

FESTIVAL HIT SERVES UP DELICIOUSLY WICKED CIRCUS CABARET EXTRAVAGANZA

The Brink and Fez Faanana present

BRIEFS

Direct from critically acclaimed seasons at the Adelaide Fringe, Woodford Folk and Brisbane Festivals comes **Briefs**, an all-male circus cabaret extravaganza playing at the Judith Wright Centre from Wednesday 26 to Saturday 29 May 2010.

Briefs Producer and Performer Fez Faanana says audiences can look forward to a “deliciously wicked and thoroughly entertaining” blend of circus, burlesque and theatre in a night of skill, strength, flesh and fun.

“Audiences can expect a fun and raucous night out with gob-smacking physicality, skilful displays of the flesh and humour that breaks the rules, blurs the lines and brings the notion of undoing your seatbelt into the theatre,” Fez said.

“In the past circus performers were sometimes considered freaks and put into glass boxes or public displays with no opportunity to show their skills. **Briefs** pays homage to these very performers in a cheeky celebration of circus and queer culture,” he said.

“Ultimately, **Briefs** is pure entertainment. We believe that theatre needs to be enjoyed and digested by everybody, and **Briefs** is the kind of show that appeals to people from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures and ages, including regular theatre goers and people who are experiencing theatre for the first time,” he said.

Briefs stars Brisbane’s finest award winning performers and mischief-makers including Mark Winmill, Fez Faanana, Natano Faanana, Mali de Goey, Davy Sampford, Rudi Mineur and special guests.

Brisbane audiences will remember Mark Winmill and Rudi Mineur (winner of the 2002 Street Performing World Cup Champions) from their guest appearances in *Garnished*, which played at Judith Wright Centre in 2009.

Conceived during a training session, **Briefs** was created as a reaction to a continuing discussion about the Brisbane arts scene, says Producer and Performer Fez Faanana.

“For a long time our city has been represented as a cultural desert, but there are many amazing artists connected to Brisbane who are being represented all over the world,” Fez said.

“Often we’re devalued in our own hometown, which happens in most cities because it’s exciting to have headlining acts from overseas. But we’ve actually got an amazing hub of skilful performers in our own city and **Briefs** was a way that we could showcase some of this talent,” he said.

Taking the lead of their friends, the all-female La La Parlour troupe, the **Briefs** contingency decided to create a show to celebrate Brisbane’s foremost male circus performers.

What started as an underground yet popular club night at West End’s Ahimsa House developed into a fully-fledged show that premiered to audience acclaim at Brisbane Festival 2008 and is soon to play at Melbourne Fringe Festival.

The season at Judith Wright Centre marks the first time that **Briefs** will be performed in an intimate theatre setting.

***Briefs** kicks off The Brink, a year-round program of circus adventures. The Brink supports the creation and development of new and existing circus and physical theatre work in Brisbane. An initiative of Judith Wright Centre and Circa, supported by Arts Queensland.*

-ENDS-

Date	Wednesday 26 May – Saturday 29 May 2010
Time	Wed – Sat 7.30pm
Venue	Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Arts
Tickets	Cabaret \$35, Theatre Full \$30 Concession \$25
Bookings	07 3872 9000 or judithwrightcentre.com

**For further information, images and interview opportunities please contact
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JUDITH WRIGHT CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS

BRIEFS – PRESS QUOTES

"Briefs are as far down as this burlesque battalion go, made up of acrobats and performers who strip and flip for your predacious pleasure... the all-male revue has quickly risen in popularity, no doubt in part because of its accessibility to people of all persuasions... Sure to be one of the most talked about crowd pleasers of this year's Fringe."

Glam Adelaide

"*Briefs* is a fun and refreshing show – a great way to end your night out or an even better way to get it started!"

The Independent Weekly (Adelaide)

BRIEFS – BIOGRAPHIES

FEZ FAANANA

Fez Faanana is a dancer, actor, choreographer, performance maker, arts worker, host/MC and an independent producer. His experience to date has seen him create accessible, groundbreaking, risqué and contemporary performance, which reference his Pacific genealogy, political awareness, gender juggling and spectacle. As co-founder, co-director and performer of Polytoxic Dance Theatre and as an independent performer and collaborator, Fez has spearheaded dance, theatre, physical theatre, burlesque, drag and comedy since 1999 with a recent add-on of circus. Fez has toured extensively throughout Australia and internationally through Canada, the South Pacific and the USA. He has featured in various cabarets, collaborations and commissioned works as part of Melbourne Comedy Festival, Sydney Biennale, Sydney Festival, Brisbane Cabaret Festival and the Sydney Opera House Studio Program. He has also produced, programmed, choreographed and performed work for Brisbane Festival, Adelaide Fringe Festival, Woodford Folk Festival and for the Brisbane Powerhouse. Fez has developed a performance style and movement vocabulary with strong influences from Pacific history, contemporary dance, gender politics, the physicality of circus, pop parody, hip-hop and theatrical cabaret. This can be attributed to his animated Australian Samoan upbringing in the good ol' Aussie town of Ipswich. As an ambassador for Pacific and indigenous culture Fez's work extends into community cultural development as an arts worker in various indigenous Australian communities and throughout the Pacific. His work in this capacity has seen him choreograph, direct and creatively consult on large community theatre projects, music and dance programs and facilitate community engagement projects.

DAVY SAMPFORD

David Sampford is an Australian Circus Performer and has worked with the country's top contemporary circuses including Rock'n'Roll Circus, Circa, Circus Monoxide and Circus Oz, and has been performing juggling and teaching other circus skills for over ten years. As part of Circa's Ensemble he was responsible for developing and performing creative circus work for around six years, performing in *Tango* (2001), *Figaro Variations* (2002), *Anyway I'm not Alone* (2003), *Inferno* (2003), *Naked* (2003), *A Love Supreme* (2004), his solo show: *A Man in a Room, Juggling* (2004), as well as touring *61 Circus Acts in 60 minutes* (NARPACA, 2009). Skills utilised in the ensemble include acrobatics, group bike, plate spinning, sword balancing, juggling, juggling and more juggling. He is currently performing in *Briefs* a successful all male Circus Cabaret production, and has toured with this show to the Adelaide Fringe Festival (2010). He has studied at the Circo-Arts school in New Zealand, and trained with Adrian Kirk (UK) and with world famous Ukrainian juggler Vladislav Bonderenko (Ukraine). Davy has knowledge and experience of a wide array of juggling styles and techniques in disciplines ranging from improvised technical juggling to plate spinning to group juggling. He is currently Juggling Coach at Flipside Circus.

NATANO FAANANA

Natano Faanana is a circus, dance-theatre, traditional Samoan performer and Samoan chief from the village of Sili, Savaii, carrying the title of Seumanufagai Fiu Faanana. Like many young Samoans going up in and outside of Samoa, Natano was immersed in traditional island dance. Other than that, as a young person Natano had little or nothing to do with the arts. Prior to his life as a performer Natano spent most of his 20s in an audience seat as opposed to on stage. It wasn't until the age of 28 that Natano took his first trapeze lesson. It was here or rather, 'up there' that Natano discovered his calling as a performer. In 2007 Natano performed his first aerial act with partnership 'Luga Aerials' with co-creator Mark Winmill 2006 with music group Blue King Brown. In 2008 Natano was one of three additions to join Polytoxic. Under Polytoxic Natano has performed in a number of corporate shows and cabarets to date. But it was in the show *Polyhood* in 2008 and 2009 where Natano first displayed his unique style of Pacific-inspired aerials. This style now has been a regular aesthetic of Natano's practice which has a prominent presence in *Briefs* (2008, 2009, 2010), which Natano co created with brother Fez and Mark Winmill. As a solo artist Natano performed at The Great Escape 2007, Island Vibe 2008, Woodford Folk Festival 2008, 2009, West End Carnivale 2008 and Adelaide Fringe festival 2009. He has also worked for various production houses such as Strut and Fret productions, Wilde Applause and Top Chick to name a few. Recently Natano joined the team of Circa as a trainer for both young people and adults. For now Natano is busy juggling life as a performer, circus trainer, community arts worker and ambassador of Samoan culture.

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BRIEFS – BIOGRAPHIES CONT'D

MALI DE GOEY

Mali has been performing, professionally since 1995. Mali fell in love with circus at the tender age of 15. Inspired by the physical prowess of the acrobats, tenderness and vulnerability of the clowns and the goddess aerialists, he decided to pursue a career as a circus performer. Humble beginnings of once a week training classes led to group training sessions with like minded individuals in the park. Having brief contact with circus master Liu Gwong Rong shaped his early training regimes. At 19 Mali endeavoured to make a living as a street performer in Brisbane until he was scouted by Australia's infamous acrobatic guru Simon Yates. This led to a crash course in stress and responsibility, taking on the role as understander for the already firmly established acrobatic troupe "acrobat". Mali has worked for, as, coached and collaborated with: Tom Tom Crew, Circa, Flipside Circus, Spaghetti Circus, Swing Set, Aerobatica, The Flying Rolandos, Levade Noble Horse Gala (Sweden), Circus Monoxide, Circus Ole, Somersault Productions, Circus Xsavia, Burtons Circus, Strut'n'Fret, Top Chick Management, Trix Circus, QLD Folk Federation, Aerial Angels, Circus Oz, The Snuff Puppets, acrobat, Flying Fruit Fly Circus, Erth, Rainbow Circus and Theatric Zunatic. Mali has performed throughout Australia both regionally and in the metropolitan centres. Mali has also performed abroad in Asia, Europe, America, South America and in the Eastern Bloc.

MARK WINMILL

Mark Winmill's aerial antics, bent theatrics and memorable physicality give the 'strong man' a new fangled brand. One of Australia's leading Boylesque bandits whose style and aesthetic encompass circus, theatre, tongue-in-cheek, dance and burlesque of a twisted and comical nature earning his title as 'The Boylesque Boy Wonder'. Of late Mark has worked with 'Meow Meow' *Insert the name of the person you love* (Sydney Festival); featured in *La Clique* (Adelaide and London), *After Dinner Mince*, *Polyhood Cabaret* (Adelaide Fringe Festival), *Pasifika Seams* (Sydney Opera House), *In the Pink en rose Cabaret* (Judith Wright Centre) and *Carnal Follies* (Feast Festival). Notably Mark also featured in the sell out production of *Feasting on Flesh* at Sydney Opera House and Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

Mark frequents the Australian night club scene with regular spots at 'Hell Fire', 'Red Door', and 'Fluffy'. Mark recently infiltrated the UK club scene touring the club circuit alongside some of the UK's most leading performers. Mark Winmill joined the formidable Brisbane-based dance theatre ensemble, Polytoxic, bringing his fresh physicality and iconic style to the already fruity blend. Mark was born into his carnie ways through his father, an acrobatic clown who worked in trad circus and often frequented the decadent club circuit of the 60s. Mark's mother sugar-fuelled children with fairy floss in between poofing her beehive.

RUDI MINEUR

Rudi Mineur was born in 1967 in Launceston, Tasmania to Dutch parents. In 1970, his family moved to the big smoke, Melbourne and after finishing school he worked as a Leather worker; house demolisher and truck driver before discovering Circus Oz's acrobatic workshops in 1990 - he was hooked! In 1992, he moved to Brisbane to join Rock n Roll Circus as a core company/performing member. Highlights there included travelling to China for a three-month training project with the Shanghai Circus School and touring the company's critically acclaimed shows *BodySlam* and *The Dark* back home in Australia. After leaving RnR in 1996, Rudi worked for several years as an artist's model as well as joining Melbourne-based Physical Theatre Company 'Dislocate', appearing as a guest artist in the show *Risk Reduction* in Ireland, Italy and Australia. In 1999, Rudi teamed up with acrobatic partner, Mark Sands to form the highly successful comedy hand-balancing act *PopEyed*. In 2002 this act won them the title of Street Performing World Cup Champions in Shizuoka, Japan, the first of many awards to follow. To this day *PopEyed* continue to thrill audiences all over the world. Rudi has taught acrobatics all over Australia, his passions include staircases and walking diagonally across roads, he lives in Brisbane with his darling wife Tess, has three beautiful kids and a puppy named Molly.

TESS BECK

After leaping The Ditch as a Child Bride in 1985, Tess Beck almost caught her breath within the gaudy lights of Kings X. Working long hours, her only relaxation came in the hour glass form of her idol, Adriana Xenides. Marvelling at her hostess skills and filled with hope, she packed her fluoro-embossed 'Wham' backpack, grabbed her constant companions (a bottle of OP Bundy Rum and her four month old baby, who fortunately had a brilliant travelling disposition and was adorable to look at) and raced towards the unknown adventure of Pre-Expo Brisbane. Upon the dreadful realisation that no bottle shops opened on a Sunday she fled, only to be lured back in '91 to discover BrisVegas! Two husbands, several more children and numerous failed 'business' ventures later, led her to a short stint at a 'Relaxation Centre' where she met up with the now legendary Shivannah(h)! Fast forward to 2010 and Tess Beck aka Adrianna Amphetamine! is living the dream on a medium sized stage – as Shivannah's personal undresser and bottle opener. Tess is more than happily married to Rudi, her youngest and most handsome husband, so far. They have three beautiful kids – Molly, Ruby and Cisco.