

Bankstown Arts Centre in collaboration
with Sydney Festival presents

BLACK DROP EFFECT

A new play by Nardi Simpson

14-18
January



WHERE
INTERESTING
HAPPENS

  @bankstownartscentre
#bankstownartscentre

 CANTERBURY
BANKSTOWN

SYDFEST 2020

 Australian Government
Indigenous Languages and Arts

 Create NSW
Arts, Screen & Culture

WRITER'S NOTES

My initial creative vision was to create a work that would give a voice to the emotion First Nations mobs have about Australia/Invasion Day, and the 250th anniversary of Cook's Endeavour expedition. But my confidence waned as I began to tackle such a complex and layered discourse. The play and its statement was almost too difficult to attempt, let alone succeed.

When I looked to my fellow First Nations artists for inspiration I began to understand that I was not alone. We had all been preparing, our work strong in culture and practice, and ready to tackle this moment together. This play then is but one verse in an ongoing song. It sits with the voices of other First Nation creatives to become the canon of our collective response to a troubled and difficult point in our history. Buoyed by the strength of my community of makers, I put pen to paper and quickly found the humour, gravity and freedom to write a work worthy of the subject and my kin. It is my sincere hope you enjoy it.

Nardi Simpson

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

The rehearsal process of any new play is really like writing it all over again; the writer has written it, now the actors, using the script as a template, break down and rebuild the play for performance.

Our five Indigenous and two non-Indigenous actors are uncovering and digesting layers of meanings in the script, bringing them to life. They have to ask hard questions of the work and of themselves; they may profoundly disagree with a character's attitude but they have to play that person and imbue them with truth and humanity in order that all sides of the arguments, all the relationships in the play, are authentic and believable.

The actions and attitudes of the past – both historic and more recent – as well as those of now, are there in this story and they must all be conveyed truthfully, no matter how unpalatable. Otherwise we produce propaganda rather than exciting, complex theatre.

Felix Cross



CAST

BINNO William McPherson

BEENIE Marlene Cummins

PIP Jane Phegan

ANDY Anthony Hunt

MAX Googoorewon Knox

BRAYDEN Isaiah Kennedy

CHARLEY BOY Ken Weldon

CREATIVE TEAM

WRITER Nardi Simpson

DIRECTOR Felix Cross

VISUAL DESIGNER Lucy Simpson

COMPOSER James Henry

CHOREOGRAPHER Matthew Doyle

VIDEO DESIGN Mic Gruchy

LIGHTING DESIGN Karen Norris

PRODUCTION MANAGER Amber Silk

STAGE MANAGER Frankie Clarke

ASSISTANT PRODUCTION

Manager Emjay Matthews

ASMS Steph Storr & Bianca Cruse

Still Photography Chris Woe

PRODUCER Katrina Douglas

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER Vandana Ram

IMAGES Billy McPherson
and Googoorewon Knox/
Photography by Chris Woe

ARTWORK Lucy Simpson

Roger Knox's recording of
'Koori Rose' by Merv Lowry
is played with permission from
Roger Knox

VIDEO DOCUMENTATION

Fadle El Harris

WITH THANKS

Gerome Te Peeti, Ben Anshaw, Alex Torney, Chris Woe, Su Goldfish, Mark Mitchell, UNSW, Margaret Silk, Loud & Clear Audio, Pollards, Chameleon Touring Systems, TDC and John Bayley, Nigel Capenhurst, Dean Stevenson, Kaleena Briggs, Interactive Control, UTP, Outloud and Bankstown Art Centre staff.

Acknowledgement

Bankstown Arts Centre is situated on Dharug Country. City of Canterbury Bankstown acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Cover image photograph by Christopher Woe. Stingray image designed by Lucy Simpson.

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