

Arts Centre Melbourne in association with Melbourne Fringe present

What Am I Supposed To Do? (WAISTD) By Sarah Aiken & Rebecca Jensen / Deep Soulful Sweats



Now is not the time to sit back and watch

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, 12 AUGUST 2019 – Sarah Aiken and Rebecca Jensen of Deep Soulful Sweats are this year's **Take Over!** commission recipients and will debut their brand new participatory work [*What Am I Supposed To Do? \(WAISTD\)*](#) as part of **Melbourne Fringe** from 18 – 22 September at Arts Centre Melbourne's Fairfax Studio.

"*Take Over!* brings together our history in creating experimental and participatory dance and performance. It is an ambitious and exciting project for us, working at an unprecedented scale, bringing the many modes and methods of working we have developed together across our growing body of work," says Aiken and Jensen.

WAISTD is a dark, hopeful and irreverent cautionary tale that stares into the hypocrisies of trying to be good, or do good, in the face of climate catastrophe. This participatory eco-horror will focus on the tension and stasis when it comes to dealing with the complexities saturating our actions towards climate change.

"In *WAISTD*, audiences will squeeze into the closing gap between the fantasy of the eco-horror inside the Fairfax Studio and the global eco-horror that is unfolding this very moment. We aren't offering any solutions, rather looking closer at an unnerving stasis. *WAISTD* creates a space for us to collectively sit with our complicity, hypocrisies and cultural inertia in the face of climate change," says Aiken and Jensen.

While the work is grounded in dance, it is experimental in nature. Blurring the line between set, performer and audience is often at the forefront of Aiken and Jensen's work. *WAISTD* directs the audience to create scenes together, and by observing from within these scenes, a new perspective is gained. The audience's contribution and participation reflects their position in the face of an unfolding environmental catastrophe.

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"In the spirit of Deep Soulful Sweats, *WAISTD* is an inclusive, immersive work, bringing people together in collective action. Each individual is a vital part of the whole. In *WAISTD*, we all play our part in an environmental horror. Nobody is a spectator; you will find yourself a part of a conversation that has been earnestly rehearsed and restaged for the last 40 years," continue Aiken and Jensen.

By staring into the cultural inertia and hypocrisies that surround climate crisis, *WAISTD* explores a non-traditional narrative style through a collage of drama, movement, and heavy symbolism. Drawing inspiration from Australian horror films from the 1970s and 80s, the work forces audiences to question the complexities and complicity of colonial Australia.

Images can be found [here](#).

"Aiken and Jensen hit gold when examining the right to access mythic traditions in contemporary terms," – **Real Time**

"Powerfully employs the corporeality of contemporary dance to discuss what the body is to us now and what it might become," – **Beat Magazine**

"A freeform, participatory fantasia that immerses the audience in a lush cocktail of physical sensations, guided dance, imposed dress-ups and tenderness," – **Jana Perkovic on *Overworld* for Dancehouse Diary**

WAISTD was developed with the assistance of Arts Centre Melbourne and Melbourne Fringe as part of the *Take Over!* commission. This project has been generously supported by Monica Lim and Konfir Kabo and John and Lorraine Bates.

Artist Statement

Do we care?
In caring or not caring I would think the main thing is the timing.
The lag will doom us.
We are flying blind, with little or no idea where the mountains are.
What am I supposed to do?
Do what you're supposed to do.
Do nothing.
Do it wrong.
Do it anyway.

Creative Team

Concept, Choreography & Performance: Sarah Aiken and Rebecca Jensen / Deep Soulful Sweats

Collaborating Performers: Claire Leske, Megan Payne, Alexander Powers, Ngioka Bunda-Heath

Mentor/Outside Eye: Mish Grigor

Production Manager: Bindi Green

Design: Romanie Harper

Lighting Design: Amelia Lever-Davidson

Sound Design: Andrew Wilson

Photography: Gregory Lorenzutti

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Media Release

About Sarah Aiken and Rebecca Jensen

Aiken and Jensen have a long history of creating experimental choreography and performance in theatres, galleries, community, film, music and site responsive contexts with their work slipping between codified forms and unbridled invention. Their free-form maximalist style has no rules, amassing multiple images in a torrent of references, satirical, sincere, absurd and unapologetic. Their ongoing project Deep Soulful Sweats creates collective experiences for audiences to come together in ecstatic, inclusive and unrehearsed performance experiences with no spectators.

About *Take Over!*

Take Over! is a unique and ground breaking partnership between Arts Centre Melbourne and Melbourne Fringe, that enables an independent artist, company or collective the extraordinary opportunity to develop a new creative idea throughout 2019, ready for presentation in the 2019 Melbourne Fringe Festival. This project has been generously supported by Monica Lim and Konfir Kabo and John and Lorraine Bates.

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What Am I Supposed To Do? (WAISTD)
Fairfax Studio | 18 – 22 September

Wednesday – Friday 7:30pm
Saturday 3pm* & 7:30pm
Sunday 5pm
Duration: 60 minutes

***Auslan interpreted**

Warnings: contains adult themes, partial nudity, flat shoes recommended, strictly no bags/food/drink, audience might be standing for long periods, low light, fluctuating light, strobe lighting and haze

Age: 15+

Accessibility: wheelchair access, Auslan interpreted, companion card

Bookings at artscentremelbourne.com.au

For more information about Arts Centre Melbourne, please visit www.artscentremelbourne.com.au or phone 1300 182 183. Become a fan of [Arts Centre Melbourne on Facebook](#) or follow [@artscentremelb](#) on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

For further media information and interviews, please contact Media Advisor Kara Bertoncini on (03) 8699 9553, 0438 423 308 or kara.bertoncini@artscentremelbourne.com.au.

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