



**LA TROBE**  
UNIVERSITY • AUSTRALIA

## So, where are you from?

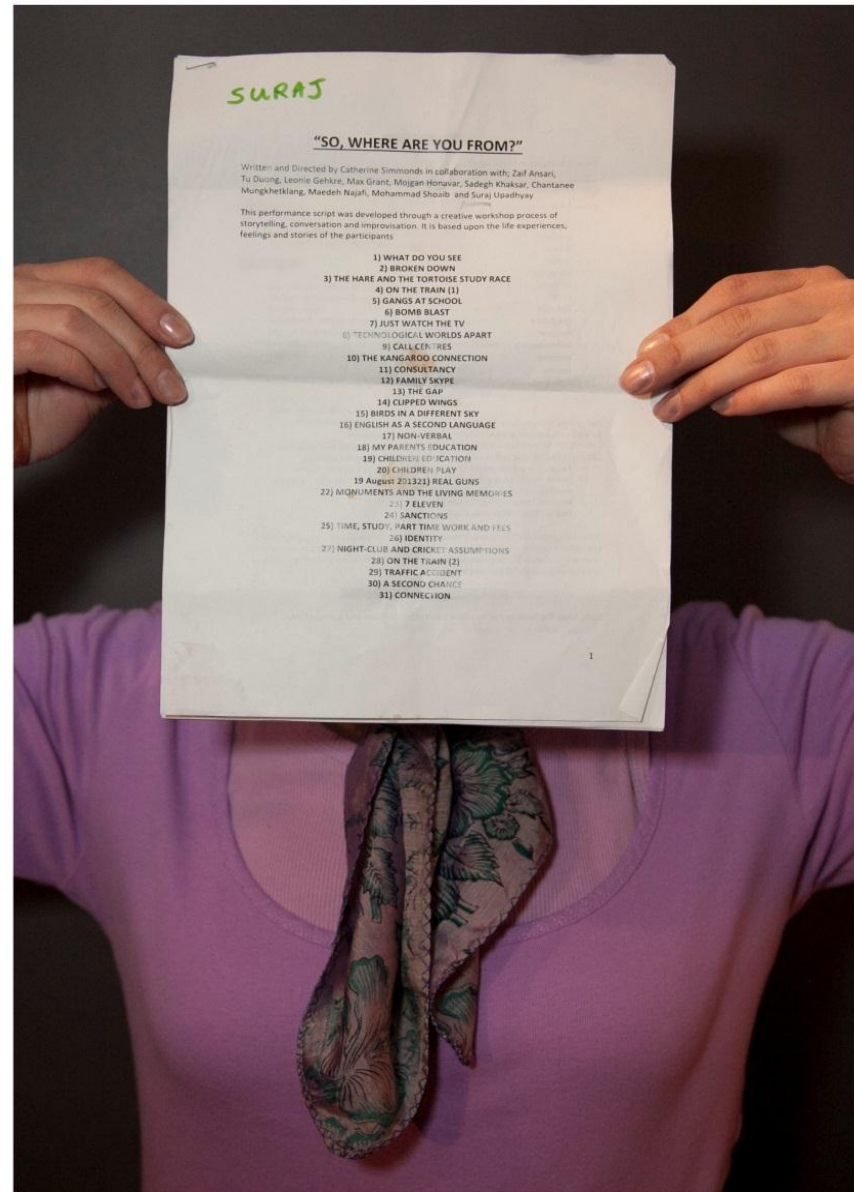
Jacqui Faliszewski – La Trobe International

Catherine Simmonds – Artistic Director and Consultant in  
Community Cultural Development

ISANA December 2013

# The Beginning

- Life's a Gamble & the impact
- Residential assistants training
- Partnership development
- National Youth Week
- Recruitment
- The student voice



# The process

- The structure of the project & identifying needs
- Partnerships, engaging the wider student community & volunteering
- Reducing barriers to engagement
- Supporting students to heal through performance
- Empowerment







# Outcome & Evaluation

- Profound feedback from staff, students and community members
- Student transformation & the therapeutic benefit of performance
- Challenging misconceptions
- Advocacy & understanding
- A method for staff and student professional development



# Quotes

“I had the pleasure of attending the opening night of the La Trobe University student theatre and film production ‘So, where are you from?’ The production highlighted the experiences of international students who both wrote and starred in the play. Their stories serve as a window into the hardship many international students face on coming to Australia. I congratulate all the performers, La Trobe on this revealing and enlightening performance” **Jenny Mikakos, State Member for Northern Metropolitan Region**

“It has really made me stop and think about some of my assumptions about international students, when they look tired or not contributing much”. **Meg, Lecturer, Academic Language and Learning Unit.**

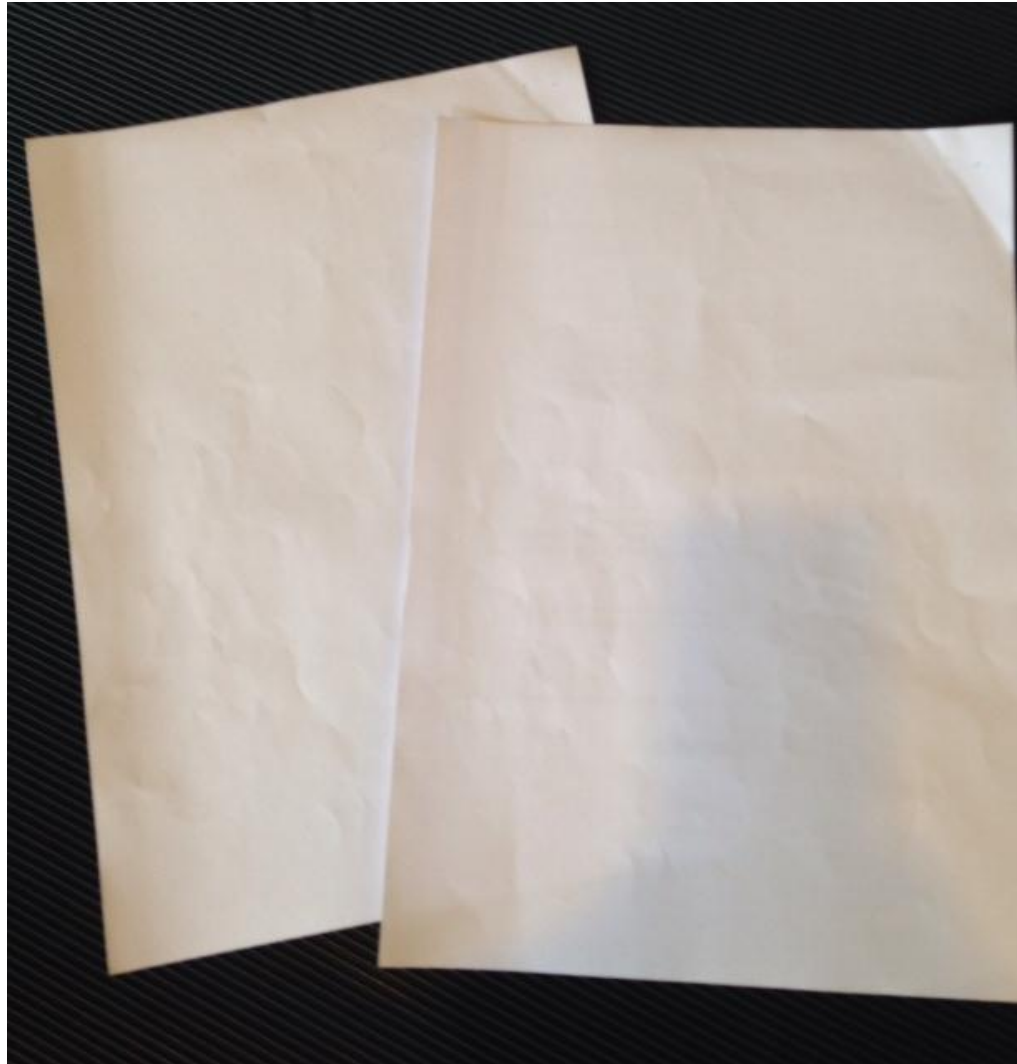
“I can definitely say that this has been a wonderful experience. It challenged me, as an introvert the project gradually made me more confident. This journey opened up my eyes to experience, to learn and to understand other cultures. I know we all have differences but we also have the same feelings inside. I know where I belong” **Chantane (theatre participant)**

# Where to from here?

- Performance at CISA, AIEC and ISANA
- Request the performance be utilized as a professional development activity for all executive staff
- Continuing the project as part of the Student Union theatre season to support greater interaction between international and domestic students
- The more positive the student experience, the greater the number of students wanting to attend the university
- Student engagement & help seeking behaviour



# Where's the script?





SO  
WHERE  
ARE YOU  
FROM?

# The Creative Laboratory

- An intercultural space fostering connection and trust at the grassroots
- Devising the Play



# The performance

- The audience see themselves reflected
- From the personal to the collective to the social – making the voice of international students relevant to us all



# Internationalization is a contemporary drama

- A 14 year old audience member wrote this comment after seeing the performance

"It did leave me with one thought, why are we told that we learn history to not repeat it but we are only told the story and never taught how to prevent it. Great play it got me philosophizing" **Joshua Sim**

It did leave me with one thought:  
'Why are we told that we learn history to not repeat it, when we are only told the story, but never taught how to prevent it...'  
Great Play, Got me philosophising!  
Joshua Sim

# The future and breaking down assumptions

- The interaction of people from different cultures is an increasing social reality.
- What are the benefits of this work to the culture of universities and the wider society?









**Thank you**