

YIRRA YAAKIN PRESENTS

WOOLAH!

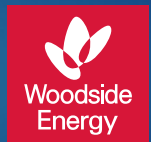


CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF
SHARING ABORIGINAL STORIES



EMPOWERING FIRST NATIONS ARTISTS

Woodside has proudly supported Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company as Development Partner since 2012. Through the Next Step Training Program, Yirra Yaakin inspires the next generation of First Nations artists and continues to create exceptional contemporary Aboriginal Theatre.



30 years OF
ABORIGINAL
THEATRE

WOOLAH!

ARTISTIC TEAM

Excerpts from works written / adapted

by Kylie Bracknell [Kaarjilba Kaardn],
Emmanuel James Brown, Jub Clerc, Peter
Docker, Richard Frankland, David Milroy,
Sally Morgan, Kyle Morrison, Narelle
Thorne & Ian Wilkes

Director Maitland Schnaars

Cast Peter Docker, Bobbi Henry, Ebony
McGuire, Della Rae Morrison, Rayma
Morrison, Tegan Mulvany, Kelton Pell,
Maitland Schnaars, Calen Tassone and
Rubeun Yorkshire

Narrator Bruce Denny

Set & Costume Designer Bryan Woltjen

Lighting Designer Jolene Whibley

Sound Designer Tao Issaro

Music Composer Charley Caruso

Stage Manager Jeniffer Poh

Assistant Stage Manager Helah Milroy

Producers Jen Edwards & Jess Gatt

Cover Photo by Dana Weeks

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND SPECIAL THANKS

Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company would like to acknowledge the support of our current donors and supporters along with the following partners: The Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body, The State Government through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, Woodside Energy, Wesfarmers Arts, Lotterywest and City of Subiaco.

RATINGS & ACCESSIBILITY

Contains adult themes including violence, sexual references, gambling, references to suicide and murder, death in custody, coarse language, haze and strobe lighting.

Recommended for ages 15+



SPONSORED BY



Creative Australia

Your Yirra Yaakin Aboriginal Corporation is assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts funding and advisory body.



Department of
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WISE WINE
MARGARET RIVER



SUBIACO ARTS CENTRE



Photo by Jon Green

SYNOPSIS

Celebrating thirty years of storytelling.

Yirra Yaakin presents *Woolah!*, a theatre production showcasing the plays and Aboriginal playwrights that Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company has championed over the last thirty years.

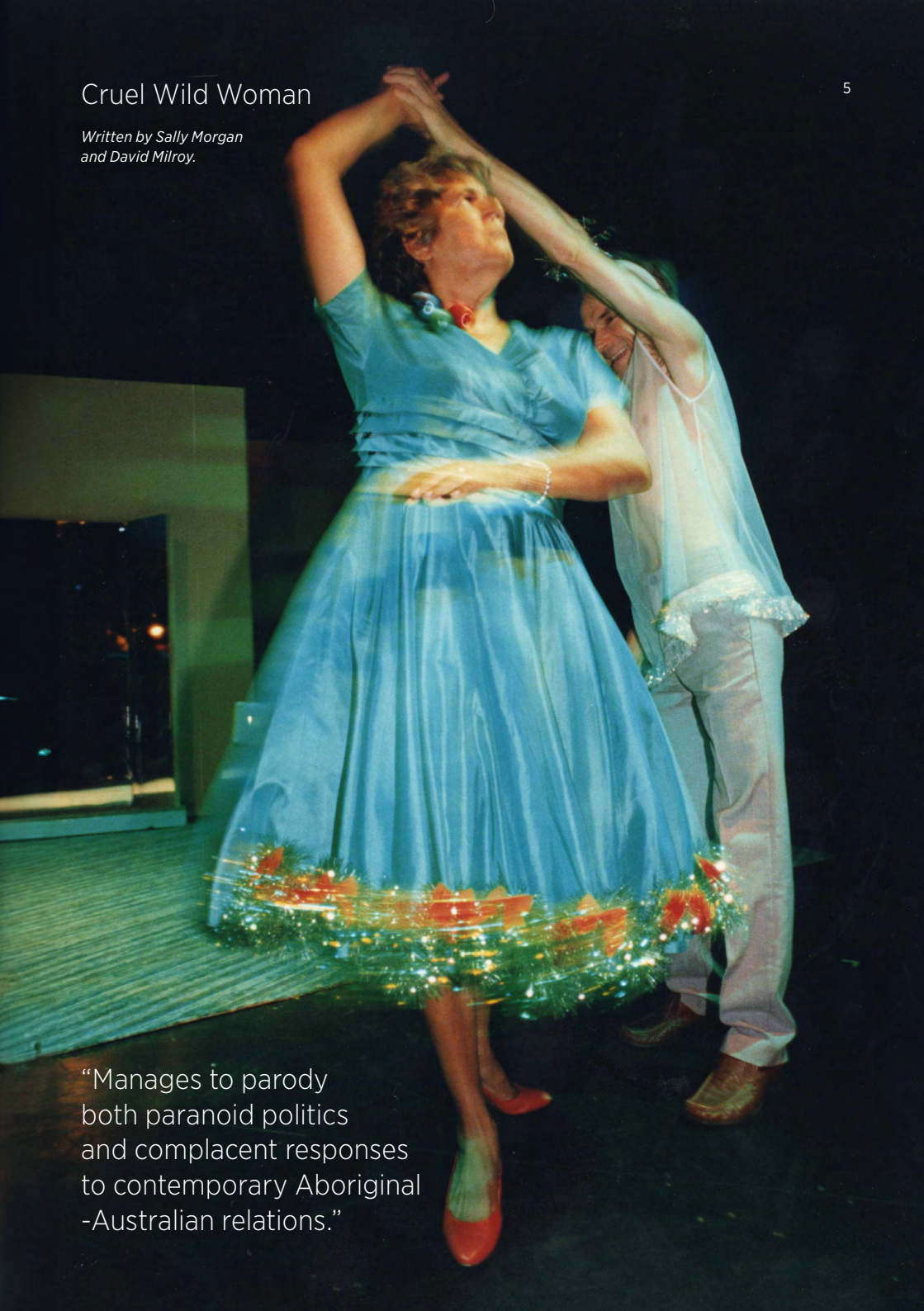
We celebrate our achievements and the joy that we have brought to Western Australian, Australian, and international audiences with a vignette-style performance drawing on scenes from a selection of main-stage shows presented by Yirra Yaakin over the last thirty years: ***Cruel Wild Woman*** written by Sally Morgan & David Milroy, ***Windmill Baby*** written by David Milroy, ***The Fever and the Fret*** written by Jub Clerc, ***So Long Suckers*** scripted by Peter Docker

in collaboration with Emmanuel James Brown, Kyle Morrison and Ian Wilkes, ***Conversations with the Dead*** written by Richard Frankland, ***Hecate*** adapted by Kylie Bracknell [Kaarljilba Kaardn] and ***Dating Black*** written by Narelle Thorne.

Come and see our brilliant performer alumni – Bruce Denny, Peter Docker, Bobbi Henry, Ebony McGuire, Della Rae Morrison, Rayma Morrison, Tegan Mulvany, Kelton Pell, Maitland Schnaars, Calen Tassone and Rubeun Yorkshire perform on centre stage.

Cruel Wild Woman

*Written by Sally Morgan
and David Milroy.*



“Manages to parody both paranoid politics and complacent responses to contemporary Aboriginal -Australian relations.”

Maitland Schnaars

Director

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

30 years is a significant amount of time for any organisation in any field let alone the arts, so the fact that Yirra Yaakin is celebrating its 30th birthday is an amazing achievement.

How do you celebrate a theatre company's achievements over 30 years? Ask the community. Every person I asked said the same thing, a mash up of scenes from different plays that Yirra Yaakin have produced over the years.

Choosing the scenes was another ball game altogether. It was extremely difficult. Yirra Yaakin has produced over 70 plays since its inception in 1993.



I have chosen seven scenes from seven different plays ranging from 1999 to 2023. I have chosen these scenes to showcase the depth, variety and complexity of the work Yirra Yaakin has produced over the last 30 years, to show the artistic growth and continuing maturity of the company into what I consider to be one of Australia's leading cultural and artistic theatre companies.

People might disagree with the plays and scenes I have chosen, they might think there are better choices, but you know what, I am fine with that. I hope there are many discussions and debates about what shows and what scenes I could have used. Yirra Yaakin has an incredible history and an even brighter future.



“Just when you thought satire was in short supply in new Australian theatre, *So Long Suckers* restores your faith that someone is looking around, thinking deeply and sharpening the pen.”

- The Australian

CAST



**Bruce
Denny**
Narrator

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

Acting credits include *The Sum of Us* and *Cracked* with Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company, *Macbeth*, *Tristan & Isolde*, *Nabucco*, *Madam Butterfly*, *Carmen*, *La Traviata*, *The Magic Flute*, *Rigoletto* and *Aida* with 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, *Presence* for So Frenchy Productions, *Scheherazade* and selected monologues for the Lux bar. Bruce was Assistant Director for *FIFO – Fit In of F**k Off!* with Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company.



**Peter
Docker**
So Long Suckers

Peter has worked with Yirra Yaakin as an artist since 2012 when he toured with *Honey Spot* to the Opera House. Peter wrote and performed with *So Long Suckers*, as well as appearing in *Conversations With The Dead* and *Panawathi Girl*. Peter also co-wrote *Lingo Lah Lah*.

Peter has also worked for and with a diverse range of Aboriginal organizations including, Kooemba Jdarra, Bunuba Cultural Enterprises, Marrugekku, Ilbijerri, Goolarri, Dodson-Lane Pty Ltd, Typecast Entertainment, Archie Roach Foundation, Community Prophets, Birrarangga Film Festival, Bunya Productions, and Nyamba Buru Yawuru PBC.

In film, Peter has played in *The Missing*, *Blight*, *The Opportunist*, and *Harry's War*. Peter has published three novels informed by this privilege: *Someone Else's Country*, *The Waterboys* (currently being developed for screen), and *Sweet One*. He continues to believe that the problem with white Australia is that it's not black enough.



Bobbi Henry
Cruel Wild
Woman, Dating
Black, Hecate

Bobbi Henry is a Noongar woman from the Southwest of WA. She is an actress and theatre maker who after along break to raise her three sons returned to the theatre and acting in 2019.

Bobbi's theatre credits include *Dating Black* (2023) (2021), *FIFO-fit in or f**off* (2020), *Hecate* (2020), *Cracked* (2019), *Runamuck* (1997) with Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company, *Randolph Stowe's Tourmaline* (1993) with Black Swan Theatre, *Educating Rita* and *By Degrees* with The Effie Crump Theatre and Queensland State Theatre Company.

Bobbi's film credits include *Genie from Down Under* with The Australian Children Television Foundation, the award-winning short film *Pilbara Pearl* (Peal) and the *Life of Harry Dare*.

She has been engaged in the facilitation of Noongar language as part of the *Ngalaka Daa Ensemble* workshops with Yirra Yaakin and in collaboration with WAYTCO.

Bobbi has completed Masters in Performing Arts at WAAPA ECU.

She is currently the Associate Director at Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company.



Ebony McGuire
The Fever
and the Fret,
Conversations
with the Dead

Ebony McGuire is a proud Noongar woman, an actor, writer, and producer.

Theatre credits: *What Do They Call Me?* (The Blue Room), *Kep Kaatijin*, *Bilya Kaatijin* and *The Fever and The Fret* (Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company), *Coranderrk* (Ilbijerri Theatre Company), *A Scandal in Weimar* and *Outside In* (wit incorporated), *Caliban* (Western Edge Youth Arts) *Cloudstreet* (Malthouse Theatre / Black Swan State Theatre Company), *From Darkness* (La Boite Theatre), *FIRE* (Kalyakoorl Collective / Fringeworld / The Blue Room Theatre), *The Bleeding Tree* and *SIT (or I'll Make You Sit)* (The Blue Room Theatre), *Barracking for the Umpire* and *The Bleeding Tree* (Black Swan State Theatre Company). In 2021 Ebony was an Assistant Director for *Bite the Hand* (The last Great Hunt).

Awards: Best actress (short film) at Hawaii International Film Festival 2020 for her work on Wirun. *The Bleeding Tree* won four Performing Arts WA 2022 Awards including: 'Outstanding Ensemble' and the 'Best Independent Production'.

CAST



Della Rae Morrison
Windmill Baby,
Hecate

Della Rae Morrison is a Bibbulmun woman of the Noongar Nation of the Southwest of Western Australia. Della has been in the Arts professionally for 30 years, beginning her career in Jimmy Chi's musical *Bran Nue Dae* in 1989. She appeared in the Australian children's television series *Lockie Leonard* and has also performed in various theatre productions and film.

Della's Theatre credits: *Headspace* (1997) with Yirra Yaakin, *Bratwurst & Damper* (2005), *Jimmy & Pat Meet the Queen* (2000) and *Red Alert* (1999) with Deckchair Theatre, *An Oak Tree* (2009) and *Vagina Monologues* (2001) with Perth Theatre Company, *Fifty Shades of Black* (2013) with Yorga Waabiny, *Banned* (2018) with Mudskipper, *The Season* (2018) with Tasmania Performs.

Della was nominated for Performing Arts WA Awards Best Actress in an Independent Production for Mudskipper's Production of *Banned* for Perth Fringe Festival 2018. She won WA Awards Best Actress award for Yirra Yaakin's production of *Hecate* in 2021.



Rayma Morrison
Dating Black

Rayma Morrison was born in Yalgoo and raised by her maternal grandmother on Country. She speaks the Wongutha language and is a respected elder. She originally trained as a community liaison worker and in marketing with Yirra Yaakin. She worked in Aboriginal health, promoting healthy eating for over 20 years. Rayma was the first Aboriginal woman to head up Radio Mulba in Port Hedland where she also worked at the Northwest Telegraph.

Rayma made her professional acting debut in 2018, in Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company and Black Swan State Theatre Company's theatrical production of *Skylab*. As an actor Rayma also has performed in Yirra Yaakin's productions of *Cracked*, *Dating Black* and *Yirra Yaakin Playwriting Festival*.

Rayma is currently Yirra Yaakin's Community Engagement Manager.



**Tegan
Mulvany**
Dating Black

Tegan Mulvany has been working in the theatre industry since 2002. She completed her studies at Curtin University's Hayman Theatre. Whilst studying there she worked on over thirty productions including *Terrible Infants of Christmas*, *Unidentified Human Remains* and the *True Nature of Love and Così*.

She has worked extensively throughout Australia; her theatre credits include *This Is Not a Love Song* (The Blue Room, 2013 |Fringe Award Winner), *Frankie's* (Variegated Productions, 2018), *Someone Stole Dee Perse's Tree* (Runaway Balloon, 2021), *Pull the Pin* (Just Friends TC) and has proudly toured *Dating Black* with Yirra Yaakin.

Tegan's film credits include DAFUQ? for ABC, *Upright* for Foxtel, *Mad Kids*, original Gavin Tanner series, and the award-winning sketch *Margaret's Got Talent* (2018 Official Selection Australia's Funniest Shorts).

Tegan also works as an improviser, role-player and educator. She will be a part of 2024 Black Swan State Theatre Company's production of *The Seed* written by Kate Mulvany.



**Kelton
Pell**
The Fever
and the Fret

Kelton Pell has built a reputation for being one of our finest indigenous actors. On the big screen, Kelton has appeared in *Mad Bastards*, *Aunty Maggie and the Womba Wagkun*, *The Last Ride*, *Bran Nue Dae*, *Blackfellas*, *Australian Rules*, *Confessions of a Headhunter*, *Cold Turkey*, *Where Two Rivers Meet*, *September*, *One Night the Moon* and *Stone Brothers*. Recent features include *Looking for Grace*, *Red Dog: True Blue*, *Three Summers* and the thriller *The Crossing* and drama *Buckley's Chance*. He will soon be seen in *Windcatcher*.

Appearing in numerous television series, his credits include *Mystery Road S3*, *Maverix*, *Firebite*, *The Heights*, *Pine Gap*, *Cloudstreet*, *The Moodys*, *Redfern Now*, *The Gods of Wheat Street* and *The Circuit*.

He has enjoyed an illustrious theatre career over thirty years with career highlights including *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* and *Endgame* (Black Swan Theatre Company), *Waltzing the Wilarra* and *The Fever and the Fret* (Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company) and *The Season* (Performing Lines).

Kelton's performance in *The Season* garnered a Tasmanian Theatre Award win and *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* a Performing Arts WA Award win. Kelton was awarded the CinefestOz Screen Legend Award.

CAST



**Maitland
Schnaars**
Conversations
with the Dead

Maitland Schnaars completed the Certificate IV in Aboriginal Theatre and Acting for Camera at WAAPA and went on to study a BA in Contemporary Performance at Edith Cowan University.

Maitland co-founded the international theatre company Corazon de Vaca and has performed in and co-created a number of their productions, both in Spain and Australia. He has performed in productions for Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company (*Panawathi Girl*, *Dating Black*, *Hecate*, *Conversations with the Dead*, *King Hit...*), for Tasmania Performs in their production in *The Season*, Black Swan State Theatre Company of WA, Queensland Theatre Company, Griffin Theatre and Performing Lines Tasmania.

In 2021 he was the Assistant Director and Associate Director for WAYTCO's production of *Beside* for the Perth Festival. In 2022 he performed in Bell Shakespeare's production of *Comedy Of Errors* which toured nationally. This year Maitland performed in APK Productions and The Blue Room Theatre's production of *Salted Pretzels*.

Maitland continues to work with artists from various backgrounds such as dance, multimedia and music. He is currently Artistic Director of Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company.



Photo by Jon Green



**Calen
Tassone**

Cruel Wild Woman,
So Long Suckers,
Conversations
with the Dead

Calen Tassone is Yamatji Martu man from the Pilbara, Western Australia. He is a graduate of the Aboriginal Theatre Course at Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA). While studying at the International Screen Academy, he won the role of 'Taylor Pete' in the Kriv Stender's directed feature *Red Dog: True Blue*.

In television, Calen starred as a series regular in the Matchbox Pictures television serial for the ABC *The Heights* (Season 1 and 2) as 'Mich Pavlovic'. Prior to this, he appeared in the ABC's *Black Comedy Series 2*. Most recently he was seen in Netflix *Irreverent* in the role of 'Harry'. Calen's theatre credits include *The Sapphires* with HIT Productions, *Astroman* with the Melbourne Theatre Company and the national tour of *Sugarland* with ATYP. Previous appearances with Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company include *Conversations with the Dead* and *Confessions of a Pyromaniac*.



**Rubeun
Yorkshire**

So Long Suckers,
Hecate

Rubeun Yorkshire is a visual artist, dancer, stage combat choreographer, and actor who is well known for his performance as Banquo in the award-winning production of *Hecate* (Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company).

After graduating from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) in 2010, Rubeun performed in shows *Kep Kaatijin* (2015), *Boodjar Kaatijin* (2016 – 2017), *Djinda Kaatijin* (2017) and *Kaarla Kaatijin* (2018) for Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company. He also performed in West Australian Youth Theatre Company's award-winning Fringe World show, *Rest* (2019).

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 (Clint Bracknell). He worked as fight choreographer on the productions *Hecate* (Yirra Yaakin 2020) and *Conversations with the Dead* (Yirra Yaakin 2017).

Rubeun has also completed a range of public art for corporate, major festivals and education institutions. His voice is featured on the ground-breaking language reclamation film *Fist of Fury Noongar Daa* (2021).

PLAYWRIGHTS



**Kylie
Bracknell**
Playwright,
and Adapter

Hecate

Kylie Bracknell is an accomplished actress, voice-over artist, television presenter, public speaker, writer, director and producer from the south-west of Western Australia – the Noongar nation. Kylie has developed innovative works completely in Noongar language, including the reimagining of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* titled *Hecate* (2020), performance of Shakespearean sonnets at Shakespeare’s Globe in London (2012), two re-voiced episodes of the award-winning animation series *Little J & Big Cuz*, and *Fist of Fury Noongar Daa*, the first feature film to be dubbed in an Australian language.

Kylie hosts the children’s television program *Waabiny Time* (NITV) and has raised awareness of Indigenous languages via platforms including TEDx (2014) and ABC television’s Q&A program (2016). As an actor, Kylie has featured in television programs such as *Irreverent* (Netflix), *Little J & Big Cuz* (NITV and ABC), *The Gods of Wheat Street* (ABC) and *Redfern Now* (ABC), films including *I Met a Girl* (2020), *Ace of Spades* (2012) and *Stone Bros* (2009), and theatre productions including *Black is the New White* (STC 2017-19) and *The Sapphires* (Belvoir 2010). Kylie is a 2020 recipient of Australia’s prestigious Sydney Myer Performing Arts Award.

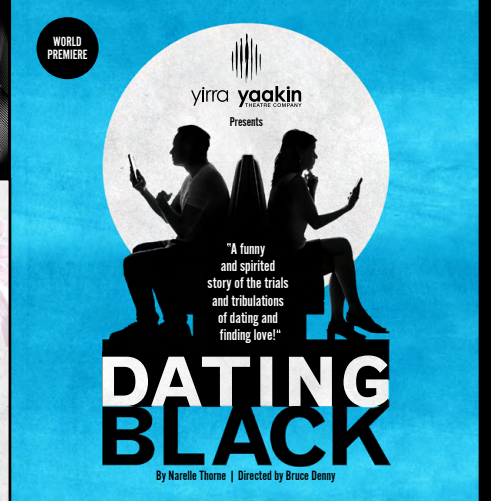
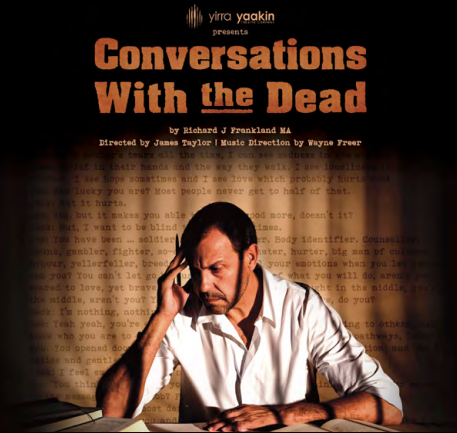


**James
Emmanuel
Brown**
Playwright

So Long Suckers

Emmanuel’s talent was unearthed at an acting workshop in Fitzroy Crossing during development of the original *Jandamarra* stage production, in which he played Ilaji. After that production he graduated from WAAPA’s Indigenous acting course and appeared in the TV documentary *Jandamarra’s War*.

For the 2011 Kimberley tour of *Jandamarra* he won a promotion to the role of the warrior leader Yilimarra, as well as creating an inspired comic cameo as the crippled station hand Jacky. In 2014 he went on to play the lead role of *Jandamarra* at the Sydney Opera House in the dramatic cantata *Sing for the Country*, presented by Bunuba Cultural Enterprises with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Gondwana Choirs. When not acting, ‘EJB’ works in his grandfather Dillon Andrews’ tourism enterprise, Bungoolee Tours.



“A performance that incites equal parts mournful reflection and punchy bursts of humour is a rare and warming experience – ‘The Fever and the Fret’ is one such exceptional performance.”

- ArtsHub



Photo by Simon Pynt



**Jub
Clerc**
Playwright

The Fever and the Fret

Jub is a Nyul Nyul/Yawuru woman from the Kimberley in WA.

A WAAPA graduate, Jub spent many years in theatre before working on shows such as *The Circuit 1 & 2*, *Bran Nue Dae*, *Mad Bastards*, *Satellite Boy*, *Jandamarra's War*, *Jasper Jones* and *Mystery Road – Season*. She has written and directed shorts *Storytime*, *Music Men*, *Min Min Light* and multiple ICS's (Indigenous Community Stories) and directed *Struggling Songlines*, episodes of TV series *The Heights* and *Turn Up the Volume*. Jub also wrote / directed her chapter *Abbreviation* of the feature anthology *The Turning*.

Jub has reported / produced for, *Around the Traps* and hosted *Mugu Kids* for NITV and was a Soprano in *Pecan Summer*, the world's first Indigenous Opera. Her play *The Fever and the Fret* debut at Yirra Yaakin won the prestigious 2017 'Kate Challis Award'.

Jub's debut feature film *Sweet AS* won the Blackmagic Design and Innovation award at MIFF 2022, the NETPAC award at TIFF 2022, the Crystal Bear in Generation KPlus at Berlinale 2023 plus many more international awards. She is currently directing 3 episodes on acclaimed political drama series *Total Control – Season 3*.



**Peter
Docker**
Playwright

So Long Suckers

Peter has worked with Yirra Yaakin as an artist since 2012 when he toured with *Honey Spot* to the Opera House. Peter wrote and performed with *So Long Suckers*, as well as appearing in *Conversations With The Dead* and *Panawathi Girl*. Peter also co-wrote *Lingo Lah Lah*.

Peter has also worked for and with a diverse range of Aboriginal organizations including, Kooemba Jdarra, Bunuba Cultural Enterprises, Marrugekku, Ilbijerri, Goolarri, Dodson-Lane Pty Ltd, Typecast Entertainment, Archie Roach Foundation, Community Prophets, Birrarangga Film Festival, Bunya Productions, and Nyamba Buru Yawuru PBC.

In film, Peter has played in *The Missing*, *Blight*, *The Opportunist*, and *Harry's War*. Peter has published three novels informed by this privilege: *Someone Else's Country*, *The Waterboys* (currently being developed for screen), and *Sweet One*. He continues to believe that the problem with white Australia is that it's not black enough.

PLAYWRIGHTS



**Richard J
Frankland**
Playwright

Conversations with the Dead

One of Australia's most prominent Indigenous figures, Richard J Frankland is a multi-talented artist and activist, who works to promote cultural strengthening, cultural agency and hope for First Nations people.

A Gunditjmara elder, from the south-west of Victoria, Frankland is a musician, filmmaker, activist, novelist, counsellor, community leader, educator, academic, songwriter and playwright. His rich life experience permeates his songs, stories and prose, which are set to the extraordinary guitar work of fellow Gunditjmara man Lee Sonnyboy Morgan, and the brilliant didgeridoo, sound effects and beats of Yorta Yorta descendent Scott Darlow.

The songs and stories depict issues relevant to the First Nations experience, past and present, and dreams of a 'Tomorrow Australia'.



**David
Milroy**
Playwright


Windmill Baby, Cruel Wild Woman

David Milroy is a Palyku man whose country is in the Pilbara. He was the first Artistic Director of Yirra Yaakin Aboriginal Theatre and in 2002 received a Myer Award for his contribution to the development of indigenous theatre.

David was a Guest Director of the American Playwrights Conference in 2002 and has attended the Australian National Playwrights Conference on a number of occasions as a writer and director. He received the 2004 Patrick White Award and the 2005 Equity Guild Award for his play *Windmill Baby* and a Deadly Award for his music in *Windmill Baby*.

David was also a finalist in the Helpmann Awards and received two Equity Guild Awards in 2011 for his play *Waltzing the Wilarra*. He has had a number of works commissioned and presented at WAAPA. These include *Rodeo Moon*, *Crowbones and Carnivores*, *Swine River* and *Killer Kane*.

David most recent work was the Award Winning *Panawathi Girl* in the 2022 Perth International Arts Festival.

A woman with dark, curly hair is sitting on a wooden platform. She is wearing a green and blue floral patterned dress and light-colored sneakers. To her right is a large, shallow, dark metal tub and a woven basket. The background consists of a large, light-colored, textured fabric hanging from a wooden frame. The lighting is warm and focused on the woman.

“This play is one of those rare gems...David Milroy builds on a rich tradition of powerful storytelling in Western Australia.”

- Victoria Laurie,
The Australian.

PLAYWRIGHTS



**Sally
Morgan**
Playwright

Cruel Wild Woman

Sally Morgan is a First Nations writer and artist. She comes from the Palyku people of the eastern Pilbara region of Western Australia. Her first book “*My Place*” was published in 1987 and is a landmark work in the field of First Nations literature.

Sally’s work as an author has been motivated by a desire to raise awareness of the issues facing First Nations Australians, particularly the ongoing effects of colonialism on First Nations families. She has also written numerous books for children, including “*Sister Heart*,” which won the 2016 Prime Minister’s Literary Award for children’s fiction, and has been involved in literacy projects for young people.

“*Cruel Wild Woman*” was her second play which she co-wrote with her brother David Milroy.



**Kyle J
Morrison**
Playwright

So Long Suckers

Kyle J Morrison is a proud Yamatji-Noongar man. He has been working in the theatre industry in Western Australia for over 25 years and was the Artistic Director of Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company from 2009 until 2019.

As an actor, Kyle has worked for such theatre companies as Black Swan State Theatre Company (*Waiting for Godot*, *Sapphires*), Barking Gecko (*Amy’s Monster & Own Worst Enemy*), WA Ballet (*Swan Lake*), Bell Shakespeare (*Romeo and Juliet & Macbeth*), and Yirra Yaakin (*King Hit*, *Booyi Koora Koora*, *Djill Djitt*, *Inside Out*, *One Day in 67*, *Warloo*, *In The Nyitting Time*, *Muttacar Sorry Business & Hecate*). Kyle’s performance in *Hecate* earned him the award of Best Supporting Actor at the Performing Arts WA Awards.

Productions directed by Kyle for Yirra Yaakin include: *Muttacar Sorry Business*, *In the Nyitting Time Good Lovin*, *Honey Spot*, *Mother’s Tongue*, *Kaarla Kaatijin*, *The Cake Man*, *King Hit*, *The Fever and The Fret*, *So Long Suckers* which was also co-created and written by Kyle, *Sista Girl*, *Skylab* and *Ice Land: A Hip h’Opera*.

Kyle has completed Master in Performing Arts at Edith Cowan University. In 2023, Kyle took on a role as an associate artist at Bell Shakespeare.



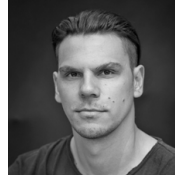
**Narelle
Thorne**
Playwright

Dating Black

Narelle is a proud Yamatji-Noongar woman. A mother and grandmother. She has always been passionate about telling stories of her people, whether it was an historical account or inspired by yarning around the campfire with family. This passion has led to a career spanning more than 20 years in Media/Communications and Community Engagement after starting as a television news journalist at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Narelle has also worked as a public servant at the Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) broadening her skills in media relations, events coordination, speech writing, research and policy development. Another passion of Narelle's is volunteering her time to a number of not-for-profit groups and she has previously served on the boards of Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company and the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts. She also enjoys going back on country practising culture and dancing with her aunts.

Her key achievements include; *Dating Black*, Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company (world premiere production 2021). *Iso Madness*, Yirra Yaarnz, Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company (2020). *Dating Black*, Yirra Yaarnz, Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company (2019).



**Ian
Wilkes**
Playwright

So Long Suckers

Ian (Moopa) Wilkes is a Noongar man with connection to the Wadjuk and Ballardong people. He is a multidisciplinary artist - theatre maker, director, performer, writer, dancer -and a graduate of Aboriginal Theatre at WAAPA. In 2021, Moopa won the Perth NAIDOC award for Artist of the Year.

He has directed several plays including York, Yirra Yaakin's *Boodjar Kaatijin*, *Hobo* and *Songbird* for The Blue Room Theatre and has helped devise and create many others. He has performed numerous roles including Yirra Yaakin's *Hecate* which premiered in Perth Festival and *Honey Spot* at the Sydney Opera House. Ian is also a regular performer in the long running WA show *Bindjareb Pinjarra*.

Performances in dance include Ochre's *Kwongan* for Perth Festival and CO3's *The Line*.

Ian's also teaches traditional and contemporary dance to the younger generation by combining his knowledge of culture, theatre and performance.

“Conversations with the Dead was well worth it. It’s production is quite unlike any play I’ve ever seen, and the very honest grief on display is something, at the very least, we can’t avert our eyes to.”

- Rhys Tarling, Perth Arts Live.



Photo by Jon Green



'Hecate' is a powerful
and inspiring production'

- Graeme Watson, Out in Perth

Photo by Dana Weeks

PRODUCTION



**Charley
Caruso**
Music
Composer

Charley is a singer songwriter, recording Artist and top liner whose voice has travelled further around the globe than she has. She produces music and writes for TV and other artists, including Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company (Yirra Yaakin Theme Song 2014). Charley sings with 'Della Mob' and goes by the artist name ABRYNZ.

Charley Caruso worked as the vocal teacher for the Aboriginal Theatre course at WAAPA until 2020.



**Tao
Issaro**
Sound
Designer

Tao Issaro is an Indian / Australian multi-instrumentalist, composer, sound designer and performance maker based in Boorloo, WA. As a musical performer Tao has worked with renowned artists and groups like Sensorium Theatre, WAAPA, Daksha Sheth Dance Company, George Brooks, Ranjit Barot, Felix Zenger, Maati Baani, Kutle Khan, and at international venues like Royal Albert Hall (UK), John F Kennedy Centre for Performing Arts (USA), and the Perth International Arts Festival.

As a composer / sound designer in Australia Tao has worked for notable companies such as Encounter Theatre, Co3, Tura New Music, Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company and Ochre Contemporary Dance Company to name a few.

Since 2020 Tao has been releasing original music on all popular online streaming platforms worldwide.



Helah Milroy
Assistant
Stage Manager

Helah Milroy is a descendant of the Palyku people from East Pilbara, living in the Walyalup (Fremantle) region of Western Australia. She is a writer and multidisciplinary artist who has a background in Existential Philosophy, Biological Arts, and Contemporary Ritual Performance. Helah's work utilizes feminist and first nations epistemologies to explore the creative potential of lived experience for personal growth and transformation through performance. By blurring the boundaries between life and art, she seeks to foster right relationship to the non-human world with respect to both the immanent and transcendent domains of experience.

Helah's play *Conversations with a Fish*, presented at The Blue Room Theatre in 2022, received great reviews. Her other writing credits include *I am and The Reckoning*, devised by Joshua Pether, Janine Oxenham and Helah Milroy.

Helah has also been involved in theatre as a performer (Existence Theatre / Fringe World), stage manager (*Kangaroo Stew / Desert Wirla*) and as assistant stage manager (*The Sum of Us, Dating Black / Yirra Yaakin*).

In 2023, she was one of STRUT's four recipients of SEED residency.



Jennifer Poh
Stage
Manager

After graduating from the WA Academy of Performing Arts in 1987, Jennifer worked with The Hole in the Wall Theatre Company for four years, during which time she was involved with over 30 productions including regional and national tours. In 1992, she toured Australia with Amanda Muggleton's Shirley Valentine. During Jennifer's 8 years with Effie Crump Theatre, she toured to Brazil with their award-winning production of *Redemption*.

Jennifer has since worked with the Perth Theatre Company, The Hole in The Wall, Regal Theatre, Civic Theatre Restaurant, WA Opera, WA Ballet, Deckchair Theatre, Onward Productions, Buzz Dance Theatre, His Majesty's Theatre, Alternative Facts, Age Link and ACT Australia. Jenny has worked with Yirra Yaakin on their productions of *Dating Black, Yirra Yaakin Vignettes, Panawathi Girl, The Sum of Us, Hecate, Conversations with the Dead, Cracked, Boodjar Kaatijin, So Long Suckers and The Fever and the Fret*.

This year Jenny worked on Juluwarlu's Ngurra Nyujunggamu - *When the World Was Soft*, in the Red Earth Arts Festival.

Jennifer was voted Best Stage Manager at the 2002 Equity Awards.

PRODUCTION



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 she 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), and the City of Fremantle (*Wardarnji Festival*, 2022).



Bryan Woltjen
Set & Costume Designer

Of English & German heritage, Woltjen is a graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts 1998 Set & Costume Design course. Woltjen is the recipient of two W.A. Equity Guild Awards for Best Set Design and has collaborated with a diverse range of theatre makers across Australia, India, the U.K. and Europe. In 2008 he undertook a series of residencies across India throughout Kerala, Gujarat and Delhi, researching traditional puppetry and devising new work.

Between 2010 and 2020, Bryan was based in London where he designed set, puppetry and costume for site-specific immersive work, new writing, festival installation, alternative spaces and established theatre institutions. Now living in Walyalup (Fremantle, Western Australia), he is an associate of Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, and he remains an (albeit remote) associate of Dash Arts London. Woltjen has recently designed the scenery for WAAPA's epic mid-year musical *Footloose* at His Majesty's Theatre, and for HAMA Production's *All Shook Up* at The Crown Theatre.

Anti-oppressive, inclusive, sustainable practice is the framework for which Woltjen seeks to create work that is beautiful, true and rare. Work that is excellent, innovative, and responsive to the changing world around us.



“Narelle Throne has delivered a laugh-out-loud funny comedy that will have you grinning all the way through.”

- Out in Perth

Photo by Dana Weeks

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Photo by Simon Pynt

Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company was established in 1993. Since then, the company has evolved into a respected cultural leader and artistic hub for First Nations people from all over WA, Australia and around the world.

Yirra Yaakin produces award-winning, world-class theatre, sharing Aboriginal stories through exciting, entertaining, educational and authentic new works.

A respected cultural leader and artistic hub for First Nations people.

The company has commissioned and premiered more than 70 new major presentations.

Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company

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yirra yaakin
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