

# SANDSONG

Stories from the Great Sandy Desert



## **SANDSONG**

Stories from the Great Sandy Desert

### *Choreographers*

Stephen Page  
Frances Rings  
and the Dancers of  
Bangarra Dance Theatre

### *Cultural Consultants*

Putuparri Tom Lawford  
Eva Nargoodah

### *Cultural Consultancy*

Wangkatjungka  
& Walmajarri Elders

### *Composer*

Steve Francis

### *Set Designer*

Jacob Nash

### *Costume Designer*

Jennifer Irwin

### *Lighting Designer*

Nick Schlieper

### *AV Designer*

David Bergman

### *Rehearsal Director*

Daniel Roberts

### *Aerial Movement Consultant*

Joshua Thomson

### *Rigging Consultant*

David Jackson

### *Lighting Realiser*

Chris Twyman

### *Sound Recordist*

Brendon Boney

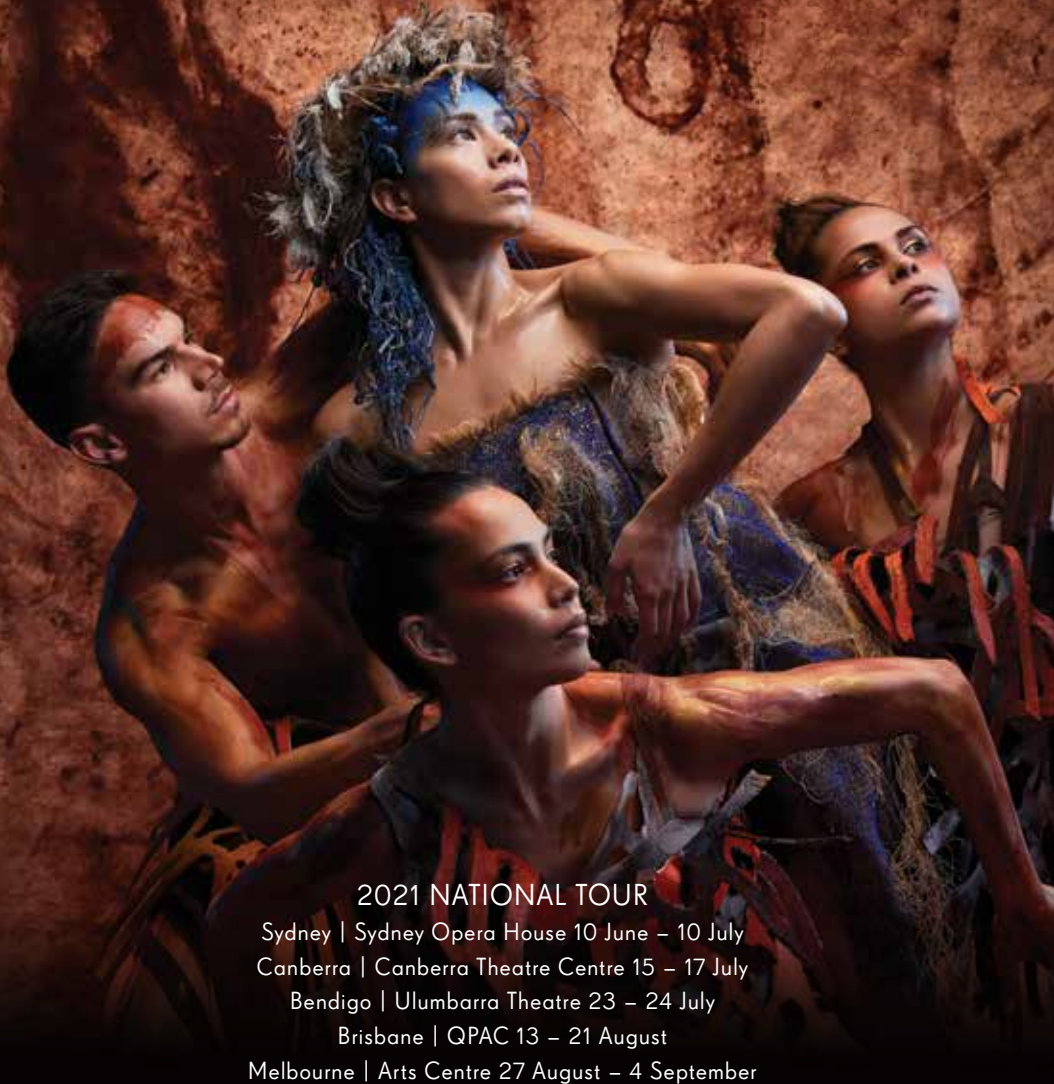
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this program contains the name and images of someone who has passed away. Use of Ningali Lawford-Wolf's image and name within this publication have been approved for use by Ms Lawford-Wolf's family.

Bangarra Dance Theatre pays respect and acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which our Company calls home, where much of SandSong was created - the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation.

# BANGARRA DANCE THEATRE

# SANDSONG

Stories from the Great Sandy Desert



## 2021 NATIONAL TOUR

Sydney | Sydney Opera House 10 June – 10 July

Canberra | Canberra Theatre Centre 15 – 17 July

Bendigo | Ulumbarra Theatre 23 – 24 July

Brisbane | QPAC 13 – 21 August

Melbourne | Arts Centre 27 August – 4 September

# WE ARE BANGARRA

Bangarra is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation and one of Australia's leading performing arts companies, widely acclaimed nationally and around the world for our powerful dancing, distinctive theatrical voice and utterly unique soundscapes, music and design.

Led by Artistic Director Stephen Page, Executive Director Lissa Twomey and Associate Artistic Director Frances Rings, we are currently in our 32nd year but our dance technique is forged from over 65,000 years of culture, embodied with contemporary movement. The company's dancers are professionally trained, dynamic artists who represent the pinnacle of Australian dance. Each has a proud Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background, from various locations across the country.

Bangarra was birthed in 1989 from the energy of NAISDA (National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association) founder Carole Y. Johnson, along with NAISDA graduates, and Uncle Robin Bryant and Cheryl Stone. That spark continues to animate the company today.

Our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are the heart of Bangarra, with our repertoire created on Country and stories gathered from respected community Elders.

It's this inherent connection to our Land and People that makes us unique and enjoyed by audiences from remote Australian regional centres to international cities such as New York and Berlin.

Bangarra's annual program includes a national tour of a world premiere work, performed in Australia's most iconic venues; a regional tour allowing audiences outside of capital cities the opportunity to experience Bangarra; and under normal circumstances, an international tour to strengthen relationships with other First Nations communities and to share our stories on the global stage.

Complementing this touring roster are education programs, workshops and special performances and projects, planting the seeds for the next generation of performers and storytellers.

Authentic storytelling, outstanding technique and deeply moving performances are Bangarra's unique signature.





Photo Daniel Boud

# WELCOME TO SANDSONG

On behalf of the entire Bangarra clan, we are excited and grateful to be able to welcome you back into the theatre for our 2021 production of *SandSong: Stories from the Great Sandy Desert*. It's been three years since we've brought a new full-length work to the stage, and we are thrilled to return with a work as fierce and political as *SandSong*.

As we enter into our fourth decade as Australia's first major Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performing arts company, we remain grounded in our history and the shared cultural knowledge that has been passed down from generation to generation. *SandSong* includes stories from one of the many brutal parts of Australia's recent colonial history, a history that is often white-washed and erased. It also tells the story of Community, of cultural resilience, and of maintaining and rebuilding culture and connection to Country. With this work, we pay respects to our friend and sister, proud Wangkatjungka woman, Ningali Lawford-Wolf. Ningali was a trail-blazing artist and activist, and her voice and spirit is woven throughout this work.

With *SandSong* postponed from 2020, the work has had an extended gestational period. Our return home to the Company's stomping ground in Walsh Bay at the end of 2020 meant that we were able to immediately realise the potential of the newly refurbished studios to bring *SandSong* to life. We were also very fortunate to be able to safely make two visits to Fitzroy Crossing during 2020-2021, to spend time on Bunuba Country with Wangkatjungka and Walmajarri Cultural Knowledge Holders. Thank you to Cultural Consultants Putuparri Tom Lawford and Eva Nargoodah for their wise guidance, and to the Lawford and Nargoodah families for welcoming us and being so generous with their time.

We look forward to returning *SandSong* to Country, to share it with the Community who entrusted us with their stories and who granted us permission to share this story with you tonight. Spending time on Country with Cultural Knowledge Holders and returning a work to Country is an integral part of Bangarra's cultural creative cycle. In order to ensure the long-term sustainability of this, and our other cultural obligations, Bangarra has established a cultural maintenance fund which will ensure that we are able to continue to appropriately care for our cultural protocol responsibilities.

So many people have contributed to the careful crafting of this story. Thank you to the incredible Creative team and the Dancers, who all worked with such dedication and creative ingenuity despite the challenges faced in 2020. Special thanks to our Associate Artistic Director, Frances Rings, for her joint leadership on this work, and for guiding the process with such integrity.

As we begin to carefully rebuild and navigate the continued challenges of a future in this new pandemic environment, we draw great strength from the support we have received from individuals and organisations throughout this period. It is an important reminder that even at the toughest of times, there is a growing collective desire and recognition of the importance of celebrating and care-taking our unique shared national heritage of over 65,000 years of continuous culture. A sincere thank you to our valued clan of supporters, we couldn't do what we do without you.

Tonight's performance would not be possible without the continued support of the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts and the NSW Government through Create NSW. A special thank you also to our



Photo Lisa Tomasetti

Major Corporate Partners: Lendlease, BAI, Qantas and Boral, who have stood by us and demonstrated their commitment to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures on and off the stage, despite the challenges of last year's operating environment. It is thanks to this support that we are able to tour *SandSong* nationally to Canberra, Bendigo, Brisbane and Melbourne following our Sydney season.

Lastly, thank you to our Chair, Phillipa McDermott, and to the Bangarra Board for their wise counsel and leadership.

Maintenance of cultural practice plays a fundamental role in shaping our sense of self, and our connection to community and Country.

Whilst the stories we share tonight in *SandSong* may be born out of one community's fight for justice, we hope that they connect to something universal within us all. Thank you for joining us tonight, and for being part of our valued community. We hope you enjoy the production.



Stephen Page *Artistic Director*



Lissa Twomey *Executive Director*



Photo Kassidy Waters



Photo Rikki Mason

# UNDER THE VAST KIMBERLEY SKY

Under the vast Kimberley sky, the red pindan dust stretches across the desert homelands of the Wangkatjungka and Walmajarri, where the ancient knowledge of People and of Country is preserved through Songlines that have endured for hundreds of generations.

At the heart of this land is Jila - the Living Water - that resides in desert waterholes across the region and is the basis of cultural beliefs and practices. *SandSong* tells the unique story of this Place and the survival of its People.

Between the 1920s and 1960s, Aboriginal people were removed from their Country and onto pastoral stations where they were forced into hard labour, usually for no wages and only minimal rations. Despite this displacement and cultural disruption, the Traditional Peoples of the Western Desert have maintained unbroken connection to Land and Country - keeping songs, stories and kinship strong.

This is the Country of Wangkatjungka woman Ningali Josie Lawford-Wolf (1967-2019), a close cultural collaborator of Bangarra, whose spirit, stories and artistic contributions have inspired a number of the company's works and enriched the broader arts landscape.

The Lawford family has long generational ties to this part of the Kimberley and are current owners of the pastoral lease for Bohemia Downs cattle station, allowing them the stability to continue to care for their Land, Culture and Community.

*SandSong* is a journey into ancient story systems framed against the backdrop of ever-changing government policy and of the survival of people determined to hold strong to their Culture.



Ningali Lawford-Wolf  
Photo Jeff Busby  
Courtesy of Yirra Yaakin

*SandSong* is created by Bangarra Dance Theatre in consultation with Wangkatjungka and Walmajarri Elders and Cultural Knowledge Holders from the Kimberley and Great Sandy Desert regions, drawing on the stories, knowledge and memories of the past to create a new narrative for our Indigenous futures.

This work honours the legacy of Ningali Josie Lawford-Wolf and her family - past, present and future.

# A TIMELINE OF THE KIMBERLEY REGION



## PRE-HISTORY

Geological origins reach back nearly 2000 million years. The Kimberley region was a separate land mass which collided with the Pilbara and Yilgram lands. The Wunaamin Miliwundi Ranges (formerly known as The King Leopold Ranges) are the point where this impact occurred.

### 1620-1730

A mega-tsunami crashed into the Kimberley coast. Waves travelled as far as the Great Sandy Desert. Noted as an event of the powerful Wandjina spirits, reflected in stories, cave paintings and oral traditions of the Worrora, Wunumbul and Ngarinyin people. White explorers first saw the paintings in the 1930s.

### Mid 1600s-1700s

Timorese trading with Aboriginal people. Dutch and Portugese explorers visited the west coast before 1699 when William Dampier, British explorer, landed at Shark Bay. He described Aboriginal people as 'the most miserable people in the world'.



Alexander Forrest and party.  
State Library WA

**1879**

Surveyor Alexander Forrest sent to look for fertile land and gold. His party included two Aboriginal men, Tommy Pierre and Tommy Dower, recruited as trackers and horsemen. Forrest named the whole region 'the Kimberley' after the Secretary for the Colonies, the Earl of Kimberley.

**1891**

Pastoralist Joseph Bradshaw was the first European to view artwork of the Gwion Gwion people, who had decorated many sites around 12,000 Before Present.

**1905**

The WA Aborigines Act 1905 controlled all aspects of Aboriginal peoples lives. The Chief Protector of Aborigines was central to the implementation of the Act.

**1883**

51 million acres of land in the Kimberley under lease hold to pastoral and mining interests.

**1887-1898**

Aborigines Protection Board, WA government department established to deal with advancement into the Kimberley area and the 'native' problem.

**1906-1910**

Alfred Canning commissioned to survey the building of a stock route from Halls Creek to Wiluna, the longest in the world. Canning accused of employing brutal tactics to coerce Aboriginal guides to show the location of sacred underground waterholes. Charges were brought to bear, then dismissed, after Alexander Forrest appeared before Royal Commission as a witness for Canning.

# A TIMELINE OF THE KIMBERLEY REGION

**1934**

Moseley Royal Commission into the Condition and Treatment of Aborigines released, regarding living condition of pastoral workers: 'woeful spectacle, buildings over-crowded, buildings and clothing vermin ridden.'

**1960**

Commonwealth Government lifts iron ore embargo (in place since 1938) opening up trade to Asia and heralding the surge in WA's mining industry. By the 1970s, 2.5M acres of pastoral land was abandoned for mining development.

**1969**

Legislation allowing for removal of Aboriginal children from their families under the policy of 'protection' repealed in all states.

**1950**

Station owners reluctantly agreed with Commissioner of Native Affairs to pay Aboriginal stockmen £1 per month, and 'yardmen' and women employees 10 shillings per month, well below award rates for white workers.

**1965**

The Wage Decision. Aboriginal workers brought under the Pastoral Act entitling them to equal wages. Station owners react by hiring white labour and sending Aboriginal people off the stations.

**1974**

Passing of the Aboriginal Land Fund Act, allowing Indigenous Peoples to claim land title if they could prove a traditional relationship to Country.



Prime Minister Gough Whitlam pours soil into hand of traditional land owner Vincent Lingiari, Northern Territory, 1975. Courtesy National Indigenous Australians Agency, Mr Mervyn Bishop and Gurindji Corporation and National Indigenous Australian Agency.

**1975**

Prime Minister Gough Whitlam pours a handful of soil into the hands of Gurindji man, Vincent Lingiari. 'Vincent Lingiari I solemnly hand to you these deeds as proof in Australian law, that these lands belong to the Gurindji People.'

**2018**

18 pastoral stations in the Kimberley/Pilbara regions completely owned and managed by Aboriginal corporations. Another 21 jointly run through partnerships.

**2019**

WA earned \$140.7 billion from mining and agriculture exports. The largest cattle station in WA - Home Valley - owned by the Indigenous Land Corporation, covers a total area of 1,400,000 hectares.

**1985**

Commissioning of the largest diamond producing mine in the world, the Argyle. (Decommissioned 2020).

**1996**

Ngurrara Canvas is presented to Parliament as part of the Ngurrara peoples' Native Title claim. Successful outcome achieved in 2007 with the Ngurrara recognised as title holders for an area of the 76,000 sq kms.

**2020**

Kimberley mining brings \$537M to the national economy. Class action initiated against WA government to claim compensation for lost earnings of unpaid labour forced upon Aboriginal people.



# SANDSONG



Photo Daniel Boud

## **ACT 1** **MAKURRA | COLD DRY SEASON**

### **Poison**

Time and space collide in a cloud of black collective consciousness, foreshadowing dark times ahead. But the Land is always present, the breathing womb of resilience.

*No cast*

### **Dry**

The vibrant energy of the seasons unfolds to reveal the enduring cycle that sustains life in the Great Sandy Desert.

*Cast: Full ensemble*

### **Skin**

A young woman is guided through kinship and affirms her place amongst her skin group. She is given her name and told of her responsibilities to family, and to the women's' business knowledge that she will inherit one day.

*Cast: Rika Hamaguchi, Glory Tuohy-Daniell, Lillian Banks, Courtney Radford, Cassidy Waters, Maddison Paluch, Emily Flannery*

### **Junta: Women's Traditional Bush Onion Dance**

This traditional dance is about collecting the Junta Bush onions, cooking them, rubbing them together and finally winnowing them in the coolamon till they are clean and ready to eat and share with the family.

*Cast: Rika Hamaguchi, Glory Tuohy-Daniell, Lillian Banks, Courtney Radford, Cassidy Waters, Maddison Paluch, Emily Flannery*

### **Totem**

The men are preparing a young man for Ceremony. Through the lens of male energy, ritual transformation connects the men to their totems. The totemic shapeshifters move through the space, evolving as they reaffirm story to place, and their responsibility to the maintenance of men's sites.

*Cast: Beau Dean Riley Smith, Rikki Mason, Baden Hitchcock, Ryan Pearson, Bradley Smith, Kallum Goolagong, Gusta Mara, Kiarn Doyle, Daniel Mateo*

### **Marjarrka: Men's Traditional Dance Story**

This tells the true story of how Wurtuwaya (Yanpiyarti Ned Cox's grandfather) and Wirrali (Ningali Lawford-Wolf's great-grandfather) recovered their stolen Marjarrka totemic object from a group of men who had taken it and were using it to perform their own ceremony. Wurtuwaya and Wirrali managed to retrieve the sacred totemic object, and created this important ceremonial dance, which is performed by both senior and younger men.

This dance belongs to the Lawford Family, Tighe Family, Cox Family and James Family.

Source: National Museum of Australia.

*Cast: Beau Dean Riley Smith, Rikki Mason, Baden Hitchcock, Ryan Pearson, Bradley Smith, Kallum Goolagong, Gusta Mara, Kiarn Doyle, Daniel Mateo*

## ACT 2

### PARRANGA, HOT DRY SEASON

#### Coolamon

The women hunt during cold weather time. This year is different though, its dry and cold. The land is quiet and there is a drought, water and food are scarce. A meditation on fragility, survival, balance, knowledge, life and death.

*Cast: Rika Hamaguchi, Glory Tuohy-Daniell, Lillian Banks, Courtney Radford, Kassidy Waters, Maddison Paluch, Emily Flannery*

#### Spinifex

The men are carrying smoking spinifex to make a shelter. They are burning off, vaccinating, maintaining the health of Country. The old people are talking to Country, they can sense the change coming. The colonisers and their cattle have brought a dust storm with them which breaks the Land apart, displacing families.

*Cast: Full ensemble*

## ACT 3

### KARTIYA

#### Auction

The land has been interrupted. Mobs have left the desert, forced to leave the memories of bush life behind them. People begin their new life as laborers and domestics, in servitude to the pastoral industry, victim to the lawlessness of a new frontier and the whims of the station owners.

*Cast: Full ensemble*

#### Station Labour

The men toil from dawn to dusk in the stockyards, labouring in a relentless cycle, paid only in rations of food and clothing.

*Cast: Beau Dean Riley Smith, Rikki Mason, Baden Hitchcock, Ryan Pearson, Bradley Smith, Kallum Goolagong, Gusta Mara, Kiarn Doyle, Daniel Mateo*

### Build Up / Walk Off

Wet season lies in the distance, reflecting the growing tensions of the people. A cyclone is brewing as the people stand up for their rights.

Vincent Lingiari's voice fills the space, stabilising the energy, awakening the memory of the proud desert men that they once were, and giving them the strength and solidarity to walk-off the stations.

*Cast: Full ensemble / Aerialists: Rikki Mason, Lillian Banks*

## ACT 4

### YITILAL, WET SEASON

#### Fringe

A young boy is lost, an internal storm brewing, ready to explode from social trauma and intergenerational grief. Wet season reminds him of his Grandfather and the resilience of the Lore Men who came before him. His sister steps out from the shadows of his fear, carrying the spirit to cleanse him.

*Cast: Rika Hamaguchi, Baden Hitchcock, Kallum Goolagong, Daniel Mateo*

#### Lore Time

Mobs come together for Ceremony and to begin the healing.

*Cast: Beau Dean Riley Smith, Rikki Mason, Rika Hamaguchi, Glory Tuohy-Daniell, Baden Hitchcock, Ryan Pearson, Lillian Banks, Courtney Radford, Kassidy Waters, Gusta Mara, Emily Flannery, Kiarn Doyle, Maddison Paluch*

#### Karnti: Women's Traditional Bush Potato Dance

This traditional dance is about looking for the Karnti bush potato. You look everywhere with your digging stick for the roots. You see a crack in the ground and that is where the Karnti is and you can dig it up.

*Cast: Rika Hamaguchi, Glory Tuohy-Daniell, Lillian Banks, Courtney Radford, Kassidy Waters, Maddison Paluch, Emily Flannery*

#### Painting Mob

Painting Country brings the people closer to their desert homeland, which they have not seen for forty years.

Art transports them back to their traditional lands, reconnecting and reaffirming ties to Country.

This cultural awakening empowers and strengthens them to rebuild family, community and their future.

*Cast: Full ensemble*

#### Homeland

Through oppression, multiple displacements and decades of upheaval, the spirit of people and place endures to stand strong in their kinship and belonging. They come together in wet season for Lore time when everyone gathers for Ceremony. Unbroken, the cycle continues.

*Cast: Full ensemble*

Descriptions of traditional dances provided by Eva Nargoodah, Mayarn Julia Lawford and Putuparri Tom Lawford

## GLOSSARY

Walmajarri language translations:

Kartiya  
*White Person*

Makurra  
*Cold Season*

Parranga  
*Hot, Dry Season*

Yitilal  
*Wet Season*

Ngurtri  
*Coolamon*

Marjarrka  
*Men's Traditional Cone Dance*

Karnti  
*Women's Traditional Bush Potato Dance*

Junta  
*Bush onion*

# CARING FOR STORY

Much like the timeless desert Country that inspired this work, *SandSong* feels like it's been in creation for millennia. Choreographers Stephen Page and Frances Rings share the process of creation.

Shaped and sculpted, weathered and nourished, is reflective of our values and commitment to the Land, people and communities that are embedded in our cultural DNA, and that have been at the core of Bangarra's practice for past 32 years. At the heart of this sits a dynamic songline of relationships with extended families across remote communities that have long believed in our vision and breathed life into Bangarra by entrusting us with their stories.

*SandSong* is our way of honouring and paying respect to our sister Ningali, to her People and Country. Ningali Josephine Lawford-Wolf, a Wangkatjungka woman from the small Kimberley settlement of Christmas Creek, was one of those defining visionaries who understood the important role Bangarra plays in changing perceptions of Indigenous Australia in mainstream society. Ningali joined NAISDA Dance College – then based in Glebe, Sydney – with dreams of a career in the performing arts. Her big sister Eva remembers a young Ningali dancing in the wind, connecting with the unseen in a strange but beautiful way. In 1988 this calling brought her to Sydney to fulfill her dream, and unknowingly propelled her into the political firestorm of the Bicentenary, a celebration of 200 years since British colonial occupation of unceded Aboriginal Land.

It was during this time that Ningali forged a lifelong friendship with us and Stephen's brothers David and Russell. We gravitated to this proud desert woman and became her eyes and ears in the city. As expected, Ningali's career accelerated rapidly and she became a successful theatre and film actress, while Bangarra began its own trajectory, shifting the artistic landscape and becoming a Major Performing Arts company. In 2002, Ningali

guested in Bangarra's double bill of *Walkabout*, balancing her growing family commitments with bespoke theatre and film roles curated specifically for her.

Ningali had a close relationship with Bangarra's Songman, David Dubboo Page, and they frequently collaborated on musical scores for film, theatre and television. It was during Bangarra's production of *30 years of sixty five thousand* in 2019 that Ningali met with Stephen and discussed creating a new work together. "I'm ready!" Ningali exclaimed, and it was agreed that the new work would be inspired by the Kimberley.

It was only weeks later, whilst Bangarra happened to be on Country in the Kimberley touring *30 years of sixty five thousand*, when the news came through that Ningali was seriously ill in an Edinburgh hospital while on tour with Sydney Theatre Company's production of *The Secret River*. Together we travelled with Ningali's family to Edinburgh to farewell and bring home our beautiful, irreplaceable friend – proud Wangkatjungka woman, inspirational artist, cultural leader, mother, grandmother, sister and Bangarra family member, Ningali. She passed peacefully, surrounded by family and friends, surrounded by love and spirit, surrounded by home, despite being far from Country.

Although we weren't able to realise our shared, long-held dream of creating this work together during her lifetime, it is now with great care that we are finding a way to honour Ningali's wish. Through this new work we hope to pay tribute to Ningali's incredible life and legacy. Not only did she make a significant contribution to the arts and cultural landscape through her award-winning film, theatre and television career,



Photos Lisa Tomasetti

but she also led meaningful change within her community, as a role model and mentor, and through her work with MADALAH Limited and the Kimberley Agriculture and Pastoral Company (KAPCO).

We are so grateful to have had the opportunity to spend time on Ningali's Country, to be guided by her spirit and to carefully craft this work together with the guidance of her family and Community. *SandSong* could not have been made without the belief and support of the Lawford Family, in particular Ningali's mother, Mayarn Julia Lawford, her siblings, Eva Nargoodah and Putuparri Tom Lawford, who took on the epic role of Cultural Consultants, and her children: Jaden Mellick, Rosie Lawford, Alexander Wolf, William Wolf and Florence Wolf. Bangarra would also like to pay respects and thank the Wangkatjungka and Walmajarri Elders and their Communities, Ngarralja Tommy May, Elsie Dickens, the Nargoodah family, Clinton Wolf, Lynley Nargoodah and Mangkaja Arts, Mckenzie Lawford, Gerard Lawford, Erica Lawford, the Kupartiya Community, Bunuba Elder Mary Aiken, Letisha Davies, the Kimberley Aboriginal Law & Cultural Centre (KALACC), Bunuba Dawangarri Aboriginal Corporation, and Goolarri Media for their time and trust. Thank you also to our two Yawuru Dancers Rika Hamaguchi and Lillian Banks for their invaluable contributions and support for our Dancers.

We are so lucky to have worked together with such an intuitive and collaborative creative clan: Steve Francis, Jacob Nash, Jennifer Irwin, Nick Schlieper, Dave Bergman, Joshua Thomson, David Jackson, together with Chris Twyman and Brendon Boney, and of course the extraordinary Bangarra Dancers. A special thank you to Legs on the Wall for their contribution and support, to our Rehearsal Director Daniel Roberts, Company Manager Claudia Elder, and to our fearless Production team led by Director, Technical & Production, John Colvin.

We are also indebted to our families who ground us with their unconditional love and support.

*SandSong* is a gift back to the people of the Kimberley who bore some of the darkest moments of our nation's history, yet today stand strong, proud and resilient in their cultural governance, a testament to the survival of our First Nations Peoples across Australia.

Just as Ningali carried so many during her life, her voice will carry our beautiful Dancers throughout the performance this evening. Her legacy, and her spirit - her incredibly generous, creative, mischievous spirit - lives on. In turn, we will carry and honour her spirit now and always, into the future.

*Stephen Page and Frances Rings*

# MUSIC NOTE

The question I'm most asked when I speak to people about the scores I write for Bangarra is "how do you do it, where does it come from?"

I'm not sure I know the answer. When I was working on the *Firestarter: The Story of Bangarra* documentary last year I saw an interview with David Page where he spoke beautifully about how he often just allowed the music to flow through him from somewhere else. I feel the same. Perhaps it's because we were both largely untrained. Maybe it goes deeper, but I know it's definitely a lack of formality in the writing and more of a reliance on instinct that drove David, and now drives me, to create these scores.

Of course if you are waiting for the music to flow, then how do you turn that tap on when you need it? The short answer is that, before responding, you need to do a lot of listening. Whom or what do I listen to? Pretty much everybody and everything. But there has been one voice that has been the strongest for me.

It was in early 2020 that Stephen and Frances were initially discussing the idea that the season's show would be a Kimberley-based story. And at the core of this would be Ningali Lawford-Wolf. Ningali was a dear friend of both Fran and Stephen and her connection to Bangarra was a long and important one, as was mine. I recall first collaborating with Ningali when I was creating music for Bangarra's 2002 production of *Walkabout*. Her energy, humour, stories and voice were such an integral part of that show it's hard to imagine it without her.

So my first round of listening was revisiting some recordings I made for that show and then some others that she had done with David. Of late I've become a sort of musical archaeologist, searching through old tapes, hard drives and data CDs, wishing I'd been more organised with my labelling at the time, hoping to find

something to either inspire me or to even use in the score. I've developed a slightly philosophical approach to this process. I figured that I'd only find what Ningali wanted me to find, and for *SandSong* she has gifted me with more than I could have wished for. Not only did I find some *Walkabout* era gems but I also found some beautiful recorded conversations between her and David as well as a couple of sung pieces which to my knowledge haven't been used before.

I created playable instruments from her hums and crafted new songs using her voice. It feels like my friend Ningali weaves her way through the whole score and that makes my heart sing.

I also need to acknowledge her amazing family and Community members who were so welcoming and generous when we visited on Country last year, and also the Land itself which gave me all the natural soundscapes you hear in this production.

To Stephen and Fran, who I listened to the most, thank you for inspiration, love and support. It was a joy to respond to them and the other creatives and as always, the dancers. I still don't know how I do it but I feel that something special flowed through me during *SandSong*. I hope you feel it too.

*Steve Francis, Composer*



*Music composed and performed by Steve Francis except:*

Vocals on *Skin Coolamon Contemporary, Labour, Homeland and Fringe*  
**Ningali Lawford-Wolf**

Voice on *Spinifex*  
**Putuparri Tom Lawford**

Voice and words on *Build Up / Walk Off*  
**Vincent Lingari**

“Gurindji Blues”  
Written by: E. Egan  
Universal Mus. Publ. MGB  
Australia Pty L  
Administered by: Universal  
Music Publishing Pty Ltd

Thank you to the Lingiari  
Family and to the Gurindji  
Aboriginal Corporation.

Violin on *Fringe*  
**Veronique Serret**

Excerpt of “Fitzroy Crossing”  
in *Fringe*  
**Warumpi Band: Neil Murray,  
Sammy Butcher**

Written by: Sammy Butcher /  
Neil Murray  
Universal Music Publishing  
Pty. Ltd.  
Administered by: Universal  
Music Publishing Pty Ltd

Vocals on *Lore Time*  
**Rika Hamaguchi, Glory Tuohy-  
Daniell, Lillian Banks and  
Courtney Radford**

*Score also includes Traditional  
songs:*

Marrjarrka: Men’s Traditional  
Dance Story  
Marrjarrka Ceremony Archival  
Footage - Courtesy of  
Putuparri Tom Lawford  
*Belongs to Lawford Family,  
Tighe Family, Cox Family and  
James Family*

Karnti: Women’s Traditional  
Bush Potato Dance  
**Performers: Mayarn Julia  
Lawford, Eva Nargoodah,  
Jean Tighe, Jenet Spinks,  
Elsie Dickens, Doreen Button,  
Malachi Hobbs**

Junta: Women’s Traditional  
Bush Onion Dance (Recording  
from 2002)  
**Performer: Mayarn Julia  
Lawford**

Kurtal (Recording from 2020)  
**Performers: Tommy May,  
Mayarn Julia Lawford, Eva  
Nargoodah, Jean Tighe,  
Japeth Rangie, Jenet Spinks,  
Elsie Dickens, Doreen Button,  
Malachi Hobbs**

# CREATIVE NOTES

## JENNIFER IRWIN – COSTUME DESIGN

People say to me ‘it must be easy to design costumes for dance, they don’t wear anything!’ There are so many things to take into consideration. Movement, longevity, cultural significance...but most importantly to tell the story and sit well within the set space. *SandSong* is a living, personal story very close to Bangarra’s heart. Culturally it has to be right.

The first meeting with the creatives is always exciting. Together we go through the story and breakdown the sections, it’s a very collaborative process. Once we have decided the feeling of each section I hunt for fabrics and materials that might work.

There are a lot of elements for each individual costume this time – rope neckpieces, emu feather belts, traditional head pieces. My design is influenced by the human story, the colours of the amazing landscape and natural beauty of the Kimberley region and Great Sandy Desert.

As always, I thank Stephen and Frannie for allowing me the absolute creative freedom and especially Frannie for all her original research and ideas, setting me in the appropriate directions.

## JACOB NASH – SET DESIGN

I am inspired firstly by connection. At Bangarra, my connection to Fitzroy Crossing and the Kimberley was through the late Ningali Lawford-Wolf. During my time at Bangarra, she has always been a part of who we are, through her connection to us as performer and storyteller, along with her friendship to Stephen, Frances, David and Russell - her spirit always is with us. So my connection to place is firstly through her. She is Fitzroy Crossing and the Kimberley to me. I never got to walk Country with her, but I did with her Family, Stephen and Frances and I felt the power of her and her Country. As the designer of *SandSong*, I hope that in some small way I can offer a sense of this experience and share the power, beauty and strength that I felt when I stood on her Country.

## NICK SCHLIEPER – LIGHTING DESIGN

The amazing expanse of the Great Sandy Desert is a major inspiration for all aspects of this work. The extraordinary weather cycles that regularly charge through it and the attendant changes to the landscape are truly theatrical. And it would have to be the biggest sky in the world!

Discovering the true story behind the much vaunted Canning River Stock Route, the story of dispossession that led to a veritable exodus of the the Wangkatjungka and Walmajarri Peoples, resonated strongly with me while researching *SandSong*. Sadly, as is so often the case, the true story is completely at odds with the romanticised, white re-invention of history that I grew up with at school.

The marriage of light and movement is one of the oldest (and most successful) in our theatrical canon. Perhaps it’s because both are less literal, more allusive forms. They tell their stories more on an emotional or intuitive level and can sometimes be all the more powerful for it. In that respect, light perhaps helps to convey a story to an audience, rather than simply to tell it.

For me, the process works in two stages. The basic over-arching design I arrive at during the many discussions around “how” and “why” we are doing this particular project, in this place and at this time. At the end of that, I have an overall design in my head, in the same way that there’s also a concrete model of the set. You could think of it as a set of aesthetic parameters. What I then do within those parameters is driven entirely by what unfolds in the rehearsal room. I literally “watch” different lighting scenarios as I watch the performers working through sections of the show. It’s out of this second stage that I arrive at the final version of what I then (hopefully!) put on stage.



Photo Jennifer Irwin

## ARTISTS



### STEPHEN PAGE

#### ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CHOREOGRAPHER

Stephen is a descendant of the Nunukul people and the Munaldjali clan of the Yugambeh Nation from South East Queensland. In 1991, Stephen was appointed Artistic Director of Bangarra and has developed a signature body of works that have become milestones in Australian performing arts.

Stephen continues to reinvent First Peoples storytelling within Bangarra and through collaborations with other performing arts companies. He directed the Indigenous sections for the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies and created a significant dance work for his dad's People, the Munaldjali clan of the Yugambeh Nation, as part of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony. Stephen has choreographed over 27 works for Bangarra. His most recent works include the Helpmann Award winning work *Bennelong* in 2017 and the work *Dark Emu* in 2018, choreographed together with former Bangarra dancers Daniel Riley and Yolande Brown, and which went on to become one of the most successful productions in the history of Bangarra.

Stephen's first full-length film *SPEAR* premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival before screening at various arts festivals around Australia in early 2016. He has also co-directed and choreographed the documentary *FREEMAN* (2020), directed the chapter Sand in the feature

film *The Turning* (2013), and choreographed the feature films *Bran Nue Dae* (2009) and *The Sapphires* (2011).

In 2015, Stephen was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Creative Arts by the University of Technology Sydney. In 2016, he received both the NAIDOC Lifetime Achievement Award and JC Williamson Award. In 2017, Stephen was honoured with the Australia Council Dance Award for significant contributions to the cultural and artistic fabric of the nation, and was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO).



## FRANCES RINGS

ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CHOREOGRAPHER

Frances is a descendant of the Kokatha Tribe from the West Coast of South Australia. She was appointed Associate Artistic Director of Bangarra Dance Theatre in 2019.

In 2002, Frances made her main stage choreographic debut for Bangarra with *Rations* (choreographed with Stephen Page). Her other Bangarra works are: *Bush* (2003, co-choreographed with Stephen Page), *Unaipon* (2004), *X300* (2007), *Artefact* (2010), *Terrain* (2012) and *Sheoak* (2015). *Terrain* is currently part of the 2019–2021 NSW Higher School Certificate Dance Syllabus.

Frances has worked as a choreographer and dancer with many of Australia's leading dance companies including West Australian Ballet, Tasdance, Meryl Tankard, Leigh Warren and Legs on the Wall, and internationally with companies including KAHAWI Dance Theatre (Turtle Island) and Atamira Dance Company (Aotearoa).

Frances directed five end-of-year productions for NAISDA Dance College between 2014–2018. She was appointed their Head of Creative Studies from 2016–2019.

Frances has received multiple awards for her work, including six Helpmann Awards (2003, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2017), a Deadly Award (2003), an Ausdance Award (2004) and a Green Room Award (2011). In 2004, *Bulletin Magazine* named Frances in their Smart 100 and she was added as the Critics' Choice to the Adelaide Festival Centre Walk of Fame in 2019.



## PUTUPARRI TOM LAWFORD

CULTURAL CONSULTANT

Putuparri Tom Lawford is a Wangkatjungka man living in Fitzroy Crossing. Putuparri grew up in Fitzroy Crossing as part of an activist family and was raised by the old people on a cattle station on the edge of the Great Sandy Desert. He learned spiritual and ceremonial traditions from his grandfather, who passed on bush knowledge and dreamtime myths. Putuparri's people have lived in the desert of Western Australia for over forty thousand years, living a nomadic life knowing they could always retreat to their sacred waterholes.

Putuparri works as a cultural officer for the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre. He works as a cultural advisor, translator, workshop facilitator and artist. Putuparri is a cultural leader determined to keep his community's traditions alive.

# ON COUNTRY

In May 2021 the company visited Fitzroy Crossing as part of its research for *SandSong*.

Photos Rikki Mason, Beau Dean Riley Smith, Kassidy Waters.





## ARTISTS



### EVA NARGOODAH

CULTURAL CONSULTANT

I was born on Christmas Creek Station and grew up with my parents until the age of six. My dad was a stockman and my mother worked in the house. I was taken away to GoGo Station where my great-grandmother lived. We moved there with the manager from Christmas Creek. His name was Vic Johns. At GoGo Station my father worked at the stock camp again and my mother in the house.

Next we shifted to Cherrabun Station where I went to school in 1965 at the men's quarter. I moved to many different places. From Cherrubun we went back to Christmas Creek. I did my next years at school in Derby and worked at Christmas Creek School as a teacher. In 1984 I was married. I have nine children and nine grandchildren.

I started painting after my kids grew up. I paint my grandmother's country and what she has taught me. I paint my style of seasons, bush tucker paintings and my childhood memories of winter rains and cold weather.

Today I live at Jimbalakudunj Community, 120 km southwest of Fitzroy Crossing.



### STEVE FRANCIS

COMPOSER

Steve is a composer and sound designer originally from Adelaide. An opportunity to produce and mix David Page's work on *Alchemy* for The Australian Ballet in 1996 led to an ongoing collaboration with Bangarra. *SandSong* is his 13th score for Bangarra.

As composer and sound designer, Steve has worked with Australia's premier theatre companies, including Sydney Theatre Company, Melbourne Theatre Company, Belvoir and Griffin. He has composed for a number of films, including *The Turning*, the multi award-winning *dik*, Leah Purcell's *She Say*, the Dendy Award-winning film *Black Talk*, Berlin Festival winner *Djarn Djarns*, the MMF Award-winning documentary *Mr Patterns*, the AFI Award-winning short film *Box* and the documentaries *Firestarter: The Story of Bangarra*, *How the light Gets in*, *Macumba* and *Picture the Women*.

For television, Steve has scored for the Channel Nine series *Cops LAC*, the mini-series *Dangerous* for Fox and the internationally released series *Double Trouble*. With David Page, Steve also composed and produced music for the Sydney Olympic and Rugby World Cup opening ceremonies.

As well as two nominations for sound design, Steve has won two Helpmann Awards for Best Original Score for two Bangarra productions (*Walkabout*, 2002 and *Belong*, 2011 with David Page). He has also won two Sydney Theatre Awards for Best Music and Sound Design.



## JACOB NASH

### SET DESIGNER

Jacob is a descendant of the Daly River people, West of Darwin, and has spent the last 20 years living, working and creating in Sydney on Eora country. He graduated from the NIDA Design Course in 2005. In 2010, he designed the set for of *earth & sky* for Bangarra and received a Green Room Award for Best Design in Dance. He was appointed Artist in Residence at Bangarra the following year and is now Head of Design.

Jacob has designed sets for Bangarra's annual productions since 2010, including *Dark Emu*, *Bennelong*, *Patyegarang*, *Ilore*, *OUR land people stories*, *Terrain*, *Blak*, and *Warumuk - in the dark night*. In 2018 was awarded a Helpmann Award for Best Scenic Design for his set design in *Bennelong*.

In 2019 for Sydney Festival, Jacob created the work *ALWAYS*, a large scale artwork that became the backdrop for *The Vigil* and the *Wugulora Ceremony*.

Jacob was also the Production Designer and Co-Creature Designer for *Cleverman* Season 2; was the Production Designer for Stephen Page's 2015 film *SPEAR*; and has been the Design Director for Bangarra's five Vivid Sydney video installations on the Harbour Bridge Pylon. He is a Board Director of Belvoir St Theatre and a Creative Artist in Residence at Sydney Festival. His other theatre credits include: *Ruben Guthrie*, *Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train* and *Yibiyung* (Belvoir St Theatre); *Macbeth* (Bell Shakespeare); *Wonnangatta*, *The Long Forgotten Dream*, *The Removalists*, *Tusk Tusk/ Like a Fishbone* (Sydney Theatre Company), *Black Ties* (Ilbijerri Theatre Company).



## JENNIFER IRWIN

### COSTUME DESIGNER

Jennifer's career spans 40 years constructing and designing costumes for drama, opera, film, dance and ballet. She has designed for some of the largest scale productions staged in Australia, including the Sydney 2000 Olympic Opening Ceremony, and was co-designer of costumes for the Olympic Games Closing Ceremony. She has also designed for The Official Commemorative Ceremony marking the Centenary of Australian Federation, the Totem segment of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony and the international production of *Dirty Dancing - The Musical*.

She has worked closely with Stephen Page, designing for Bangarra Dance Theatre since its inception including *Dark Emu* and *Bennelong*. Costume commissions include multiple shows for Sydney Theatre Company, Sydney Dance Company where she designed 36 ballets for Graeme Murphy, The Australian Ballet, Belvoir, WA Ballet, Opera WA, Qld Opera, Singapore Dance Theatre, Royal New Zealand Ballet, Universal Ballet of Korea, Melbourne Theatre Co, Joffrey Ballet and Opera Australia.

Jennifer has been recognised for her contribution to design with multiple Helpmann, Green Room and Australian Production Design nominations and awards including nomination for Best Costume Design for the feature film *Spear* (2017 AACTAs). She received a Theatre Board Grant to Study at La Scala Opera Milan and the Centenary Medal for Service to Community & the Arts. In 2017 Jennifer was awarded Service to Dance at the Australian Dance Awards.

## ARTISTS



### NICK SCHLIEPER

#### LIGHTING DESIGNER

Nick's many previous productions for Bangarra include *Unaipon*, *Bush*, *Patyegarang* and *Bennelong*.

His long-standing relationship with Sydney Theatre Company has most recently seen him light *Playing Beatie Bow*, *Wonnangatta*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Mosquitoes*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, and *The Real Thing*; for Melbourne Theatre Company, set and lighting design for *Photograph 51* and *North By Northwest*; and for Belvoir Street, *The Cherry Orchard* and *Packer and Sons*.

Nick has worked extensively with Opera Australia, and all the state opera companies, including lighting and associate set designer for Wagner's *Ring Cycle* in Adelaide. His music theatre work has also been seen on London's West End and on Broadway.

His international credits include Reiman's *Lear*, and Cherubini's *Medee* at Salzburg Festival; *Private Confessions*, directed by Liv Ullman for National Theatre of Norway; *Love Never Dies* in Tokyo and Hamburg; STC's production of *The Present* with Cate Blanchett on Broadway. Further engagements have taken him to The Barbican, London; Hamburg State Opera; Royal Shakespeare Company; Theatr Clwyd in Wales; Deutsches Schauspielhaus Hamburg; Theater in der Josefstadt Vienna; Schillertheater Berlin; State Theatre of Bavaria; Kennedy Centre Washington; and *Hedda Gabler*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Maids* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*, in New York.



### DAVID BERGMAN

#### AV DESIGNER

David is a leading video, music and sound designer for theatre, dance, opera, installation and film. For Sydney Theatre Company, David was video designer for *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, sound designer for *Playing Beatie Bow*, video and sound designer for *A Cheery Soul* and *The Wharf Revue* (from 2009-2018); and video designer for *Muriel's Wedding: The Musical*, *The Hanging*, *The Effect*, and *The Long Way Home*. He was video designer for *Breaking Glass* with Sydney Chamber Opera. For Griffin Theatre, David was composer and sound designer for *Superheroes*, and composer, video and sound designer for *First Love is the Revolution*; and for Belvoir, David was co-sound designer for *Packer and Sons*. For Monkey Baa Theatre, David was video designer for *Possum Magic* and *The Peasant Prince* and sound designer for *Josephine Wants to Dance*. Other credits include: as video designer, *Knowledge Ground*, *Spirited* (Bangarra); as composer and sound designer, *Made To Measure* (Seymour Centre), *Maggie Stone* (DTC), *Salem* and *Another Country* (NIDA); as sound designer, *The Rise and Disguise Of Elizabeth R.*, *Catch Me If You Can* (Hayes); and *Spring Awakening* (ATYP). David is a NIDA graduate. He teaches NIDA's graduate and post graduate courses.



## DANIEL ROBERTS

REHEARSAL DIRECTOR

Daniel is a professional dancer from Melbourne, Australia. He completed his high school education at The Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School before continuing his dance training at The Australian Ballet School, graduating in 2008 with an Advanced Diploma in Dance and an Advanced Diploma in Choreography. Daniel was the first student in the School's history to graduate with two Diplomas. He danced with The Singapore Dance Theatre for two years before accepting a contract with The West Australian Ballet where he danced many Principal Roles and was promoted to Soloist in 2014. In January 2015 Daniel joined Sydney Dance Company under the directorship of Rafael Bonachela. He toured internationally to Europe, Asia, South America and North America. In 2018, Daniel returned to musical theatre in The Production Company's *Oklahoma!* playing the role of Dream Curly. Since joining Bangarra as Rehearsal Director in 2018, he has toured to India, Japan, Canada and the US and throughout Australia.



## JOSHUA THOMSON

AERIAL MOVEMENT CONSULTANT

Joshua was appointed Artistic Director of Legs on the Wall in 2017 and has since made numerous works that have toured nationally and internationally. His latest co-created work, *Highly Sprung*, is an outdoor trampoline activation which has been presented at Sydney Festival, Bleach Festival, Chile and continues to play around Australia. *Tide*, a durational work he co-created, won Best Physical and Visual Work at the 2018 Helpmann Awards. Joshua holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Dance) from the Queensland University of Technology. For the past 15 years he has worked with companies such as Tasdance, dancenorth, Perth Theatre Company, The Farm, PVC – Physical Virus Collective (Germany), Legs on the Wall, Shaun Parker & Company, Stalker Stilt Theatre and Marrugeku. Joshua is one of the founding members of the new Gold Coast company The Farm, who's *CockFight* was nominated as Best Ballet or Dance Work at the 2016 Helpmann Awards.



## DAVID JACKSON

RIGGING CONSULTANT

David is a performer, director, teacher and rigger with experience across circus, acting, physical theatre, dance and visual arts. David has performed for Sydney Festival, Vivid Sydney, LATT Children's Theatre (Seoul), Brainstorm Productions, Legs on the Wall, Force Majeure and Sydney Trapeze School. He has taught circus and physical theatre for over 10 years and is co-founder of Brown Paper Circus, performing in and co-directing productions *We Are All in the Gutter* (2015), *Return to Centre* (2016) and director of *Letters to an Unborn Child* (2018) and *Please Consider Our Neighbours* (2017). David has also worked as a movement consultant for theatre and designed for performance and events.

David trained with Circus Monoxide, Caserne (Montreal) and Legs on the Wall. He is a qualified advanced rigger, with experience in circus, performance and entertainment rigging. David holds a Bachelor of Creative Arts (Performance) from the University of Wollongong.

## DANCERS



**BEAU DEAN**  
**RILEY SMITH**

Beau was born in Dubbo and grew up on the South Coast of New South Wales in Culburra Beach on Yuin country. He is an Aboriginal man from the Wiradjuri Nation of Central New South Wales and the Gamilaraay Nation of New South Wales. He joined Bangarra in 2013.

His career highlights include performing the title role in Bangarra's *Bennelong* (2017), *Black* from *Ochres* for the first time in Vietnam, and performing the Wiradjuri solo from *ID* on the Kinship regional tour on Country in Dubbo.

*Miyagan*, part of the 2016 triple bill *OUR land people stories*, was his first choreographic work for Bangarra – a work that Bangarra returned to Country as part of the 2018 regional tour.

In 2018 Beau won Best Male Dancer at the Helpmann Awards, Outstanding Performance at the Australian Dance Awards and was nominated for a Greenroom Award for Best Male Dancer.



**RIKKI**  
**MASON**

Rikki is a descendant of the Kullilli people from South West Queensland and is from the country town of Inverell on land of the Gamilaraay people. Rikki also has Danish, German, Scottish and Irish heritage.

He grew up playing Rugby League representing NSW Country Catholic Schools, NSW CHS for Touch Football and was Junior World Champion in 2000 for Koshiki Karate. Starting dance at 17, he went on to train at the Australian Dance Performance Institute and L'Ecole-Atelier Rudra-Bejart in Switzerland.

Rikki has performed with Brisbane City Youth Ballet, Queensland National Ballet and Lucid Dance Theatre. Joining Bangarra in 2014, he's since toured regionally, nationally, internationally and On Country. Performing On Country is a highlight for Rikki as well as performing the solo *The Call* from *Walkabout* on stages around the world.

'Connecting and performing stories gifted to Bangarra from communities around Australia is a great honour.'



**RIKA**  
**HAMAGUCHI**

Rika is from Broome in Western Australia. She is a descendant of the Yawuru, Bunaba, Bardi and Jaru people in the Kimberley Region. Rika also shares Japanese, Chinese and Scottish ancestry.

Before joining Bangarra in 2015, Rika studied at NAISDA Dance College, where she was awarded the prestigious Chairman's Award.

Rika is a senior artist with the company and is grateful to have worked with a number of artists and cultural tutors throughout her career. She is honoured to be able to perform and consult on a Kimberley work such as *SandSong*. She'd like to acknowledge The Kimberley community back home who have shaped her into who she is today.

Rika has toured nationally (*Bennelong*, *lore*, *OUR land people stories*, *Dark Emu* and *30 years of 65,000*), regionally (*Kinship*, *Terrain* and *OUR land people stories*, *Bennelong*, *Spirit: a Retrospective*) and internationally (Europe, Asia, America).



## GLORY TUOHY-DANIELL

Glory is a descendant of Indjalandji Dhidhanu and Alyewarre Aboriginal tribes, in North West Queensland, and of Scottish, English, Irish, Welsh, Chinese and Spanish heritage. Glory joined Bangarra in 2016, one of two Russell Page Graduate Program recipients. She studied dance at NAISDA.

The experience that has made the biggest impact on Glory was attending a cultural residency, learning and performing cultural dance in community on Saibai and Moa Islands, in the Torres Strait and Elcho Island, North-East Arnhem Land.

Glory first saw Bangarra in 2011's *Belong*, and it has been a long-held goal of hers to join the company. *OUR land people stories* in 2016 was her debut season with Bangarra, and she has since toured nationally with *Bennelong*, regionally with *Terrain* and *OUR land people stories*, and internationally to Copenhagen, Berlin, Bonn, Paris and USA.



## BADEN HITCHCOCK

Baden is a descendant from Saibai (Umai Clan), in the Top Western region of the Torres Strait Islands and is also from the Central (Hohodae clan, Hanuabada) and Western (Maravadai Clan, Mabaduan) provinces of Papua New Guinea. He also has English, Irish and Chinese heritage.

Baden joined Bangarra in 2017 as part of the Russell Page Graduate Program. In 2015, he completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts in dance at Victorian College of the Arts, where he was awarded the Creative Arts Outstanding Undergraduate Award. While training he worked with choreographers including Antony Hamilton, Lee Serle, Maria Randall, Lina Limosani, Rebecca Hilton, Jacob Boehme and Prue Lang.

He has performed as an independent dancer/choreographer in the Melbourne Festival (2016), TPS Nomad Laboratory (2016), Asiatopa (2016), Black & Bright Literacy Festival (2016) and also Yirramboi Festival (2017). He has also worked as a singer and workshop teacher with Short Black Opera company.



## RYAN PEARSON

Ryan is a descendant of the Biripi, Worimi, Minang, Goreng and Balardung people. He was born and raised in Taree, New South Wales. He joined Bangarra in 2017 as part of the Russell Page Graduate Program.

Ryan began his dance training at NAISDA at age 16, after taking part in the NSW Public Schools' Aboriginal Dance Company, facilitated by Bangarra's Youth Program Team in 2012. During his time, Ryan learnt from renowned teachers and choreographers. A highlight during his training was attending a six-week Professional Intensive at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre in New York City.

Ryan has performed regionally, nationally and internationally as well as the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony. He was nominated in the 2020 Australian Dance Awards for Most Outstanding Performance by a Male Dancer for his performance in Jiří Kylián's *Stamping Ground* (2019 Production, *30 Years of Sixty Five Thousand*).

## DANCERS



**LILLIAN  
BANKS**

Lillian is a Yawuru woman from Broome, Western Australia.

In 2013, Lillian left her hometown and travelled across the country to study dance at NAISDA Dance College in Sydney. She was applauded for her thoughtful contemporary solo in the college's graduation showcase and following this, joined Bangarra in 2018 as a recipient of the Russell Page Graduate Program.

An opportunity Lillian will cherish forever is being part of the Cathy Freeman documentary, *FREEMAN*. As a Kimberley girl, having the chance to perform a story close to home is very special to her. The experience of going On Country to learn dances from the Elders is a highlight for Lillian and she always looks forward to returning the work back to the community.

Lillian is passionate about teaching, educating and leading the way for the next generation and hopes to be an inspiration to anyone striving to achieve their dreams.



**BRADLEY  
SMITH**

Bradley is a descendant of the Gumbaynggirr people and also has Fijian and English heritage. He is a Gumbaynggirr man, born and raised in Coffs Harbour, on the north coast of New South Wales.

Bradley joined Bangarra in 2018 as one of two Russell Page Graduate Program recipients, after completing four years of dance training at NAISDA Dance College.

He was praised for his standout performance in the college's annual showcase, *RESTORATION* at Carriageworks in 2017.

Having enjoyed contemporary dance since high school, Bradley is inspired to learn more about his culture and share knowledge and traditional stories through dance.

Bradley is proud to perform these important stories on Australian and international stages. He's thankful to the communities whose customs and culture inspire him every day.



**COURTNEY  
RADFORD**

Courtney is a proud descendant of the Balardong people, whose land is on Noongar country. She spent most of her childhood in Port Hedland (Pilbara) Western Australia, where she first found her passion for dance. She joined Bangarra in 2019.

Courtney completed her classical ballet training in Perth before moving to Brisbane in 2015 as part of Queensland Ballet's pre-professional program. A highlight was touring to London with the Queensland Ballet to perform *La Sylphide* at the London Coliseum. In 2016, she accepted a position with the West Australian Ballet (WAB), where she performed both classical and contemporary works. While working with Annabelle Lopez Ochoa on one of her famous creations *In Transit*, Courtney recognised her love for contemporary dance. During Courtney's two years with WAB she was fortunate enough to work with a range of choreographers such as David Dawson, David Nixon and Lucette Aldous.



## KASSIDY WATERS

Kassidy is a descendant of the Wanaruah People in the Hunter Valley, NSW. She joined Bangarra in 2019. She trained at NAISDA Dance College, graduating in 2016 with the prestigious Chairman's Award followed by Sydney Dance Company's Pre-Professional Program in 2017.

Kassidy has worked with Ausdance, EARTH Visual and Physical Inc. and with choreographers including Matt Cornell, Thomas E.S Kelly's Karul Projects, Lucky Lartey, Jo Clancy, and Vicki Van Hout at NAISDA Dance College. Kassidy also completed her DirtyFeet Choreographic Lab in 2018.

Wagana Aboriginal Dancers and Jannawi Dance Clan have played an important role in Kassidy's cultural connection and performance growth. She recognises these women as important female leaders in her life and thanks them for the opportunities to grow as an educator and performer, on a local and international level.

Kassidy is also a Romana's Pilates Apprentice at Cynthia Lochard's Pilates Studio.



## KALLUM GOOLAGONG

Kallum is a proud Wiradjuri and Darkinjung man. He also has Mediterranean, Italian and Irish ancestry. He joined Bangarra in 2019 as part of the Russell Page Graduate Program.

Born on the Central Coast, Kallum starting dancing at NAISDA Dance College in 2015. Throughout his four years at NAISDA he worked with teachers and choreographers Craig Bary, Frances Rings, Sani Townsend and Raymond D Blanco. In 2018, Kallum graduated from NAISDA with a Certificate in careers in Dance and a Diploma of professional Dance Performance.

Kallum also has a sporting background and before dance was training for the Olympics in athletics as an all-rounder. Kallum is excited to learn more about himself and his culture through his journey with Bangarra.



## GUSTA MARA

Gusta Mara is an Angamudthi, Atembiya, Goba, Argun, Wagadthagum and Kaurareg man from the tip of Queensland and the Western islands of the Torres Strait. He joined Bangarra in 2019 as part of the Russell Page Graduate Program.

Gusta first started dancing at the age of 16 at the Graham Academy of Dance. He auditioned for NAISDA in 2015 and completed his final year of studies in 2018. In Gusta's short time training and dancing he has worked with many renowned choreographers, including Vikki van Hout, Pamela Williams, Craig Bary, Raymond D. Blanco, Frances Rings, Sani Townson and Jack Grey. He has also performed with Atamira Dance Company at the Tempo Dance Festival in New Zealand.

Since joining Bangarra, Gusta has toured around Australia as well as internationally to Canada and Chicago.

## DANCERS



### KIARN DOYLE

Kiarn Doyle is an Aboriginal man from the Dughutti Nation. He was born in Mullumbimby (Bundjalung country) and raised in the Blue Mountains (Darug/Gundungurra country). Kiarn joined Bangarra in 2020 as the Russell Page Graduate recipient.

Kiarn trained at PAWS (Performing Arts Western Sydney) 2012-2016. He then went on to pursue full-time dance training at the National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association (NAISDA Dance College). Kiarn received awards in Certificate III and IV in dance performance and graduated in 2019 with a Diploma of Dance.

Kiarn has performed in The Arts Unit's Aboriginal Dance Company and with Project Dance on *Australia's Got Talent*. He has worked with choreographers including Natasha Crane, James Barry, Stephen Tannos, Rebecca Lui-Brennan, Frances Rings, Craig Bary, Sani Townson, Raymond D Blanco, Patrick Thaiday, Sidney Saltner and Chantal Kerr.



### EMILY FLANNERY

Emily is a proud Wiradjuri woman from Forbes in the Central West of NSW. She joined Bangarra in 2021.

Emily studied at NAISDA Dance College where she was fortunate enough to spend time in both Yolngu and Moa Island communities. She was the recipient of the Young Regional Artist Scholarship (YRAS), which enabled her to spend five months at Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company in Israel during her final year of study. Since graduating, Emily has performed with Opera Australia, Phunktional Arts, Catapult Choreographic Hub, Ensemble Offspring and Karul Projects, and collaborated with Cloe Fournier, Katina Olsen and Yolande Brown.

Emily was an Artist in Residence at PACT Theatre with the Lost All Sorts Collective and was also a recipient of the Joanne Harris Graduate Scholarship program.

In 2019, Emily was the recipient of DirtyFeet Choreographic Lab.



### MADDISON PALUCH

Maddison is a Wiradjuri woman descending from Narrandera area in the Riverina region of Southern NSW. Born and raised on Dharug Country in Western Sydney, she is also of Polish background. Maddison joined Bangarra in 2021.

A graduate of Newtown High School of the Performing Arts and NAISDA Dance College, Maddison was the recipient of the Bangarra's 2020 Russell Page Professional Development Scholarship, which gave her the opportunity to study with Sydney Dance Company's Pre-Professional Year. While at school she was part of the NSW Department of Education's Aboriginal Dance Company working with Sidney Saltner and the Bangarra Youth Programs team.

Her first choreographic work, *Nqoenakap*, was performed at the 2019 NAISDA graduation, and she has undertaken cultural residencies in both the Torres Strait and North East Arnhem. Maddison's first performance with Bangarra was *Spirit* at Sydney Festival in January 2021 followed by a Regional NSW Tour.



## DANIEL MATEO

Daniel Mateo is a descendent of the Gamilaroi people of north east NSW as well as the Tongan people from the Pacifica region. Daniel was born and raised in Orange (Wiradjuri country) and later moved to Newcastle (Awabakal land). He joined Bangarra in 2021 as one of two Russell Page Graduate Program recipients.

Daniel started his dance studies at Catapult Dance in Newcastle before moving on to NAISDA Dance College in 2019. At NAISDA Daniel quickly demonstrated an impressive commitment to building both his technical and creative skills. In 2019 Daniel was part of Catapult Dance's Propel program, where he created his first choreography, *Boy, cries*.

Daniel's first performance with Bangarra was *Spirit* at Sydney Festival in January 2021 followed by a Regional NSW Tour.



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Bangarra Dance Theatre is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body.



Bangarra Dance Theatre is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW.

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Bangarra's Bendigo residency is supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria.

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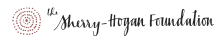
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In consultation with Wiradjuri Elders, we have taken inspiration from the word Bangarra, a Wiradjuri word meaning 'to make fire', to describe the levels of donor support. This use of Wiradjuri language is part of Bangarra's ongoing commitment to the survival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Bangarra Dance Theatre would like to thank the following patrons for their generous contribution to the company.

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**DHULUBANG -  
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Gratefully  
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gift in their Will.  
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Elizabeth Roberts  
Marena Manzoufas  
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We gratefully  
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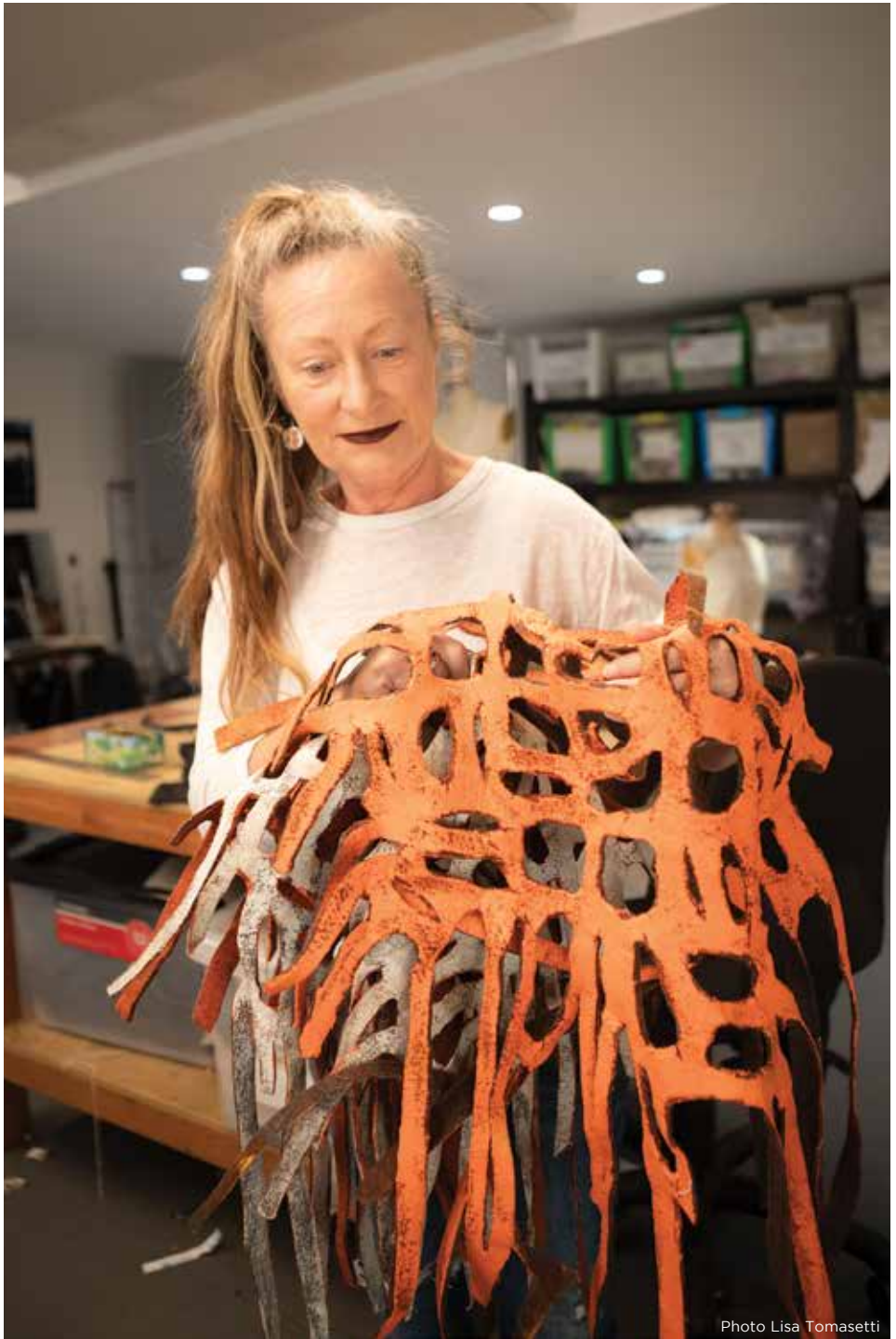


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Photos Lisa Tomasetti

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Walsh Bay NSW 2000  
Phone +61 2 9251 5333  
Email [bangarra@bangarra.com.au](mailto:bangarra@bangarra.com.au)

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The logo for Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia. It features the word "bangarra" in a lowercase, white, sans-serif font with a stylized, thin white line that curves under the 'a' and extends upwards. Below this, the words "DANCE THEATRE" and "AUSTRALIA" are stacked in a smaller, uppercase, white, sans-serif font.

**bangarra**  
DANCE THEATRE  
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