

Penelope Bartlau – Branch Committee Application MAV 2016

WHY I WANT TO JOIN THE BRANCH COMMITTEE

I want to join the branch committee because I am passionate about museums – the custodians of stories. As far as museums go - I am a quasi-outsider. I tell stories in many museums – but I do not represent one. I have worked in museums across Australia and I have a perspective that is fresh: I will provide a voice of innovation, ideas and “what if” to the branch committee.

I bring a wealth of experience from the many sectors I work across: including arts, education, community, disability, young people and festivals. I bring strategic and business skills along with the creative brain. I can make connections where none have yet been perceived. With the unique skill set I offer, plus drive, energy and creativity - I can make a difference to the committee and the cultural institutions it serves and represents.

WHY I DO WHAT I DO - *I believe that people need to be heard and that everyone has a story to tell. My job is to enable the sharing and telling of stories – And to create the platforms for their telling across many different mediums.*

WHAT I DO - *I interpret and create stories. I specialize in visual creation.*

BACKGROUND - I am the Artistic Director of independent theatre company Barking Spider Visual Theatre (Barking Spider). I am a director and visual creator with a background puppetry and performance, as well as being award-winning creative writer.

I have worked professionally in the arts for over 25 years. In the last 9 years with Barking Spider, I have generated, collaborated and directed in excess of 56 works - with museums and galleries, site-specific works, works for theatre and for radio, community arts projects, schools works and roving pieces. As a part of my practice, wherever possible I work with young people as equal creative collaborators and innovators.

A FEW STATS - Over the last financial year I directed/created and delivered over new 14 works, and managed, coordinated, and administered 66 events - (one event can mean a workshop, a residency or a show season). These events have taken place across 2 states and regionally, plus one international event in New Zealand). I have generated 216 jobs for artists from a wide diversity of practices. With these works, with Barking Spider I have reached over 38,000 audience members: 25,645 adults and 12,423 young people.

AWARDS - In the past 3 years I have been awarded a Dome Centenary Fellowship (State Library of Victoria), and with Barking Spider three MAGNAs (Museums and Galleries National Award) for public programmes in Interpretation, Learning & Audience Engagement.

TRAINING/ACADEMIC - I have a Master of Puppetry from the Victorian College of the Arts and worked as a performer for many years, having trained in physical theatre/improvisation (Commedia Dell'Arte) in Italy with Antonio Fava and in method acting at Lee Strasberg in New York. I studied screenwriting at RMIT. I have a Bachelor of Arts Degree (Monash Uni), Double Major in English Literature and Politics.

The body of my work over the last 9 years can be found at the Barking Spider Visual Theatre website: www.barkingspidertheatre.co.au

Memberships and Associations

- Board member – The Village Festival
- Creative Victoria Advisory Panel member
- Australia Council Advisory Panel member
- Arts Ambassador for the City of Darebin
- YPAA – Young People and the Arts Australia
- Theatre Network Victoria
- Australian Women Directors Association
- Museums Australia
- UNIMA - Union Internationale de la Marionnette (international puppetry union)