

# q circus: NICA'S PLEASE HOLD

The National Institute of Circus Arts (NICA) presents

## PLEASE HOLD

Directed by Kate Champion

Wednesday 29 November – Saturday 9 December

NICA National Circus Centre, Prahran

Bookings: [www.nica.com.au](http://www.nica.com.au)

Australia's next generation of circus talents will be on show when the National Institute of Circus Arts (NICA) presents PLEASE HOLD – from 29 November to 9 December. PLEASE HOLD examines the social mediums that bind and isolate – from the invasive qualities of social media, to the rigid expectations of social etiquette – looking deeper into how community rules are created and challenged; and what happens when we don't measure up to expectations.

PLEASE HOLD will showcase NICA's final year circus artists – all incredible elite performers – with high-level circus skills: from competitive hand balancing and intricately coordinated tumbling, to extreme flexibility and highly tuned acrobatics. Performers will traverse a maze of ropes, straps and poles testing their stamina and agility to the limit. Through humour and insightful observations, PLEASE HOLD will dig into the impulse that drives these young adults to shun a 'normal' life and push their discipline and focus to its limit in pursuit of something out of the ordinary, something rare and exceptional.

Elite NICA performers include Nelson Smyles, who recently accepted a contract to perform hoop diving in Cirque du Soleil's production Luzia next year; Isaac Lawry an adagio and hand balancing expert who's trained at renowned Shaolin Kung Fu in China; multi-talented Jessie McKibbin winner of the Victorian Apprentice of the Year for her career in abseil painting, now specialising in roue Cyr, dance trapeze and fire manipulation; and Katie Martin, who fell in love with Chinese pole acrobatics at the age of eight (after seeing Cirque Du Soleil's show Saltimbanco), and is currently completing her PADI Dive Master Ticket, aspiring to become a scuba diver in water-based circus shows.

PLEASE HOLD is devised and directed by the incomparable Kate Champion, who's worked as a director, choreographer, teacher and performer for over 30 years – with art organisations including Belvoir, Sydney Theatre Company, NIDA, The English National Opera, Australian Theatre for Young People, Dance North, Vitalstatistix, The Australian Dance Theatre, DV8 Physical Theatre (London), and many more. In 2011 Kate directed Not In A Million Years which won a 2012 Helpmann Award for Best Visual or Physical Theatre Production – and in 2004 she choreographed the world premiere production of DIRTY DANCING which is currently being performed in London's West End, Europe and North America.

NICA is Australia's Centre of Excellence for training in contemporary circus arts. It is one of eight national arts training institutes and offers Australia's only Bachelor of Circus Arts. Graduates of NICA have gone on to pursue exciting careers both locally and internationally and have contributed to the development of Melbourne's vibrant circus arts industry.

