

Sydney Festival 2026

SF



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CITY OF SYDNEY 

GARRIGARRANG BADU

Peta Strachan
& Jannawi Dance Clan

GARRIGARRANG

BADU

**Peta Strachan
& Jannawi Dance Clan**

9–10 January
Sydney Opera House, Drama Theatre
70 mins (no interval)

World Premiere
FORM Dance Projects & Sydney Opera House

CAST & CREDITS

Artistic Director, Choreography, Language and Design Peta Strachan

Rehearsal Director Lea Francis

Co-Choreography, Cast And Traditional Vocals Abigail Delaney, Amy Flannery, Aroha Pehi, Breanna Kemmerling, Buia David, Dubs Yunupingu, Gapala Yunupingu, Hannah Hansen, Harlisha Newie-Joe, Maddison Fraser, Miah Wright, Olivia Kirkman, Tameeka Cora, Tessarna Cora

Dramaturg Nigel Jamieson

Salt Water and Play Choreography Albert David

Tree Gifting Choreography Beau Dean Riley Smith

Sound Design Damian Robinson, Wicked Beat Records

Lighting and Production Manager Paul Osborne, Catapult Creative

Technical Operator Matthew Osborne

Language, Composition and Vocalist Matthew Doyle

Language and Vocalist The Late Richard Green

Lead Vocalist and Composition DYAGULA

Vocalist Jacinta Tobin

Costumes and Cultural Artifacts Pauline Strachan, Djuwakan Jeremy Marika

Set & Prop Design Govinda Webster, Pink Cactus Props

Cultural Advisor Julie Webb, Matthew Doyle, Leanne Tobin, Jacinta Tobin

Videographer and Projection Design Samuel James

Stage Manager Amelie Downie, Abby Dinger

Assistant Stage Manager Peta-Louise Rixom

Executive Producer FORM Dance Projects in collaboration with Arts and Cultural Exchange

ABOUT THE SHOW

Garrigarrang Badu invites you to bear witness to the strength, resilience, and power of the Dharug Matriarchy. Garrigarrang (salt water) and Badu (fresh water) tells the stories of Dharug country which spans from the mountains to the sea, where the fresh water meets saltwater.

"We are dancing about the earth, sky and waters. We translate it through our bodies connecting to the spirit of our ancestors. We are embodying the voice of Country. We live and breathe culture, it aligns our spirits. Country hears us, sees us, feels us."

Peta Strachan

MOVEMENTS OF STORY AND COUNTRY

FIRE STICK REED

Women are travelling across country carrying their firestick reeds providing safe passage through Country from the top of the mountain down to Yarramundi, guided by spirit women.

CAMP LIFE

Gathering and a passing on of knowledges on Country, down through generations after generation of Dharug women.

FEATHER

Honouring and an offering to our ancestors, the feathers represent the fog in the top of the trees and the clouds.

SPIRIT OF PLACE

The dancers represent the protector spirits of Country watching over and caring for Sacred sites.

BUDBILI

A traditional song and dance about the heartbeat, mother and child.

TREE GIFTING

The Grandmother Tree spirit gifts the knowledge and spiritual meaning to the women that the cultural artefacts hold.

DIGGING STICK

The Digging Stick represents a higher power and helps navigating mother earth and sky Country.

BURRADOWEE

A traditional Dharug dance of Burradowee, the eel spirit representing the journey from the freshwater to the saltwater.

EEL TRAP

Dharug women fish using woven eel traps on the Burramatta river.

NAWI

Featuring the Nawi (canoe), the fisherwomen whisper the secret truth telling of the river under the night sky.

COLEBEE

A traditional dance of Colebee the sea eagle spirit.

GARRIGARRANG BADU

Celebrating the coming together of Saltwater and Freshwater at the heart of Dharug Country.

ABOUT JANNAWI DANCE CLAN

Jannawi Dance Clan is an Indigenous dance company based on Dharug Country in New South Wales. Led by Artistic Director and Dharug woman Peta Strachan, the company blends traditional cultural practice with contemporary performance to honour and revitalise Dharug language, story and ceremony. "Jannawi" means with me, with you in Dharug, a principle reflected in the company's collaborative approach, strong community ties and commitment to cultural continuation. Their work spans stage productions, workshops and cultural education programs, showcasing the strength, resilience and creativity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, men and young people, and sharing the living heritage of the world's oldest continuous culture through movement, song and storytelling.

ABOUT PETA STRACHAN

Peta Strachan is a Dharug woman from the Boorooberongal Clan, she has been working in the performance space for 35 years as a multi-disciplinary dancer. During Strachan's career she has danced with Bangarra, performed for the 2000 Sydney Olympic opening and closing ceremonies and has performed around the country. Strachan is the Artistic Director of Jannawi Dance Clan and freelances as a dancer, choreographer, teacher, and costume maker. Dharug culture is at the centre of everything Strachan creates, and she has dedicated years of work to creating one of Australia's most renowned Matriarchal dance clans. Alongside Julie Jones and Chris Tobin, she is a member of ACE's Dharug Knowledge Holders Group. From the rich storytelling traditions of Aboriginal Sydney NSW Jannawi Dance Clan shines a light on strength, resilience and artistry of Aboriginal women, men, youth and dance culture today.

ABOUT FORM DANCE PROJECTS

FORM Dance Projects is a leading producer and presenter of Australian dance that celebrates place, champions collective storytelling, and creates destination experiences for diverse and vibrant communities from our home in Western Sydney to the world.

Arts & Cultural Exchange is a Western Sydney-based community arts organisation working across five program pillars: First Nations, Youth Engagement, Multicultural Women, Artists with Disability and Screen.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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