

# WHELPING BOX

BRANCH NEBULA, MATT PREST  
AND CLARE BRITTON

## Arts House, Meat Market

Wed 4 – Sun 8 September 2013

70 minutes

Post-show Q&A Fri 6 September

## Creative Team

Co-Creators: **Branch Nebula (Lee Wilson, Mirabelle Wouters), Matt Prest, Clare Britton**

Sound: **Jack Prest**

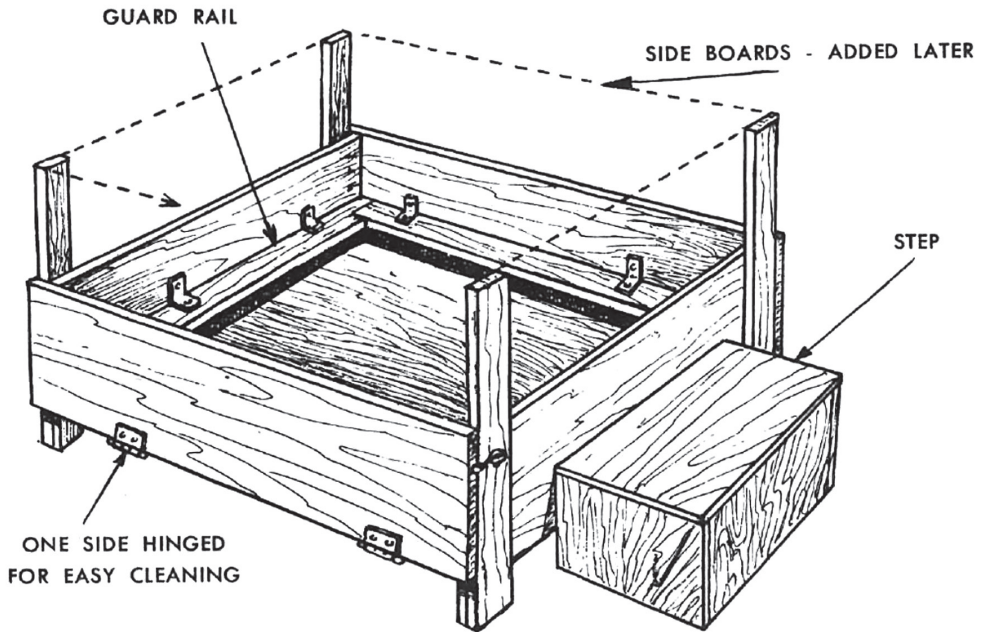
Toured by: **Intimate Spectacle**

**Whelping Box** premiered at Performance Space, Sydney, in October 2012, as part of SEXES 2012. It was originally co-produced by Performing Lines and Performance Space.

**artshouse.com.au**

**branchnebula.com**

**Whelping Box** was developed with the support of the Australia Council, the Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body, and the Hot House Month in the Country residency program. Branch Nebula is supported by Managing and Producing Services (MAPS) NSW, a joint initiative supported by the Australia Council and Arts NSW, managed by Performing Lines. Matt Prest is supported by a Creative Australia Fellowship for Young and Emerging Artists from the Australia Council for the Arts.



WHELPING BOX

## Artistic Notes

The process of creating **Whelping Box** has led us down dirt tracks and rivers, and through the bush. We have absorbed true crime reportage, metal, techno, Norse mythology, dog training manuals, and the artwork that people airbrush on cars and posters.

Our focus in making **Whelping Box** has been on atmospheres, actions, tasks and images. Led by what we want to experience in the performance, we have composed an experience for the audience that aims to work on a visceral and sensorial level.

**Whelping Box** is a place to test the body, the performer and the spectator. It is a place of permission, of what we allow of each other. An absurd spectacle. A breeding ground for wild things.

## Biographies

### **Branch Nebula**

Lee Wilson and Mirabelle Wouters, co-creators, began collaborating in 1998. Driven by an eclectic and diverse passion for culture in all its forms, they work in a range of settings – public space, conventional and non-conventional – with diverse artists like skaters, BMX-ers, dancers, parkourists, footballers, Bboys and Bgirls, and performance artists; to create experiences for audiences that are immediate, risky, physical, visceral and challenging.

Their most recent work, *sloop*, is a site-specific work; an international co-production with the Kiasma Museum in Helsinki, Finland for the Urb Festival, it premiered in August 2013. *Concrete and Bone Sessions* is also a site-specific work, in a skate park, which premiered at Sydney Festival 2013; it was nominated for a Helpmann Award for Best Visual or Physical Theatre Production.

SWEAT premiered at Performance Space, Sydney in 2010, and toured to Dance Massive in Melbourne and the In Transit festival at Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, in 2011. The Helpmann-nominated *Paradise City* premiered at the Sydney Opera House in 2006 and toured to four international festivals in Brazil in 2007, and to 11 cities nationally with Mobile States in 2008. Earlier productions include *Plaza Real* and *Sentimental Reason*, touring to Perth, Belgium and Switzerland.

### **Matt Prest**

Matt Prest is a performance maker with a background studying performance and installation art. He holds a BFA in Sculpture, Performance and Installation, from COFA, UNSW, and has trained at L'Ecole Philippe Gaulier, Paris, in Bouffon and Clown. He has been a lead artist in cross-disciplinary theatre works *The Tent* (Next Wave, 2008; Liveworks Festival, Performance Space, 2008; Campbelltown Arts Centre, 2009; Darwin Festival, 2010; PICA, 2010); *Hole in the Wall* with Clare Britton (Next Wave Festival, Performance Space and Campbelltown Arts Centre, 2010) and **Whelping Box** with Branch Nebula and Clare Britton (Performance Space, 2012). He received a Green Room Award for *Hole in the Wall* in 2010 and was nominated for a Sydney Music, Arts & Culture (SMAC) Award for **Whelping Box**. He is recipient of a Creative Australia Fellowship for Young and Emerging Artists from the Australia Council in 2012–14 and is participating in Robert Wilson's Watermill Summer Program in New York.

### **Clare Britton**

Clare Britton is an interdisciplinary artist who works across concept, design and performance. She is Co-Artistic Director of My Darling Patricia. A founding member of the company, she has collaborated to create My Darling Patricia's process and body of work. My Darling Patricia has created six original works that have received theatre and design awards and toured nationally.

Concurrent with her practice with My Darling Patricia, Clare has an active freelance practice. This includes an ongoing collaboration with Matt Prest; together they have created performance/installation works *The Tent*, *Hole in the Wall* and, in collaboration with Branch Nebula, **Whelping Box**. For My Darling Patricia she is currently developing the works *Mantle*, *Alice Osborne's Falling*, *The Piper* and *The Batela Project*. As a freelancer she is working on *Yurt Empire*, Auntie Rhonda Dixon-Grosvenor's *The Fox and the Freedom Fighters*, and *Room Noise* with Matt Prest.

### **Jack Prest**

Jack Prest has worked as a producer, sound designer and performer in Sydney for more than ten years, building an impressive resumé that includes headlining shows at the Big Day Out, studio work with KRS-One and rotation on Triple J. He is currently involved in a solo multimedia art project called *Future Love Hangover*, in which he is reinventing the album for the 21st century, bringing a fine art aesthetic to pop music. This is Jack's second time collaborating with this group of performers; he also created the sound design for *The Tent* in 2008 (Next Wave).

### **Intimate Spectacle**

Intimate Spectacle is a contemporary arts producing company, founded by Harley Stumm in 2012. It works across genres, from contemporary theatre and dance theatre to live art, interactive performance, and events in between 'the arts' and popular culture. Intimate Spectacle is interested in work that's engaging, surprising and playful, but with substance and full of heart. In 2013 it is collaborating with artists including Sam Routledge and Martyan Coutts, Erth Visual and Physical, Team MESS and Vicki Van Hout.

## Thank You

Branch Nebula, Matt Prest and Clare Britton would like to thank the Creative Practice Lab in the School of the Arts and Media at the University of New South Wales, Acrobat, Critical Path, Denis Beaubois, Urban Theatre Projects, Carlie and Josh, Danny Egger, Katy and Mike, Elaine and Mick, Ubu, Warre and Les.

## Arts House

Arts House presents contemporary arts in programs encompassing performance, exhibitions, live art, residencies and other activities that nurture, support and stimulate cultural engagement. We value work in which artists at different stages of their careers, as well as our diverse audiences and communities, are actively involved in creating an imaginative, just and environmentally sustainable global society.

Arts House's programs include two curated public seasons of multidisciplinary work each year. Approximately half of this work is selected through an Expression of Interest process. We seek artists who are responding to the urgent issues of our time in imaginative and surprising ways, taking artistic risks and offering multiple ways for audiences to engage with or co-author their work.

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)

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