance Presentation

Uti Kulintjaku [main stage] (represented by Rene Kulitja, Nyunmiti Burton and Wanatjura Lewis) - formed by Ngangkari (traditional healers) and multi-artform artists of the NPY Women's Council, Uti Kulintjaku is an innovative, Aboriginal-led mental health literacy project that takes its name from a Pitjantjatjara phrase that means 'to listen, think and understand clearly'.

Uti Kulintjaku have created virtual reality artworks (to be presented at The Big Reach) describing the experiences of trauma and mental health through traditional stories such as Man in the Log – as well as trauma-informed mediations. Their performance-presentation explores mental health, trauma and healing from Anangu perspectives.



DAY 2: MAKING CHANGE

9.15-11.30 - CHANGING THE SYSTEM:

1. WORKSHOP: EVONNE MILLER, DESIGN SPRINT [foyer space]

Evonne Miller, Professor and director of QUT Design Lab will lead a design sprint on systems change for improving mental health and suicide prevention in regional and rural areas

2. WORKSHOP: MINOLA THEATRE: MACHINES for CHANGE [main stage]

A Forum theatre exercise for improving systems. [Concurrent events repeated 2 x]

11.30-2.30 - SIDESHOWS: AWKWARD CONVERSATIONS, as per Day 1 with variations



DAY 2 WORKSHOPS

11.30 - 12 THRIVING REGIONAL COMMUNITIES & CRISIS. [foyer] Lenine Bourke chairs a conversation with Prof Sandra Gattenhoff (QUT), Lia Pa'apa'a (Cairns) & Ashleigh Ralph (Lismore Regional Gallery)

11.30-12.30 - DESIGNING AND FACILITATING PROJECTS ATTENDING TO TRAUMA [atrium] **Rebecca Moran** draws on extensive experience of trauma-work to share tips for making workshops accessible, transformative and safe.

12.00-1.00 - SONG SENSE: [main stage] An inclusive song-writing workshop, drawing on sensorial experiences and diverse languages and music styles. Led by **Dr Charulatha Mani** (UQ School of Music) and Erica Rose Jeffrey.

1.00-2.00 - BEYOND THE 'INTERVENTION' - CULTURAL/CREATIVE PRACTICE AS EMBEDDED MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT. [main stage] A conversation with experienced arts-health researchers and community workers: Hosts: Dr Lydia Gitau (UNSW), Charu Mani, with Meriam Aman (QPASST), Genevieve Dingle (UQ), Marianne Wobcke, Erica Rose Jeffrey – and Health and community partners.

2.00PM - THE VALUE OF THE EMBODIED ART AND PRACTICE OF CONTEMPORARY CIRCUS PERFORMANCE. [foyer] Artistic Director of Vulcana Circus, **Celia White** and collaborators, – live performance presentation.

+ HARD PLACE/GOOD PLACE [repeated]

Workshop using augmented reality as a trauma informed process of digital story-telling.

+ PARRAGIRLS PAST, PRESENT

[On screen in Cube]

+ EDGE OF THE PRESENT [studio level 1]

10 min immersive experience

+ OTHER VR PROJECTS as per Day 1 [Cube.]

2.45-4.15 - THE S WORD: LONG TABLE*

[foyer] Prelude: Uti Kulintjaku 'trauma informed' meditations on Country [played on audio]

A conversation about suicide led by people with lived experience - exploring suicidal feelings - and the challenge of reaching and supporting people who go 'under the radar'. Five guests with lived experience of suicidality or family suicide will seed the discussion, which all participants are welcome to join, building on whatever has emerged in previous sessions.

The conversation may encompass discussion of experimental arts projects, commissioned by The Big Anxiety, including Edge of the Present, the S-word and a recent Long Table in Warwick - as well as of the findings of the Under the Radar project (Black Dog), and the initiatives of Mindblank and Roses in the Ocean. Opening Guests at Table include:

Ally Kelly, Mind Blank, using Forum theatre in mental health and suicide prevention (with video piece);

Dr Ally Nicolopoulos, lived experience researcher working on Under the Radar, Black Dog Institute;

Bronwen Edwards, CEO of Roses in the Ocean, Australia's leading lived experience of suicide organisation;

Gabrielle Vilic, Director for Social Inclusion and Recovery, Metro South Addiction and Mental Health Services (MSAMHS); Deputy Chair, QLD Mental Health Commission;

Warwick Community participants TBC.

+ Edge of the Present creative team, Roses in the Ocean peer-care-workers

**Long Table - The Long Table originated as a performance installation, developed by artist Lois Weaver. It experiments with using the private form of a dinner party as a structure for public debate, encouraging informal conversation on difficult subjects in a format that elicits participation from a diverse range of experts and enables anyone wishing to speak to join the table. A Long Table commences with ~6 guests/speakers at Table, initiating a conversation. Typically the table will include ~12 chairs. Audience members seated beyond the table may join the conversation at any time by taking an empty seat at the table. Participants may join or leave the table at any time but must join the table in order to speak. The format is designed to promote full integration of all perspectives/participants, breaking down the panel-audience hierarchy. More info on etiquette here: <http://www.split-britches.com/long-table>.*

4.30-5.30 - RAINBOW MEDITATION: Hiromi Tango with Dr Emma Burrows. *[main stage]*
 Artist **Hiromi Tango** seeks inspiration from neuroscience and her own lived-experience to explore the impact of the rainbow colour palette on the brain for positive mental health. She will demonstrate the Rainbow Meditation with her collaborator: Dr. Emma Burrows, Neuroscientist, Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health, Melbourne.



5.30 - MOVE INTO RELAXED DISCUSSION IN BAR

Ruby and Beryl, Puppets by Rebecca Dostal in roving conversations. Ruby and Beryl have 'lived' a full life with many a traumatic experience. Rebecca has lent them some of hers.

Note: program detail and timings may be revised, especially given the need to work within a COVID safety plan.

WHAT I KNOW NOW THAT CAN CHANGE THE WORLD - a program focused on ageing will run on 25 May, 2-5pm
[CLICK HERE >](#) for more information

- + [CLICK HERE FOR BOOKINGS >](#)
- + [FULL PROGRAM HERE >](#)

We acknowledge the traditional owners of **Meanjin** (where the city known as Brisbane now stands), the Turrbul and Yugara people, whose sovereignty was never ceded. We pay our respects to their elders past and present and to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from across the continent who will come together in The Big Reach.

The Big Reach Management Team - Prof Jill Bennett, Nigel Lavender, Ben McKinnon, Melissa Neidorf

FOUNDING PARTNER



PRINCIPAL SUPPORTERS



MAJOR SUPPORTERS



COMMUNITY PARTNERS



VENUE PARTNERS



ARTISTIC PARTNERS

