

Jonathan Holloway

International Artistic Director and Speaker on Giant Thinking

Jonathan Holloway is the extraordinarily accomplished international artistic director who devised and delivered Australia's largest single cultural event: The Giants in Perth. Over three days, this unique event disrupted the city of Perth, closing down the CBD as an audience of 1.4 million people chose to walk with giants through the streets. Staging The Giants in Perth, required Jonathan to manage a team of over 400 people and to negotiate and coordinate with politicians, tourism and culture bodies, the emergency services, the military, Aboriginal elders, the Returned and Services League, schools, main roads, hoteliers, major business and the public.

A unique keynote speaker, Jonathan draws on his experiences with Giants in Perth to entertain audiences with stories about the skills, techniques and tricks needed to bring together every part of a city's operations. In doing so, he inspires innovation, creativity and disruption, and teaches audiences the powers of persuasion, negotiation, fundraising, motivation, team building, leadership, story telling, health and safety... and more, so that they too can deliver giant projects with success.

More about Jonathan Holloway:

Born and bred in Sheffield, South Yorkshire, Jonathan Holloway has spent the last twenty years travelling the world as a Festival Director, chief executive, educator and cultural leader.

He has helped transform great organisations and cities through exhilarating art and irresistible spectacle, from London's National Theatre to major international arts festivals in Europe and Australia.

In 2012, he opened his first Perth International Arts Festival with a spectacular that saw 30,000 people dance in the streets as angels and two tonnes of feathers descended from the sky.

In 2015, he masterminded the largest single arts event Australia has ever seen, when 1.4 million people stopped what they were doing for three days so they could walk with giants through the main streets of Perth. That year, the City Of Perth made him an 'Honorary Citizen', an accolade he



shares with just five other people including Hillary Clinton.

As the Artistic Director of Melbourne International Arts Festival, the flagship arts event of Australia's cultural capital, Jonathan's production was hailed by the Sydney Morning Herald in 2017 as "the strongest Melbourne Festival in years... only the brilliance and daring of festival director Jonathan Holloway's programming made it possible, and if you didn't see it, you missed a landmark theatrical event".

Nothing short of a Giant thinker, Jonathan is renowned for his detailed delivery, creative leadership and powerful persuasion, corporate storytelling and the celebration of everyday heroes. A humorous, inspiring and compelling speaker, his presentations are jam packed with breakthrough stories from the arts and culture that demonstrate practical strategies businesses can implement to increase productivity, profitability and happiness.

Client testimonials

“ Jonathan has been an absolute live wire in the arts community and has been really good for entertainment and culture in Perth. He has brought his own flair and his personality has been a big factor in his success. The Giants were the culmination of Jonathan's four years at the Festival. One of the untold stories of the Giants was when Jonathan came to a meeting in my office with me and some of the corporate sponsors and he just won us over with his enthusiasm for the Giants. He just got us all on board. He was so enthusiastic that no one could argue with him.

- Hon Colin Barnett MLA, Premier of Western Australia

“ I've worked with Jonathan for over three years. Jonathan is a great orator and teller of stories. He has that unique ability to create wonder in audiences. His blue-sky thinking is a huge talent that he then translates into reality and delivers these wondrous events for audiences to talk about for years to come. Jonathan has presented to our employees on many occasions and they always come out saying 'that was amazing, really enjoyed the presentation and the humour'. Jonathan captures the audience from the start and brings them on the journey with him - through funny anecdotes and his indisputable knowledge of his subject matter. No one leaves the auditorium feeling bored!

- Rio Tinto

“ I saw Jonathan Holloway present the opening keynote at a national conference and I thought he was brilliant - funny, fast, provocative and inspiring. He really challenged the audience, but not as some kind of 'rah rah' motivational speaker, rather as someone who is out there doing it - dreaming large, living boldly, taking meaningful risks and making amazing things happen. He can be highly intelligent, deeply empathetic or audaciously mischievous - sometimes all in the same paragraph. I'd like to see him at more conferences and events, making people laugh, feel, think and then go out and do something special

- Andrew Horabin, Professional Speaker, Facilitator and Comedian

“ I have always found Jonathan to be an engaging and passionate speaker – a storyteller like no other. He understands how to connect with his audience and dazzles them with new ideas and innovative thoughts. We appointed Jonathan as the Artistic Director of the Perth International Arts Festival because we knew that his unique talent and internationally acclaimed reputation for public engagement would build the festival’s special quality – the results have been fantastic and we are so grateful for Jonathan’s work.

- University of Western Australia

“ Jonathan’s passion for the arts and his tenacity have helped him make an important and wide-ranging contribution to the Perth International Arts Festival. Under his inspired artistic leadership the Festival’s international excellence program and collaborations with the local arts have both expanded. Thousands of artists from around the world and from around the corner have brought art of the highest quality to Western Australian audiences.

- Perth International Arts Festival Chair

“ Jonathan’s ability to transform a street performance into a discussion on IT, systems and infrastructure demonstrates his ability to adapt and engage the audience. His insight, humour and enthusiasm infected the audience – in a good way!

- RAW Marketing for IBM and CISCO

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