

BRISBANE POWERHOUSE, SHOCK THERAPY PRODUCTIONS AND ZEAL THEATRE PRESENTS

# THE FORWARDS

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY STEFO NANTSOU



SHOCK THERAPY  
PRODUCTIONS

## THE FORWARDS INFORMATION PACK

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY: STEFO NANTSOU  
PERFORMED BY: SAM FOSTER, HAYDEN JONES & ELLEN BAILEY



# SHOCK THERAPY PRODUCTIONS

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

Shock Therapy Productions was founded in 2015 by Sam Foster and Hayden Jones and has quickly established itself as one of the leading performing arts companies based on the Gold Coast. In this year, the company was awarded Accelerated Triennial Funding by City of Gold Coast for operational costs and to assist in the growth of the company. In 2018 this funding was renewed for a further 3 years.

Shock Therapy Productions aims to deliver Transformative Arts Experiences, and tell stories that are meaningful, thought-provoking, dynamic and entertaining, celebrating both the confronting and cathartic nature of performance.

Working across theatre, film and live events, Shock Therapy Productions aims to establish itself as a leading company in the delivery of high quality, relevant, multidisciplinary performance and a leader in the Arts and Culture Sector on the Gold Coast as well as Nationally and Internationally.

The company has produced a rapidly expanding catalogue of works, including a number of original productions, won 5 Matilda Awards, performed at venues and Arts Festivals in both Australia and Internationally and is proudly sponsored by the City of Gold Coast Council.

## FOR ALL ENQUIRIES AND BOOKINGS

E: [education@shocktherapyproductions.com.au](mailto:education@shocktherapyproductions.com.au)  
[www.shocktherapyproductions.com.au](http://www.shocktherapyproductions.com.au)

## AWARD WINS

2017 MATILDA AWARDS  
*Best Independent Production*  
– *The Forwards*

2016 MATILDA AWARDS  
*Best Independent Production*  
– *Viral*

2015 MATILDA AWARDS  
*Best Independent Production*  
– *The Pillowman*

*Best Director, Sam Foster*  
– *The Pillowman*

*Best Supporting Actor, Tama Matheson*  
– *The Pillowman*

## AWARD NOMINATIONS

2021 MATILDA AWARDS  
*Best New Australian Work*  
– *Undertow*

*Best Independent Production*  
– *Undertow*

*Best Sound Design*  
– *Undertow*

2017 MATILDA AWARDS  
*Best Actor, Sam Foster*  
– *The Forwards*

*Best Actress, Ellen Bailey*  
– *The Forwards*

2016 MATILDA AWARDS  
*Best New Australian Work*  
– *Viral*

*Best Actor, Sam Foster*  
– *Viral*

*Best Audio Visual Design, Nathan Sibthorpe*  
– *Viral*



## MEET THE CREATORS

### HAYDEN JONES – ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Hayden is a performer and contemporary performance maker, working across a range of forms including theatre, installation, immersive experiences and cross art-form collaborations. He has worked as an Actor, Director, Writer, Producer and workshop facilitator, for some of Australia's most recognised and innovative arts organisations. He is a co-founder of Shock Therapy Productions.

Hayden also has an extensive background working in Youth Theatre, Children's Theatre and Theatre-in-Education, writing and directing shows for young people, and touring nation-wide performing and teaching workshops.

### SAM FOSTER – ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Sam is a storyteller, performer and theatre maker. He is an award-winning Actor, Director, Writer, Producer, Stunt Performer and Stunt Rigger as well as being a Physical Theatre Performer, Movement Director and workshop facilitator. He is the co-owner and co-founder of Shock Therapy Productions.

Sam works in theatre, film and large-scale events and has worked for a number of companies and festivals throughout his career. His career has taken him to New York, London, Namibia, South Africa, Denmark, Norway and India as well as all over Australia.





## CONTENTS

- 5 Synopsis
- 6 Performance Specifics
- 7 Audience Engagement
- 7 Workshop Description/Details
- 7 Target Audience For Community Engagement
- 8 Marketing
- 9 Media Quotes
- 9 Audience Reviews
- 9 Colleague Recommendations
- 10 Photo Gallery



## SHOCK THERAPY PRODUCTIONS

PRESENTS: *THE FORWARDS* WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY: STEFO NANTSOU

---

### SYNOPSIS

Created by Stefo Nantsou through extensive drama workshops in a number of regional and remote high schools in 2003, *The Forwards* is a tragic-comedy about friendship, alcohol-fuelled sporting culture and small town rivalries.

*The Forwards* is directed by Zeal Theatre's artistic director Stefo Nantsou and stars Sam Foster, Hayden Jones and Ellen Bailey.

It was published by Playlab in 2009.

Three actors take the audience through a whirlwind of emotions, as the show follows the story of a small town called "Pintoon" where nothing ever happens.... except the footy! The town is buzzing as the "Pintoon Parrots" finally make it to the Grand Final. Tensions boil over in the build up to the big game, leading to some devastating repercussions for the whole town. Each actor plays a number of characters from the town including the 3 star "forwards", Hoges, Tractor and Gary Rabbit. The story is told through the eyes of Julie Carter, who is "Rabbit's" girlfriend, with both roles being played by the same actress (Ellen Bailey).

A live musical score, performed by onstage musicians along with the 3 actors, complements

the high-octane physical action. *The Forwards* is a superb example of Zeal's signature style of theatre, utilizing physical theatre, live music and multiple characters.

A season of *The Forwards* was presented at The Arts Centre Gold Coast in July 2015. After this season a schools touring version of the show toured to several schools throughout SE Qld.

Previous schools touring versions of *The Forwards* have toured with Queensland Arts Council and Regional Arts Victoria.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**PERFORMED BY:** Sam Foster, Hayden Jones, Ellen Bailey (5 hand version includes Stefo Nantsou and Rob Diley)

**DIRECTED AND WRITTEN BY:** Stefo Nantsou

**PUBLISHED BY:** Playlab (2009)

**LIGHTING DESIGN:** Geoff Squires

**SET DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION:** Stefo Nantsou and Sam Foster

## PERFORMANCE SPECIFICS

### DURATION

75 mins (No Interval)

### SUITABLE VENUES

This show is suitable for most venues including, black box, pros arch, and town halls. Minimum stage dimension are 10m (W) x 6m (D) x 3m (H). Access to power supply.

**Maximum number of performances per week:**  
8 performances

**Minimum break between performances:**  
60 minutes

### LICENSING AGREEMENTS

Copyright Zeal Theatre, 2007

### TOURING PERSONNEL

The touring party consists of 4-5 people.

**SAM FOSTER** Performer/Producer

**HAYDEN JONES** Performer

**ELLEN BAILEY** Performer

**TBC** Tech/ Stage Manager



### PERFORMANCE HISTORY

YEAR	VENUE	NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES
2007	Regional Arts Victoria – Schools tour	50-100
2008 – 2010	Qld Arts Council – Schools Tour	200+
2015	Arts Centre Gold Coast – The Space	6
2017	Brisbane Powerhouse	9

## AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

### OVERVIEW

*The Forwards* was inspired by true stories and people from regional communities. This allows for community to connect with the show on a deeply personal level. Hopefully the events and characters in the show are easily identifiable and relatable for the audience creating a meaningful engagement between audience and performer.

Zeal Theatre Qld have extensive experience in workshop facilitation and performances of *The Forwards* can we accompanied by a workshop or masterclass. Workshops can be in delivered in physical theatre, devising theatre and characterisation.

*The Forwards* explores several themes and issues that are relevant to many regional communities. Zeal Theatre Qld can facilitate a community forum discussing these themes and issues upon request from the venue.

Zeal Theatre Qld also offers another production, *The Apology* which could be performed as a double bill with *The Forwards* or during the daytime for high school students. This would increase the contribution to the community while keeping the cost for the venue down.

### WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION/DETAILS

Workshops are available in a range of areas including:

- Physical Theatre and Movement
- Character Development and Multiple Characters
- Devising Theatre and Play Building
- Monologues
- Improvisation
- Shakespeare
- Brechtian Techniques

These workshops can be catered to the specific needs of the participants and are suitable for all skill levels from novice to professional.

Duration of workshops can vary depending on request from the participants.

### EXAMPLES OF WORKSHOP DURATIONS ARE:

- 60 – 90 mins
- Half day
- Full day
- Weekend

### MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS PER WORKSHOP:

30 people

### ARTIST IN RESIDENCIES

As well as one off workshops, Zeal Qld offer “Artist in Residencies”. These residencies can run for anywhere between 1 week and 1 month and have the option of culminating in a community performance outcome or a “work in progress” showing.

### COST

Cost of workshops and Artist in Residence are a flat rate for venue. These costs vary depending on duration of workshop and length of residency.

### AN EXAMPLE OF PRICING IS:

- 90 min workshop = \$350
- 1 week Artist in Residency (2 artists) = \$3000

### TARGET AUDIENCE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Zeal Qld can run workshops for participants of all ages and skill levels. Though they have specialised in delivering high quality, hard hitting and engaging Theatre For Young People, Zeal has also worked with and run workshops for professional artists and companies around the World.



## MARKETING

### ONE LINE

A unique theatre experience about footy, friendship and reckless behaviour.

### SHORT

Strap yourself in because you're about to experience a roller-coaster of emotions with Zeal Theatre's latest production, *The Forwards*. The hard-hitting physical performance delves into the pressures facing young sportspeople, a culture of binge drinking, racing cars and small town rivalries and promises to have you spellbound from beginning to end.

Zeal Theatre's internationally renowned style of physical theatre makes this an unforgettable experience.

### EXTENDED

Zeal Theatre offers a unique style of theatre, based on the multi-skilled performer who brings to life a range of characters, being true to its audience through the physicality of the performance.

"The piece is 'lifted' by its theatricality. It's not a bunch of characters sitting around talking about 'their problems'. It's people doing what they do... kicking a ball, dancing to a band down the pub, going to parties, being in dangerous situations, holding secrets, cheating, gambling, raising hopes and disappointing loved ones", writer and director Stefo Nantsou explains

"I think the mobile phone and social media mania has magnified the theatre experience. People are just not used to live performance anymore and their place in it, that they are a participant. People are so disconnected from the reality around them that when they see a live performance on stage it can be very confronting and a powerful experience".

### STORYLINE

In the small town of Pinton everyone loves the footy. The local team, the Pinton Parrots, finally make it to the grand final due to the talent of their three star goal kickers, Rabbit, Hoges and Tractor. Before the big game, the entire town is partying hard and the 'dream team' are challenged by the vicious cocktail of grog and jealousy as mateship gives way to anger and violence.

*The Forwards* looks at the pressures on young people to balance their sporting skills, hopes and



dreams, with a culture of binge drinking, racing cars and small town rivalries. Zeal Theatre's internationally renowned style of physical theatre makes this an unforgettable experience.

### RECOMMENDED FOR 15+

## MARKETING SUMMARY

### MEDIA RELEASE FOR THE SHOW IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

Previous marketing strategies have included newspaper, magazine, radio interviews and online advertising. We have worked with a publicist in the past to assist in reaching these key media contacts.

Previous reviews of the show and also radio, print and online reviews once the show has opening at a venue has also been a very effective form of marketing.

The target audience would be 15-45 years olds but is by no means limited to this demographic. Due to the sporting content of the show there is a potential to market the show to sporting clubs and organisations (especially AFL clubs). We approached several clubs during our 2015 season at the Arts Centre Gold Coast with some successful outcomes, including a write up in a local footy clubs newsletter.

Schools groups were also a key market for us to target. Due to the reputation and success of Zeal Theatre in high schools throughout Qld this continues to be a key market for all our productions.





## MEDIA QUOTES

“The hard-hitting physical performance delves into the pressures facing young sportspeople, a culture of binge drinking, racing cars and small town rivalries and promises to have you spellbound from beginning to end.” – Jade Quinlivan (The Weekend Edition)

“The most powerful play from the acclaimed Zeal Theatre” – Lowdown Magazine

## AUDIENCE REVIEWS

“I loved The Stones and The Apology. Now *The Forwards* - Wow! These guys really know school culture” - Queensland Arts Council

“Using Aussie Rules as the vehicle, this was a brilliant production on the importance of community, social fabric and the pressures of performance both on and off the sporting arena.

A fast, very entertaining ‘play’ with some stark ponderables. Excellent performances by all and the four stanzas of aussie rules ‘ballet’ choreography to live music had you at the G.” - Rick Trewavas

## THEATRE REVIEW FROM XS ENTERTAINMENT:

<https://xsentertainme.wordpress.com/2015/07/15/the-forwards/>

## VIDEO LINKS

### PROMOTIONAL TRAILER:

[https://youtu.be/S\\_Xakl\\_hAns](https://youtu.be/S_Xakl_hAns)

## COLLEAGUE RECOMMENDATIONS

### VERONICA NEAVE

Email: [veronicaneave@hotmail.com](mailto:veronicaneave@hotmail.com)

Phone: 0448853141

### PAUL BISHOP

Email: [paulbishop@me.com](mailto:paulbishop@me.com)

Phone: 0412692690

### GAVIN ROBINS

Email: [gavinrobins@me.com](mailto:gavinrobins@me.com)

Phone: 0402066949





The most powerful play from the acclaimed Zeal Theatre.

- LOWDOWN MAGAZINE

---

