



**Creating extraordinary  
theatre for young  
audiences.**

**To Whom It May Concern,**

**Subject: Support letter for Meg Upton**

I write to you in support of Meg Upton, with whom both myself and Arena Theatre Company has worked over many years as a researcher and as a provider of education resource materials connected to performances.

Meg's knowledge of the intersection between contemporary performance practice, research and education is unsurpassed in the Theatre for Young Audiences sector, where the majority of my experience has been for the last decade.

Most recently we have been working with Meg as part of the ARC Linkage project titled Creative Convergence. Over consecutive years Meg attended workshops that Arena was conducting in Far East Gippsland. She generated profound insights into what was occurring in these workshops for both artists and participants. Her observations and conclusions had the quality of being surprising, rigorous, and resonating with powerful truths. Her research illuminated the unique processes that were occurring in our work that we were not fully aware of, and gave us language and concrete examples so we became able to communicate about our work with clarity and power.

Meg's efforts to have Arena attend and present on Creative Convergence at the IDIERI Conference was a wonderful opportunity for the Company, and created value for us on many levels.

One of the great gifts of Meg as a research partner is that she brings extraordinary expertise and breadth of knowledge, in addition to an open mind. She brings analysis that meets the work on its own terms. Never have I felt with Meg that she was shaping her ideas about the artwork to fit a pre-conceived paradigm or intellectual construct. She generates confidence and trust in the artists that the art is primary, and is respected. This supports her resolute rigour when holding the work up to critical analysis.

We have commissioned Meg to write education resources for many of our works over the years. One of the marks of good education resources is when the artists learn things about their own work through reading them. This is always the case with Meg's work. Not only that, but usually gives us additional insights into the ways our audience are viewing and considering the work. Practical understanding of contemporary creative process, deep understanding of the contexts in which works are made, and a complex vision of the educative values of performance set her apart in her field. I thoroughly commend Meg Upton to you.

Yours truly,

**Christian Leavesley**

**Artistic Director, Arena Theatre Company.**