


## Glow in the dark

Face-paint, florescent headgear and lycra were the order of the day at the Swinburne Fluro Party held at Room 680 in Hawthorn, last month. Organised by Swinburne Students Amenities Association a good time was had by all. 



## Puppets tell the story

Later this month the Victorian College of the Arts presents the Master of Puppetry performance season. The showcase features two works by student puppeteers Penelope Bartlau and Jacob Boehme. The course contributes to the completion of their masters degree in puppetry.

Jacob Boehme comes to the course with a background in theatre and dance. His show, *Idja* is described as a "contemporary Indigenous story". It's a personal journey toward belonging and acceptance.

"*Idja* is awakened to his own identity by this spirit guide who takes him on a journey toward home and belonging and accepting the skin that you're in," Boehme says. "It's a metaphor of what most of us have to go through."

Fair-skinned Boehme – whose father is from the Nurungga Gana nations of South Australia and whose mother is white – says the colour of his skin puts him at odds with an Indigenous identity.

"It's something that I and a lot of

*"...people don't see you as that because you're not flat nosed..."*


what I call 'whitey blacks' have to deal with. When you're fair on the outside but you have this strong connection to another people. You identify as Aboriginal but most people don't see you as that because you're not flat nosed or big lipped or dark skinned and you don't live in the bush."

Boehme's story uses shadow puppetry and is told in the Nurungga language with symbols from the Nurungga culture. It's accompanied by First Chorus, a local community choir from Northcote.

"I wanted to keep the show organic so that everything comes

from the body," he says. "So the choir are creating soundscapes for the world in which these characters live."

Penelope Bartlau's show *Dispatch*, about a puppet character marooned on an island will be performed with electronic improvised music and song.

The postgraduate diploma and masters in puppetry commenced at the VCA in 2004. The program is housed within the discipline of production and caters for students who wish to study and further develop their skills in the areas of writing, design, making and performance in puppetry. Puppeteer and director Peter Wilson, heads the program and teaches in the area of performance skills. Writer and director, Gilly McInnes teaches the writing and design component of the course with designer Richard Jeziorny. 

**Daren Pope**

*The Masters of Puppetry Season runs from September 25-29. Details: 9685 9256.*