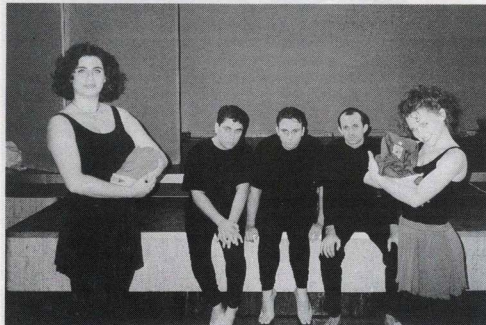


# WASTED by violence

**WASTED** is a community theatre project created under the auspices of Bankstown Youth Development Service with the assistance of funding from the Australia Council and the NSW Ministry for the Arts.



Anna Bazzi, left, Orom Bisseh, Mustafa Hussein, Tim Carroll and Roslyn Oades rehearse for **WASTED**.

**WASTED** was developed in response to the recent murders of several people in the Bankstown area and the urgent sense that something must be done to curb escalating violence.

The performance was developed in a context of several local initiatives designed to help young people recognise the sources of conflict and to know that alternatives were possible to vio-

lence in resolving conflict.

Ideas were workshopped by Antoinette Slabacu, Roslyn Oades, Orom Bisseh, Mustafa Hussein, Anna Bazzi, Khaled Sab-sabi and Tim Carroll under the direction of Maddy Slabacu.

A multimedia production was the result with imaginative and evocative use of video developed by Anna, hip hop music and rhyming by Khaled, sets and costumes created by Joe Hurst and lighting by Adam Newcombe.

The production became one of universal themes of attraction, coupling, childbirth and parenting, childhood play and relationships, puberty and sexuality, adolescence, attraction and sudden death.

**WASTED** opened with haunting newsclips of people grieving for loved ones in areas of conflict overseas and as a result of local violence at home, while live actors relinquished the clothes of loved

ones to the grave.

A scene of similar devastation closed the play and the question left hanging in the air was: Why? After all that love and fun and care, does life have to end abruptly and with such futility?

Young audiences may not have discussed these issues immediately, but hopes were high that they would pause and reflect.

## Khaled talks about hip hop

Khaled Sab-sabi is passionate about hip hop.

"I wish I had known about it when I was young and that my brothers had known about it," he says.

"It's an artform that deflects violence and conflict over things like turf into battles of voice, movement and rhythm. The other kids watching know who's winning.

"Graffiti is the imagery of hip hop, rap is the sound and break the movement. The custom of abbreviated names comes from the need to avoid recognition, to get out of being identified by the law.

"Hip hop goes back a long way through the culture of poor North American black communities. Funk is the origin of hip hop.

"Hip hop is the culture of the street. You can learn to create your own rhymes and de-jay them to rhythms in an hour. You don't need much skill, but you can become very skilled."

Khaled is angry that record companies promote hip hop that is largely bad and destructive.

"There is plenty of good stuff around and kids would listen to it if it was played. But the record companies don't want to know. They would rather just push the violent, negative rhymes."

Khaled has an Arabic background. He came to Australia at the age of eleven with his family, leaving the violence and destruction of civil war.

In the past eight years he has worked in hard core music throughout Sydney and has his own well established group C.O.D.

"C.O.D. could mean Cash On Delivery, but it's really about choice, Crim Or Diplomat," he says.

Khaled worked with Death Defying Theatre on last year's production of Eye of the Law and considers he has Fiona Winning to thank for drawing him into the realm of community theatre.

"It took three years of development and funding applications to get Hip Hopera going," he says.

Khaled leaves shortly for hip hop battles overseas.