

MEDIA RELEASE: Thursday, 31 October 2019

SHAKESPEARE IN NOONGAR A WORLD FIRST

Hecate (Feb 6-16)

PERTH FESTIVAL COMMISSION

WORLD PREMIERE

Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company

Presented in association with Bell Shakespeare



Image: Wendy Slee

In a landmark international event, Perth's **Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company** presents Australia's first full-scale Indigenous language interpretation of a major Shakespearean work for the stage.

Hecate is an all-Noongar language adaptation of *Macbeth* by writer-director and Perth Festival Associate Artist **Kylie Bracknell (Kaarlijilba Kaardn)**, working with senior language consultant and editor **Aunty Roma Yibiyung Winmar** and a cross-cultural team including dramaturg **Kate Mulvany**.

This world-premiere production, presented in association with **Bell Shakespeare**, has been eight years in the making as part of Yirra Yaakin's **Noongar Shakespeare Project** initiated in 2012.

Hecate, queen of the witches, usually is omitted from productions of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Most directors don't know 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.

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

Noongar is considered 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 *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.

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].

Hecate writer-director and Perth Festival Associate Artist Kylie Bracknell (Kaarljilba Kaardn) says: “When Kyle J Morrison first planted this idea, out of left field, I saw its immense potential to nourish language resurgence amongst Noongar actors and community. Our endangered language refocuses this famous story on country, revealing new layers of meaning.”

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

WHAT: Hecate

WHEN: Thu 6 - Sun 16 February

Tue – Fri, 7.30pm; Sat 8 Feb, 2pm; Sat 15 Feb, 2pm & 7.30pm; Sun 6pm

WHERE: Subiaco Arts Centre (Wandaraguttagurup)

HOW MUCH: \$69

Hecate Kambarnap: Wed 5 – Sun 16 Feb, before and after Hecate

BOOKINGS AND FESTIVAL INFO: perthfestival.com.au

[Click here for images](#)

For further information, interviews or images please contact:

Stephen Bevis

+61 8 6488 8618 / 0448 927 281

sbevis@perthfestival.com.au

Emma Britton

+61 8 6488 8582 / 0411 726 605

ebritton@perthfestival.com.au

Perth Festival acknowledges the Noongar people who continue to practise their values, language, beliefs and knowledge on their kwobidak boodjar.

They remain the spiritual and cultural birdiyangara of this place and we honour and respect their caretakers and custodians and the vital role Noongar people play for our community and our Festival to flourish.

Perth Festival

Founded in 1953 by The University of Western Australia, Perth Festival is the longest running international arts festival in Australia and Western Australia's premier cultural event. The Festival has developed a worldwide reputation for excellence in its international program, the presentation of new works and the highest quality artistic experiences for its audience. For 66 years, the Festival has welcomed to Perth some of the world's greatest living artists and now connects with hundreds of thousands of people each year.

Iain Grandage is the Artistic Director 2020 – 23.

-ends-