

## MEDIA KIT

### HECATE

#### YIRRA YAAKIN

PERTH FESTIVAL COMMISSION, AUSTRALIAN EXCLUSIVE

SUBIACO THEATRE CENTRE, THU 6 – SUN 16 FEB

TICKETS: \$69

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### HECATE

In a world where the Noongar language is spoken by all, a yarn about a Scottish king is retold – like never before.

Join Yirra Yaakin, one of Australia's leading Aboriginal performing arts organisations for Australia's first large-scale Shakespeare production entirely in Noongar.

Hecate, queen of the witches, is usually omitted from productions of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Most directors are unsure of what to do with her. Here, she is at the heart of everything watching as Macbeth strives toward power at any cost, all the while knowing that order must be restored; that Country always trumps human ambition and greed.

In 1833 colonist Robert Menli Lyon wrote in reference to Noongar people that 'the whole of each tribe are bards'. This world premiere event puts those words to the test. Having spent years studying and reclaiming their endangered Noongar language, a star ensemble use this audacious adaptation as a springboard to showcase its poetic and expressive qualities.

### HECATE KAMBARNAP

SUBIACO THEATRE CENTRE, Wed 5 – Sun 16 Feb, before and after Hecate

### HECATE KAMBARNAP

Before and after seeing Hecate you are invited to Hecate Kambarnap. This gathering space offers a unique environment to celebrate Noongar people and their maintenance and care of the Noongar language as it pulses through this very bedrock we call home. Language revival and healing plays a vital role in strengthening our community. Noongar language is rarely spoken fluently here and this kambarnap offers a safe place for ceremonial smoking for those who wish to partake respectfully in honour of these ancient sounds and their speakers. Conceived by *Hecate* adaptor and director Kylie Bracknell [Kaarljilba Kaardn].

### COMPANY CREDITS:

**Director/Adaptor** Kylie Bracknell [Kaarljilba Kaardn]

**Translators** Kylie & Dr Clint Bracknell

**Editor/Senior Language Consultant** Aunty Roma Winmar

**Cultural Consultant** Judy Bone & Mitchella Hutchins

**Assistant Director** Jill Collard

**Bell Shakespeare Consultants & Associate Directors** James Evans & Peter Evans

**Set & Costume Designer** Zoe Atkinson

**Lighting Designer** Mark Howett

**Composer/Musical Director/Sound Designer** Dr Clint Bracknell

**Dramaturg** Kate Mulvany

**Stage Manager** Sue Fenty

**Cast:** Cezera Critti-Schnaars, Bobbi Henry, Della Rae Morrison, Kyle J Morrison, Mark Nannup, Trevor Ryan, Maitland Schnaars, Ian Wilkes, & Rubeun Yorkshire

### **YIRRA YAAKIN**

Yirra Yaakin (Yir-raarh Yaarh-kin] which means 'Stand Tall' in Noongar language, is one of Australia's leading Aboriginal performing arts organisations producing award-winning, world-class theatre that is exciting, entertaining, educational, authentic and culturally appropriate.

Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company has been committed to sharing Aboriginal stories since 1993. Their stories have reached 13 countries in five continents and they have won awards for theatre, governance and partnerships, including a prestigious Sidney Myer Award for their record of facilitating Indigenous artistic programs.

The company has commissioned and premiered over 50 new theatre works. Prominent Aboriginal writers have included Dallas Winmar, Mitch Torres, David Milroy, Sally Morgan and Derek Nannup, amongst many others who have contributed to the Yirra Yaakin experience.

Yirra Yaakin is proud to have produced a body of work unequalled in innovation, excellence and cultural significance. Yirra Yaakin has also always had a broad education and community engagement program with a development base to ensure they continue to have Indigenous trainees working within the Australian theatre industry. Yirra Yaakin's priority is to ensure Aboriginal theatre remains under Aboriginal control and keeps providing opportunities for Aboriginal artists at all levels of theatre creation and production.

### **THE NOONGAR SHAKESPEARE PROJECT**

The Noongar Shakespeare Project is a long term cultural and creative endeavour celebrating Noongar culture and language.

Noongar language is considered to be an endangered language, with fewer than 400 fluent speakers within the Noongar nation. This project aims to have a direct and immediate impact to grow the number of people with an understanding of Noongar language and culture.

Beginning in 2012, in an international first, Yirra Yaakin presented translated *Shakespeare's Sonnets* in the Noongar language as part of The Globe Theatre's Cultural Olympiad in London. This represented an important moment in celebrating Noongar culture and language internationally.

### **DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE**

**2018** – A public showing of selected scenes from the Noongar *Macbeth* adaptation was held as part of the 2018 Perth Festival's Perth Works program of showings of Western Australian works in development. Further creative development sessions were completed between Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company and Bell Shakespeare on the adaptation. Yirra Yaakin also introduced the Junior Sonneteers Program, in which 12 young artists from diverse backgrounds were invited via an audition process to become Yirra Yaakin's first youth ensemble. After a two-month period of workshops and rehearsals, the Junior Sonneteers took to the stage to showcase their commitment and hard work in a unique performance of Noongar language and Shakespeare.



**2017** – Creative Development sessions were completed between Yirra Yaakin and Bell Shakespeare on the adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* into Noongar language. Development sessions were completed, training Aboriginal performers to become skilled Noongar language speakers.

**2016** – Yirra Yaakin provided *Shakespeare’s Sonnets in Noongar Language* workshops to six selected local high schools.

**2015** – Yirra Yaakin continued this evolution of translating *Shakespeare Sonnets* into the Noongar language with an expansion of these initial seeding projects. We began a Noongar language-training program for selected Yirra Yaakin artists, which included developing a schools based workshop residency program that was successfully piloted with Clontarf Aboriginal College.

**2013** – A presentation of a selection of the Sonnets at the Opening of the Perth Festival, another first for Yirra Yaakin.

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