

## ***So, Where Are You From?* Forum workshop and project discussion**

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Catherine Simmonds, Artistic Director, will build on the powerful and engaging student theatre performance ***So, Where Are You From?*** facilitating further reflection on the themes of last night's performance. How, as workers in international education have we come to understand the international student experience, and how has the performance changed our ideas?

Catherine began working with international students as part of the theatre project ***Life's a Gamble***, initially funded by Gamblers Help Northern, Darebin and Moreland Councils.. After viewing the performance in 2012 and being moved by its power, emotion, and the students' stories, La Trobe International and La Trobe Student Theatre and Film decided to fund an international student theatre piece as part of the University's annual theatre program at Northcote Town Hall.

La Trobe International has also commissioned Catherine and the students to provide theatre workshops as powerful cross-cultural training experiences. So far, over 150 students including Residential assistants living in Colleges, at the Melbourne and Bendigo Campuses have participated. Catherine and international students also delivered the closing workshop at this year's CISA conference.

This project helps people understand that international education is an experience that changes lives and cannot be reversed. It also shows how powerful theatre is as a form of communication: the international students involved gained confidence, a voice and ownership of their stories.

Student voice, Life changing experience, Storytelling, Cultural understanding.