

A

Arts House at  
North Melbourne Town Hall

H

Imagined Touch:  
the Deafblind  
live art experience  
Jodee Mundy  
Collaborations

Image: Jeff Busby

Arts House



Season 2

2

Wed 7 – Sun 11 September, 60 mins  
Post-show Q&A: Thu 8 September

S

## Creative Team

Artistic Director &  
Creative Producer:  
Jodee Mundy  
Performer, Collaborator  
& Consultant:  
Heather Lawson  
Performer, Collaborator  
& Consultant:  
Michelle Stevens  
Composition & Sound Design:  
Madeleine Flynn & Tim Humphrey  
Set, Light & Visual Design:  
Jenny Hector  
Deafblind Communications  
Consultant:  
Dennis Witcombe  
Producer:  
Stacey Baldwin  
Stage Manager:  
Jo Leishman

Performers/Interpreters:  
Mark Sandon, Marc Ethan,  
Dennis Witcombe, Georgia Knight,  
David Pidd, Christopher Dunn,  
Shane Mundy  
Operator:  
Taran Ablitt  
Assistant Stage Manager:  
Mia Donnett-Jones  
Movement Consultant:  
Jo Dunbar  
Support Workers:  
Amber Richardson, Antoinette  
Katzakis, Jennie Kadiki, Fiona  
Crisp, Natalie Sandon-Stanhope

Image: Jeff Busby



## Director's Statement

“We need to make  
a theatre show that  
tells the truth about  
being Deafblind.  
We want to share our  
humor, grief and our  
profound isolation,  
to highlight the  
importance of human  
touch and tactile  
communication for  
Deafblind people.”

— Heather Lawson & Michelle Stevens,  
3 March, 2013.

What began as a community cultural development project has now, four years on, evolved into a large-scale work created by a team of more than twenty collaborators.

Every moment you experience in *Imagined Touch* has been created in collaboration with contemporary Deafblind artists Heather Lawson and Michelle Stevens, whose hands have felt thousands of hours in tactile sign interpreting, social haptic communication and braille.

“*The only way out is through.*”

— Helen Keller, Deafblind political activist

In a world where we are bombarded with visual images and where individualism reigns, Heather and Michelle offer us expertise in the art of touch, connection and trust.

Our journey has challenged us to ask many questions. Is touch the most important sense? How do we keep Deafblind artists connected to the audience at all times? How can we reframe disability as an opportunity to share untapped expertise on human potential?

The language of touch shows us that race, religion, ability, gender and colour are simply irrelevant when all that matters is that the person offers a kind hand.

All people, with diverse sensory combinations, can experience this work in different ways. Inclusive arts practice, an emerging art form, offers the opportunity to unravel our human complexities and lay it out for us all to witness.

We hope this work of art awakens your senses and ignites the power that lies in your head, your heart and your hands to connect with others.

— Jodee Mundy

## Biographies

### Jodee Mundy

Artistic Director & Creative Producer

•

Jodee started Jodee Mundy Collaborations in 2012 after realising the need for a company reflecting the truth unearthed through her practice. Her innate ability to bring together a wide cross section of people is no accident; she has been practising all her life. Jodee is fluent in Auslan and tactile communication because everyone in her family is Deaf except for her. Auslan is Jodee's first language. After twenty years of theatre making in diverse communities and sign language interpreting around the globe, she has a method of creative practice that takes into account the power balances of all parties involved, the voices and lack of voices of all stakeholders and asks: how can we do it? And not just why.

Current work includes: *The Carers Project*, *A Sanctuary in the City*, a participatory installation created in collaboration with primary carers commissioned by the City of Melbourne; developing *Imagined Touch the Deafblind live art experience* and new solo work in development, *Personal* slated to premiere in 2018.

### Heather Lawson

Performer, Collaborator & Consultant

•

Heather is a collaborator and performer in *Imagined Touch*. This is her third arts project. She was part of RoundAngle's 2005 project *Source/Sauce* receiving multiple awards at the 2006 Melbourne Fringe Festival: The Visionary Award, The Go Full Tilt Award and The Melbourne International Arts Festival Award. Heather was also in the 2009 development of *In the Dark* co-performing with Jodee Mundy and Michelle Stevens. In 2012, she came first in the DeafBlind Got's Talent contest in Perth performing her own solo act.

### Michelle Stevens

Performer, Collaborator & Consultant

•

Michelle has been a collaborator on *Imagined Touch* since 2003. In 2012 she sat the Australian Music Examination Board AMEB Piano for Leisure Eighth Grade. Prior to this, she has performed in *In the Dark* (Art of Difference Festival 2009) and in *Source/Sauce* (2005) working under the direction of Charlie Ahrens of RoundAngle. Through this, Madelene Flynn and Tim Humphrey encouraged her to take up playing piano again after a short break. She is now studying a Bachelor of Music part time at Melbourne Polytechnic College.

### Madeleine Flynn & Tim Humphrey

Composition & Sound Design

•

Madeleine Flynn and Tim Humphrey are audio artists who work with the human experience of listening. Their collaborations intersect with industry, communities and sites. Their wide range of works are unified under a philosophy which strives for a rigour and experimentation that is also accessible and relevant to a broad public engagement. Their works are commissioned and presented nationally and internationally, recognised with Green Room Awards for Hybrid/Alternative work, the APRA-AMC National Award for Excellence in Experimental Music, and the Melbourne International Arts Festival Award.

Current works include: *Shriek*: ANTI Festival Finland, 2016 :5 *Short Blasts*, for electric boats and marine radio, City of Melbourne, 2013, Prague Quadrennial 2015, APAM 2016 and internationally in 2017: *Gauge* – a large scale sound of the weather installation presented at the Brighton Festival UK in 2015: *the megaphone project*, an interactive public sound sculpture presented in many countries, most recently the New Visions Art Festival, HongKong, 2016. Recent work for dance include *Stampede the Stampede* by Tim Darbyshire, Dance Massive, and *Lines of Birds* by Paea Leach, Chunky Move. They are currently the inaugural artists in residence in The Listening Room, ArtsHouse. Their work is documented at [madeleineandtim.net](http://madeleineandtim.net) and [themegaphoneproject.com](http://themegaphoneproject.com)

### Jenny Hector

Set, Light & Visual Design

•

Jenny Hector's designs are driven by her collaborations and the space they find themselves in. For the last two years she has been working with Jodee and her collaborators to develop and design the set lighting and visuals for *Imagined Touch*. In 2016, Jenny designed the lighting for Sandra Parker's *Small Details*, Aphids *Howl* for FOLA, *Another Other* produced by Chamber Made Opera. Jacob Boehme's *Blood on the Dance Floor* (produced by Ilbijerri Theatre Company) and Dark Mof's *Funeral Party*. In 2015 she travelled with Madeleine Flynn and Tim Humphrey to light their work *Gauge* at Brighton Festival (UK); co-designed the set and lighting for Tim Darbyshire's *Stampede the Stampede* for Dance Massive and lit the premier of Jo Lloyd's *Confusion For Three* at Arts House. Jenny has developed the residential light installation *How Are You?*; performed in Shian Law's *Personal Mythologies*; and designed for artists and companies including Back To Back Theatre, Rimini Protokoll, Paul Kelly and Paul Grabowsky, The Light In Winter, BalletLab, Stephanie Lake and Robin Fox and Big West Festival. Jenny has received two Green Room Awards and is a current member of the Green Room Awards Dance Panel.

### Dennis Witcombe

Deafblind Communications Consultant

•

Dennis has been an Auslan and tactile Sign Language Interpreter for the last twenty years. A recipient of a Winston Churchill Fellowship, he travelled to Finland to research Haptic communication created by Deafblind people. He now tours the world presenting at different conferences exploring Deafblindness and haptics.

### Stacey Baldwin

Producer

•

Stacey is an independent producer with a background in arts management. She has worked with Back to Back Theatre and Melbourne Festival. Stacey joined the team at Insite Arts in 2014 supporting a range of artists including Antony Hamilton, Stephanie Lake, Tamara Saulwick and Campagna TPO. She was the lead producer for *We3's The Long Pigs* at Sydney Festival and was the Program & Operations Manager for MONA FOMA 2016. Stacey worked with Back to Back Theatre for six years producing national and international tours including *Food Court* in Berlin, *small metal objects* in Seoul, and *The Democratic Set* in Basel, Zurich and Leuven. She was an associate producer with Performing Lines working on Meryl Tankard's tour of *The Oracle* to the Netherlands and Switzerland and CIRCA's tour to regional centres as part of a *Road Work* tour. Stacey works with organisations to support them through periods of change, implementing new systems and ways of working to better support their company. Stacey identifies as a person with a disability.

### Jo Leishman

Stage Manager

•

Jo has stage managed on: DarkMof, MONA FOMA, White Night, Melbourne Festival, New Year's Evie, Ten Days on the Island, Next Wave, Falls Festival, Comedy Festival and Melbourne Fringe Festival. She's worked with: Rawcus, Back to Back, Union House Theatre, St Martins Youth Arts Centre. She has collaborated with: Susie Dee, Tom Gutteridge, Jane Woollard, Amelia Ducker, Brienna MacNish and Donna Jackson. Jo has worked on many events that give high importance to inclusivity and access for both artists and audience. Most recently she's toured with Effie as a wardrobe mistress on her latest show *Effie the Virgin Bride* and has returned from Hobart after program producing and stage managing Blacklist, the club for DarkMof in Hobart.

Our incredible interpreting team, all the support workers, Able Australia and all their donors, all the amazing MATCH donors, Amber Richardson, Arts Access Victoria, Arts House, Auspicious Arts Projects, Bosco Shaw, Carla Anderson, Caroline Lee, Claire Tellefson, Dancehouse, Danielle Don, Echo Interpreting, Ed Holmes, Jim Stenson @ Independent Scenery, Jo Dunbar, Kaye Collard, Marie Hunter, Paul @ AAC ID Solutions, Polyglot Theatre, Rainbow Sweeny, Charlie Ahrens, Medina Sumovic, Tyson Boal, Fi Brindle, Jinaya Myers, Ricci Jane Adams, all volunteer audiences, Melbourne Polytechnic's Auslan course students and teachers, Selene Bateman, Sofya Gollan, Sue Giles, The Mundy family, Tom Chapman, Van Locker, Veronica Pardo.

*Imagined Touch* is supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria; the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body; the Ministry for the Arts' Catalyst—Australian Arts and Culture Fund; Able Australia; and the Besen Family Foundation and the City of Melbourne through Arts House.

jodeemundy.com

Arts House is a program of the City of Melbourne and our home is North Melbourne Town Hall. We support new and diverse ways to make and experience art providing a nexus for cultural expression and social connection in a city environment.

Arts House develops work that is contemporary, experimental and participatory.

For more information, please contact us on the details below.

521 Queensberry Street  
North Melbourne VIC 3051  
(03) 9322 3720

[artshouse@melbourne.vic.gov.au](mailto:artshouse@melbourne.vic.gov.au)  
[artshouse.com.au](http://artshouse.com.au)

Bookings:  
[artshouse.com.au](http://artshouse.com.au) or  
(03) 9322 3713