

JUDITH WRIGHT CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS

Media Release
Tuesday July 2009

INTRICATE MARIONETTES BREATHE LIFE INTO THEATRE FAIRYTALE

Judith Wright Centre presents
THE GRIMSTONES – HATCHED

*“This is one of the most deliciously dark and touching shows you will see. * * * *”*
The Sunday Mail

“...a must see” Arts Hub

Intricate old-world marionettes, giant books and sign language combine in the critically acclaimed gothic theatre fairytale, **The Grimstones – Hatched**, playing at Judith Wright Centre from Tuesday 21 to Saturday 25 July 2009.

The creator, a deaf circus performer turned puppeteer named Asphyxia, says **The Grimstones** was borne from her love of making things and is an “enchanted” fairytale that especially appeals to fans of stories like Harry Potter.

“Nothing in the world gives me greater pleasure than making things; I spent 18 months in my tiny loft studio fiddling with fabrics, stitching, painting, sculpting and building to create the set and each marionette for this show,” Asphyxia said.

“If you’re a fan of Harry Potter, Edward Scissorhands and The Addams Family, then you’ll really enjoy **The Grimstones**, which I would describe as an enchanting fairytale for kids and adults alike,” she said.

Hatched tells the story of the Grimstones family, including a girl who reads dreams, a baby boy with three legs, a mother who sews garments lined with joy, and a grandfather who heals people with his magical concoctions.

Nationally touring to rave reviews, **The Grimstones** celebrates the wonder of books, acceptance of difference, family love and the simple pleasures of life.

While touring the world as a circus performer, Asphyxia was inspired by a chance meeting with a master puppeteer in Guatemala to turn her hand to marionette-making.

Asphyxia says she is passionate about introducing Australian audiences to the world of marionettes, and at the same time aims to educate hearing audiences about deaf culture and lifestyle.

“I am passionate about sharing my love of marionettes, particularly with Australian audiences because although puppetry is becoming more popular in Australia, marionettes are rarely used here,” she said.

“My craft also allows me to create work that teaches and reflects deaf culture through the use of strong visual motifs and sign language,” she said.

Free Auslan sign language workshops with Asphyxia will be offered to every patron who books to see **The Grimstones**.

For a strictly limited season **The Grimstones – Hatched** will play at the Judith Wright Centre from Tuesday 21 to Saturday 25 July before embarking on its next tour – to France.

-ENDS-

Date	Tue 21 – Sat 25 July 2009
Time	Tue 6.30pm, Wed – Sat 11.30am + 6.30pm
Venue	Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Arts
Tickets	Full \$20, Concession \$15, School Students \$12, School Groups 10+ \$10 per student Patrons who book to the show can book to “Auslan For Everyone” sign language workshops for free
Duration	50 mins
Bookings	07 3872 9000

For further information, images and interview opportunities please contact
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ASPHYXIA - BIOGRAPHY

www.asphyxia.com.au

Asphyxia is Australia's leading Deaf circus performer turned puppeteer. She has toured nationally and internationally over the past decade with her performing arts company Sky Works.

Asphyxia has a background in ballet, and has trained with Circus Oz and the National Institute of Circus Art, specialising in trapeze, adagio (double balance) and hula hoops. She has created theatre shows, including *Blood Makes Noise*, which have performed sell out seasons in Melbourne, Sydney and the USA.

A chance encounter with master puppeteer Sergio Barrio on the streets of Guatemala in 2006 introduced Asphyxia to the world of marionette theatre – and she was hooked! Asphyxia's first puppet show, *The Paint Factory*, has won the hearts of audiences all over Australia. Her latest show *The Grimstones - Hatched* took her eighteen months to create. She designed the aesthetic for the show, handcrafted each of the marionettes, and built the set.

Asphyxia is passionately committed to introducing Australian audiences to the delightful world of marionettes, and creating groundbreaking new concepts with this traditional form of theatre.

Rather than hiding behind a miniature stage, Asphyxia brings the puppeteers into the performance and creates an integral role for them.

As a deaf artist, Asphyxia creates works that reflect and strengthen Deaf culture and values - providing positive modelling and validation for Deaf audiences. She provides education about Deaf culture and lifestyle to hearing audiences.

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