

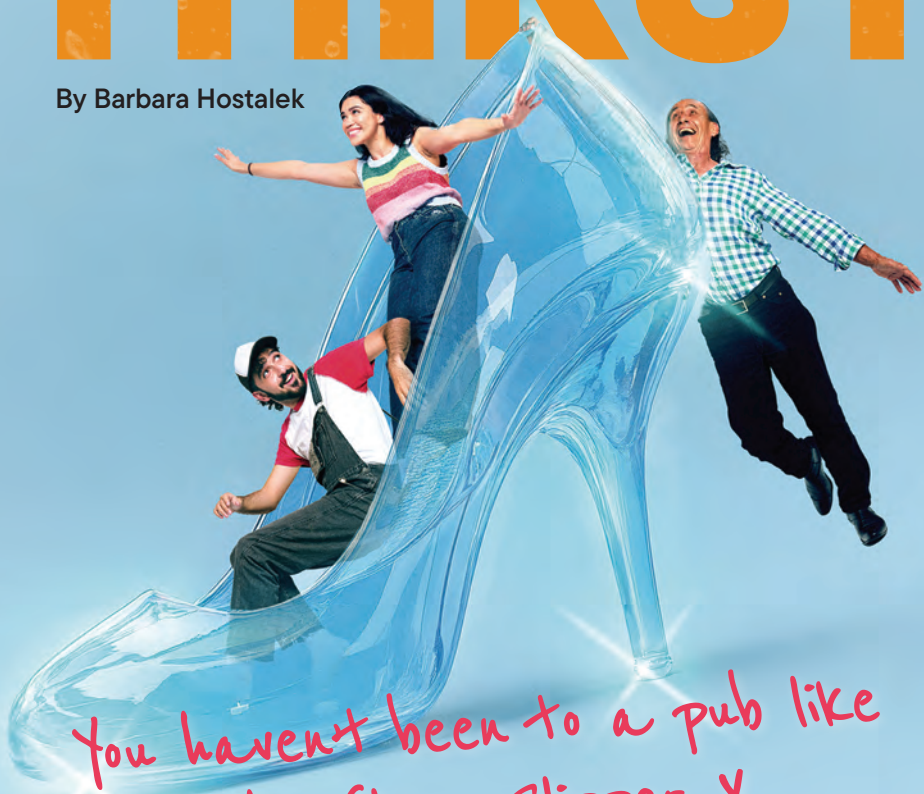
Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company



presents the world premiere of

THIRST

By Barbara Hostalek

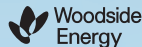


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The Glass Slipper...X*

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Subiaco Art Centre | 29 April - 10 May



CAST & CREATIVES

CAST

Bruce Denny

Jarrad Inman

Della Rae Morrison

Leah Pigram

CREATIVES

Maitland Schnaars Director

Charlotte Meagher Set & Costume Designer

Jolene Whibley Lighting Designer

Tao Issaro Sound Designer

Jasmyn Day Stage Manager

Hannah Portwine Tour Manager

Rubeun Yorkshire Community Engagement Coordinator

Emma Stirling Assistant Stage Manager

Thirst – Sony Music Credits

“Love Is In The Air”

Written by Johannes Vandenberg and George Young

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“The Dead Heart”

Written by Hirst/Moginie/Garrett

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“Let It Sing” - Written by David Milroy

SYNOPSIS

Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company presents the world premiere of *Thirst* by Barbara Hostalek.

Thirst is a funny and tender comedy that explores why some people leave, some stay, and some return to regional towns.

Thirst is set in the Glass Slipper Tavern, the community hub of Yellow Springs. Lola, a former popstar, and her entrepreneurial long-term partner and band member, Chico, never thought they'd settle down in the country, let alone inherit a pub from Lola's estranged white fella uncle.

They are the first blackfullas to run the only pub for miles amongst the canola and cattle farms. The tavern desperately needs repairs but it's not easy operating on a shoestring budget. Can a karaoke night fundraiser, with the help of a savvy barmaid with secret talents, help them save the pub?



Barbara Hostalek
Playwright

Born and raised up surrounded by saltwater country on Larrakia lands (Darwin), Barb is a proud Aboriginal playwright living with kwobidak (beautiful) Noongar boodjar, Boorloo. Her mum's lineage connects her to Yawuru and Gija families Clarke and Murphy of Darwin, Beagle Bay, Broome, the East Kimberlys, and Port Hedland. And on her dad's side Territorian, Czech, Greek, and English ancestry.

Barb has been crafting powerful short plays with Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company's Writers' Group since 2015, with titles such as *Cracked*, *Banned*, *Go Fish*, *Turtle Pool*, *Thirst*, *Perpetuity*, *Prickly*, and *Business*. Her works have been staged by Yirra Yaakin, The Blue Room, and Black Swan State Theatre Company. As well as writing for theatre, she enjoys spoken word poetry performance opportunities: *A Night Out West* (Perth Festival) and *REVEALED (PICA) 2025*. Her poem *Numbfounded* was awarded second place in *Blak Ink Poetry (2021)* sponsored by Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTaR), WA.

She was commissioned by Curtin University, to create *Bidi Walbraaniny—Path to Healing*, with Noongar Elder interviews to develop a virtual reality (VR) training program on cultural empathy for allied health students, this was nominated for a WA Screen Culture Award (2023).

Beyond her artistic pursuits, Barb supports Doctor of Veterinary Medicine students at Murdoch University.

WRITER'S NOTES

Have you ever felt that twang in your body, should I stay and give it a go, or should I leave, try something else, but there were a myriad of feelings and reasons stopping you. Is that feeling getting less intense now you are older? Broadly speaking this was perhaps what initially inspired the idea to write *'Thirst'*. It was after the closing scene of *'Cracked'* produced by Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company in 2019 with the solemn feeling and lingering image of Frankie (performed caringly by Bobbi Henry) sitting in her cell slowly fading into a total blackout that I thought, what else is burning in my guts that I want to share and write about... and that's what *'Cracked'* opened up for me, further inquiry into the fate and paths of people, and how our lives as young people intersect with our more senior people.

I can guarantee this, every older person was once a young person and as a young person the intensity of moments and relationships impacted not only on our choices but also on our decisions and how we made them, to be where we are...

At the heart of this story lies a crossroads — a place where dreams, obligations, and the weight of unspoken hopes converge. Yellow Springs, with its seasonal golden fields and cows, breeds a quiet familiarity, with the offer of comfort and certainty, doing things the same as what has happened before or doing something new, daring to be different and risking the comfort of life as it is known. The Glass Slipper is standing strong, despite the need for repairs and reno's, time can have that effect if left unchecked, however just like land the walls hold secrets of times and events passed, and remains a place where stories are shared, held and futures feel tangible.

Our protagonist stands on the edge of a choice that so many have faced before her. Should she embrace the predictable rhythm of life in the country—a place where roots run deep and love is steadfast—or venture into the unknown, chasing a future that may shimmer with possibility but remains uncertain?

This play is a meditation on dreams, duty, and the whispers of what could be. It is not merely a question of staying or leaving, but of identity—how we define ourselves by the places we are raised-up in or call home and the paths we dare to take and with who.

Thank you everyone for the opportunity to work with you. There's been a lot of work and a lot of fun, and singing (utter moments of joy for me, even tears), each opportunity of creative development building and layering story, plot, characters and themes. I hope for you watching, perhaps you, too, will find echoes of your own journey, hear your music and share the dance of your own beats with those you trust and respect.

With much love,

Barb

(April 2025)

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

A pub in a country town owned and operated by blackfullas! How could I not choose to do this play. 'Thirst' is a beautifully written play by Gija Yawuru woman Barbara Hostalek. What I love about Barbara's work is it's funny, it's tender, with a subtle depth that creeps up on you. 'Thirst' is a great feel-good play". I am very excited to be directing the world premiere of this beautiful play.

The vast canon of Aboriginal theatre across Australia is in many ways rooted in trauma. Our history since the British invasion has not been a pleasant one and unfortunately there are still many issues that have not been resolved, such as Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and the lingering effects of the Stolen Generation, just to name a few. As an Aboriginal theatre company, we will always continue to do work that shines a light on this aspect of Australian society and history both historic and current.

What I love about 'Thirst'" though, is that it's none of the above. It is just about why people might stay, leave and sometimes come back to country towns. It is looking at a universal issue through our eyes. It is a story that is, I think relatable to anyone who has lived and grown up in a country town. It is a story for country people irrespective of their cultural or ethnic background.

It is simply a very funny and tender piece of theatre for everyone with the opportunity of a bit of a sing-along in one of the scenes. With what is happening in the world at the moment, I think we all could do with a bit of a song and laugh together.



Maitland Schnaars
Director

*Don't look at us
And what we do on stage
But through us
And what we do
And at your world
Not ours*

CAST



Bruce Denny

Bruce Denny's heritage is Yamatji and native American. Bruce started his acting career in the late 1980s, firstly in Community Theatre and then progressing to professional work as an actor, director and playwright.

Acting credits include Woolah! (Narrator), Yirra Yaakin Vignette Series, The Sum of Us and Cracked with Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company and various acting roles for the WA Opera.

Some of film and television credits include Below, The Heights, Itch, Paper Planes, Gallipoli, Cloud Street, Bran Nue Dae, Leather, The Mickelburg Stitch, Surviving Mumbai, Sundowner, Speed Date, Storm World, Two Fists One Heart and Bush Patrol.

Directing credits include Dating Black for Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company, Kangaroo Stew for Desert Wirla and Presence for So Frenchy Productions. Bruce was Assistant Director for FIFO – Fit In of F**k Off! and Brothers Wreck with Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company.

Writing credits include Operation Boomerang (Presented by Yirra Yaakin in 2024); the play was created during Bruce's participation in Yirra Yaakin Writers' Group in 2020. He is currently working on another play titled Lost, developed through the Yirra Yaakin Writers' project.

CAST



Jarrad Inman

Jarrad Inman is a Noongar man raised in Kinjarling/Albany, Western Australia. Jarrad was born in 2001, the youngest of three brothers who he credits for getting him into music. Now at the age of 23, Jarrad has been performing in various ways since the age of 11. Jarrad is passionate about his music and plays on the Perth music scene under the name Ricky Neil Jr. He cites David Bowie, Prince and Freddie Mercury as his major inspirations in music and stage performance.

Jarrad's acting career started in Albany at the age of 16 when he joined ALOTCO (Albany Light Opera Theatre Company) and would continue throughout the years in Albany. Jarrad's most prominent role within WAO to date was the part of "Koolbardi" in the Gina Williams and Guy Ghose production "*Koolbardi Wer Wardong*" starting back in 2021, a role he is immensely proud to have played."

CAST



Della Rae Morrison

Della Rae Morrison is a Bibbulmun woman of the Noongar Bibbulmun Nation of the Southwest of WA, with 30 years' experience in the arts in Australia. Della first started with Jimmy Chi's Aboriginal musical *Bran Nue Dae* in 1989 and has never looked back.

She performed in *Shakespeare Sonnets in Noongar*, the award-winning production of *Hecate* (2020), *Woolah!* (2023) and *Brothers Wreck* (2024) with Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company. Della performed the part of Kabaali in *Wundig Wer Wilura* with the WA Opera as part of PIAF 2024 and then toured with Maatakitj and Angelique Kidjo on her 2024 Australian tour.

Della won PAWA actress of the year for *Hecate* in 2021.

She is now looking forward to performing in *Thirst*, written by Barbara Hostalek, with Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company in 2025.



Leah Pigram

Leah Pigram is a proud Yawuru and Niyaparli woman, born and raised in Rubibi (Broome), WA.

Originally a circus performer, Leah found love for acting after completing the Cert IV of Aboriginal performance in 2022. Leah then went on to complete the diploma of Acting (2023) and the Diploma of screen performance (2024) at WAAPA.

In 2020 she was a part of the internationally renowned circus company 'Circa' in their acclaimed production *leviathan*, performed at the Perth festival. Leah's physicality and skill were further showcased in 2023 as a tightrope walker in the crossing wires production, by Seed Arts Australia in Lismore, NSW. Most recently Leah performed in the Blue Room Theatre 2024 production of *Ask*, directed by Barbara Hostalek. She can also be seen featured in Bradley Halls 2024 music video "First Kiss" Directed by Andrew Nowrojee.

CREATIVES



Charlotte Meagher
Set & Costume
Designer

Charlotte Meagher (she/her) is a neurodivergent multidisciplinary artist and writer with a passion for theatre, based in Boorloo. Having graduated from WAAPA design in 2022, Charlotte believes in developing high quality local work and creating opportunity for emerging talent.

With a background in both set/costume design and fine art, she is an advocate for creating alternative pathways for designers. An avid illustrator, Charlotte is always searching for ways to challenge theatre and exhibition spaces as a form, finding areas where they intersect. Above all else, she feels she is a storyteller first and foremost.



Jolene Whibley
Lighting Designer

Jolene Whibley (she/her) is a Boorloo based Lighting Designer. Jolene gained her early technical experience in the Goldfields, as a theatre technician at the Goldfields Arts Centre. After spending two years as the venue's Technical Assistant, supporting a range of local and touring productions, Jolene realised that lighting was what she wanted to specialise in.

In 2019 Jolene relocated to the big city to focus whole-heartedly on a career within lighting design. Her first step to this was completing a Bachelor of Performing Arts (Lighting) at WAAPA. Since completing her studies in February 2022, Jolene has professionally lit works for companies and organisations that include, Black Swan Theatre Company (*TOAST*, 2022), Perth Festival/WAYTCo (*Seven Sisters*, 2023), APK Productions (*Salted Pretzels*, 2023), the City of Fremantle (*Wardarnji Festival*, 2022), *Woolah!* (Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company, 2023) and *Songbird* (Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company, 2024).

CREATIVES



Tao Issaro
Sound Designer

Tao Issaro: is an Indian/Australian multi-instrumentalist, composer, sound designer and performance maker based in Boorloo, WA. As a composer/sound designer in Australia Tao has worked for Encounter Theatre, Monkey Brain Theatre, Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company, Tura New Music and Ochre Contemporary Dance Company to name a few.

Tao was nominated for 2 PAWA 2024 awards for outstanding composition and sound design for his work on Encounter Theatre's *Beneath the Music*. Tao currently is working with Sensorium Theatre providing bespoke sensory theatrical experiences for neuro-diverse children in schools across Perth. Tao also works as Captain Starlight at the Perth Children's Hospital, providing a playful and creative environment, supporting sick kids to cope with the uncertainty and worry of hospitals and treatments.



Jasmyrn Day
Stage Manager

Jasmyrn Day is a current Whadjuk Boodjar/Perth based Stage Manager who graduated from WAAPA, with a Bachelor in Performing Arts. She has been involved with the arts from a young age and possesses a keen interest in presenting new, challenging and thought-provoking works.

Her recent shows include *Song Circle* presented by Boomerang and Spear, *All Boys* presented by Every other Theatre and *Songbird* presented by Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company.

Her passion lies with imaginative work, art that challenges its audience, touring and exploring with creatives around WA.

CREATIVES



Rubeun Yorkshire
Community
Engagement
Coordinator

Rubeun Yorkshire is an actor, visual artist, dancer, stage combat choreographer. After graduating from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts WAAPA in 2010, Rubeun performed in WA Youth Theatre Company's award-winning Fringe World show *Rest* (2019). He also performed in the *Kaatijin* Series (2015-18), as Banquo in the award-winning production of *Hecate* (2020), and *Brothers Wreck* (2024) for Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company.

Rubeun was a key collaborator on Boomerang and Spear's *Noongar Wonderland* presented at the 2022 Perth Festival, co-choreographing a series of dances for a new collection of Noongar-language dance tracks by Maatakitj.

He's worked as fight choreographer on various productions, while completing a range of public art projects for major festivals and education institutions.



Emma Stirling
Assistant Stage
Manager

Emma is a freelance Stage Manager with extensive experience across theatre, musicals, opera, live events, and new stage works. A graduate of WAAPA's Bachelor of Performing Arts course, Emma has collaborated with leading companies such as Perth Festival, Black Swan State Theatre Company, RWS Global Sports, and Tennis Australia.

Emma's professional credits include stage management roles with Barking Gecko Arts on *The Great Un-Wondering of Wilbur Whittaker* and the West Australian Ballet on *Genesis*, as well as graphics operation roles for the United Cup over the past three years.

Emma is looking forward to returning to Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company as the Stage Manager of their 2025 school show, *Karla Kaatajin*, which will be touring to metro and southwest WA schools.

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Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company would like to thank our current donors for their continued support.

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ABOUT YIRRA YAAKIN THEATRE COMPANY

**Yirra Yaakin (Yir-raarh Yaarh-kin] which means
“Stand Tall” in Noongar language.**

Established in 1993 and located on Whadjuk Noongar boodja, Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company produces theatre that is exciting, insightful, authentic, and culturally resonant.

As a locally cherished and nationally recognised Aboriginal company, Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company leads by honouring the past, investing in the future, and embracing the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander theatre.

We respect the generations that came before us and invest in a thriving future for our artists and arts workers. Under the artistic direction of Maitland Schnaars (Nyaki-Nyaki), the company is forging strong bidi across our moorditj landscape through metro, regional, and national touring productions, artist development, and vibrant community programs.

We take pride in our legacy of premiering over 60 new theatre works that have toured throughout Western Australia and across 13 countries on five continents. The future of Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company is bright as we continue to commission new Aboriginal plays and nurture the next generation of Aboriginal artists to share with everyone incredible stories told through their unique lens.



yirra yaakin
THEATRE COMPANY

OUR COMPANY

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The Yirra Yaakin Board brings together a strong mix of skills from Community advocacy to Indigenous media. Visionary in its commitment to Aboriginal leadership and control alongside successful artistic outcomes.

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YIRRA YAAKIN THEATRE COMPANY

Whadjuk Boodjar

Subiaco Arts Centre

180 Hamersley Road, Subiaco
(Wandargutttagurru), WA 6008

Phone: (08) 9380 3040

Email: kaya@yirrayaakin.com.au

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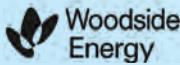


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