



EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM OF ARTS THERAPIES EDUCATION

ECArTE

18TH EUROPEAN ARTS THERAPIES CONFERENCE

8-11 SEPTEMBER 2026

PULA, CROATIA

Mythlab: On Twists and Turns

Ben Haggarty and Steph Brittain

Following their keynote presentation exploring episodes from the Odyssey, in this workshop Ben Haggarty and Steph Brittain invite you to delve deeper into the stories they have shared. Through a playful combination of storytelling technique and the processes of re-enactment, song, chant and movement, we will explore the rich symbolic and metaphoric content of these episodes in Odysseus' epic journey and how the repeating twists and turns he endures manifest in his inner journey of humility, love, surrender and release.

In the oral tradition, an epic is one of those stories that have at their heart the encounters between the Gods and the Humans; how does Odysseus' relationships with the Gods, fate and prophecy affect his transformation? How does Odysseus' trickster nature lead him to confront his own inner nature when he risks being overwhelmed by these greater forces? What is the role of the Chthonic in his journey? How does the inflated hero experience the depths of the underworld and being brought down to the Earth?

Odysseus' homecoming is full of loose ends; there is a journey after the journey. How do we experience uncertainty and unknowing after times of reunion and return? What is the experience of repetition and return for the ones left at home?

The story is the full spectrum of the story not the main character, the story can mean different things at different times; why and how does this epic resonate with us today?

Mythlab is an ongoing collaborative project between storyteller Ben Haggarty and storyteller and drama and movement therapist, Steph Brittain. Mythlab explores experiential ways of engaging with the content of traditional narratives. Previous projects have included: *Love Rites* – an exploration of the mythologies of love and finding the courage to love; workshops with young people at risk of self-harm and an ongoing 'Beholder's Share' approach to opening sustained audience dialogue.



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Biography

Ben Haggarty has been a performance storyteller working in frontline community arts and on international stages for more than four decades. He is the founder and Artistic Director of the Crick Crack Club. Ben is a world-class performance storyteller and much sought after teacher, whose work delights and subverts audiences across the English-speaking world.

Ben has performed in venues ranging from caves to the Carnegie Hall and has been commissioned by the likes of the Barbican, the British Museum, the ENO, the National Gallery, the Unicorn Theatre & the Guardian Hay Festival. He is the official storyteller for Yo Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble, devising shows for audiences of up to 10,000 people.

Steph Brittain is a storyteller and drama and movement therapist. Steph's love for storytelling developed whilst studying Kathak dance in Paris and Delhi, and it continued to grow during her MA in Drama and Movement therapy. She is passionate about the vital role she feels that orality and traditional tales can have in our expression of the universalness of humanity and community.

Both Ben and Steph are members of the epic storytelling ensemble, Pandvani 108.