



# GURR ERA OP

Sydney  
Festival  
2024



# GURR ERA OP

By Ghenoa Gela

Produced by Force Majeure in association with ILBIJERRI Theatre Company

WORLD PREMIERE

The Studio Theatre at Bangarra

13 - 19 January

60 mins (no interval)

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## CAST AND CREDITS

**Elders/Cultural Consultants/Advisors** Anson Jack Gela, Annie Gela, Agnes Santo, Meo Sailor, Mua Sailor, Nancy Nawie, Patricia Dow, Sarah Gela, Joshua Thaiday

**Creator, Director, Writer and Performer** Ghenoa Gela

**Performers** Taryn Beatty, Aba Bero, Berthalia Selina Reuben

**Associate Director** Amy Sole (Creative Associate, ILBIJERRI Theatre Company)

**Artistic Consultant** Danielle Micich (Artistic Director, Force Majeure)

**Set Designer** Katy Moir

**Costume Designer** Lisa Fa'alafi

**Costume Associate** Tracy Datson

**Lighting Designer** Kelsey Lee

**Composer and Sound Designer** Ania Reynolds

**Sound Associate** Carl Polke

**Production Manager** Mark Haslam

**Stage Manager** Bronte Schuftan

**Assistant Stage Manager** Rebecca Dilley

**Impact Advisor** Anna Weekes

## ABOUT THE SHOW

*What would you do if you could never go back home? Is your identity bound by place or by self? What happens to your culture when the physical place that holds your ancestral stories disappears?*

These are some of the questions our storytellers grapple with on a daily basis as they watch their motherland, family and community defend against the onslaught of climate change. The Torres Strait Islands are currently on the front lines - ultimately, your homes will be next.

*GURR ERA OP* invites you to join four mainland born Torres Strait Islander women as they bring visibility to their fight against the rising tide that threatens their home, culture and identity.

Weaving contemporary storytelling, movement, spoken word and cultural celebration, these women

explore connection to family, duty and the ancestral stories of their motherland.

More than an urgent contemporary performance, *GURR ERA OP* is a celebratory sharing of culture in the face of climate devastation. It is the vivid imagining of loss, and a call to action for a better future.

Learn more about the inspiration behind *GURR ERA OP* in the short documentary streaming on Sydney Festival's [AT HOME](#) platform. You can also watch a multi-camera [live recording](#) of the show on Saturday 20 January.

## ARTIST STATEMENT - GHENOA GELA

I am currently fighting the fear of being displaced. The fear of not belonging somewhere, do you know what that feels like? I know for some of us, that fight is very real and constant. I am so aware of living on someone else's unceded lands and truth be told, as colonisation and capitalism continue to run the world, just "going back home" is no longer an option I can even consider. Water is lapping on the doors of my people's homes, my family's home. And my ancestral homelands are slowly being devoured by a force that is essentially a product that we humans made. I know as an individual there's not much I can do, but with the little I can, I'LL AT LEAST TRY SOMETHING. 'GURR ERA OP', in Meriam Mir, translates to 'The Face of the Sea' - IS MY SOMETHING.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO:

This journey doesn't end when you leave our show.

We invite you to step from the theatre into meaningful action toward a more equitable, sustainable and regenerative future.

You too can take action on climate change, here is how:

### Our Islands Our Home Campaign

Eight Torres Strait Islanders have won a historic legal fight against the Australian Government for inaction on climate change. Learn more and support the campaign by signing their petition, sharing their message and donating.

Find out more [here](#).

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## ABOUT FORCE MAJEURE

Force Majeure is Australia's preeminent multidisciplinary movement-based theatre company, known as a crucible for diverse voices and producing unforgettable performances.

**Artistic Director** Danielle Micich

**Executive Director** Amy Morcom

**Associate Producer** Whitney Richards

**Communications & Development Coordinator**  
Laura Hart

**Accounts Manager** Rhanda Mansour

**Financial Consultant** Emma Murphy

**Associate Artists** Ghenoa Gela, Liesel Zink

**Board** Julieanne Campbell (chair), Lucy Gardoll, Rani Haywood, Rachael Maza AM, Danielle Micich, Helen Porter, Stephanie Purcell

To support our vital storytelling,  
[head to our website to donate.](#)

Every tax deductible donation makes a difference, and helps us to run initiatives such as our Associate Artist mentorship program:

*"Force Majeure is more like family than a company. They have been my greatest support and rock in not only my artistic career but also my life. Coz art is life is art is life. Force asking me to be one of their Associate Artists is more than just a title, it's a rare role that a black woman like me in the arts rarely gets offered without an agenda. This is what recognition beyond colour looks like." - Ghenoa Gela*

## GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



**Major  
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## ILBIJERRI THEATRE COMPANY

The longest established First Nations theatre company in Australia, ILBIJERRI creates, presents and tours powerful and engaging theatre by First Nations artists that gives voice to our Cultures. Find out more [here.](#)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- Darin Cooper Foundation
- Helen Porter
- Katrina Chisholm

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