



# ZOOLOGY

TOO CLOSE TO THE SUN

AVAILABLE FOR TOURING MAY 2026  
ONWARDS

# THE SHOW: A SUBVERTED PERFORMANCE LECTURE ABOUT WILDNESS AND EXTINCTION

When Talya Rubin was little, she would tell adults she wanted to be 'a ballerina and a gorilla' when she grew up. *Zoology* is a hybrid performance lecture and dance work for one woman and two children that attempts to live up to that childhood dream.

The work was inspired by slides found in a New York City antique shop of zoo animals in vibrant 1980s Ektachrome colours.

In the work, the animals tell their wordless story of extinction through movement that has absurdity and poignancy at its core.

In a domestic living room, in a house floating in the universe, a white

poodle transmits wordless messages impossible to receive and essential for this present moment.

There is a dream-like lecture at the centre of *Zoology*. It riffs on zoos, panda diplomacy, Reagan and Thatcher, *The Wizard of Oz*, extinction and Talya's own childhood - until it falls apart.

*Zoology* is a timely work of true imagination and vitality, a deeply personal journey of listening towards surprising transformation.

It provokes a visceral reconnection with our inner wildness and invites us to sit in the unresolved spaces of the current extinction crisis.



**MALTHOUSE  
THEATRE**

**PERTH INSTITUTE OF  
CONTEMPORARY ARTS**



**WMM** WESTERN  
AUSTRALIAN  
MUSEUM

**pvi**  
collective



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SYDNEY**

**VITALSTATISTIX** **BUNDANON**

**PERFORMANCE**  **SPACE**

**IMAGES**

**LOGOS**

*Zoology* had its world premiere in partnership with PICA (Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts) and the WA Museum Boola Bardip as part of APAM (Australian Performing Arts Market) 25-27 February, 2026.



**"AMONG THE  
VERY BEST  
THEATRE MAKERS  
IN THIS OR ANY  
OTHER COUNTRY.  
THERE ARE FEW  
TRUE ORIGINALS,  
'TOO CLOSE TO  
THE SUN' IS ONE  
SUCH COMPANY."**

**DAMIEN CASSIDY, FORMER PRODUCER BRISBANE  
FESTIVAL**

**TOO CLOSE TO THE SUN** is an interdisciplinary performance company run by writer-performer Talya Rubin and director Nick James. Their work unfolds like living poems - blurring the boundaries between performance, ritual, and dream - and invites audiences into spaces of intensity and reflection. Working from Perth (Boorloo), Western Australia, they collaborate with artists across the country and around the world to craft works that are both precise in form and open to mystery. They draw audiences into immersive worlds where the poetic meets the political, and the personal extends into the mythic.

Their works have been created through: The Banff Centre & The National Arts Centre (Canada), Bundanon (NSW), Terrapin Theatre (Hobart), PICA (Perth), Malthouse Theatre, CultureLAB (Melbourne), Performance Space (Sydney), Adhocracy (Adelaide), Metro Arts (Brisbane) and have toured to Arts House (Melbourne), Brisbane Festival, Brisbane Powerhouse, Performance Space (Sydney), PICA (Perth), Vitalstatistix (Adelaide), Summerworks, Theatre La Chapelle & Uno Festival (Canada).

## **TALYA RUBIN**

is a Boorloo (Perth) based poet and performance maker originally from Montreal, Canada. She has toured and performed original solo performance works, *Of the Causes of Wonderful Things*, *The Bluebird Mechanicals* and *At the End of the Land* to critical acclaim across Australia, including at PICA, Performance Space, Arts House, Brisbane Festival, Brisbane Powerhouse, Metro Arts, and Vitalstatistix. Her performance work was chosen to be part of the Collaborations Project at The National Arts Centre (Canada). Her work has been developed through awarded residencies at Arts House CultureLAB, Fremantle Arts Centre, KISS Club/pvi collective/PICA, Spare Parts, Hill End and the Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, The Contemporary Australian Puppetry Residency at Terrapin Theatre, Adhocracy Lab Vitalstatistix, HotHouse Theatre, Live Dreams at Performance Space, The Banff Centre, and Bundanon. As a poet she won a national poetry award in Canada and has had two books published, *Leaving the Island* and *Iceland is Melting and So Are You*.

## **NICK JAMES**

is a co-founder of Too Close to the Sun. A writer, musician, and film and theatre director born in Chile from Australian parents, Nick directed and co-devised the company's previous works *Of the Causes of Wonderful Things*, *The Bluebird Mechanicals* and *At The End of the Land*. He has participated in numerous curated residencies with Too Close to the Sun, including: The Banff Centre, The Rex Cramphorn Studio (Sydney University), Metro Arts, HotHouse Theatre and PWM Montreal. His first short film was screened at 20 Australian and International festivals and he has just completed two new short films. Nick is currently working on several short and feature film projects in development and production in 2026 and runs a production company, Clearwater Films.

**“WALKING OUT OF ZOOLOGY FELT LIKE  
WAKING UP FROM A DREAM.”**

**HENRY SLADE, CREATIVE PRODUCER, WA MUSEUM BOOLA BARDIP**



# "ZOOLOGY IS A WORK OF PURE ART, A POWERFUL EMBRACE OF HUMANITY."

ALEXANDROS COHEN, DIRECTOR, HYPERION THEATRE COMPANY, ATHENS, GREECE

## CREATIVE TEAM

Performance Title: **Zoology**

Company: **Too Close to the Sun**

Genre/Form: **Interdisciplinary theatre**

Writer, Performer, Original & Visual

Concept: **Talya Rubin**

Co-devisor and Director: **Nick James**

Sound Design: **Giorgos Poullos**

Lighting Design: **Katie Sfetkidis**

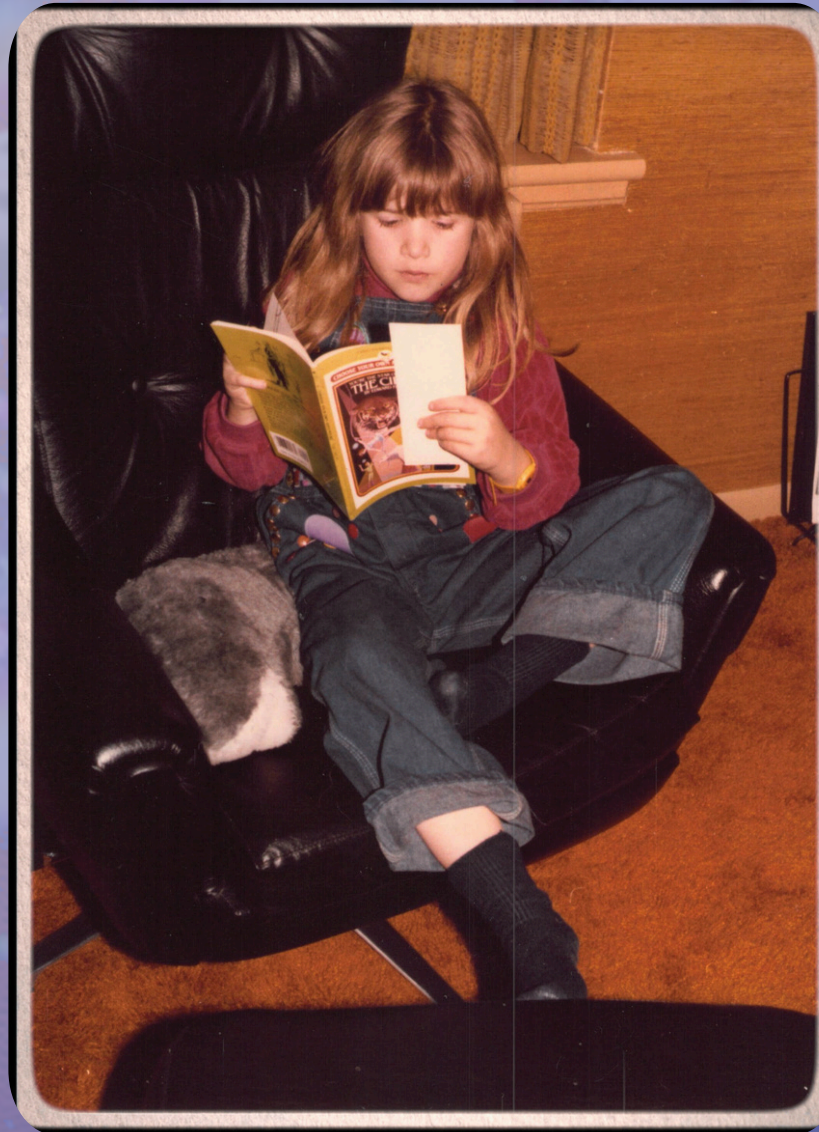
Movement Consultant: **Natalie Allen**

Set & Costumes: **Laura Heffernan**

Dramaturg: **Emma Valente**

Slide & Projection Maker: **Samuel James**

**\*\*Note: 2 young performers (between ages 9-11 years) join Talya on stage for each performance. On tour we can work with local youth or travel with our original young performers. To be determined in consultation with presenting partners.**



Production & Tour Contact: **Nick James**  
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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Length of work: **65 mins**

Space: **Blackbox Theatre or Hall with 3 phase power**

Audience Capacity: **100-300**

Set: **A large white curtain (6m x 4m), a push up projection stand, a white tarket floor surface (6m x 4m), boxes of several hundred animal figurines, a set of animal heads, a tea trolley, a small white sofa, small 1980s TV, and props/objects the animals use.**

Team on Tour: **1-3 performers, 1 Director, and 1 Operator**

**\*\*Note: Too Close to the Sun will travel with some of these set items, whilst others will need to be sourced locally.**

**TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS**

# PRAISE FOR PAST WORK

**"IT IS A SEAMLESS PERFORMANCE. AN AVALANCHE OF IMAGES KNITTED TOGETHER THAT INVITE THE AUDIENCE TO SIT ALONE IN TIME AND SPACE TOGETHER."**

**–THE CONVERSATION (AT THE END OF THE LAND)**

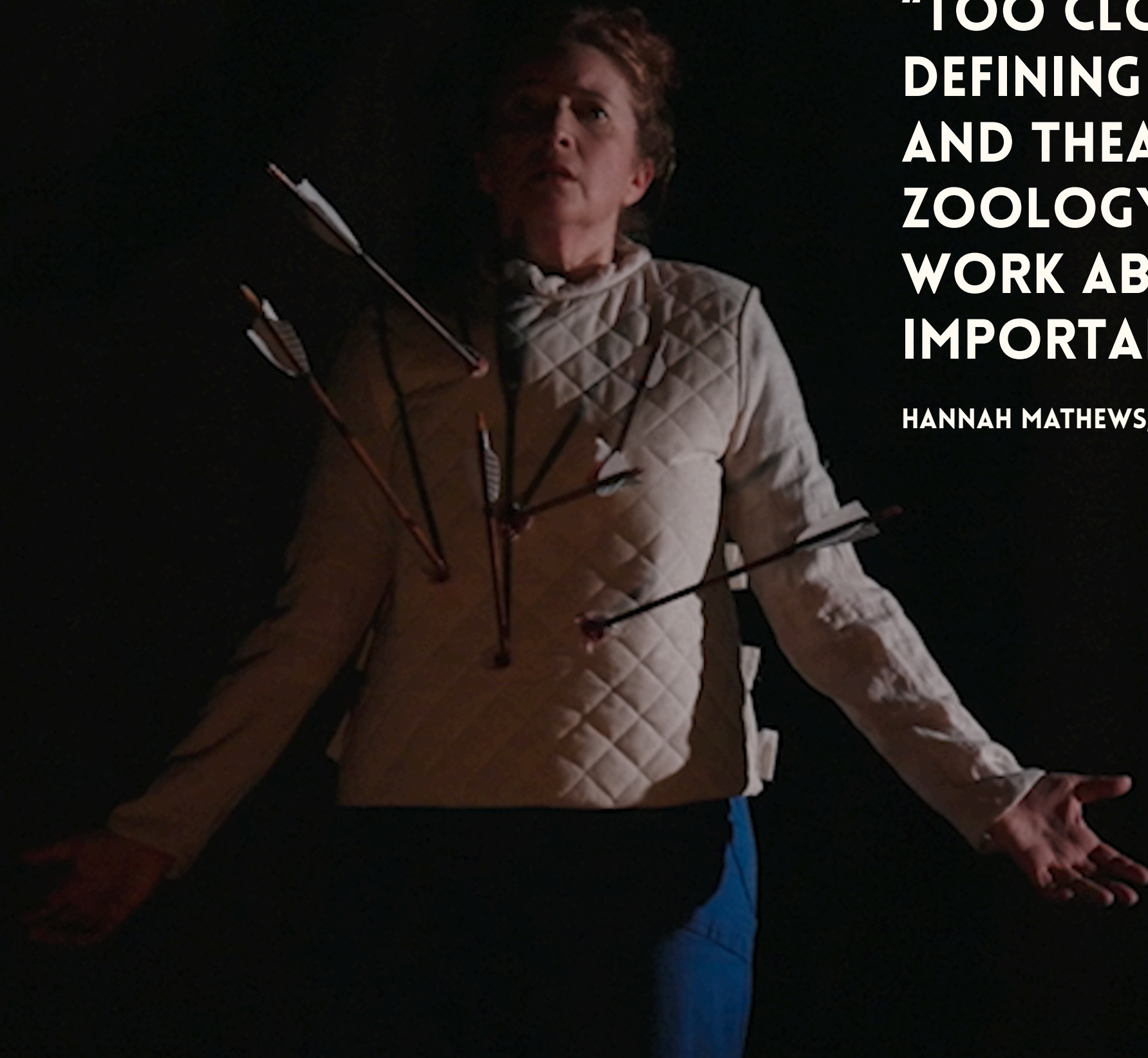
**"THE HUMAN CONDITION CAN BE SPOKEN OF AND CAN BE READ ABOUT. BUT WHEN YOU HEAR IT, SEE IT AND IF IT UNVEILS IN FRONT OF YOU, HAUNTING YOU, IF IT UNSETTLES YOUR BEING AND IF YOU BEGIN TO LIVE WITHIN A DREAM NARRATIVE THAT HAS LOST ALL BOUNDARIES – IF ALL OF THIS IS ACHIEVED ON STAGE THEN IT CAN ONLY BE MAGIC."**

**– ARTS HUB (OF THE CAUSES OF WONDERFUL THINGS)**

**"ONE OF THE TIGHTEST, MOST CONSIDERED AND DELIBERATE WORKS I'VE EVER SEEN. THERE ISN'T AN INCH OF THE SHOW THAT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE IT'S BEEN REFINED AND DISTILLED TO ITS PUREST, MOST IMPACTFUL ESSENCE."**

**– NOTHING EVER HAPPENS IN BRISBANE (THE BLUEBIRD MECHANICALS)**





**"TOO CLOSE TO THE SUN IS A  
DEFINING VOICE IN PERTH'S LIVE ART  
AND THEATRE MAKING COMMUNITY.  
ZOOLOGY IS AN EXTRAORDINARY  
WORK ABOUT REALLY BIG, REALLY  
IMPORTANT, CRITICAL THINGS."**

**HANNAH MATHEWS, CEO, PICA (PERTH INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS)**

# TOO CLOSE TO THE SUN



Website: [www.tooclosetothesuntheatre.com](http://www.tooclosetothesuntheatre.com)

Facebook: [facebook.com/tooclose2thesun](https://facebook.com/tooclose2thesun)

Instagram: [@talya\\_tooclosetothesun](https://instagram.com/@talya_tooclosetothesun)