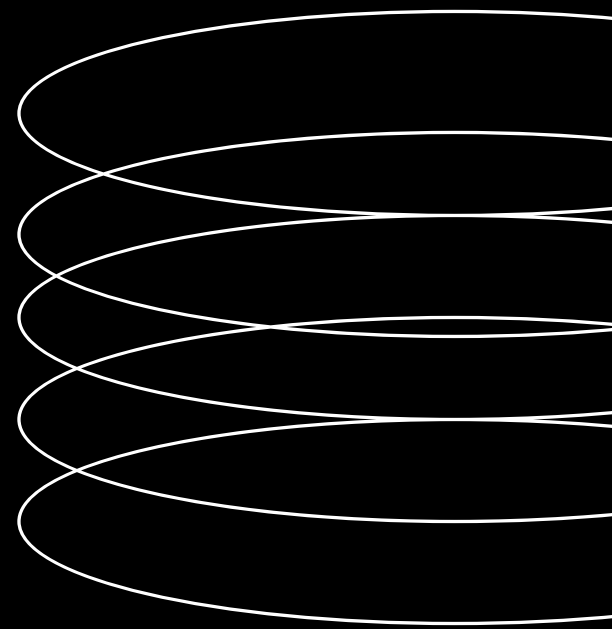




UFO

by Kirby Medway and
Solomon Thomas



18 - 29 April 2023

A re:group performance collective production
for Griffin Lookout



Director's Note

About six years ago I had an idea to make a show that involved an actual ‘life-size’ UFO landing in an actual field. Audiences would sit in their cars and watch a spaceship land on the horizon. Around the same time that I had this idea, my friend Kirby invited me to a listening party of *The War of the Worlds* by Orson Wells. We crawled under his house with a record player and lay on rugs and listened to it on vinyl. It was clear that Kirby was the perfect person to write a piece that would happen after the UFO lands. Kirby agreed and began to write.

A year later, sitting by a river in Japan with my partner Hannah, I complained that I still had no idea how I was going to build a ‘life-size’ UFO. She asked me, “what about miniatures?”

Enter another friend: Chris Howell. Chris described a process to me whereby he could 3D scan a person and then, with a 3D printer, he could print their likeness in miniature form. I learnt how to utilise this 3D printing process myself. I added some puppet joints into the design, a miniature set and some cameras. In this process of realisation, I found a form wherein the scale of the UFO could be staged using miniature puppets of the performers. Within this form, everything came together. Kirby's play about what we do when we face something larger than ourselves (whether that be a UFO or overly bureaucratic power structures) came to life in the puppeteering of the miniatures of ourselves.

Over the long course of making *UFO*, bushfires ravaged the country, skirting the doorstep of my family home in Bega. Then, before we could recover, Covid-19 plunged the country into further chaos. For me, *UFO* is about how we act in the face of all these crises that we have been experiencing. It looks at the failing bureaucracy and the fear of the unknown that resides on the other side of any such situation.

Many thanks and much appreciation to all the project team and project partners, including those who have come and gone in the face of all the covid-cancellations and postponements. It feels pretty great for *UFO* to finally be landing.

Cheers,

Sol



PROJECT TEAM

Writer: Kirby Medway

Director / Video Designer: Solomon Thomas

Sound Designer: Tom Hogan

UFO Design: Dylan Tonkin

Puppet Design: Chris Howell, Solomon Thomas

Puppet Painting: Miri Badger

Set Designer: Angus Callander

Cast: Matt Abotomey, James Harding, Angela Johnston, Tahlee Leeson

Creative Consultants: Hannah Goodwin, Tessa Leong, Jenni Medway, Mark Rogers

Stage Management / Technical Assistance: Annika Bertinat, Jessica Henley-Sadgrove

Accessibility Services: Steve Wilson-Alexander

Creative Producer: Malcolm Whittaker

Administration: Intimate Spectacle

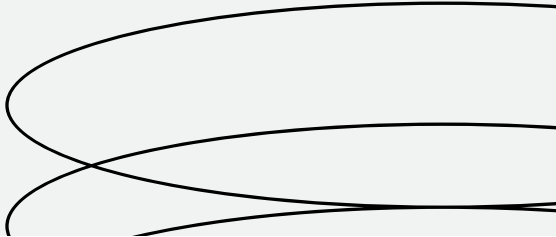
SUPPORTED BY

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SPECIAL THANKS

Eli Badger, Geoffrey Badger, Rose Badger, Michael Blake, Laura Caeser, Gabriel Castro, Kaillan Clay, Jackson Davis, Nell Ferguson, Declan Greene, Hannah Goodwin, Nathan Harrison, Aesha Henderson, Steve Howarth, Harry McGee, Mark Mitchell, Troy Reid, Rachel Roberts, Madeleine Stedman, Sian Thomas, Steve Wilson-Alexander, James Winter, Scott Wright, Carly Young, Carriageworks, University of New South Wales, University of Sydney, University of Wollongong.

Image credit: Brett Boardman



re:group performance collective

re:group performance collective is Mark Rogers, Solomon Thomas, Malcolm Whittaker, Steve Wilson-Alexander and Carly Young. We are a group of friends based between Sydney, Wollongong and Hobart who create work by engaging other friends on a project-by-project basis. Inspired by the highs and lows of pop culture, we mash theatre and movie-making together to create “live cinema”. Our aim is to turn the typically comfortable and passive movie-going experience into something immersive, irreverent, sweaty and live. We are passionate about creating innovative work that questions the role and meaning of art in society, where the technology we use is core to the ideas in each work we make, which is ironic and sincere, and accessible and experimental, all in equal measure.



Up next from re:group: *Coil*

An elegy to the closure of the local video shop, *Coil* is about loneliness, nostalgia, friendship and viability. Blurring the boundaries of theatre, film and ceremony, *Coil* draws on our collective memories to pay tribute to the glory days of the video store, and commemorate the communities we made within them.

In *Coil*, we use custom coded video-DJing technology to reflect upon the joys, perils and pitfalls of nostalgia, outsource our own labour to technological replacements and grapple with goodbyes. After premiering in 2022 with sold out seasons at Mona Foma (Hobart), PACT (Sydney), Next Wave (Melbourne) and Sydney Opera House, *Coil* embarks on a national tour in July-August 2023.

www.regroupperformancecollective.org



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