HIDE THE DOG



Sydney Festival 2023

HIDE THE DOG

By Nathan Maynard (trawlwoolway pakana) & Jamie McCaskill (Ngāti Tamaterā, Te Ati Haunui a Pāpārangi, Ngā Puhi)
WORLD PREMIERE

Sydney Opera House, Drama Theatre
6-8 January
70 minutes (no interval)

CAST AND CREDITS

Co-Writers Nathan Maynard (trawlwoolway pakana) Jamie McCaskill (Ngāti Tamaterā, Te Ati Haunui a Pāpārangi, Ngā Puhi)

Director Isaac Drandic (Noongar)

Assistant Director and pakana Cultural Advisor Nathan Maynard (trawlwoolway pakana)

Cast

Elaine Crombie (Pitjantjatjara & Yankunytjatjara)
Tibian Wyles (Girramay, Kalkadoon)
Reuben Butler (Māori)
Najwa Adams Ebel (Birri-Gubba)
Poroaki Merritt-McDonald (Māori)
Tyler Wilson (Māori) Understudy

Set Designer Jane Hakaraia (Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga)
Sound Designer Maaka McGregor (Māori)
Lighting Designer Ben Hughes
AV Designer Keith Deverell
Costume Designer Sabio Evans
Associate Designer and Design pakana Guide Denni Proctor (pakana)
Voice and Movement Coach Reuben Butler
Boat Technical Design Greg Methe
Additional Māori Cultural Advisor Maakarita Paku
muyini song lyric contributor Kaninna Langford (Aboriginal) and Jordy Gregg (Murrie)
Education Kit Dr Meg Upton with Theresa Sainty (pakana) and Kimo Winiata (Māori)
Producer Annette Downs
Production Manager Simon Rush
Stage Manager Adam (Gus) Powers
Assistant Stage Manager & Tour Manager Sinsa Mansell (pakana)
Technical Operator Marty Shlansky
Construction Team Sabio Evans, Jen Goodluck, Petra Lagewaard, Greg Methe, Denni Proctor, Jake Sanger and Edith la Sauvage; Harriet Ayers assisted by Stephanie Rebeld

ABOUT THE SHOW

Performing Lines Tasmania had been working with Nathan Maynard for some time when our Associate Producer Marianne Taylor moved to Aotearoa and met local playwright Jamie McCaskill. Marianne thought the two men had many things in common, both as artists and First Nation men, and that perhaps they should meet.

At the 2017 Australian Performing Arts Centres conference, one of the keynote speakers held an on-the-spot pitching contest with the delegates contributing a few thousand dollars in cash to support the best project idea. Senior Producer Annette Downs convinced the participants that they should invest in placing the two playwrights Nathan Maynard and Jamie McCaskill in a room together for two days to see what they might create. Creative NZ supported Jamie to attend the Artists Residency in Tasmania and afterwards he and Nathan met in Nipaluna (Hobart) for two days.

That's all it took!

By the second day Jamie and Nathan had a two-page treatment that we shared with the Ten Days Festival who immediately offered seed funding from the Major Festivals Initiative. From there, momentum grew with a succession of creative developments taking place in both lutruwita/Tasmania and Aotearoa and with numerous festivals coming on board as co-commissioners. In November 2020, rehearsals started for the 2021 Sydney Festival premiere.

Unfortunately, the season was postponed due to the COVID surges. The team gathered again in March 2021 in preparation for the Ten Days Festival, but then

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the Auckland artists couldn't travel. Artists have gone through two week-long quarantines and missed Christmas 2020 with their families and still they have returned to share this work with you.

The 2023 premiere is our third attempt to beat Covid and we are delighted to be reunited on Gadigal land to finally share this delightful trans-Tasman work with our audiences, young and old.

A MESSAGE FROM CREATORS

From Nathan Maynard - Co-Writer

"As a palawa storyteller in the 21st century, I have a responsibility to tell contemporary stories, yet I still have a responsibility to keep the old alive. In *Hide the Dog*, I took the chance to merge both, where palawa spirits and characters that belong to stories 60,000 years old are helping contemporary characters deal with current problems. Stories and characters evolve with the people they belong to and I've enjoyed giving ancient palawa characters a new chapter in their 60,000-year journey.

Being palawa in 2022 means you also belong to an international First Nations community, which is extremely empowering. Jamie and I were all about passing on the empowerment that we felt from our connection as First Nations brothers, to younger mob, hence the reason we wanted our first collaboration to be a story for youngins.

There's also the fact that we're both a little ridiculous, and creating stories for kids gives you permission to be stupidly ridiculous, which we brought plenty of into *Hide the Dog*.

Without giving too much away, Jamie and I aren't the only ones collaborating in our story, our respective spirits and gods are running amok together too. Those international ratbags."

From Jamie McCaskill - Co-Writer

"Ngā mihi tino nui ki a koutou katoa. Writing *Hide The Dog* has been one of the highlights of my career. Working alongside Nathan Maynard has been fulfilling for me as a Māori storyteller and theatremaker and I look forward to the projects we create in the future as indigenous artists using the arts to promote our cultures and our way of looking at the world. Through this collaboration, I have learnt and experienced another way of looking at the world that isn't ngā tangata māori or ngā tangata pākehā, but I can never show enough appreciation for Nathan's passion for pakana and palawa stories, land, spirits and people.

I'd like to say a huge thanks to Performing Lines Tasmania and Senior Producer Annette Downs for bringing Nathan and I together all those years ago and pushing us to get our story to the stage. We have been looking forward to having audiences enjoy this journey for some time now and I'm really glad it is finally here. Mauri ora."

From Isaac Drandic - Director

"*Hide the Dog* is one of the very best projects I've had the pleasure of directing, a co-written play between Māori and palawa wypa. It's full of fun and adventure and laugh hard out loud humour from both these beautiful, strong and distinctive cultures.

We get to meet Māori gods like Tawhirimatea (god of the wind) and the great palawa spirit Muyini (creator spirit) that have been part of the stories from both cultures for thousands of years. The stories that thousands of generations of palawa and Māori children have grown up with. They've heard these stories around ancient campfires, they've learnt important lessons, they've been entertained, influenced, and shaped by these stories and now in 2023 these stories are accessible to another generation of children from all backgrounds at the Sydney Opera House.

So many First Nations stories from around the globe are making their way into the public sphere and it's heart-warming to see so many non-indigenous people and their families engaging with these stories. I can't wait for my own kids to see this play and immerse themselves in the world of Māori and palawa cultural expression. It's a gift for the whole family."

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PERFORMING LINES

Performing Lines is a national organisation that produces provocative contemporary performance by Australia's most audacious independent artists. Our purpose is to champion risk and to ensure that the breadth and plurality of Australia's creative potential is represented and celebrated.

Performing Lines is led by Executive Producer Marion Potts, and manages teams in Sydney, Hobart, Perth and Melbourne, with a network of producers and presenters around the country and the world.

PERFORMING LINES TAS

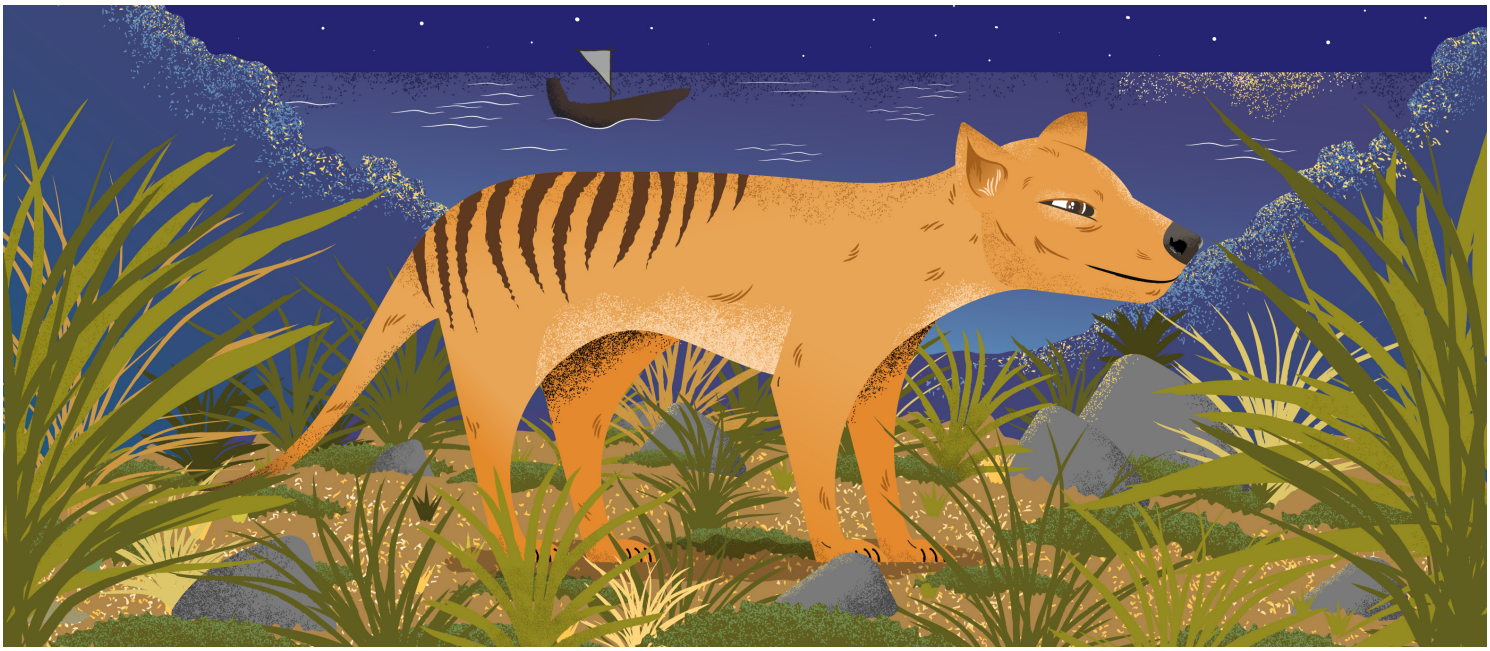
Over the past 15 years, Performing Lines TAS (formerly known as Tasmania Performs) has become a critical force in the Tasmanian ecology, using our credibility and knowledge to support independent artists. With a focus on producing the work of First Nation artists, we work state-wide empowering people to tell their stories. Our work is always artist-led.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

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