



SNUFF PUPPETS

ANNUAL REPORT

2020

Snuff Lovers heART, Birrarung Marr, Melbourne

Photo: Matt Bottos

snuffpuppets.com

ARTISTIC REPORT

After a fun & productive start to the year we, like so many others, had to pull the plug on many plans. Tours to Portugal, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lithuania, Germany and Taiwan were all in suspended animation. Local collaborations with African Women's Foundation and Vietnamese Community of Australia, as well as the inaugural Snuff Lovers fundraising Gala and string of roaming gigs, were all coronaized.

But thanks to our dedicated staff, puppeteers and board we took our work home and zoomed away together, preparing many unexpected treats, from our SWAMP creatures crawling out of the oily primordial muck to Snufflix digital shorts that millions viewed across the globe.

In 2020 long-time collaborators Nick Wilson and Daniell Flood became permanent staff, as Artistic Associate and Digital Artist respectively. We said goodbye to Snuff Treasurer James Adams who saw us safely through the crisis, and we're excited to welcome Annie Hariharan who is taking over the reins. A big thank you to our core funders and all the Snuff Lovers around the world who donated to our inaugural Snuff Loves campaign.

This year proved how important the company's vision is to make 'art for everybody'.



Snuff Lovers promo video

snuffpuppets.com

ABOUT SNUFF PUPPETS

Snuff Puppets is a community of Melbourne-based artists, artisans and performers dedicated to the art and craft of giant puppet making and the theatre of puppetry.

Since 1992, Snuff Puppets has been unleashing its giant puppet spectacles on millions of people worldwide. Our work is a collision of visual art, sculpture, design, engineering, sound, movement, performance and physical theatre. At the heart is our giant puppets – sometimes gorgeous; sometimes grotesque – and the unpredictable ways they are brought to life.

From our home in Footscray's Drill Hall, in Melbourne's inner western suburbs, our artists and our works regularly travel to dozens of countries across five continents. Our People's Puppet Projects have created more than 25 new works in partnership with communities worldwide.

We specialise in performing for free audiences and non-traditional arts

audiences; reclaiming streets and public spaces for creativity, art and humans.

We collaborate with communities to create giant puppet roaming acts, community workshops, puppet performance master classes and main-stage shows, often in reclaimed public indoor and outdoor spaces.

Our stages are the streets, parks, towns and villages that our audiences worldwide call home. We work with them to produce and perform our work, challenging and delighting audiences of all ages.

Snuff Puppets are deliberately anarchic, rebellious and dangerous. Our work tackles difficult, awkward and taboo topics that challenge our audiences with irreverence; simultaneously causing discomfort and delight. We deliver visceral, electric performances that blur the traditional lines between audience and performer; creating other worlds that are unfamiliar, uncomfortable and,



Snuff Lovers promo video

at times, unsafe and scary.

Snuff Puppets' aesthetic and our approach to theatre making are unique: the audience for our work has been invented simultaneously with the work itself. Snuff Puppets' lofi, spontaneous, collaborative, devised, quick, experimental approach inspires creativity and allows us to leave behind the legacy of our art form and our approach in remote, off-the-beaten-track destinations globally.

Snuff Puppets are ambassadors for a distinctive and recognisable Australian culture.

**"Fabulous
work...bizarre
and awesome
and beautiful"**
– Sammy J ABC Radio

MAINSTAGE SHOW **SWAMP**

Snuff Puppets continued creative development on it's newest work, *SWAMP*, an oily primordial muck, where life begins with blood and ends with ash.

The creative team met for two weeks of script development, building and creative development culminating in a presentation at the Australian Performing Arts Market in February.

A Mosquito, Magpie, Lyrebird, Koala, Snake and Frilled-Neck Lizard each eke out their quiet lives. A Thylacine paces back and forth. A dormant whirlpool begins to swirl, descending into a world of dust and blood, water and flame, strangled trees, dissolved skin, pools of tears, blankets of bones. The Serpent consumes the scene, and then itself. Whether it's a cycle or an ending is up to us.

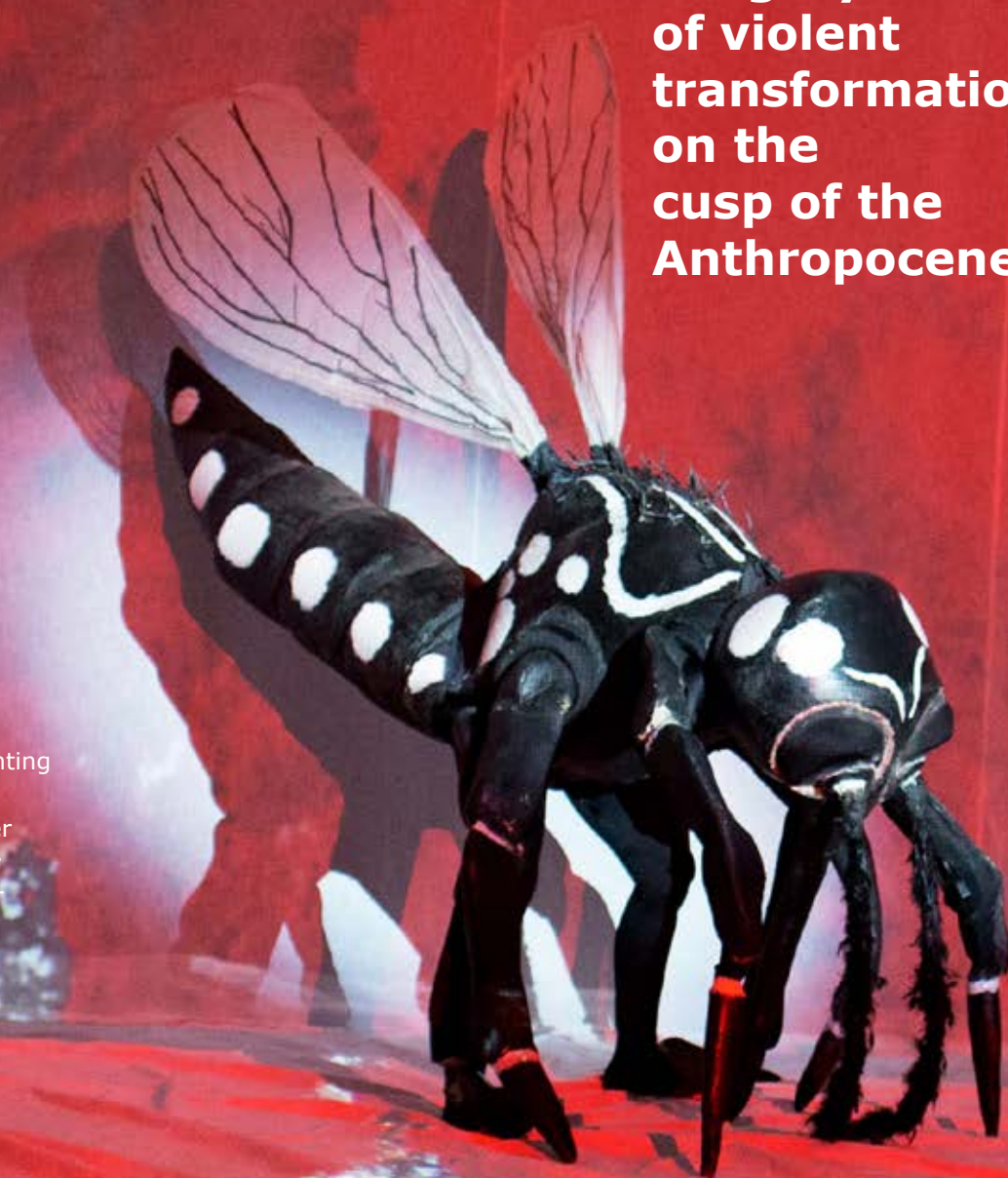
Creative Team:

Andy Freer – Director
Angus Cerini – Playwright
Eben Greaves – Multimedia + Lighting Designer
James Wilkinson – Sound Designer
Nick Wilson – Performer + Builder
Nick Barlow – Performer + Builder
Rebecca Rutter – Performer
KT Prescott – Performer
Shannon Quinn – Performer

Additional Videography by Dennis Murphy Visuals. Editing by James Ferris.

Supported by Australia Council & Besen Foundation

**a darkly comic
allegory
of violent
transformation
on the
cusp of the
Anthropocene**



SWAMP creative development

DIGITAL ART

SNUFFLIX

As Melbourne's first pandemic lockdown hit we headed home and made two short videos, *Everybody Isolates* and *Cabin Fever*.

Everybody Isolates enjoyed over 2 million Facebook views, 33 million Youtube views and was bought by the Cartoon Network in America and screened on Adult Swim.

View [EVERYBODY ISOLATES](#) and [CABIN FEVER](#) on Youtube.

**This turns my
tears into laughter
thank you Snuff
Puppets!**

~ Pilgrim Heidi Kambitsch,
Facebook



Video still: *Everybody Isolates*

snuffpuppets.com



Lachlan Plain building the Sea Dragon

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

GIANT PUPPETS OF A HUNDRED EGGS

A People's Puppet Project with the Vietnamese Community in Australia: Victorian Chapter was developed and built over several months and performed at the Tet - Lunar New Years Festival in February.

The story of the show is about Lạc Long Quân (Sea Dragon) and Âu Cơ (Mountain Fairy) falling in love and giving birth to 100 eggs - 100 children who are the original people of Vietnam.

Lead Artists: Nick Wilson and Lachlan Plain

Lead Performers: Trang Nguyen and Andrew Doe

Coordinator: Jennifer Tran

Music: Andrew Do

Thank You: Tina Nguyen, Kim and the voices of the Vietnamese Community in Australia

Supported by Brimbank City Council

MELBOURNE ROAMING GIGS

Melbourne Zoo

In January, Seagulls swooped on crowds at Melbourne Zoo, as part of Zoos Victoria's 'When Balloons Fly, Seabirds Die' campaign.

Dandenong Night Market

Giant Seagulls floaked around market shoppers and dinners in January.

Craigieburn Festival

The giant Hand and Foot from the Human Body Parts greeted crowds at Craigieburn Festival in February.

Caulfield Racecourse

Giant Seagulls entertained crowds at C.F. Orr Stakes Family Day in February

Melbourne University

Seagulls attacked students during Welcome Day in February.

Footscray Pride March

The Butcher finally came out at the inaugural Footscray Pride March!

Day Dream 2020

In December we returned to Melbourne Zoo with SWAMP'S Koala and Lyrebird for a special day with the Association of Children with a Disability.

Super Hero Award

The Maribyrnong Truck Action Group awarded the inaugural Community Super Hero Award to Daniell Flood for nine years of protesting in a Snuff Puppet for clean air!



The Butcher at Footscray Gay Pride



Seagulls at Melbourne Zoo

ENGAGEMENT **ONLINE AUDIENCES**

Snuff Puppet videos enjoyed over 95 Millions views on YouTube and Facebook in 2020.

YouTube subscribers increased by 42% to 331,000.

Facebook Likes shot up 52% to 28,700.

Instagram Followers grew 8% to 9,600

The *snuffpuppets.com* website averaged 50 visitors a day, with 18,072 online user sessions in 2020.

**I laughed so hard
I had to use my
inhaler! – Beth
Duncan, Facebook**



Human Body Parts in London
56 Million YouTube views in 2020



Everybody Isolates
30 Million YouTube views in 2020



Human Body Parts On The Streets Of Europe
2 Million YouTube views in 2020

DEVELOPMENT

SNUFF LOVERS

Our inaugural fundraising campaign, Snuff Lovers, raised over \$32,000 and connected the company with local supporters and fans overseas.

The three tiers of Snuff Lovers:

Snuff Gods: \$1,000+ donation with sponsorship of individual puppets.

Snuff Nuts: \$100+ personal message of love painted on the giant Snuff Lovers heART.

Snuff Buffs: \$5+ early access to Snuff Puppet videos.

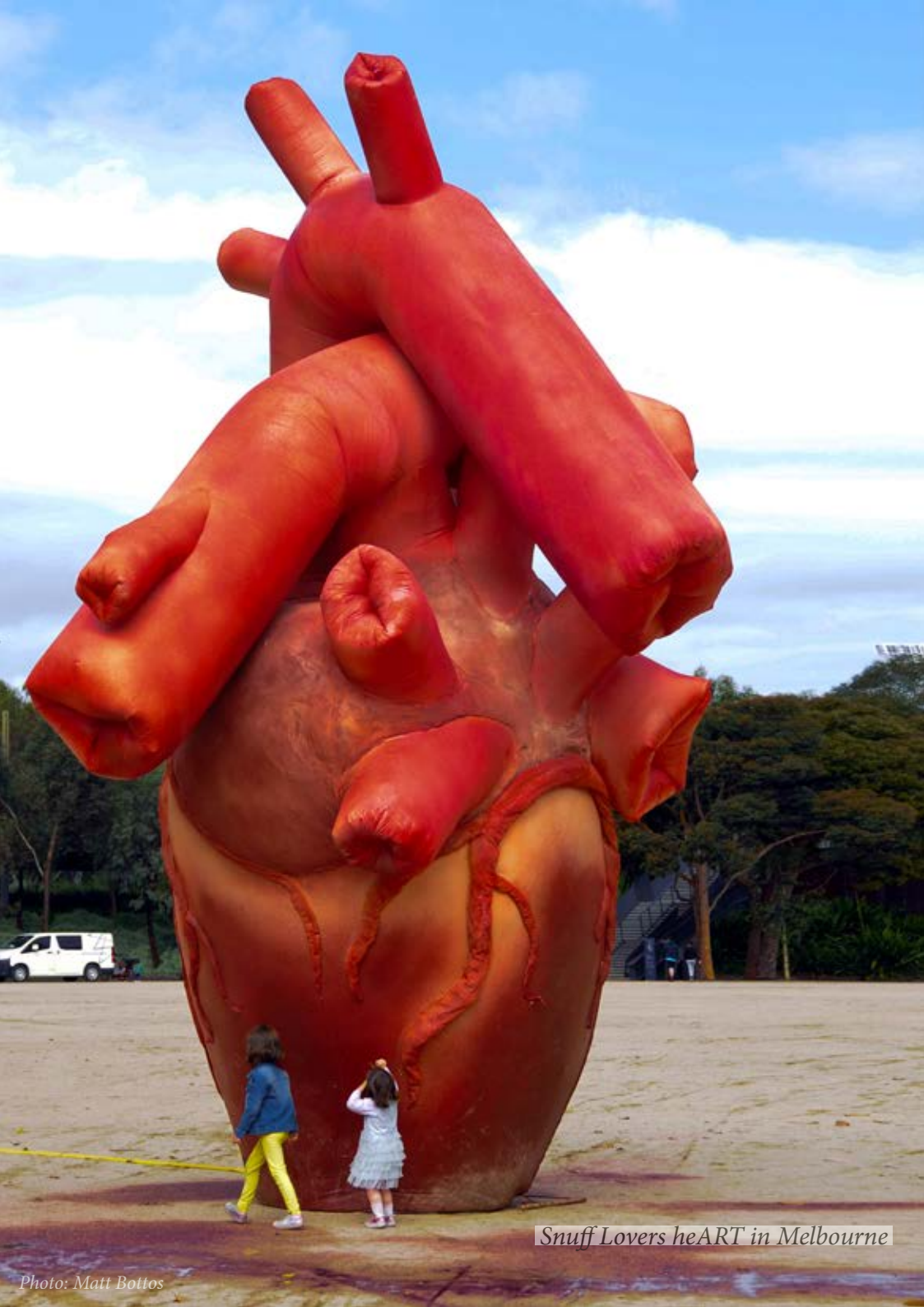
The campaign's promotional [VIDEOS](#) enjoyed 200,000+ views on social media.

Media coverage included interviews on ABC radio, news item in The Age and Time Out, and a special feature on ABC TV's national breakfast program.

Snuff Lovers 2020 was supported by Creative Partnerships Australia through Plus1

Andy Freer and Everybody's Heart





DEVELOPMENT

SNUFF LOVERS HEART

A free-for-all blood-pumping celebratory spectacle.

As part of the Snuff Lovers campaign a giant 8 meter tall Snuff Lovers heART was installed at Birrarung Marr and live-streamed online.

The heART was one of Melbourne's first public performances after an 111-day pandemic lockdown.

**To me your works
are more than art,
its commitment
and giving back to
others.** - Charlie Schembri
[on Facebook](#)

"It's symbolic of the kind of love, the kind of emotion that's needed in these times, vulnerability, but also strength and power" – Andy Freer, Artistic Direct

View the [Snuff Lovers heART](#) VIDEO on YouTube.

Builders: Nick Wilson, Andy Freer, Erin Hall

Performers: Nick Wilson, Andy Freer, Lauren Bok

Sound Design: James Wilkinson

*Supported by Snuff Lovers
Co-presented with Melbourne Fringe
Additional visuals and equipment
provided by the Little Projector
Company*

Snuff Lovers heART in Melbourne

DONORS

SNUFF LOVERS

Snuff Gods

Joseph Norster
Anonymous
Meg Sands
James McCready
James Adams
Chris Miller
Farrow Family
Alex Cleary
Alpha60
David Roper

Snuff Nuts

Martin Wurt
Michael Dawe
Robyn Bok
Samantha Sainsbury
Lisel Thomas
Vivienne Halat
Lucy Best
Ignatz Freer
Rin Ishioka
Hugh McNab
Terry Mulhern
Riyo Harada
Ian Pidd and Sue Giles
Margaret Mayhew
Robyn Gawenda
Julie Cattlin
Sanda Aye
Lisa Gorman
Claire Freer
Olivia Floate

Georgia Symons
David Stefanoff
Steve Farrow
Shelley Willoughby
Stefanie Oberhoff
Gary Westbrook
Kain Whiteway
Stephen Rodd
Jodie Kinnersley
Tim Denshire-Key
Bindi Green
Janis Lacey
Adam Nason
Logan McLennan
Patti Farley

Snuff Buffs

Lisa Dib
Anonymous
Lesley James
Jude Czerenkowski
Jill Warneke
Tim Richards
Betty Musgrove
Carey Handfield
Fiona Morris
Mel Dickson
Brynna Lowen
Kate Donelan
Petria Eaves
Pauline Sherlock
Peter Fisher
Andrew Dao
Narelle Wilson

Maj Green
Penelope Sands
Melynda von Wayward
Beth Raywood Cross
Sasha Hampson
Suzanne Earhart
Liz Walsh
Corinne Louise
Charlotte Craib
Peter Komsta
Damien Mannix
Mandy Mac
Kate Anderson
Angela Sands
Leonie Van Eyk
Jessie Swallow
Kirsten Zubrinich
Leonardo Naylor
Kirsten Brown
John Dearheart
Daniel Santangeli
Polly Hellier Morton
Matt Bottos
Richard Walsh
Dominic Brown
Angharad Wynne-Jones
Alison Mann
Venus Flytrap
Georgina Ross
Ben Peake
Olive Capurso
Veronica Villegas
Robbie Rowlands

Mitch Jones
Brigitte Bailey
Cassandra Longley
Mars Drum
Mish Eisen
Megan Freeman
Ms Liz
Lisa Sommerlad
Eden Alley-Porter
Elyse Rider
Anne Cady
Elissa Jenkins
Dominic McMullan
Dominka Bjelobrk
Pauline Cady



Snuff Lovers promo

PEOPLE

ARTISTS + STAFF + BOARD

Snuff Puppets Artists

Nick Barlow
Lauren Bok
Julian Chapple
Opal Crafter
Daniell Flood
Eben Greaves
Lachlan Plain
Daniele Poidomani
Aidan Min
KT Prescott

Shannon Quinn
Rebecca Rutter
James Wilkinson
Nick Wilson

Snuff Puppets Staff

Andy Freer – Artistic Director
Ro Bright – Executive Director
Lauren Bok – Producer
Nick Wilson – Artistic Associate
Daniell Flood – Digital Artist
Hugh Nguyen – Accounts Manager

Snuff Puppets Board

Dave Roper – Chair
James Adams – Treasurer until December
Annie Hariharan – Treasurer from December
Janis Lacey – Secretary
Andy Freer – Committee Member
Erin Farley – Committee Member
Daniell Flood – Committee Member
Kelly Farrow – Committee Member



Snuff Puppets board meeting





WWW.SNUFFPUPPETS.COM

snuffpuppets.com