



Victorian College of the Arts
Media Announcement
Thursday 23 August 2007

EMBARGOED UNTIL SATURDAY 25 AUGUST 2007

The \$20,000 Keith and Elisabeth Murdoch Travelling Fellowship 2007 Winner (VCA DRAMA)

VCA Drama is proud to announce that the winner of the **\$20,000 Keith and Elisabeth Murdoch Travelling Fellowship** for 2007 is **Mary Sitarenos**.

Mary Sitarenos holds two VCA Drama qualifications: Bachelor of Dramatic Art (1981) and Master of Animateuring (Theatre Making) (2003). Mary's aim is to use the Murdoch Fellowship to travel to Senegal, Paris, Greece and Cyprus in 2008, to continue her life work as a passionate theatre maker with particular interest in performance practice, cultures and ancient Greek drama.

A Greek-Cypriot/Australian the focal point of Mary's artistic research and practice is the diaspora and to re-embed ancient knowledge in contemporary practice. Mary regards the Fellowship as a unique opportunity to develop her artistic practice through collaborating with international artists, performers and scholars.

Mary Sitarenos has been a prolific director, teacher, actor, writer and choreographer in theatre for over 25 years. She has been a core member of Anthill and Theatreworks and has worked with MTC and Playbox in Melbourne, amongst others. Mary has toured, studied and practiced theatre in Indonesia, Cyprus, Greece and Senegal, performed in Japan and taught and directed in China. Currently Associate Director and Actor Trainer for Liminal Theatre and Performance, Mary recently has forged close links with local African communities in Melbourne and practices African dance.

Head VCA Drama, Richard Murphet said today: "**Mary Sitarenos** has been one of the most outstanding theatre practitioners working in Melbourne over the past two decades. Her work as an actor with Jean-Pierre Mignon, Jenny Kemp and Robert Draffin, has combined bold and passionate expression with a nuanced emotional depth. Her work as a director has lately etched a sharp and minimalist intensity into productions at Liminal, MTC and VCA. Her plans to fuse the joy and energy of Senegalese Dance with the power of Ancient Greek tragedy made her proposal for the Murdoch Fellowship the outstanding application from a very strong field. We congratulate Mary and look forward to the product of her research."

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Mary was presented with her fellowship by **Professor Andrea Hull AO, Director and Dean, VCA** on **Friday 24 August**.

The prestigious **Keith and Elisabeth Murdoch Travelling Fellowship** for VCA Drama graduates is one of three biennial awards awarded every two years to VCA graduates of Art, Drama and Music, through the generosity of **Dame Elisabeth Murdoch DBE, CBE, LLD** and must be used to fund travel and study abroad. The 2007 award is open to VCA Drama alumni who graduated between 1996 and 2006. Previous VCA Drama winners of this award include Christian Leavesley and Phil Rolfe from Uncle Semolina (& friends), Vanessa Pigrum, Raimondo Cortese and Janice Mueller.

For **Media Information** or **Interview** please contact:

Lisa Montague – Communications Manager 03 / 9685 9371 or 0412 002 544