

SUZANNE OLB

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CAREER PROFILE

A highly experienced, resourceful, interpersonal and innovative arts and culture program curator and advisor; proven record of initiating, planning, developing and implementing high-impact festivals, events and activities.

"Wow, mighty fine event [Glen Eira Storytelling Festival] you have here. Giving the MWF [Melbourne Writers Festival] a run for their money." Danny Katz, Columnist & Author, 2017

"Congratulations on your [Glen Eira Storytelling] Festival's success (and breadth), and looking at the Council's website on being part of a vibrant arts program." Chris Mead, Literary Director, MTC, 2019

ARTS CURATION SKILLS

Interdisciplinary Programs (incl. Multi Activities & Artforms) – Audience-Focused Events (incl. Outdoor & Digital) – Benchmark Performances (incl. International & Emerging Artists) – Arts & Culture Networks (incl. Key Influencers) – Commissioning of Artworks & Talent (incl. Interactive) – Key Program Deliverables (incl. Budgets & Deadlines)

OTHER KEY SKILLS & OFFERINGS

Financial Acumen (incl. Grants) – Strong Communications (incl. Writing & Editing) – Key Stakeholder Relations

CAREER SUMMARY

DATES	POSITION	ORGANISATION
Productions & Promotions		
2023 to 2024	Arts & Culture Programs Lead	Glen Eira City Council (part-time)
2016 to mid 2023	Programming & Events Coordinator	Incl. Director Glen Eira Storytelling Festival
2020 (6 months)	Creative Producer – Victorian Seniors	Victorian Government/SO Creative Projects
2015 to present	Founder & Creative Producer	<u>SO Creative Projects</u>
1993 to 2015	Co-founder & Director	Explosivemedia (see LinkedIn for archive)
1995 to 1996	Arts/Theatre Publicist	Arts Centre Melbourne
1995 (6 months)	Publicity Consultant	Mietta's
1992 to 1995	Communications Manager	Victorian Arts Council
Journalism & Publishing		
1988 to 2007	Writer & Editor*	Various arts & culture publications (incl. New Theatre, Arts Hub, Oz Arts & Vive Magazines)
Teaching & Research		
1986 to 1997	Tutor, Lecturer & Research Assistant+	Various institutions (incl. University of Melbourne & Victorian College of the Arts)

*One of the youngest in Australia to be appointed to role of Deputy Editor (of New Theatre publication)

+Delivered Australia's first research-based review of dramaturgy, plus internationally recognised dramaturgical interpretation of live-performance

Professional references, relevant referees and / or further detail on early career provided on request

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY – PRODUCTIONS & PROMOTIONS

ARTS & CULTURE PROGRAMS LEAD etc., GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL 2016 TO PRESENT

Report to: Team Leader – Arts & Culture / Manager – Libraries, Arts & Culture

Primary focus: Program, curate & coordinate arts & culture programs (incl. annual festivals & creative events)

Stakeholder relations: celebrities, artists & other talent – government agencies – key influencers – museums – not-for-profit – council departments – program/event team members

Key contributions

- **Developed and enriched audience-focused programs**, building on established festivals via diversified talent (e.g. TV personalities and award-winning authors) and features (e.g. First Nations' Matriarch play and London-streamed panel), while initiating new events such as a public arts program in a transparent Cube.
- **Leveraged and expanded stakeholder relations/networks**, involving NFPs such as Writers Victoria as well as cultural associations such as the Immigration Museum and Melbourne Holocaust Museum in festivals and events, while securing performances by emerging and alternative artists (e.g. Triple-J-recognised Mia Wray).
- **Recognised as an innovative, organised and committed arts and culture curator**, including via the Mayor who highlighted it as the best programming personally seen in 30 years, and based on the GREAT Award 2021/22 nominations from the Council for my ability to work in partnerships and maintain a customer focus.

Key Programs & Events

Glen Eira Storytelling Festival (annual)

- *Snapshot of Artists/Talent:* Myf Warhurst, Clare Bowditch, Sami Shah, Damian Callinan, Cal Wilson, Alex Skovron, Leah Kaminsky, Niraj Lal, Annie Louey, Peter Wilson, Libbi Gorr, Yuri Worontschak, Evelyn Krape, Freydi Mrocki, Lorraine Brigdale, Pluginhuman, Danny Katz, Melanie Cheng, Christos Tsiolkas, Tony Birch
- *Artforms:* Music, theatre, comedy, film, live discussion & open mic sessions, talks, tours (incl. historical), poetry & book readings, installations (incl. immersive lighting & sound technology). Moved to Libraries in 2024.
- *Value-add:* Diversification of arts & culture content (incl. First Nations theatre)
- *Future programming:* Rehearsed play reading by Melbourne Theatre Company (cancelled due to COVID)

Carols in the Gardens, Rippon Lea Estate / Hodgson Reserve (annual)

- *Artists/Talent:* Rob Mills and Lucy Durack (hosts), Mike Bishop (Santa)
- *Artforms:* Music, dancing, theatre • *Value-add:* Songs in First Nations language (a first), Auslan interpreter
- *Future programming:* Teeny Tiny Stevies for children's act and Shauntai to sing in language (2024)

Groove and Graze, various parks and gardens in Glen Eira (annual)

- *Artists/Talent:* Sourced guest curator with long-term involvement with The Push
- *Artforms:* Music, games • *Value-add:* Emerging local musicians, outdoor games for children

Under the Stars, various parks and gardens in Glen Eira (annual)

- *Snapshot of Artists/Talent:* Archie Roach, You Am I, Tex Perkins, Melbourne Ska Orchestra, Mia Wray
- *Artforms:* Music • *Value-add:* Emerging local artists (incl. Triple J favourites and Seniors choral group)

Lunar New Year (2023/2024)

- *Artists/Talent:* Double Lucky Lion Dance, Melbourne Hanfu Association, Serena Yang, Rachel Hu, Alice Zhao
- *Artforms:* Music, dancing, fashion runway, exhibitions, photo wall. Local community acts (2024)
- *Value-add:* Musicians playing traditional Chinese instruments (e.g. Guzheng and Pipa)

International Women's Day (2023/2024)

- *Artists/Talent:* Sunanda Loves Britney (LGBTQIA+)
- *Artforms:* Comedy • *Future programming:* Geraldine Quinn in BROAD (2024)

Junkyard Beats Takes Over Glen Eira (2023) / JUNKLANDIA (2024)

- *Artists/Talent:* Junkyard Beats
- *Artforms:* Music, dancing, comedy, circus acts (incl. pop-up performances 2023). JUNKLANDIA show (2024)
- *Value-add:* Music via ordinary household items (incl. interactive workshops 2023). Junk orchestra jam (2024)

Lil Robots Premiere (2023)

- *Artists/Talent:* A Blanck Canvas
- *Artforms:* Immersive industrial soundscapes, video and lighting & 40 individually decorated 'robots'
- *Value-add:* Eco-friendly 'robots' made from Roomba vacuum cleaners
- *Future programming:* Snuff Puppets Cochlea installation, celebrating voices from the frontline of gender

Diwali Festival of Lights, Booran Reserve (2022/2023)

- *Artists/Talent:* Richi Madan (MC/DJ) & Dhol drummer, Bolly Dazzler dancers, Chandralaya dance school, Ignite Bollywood (also Sindu Bhairavi classical Indian dance & Sangathamizh Kalaiyagam Parai drums 2023)
- *Artforms:* Music, dancing, feature lighting, face & body painting, Mehendi (henna art), photo booth
- *Value-add:* Featuring Australia's pioneer of Bollywood and Bhangra

The Cube: Illuminating Arts Experiences Premiere, Carnegie Community Space (2022)

- *Artists/Talent:* Born in a Taxi, Street Artists Live, Alice Will Caroline
- *Artforms:* Immersive art (in transparent Cube venue), music, dance, visual arts, sustainable eco-art practice
- *Value-add:* Unique multi-sensory creation (incl. Butterfly House; street art, hip hop & community dance jam)

Gardens of the Galapagos, Hodgson Reserve (2022)

- *Artists/Talent:* A Blanck Canvas, Australian puppetry master Peter Wilson (director)
- *Artforms:* Interactive giant puppetry based on a segment of Graeme Base's much loved The Waterhole

The Trust Makers' Market, Rippon Lea Estate (2021)

- *Artists/Talent:* Tamara Kuldin Trio, The Stiletto Sisters, Alma Zygiel Quartet, Isaiah Firebrace, Nicky Bomba's Bustamento, Born in a Taxi
- *Artforms:* Music, handmade art & design, physical theatre, cultural diversity

CREATIVE PRODUCER – VICTORIAN SENIORS, VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT 2020 (6 MONTH CONTRACT)

Reported to: Executive Director – Victorian Seniors Festival

Primary focus: Consulted on audience-focused programs (incl. new/proposed productions)

Stakeholder relations: artists & other talent (incl. First Nations authors) – government agencies – key influencers – program/event team members

Key contributions

- **Delivered connections to enrich and reimagine the festival**, such as playwright Patricia Cornelius, authors Melanie Cheng and Tony Birch, Jewish Director Evelyn Krape, and the oral historian Dr Vivienne Nicholson.
- **Championed a multidisciplinary programming strategy**, initiating segments by cross-cultural authors (incl. Australian-Chinese and First Nations), as well as interview broadcasts by industry specialists (e.g. historians).
- **Established trust and rapport with various stakeholders**, whether participating in creative brainstorming sessions, securing artists/talent to deepen interest, or developing program content for targeted audiences.

CO-FOUNDER & DIRECTOR, EXPLOSIVEMEDIA

1993 TO 2015

Primary focus: Consulted on & produced various arts & culture events/programs (also writing & editing)

Stakeholder relations: celebrities, artists & other talent – government agencies & councils – key influencers – commercial clients (incl. arts & culture) – not-for-profit – program/event team members

Key Programs & Events

Melbourne Festival (2014)

- *Key Artists/Talent:* Belgian Carrousel des Moutons
- *Artforms:* Music, comedy, circus
- *Value-add:* Inspired Australian circus community attending nat. conference plus unknown act a sell-out

Arts Centre Melbourne (2013)

- *Key Artists/Talent:* Oh Suivant!
- *Artforms:* Interactive theatre unknown in Australia
- *Value-add:* Achieved 90% capacity across 18 performances

Kew Court House (2011)

- *Key Artists/Talent:* Disabled artist group, Deborah Conway & Willy Zygier, Jailhouse Rock
- *Artforms:* Music (incl. opera, jazz & cabaret), dance (incl. ballet), theatre (incl. acrobatic), magic, talks, exhibitions (incl. historical & visual arts), sound installations, roving artists, interactive activities
- *Value-add:* Created & produced opening program to great acclaim

Bright n Sandy Food & Wine Festival (2008–2011)

- *Key Artists/Talent:* Kylie Auldist & The Bamboos, Allan Champion, Junior MasterChefs
- *Artforms:* Music, activities, roving performances, installations
- *Value-add:* Record attendance (17K in 2011), 96% positive survey responses (2010)

Sustainable Travel – Love Living Local, Reservoir (2009)

- *Key Artists/Talent:* Amanda King, Edvardo, Kristina Diaz, Lilikoi
- *Artforms:* Music, dancing, activities & competitions, interactive performers, house & street parties
- *Value-add:* Grew community connectedness, instigated additional programs (e.g. Drive with Your Heart)

City of Melbourne Summer Fun in the City & Parks incl. Docklands (2006–2008)

- *Key Artists/Talent:* Flying trapeze artists
- *Artforms:* Music, interactive dance, circus, ice skating, theatre, visual arts, activities, installations
- *Value-add:* Grew audience attendance, commissioned for three new sister city festivals

Melbourne Commonwealth Games, Tribal Expressions (2006)

- *Key Artists/Talent:* First Nations theatre makers and entertainers (incl. Dan Sultan & Wesley Enoch)
- *Artforms:* Music, dance, theatre, cabaret, visual arts, craft
- *Value-add:* First major indigenous event held in centre of Melbourne

Melbourne Commonwealth Games, The Beach at the Arts Centre (2006)

- *Key Artists/Talent:* Bomba, Nick Barker, The Stiff Gins, Inge King, Jamie Durie, Pop-Eyed, Big Rory
- *Artforms:* Music, dance, circus, comedy, design, sculpture, films, games, roving performers, activities
- *Value-add:* Iconic cultural hub for Melbourne

EDUCATION

Master of Publishing & Communications, University of Melbourne

Bachelor of Arts w. Honours – English Literature, University of Melbourne

PERSONAL DETAILS

Australian Citizen living in Elwood, Victoria, with current Police Check and Working with Children Check