


Stephen Bevis arts



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Playing to an audience of one

■ Claire Williams

Proximity Festival of one-on-one art is about as intimate a theatre experience as you can get, with a program that includes private tap dances, games of strip poker, even beard-stroking. Stretched over four Sundays in January and February, Proximity features 12 WA artists who will use 12 spaces throughout The Blue Room Theatre building in Northbridge — including the men's toilets — to present 12 separate performances designed for an audience of one.

Curators James Berlyn and Sarah

Rowbottam are confident the range of hybrid performances in the Proximity program — such as theatre, dance, performance art and installation — will appeal to people interested in those genres. But the radical intimacy between performer and audience means it may take braver members of the general public to participate. “It’ll be people who are willing to take a bit of a risk, people who are interested in pushing their boundaries,” Rowbottam says.

A one-hour ticket gets you four shows, with each performance lasting 12 minutes. The programs have been designed to

include work that is diverse, provocative and entertaining. “Each performance is bespoke,” Berlyn says. “How it manifests is in direct response to the audience member. That’s what so special about one-on-one performance.”

For example, Jen Jamieson’s *How to Take a Three Minute Shower* may or may not include nudity. “It depends on whether the audience member opens the shower curtain,” Rowbottam says.

■ Proximity Festival runs Programs A, B and C every Sunday at The Blue Room Theatre from January 29-February 19.



Radical intimacy: Festival curator Sarah Rowbottam, left, and actress Jen Jamieson. Picture: Iain Gillespie