

# CATE FOWLER

Director/Creative Producer

## Biography

### Education

Bachelor of Arts (Drama Hons), University of NSW  
Diploma of Education, University of NSW

### Employment

2008— Independent Artist

As an independent artist, I have focussed on an area of work – very early childhood practise in performance and the arts. I re-directed *The Green Sheep* and *Cat* for the ASSITEJ (International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People) Congress and Festival - the first time two shows by the same Director has been presented in the history of the event). I returned to the Seattle Children's Theatre to re-direct a production of *The Green Sheep* with American performers This production toured to the New Victory Theatre in New York and then enjoyed a return season at the Seattle.

2001—2007 Director/Creative Producer, Windmill Performing Arts

At Windmill Performing Arts, Australia's flagship company for children and family audiences, I was responsible for creating a vision, structure and program for the company, which was launched in July 2002. I brought extensive experience in theatre programming and production and a strong background in arts/education to the fledgling company. I produced all Windmill's new works, including *Wilfrid Gordon Macdonald Partridge*, *Brundibar*, *The Snow Queen*, *Riverland* (Helpmann Award winner), *Afternoon of the Elves*, *Midnite* (With OzOpera), *Moonfleet* (with Mainstreet Theatre), *The Sad Ballad of Penny Dreadful* (with Mainstreet Theatre), *Two Weeks with the Queen*, *The Adventures of Snugglepoot and Cuddlepie* and *Little Ragged Blossom* (with Company B), *The Little Gentleman* and *The Clockwork Forest* (with Brink productions). In addition, I was responsible for creating and directing Windmill's groundbreaking work in the Early Childhood area, *The Green Sheep* and *Cat*. Both productions were nominated for Helpmann awards and have become 'cult classics' for babies and toddlers.

Windmill Performing Arts presented more than 20 different productions in Adelaide and toured internationally (USA, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand), nationally (Sydney, Perth, Brisbane, Melbourne) and through regional South Australia, Victoria and Queensland. In its short life, more than 273,000 children and families attended Windmill shows from 2002-2007. Windmill was nominated for more than 24 awards during this period and won 12, including three prestigious national Helpmann Awards.

1998—2001 Director, Education Services, Queensland Arts Council

At the Queensland Arts Council, I was responsible for presenting an annual, statewide program of touring productions/arts activities to schools and communities across the vast state of Queensland. In excess of 50 productions toured annually and created significant employment for artists. At QAC, I also produced and organized the Australian Tour of *TOPPINSHAN* by Theatre Kazenoko Kyushu from Japan. The show toured to the Victorian Arts Centre, venues in regional Queensland and the Queensland Performing Arts complex. In 2003, I co-produced *A WORLD OF PAPER* with Theatre Kazenoko Kansai which was created by Australian and Japanese artists (directed by Peter Wilson). This production toured to Adelaide, regional South Australia, Victoria and Queensland, the Sydney Opera House, Victorian Arts Centre. It continues touring in Japan and has toured to the United Kingdom, Seoul, Hong Kong and USA.

1996—1998 Executive Producer, Programming, Queensland Performing Arts Complex

In addition to directing QPAC's festival of early childhood, I assumed the role of an Executive Producer with the Programming Department. In this capacity I was involved in the planning, programming and implementing of the Stage X Youth Festival – for young people 13 years and over.

1995—1998      Artistic Director, 1996 & 1998, Out of the Box Festival, Queensland Performing Arts Trust

I was the Artistic Director of QPAC's '96 and '98 Out of the Box Festivals of Early Childhood. My role was the overall artistic direction of the festival. In excess of 100,000 children and families attended the week long event. Major commissions included *Wake Baby* (directed by Nigel Jamieson), *The Little White Dress* (directed by Wesley Enoch), *Twinkle Twinkle Little Fish* (directed by Simon Phillips). In both festivals, Raquel Redmond co-ordinated major visual installations by children from schools and community groups. As well as an extensive performance program, arts-related workshops, a literature program (Picture Book Land) and forums (for artists and interested community members) were offered.

1994—1995      Artistic Adviser, Come Out Youth Arts Festival, SA

I was involved in the Come Out Festivals during my tenure at the Adelaide Festival Centre., in an active capacity and at a Board level. In 1995, I led an artistic directorate who were responsible for aspects of the festival. My main involvement was the core program and I also produced the central commission, *Galaxarena* (by Gillian Rubinstein). Other commissions included *Verona* (by Magpie Theatre) and *Don Quixote* (by Carouselle Theatre). There was an extensive international program which included Unga Riks (from Sweden), Teatro Musica (from Italy), a Taiko drumming group from Japan alongside a strong representation of Australian work. Come Out '95 also organized and hosted a national critics' symposium which discussed critical analysis of work for young people.

1990—1995      Youth & Family Program Manager, Adelaide Festival Centre, SA

This position was specially created by the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust and it ensured children, young people and families were involved with productions and activities at the Centre. I programmed Children, Youth and Family component of the Trust's activities which bannered a number of programs. I was responsible for the State Bank Theatre Passport, Something on Saturday program, special holiday attractions, school performances, Literary activities the Rural Access Program, an Annual Summer School for Teachers – based on the Lincoln Centre model and other initiatives.

### **Board Positions**

I have served as a Director and member on a number of Boards, including Come Out Festival (2008—); Terrapin Puppet Theatre (2005—); Arts Industry Development Panel, Arts SA (2001—04); Asialink - Performing Arts Committee (1999 – 2002); Brisbane Writers' Festival (1996—97); Third International Women Playwright's Conference (1992—94); Australian Children's Television Foundation – Outreach program (1990—92); Carouselle Theatre (1988—93); Magpie Theatre Advisory Panel (1986—88); Patch Theatre Centre (1985—88) : Performing Arts Collectionn (1984 and others.

### **Keynote Addresses**

I have delivered a number of keynote addresses at conferences in Australia and internationally. These include: International Theatre Conference, Aichi Centre, (Nagoya); Kagoshima Kodomo Gekijo (Audience Development organization for children and families); Youth Performing Arts Australia Conference, Sydney Opera House (Sydney); Come Out Audience Development Forum (Adelaide); de Lissa Oration (University of South Australia); Queensland Biennial Festival of Music Forum (Brisbane); Out of the Box Symposium, Queensland Performing Arts Complex (Brisbane); National Puppet Summit, Salamanca Centre (Hobart); Regional Arts Australia Biennial Conference (Mackay); Youth Arts Showcase and Forum (Perth); 2008 ASSITEJ – Early Childhood Forum, Adelaide Festival Centre (Adelaide) and

### **Research**

2003—05 Children's Voices. Abstract: Windmill Performing Arts; the School of Education, University of South Australia and the Department of Education and Children's Services. A longitudinal study on the impact of live performance on children's learning - three year study involving four primary schools, 130 students, teachers and a research team. [Ref: Schiller, W. (2006). *Children's Voices: Children's responses to live performance: A longitudinal study (2003 - 2005)*. Final Report: August 2006, Adelaide: University of South Australia.]

2002—05 In the Beginning. Abstract: Work with young children, artists and early childhood education students in an innovative arts education partnership between Windmill Performing Arts and the University of South Australia. A research project which examined the elements involved in creating a memorable 'first' performance experience for very young children. The project assessed how artists created work in their respective artforms—music, dance and visual arts—with tertiary students observing children's spontaneous responses. The research paper identified implications for teaching and learning in the arts in early childhood. [Ref: Meiners, J. *In the beginning: young children and arts education*. *International Journal of Early Childhood*; 2005, Vol. 37 Issue 2, p37-44, 8p.]

### **Publications**

Schiller, W., Meiners, J., & Fowler, C. (2007). If the performance is good the government makes the funds: Children's responses in an arts and multiliteracies research project. Paper presented at European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA) 17th Annual Conference, Prague, Czech Republic. Aug 29 – Sept 1.

Fowler, Cate. "Installation Theatre." *Lowdown Magazine*, April 2007 (Vol 29, No. 2)

Fowler, C., Orchard, J. (2006). Literacy is more than just words: exploring performance literacy for very young. World Conference on Arts Education (Lisbon). United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.