



Performing Lines



HUMAN ANIMAL EXCHANGE

They Saw a Thylacine

HUMAN ANIMAL EXCHANGE

Education Resource

Resources written by Meg Upton, Arts-in-Sync

Watch the [full length video](#) (PW: thylacine2015)



On an unseasonably cold September day in 1936, the world's last known Tasmanian tiger died in captivity at Hobart's Beaumaris Zoo...

The struggle for existence holds as much in the intellectual as in the physical world. A theory is a species of thinking, and its right to exist is coextensive with its power of resisting extinction by its rivals.

Thomas Huxley, Scientist (1825-1895)

We have much to learn by studying nature and taking the time to tease out its secrets.

David Suzuki, Scientist and Environmentalist (1936 -)

The greatest danger to our future is apathy. - Jane Goodall, primatologist and anthropologist (1934 -)

A Performing Lines produced tour

Contact:

Producer

Marketing/PR

performinglines.org.au

Narelle Lewis

Thom Smyth

02 9319 0066

08 9200 6212

narelle@performinglines.org.au

marketing@performinglines.org.au

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource has been created to accompany the 2016 national tour of Human Animal Exchange's production of *They Saw a Thylacine*. The production is suitable for students and young people in Years 9 to 12. Included in this resource is a range of activities that explore the production through the lenses of drama, theatre, English, history, critical thinking, ethics, and the cross curricular priorities of Indigenous cultures and sustainability.

More detailed references to the Australian Curriculum can be found in the table located at the end of this resource. The activities and tasks have been designed to be adapted for different ages and skill levels, to challenge, to provoke, and to enrich students' and teachers' experience of seeing the production. Further, senior secondary students of Drama, Theatre, Environmental Science, and Australian History will find there are many activities that will relate to their studies.

WHY THEATRE?

Performers Sarah Hamilton (Young Trapper Beatie McCullough) and Justine Campbell (Alison Reid) have chosen to use theatre as the medium for their story telling and for drawing our attention to some urgent matters in our world. They could have written an article, a book, a graphic novel, made a film or a generated a YouTube channel – all these media could contain and project their ideas. However, they chose theatre.

The word theatre derives from the Greek “the seeing place” or “to behold” (*theasthai*). Traditionally, it was the place where people came together to see the truth about life and society. American theatre actor, Willem Dafoe, stated that “Great theatre is about challenging how we think and encouraging us to fantasise about a world we aspire to”. It is worth considering this statement when you are preparing to see or have seen the production.

In the theatre you are part of a live audience watching live performers in real time. Both audience and performers can see and hear each other, the story can only go forward, not backwards, nor paused, nor repeated. In a way you are held captive. Theatre is *unique* in this regard. The liveness makes it unique and thus can make it a far more powerful (and risky) experience than other media. You may have experienced this yourself if you have acted in plays or musicals. This is often why artists choose theatre as a medium through which to explore their ideas.



DISCUSS (Critical Thinking)

- What theatre experiences have you already seen?
- Have you performed on stage?
- What do you recall about these that possibly made you feel excited, nervous, curious etc?
- What is different about seeing a play from seeing a film?

THEY SAW A THYLACINE - CREATIVE TEAM

Created and performed by Justine Campbell and Sarah Hamilton

Artistic Collaborator Matthew Lutton

Set & Lighting Design Matthew Adey, House of Vnholy

Sound Design Jethro Woodward

Costume Design Chloe Greaves

2015 season produced by Malthouse Theatre

A Performing Lines tour



DISCUSS (Drama)

- Consider the above list of creative personnel who produced *They Saw a Thylacine*. In contemporary theatre practice more traditional roles of writer, director, and performer tend to become blurred.
- Discuss the differences between a 'creating' theatre and 'playwriting'.
- Matthew Lutton is named as 'artistic collaborator'. Discuss whether this would be the same as a 'director'.
- What is the role of design in theatre?
- *Matthey Adey is both set and lighting designer*. Is this usual? How might these two design areas complement each other?

PREPARING TO SEE THE PRODUCTION

SYNOPSIS

They Saw a Thylacine tells two parallel stories of two women who unknowingly saw the last of a species – the Tasmanian tiger. In Tasmania in 1936, "tigers" fetched a good price. Female trapper, Beatie (Sarah Hamilton), is tracking a wild one to sell to a zoo, and Alison (Justine Campbell) is the zoo curator's daughter at the Beaumaris Zoo in Hobart where a female thylacine, called 'Benjamin', is alone in a cage.

Alison's father becomes ill and government cutbacks wreak havoc on the facilities and treatment of the zoo's animals. Not only is the real-life Alison Reid blocked from succeeding her father as curator of the Beaumaris Zoo in Hobart, but its animals 'are left to rot', cared for by unskilled workers keen to have a job in the middle of the Depression. The story echoes down from eighty years ago to remind us what is within our power to prevent.

STYLE

Written by Hamilton and Campbell, *They Saw a Thylacine* is a one act play. Its predominant style is story-telling. It incorporates a series of monologues and intersecting stories centred on the characters of two women Beatie and Alison; one tracking a Thylacine for the bounty and one caring for a Thylacine in a zoo.

The performers play a number of other characters. These include; a male trapper, 'Fred', who Beatie encounters in the forest, tracking the same thylacine; the manager of the zoo, 'Bruce'; and workers at the zoo and other officials who have an interest in the Tasmanian tiger at the time. Apart from Beatie and Alison, all other characters are male.

Language is important in the play. It is lyrical, sometimes poetic, conjuring an Australian language of the past. The design is minimal, a stage, three chairs and some simple but prominent lighting asking the audience to listen carefully and to strongly and powerfully imagine.

INTERVIEW WITH THE CREATORS

Watch: <http://malthousetheatre.com.au/blog/victoria-university-interviews-justine-campbell-and-sarah-hamilton> or at <https://vimeo.com/140271067>

In this short interview, filmed at the Beckett Theatre, Coopers Malthouse in Melbourne during the 2015 season of the production, the creators, Sarah Hamilton and Justine Campbell, provide some insight into the work, its form and its purpose.



DISCUSS (Drama)

- From the online interview, what insights did you gain about the production in terms of: stagecraft, the way language is used, the purpose of the work and the overall theatrical style?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Thylacine

The thylacine (Greek for "dog-headed pouched one") was the largest known carnivorous marsupial of modern times. It is commonly known as the Tasmanian tiger (because of its striped lower back) or the Tasmanian wolf. Native to continental Australia, Tasmania and New Guinea, it is believed to have become extinct in the 20th Century. It was the last extant member of its family, *Thylacinidae*. Specimens of other members of its family have been found in the fossil record dating back to the late Oligocene.

The thylacine had become extremely rare or extinct on the Australian mainland before British settlement of the continent, but it survived on the island of Tasmania along with several other endemic species, including the Tasmanian devil.

Intensive hunting encouraged by bounties is generally blamed for its extinction, but other contributing factors may have been disease, the introduction of dogs, and human encroachment into its habitat. Despite its official classification as extinct, sightings are still reported, though none has been conclusively proven.

Surviving evidence suggests that it was a relatively shy, nocturnal creature with the general appearance of a medium-to-large-size dog, except for its stiff tail and abdominal pouch (which was reminiscent of a kangaroo) and a series of dark transverse stripes that radiated from the top of its back (making it look a bit like a tiger).

Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thylacine>



RESEARCH (Critical thinking, Environmental Science, Sustainability)

DISCUSS the differences between **threatened, vulnerable, endangered** and **extinct** animals.

- Conduct some research with regard to other Australian animals that have become extinct since the death of the last thylacine in 1936
- How might human activity have contributed to the loss of fauna since colonisation?
- Select one Australian animal and prepare a report for the class that tracks their journey from threatened to extinct; what, when, how.
- Your presentation should seek to be persuasive in highlighting the message about extinction. How could you use digital technologies to do this? Images, vision, Prezi, sound etc.

MORE LINKS:

YouTube:

The last Tasmanian tiger known as Benjamin:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6vqCCI1ZF7o>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2746016/Left-cold-die-The-Tasmania-Tiger-extinct-result-human-neglect.html>

ABC Radio National:

The Science Show:

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/scienceshow/tasmaniae28099s-thylacine-and-how-it-was-hunted-to-extinction/4919758>

Trapping the Thylacine

Source: http://www.qvmag.tas.gov.au/upfiles/qvmag/cont/preciouslittleremains_pdf.pdf

A unique trapping system used fencing to direct thylacines toward a series of pit fall traps, wire snares, and a box trap (Fig. 32). At least 60 thylacines were caught this way at Aplico between 1888 and 1906, 27 of which were used to claim the Government bounty. Most were destroyed and discarded, although some skins were kept. Stevenson used eight of them to make a buggy rug, the only one of its kind known to exist. Occasionally thylacines were kept alive and sold to animal dealers. The last thylacine caught at Aplico in 1906 starved to death in a neglected pit fall trap.



RESEARCH & DISCUSS (Environmental Science, Sustainability)

What is sustainability?

*In ecology, **sustainability** is the capacity to endure; it is how biological systems remain diverse and productive indefinitely. Long-lived and healthy wetlands and forests are examples of **sustainable** biological systems.*

Sustainability addresses the ongoing capacity of Earth to maintain all life. Sustainable patterns of living meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Actions to improve sustainability are individual and collective endeavours shared across local and global communities. They necessitate a renewed and balanced approach to the way humans interact with each other and the environment.

Source: <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/crosscurriculumpriorities/sustainability/overview>

Take the challenge – How many Earths?

Go to this link and enter the required details to determine your environmental footprint

http://www.wwf.org.au/our_work/people_and_the_environment/human_footprint/footprint_calculator/

Read the extract about the trapping system used for thylacines in the early part of the 20th Century into the 1930s.

- What values does this trapping system suggest?
- How might the onset of the Depression have impacted people's values?

What comment do you think the play is making about our relationship to the environment?

THE COLONISING OF TASMANIA (Australian History)

*The arriving Europeans came with the idea that marsupials (such as the thylacine) are an inferior type of mammal, in the same way that the egg-laying platypus and the echidnas are also inferior, second-rate types of mammals, in the same way of course that the arriving Europeans looked at the Indigenous populations of Australia and said they are inferior peoples. And the assumption was that all of these inferior people, inferior animals, would die out and give way to the superior European animals and European persons as they arrived in the Australian continent – Robert Paddle, author of **The Last Tasmanian Tiger** (2000)*

A story from the past: The impact of colonisation

Mathinna was a Tasmanian Aboriginal child born in 1835 and taken from her family at age five by the Governor of Tasmania, John Franklin, and his wife Jane. It is said Mathinna arrived at Government House with a kangaroo skin, a rush basket, some shell necklaces and a pet possum. When the Franklins returned to England in 1843 they left her behind, and in the following years Mathinna struggled to find a sense of belonging in either black or white society. She died at age 17 as a result of alcohol abuse not long after the watershed events of the abolition of transportation, the granting of self-government and the official renaming to Tasmania – from "Precious Little Remains", Tasmania Museum and Art Gallery, Tasmania.

Source: http://www.tmag.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/80758/Teachers_guide.pdf



DISCUSS (Australian History, Ethics)

After reading the above extracts by author Robert Paddle and from the TMAG consider:

- What issues are raised about the attitudes of the British in their colonising of Australia?
- What 'values' are suggested as being present at the time (late 18th to late 19th Centuries)?
- Why would one race/culture be considered superior to another?
- Why would one type of animal be considered superior to another?
- Has our thinking changed? How might our thinking continue to change into the future?
- Is there a parallel between the extinction of the thylacine and the impact of colonisation on the indigenous people of Tasmania?



RESEARCH & DISCUSS (Intercultural Understanding)

EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING LINK:

<http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/media/525907/indigenous-perspective-on-sustainability>

The thylacine was considered a 'threat' to livestock in Tasmania. To create a financial 'bounty' for the skin of a thylacine was a way of addressing that threat – for both the trappers and for the farmers.

- Drawing on the background material provided, **your experience of the production** and any additional research and knowledge you have:
- Discuss what differences may exist between Western people's relationship to the land and to its animals and the relationship that Indigenous Australians had/have.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN



The traditional role of women in the 1930s.



PUSHING BACK (Australian History)

In *They Saw a Thylacine* the two women, Beatie and Alison, don't adopt traditional female roles. For instance, the male trapper Beatie encounters tries to control Beatie as they hunt for the thylacine but she stands her ground, and when Alison makes a stand and argues that she needs to take over her father's role as the zoo curator, the management dismiss her and put her in her 'place'.

- In pairs discuss why these two women may not have been taken seriously during this time?
- What opportunities do women in Western countries now have in terms of education, finances and professional lives?
- How did these changes come about?
- In what countries in the world are women still considered differently to men and perhaps have less opportunities, status and rights?
- Consider the image of Alison Reid below, a tiger on her lap. What does this suggest about her that would be different from traditional perspectives of women in the 1930s?

What comment do you think the play is making about the role of women?



Alison Reid, Beaumaris Zoo, 1930



AFTER SEEING THE PRODUCTION

POST SHOW QUESTIONS (Drama, Critical Thinking)

Use the following questions as prompts to explore the play in performance. Find a way to record responses through writing or online or other digital mode.

As you work through the questions keep considering – *what makes you think or say that* – in order to provoke reasons for your response.

- What do you remember about the theatre that you saw the play in?
- Discuss how different theatres and where you sit in a theatre might give you a different experience.
- What type of world did the characters in the play inhabit – how would you describe it?
- What did you know about the history of the thylacine as a creature before you saw the show?
- In pairs make some dot points about the main story or stories in the play – where did it begin and where did it end?
- Did you predict what was going to happen in the end?
- At what point do you think the stories between the two women begin to overlap?
- How did the performers create their main characters of Beatie, the tracker, and Alison, the zoo curator?
- Did they wear particular costumes? Make-up? Use particular acting/expressive skills?
- How did they create the male characters? How did they change their acting/expressive skills?
- Did the performers change costume?

- Did the types of costumes worn impact on your understanding of what was happening?
- How many different *places* did the stories include? For instance the character of Alison Reid lives and works at a zoo – where else was described?
- Were these places created on stage?
- How did you feel about the characters? Which ones did you respond to most strongly?
- How dominant were the thylacines in the stories? Did you feel they were important? Did they take on different importance to different characters? Why?
- Did you feel you were asked to take sides in this play? Which side did you take?
- Why do you think the performance was mainly story-telling and not enacted?
- How important was the audience to the performance? Did you feel you had a role to play?
- Why do you think the stagecraft – set, props, lighting, sound, costume - was so simple?
- What was your overall feeling and opinion of the production?
- If you could ask a question of the creative team what would it be?
- How would you describe the play to a friend, a parent, a stranger?



LANGUAGE AND WRITING (English)

Beatie:

And in my dreamin', in my salivatin',
 In my smoke blown eyes
 I see you
 Flirtin' with smoke
 I can see you.
 Heart goes to throat
 What do you call that?

(Extract 1 from: *The Sighting*)

Mornin' sun bleeds into dead-man's creek
 She shivers in a ripple and I drink
 It's too cold to be kind
 I strip for a dip with local platypus
 She's fresh by god and days ahead
 Snow ain't common in these parts
 And I'm grateful she's graced us
 Because it's making trackin' easy

(Extract 2 from: *The Old Snoz*)

The language used in ***They Saw a Thylacine*** is sometimes quite lyrical and reflects the past. At times it feels like poetry. Discuss the above script extracts, how are they set out, the use of old words and abbreviated words such as “Did it as quick as poss, poss”. Consider how things are described, the narrative perspective, and the imagery conveyed.

- What images are conveyed by the words in the extracts?
- In pairs study the two extracts from the play – note the punctuation, how each line begins and ends and any rhythms or rhyming you notice
- In theatre words are written to be spoken and to be heard by an audience
- Allocate one extract each and read it aloud to your partner. Listen carefully to how the words sound. What does it mean to drop the ‘g’ in an ‘ing’ word?
- What do you notice about the differences between the words on the page versus the spoken version?
- How could these moments have been written in more everyday language?
- Would the effect be the same?
- Did you find it difficult to understand this language when you heard it in the theatre?

HAIKU: A Japanese poem using three lines of verse. The first and third lines have five syllables and the middle line has seven. It seeks to capture the essence of an idea, a moment, or an experience. See the following examples of Haikus that explore the thylacine.

Tiger striped along
Its back, intelligent eyes
Staring with knowing

Thylacine has gone
Hunted to the very last one
A distant echo

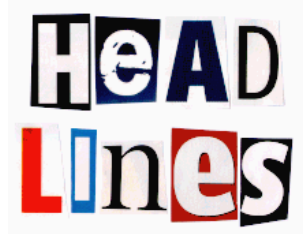
RESPONDING TO THE PLAY THROUGH HAIKU

Consider what you have read, researched, discussed and explored about the play. Consider the performance itself.

- Select an idea or theme, a moment, a character, a perspective, a place or even choose the experience of seeing the play itself.
- Write a Haiku that captures that moment or idea in as compelling way as possible.
- Share the Haikus, collate the Haikus, publish the Haikus.
- Consider similarities, differences, surprises and discoveries about writing, about ideas and about theatre.
- How does the writing of the Haiku enhance your understanding of the play and the issues it raises?

NEWS REPORT (English & Drama)

WRITE: It is September 7, 2036, one hundred years since the last thylacine died. As a news reporter for a major media outlet, your assignment is to report the shocking and unexpected news of the extinction of another Australian species, one of our most renowned.



- As a reporter you will need to do your research. You will need to be PERSUASIVE and CONVINCING.
- Select a species of Australian wildlife - perhaps it is one that is currently endangered, perhaps it is one that we never thought would die out.
- Consider how news reports have the capacity to *elevate*, *sensationalise* and/or *trivialise* issues.
- What would be your choice here?
- Create a powerful headline for the story.
- Create the opening few sentences aiming to capture the audience's attention.
- Try out your headline and opening sentences on a partner – effective?
- Now write another two – three paragraphs that capture the story of the species' extinction.
- Do you need any pictures, do you need interviews with experts?
- The report will be posted on the media outlet's website.

- A version will also appear on social media and the story will be tweeted. Consider how you can use these platforms effectively. What are the key words and ideas that need to be conveyed using these mediums?
- Discuss what you learned about the species and about sustainability as you created this report.
- Discuss what you learnt about how the media reports key issues to the public.

PERFORM: Consider how you may transfer **the written media report** into a performance and/or film (use your smart phones or, if that's a no-go, an approved digital camera) in the style of a current affairs show such as: *The Drum*; *The Project*; *A Current Affair* (check some out on television or online). **It may be useful to discuss the structure, purpose and qualities of a current affairs show.**

- Make a list of characters required – reporters, experts, locals, families
- Consider a list of possible locations – studio, environmental setting, home, museum
- Transfer the report into a script, allocating lines to certain characters.
- Consider if you want to use stagecraft eg. costumes, sound effects or a score, go “on location” or set it in a studio.
- Use the elements of drama to their best effect – vocal qualities, facial expression, focus, contrast, climax, mood, timing, tension, use of space, sound etc.
- Perform the current affairs report to the class using drama OR
- Film the scene, edit and present it to the class.
- Discuss the content of each piece, the animal selected, the story told, how it was presented to an audience.
- Discuss the difference between a live performance and a digitalised performance – the impact on an audience, what is required by an actor, possible editing choices and how they may affect meaning.
- Discuss the work and discuss the impact of news and current affairs in our lives – will we remember tomorrow what made the headlines today?
- How does the media and its treatment of issues impact ‘care factor’?



CREATING A DEVISED PERFORMANCE (Drama)

In the activity you will work in small groups of 3 – 5 to create an ENSEMBLE devised performance that responds to one of the following stimuli.

Stimulus 1

A documented interview of an incident in 1933 about the discovery of a thylacine’s body by young boy, Eric Sargent on a beach in Tasmania. Eric is the grandpa of performer Sarah Hamilton, who conducted the interview. It was recorded when Eric was 85 years of age.

Stimulus 2

A poem by 17 year old Tasmanian Aboriginal woman, Mathinna, adopted by the Governor of Tasmania as a child and then left behind when they returned to England.

Stimulus 3

An excerpt of script from *They Saw a Thylacine* with Beatie and Fred.

Stimulus 1:

We lived just across the road from the beach. As youngsters, my younger brother and myself would be virtually sent down to the beach to play. We'd build sand castles, paddle around in a pond that was there, and all that sort of thing on the beach. Mother could see us from the front veranda and whether we were still there. We did a lot of that in our young days. I would have been less than five, running along the wet sand with the low tide and suddenly came across this animal which was prostrate in the wet sand, pretty obviously washed up and it was about dog size, brown in colour with stripes. It had colouring in its hair as I recall, it looked like a tiger and my heart went into my mouth. It was that adrenalin pump when I suddenly saw it and it scared me and I went home. When my father came home for lunch I virtually dragged him down there to see it. I know he didn't want to go because he was busy and needed to have a quick lunch and get back to work quickly. But he went down and we had a look at it and he said it might have been one of Mr Harrison's tigers. Now I could only guess that maybe the tiger had died in the pens just along the road a little bit from us. He had a bit of a zoo there. He kept tigers and other animals and sold them to zoos elsewhere as far as I know. It could have been one that died. I would be surprised if he took it down and threw it in the sea. It got washed up, anyhow that's my story.

Stimulus 2:

Mathinna

I am from Trowenna, a long time ago,
 Stolen from my people and forced out on show,
 A mere curiosity, a toy passed around,
 Nowhere to belong –
 Drowned my sorrows, and drowned

Source: http://www.tmag.tas.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/80758/Teachers_guide.pdf

Stimulus 3:

Beatie:

I go down to beach
 Sea is too far from dead man's creek
 The squeakin' sand makes music when I walk
 Like campfire singin
 And spoon and fork
 Bangin' 'gainst each other
 In the rhythm of silly made up song.
 There's a shadow on my wool clad back
 Tall and cloaked and hatted
 It's got a certain limp to it
 Which wasn't there before
 What you doing FRED

Fred:

Trixie Bell Dixie
 I'm followin' you, can't you see
 What are you doing lady mystery?

Beatie:

Listnin'
 Can you hear it?
 The singing sand
 Think I might be mad
 Its singing
 See
 An' we walk down the beach
 Singin' with pebbles
 Crunchin' where the creek comes to
 shore
 That's when we see
 In the sand
 Wet
 Stopped
 Complete
 A drowned Queen in the sand
 Stripes pointing to the sea

BEGINNING POINTS:

As a group decide which of **the stimulus material** you would like to respond to. You may wish to draw on aspects of all three but consider how much time you have to work on the piece.

- Brainstorm around what the chosen stimulus material offers your group with regard to **who** (the characters), **where** (setting), **when** (period/era), **what** (actions and narrative), **how** (use of drama elements and theatre conventions) and **why** (the purpose, intention and meaning)
- Write down some key words and themes that could be used as dialogue or narration, or used to develop movement and action, sound and possibly music
- Consider whose story or stories are being told
- What potential symbols or representations may exist in the stimulus material that you could draw out?

THEATRICAL STYLES:

Consider drawing on aspects of **non-naturalism/non-realism, Brecht's Epic Theatre, verbatim theatre, story-telling** and **Realism**

- You may need to do some research with regard to the conventions of some of these styles <http://www.thedramateacher.com/category/genres-and-styles/>
- How might the conventions of certain styles link to the ideas you have already brainstormed to assist in conveying the story and the meaning?

STRUCTURING THE PIECE:

Here you may like to select up to five key points or scenes.

- You may like to story board these, write them onto large sheets of paper or have as a digital record and include the, **who, where, when, what, how and why** for each scene.
- Consider your AUDIENCE and the PERFORMANCE SPACE you have available.

IMPROVISATION:

As a group allocate characters, but also consider several performers playing the same character. For instance several performers could play Mathinna and her different thoughts, her elders. The thylacine could be represented by several performers who use non-naturalistic techniques to shift and change. **See above for advice re theatrical styles**

- Improvise the characters and find their qualities
- Improvise the key scenes using the entire ENSEMBLE
- Play with representation, chorus, freeze, disconnected voices, sound to find contrasts.
- Keep considering your audience, the story/ies you are telling and the impact you wish to have.

REHEARSE & REFINE:

Rehearse your ensemble performance, invite some critical friends to give feedback, record and keep what is working, don't be afraid to let go of what is not.

- Refine your choices make final decisions about what will remain.
- Rehearse again
- **CONSIDER:** What choices and compromises might the two creators of *They Saw a Thylacine* have had to make in order to be 'ready' for their first performance?

PERFORM:

At its most simple, the work can be performed in a drama class or to another class. At its more ambitious, it could be part of a drama or theatre festival that explores issues around Australia's past and how we will approach our future.

REFLECT:

Reflect on the work, both the process and the performance.

Consider how you made the work, how others made theirs, what you might change if you had more time, the different experiences of being audience and performer.



DEBATE (Critical Thinking)

At the beginning of this resource the following quotes/provocations are presented:

The struggle for existence holds as much in the intellectual as in the physical world. A theory is a species of thinking, and its right to exist is coextensive with its power of resisting extinction by its rivals. – Thomas Huxley, Scientist (1825-1895)

We have much to learn by studying nature and taking the time to tease out its secrets. – David Suzuki, Scientist and Environmentalist (1936 -)

The greatest danger to our future is apathy – Jane Goodall, primatologist and anthropologist (1934 -)

DEBATING

- Divide into groups of six and select one of the quotes from key environmentalist and scientists
- Make sure the topics are spread around the class evenly
- Divide the six into groups of three – one three will be for (affirmative) the quote and one against (negative) the quote
- Prepare for the debate by researching, brainstorming, developing arguments and dividing the case amongst the three speakers – maximum of 2 mins each
- Debating rules – someone in your class will know these if not here is a very useful link: http://www.dav.com.au/resources/itd_speaker_roles.php
- Once prepared, set up the debate with a time keeper and adjudicators (peers may work here)

REFLECTING

- Reflect on the debates, particularly in terms of the issues they raised and the arguments put.
- Which arguments and ideas seems to be most effective?
- How did this process impact on your thinking about the issues?



FINALLY: At the beginning of this resource a quote from theatre and film actor Willem Dafoe, stated, “**Great theatre is about challenging how we think and encouraging us to fantasize about a world we aspire to**”.

Do you agree? Have your thoughts changed?

What may have prompted that?

Does your own creative work seek to challenge and inspire?

Did seeing *They Saw a Thylacine* have an impact on both your thinking and your creative work?

WEBSITES USED IN THIS RESOURCE:

Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Tasmania

http://www.qvmag.tas.gov.au/upfiles/qvmag/cont/preciouslittleremains_pdf.pdf

<http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/media/525907/indigenous-perspective-on-sustainability>

Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

http://www.tmag.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/80758/Teachers_guide.pdf

Wikipedia

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thylacine>

Malthouse Theatre

<http://malthousetheatre.com.au/blog/victoria-university-interviews-justine-campbell-and-sarah-hamilton>

Vimeo

<https://vimeo.com/140271067>

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM LINKS:

Discipline	Organising Strands	Sub-strands / descriptors
English	<p><i>Language:</i> knowing about the English language</p> <p><i>Literature:</i> understanding, appreciating, responding to, analysing and creating literature</p> <p><i>Literacy:</i> expanding the repertoire of English usage.</p>	<p>Language variation and change</p> <p>Language for interaction</p> <p>Expressing and developing ideas</p> <p>Literature and context</p> <p>Responding to literature</p> <p>Examining literature</p> <p>Creating literature</p> <p>Interacting with others</p> <p>Interpreting, analysing and evaluating</p> <p>Creating Texts</p>
History	<i>Australia and Asia</i>	<p>Who we are, who came before us, and traditions and values that have shaped societies.</p> <p>How societies and economies operate and how they change over time.</p> <p>The people, places, ideas and events are perceived and connected.</p> <p>How people exercise their responsibilities, participate in society and make informed decisions.</p>
The Arts: Drama	<p><i>Making</i></p> <p><i>Responding</i></p>	<p>Improvising, devising, playing, acting, directing, refining, interpreting, rehearsing, presenting, performing</p> <p>Being an audience, listening to, enjoying, reflecting, analysing, appreciating and evaluating own and others' drama work</p>

General Capability	Organising Elements
Intercultural Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising culture and developing respect • Interacting and empathizing with others • Reflecting on intercultural experiences and taking responsibility
Ethical Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding ethical concepts and issues • Reasoning in decision making and actions • Exploring values, rights and responsibilities
Critical and Creating Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquiring – identifying, exploring and organising information and ideas • Generating ideas, possibilities and actions • Reflecting on thinking and processes • Analysing, synthesizing and evaluating reasoning and procedures

Cross Curriculum Priorities	Key Concepts
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection to Country/Place • Celebration of unique believe systems that connect people physically and spiritually to Country/Place • Diversity of culture through language, ways of life, and experiences as expressed through historical, social and political lenses • Kinship structures and significant contributions of ATSI people at local, national and global level.
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interdependent and dynamic nature of systems that support life on Earth • Promotion of patterns for living for our collective wellbeing and survival • Allowing for diversity of world views, ecosystems, values and social justice to be discussed and linked to individual and community action for sustainability • Building capacities for thinking and acting in ways that are necessary to create a sustainable future.

ABOUT THE WRITER:

Meg Upton is an arts education, arts researcher, lecturer and writer in drama and theatre (Deakin University). She has held education management positions with Malthouse and Melbourne Theatre Company and consulted with, amongst others, Arena, KAGE, Polyglot, Arts Centre Melbourne, Theatre Works, Platform Youth Arts, Ilbjerri and Victorian Opera. Her PHD research (University of Melbourne) examined the pedagogies of teaching performance analysis to students. Meg has created over sixty education resources in the past fifteen years for theatre and dance companies, touring companies, playwrights, ABC Splash, Education Services Australia and recently for the AFD/AGD and Victoria University. In the past three years she has presented on her research and practice at conferences in Paris, Singapore, New Zealand, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Hobart. Meg is a member of the boards of Drama Australia and RAWCUS, and is the Chair of the Theatre Panel and Vice President of the Victorian Green Room Association Awards. Recent publications include *Education and the Arts: Creativity in the promised new order* (Currency House, 2014) and *The Provocative Space: Deepening Students' Experience of Live Theatre performance*, International Yearbook for Research in Arts Education (2015).



meg@arts-in-sync.com.au