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Arts House at  
North Melbourne Town Hall

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# Permission to Speak Chamber Made Opera

Image: Pier Carthew

Arts House



Season 2

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Wed 23 – Sun 27 November  
60 minutes

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## Creative Team

Concept, Direction,

Text & Libretto:

**Tamara Saulwick**

Composition, Libretto,

Instrument Design:

**Kate Neal**

Performance:

**Georgie Darvidis,**

**Edward Fairlie, Josh Kyle,**

**Gian Slater**

Sound Design:

**Jethro Woodward**

Lighting Design, Prop

Design & Construction:

**Bosco Shaw**

Costume Design:

**Marg Horwell**

Production & Stage

Management:

**Nick Wollan**

Recorded voices:

**Penny Baron, MaryAnne**

**Caleo, Olive Chaston,**

**Rudie Chapman, Emilie**

**Collyer, Annie Edney,**

**Andrew Gray, Jane Hall,**

**Carolyn Hanna, Kate**

**Hunter, Martin Hoggart,**

**Petra Kalive, Quinn Knight,**

**Jai Leeworthy, Dave**

**Maney, Niki na Meadhra,**

**James Pratt, Ahn Tran,**

**Charlotte West, Jack,**

**James, John, Laney, Mia,**

**Rosa, Sybilla, Ting.**

*Interviewees have been credited by their full name, first name only, or pseudonym, in accordance with their wishes.*

## Artist Statement

Working on *Permission to Speak* has given us time to reflect on the act of giving voice, the desire to be heard, the ability to listen, the struggle to connect with those closest to us and the need to feel understood.

In *Listening and Voice: Phenomenologies of Sound*, Don Ihde talks about, ‘moments of fragile meeting in which there is an exchange of concentrated listening and speaking’. If we are lucky, we grow up in a family where these fragile moments of connecting with others are part of our experience. We learn the skills of genuine exchange by example. For others, as one interview participant puts it, ‘there is a simmering unspokenness that sits amongst family members’. Perhaps for many of us, family interactions are a haphazard series of connections and misconnections, which unfold over time whilst we watch each other grow older and witness the changing shape of our relationships.

It has been a fascinating and rewarding experience to be invited into people’s personal worlds to discuss this most universal of personal relationships. We have been struck by how idiosyncratic and particular each relationship is—how full of intimate detail and nuance—and yet, how in so many cases, these specificities then point to the larger social and cultural themes of our times. The family home is the location where our world-views, our principles and our sense of identity are first seeded, tested and contested.

We are deeply grateful to all of the interview participants whose words and experiences form the foundations of this work. Thanks to each and every one of you for your generosity, your candour and your willingness to voice your experiences.

— *Tamara Saulwick & Kate Neal*

## Biographies

### **Tamara Saulwick**

Concept, Direction, Text & Libretto

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Tamara Saulwick is a Melbourne-based artist who creates contemporary performance works for theatres and public spaces. With over twenty year's experience working across and between artforms, Tamara has presented her work nationally and internationally. For Chamber Made Opera, Tamara has worked as director (*Permission to Speak*) and dramaturg (*Wake*). Other recent works include: audio walk *Newport Archives* (The Substation); audio-visual installation *Alter* (Arts House / FOLA) and *Endings* (Sydney Festival/Performance Space & Arts House), which was nominated for the 'Best New Australian Work' Helpmann Award. She has also received the 'Design and Realisation' Green Room Award and toured to Canada and the UK in 2017. Tamara's solo work *Pin Drop*, that premiered at Arts House in 2010, was remounted at The Malthouse then toured nationally with Mobile States and internationally to Tramway in Glasgow. Tamara has a PhD in Performance Studies from VUT and is a current recipient of an Australia Council Theatre Fellowship.

### **Kate Neal**

Composition, Libretto, Instrument Design

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Kate Neal is an artist with over 20 years experience as a composer, arranger, artistic director and collaborator. Since 2006 she has been incorporating extra-musical parameters within the notation of a musical score, such as physical gesture, design, light and choreography. The result is a musical language that extends the existing techniques of the performing musician, and creates a synthesis of experience for audiences where music is to be seen and heard: the performative aspect of the work is as important as the aural. In 2015/16 Kate is the recipient of an Australia Council for the Arts Fellowship, allowing her to compose six substantial new works over two years. In 2013 Kate returned from the US to take a one-year position as Composer in Residence for the Four Winds Festival. From 2009 to 2013 Kate was a Graduate Fellow at Princeton University in the USA, and from 2000 to 2007 she was based in the UK. In 2016 Kate's work *Semaphore* won both the Instrumental Work of the Year and the Performance of the Year Awards at the Australian Art Music Awards, as well as the inaugural Melbourne Prize Beleura Award for Composition.

### **Georgie Darvidis**

Performer

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Georgie Darvidis is one of Melbourne's most exciting and in demand young vocalists. She possesses not only a powerful and agile instrument but also a deeply artistic sensibility that she brings to many different projects and ensembles. Since graduating from the VCA in 2012, she has performed regularly with her own projects as well as her major roles in Victorian Opera's *Turn of the Screw* and *Cinderella*. She is an original member of the acclaimed vocal ensemble Invenio and has performed with the Australian Art Orchestra's Electro-Acoustic Series. She recently attended the Banff Jazz and Creative Music Workshop learning from the likes of Theo Bleckmann and Vijay Iyer and spent further times in New York studying with Shelly Hirsch.

### **Edward Fairlie**

Performer

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Edward Fairlie has performed extensively both as a vocalist and trumpet player. He has toured with ARIA award winners Gotye and Julia Stone both nationally and overseas. Has also performed with artists as diverse as Paul Kelly, CW Stoneking and Kamahl. As a composer, Edward has written for orchestra, wind band, big band, chamber ensembles and vocal groups, and has an original solo project which incorporates his vocal, piano and instrumental orchestration skills. He is also an ensemble director and trumpet tutor at Eltham High School, as well as a lecturer in arranging and composition at the University of Melbourne.

### **Josh Kyle**

Performer

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Josh Kyle is a creative vocalist whose varied approach to music making has seen him involved with many different musical experiences and settings. He has released two albums *Possibilities* (2010) and *Songs Of Friends* (2014) as well as a yet-to-be released recording, "*I Hear, Here I*". Josh is a member of Gian Slater's Invenio as well as Andrew Murray's ATM15 and various other ensembles. He was a finalist in the James Morrison Generations in Jazz Vocal Scholarship & The National Jazz Awards. In 2014 he was a nominee for The Bell Awards & The 2016 Freedman Fellowship in Jazz. Josh has presented various projects at festivals and theatres around the world.

### **Gian Slater**

Performer

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Gian Slater is one of Australia's most sought-after and inventive creative musicians, known for her superb musicianship, pioneering vision for vocal music and powerful artistic integrity. She is a four-time finalist in the Freedman Fellowship, winner of 2015 PBS Young Elder of Jazz and recipient of a 2012 Creative Australia Fellowship. Her approach incorporates wordless singing and improvisation, deeply personal and poetic original songs; electronics and extended vocal techniques; new music and contemporary composition and collaborations with theatre and dance practitioners. She has released eight albums of her original music and has recorded and performed with many renowned Australian and International artists. She formed her own vocal ensemble, Invenio in 2010, for which she has composed and directed seven major works.

### **Jethro Woodward**

Sound Design

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Jethro Woodward is a Melbourne-based composer, musician and sound designer recognised for his expansive and highly layered film, theatre and dance scores. A multi Green Room Award winner and nominee, he has worked with some of Australia's leading major and independent companies including MTC, Malthouse Theatre, Belvoir Company B, Arena, Windmill, MSO, Rawcus, Stuck Pigs Squealing, Fragment 31, Lucy Guerin, Australian Dance Theatre, KAGE, Lemony S Puppet Theatre and more.

Jethro won Green Room Awards for *Moth* (Malthouse/ Arena), *Goodbye Vaudeville Charlie Mudd* (Malthouse/ Arena) and *Irony Is Not Enough* (Fragment 31). He was the Musical Director and Sound Designer for the six-time Helpmann nominated musical *Wizard of Oz* (Windmill).

### **Marg Horwell**

Costume Design

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Marg Horwell has been recognised for her work with six Green Room Awards and two Sydney Theatre Awards for Outstanding Set and Costume Design. Marg was also nominated for a Helpmann Award in 2015 for her work on Marlin with Arena theatre Company. Recent credits include: *Lilith The Jungle Girl* (Sisters Grimm/MTC 2016), *Edward II* (Malthouse 2016), *Peddling* (MTC 2016), *Birdland* (MTC 2015), *SHIT* (Dee

& Cornelius/MTC Neon 2015), *I Am A Miracle* (Malthouse 2015), *Marlin* (Arena Theatre Company/MTC 2014), *The Good Person Of Szechuan* (Malthouse Theatre/ The National Theatre Of China 2014), *Resplendence* (Angus Cerini Doubletap/MTC Neon 2014), *Eight Gigabytes Of Hardcore Pornography* (Griffin Theatre Company/Perth Theatre Company 2014), *Cock* (MTC/La Boite 2014), *Summertime In The Garden Of Eden* (Sisters Grimm/Griffin Theatre Company 2013), *Savages* (Dee & Cornelius 2013), and *Constellations* (MTC 2013). Marg was the Designer in Residence for the Lawler Studio with Melbourne Theatre Company in 2011 and is Resident Designer at Malthouse Theatre for 2017.

### **Bosco Shaw**

Lighting Design, Prop Design & Construction

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Bosco Shaw works primarily as a Lighting and Set Designer. His interest is in work that involves bodies and movement, how light feeds and influences the performing space and collaborations that propose alternate light sources and means. He has worked for companies and festivals in Australia and around the world. Recent design projects include: Antony Hamilton – *Meeting*, Tim Darbyshire – *Stampede the Stampede*, Dance North – *Syncing Feeling, 3 dancers, IF\_\_ Was\_\_*, Daniel Jaber/ADT – *Nought*, Chunky Move – *It Cannot Be Stopped*, Keir Choreographic Awards 2015 – Tim Darbyshire, Atlanta Eke, Matthew Sleeth – *A Drone Opera*, Stephanie Lake Co. – *Double Blind*, Luke George – *Erotic Dance*, Lee Searle – *3 Dancers*.

### **Nick Wollan**

Production & Stage Management

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Nick Wollan works in a number of technical areas in the arts, mainly as an operator of automation and AV. His most recent works at Melbourne Theatre Company include *Jasper Jones*, *Double Indemnity* and *Miss Julie*. Earlier this year he oversaw the AV elements on the return season of *North by North West* in the State Theatre, Arts Centre Melbourne. Nick completed a Bachelor of Production at the Victorian College of the Arts in 2011 from which he was awarded the Dennis Irving Award, a technical scholarship to work in the industry.

## Thank You

Chamber Made Opera wishes to thank:  
Stephen Adams and ABC Classic FM; Jean Bink;  
Virginia Lovett, Annie Bourke, Judy Bunn, Kerry Saxby,  
Terry McKibbin and the Melbourne Theatre Company;  
Michael Carr and Chunky Move; Rachael Dyson-  
McGregor; Dale Gorfinkel; Lawrence Harvey and  
SIAL; Brienna Macnish; Craig Morton from Outlook  
Communications; Denis Muller; Emma Schmidt  
from Footscray City College; Angharad Wynne-Jones  
and the wonderful staff and crew at Arts House.

*Permission to Speak* was commissioned by Chamber Made Opera with support from Helen & Peter Murdoch, Sue Kirkham and the company's Navigators. The project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body. It has also been supported by the City of Melbourne through Arts House and by the Australian Research Council and SIAL Sound Studios through the Agile Opera Project.

Chamber Made Opera is assisted by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria and the City of Melbourne, and receives funds from Creative Partnerships Australia. Chamber Made Opera is based in a Creative Spaces managed studio. Creative Spaces is a program of Arts Melbourne at the City of Melbourne.

## Arts House

Arts House is a program of the City of Melbourne and our home is North Melbourne Town Hall. Melbourne's centre for contemporary and experimental performance, Arts House provides a nexus for cultural expression and social connection in a city environment. Arts House is committed to championing independent artists' practice, developing contemporary, experimental and participatory work and engaging audiences. Locally engaged with the diverse communities that surround it and a collaborator across the city, Arts House engages not just an arts audience, but a broad spectrum of audience and participants.

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

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