

# All abilities included in Geelong's 'Society'

06/09/2018



CAST CALL: Deputy mayor Peter Murrhly with SOCIETY cast members Scott Price, Robbie Croft, Ben Oakes, Sarah Mainwaring, Liam White and Jess Walker, Northern Bay College students Jess, Skye and Deeanna and City of Greater Geelong Mayor Bruce Harwood. (Rebecca Hosking)

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An inclusive documentary theatre has drawn full houses to Back to Back Theatre Studio in Geelong.

Theatre of Speed encouraged participants to explore group dynamics, games, social behaviour and rituals in the production Society.

The group of 15 young people with intellectual disabilities collaborated with guest artists as part of Back to Back Theatre's experimental lab for performance making.

Artistic director Tamara Searle said the piece was informed by members' personal experiences and perspectives as people living with disability, who shared group situations through reactions, voices and dance.

Back to Back's staging of Society also benefited from the efforts of three year 6 students from Northern Bay College, Jess, Skye and Deanna, who hosted a morning tea for the theatre group's supporters, special guests and council officials.

The girls secured \$400 funding as part of a Kids Thrive program to promote all-abilities initiatives, choosing Back to Back as their community partner.

Executive producer Alice Nash said Society was "a heart-filled, wonderful piece" from experimental theatre group Theatre of Speed.

"We were excited to share it first with an audience of some of our company's closest friends and supporters."

Ms Nash said the feedback from the audience was "extremely positive", with members finding the production "deeply moving".

Artist director Bruce Gladwin said he “loved seeing the performers in Theatre of Speed grow over a period time, seeing from each production their development as actors and as performers, but also as people”.

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