



BELONG





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Rekindling Indigenous culture, internationally acclaimed Bangarra Dance Theatre has created an original and breathtaking theatrical experience - *Belong*.

Belong features two new dance theatre works: *ID* by Artistic Director Stephen Page, and *About* by Elma Kris, choreographer and dancer with Bangarra.

Stephen Page investigates what it means to be Aboriginal in the 21st century, asking important questions of identity. Based on personal observations of people tracing their bloodlines and re-connecting with traditional culture, *ID* provokes perceptions in contemporary society.

Torres Strait Islander Elma Kris is inspired by customs passed down through families for generations. Reflecting the strong links between communities and their natural environment, *About* explores the mood of the winds as they move across land, sea and sky signifying key moments in time.

At the heart of Bangarra Dance Theatre are challenging social and political questions. As Indigenous people, who are we and where do we belong?

Bangarra creates a truly Australian theatrical experience that connects the spirit of traditional culture with our contemporary lives. Always uplifting and deeply moving, *Belong* transforms perceptions of the places we call home.



PROGRAM

About

CHOREOGRAPHER: Elma Kris

Storyteller

Zey

Kuki

Naygay

Sager

Kaima Eso

ID

CHOREOGRAPHER: Stephen Page

Initiate

Caste: Fractions/Class 7B

Totem

Discriminate

Kinship



MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR STEPHEN PAGE

We began this year with two special Sydney performances of *Spirit* to raise funds for Bangarra's Indigenous traineeships and for the Theodore Aboriginal Medical Centre that was badly affected by the Queensland floods. It was exciting to fill the theatre on these nights as a warm send off to our dancers who were heading to Italy and Germany for a five week tour.

With *Spirit* we were able to present a program that represents the evolution of Bangarra, from traditional to modern. Spreading the message about our Indigenous culture's evolution is one of our responsibilities as an international touring company. We travelled with 22 people for 6 weeks, presenting 23 performances in 17 cities to an audience of 15,761.

The reception in Europe was extraordinary with standing ovations, full houses and a huge unexpected demand for programs! The Italian and German audiences were really excited to experience Bangarra and

wanted to know all about our company and its place in Australian culture.

An important innovation this year has been our Artist-in-Residence program: building our relationships with our valued collaborating artists Kathy Marika, Frances Rings, Jacob Nash and David Page. As Cultural Consultant, Kathy Marika has an important place in the Bangarra family. She has performed in *Spirit*, in Sydney and overseas, and brings her culture and traditions to the company that inspire me, our creative artists and performers. Jacob Nash has brought his wonderful design perspective to a number of aspects of Bangarra including his aesthetic direction of our office and green room renovations. We were pleased to see Jacob awarded the Green Room Award for Best Set Design for our 2010 production of *earth & sky*.

Music is an integral part of Bangarra's creativity, reflecting my brother David's identity and artistic talents so it's exciting that he too, is part of our Artist-in-Residence program.

Frances Rings, our resident choreographer, is the keeper of Bangarra's creative message and has helped us to present our cultural philosophy in major public forums and workshops to keep the message alive. I would also like to acknowledge Bangarra's collaboration with Djakapurra Munyarryun, whose creative cultural services remain central to our work. Djakapurra Munyarryun and Kathy Marika connect with us through their traditional knowledge and guide our creative connections to over 50,000 living cultures.

Following our European tour, our wonderful dancers took on the role of messengers and storytellers by passing on the Bangarra repertoire to Indigenous kids in Sydney schools through dance workshops. Our commitment to young people has extended to a new Indigenous Employment Program providing training and education opportunities in performance, production and administration.

Mentoring Indigenous artists is an important role for me as Artistic Director, and this year

we warmly welcomed two new dancers who are part of the *Belong* season: Travis de Vries and Kaine Sultan-Babij. Our relationships with the National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Association and the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts allow us to welcome new artists like Travis and Kaine, which is an essential part of the evolution of our company.

We have also welcomed Louanna Sainsbury as an Assistant Stage Management Trainee and thank the Sydney Opera House for their support with her training and education program. A traineeship at Bangarra is more than gaining career skills and experience; it is also about connecting with Indigenous culture and offers trainees an intimate understanding of Bangarra's creative processes and cultural exchange with traditional communities.

This year, Elma Kris creates her second work for the company after her successful work in 2007, *Emeret Lu*. One of my hats as Artistic

Director is to constantly nurture the senior artists of the company, especially those who have that choreographic ability to tell their stories. I enjoyed supporting Frances Rings and Daniel Riley McKinley for our *of earth & sky* season last year, and I'm pleased to have this experience with Elma so she can continue to tell her stories inspired by the Torres Strait Islands. With *About*, she went into her own backyard, reflecting on her upbringing, and taking a closer look at Island life.

I would like to acknowledge and give a special thank you to our Executive Director, Catherine Baldwin, who has awakened and brought to life all the programs and projects I have aspired to until now. Catherine has provided me with constant support for the last 20 years and now at Bangarra she continues to develop the foundation of our organisation. Aden Ridgeway, Chair of the Board for 14 years, left Bangarra last year having led the organisation through the

many changes of the company from the first success of *Ochres*, through to our first Edinburgh Festival, and then the Olympic ceremonies. He supported my passion and vision for the company, and provided a great deal of stability and I would like to thank him for this. Our new Chair Larissa Behrendt along with our new board members are the new flame for the company's evolution.

Special thanks go to our supportive government funders at federal and state levels and to our valued sponsors and donors. Your confidence in our artistic endeavours and vision for improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities means a great deal as we develop and grow our influence and engagement with audiences Australia-wide and overseas.

Most importantly a big thanks to you, our audience, for your loyalty. Your enthusiasm for our work keeps the creative fire burning for Bangarra's artists.

About

CHOREOGRAPHY NOTES BY ELMA KRIS

The title of my new work *About* expresses my curiosity of the four winds (Gub) that make up the seasons we have in the Torres Strait Islands: Zey, Kuki, Naygay and Sager. I looked at the influence they have on the land, sea and sky. I want to share my connection with my culture and pass it on to future generations, both Torres Strait Islanders and all Australians alike.

I have always admired how my parents talk about the winds, which are a daily part of our islander life. The winds move and shape themselves in a magical and mysterious way. They paint colour in the day, the sky, and the seas.

They are like spirits swiftly passing by, and merging with nature; they guide and nurture day-to-day life. I wanted to take a journey with them, travel with their moods and see how I could bring them to life through dance.

As the work took shape, it always sent me somewhere new. I felt it could be sometimes calm, aggressive, subtle or swift. I drew on my traditional dance knowledge to reform some contemporary island dance movements that express how I felt as I looked into these winds. Each wind also has a colour that represents how I see them. I wanted this piece to use all the senses.

Zey is like a cool breeze; it is the 'south wind'. To me I felt it had a female energy and so I use a female dancer to act as a metaphor for this 'cool wind'. Zey lures your body to the motion of that breeze and it captures you. I match Zey with the colour blue to showcase the fluid and cool character of this wind.

Kuki is the time of tropical storms and rough seas, it is the 'northwest' wind. Kuki has an energy that comes with a force. To me, I see Kuki as having a male energy. In early development I struggled with the balance of the male and female dancers. It was confusing, just like the turbulent Kuki wind. It was like it was taking me for a rough ride, like Kuki's destructive winds. I could not grasp what exactly this was. The wind patterns inspired my choreographic direction, such as creating the many levels of movement, just like wind changes in Kuki. I've given this wind a charcoal black colour to represent the cloud changes. The headdress is inspired by the elaborate 'dance machines' (apparatus) used in the Torres Strait and represents the lightning that comes with Kuki.

Naygay is the calmest, most gentle wind; the 'northwind'. I use silver to represent the calmness and reflect the glistening of the sun off the dead calm sea. I begin this piece with a warm glow of light, which sets a new day. I coupled the dancers in this piece to represent the new day as well. I also use a language chant to help us herald in the new day. The couples layer their movement of energy on top of each other and they create little whirly winds, that form patterns by shooting out into rays of directions, eventually shaping towards building a wall of stillness, that represents the dead calm sea.

Sager is the dominant wind; it's the gusty southeast. We used this wind in the Torres Strait to know when to go hunting or pearl diving. In this piece I wanted to bring a character along the journey of the wind and have them travel together side-by-

side, experiencing the elements of the wind and being one together. The dancers' movements visualise the movements of the dust, sand and wind. I chose a chalky white as the colour for Sager to match the dust that the wind picks up when it blows.

Looking into these elements they create an atmosphere: they morph as they move in different directions and in different ways. These elements are so important to me, where we have language to describe their character and show a sense of feeling. I can feel, when a wind is blowing strongly; I feel another energy is present when the environment is so quiet, so calm, and it shows colours in the sky, sea and land.

I invited Peggy Misi to be my cultural advisor on this work. She helped with the use of Kala Lagaw Ya language in the piece, and we also used Torres Strait Kriol, which

I speak. The use of language to describe the characters of the winds, brings it all to life and adds colour, depth and movement. It was so lovely to work with Peggy again at Bangarra and I thank her for all her wonderful help.

I acknowledge Bangarra Dance Theatre, especially Stephen Page for allowing me to create my second work. As a Torres Strait Islander woman, I am very excited to once again bring a new story from the Torres Strait Islands to you that has inspired me. This is a new journey; it's more contemporary than my other choreography. It's like I'm painting and it is like that journey where you're not sure what's coming next. You create your own emotions as you sit, watch and experience the performance. I hope everybody will enjoy the journey and travel with it as I did.





ID

CHOREOGRAPHY NOTES BY STEPHEN PAGE

ID is a personal observation of why we are passionate about celebrating our heritage and culture through dance theatre. We are standing back, observing what has been happening to our people over the last two decades from different perceptions and having a dance theatre conversation about it.

I believe we are obsessed as a western culture by wanting to understand: we want an answer now. We want to understand the complexities rather than to just accept them.

What's inspired me for this work is the question of 'what is the real Aborigine?' It's been in our social consciousness and in the media. So there's this 'outside' discussion from mainly a non-indigenous perception about Aboriginal identity – urban versus traditional – and this has sparked an internal debate amongst Aboriginal people.

Our people are entitled to find out where, and what, we are supposed to be. I believe this country really struggles with what the Australian identity is. We still struggle with who we are but we all want to belong and to feel proud of our identity.

This debate has me putting up a mirror to look at what we do here at Bangarra. Are we authentic? Are we true in our passion and our loyalty to our heritage?

For instance the *Totem* section in *ID* is inspired by living traditional social customs, languages and cultures that are still practised in communities today. Even with 21st century distractions, communities hang on to these cultural principles. *Totem* pays respect to that through abstract and symbolic expression.

Another aspect of *ID* is to question the degree of Aboriginality based on skin colour. It's more of a psychological exploration: we are all Aboriginal but we're all different skin colour. It is important in our work to break down stereotypes.

Our mob enjoys sitting around and hearing stories about connecting to kinship and clans. Clans are such an embedded part of Aboriginal life. We're really showing kinship within Bangarra; in our contemporary and professional family. All the dancers learn these customs and principles that immediately draw them into the company. It's like a web in a way, it challenges them to work together in a clan and yet they're from all over the country – this is part of their initiation. They're learning these cultural experiences at the same time and they naturally bond and connect as one.

There are many ensemble pieces on stage for Bangarra; they represent our signature work as they unify us in one spirit. It's what we identify in the 21st century as a moving visual symbol of unity. With David's music and the visual form on stage you see this blend of contemporary and traditional.

In our cultures we have a thousand dialects; it is so complex, so diverse and vast but there's one spirit unifying it all. It's an innate spirit that gives us our distinctiveness. The character of our land has been shaped by Indigenous people for thousands of years. Our dance theatre is abstract, it is a psychological observation, yet it pays homage to traditional cultural customs that still exist today.

The beautiful thing about dance theatre is that it's like visual art: you can push the boundaries to create symbolic imagery, and a powerful new media. We pay respect to identity through theatrical Indigenous expression to inspire the next generation in this 21st century.

MUSIC NOTES

DAVID PAGE Artist-in-Residence

It's another year and again, another amazing time in my life. Being the music man for Bangarra Dance Theatre, I am fortunate and thankful to be part of such an important cultural creative team. Thank you to my brother for his vision and belief in the creative dreaming that motivates me to help keep our culture alive.

About

I was so pleased to have worked with Elma Kris this year. With *About* I was very excited to experiment with the Torres Strait Island musical elements and fuse them with contemporary sounds. I asked my old friend Steve Francis to collaborate musically with me once again. He brings a new and fresh, abstract feel to this unique dance work soundtrack. Working with language is so rewarding especially when this beautiful instrument is so easily accessible. Elma Kris and Peggy Misi are masters at adapting the Torres Strait Islander language translation and poetry. Fusing this with original composition allows us to create something special. Inviting the Bangarra dancers and various singers to sing the language adds colour to this score. The language story telling is the hook of the *About* soundtrack. The story concept is simple: it is about the winds. Complementing the dance musically can be very challenging. The music must support the dance not over-power it. These winds, featured in relation to the people that the story is about, are unpredictable but powerful as well. Thank you Elma, for allowing Steve and I to explore your world of dance. Hopefully the audience will capture the beauty and truth of your story telling when watching as we did while working with you.

Naygay Chant

Naygay kaipa gabu yudi
Padau dhadha kasiya

*The naygay cool breeze
Is going through the hills*

Urabau boeythail
Kalan uminu

*The coconut fronds
Are swaying in the breeze*

ID

It's been 3 years since Stephen's last work *Mathinna*. As the composer I was anxious to discover what this new work was going to be. *ID* is very clever and daring (like my brother) and who else could attempt to tackle such a subject? Once again I am challenged to approach a new concept and create music that is different from previous productions, but still keeps the Bangarra essence alive. I never know how it will be until all the creative elements – the direction, the set, lighting, costumes, choreography and dancers – are finally on stage together; that's when the magic begins.

Being part of this creative team is that magic and if it is working on stage, that is when you know you have done well. Creating music for *ID* has been a real challenge. I experimented with different sound wave forms, vocals and languages to create something new. I love working with new sounds and there are some amazing samples available. I want to thank the Spectrasonics and Native Instruments teams and Matt Jones from Soundseasy for their help. We are privileged to have some amazing artists featured on this soundtrack. Thank you to Djakapurra Munyarryun, Kathy Marika, Ursula Yovich and Ningali Lawford Wolf for their contribution. When exploring the subject 'Identity' you can't help but reflect on your own experiences. I love my work because I have a passion for it. Being happy with who you are and where you come from is a major step in the right direction of accomplishing anything you put your mind to. I think at 50 I've come to a point in my life where I am happy with what I have achieved, have gratitude to the people that have helped me and can't wait for what's around the corner.

Lyrics from *Initiate*

Djinal nhunu/ dhawal/wuyaninam/yutana nayinga
Yol dhanga nhunu yolnum?
Nala nhugu nayambalk'ma?
Nha nhunu bapurrum?
... ga dharuk'ma?

*From here you are born into a new world
Who are you?
Where's your country?
Who's your tribe?
Ga dharuk*

Dhawurun nhunu narru marngyim
nhunguru djalkiri'wum, ga rom'gum
Naya nhuna narra gunga'yunma

*From here you will learn
Your identity
Your future
I will guide you*

Wangany nalingu gulan
Wanany nalingu bapamingu ga nandimingu
bili rrambangi yaligu rutnbal
yo yapamanytji nail dhangu
narru waripunuuy nayambalk puy

*This is just the beginning of your journey
Believe where you come from
Believe in who you are
Believe in where you're going
Because you know who you are*

Dhayum yana yuta nhungu
Guyaniya nalanuru nhunu dhanu
Guyaniya yol nhunu
Guyaniya nalambal nhunu narrunga yaka

Yolnu

SET DESIGN NOTES

JACOB NASH Artist-in-Residence

This year's new works of *ID* and *About* are two very different works with their own distinct visual language and imagery. The creative journey I have been on whilst creating these works with both Stephen and Elma has been both rich and rewarding. Elma is telling stories from the Torres Strait and investigating how the four winds of the Torres Strait affect, inform and guide people's lives throughout the seasons of the year. The challenge for Elma and me was how to translate the natural element of wind into a visual form of contemporary design onstage. Fortunately, we were able to travel to the Torres Strait at the end of last year and I was able to experience the heat and humidity of the wet season – the rain, the clouds and the ocean during that time of the year. From this journey I began to understand more fully the relationship between the wind and the ocean and how seasonal weather conditions affect this part of the world and play a huge part in the lives of the people who live there. Even though it was a short trip, being a part of the landscape and observing it change throughout the day whilst listening to Elma describe what we were experiencing added a deep layer of understanding, inspiration and greater knowledge to the birth place of Elma's story. Creatively this journey filled me up opening the possibilities of what we were going to create and from this point I begin to explore the abstract concepts of wind, rain and water in the context of a contemporary theatrical setting. It is at this point where the design process really takes shape as you began to explore different materials and textures to visually describe the natural elements, such as wind. It begins by asking questions; for example what is wind? What form does it take? Can it be created through lighting and smoke effects? Should it be a sculptural element, an organic form that suggests several elements of the sky and earth? It is these type of detailed questions and the visual responses to these questions that shape the look of the show and complement the story that Elma is telling.

Working on *ID* with Stephen was a really close to home process of looking at contemporary Aboriginal identity. We talked a lot, and the reference material we looked at was vast – from photos out of the newspaper to music video clips, to more traditional material from Arnhem Land. The more we looked the more we were informed. We ended up with a wall of imagery that began to tell the visual story of what Stephen was describing and creating. The beautiful aspect of both these design journeys is that they are really organic. As the set designer I was allowed the freedom to explore ideas and images with choreographers and thus the process was fluid and reactive. Stephen and I explored several different design possibilities for most of the sections of the work but were always trying to create layered contemporary Indigenous images that made you really engage and question what is in front of you.

At the start of this year, I was appointed an Artist-in-Residence at Bangarra and this has significantly shaped the process of how these two works were created. Becoming a part of the company has not only strengthened my relationship with Bangarra but more importantly given Stephen, Elma and myself the opportunity to create these works in a really focused but organic way. The journey of collaborative creation is an exciting, rich, unexpected and often frustrating, but ultimately a very rewarding experience. You begin on a path together and the further you explore along the way the better the end result. Being 'under the same roof' as the rest of the show developed at Bangarra, I have been able to explore ideas and images in depth but also respond to them rapidly informing the next stage in the design process. Often it is an unexpected conversation that will actually inform the work in a really significant way: it is these moments of clarity that are always the most precious and rewarding part of the design process. Collaboration is about sharing and trust and the journey of *Belong* has travelled many paths. Hopefully both these designs reflect these journeys of collaboration and the stories we want to tell.

COSTUME DESIGN NOTES

EMMA HOWELL

Working with Stephen and Elma on their two very different pieces has meant I have had many opportunities to use a variety of fabrics, textures, and techniques to create costumes that enhance the feel of each work. Designing for dancers is fantastic – such wonderful bodies to display and work with, and the movement factor often calls for creative thinking when designing a costume.

Elma's work, *About*, tells of the different personalities of the winds, and each section called for a specific feel. The idea of all the debris and dust getting swirled up and collected by a hurricane was my inspiration for *Kuki*; I have incorporated feathers, grasses and tattered fabrics into the costumes. *Zey* uses fabrics that move in a fluid motion with the body, and we experimented with ombré dyeing techniques to portray the feel of the cold wind. *Naygay* called for shimmering, shining details which we have created through cut-out panels and layered fabrics.

Stephen's work, *ID*, is a particularly modern and statement-making piece. I worked closely with him to produce costumes that are in some cases an abstract version of streetwear, and in others very dreamlike and poetic. The film sequence, *Initiate*, called for each person to have a distinct "character" whilst still staying in black and white. We achieved this through art finishing, painting patterns of lines and dots to show each person's journey. The *Totem* section is straight from the earth – the stories of clouds, bark and trees called for an abstract interpretation. For this I used shibori dyeing, crinkle pleating and soft draping.

The final section, *Kinship*, tells of each dancer's continuing journey, their connections and the paths they will tread. We chose a heavy grey paint with toned horizontal sections, suggesting layers of rock sediment, and I used quite modern, pared down tailoring, with flashes of midnight blue to accentuate the bodies.

Working with the choreographers, composers, and set designer, as well as some very talented costume makers, has really made my design process a memorable experience. Having a workspace next door to rehearsals has meant I have felt a part of the creation from day one. Being able to sneak in and show bits of fabric or dye work to the choreographers and the dancers is invaluable and has made the process truly collaborative.

LIGHTING DESIGN NOTES

MATT COX

Working on the lighting design on *Belong* has been an absolute privilege and a lot of fun. My process initially involves a lot of talking and observation in order to make sure I can help tell the story as well as complement the other design elements in the performance. I spent a lot of time in the rehearsal room watching the two different works come alive, listening to Stephen or Elma translate their ideas from words into dance. I sat in the workshop with Jake as he played with different set designs and with Emma as she experimented with her costumes and colours. And I joined David in his studio as he created the sounds and music for each piece. I needed to be sure to choose the right colour palette and lighting fixtures to support and create in their own right, images that will help Stephen and Elma tell their stories. They are two very different themes and stories and so the early stage of my process is quite a lot of observation and just taking in the show. In my work I try to refine my ideas as much as possible and then when we head into the theatre, that's when I really get to put my work in to action.

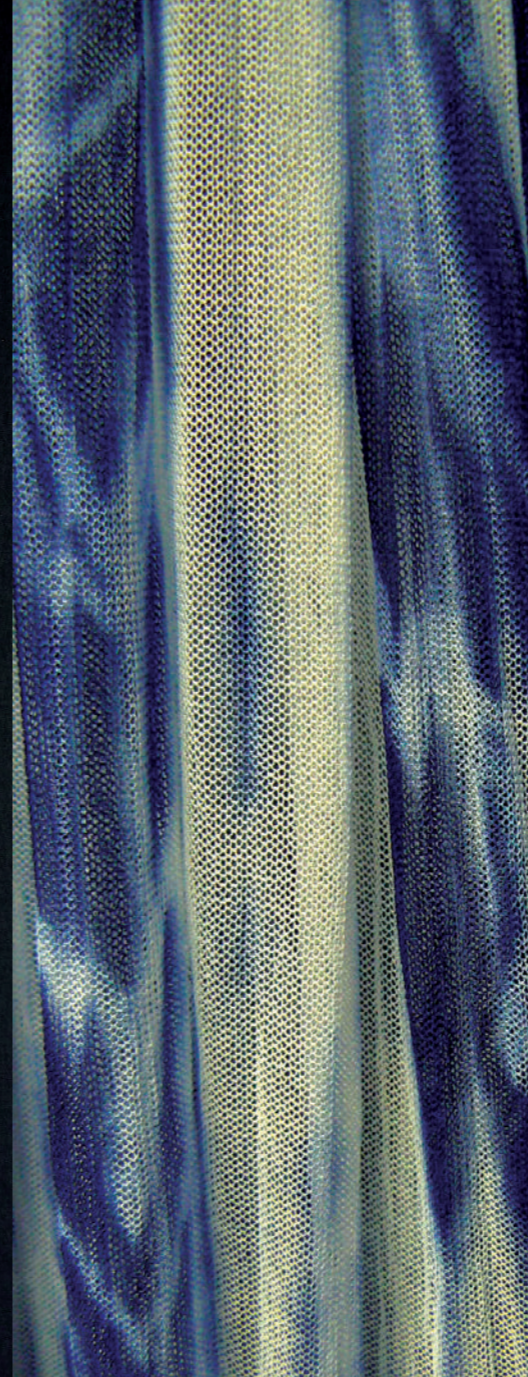


IMAGE OF COSTUME DESIGN BY EMMA HOWELL
AND SET DESIGN BY JACOB NASH



CREDITS

Creative Artists

Artistic Director
Rehearsal Director
Choreographers

Cultural Advisors (*ID*)

Cultural Advisor (*About*)
Composer (*ID*)
Composers (*About*)
Set Designer
Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
AV Designer (*ID*)
Cinematographer
Dramaturg Advisor (*ID*)

Artists-in-Residence

Stephen Page
Catherine Goss
Stephen Page (*ID*)
Elma Kris (*About*)
Kathy Balngayngu Marika
Djakapurra Munyarryun
Peggy Misi
David Page
David Page/Steve Francis
Jacob Nash
Emma Howell
Matt Cox
Declan McMonagle
Eric Murray Lui
Alana Valentine

Kathy Marika
Jacob Nash
David Page
Frances Rings

Dancers

Sidney Saltner, Elma Kris, Yolande Brown, Patrick Thaiday, Deborah Brown, Jhuny-Boy Borja, Waangenga Blanco, Tara Gower, Leonard Mickelo, Daniel Riley McKinley, Jasmin Sheppard, Ella Havelka, Tara Robertson
Trainee Dancers: Travis De Vries, Kaine Sultan-Babij

Production

Production Manager
Stage Manager
Head Mechanist
Head Electrician
ASM/ Costume Supervisor
ASM (Brisbane)
Set Construction
Scenic Artists
Costume Cutter
Costume Makers

Costume Art Finishing
ASM Trainee

Phoebe Collier
Kate Williams
Kayne Johnson
Padraig O Suillebhain
Emma Howell
Millie Adams
Planet Engineering
Scenographic Studio
Ellen Doyle
Brett Chamberlain
Glennond Casey
Ruby Langton-Batty
Megan Venhoek
Louanna Sainsbury

Belong – Music Credits

Matt Jones from 'Soundseasy', Spectrasonics, Logic Audio Sony ATV Publishing, Native Instruments, Torie Lista Sound Engineer, Nikinali Music Studio, Peter King And The Gang

Belong – Music Artists

Kathy Marika, Djakapurra Munyarryun, Yolande Brown, Waangenga Blanco, Rhimi Page-Johnson, Bangarra Dance Ensemble, Peggy Misi, William Satrick, Ningali Lawford, Elma Kris, Ursula Yovich, Steve Francis and Helen Anu

Belong – Special thanks to:

Rick Best, Phillipe Debar, Rod Nash, Rodney Clarke, Estelle Ginsberg, Russell Carey, Chameleon Touring Systems, Herkes Professional Lighting, Showfreight, Rob Murphy, Peter England, Global Colours Australia, The Seymour Centre, Pattons Awnings, Production Resource Group, Mark Collins, Andrew Robertson, Carl Mullin, Helen Anu, William Satrick, Bindi Cole, Hunter Page-Lochard, Alphabet Studio, Erin Daly

Management

Executive Director
Manager, Operations & Sponsorship
Manager, Marketing & Communications
Manager, Philanthropy & Government Relations
Business Manager
Financial Controller
Company Manager
Marketing Coordinator
Marketing & Media Coordinator
Administrative Coordinator
Geek in Residence
Personal Assistant

Catherine Baldwin
Michael O'Rourke
Nathalie Vallejo
Nicholas Hartley
Aaron Beach
David Lloyd
Amy Hammond
Sarah Whelan
Carolyn Hammer
Helen Anu
Daniel Andrews
Aodhan King

Board of Directors

Larissa Behrendt (Chair), Paul Wand AM, Tanya Hosch, Lee-Ann Buckskin, Lynn Ralph, Stephen Page



STEPHEN PAGE

Artistic Director & Choreographer of *ID*

Born in Brisbane, Stephen is a descendant of the Nunukul people and the Munaldjali dan of the Yugambah tribe from southeast Queensland.

Stephen studied at NAISDA and after graduating in 1983 he began his professional dancing career with Sydney Dance Company. During 1988 he toured internationally with Aboriginal and Islander Dance Theatre (AIDT) and in 1989 was artistic director of NAISDA's production *Kayn Walu*. After returning to Sydney Dance Company for two years, Stephen was appointed Artistic Director of Bangarra Dance Theatre in 1991 and has since created 12 new dance theatre works for the company.

Stephen has developed Bangarra's distinctive performance style drawing on over 50,000 years of Aboriginal culture and translating the traditional stories, music and dance into a contemporary theatrical experience.

Under his leadership, Bangarra has built a strong reputation touring throughout Australia and the world, including New York, Washington, Paris, London and Germany. Memorable works *Ochres*, *Skin* ('Best New Australian Work' and 'Best Dance Work', 2001 Helpmann Awards), *Bush* ('Best Dance Work', 2004 Helpmann Awards), and *Mathinna* ('Best Dance Work' and 'Best Choreography', 2009 Helpmann Awards) have become milestones in Australian performing arts.

Significantly, Stephen has choreographed *Rites* to Stravinsky's score – a collaboration between Bangarra and The Australian Ballet and he directed Indigenous sections for the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies. As Artistic Director of the 2004 Adelaide Festival of the Arts, Stephen was praised for reinvigorating the event with an impressive and highly successful world-class program. Stephen's film and theatre credits include the contemporary operatic film *Black River*, numerous music video clips, directing his brother David Page on stage in the highly acclaimed *Page 8* which toured Australia and the UK and most recently he choreographed the film *Bran Nue Dae*.

In 2008 Stephen was named NSW Australian of the Year in recognition of his efforts to bring cultures together through the performing arts and his commitment to developing the next generation of Indigenous storytellers by mentoring emerging artists.

In 2009 Bangarra celebrated 20 years with *Fire: A Retrospective* presenting the signature works of Bangarra's repertoire. For this celebration Stephen invited over one hundred artists who had worked with Bangarra,

including the founders of the company, to a special performance of *Fire* at the Sydney Opera House.

Stephen received the 2010 Helpmann Award for 'Best Choreography' for *Fire* and a further two awards for the company; Best Ballet/Dance Work for *Fire* and Best Regional Touring Production for *True Stories*.

In 2010, Stephen was also honoured at the Australian Dance Awards for his Services to Dance and accepted Bangarra Dance Theatre's award for 'Outstanding Performance by a Company' for *Fire: A Retrospective*. Continuing his commitment to the next generation of indigenous storytellers, Stephen commissioned and mentored Frances Rings and Daniel Riley McKinley in their new works for Bangarra's season of *of earth & sky*.

In 2011 Stephen is also working in collaboration with Wayne Blair and Kathy Balngayngu Marika, writing and directing *Bloodland* for Sydney Theatre Company in association with Bangarra Dance Theatre and choreographing for the feature film *The Sapphires*.

This year is Stephen's 20th year as Artistic Director of Bangarra and *ID* is his 13th work for the company.



ELMA KRIS

Choreographer of *About & Dancer*

Elma was raised on Thursday Island in the Torres Strait. She is a descendant of the Wagadagam, Kaurareg, Sipingur, Gebbara, Kai Danggal Buai of the Western and Central Islands of the Torres Strait. Elma's tribal totems are Wagadam, Kigus, Kadal, Snake, Danggal, Waru, Warup, Umai, Serra, Walisirsir, Pibi, and Umailag. Her language is Kulkagau Ya, Kala Kawaw Ya and Kala Lagaw Ya.

Elma completed a Visual Arts course in 1993 and taught at the Thursday Island TAFE. In 1994 she joined NAISDA choreographing and performing in *Bupau Ipikazil* and *Bupau Mabigal*.

Elma has appeared in the films *Oscar and Lucinda*, *Reef Dreaming*, *Farscape* and the ABC radio broadcast: *Not Your Mob Next Door*. In 1997 Elma joined Bangarra under NAISDA's ADAPT Program and performed in *Fish*. After graduating Elma joined the Aboriginal Islander Dance Theatre Company for her first international tour with *Warup Kodominir*. She later performed in Albert David's *Bipotim for Dance Clan*.

Elma founded her own dance group named *Bibir* (Strength) and choreographed *Malu*, presented as part of *Artyfact* at the Opera House. Her work *Bupau Ipikazil* appeared as part of *Fusion* at the Sydney ANA Hotel. In 1999 Elma joined Bangarra and toured the UK with *The Dreaming* and was part of *Dance Clan 2*.

Elma danced at the Olympic Arts Festival and at the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, and choreographed the Torres Strait Island element of the Opening Ceremony. She also danced in Gail Mabo's *Koiki*, Bangarra's *Bush* in the UK, *Walkabout*, *Unaipon*, *Boomerang* and *Gathering*.

In 2007, in her choreographic debut for Bangarra, Elma created *Emeret Lu*, as part of Bangarra's *True Stories* program. *Emeret Lu* was named 'Best New Work' in the 2007 Critics' Survey and in recognition of her outstanding achievements as a dancer, in 2007 Elma received a Deadly Award for 'Dancer of the Year'. In 2009 after a highly successful European tour, it culminated in a special performance on Mer Island.

In 2008 Elma Kris performed the title role in *Mathinna* and in 2009 danced in Bangarra's 20th Anniversary program *Fire – A Retrospective*. During 2010 she featured in Peter Sellars' *Oedipus Rex/Symphony of Psalms* as part of the Sydney Festival, performed in Bangarra's *of earth & sky* and the regional tour of *Mathinna*.

About is Elma's second choreographic work for Bangarra.



CATHERINE GOSS
Rehearsal Director

The past twelve years have seen Catherine hold artistic positions with a wide variety of companies. As Rehearsal Director, she has worked with Bangarra Dance Theatre (*Bush*, *Unaipon*, *Rush*, *True Stories*, *Fire*, *Spirit*, *Mathinna* and *of earth and sky*), TasDance, Sydney Dance Company (*Underland*, *Mercury*) and Tanja Liedtke's construct for the 2009 tour. She has held the position of Assistant to the Director of Australian Dance Theatre (2002).

Catherine was Associate Artistic Director of West Australian Ballet from 2005-2007. During this time she was also a member of WA Ausdance Organising Committee.

Catherine was awarded the Centenary Federation Medal for Services to Dance in 2003. She was the recipient of an Australia Council grant for Skills and Development in 2008 and travelled throughout Europe. Before returning to Australia in February 2009, she was interim Ballet Mistress for *Introdans* in The Netherlands.

Catherine took up her current position as rehearsal director for Bangarra Dance Theatre in 2010.

Catherine's formative years of dance training were in Canberra under the guidance of Janet Karin and Bryan Lawrence. Travelling with her parents she spent a year in Chicago (1977) learning under Stone/Cameron and Ellis/DuBoulay. After graduating from Victorian College of the Arts in 1986 under the watchful eye of Anne Woolliams, Catherine joined Royal New Zealand Ballet (1987 – 1991) attaining the rank of soloist. Her other performance credits include Sydney Dance Company (1991 – 1992 and 1996 – 1999). While with SDC she performed in *Poppy*, *Shakespeare Dances*, *Piano Sonata*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Synergy with Synergy*, *Free Radicals*, *Air and other Invisible Forces*, to name a few. Travelling overseas she joined Reflexdansgezelschaft for the 1993-1994 season (Netherlands) and she also performed with numerous projects both in Australia and Europe during her performance career. She travelled and performed both nationally and internationally with each company. She has been guest teacher for a number of companies and tertiary training institutions over the past decade.

Her choreographic credits include *One* and *Mbili* for SDC's *Freefall* and *New Blood* seasons and *Tatu* and *A'raha*, both for West Australian Ballet.



DAVID PAGE
Composer (*ID & About*)

David Page studied saxophone, voice, composition and song at the Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music (CASM) at Adelaide University. David has composed music for Bangarra's major works: *Praying Mantis Dreaming* (1992), *Ochres* (1995), *Ninni* (1996), *Fish* (1997), *Skin* (2000), *Corroboree* (2001), *Bush* (2003), *Unaipon/Clan* (2004), *Boomerang* (2005), *X300* (2007) and *Mathinna* (2008).

In 2000, David in collaboration with Steve Francis contributed music to the Opening Ceremonies of the Sydney Olympic Games, the Sydney Olympic Arts Festival and, in 2002, the Sydney Dreaming Festival. David composed for The Australian Ballet's *Alchemy* (1997) and collaborated with Elena Kats Chernin on *Amalgamate* (2007). David has numerous television credits including music for *Heartland*, *Pride* (part of the Seven Deadly Sins series) and *Poison* for the ABC, and themes for *Songlines*, *Living Black* and *Pioneers of Love* for SBS. David's short film scores include *Round Up*, *Passing Through*, *Grace* and *Saturday Night Sunday Morning*, and five of the thirteen *Bit of Black Business* AFC short film series. He composed for the short film *Jacob*, selected for the 2009 Melbourne International Film Festival.

Since 1995, David has won four of his eight nominations for the Deadly's Sound Awards, an ARIA nomination for *Heartland* in 1996, and was the inaugural winner of the Indigenous Artist Award for The Sidney Myer Foundation in 2000. He also received the 2006 Green Room Award for his solo performance in *Page 8* as the Best New Australian Play. David received a Helpmann Award for Best original Score for *Mathinna* in 2009.

In 2010, David created the musical soundscape for Bangarra's *of earth & sky* and in 2011 was appointed Artist-in-Residence with Bangarra, composing music for the company's new program *Belong*.



STEVE FRANCIS
Composer (*About*)

Steve Francis is a composer and sound designer originally from Adelaide with a secret past in the music industry. An opportunity to produce and mix David Page's work on *Alchemy* for The Australian Ballet in 1997 led to a long and fruitful collaboration with Bangarra.

He has since composed music for the Bangarra productions of *Fire*, *True Stories*, *Walkabout*, *Bush*, *Boomerang*, *Skin* and *Corroboree*.

As composer and sound designer he has also worked with Sydney's premier theatre companies. A selection of his work includes *The Removalists*, *Rabbit*, *Pig Iron People*, *Hamlet*, *The Great*, *Gallipoli*, *Embers* and *The White Guard* for Sydney Theatre Company, *The Power of Yes*, *The Book of Everything*, *Ruben Guthrie*, *Baghdad Wedding*, *Keating*, *Paul*, *Parramatta Girls*, *Capricornia*, *Page 8*, *Gulpillil* and *Box the Pony* for Belvoir, *Speaking in Tongues* and *Strange Attractor* for Griffin and *Romeo and Juliet* for Bell Shakespeare.

Steve's work in film and television includes *Cops LAC*, *Dangerous*, *Double Trouble*, *Djarn Djarns*, *Mr Patterns* and *The Burnt Cork*.

With David Page, Steve also composed for the Sydney Olympic and Rugby World Cup opening ceremonies.

As well as two nominations for sound design, Steve won Helpmann Awards for Best Original Score and Best New Australian Work in 2003 for the Bangarra production of *Walkabout*.





JACOB NASH
Set Designer

Jacob is a murri man who grew up in Brisbane. He graduated from the NIDA Design Course in 2005. He designed *of earth & sky* for Bangarra in 2010 winning a Greenroom Award for Best Design in Dance, and was appointed Artist-in-Residence at Bangarra Dance Theatre in 2011.

His other theatre credits include *The Lonesome West*, *Ruben Guthrie* and *Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train* (BSharp); *Yibiyung* and *Ruben Guthrie* (Belvoir St Theatre); *Macbeth* (Bell Shakespeare); *The Removalists*, *Tusk Tusk/ Like a Fishbone* (Sydney Theatre Company) and *Romeo and Juliet* (Sydney Theatre Company – Education); *Rainbow's End* (Parramatta Riverside Theatre); *Into: Belonging* (Sydney Festival/ Parramatta Riverside Theatre).

He worked in the costume department on Baz Luhrmann's *Australia* and in 2006, Jacob wrote and directed *Blood Lines*, a five-minute short film. Jacob also was a recipient of the British Council initiative *Realise Your Dreams* in 2008.



EMMA HOWELL
Costume Designer

Emma has worked in costume since she graduated from NIDA in 2004. Born in Sydney, she has worked in film, theatre and television.

Previously she has worked as Costume Supervisor and ASM on Bangarra shows *Spirit, of earth & sky*, *Fire – A Retrospective*, *True Stories*, *Clan*, and an assistant on *Mathinna*.

She lived and worked in London for several years, where she was a costumier at Cosprop, which produced costumes for films such as *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Atonement* and *Pride and Prejudice*.

Emma has worked as a costume maker for Melbourne Theatre Company's productions of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Frost/Nixon*, *Scarlett O'Hara at the Crimson Parrot* and *The Hypocrite*; *Circus Oz's 30th Birthday show*; *Eucalyptus*; costumes for *Ivanov* and *Already Elsewhere* for the Sydney Festival; cutter for *Sunday in the Park with George*; and a costume assistant for Opera Australia. She has also worked as a maker and costume assistant for *Hi-5*, *All Saints* and *The Colony*.

Belong will be Emma's first production with Bangarra as Costume Designer.



MATT COX
Lighting Designer

Matt has designed lighting for *Ruby Moon* (STC Education); *Fools Island* (Tamarama Rock Surfers); *Romeo and Juliet* (Bell Shakespeare Education); *BUG* (Griffin Independent Productions); *The Oracle* (Meryl Tankard); *One Long Night in the Land of Nod* (Floogle); *A Woman in Berlin* (Splinter Theatre); *Halfway There* (JUTE theatre); *Beyond the Neck* (Bambina Boracha); *The Seed* (Company B); *Tender* (Nowyesnow with Griffin); *Killer Joe* (Adam Booth); *The Red Shoe* (Jigsaw) and *Vital Organs* (Easily Distracted). Other theatre credits include Lighting Associate for *Haunted* (Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester); *My Bicycle Loves You* (Legs on the Wall); *Waiting for Godot* Australian Tour (Kay and McLean Productions in association with The Royal Haymarket Company); *The Government Inspector* (Bell Shakespeare); *The 39 Steps* and *Talking Heads* (Tinderbox Productions). In 2010, Matt was the Associate Lighting Designer for *of earth & sky*.





PEGGY MISI
Cultural Advisor (*About*)

Peggy is from Mabuig Island in the Torres Strait. She is a descendant of the Wagedegem tribe and associate of the Panai Sipi Ngur clan.

Peggy spent her childhood learning her people's tradition and living in their way. At twelve years of age she left her Torres Strait Island home and moved away to the city where she was bombarded with all the new information of modern life. Peggy was particularly amused and interested by television that she had never seen or heard before.

Although she had left her island home, her culture would always be a driving force in her life. Peggy joined NAISDA in 1995 as a mature-aged student, expanding her knowledge of dance from traditional to modern.

After graduating from NAISDA, she joined Bangarra Dance Theatre in 1999. A highlight of her time with Bangarra was touring New York with The Australian Ballet in her first year. It was like she had stepped into the television set and she was experiencing all the places she had seen before—but now first hand.

In 2001 Peggy contributed additional music composition and cultural consultancy for *Turtle*, as a part of *Corroboree*.

Peggy left Bangarra at the end of 2004 to go back to Cairns to be with her family. In 2005 - 2006 Peggy taught contemporary classes at TAFE college in Cairns along with a long time friend Rita Pryce. When the TAFE program was completed Peggy and Rita decided to put a contemporary dance group together called *Baiwa*, meaning waterspout. Formed in 2005 they performed with Gail Mabi in *Koiki* in 2007.

Peggy also toured to China to dance for the opening of her brother's art exhibition in 2006. She performed for the pope's visit in Sydney in 2007 and choreographed with Rita Pryce for *Warupau uu* in 2010.

Peggy is worked with Elma Kris as a cultural consultant with Elma's new work *About*. Peggy has also worked in film including *Bran Nue Dae* (2008)

Peggy's life ambition is to share her culture with all those who are interested. She enjoys conducting workshops with children. Her inspiration comes from seeing her godchild Patrick dancing at an early age. It shows her that the culture will live on.



DECLAN McMONAGLE
AV Designer

Born in Ireland and raised in Melbourne, Declan moved to Sydney in 2002 to study. He graduated from NIDA with a degree in Technical Production in 2004. Since graduating, Declan has worked as an AV operator and consultant in a variety of settings. His theatrical experience includes *Dirty Dancing*, *The Lion King*, *Walking with Dinosaurs*, Sydney Dance Company, Australian Chamber Orchestra (*The Red Leaf*), DV8 Physical Theatre, Queensland Theatre Company (*Water Falling Down*) and various commercial events. In the corporate arena he has been involved with projects including Sydney Harbour Bridge NYE celebrations (projection), Sydney Christmas lights projection and countless corporate events.

Declan has toured both Australia and the world on many different productions. A recent career highlight was touring North America, London, Paris, and Stockholm with DV8 Physical Theatre's production of *To Be Straight With You* in 2008. Recently, he has continued to develop his career in the area of dance theatre and enjoyed a national tour of *360* with Sydney Dance Company working as AV Operator.

Declan began working for Bangarra in 2009 as AV Operator on the national tour of *Fire – A Retrospective*. He was also very excited to be AV Designer and Operator on *of earth & sky* in 2010. Declan is pleased to be involved with Bangarra again working as AV Designer on *Belong*. As well as being a part of Bangarra's production team, Declan also enjoys filming their shows for archival purposes and creating promotional footage. He hopes to have more opportunities to develop his visual design skills in the future.



SIDNEY SALTNER
Dancer

Sidney is from the Wulli Wulli people of central Queensland.

He graduated from the National Aboriginal Skills Development Association (NAISDA) College in 1991. Whilst studying he performed with The Aboriginal Islander Dance Theatre (AIDT) and undertook his apprenticeship with the Australian Dance Theatre.

Sidney performance credits include film, opera and television productions such as *Harold* ('91-'92); *River Woman* (Bodies '96); *Senesino* (Mardi Gras Festival '97); and *The Pearl Fishers* (Opera Australia 2000), *Billie's Holiday* and the film *Fish*.

Sidney has performed and taught extensively throughout Australia and internationally in Asia, North and South America, Europe, South Africa and the Pacific Islands.

In April 1992, Sidney joined AIDT and was appointed Assistant Artistic Director. Featured roles included *Maralji*, *Colours*, *Gelam*, *Asik*, *Sanctum*, *Drums of Mer* and *Frontier Stories*: a collaboration with Side Track Theatre. Sidney also appeared in *Cockroach Opera* - a collaboration with Company B Belvoir.

In 1997, Sidney became a member of Bangarra Dance Theatre, performing major roles in all of Bangarra's productions from 1997 – 2010. Sidney also featured in the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games Arts Festival, the Opening and Closing ceremonies of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

In 2003, Sidney was nominated for Best Male Dancer in both the Australian Dance Awards and the 2003 Deadly Awards. In 2004, Sidney was nominated for a Mo Award for his role in Bangarra's production of *Bush*.

In 2006, Sidney performed to critical acclaim in Bangarra's collaboration with The Australian Ballet, *Gathering*. This was Sidney's second appearance with The Australian Ballet, dancing in *Rites* in Australia (1997) and in the international tour to the United States (1999), Paris and London (2008).

Sidney was appointed Bangarra's Rehearsal Director for *Boomerang* (2005) and again in 2009 for the Company's acclaimed *Fire: a Retrospective*.

In 2010, he performed in Bangarra's double bill *of earth & sky*, toured nationally with *Mathinna* and appeared as a guest artist in *Classico Italiano* in Milan in a program of the world's foremost classical and contemporary dancers. He commenced 2011 with Bangarra's highly successful European tour of *Spirit*.



YOLANDE BROWN
Dancer

Yolande is a descendant of the Bidjara clan of the Kunja nation, central Queensland and also shares French and Celtic origins.

She believes that people can achieve whatever they set their hearts on. A keen scholar, Yolande received the Australian Students' Prize of Excellence – a scholarship awarded to the top 500 Australian high school graduates. She completed a C.Mus.A (AMEB) in piano performance and a BA (Dance) at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT). She has been a Guest Lecturer and choreographer at QUT and was the 2005 recipient of the QUT *Outstanding Alumni Award for the Creative Industries*.

Yolande's history with Bangarra spans 13 years. Her career highlights include dancing traditional 'out bush' with the Pitjantjajara and Yirrkala people, performing in *Rites* (a collaboration with The Australian Ballet - New York/Paris), and *Corroboree* (BAM Festival - New York). One of her favourite and most challenging experiences has been contributing her interpretations to the role of Lady Jane Franklin in Bangarra's *Mathinna*.

In 2010, she was honoured to receive the Deadly Award for "Best Dancer". She has been nominated for 'Best Female Dancer' in the Greenroom awards (2008) and the Dance Australia's Critics' Choice as 'Most Outstanding Dancer' and 'Dancer to Watch' (2004, 2007).

Yolande regularly contributes vocals to Bangarra soundtracks and in 2006 she produced an EP featuring her original songs, of which *River* was a finalist in the Queensland Song Awards (2008). She loves playing her music at various establishments in Sydney (myspace.com/yolandeb). She appeared nationally in the musical *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* (2002-04) directed by Nadia Tass. This highly acclaimed production enabled her to further explore her acting and singing talents in a principal role as Susan Pevensie. She enjoyed collaborating with TaikOz, Meryl Tankard, Regis Lansac and dancers in the sold out production of Sydney Festival's *Kaidan* (2007).

Yolande recently reconnected with her traditional Bidjara homeland and people, an unforgettable journey where she was able to experience the land and share dance workshops with her community.

Yolande was excited to tour *Spirit* internationally this year. She looks forward to performing in *Belong* and once again reawakening the character of Lady Jane Franklin for regional tour 2011, *Mathinna*.



PATRICK THAIDAY
Dancer

Patrick was born in Biloela, Queensland and grew up in Mackay - his parents come from lama and Erub in the Torres Strait Islands. He believes that his in-built desire to dance is derived from his parents' ancestors who originated from Lifu, South Sea Islands and Jamaica. With a strong cultural background, he learnt traditional dances from an early age.

During his years at North Mackay High State School, he choreographed for and performed in school musicals, variety concerts and dance competitions.

While working for Queensland Health, Patrick's family and friends encouraged him to pursue a career in dance. In 1999 he moved to Sydney to study at NAISDA, performing both traditional and contemporary dance. He completed his three years at NAISDA and did six weeks ADAPT in Adelaide with Leigh Warren and Dancers. He also performed with Bangarra and Christine Anu at the Closing Ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games.

Patrick joined Bangarra Dance Theatre in 2002, where his solo in *Walkabout* earned him recognition for his talents. Since then this critically acclaimed dancer has received prestigious awards for his performances in *Clan* (2004), *Boomerang* (2005) and *Gathering* (2006) and *True Stories* (2007). In 2008 Patrick performed in Stephen Page's *Mathinna*.

In 2009 Patrick travelled to Europe with Bangarra to perform *True Stories* and later helped Bangarra celebrate its 20th Anniversary with *Fire – A Retrospective*. In 2010 he performed in Bangarra's double bill *of earth & sky* to outstanding acclaim. Patrick's recent highlights include performing at the 2011 Indigenous All Stars NRL game and the *Spirit* tour of Europe at the start of the year.

Patrick is inspired by Stephen Page's ongoing ability to create unique works and his rapport with the dancers. He is looking forward to Bangarra's latest work, *Belong*.



DEBORAH BROWN
Dancer

Born in Brisbane, Deborah is a descendant of Wakaid Clan, Badu Island. Her grandmother is a descendant of Mer people, Murray Island. Her totems are Beizam (the shark) and the moth. She also acknowledges her Scottish heritage.

At age 5, Deborah began dance classes at the Pamela Le Ray School of Dance, Brisbane, where she studied Tap, Modern, Jazz and Ballet (RAD). Under their tutelage, Deborah worked with choreographers such as Elsie Seaguss and Natalie Weir. She then turned her focus to acting and trained at The Actors Conservatory, Brisbane.

After a 7 year hiatus from dance Deborah joined Bangarra in 2003 and has enjoyed her involvement with Bangarra's extensive repertoire. 2009 marked a milestone with Bangarra, celebrating 20 years with *Fire – A Retrospective* and also marked a career highlight for Deborah by earning a nomination for Best Female Dancer in a Dance or Physical Theatre Production in the 2010 Helpmann Awards.

Other highlights with the company range from Bangarra's return to country experiences including Mer Island and Yirrkala, to travelling overseas to theatres such as Brooklyn Academy of Music's Harvey Theatre and Theatre du Châtelet, Paris with The Australian ballet co-production.

Deborah has also worked with Kooemba Jdarra Performing Arts, conducting movement and dance workshops with various schools throughout Queensland. Here, she also gained her first professional role as "Pearl" in *Luck of the Draw* (2000) at the Queensland Performing Arts Complex. Other credits include a *World Around Us special*, *Bush Survival* (2004) and as a Roebuck Dancer in the popular Australian film *Bran Nue Dae* (2010).

Deborah's inspiration comes from her family, especially her parents. They both come from opposite ends of the world, with cultural backgrounds that enrich her and teach her to be proud of her identity.



JHUNY-BOY BORJA
Dancer

Jhuny was born in Manila, The Philippines, and was brought up in the outback town of Katherine in the Northern Territory.

In 2002 Jhuny completed his Bachelor of Arts with Honours at WAAPA and was a founding member of LINK Dance Company, working with some of Perth's leading choreographers. He has also performed with Shih Gee-Tze's Acme Physical Theatre (Taiwan), with One Extra Dance, collaborating with many of Sydney's established independent artists, and at the Australian Choreographic Centre.

Jhuny joined Bangarra Dance Theatre in 2003 and has since danced in the company's new works *Bush*, *Clan*, *Boomerang*, *True Stories*, *Mathinna*, and *of earth & sky*. His company repertoire also includes *Rush*, *Reflections*, The Australian Ballet collaboration *Gathering* and most recently the international tour of *Spirit*. In 2009 he helped Bangarra celebrate its 20th Anniversary with *Fire – A Retrospective*. He has also toured with the company to the Torres Strait island of Mer and to Yirrkala and Dhalinybuy in North East Arnhem Land; career highlights that he is grateful and honoured to have experienced.

Beyond Bangarra, Jhuny has also worked as a software engineer and completed his Bachelor of Science at the Australian National University majoring in pure mathematics. He has developed and enhanced his skills in web technologies through the SCOPE program for further professional career development for dancers.

Jhuny feels absolutely privileged and thankful to be a part of Bangarra, learning about and embodying the indigenous culture of this land and bringing it to the world and back to the people it came from.



WAANGENGA BLANCO
Dancer

Waangenga Blanco is a descendant of the Meriam Island people and of the Pajinka Wik, Cape York.

After completing 3 years of study at NAISDA, Waangenga was invited to join Bangarra. During that year he toured internationally with *Bush* and nationally with *Boomerang*.

2006 saw Waangenga perform for other choreographers such as Vicky Van Hout in *Wiradjourni* and Meryl Tankard in *Kaidan*. He was also a lead dancer for the Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony.

Waangenga re-joined Bangarra in 2007, dancing in *Clan* and *True Stories* nationwide. In 2008 Waangenga performed in *Mathinna* nationwide and toured to Europe, US and Canada with *Rites* and *Awakenings*.

In 2009 Waangenga toured to Europe with *True Stories* and helped Bangarra celebrate its 20th Anniversary with *Fire – A Retrospective*. He was also nominated for a 2009 Deadly Award for Dancer of the Year.

In 2010 he performed in Bangarra's *Mathinna* and in the acclaimed double bill *of earth & sky* touring throughout Australia. He also joined the company on their 2011 European tour of *Spirit*.



TARA GOWER
Dancer

Tara is a Broome girl and joined Bangarra Dance Theatre in 2006. She has performed in *Clan*, *Spirit*, *Bush* and *Gathering* (a collaboration with The Australian Ballet). Highlights include performing at Sadler's Wells in London and returning home to Western Australia to perform for her family. Tara was also nominated for 'Dancer to Watch' in Dance Australia's Critic's Choice awards.

In 2007 and 2008 Tara performed *True Stories* both in Australia and in Europe and with Bangarra and toured *Mathinna* around Australia. Performing *Rites* in Paris and *Awakening* in New York have been career highlights. She was also a dancer in the movie *Bran Nue Dae* (2010).

In 2009 Tara helped Bangarra celebrate its 20th anniversary with *Fire - A Retrospective*. This year brought a string of memorable moments including travelling to Yirrkala and performing classic Bangarra repertoire such as *Ochres*.

Tara performed in Bangarra's *Mathinna* in 2010 and in the double bill *of earth & sky*, touring throughout Australia.



LEONARD MICKELO
Dancer

Born in Ipswich, Queensland, Leonard is a descendant of the Wakka Wakka tribe, Bidjara nation, Gungahlu tribe and Juduwa mob from Springsure black water and Barramba station (Cherbourg). His parents are from Cherbourg.

In 1997 he began studying Tap, Modern Jazz and Classical Ballet under the direction of Fiona M'lvor at the Fiona Armstrong Dance Academy in Biloela. He completed his studies in dance in Brisbane under the direction of Sandra Breen at The Southern Academy of Dance.

Leonard's performance history includes performing in the Queensland Wakakirri Story Dance Eisteddfod in 2004 with his secondary school, receiving runner up in the state; as a special guest artist in the Laidley Mayor's Command Performances in 2003, 2004 and 2005; in physical theatre productions with the Toowoomba University; as lead in many Queensland musical theatre performing arts groups.

He has received outstanding results competing in Dance Festivals and Eisteddfods all over Queensland. He has received awards including the Most Outstanding Male Dancer of the Year at the Rockhampton Festival (2003, 2004).

In 2006, Leonard joined Bangarra, performing first in *Rites* and *Amalgamate*, a double-bill collaboration with The Australian Ballet. Leonard toured with Bangarra to the UK, performing *Bush* to rave reviews.

Since 2008, Leonard has performed in Stephen Page's acclaimed *Mathinna*, helped Bangarra celebrate its 20th Anniversary with *Fire – A Retrospective*. and in 2010 he performed in Bangarra's double bill *of earth & sky*.

Leonard's mentor is his foster mum, who opened Leonard's heart to dance.



DANIEL RILEY MCKINLEY
Dancer

Daniel's bloodline runs through the Riley clan of the Wiradjuri people, from the Wellington area of western New South Wales.

From 1998 to 2003 Daniel was a performer and member of *Quantum Leap*, an initiative of QL2 Centre For Youth Dance in Canberra. He was also an inaugural member of Cadi McCarthy and Company Members.

Daniel went on to attend the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane graduating with an Associate Degree in Dance in 2006.

In 2005 Daniel was the recipient of an Australia Council grant titled Making Tracks, which allowed him to spend seven months with Leigh Warren & Dancers in Adelaide. During this time he performed in two brand new works, *Like No One Is Watching* and *Petroglyphs-Signs Of Life*, touring the latter to the 2006 Indigenous dance festival *The Dreaming* in Woodford, QLD.

Daniel joined Bangarra in 2007. Since then he has toured and performed nationally in *Clan*, *True Stories*, *Mathinna*, *Fire - A Retrospective* and *of earth & sky*. Internationally he has performed *Rites*, with The Australian Ballet, *True Stories*, *Awakenings* and *Spirit*.

In 2010 Daniel was nominated for Dancer of the Year at the Deadly awards as well as an Australian Dance Award for Outstanding Performance by a Male Dancer for his performance in *Fire - A Retrospective*. Also that year, he was nominated to apply for the worldwide Rolex Mentor & Protege Initiative.

Last year Daniel made his choreographic debut for Bangarra with the work *Riley*, from the double bill *of earth & sky*. The work was inspired by his cousin Michael Riley's well-known photographic series, *cloud*.



JASMIN SHEPPARD
Dancer

Jasmin, a descendant of the Walangamma tribe in the Gulf of Carpentaria, was born in Brisbane and raised in Melbourne.

At 18 she began full time training in musical theatre and completed three years at The Dance Factory, Melbourne. During this time she performed in *Hair: The Musical* (David Atkins, The Production Company, 2002) and The Green Room Awards (2002). In addition to this she obtained qualifications to teach Jazz and Tap dance to Advanced level.

In 2002, she studied for a further two years at NAISDA Dance College, working under choreographers such as Jason Pitt, Bernadette Walong, and Jennifer Newman-Preston.

During her time at NAISDA she was privileged to learn traditional dance from Yirrkala and Mornington Island regions, and Darnley and Badu Islands in the Torres Strait. She was particularly inspired by Mornington Island dance, (also known as Lardil), and felt spiritually touched in every lesson, later discovering that her tribe is closely situated to the Mornington Island region.

Jasmin's other recent work includes: *Screen Dancer*; Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony, '*The Migrant Project*' *Creative Arts Show*, and *2006 Australian Dance Awards* choreographed by Jason Pitt.

Jasmin joined Bangarra in 2007, and has performed in *True Stories*, *Mathinna*, *Fire – A Retrospective*, *of earth & sky* and on the European tour of *Spirit*.

Jasmin hopes to inspire others when she dances, just as those who went before her in the industry inspired her to dance.



ELLA HAVELKA
Dancer

Born in Dubbo, Ella is a descendant of the Wiradjuri people. She graduated from the Australian Ballet School in 2007 after touring with the Dancers Company Tour.

In 2008, Ella was honoured to be able to work with former Bangarra dancers; Gina Rings, Albert David and Sani Ray in *Petroglyphs*. For this performance with Leigh Warren and Dancers, she was nominated as 'Dancer to Watch' in the Dance Australia Critics Survey 2008.

Ella's first few days with Bangarra were spent with the community in Arnhem Land. She was humbled by the opportunity to visit Djakapurra's homeland and to connect with the community. She made her first appearance with Bangarra in *Fire – A Retrospective* in 2009 and was again nominated as 'Dancer to Watch'.

Since then she has performed in Stephen Page's *Mathinna* and in Bangarra's double bill of *earth & sky* in 2010 as well as the European tour of *Spirit* in early 2011. In 2010, Ella took part in the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund Professional and Educational Development Program, receiving a Dance scholarship as a part of the program.

Ella owes her success to her mother; her strength and determination inspires her in everything she does.



TARA ROBERTSON
Dancer

Born and raised in Darwin, Tara Robertson is a descendant of the Munanjali people from the Logan River area of Queensland.

She commenced her dance training at the age of four with the Lisa Campbell School of Dancing, and pursued her interests in Contemporary Dance and Ballet throughout high school. Tara completed a Bachelor of Dance Performance at the Adelaide Centre of Performing Arts in 2005, where she worked with renowned Independent artists Aiden Kane Munn, Peter Sheedy, Troy Mundy, Leanne Ringlestien, and Lina Limosani.

As a young adult, she had the privilege of working with some of Darwin's premiere dance groups, including Baru Kadal in *Entrapment* and *The Dreaming*, TRACKS Theatre Company in *IGNITE*, *Rivers of the Underground* and *FAST*, *Dynamic Energy* in several local shows and remote workshops, and with Juniper Tree Dance Co in *HEAT*, and *RHIALE*.

Since then, she has returned to Darwin and has been working with Gary Lang for the Gary Lang NT Dance Company. Her most recent performances include *Manuk Gapu*, and the widely acclaimed *Goose Lagoon*. Other projects that she has been involved in include: Independent works for iMoves in 2008 and 2010, *Fringe at the Bank*, *Reel Dance*, *What Remains* (film), *Bricks without Straw*.

Tara is the recipient of a 2011 Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund Professional and Educational Development Scholarship and made her debut with Bangarra Dance Theatre, on the 2011 *Spirit* European tour.



TRAVIS DE VRIES
Trainee Dancer

Travis is a Gamilaroi man who was born in Muswellbrook, NSW.

He discovered a passion for dance after high school and has avidly pursued his training since then. In 2007 he was accepted into NAISDA Dance College, and graduated in 2010. During his time at NAISDA, Travis worked with numerous people in the field, including three years in the study of Lester Horton Technique under Graeme Watson.

Since graduating from NAISDA Travis has worked with Gosford City Council as a dancer, photographer and a film and sound engineer on their *iDance You Watch* production. He has also worked to create music for NAISDA's Baby Proms.

In 2010 Travis was accepted on secondment with Bangarra Dance Theatre to work with Frances Rings on *Artefact* as part of *of earth & sky*. Travis started a dance traineeship with Bangarra Dance Theatre in April of 2011 where he is continuing to immerse himself in his passion for improving his skills in the medium of dance.



KAINE SULTAN-BABIJ
Trainee Dancer

Kaine was born and raised in Whyalla, South Australia. Of Aboriginal, Afghan and Yugoslavian descent, Kaine's cultural and spiritual connections are to the Arrernte people of the Central Desert regions in the Northern Territory.

Kaine is a recent graduate of the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts (ACPA), leaving with an Advanced Diploma in Dance.

He has worked with many industry artists from a wide variety of disciplines, including: Penny Mullen, Nik Hills, Rosetta Cook, Zaimon and Lizzie Vilmanis, Gina Rings, Frances Rings, Elise May and Richard Causer.

Kaine also worked alongside Expressions Dance Company in their season of *Launch Pad – Double Act* and has recently returned from Adelaide where he danced as part of Leigh Warren and Dancers at the 2011 WOMADelaide Festival.

Kaine had an amazing opportunity to go to Argentina and Brazil last year and collaborate there with a youth ensemble; this is an experience that continually inspires Kaine in his art.

In 2011 Kaine joins Bangarra for *Belong* as a trainee dancer and believes in continual training and professional development as an artist. He has a keen interest in dancing with Australian dance companies.



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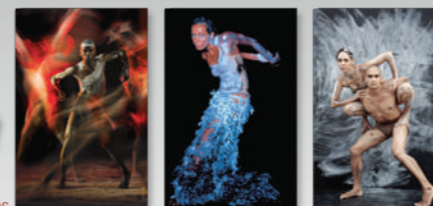


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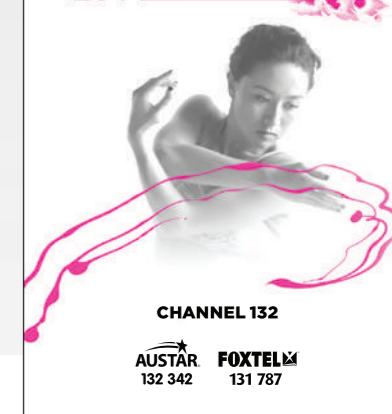
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