

## BESIDE

Stand beside the river and see things from a different perspective. Join a small walking group as you discover Peninsula Farm, one of the first farms in colonial Perth. Over three acts you'll explore the site discovering life beside the river through a combination of storytelling, song and find-your-own-adventure. The Derbarl Yerrigan flows through the heart of our city, bearing witness to millennia of change, shaping the land and its stories.

BESIDE invites you to explore our individual and collective responses to this area of the Swan River and to the cultural, environmental and social changes that have taken place along its banks. Created by a dynamic team of professional and emerging artists, including senior Noongar artists, BESIDE is a critically relevant new work showcasing the talents of a diverse and exceptional group of young Western Australian performers and theatre makers, led by WA Youth Theatre Company's artistic director James Berlyn. Inspired by 65,000 years of rich history, BESIDE delves into social change and its capacity to both marginalise and empower.

### CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION CREDITS

**Director:** James Berlyn

**Assistant Director:** Maitland Schnaars

**Artistic Associates:** Georgia Ivers, Phoebe Sullivan, Ian Wilkes

**Composer & Sound Designer:** Rachael Dease

**Choral Composer:** Della Rae Morrison

**Lighting Designer:** Lucy Birkinshaw

**Visual Dramaturg:** Zoe Atkinson

**Cast:** WA Youth Theatre Company members with Della Rae Morrison and Maitland Schnaars

**Noongar Cultural Advisory Panel:** Della Rae Morrison, Maitland Schnaars, Ian Wilkes

**Stage Manager:** Tracey Shaw

**Production Manager:** Sian Murphy

**Producer:** Mollie Hewitt

**National Trust of Western Australia team:** Anne Brake, Julian Donaldson, Sarah Murphy

### WA YOUTH THEATRE COMPANY

WA Youth Theatre Company is focused on professionally-led, collaborative theatre making and performance training with diverse groups of Western Australians aged between 13 and 26 years. We make bold and thought-provoking theatre across genres and forms with our members because we know that in tandem with an artist-led collaborative process this engenders personal growth as well as a deep and relevant understanding of contemporary practice. Our artistic endeavours champion the diversity of our members' voices and stories. The high-quality performances created with and by our engaged young artists stimulate and inspire audiences and enrich the wider community.

### JAMES BERLYN (Director)

James Berlyn is a performing artist of more than thirty-five years' experience. Trained in dance at Victorian College of the Arts, he has worked in dance, dance-theatre, theatre and community art across the country and internationally as a performer, creator, director, curator and lecturer. He is still touring his one-to-one show *The Secret Project* (2010) nationally and internationally. He was the instigator and a co-founder of Proximity Festival, Australia's first festival of one-on-one performance. He was a co-founding director of Tracksuit, WA's adult disability performance group. James has been a guest lecturer at WAAPA in movement and devised performance since 1990. He is currently the Artistic Director of WA Youth Theatre Company, for whom he created and directed multi-award-winning hits at the 2018, 2019 and 2020 FRINGE

WORLD festivals; *YOURSEVEN*, *REST* and *BODY RIGHTS*. In 2019 *REST* was the “stand out hit of the Fringe”, winning five awards including the Theatre Award and the coveted Martin Sims Award as well as Interpretation, Learning and Audience Engagement Award at the Australian Museums and Galleries Awards 2019.

**MAITLAND SCHNAARS (Assistant Director, Performer, Noongar Cultural Advisory Panel)**

Maitland Schnaars is a Noongar actor, poet and playwright and one of Western Australia’s premier contemporary theatre artists. He has acted in a number of productions including numerous educational DVD’s, short films and television commercials over the past decade. He has studied Aboriginal Theatre and Acting for Camera at WA Academy of Performing Arts and Contemporary Performance at Edith Cowan University. He has won the Western Mining Corporation Award for Best Indigenous Artist and co-founded the international theatre company Corazon de Vaca. With Corazon de Vaca he performed and co-created a number of productions, including a commission for the World Expo in Zaragoza, Spain 2008. He has worked with independent theatre companies including Happy Daggers, Ellandar Productions, Upstart Theatre Company and Class Act Productions. In 2013 Maitland formed Ward 4F Productions and produced a re-working *If I Drown I Can Swim* for Fringe World where it was nominated for Best Theatre Production. Maitland has undertaken residencies in Sweden and Norway. **He performed** in Yirri Yaakin’s multi award winning play *King Hit* in 2014, has performed at various Poetry Festivals nationwide, including the Overload Poetry Festival in Melbourne and WA Poetry Festival. Most recently Maitland performed as Macbeth in Yirra Yaakin’s all Noongar language production of *Hecate* for Perth Festival 2020.

**GEORGIA IVERS (Associate Artist)**

Georgia Ivers is an emerging performer, theatre maker and multimedia artist from *Boorloo* (Perth). She aims to create work that builds empathy and empowers change. At FRINGEWORLD 2020, she produced *The Lion Never Sleeps* (Summer Nights), worked as a digital artist for *The Dirty Mother* (Summer Nights), and assistant directed and performed in *Body Rights* (WAYTCO). In 2019, she performed in *The Cockatoos* (WAYTCO) and *The Trojan Women* (Murdoch Theatre Company). She also wrote for WAYTCO’s 24 Hour Play Generator and trained with WAYTCO’s Devisers Club and Senior Ensemble. She was a teaching artist in audience engagement for Performing Lines’ Layla Majnun, having trained with WT McRae and Lindsey Buller Maliekel from the New Victory Theatre (WA Showcase). Georgia has a Bachelor of Arts in Screen Production from Curtin University, and has also studied and worked in creative media in Hong Kong. She continues to work as a freelance filmmaker, mentored by Sohan Ariel Hayes, in short documentary and public art projects.

**PHOEBE SULLIVAN (Associate Artist)**

Phoebe Sullivan is an emerging artist who lives and works on Whadjuk Noongar boodja. She graduated from the Performance Making course at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) in 2016. Sullivan’s artistic inquiry is concerned with contemporary ideas of rabid, conspicuous consumption; consumption within contemporary culture, her local community, her personal narrative and more broadly how art audience consumers can find agency and participate more holistically in her projects. Since graduation Phoebe has worked and undertaken residencies with companies such as Australian Theatre for Young People, Queensland Theatre, PICA, pvi collective, and The Blue Room Theatre. Her recent credits include being an actor in *Cloud Nine* for WAYTCO (2018); director for *Let Me Finish* (2018/19); an actor in *Somnus* for the Fremantle Biennale (2019), a director for *GRACE* (2019); and director for *Boxed In*, part of WAYTCO’s *Body Rights* programme for FRINGE WORLD (2020)

**IAN WILKES (Associate Artist, Noongar Cultural Advisory Panel)**

Ian is a proud Wadjuk Noongar man from Perth, Western Australia. After graduating high school, he went on to study Aboriginal Theatre at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) in 2008. Ian then performed with the Wadumbah Aboriginal dance group learning skills in dance, music and storytelling.

He has since been performing in the arts industry regionally, nationally and internationally. Ian has performed with Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company in many productions such as *So Long Suckers* where he was also a co-deviser. Recently Ian has been a part of Ochre Contemporary Dance Company as a regular performer and co-choreographer. His productions include *Kaya*, *3.3* and the recent Perth Festival show *Kwongkan*. He also performed in *Hecate* (Yirra Yaakin) for Perth Festival 2020. Amongst his performing career, he now uses his knowledge of dance and theatre to teach the younger generation through workshops and classes.

**DELLA RAE MORRISON (Choral Composer, Performer, Noongar Cultural Advisory Panel)**

Della Rae Morrison is a Bibbulmun woman of the Noongar Nation of the South West of Western Australia. Della has been in the Arts professionally for 30 years, beginning her career in Jimmy Chi's musical *Bran Nue Dae* in 1989. She appeared in the Australian children's television series *Lockie Leonard* and has also performed in various theatre productions and film. Della was nominated for Performing Arts WA Awards Best Actress in an Independent Production for Mudskipper Productions' Production of *Banned* for Perth Fringe Festival 2018. In 2020 Della starred in Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company's production of *Hecate* for Perth Festival.

**RACHAEL DEASE (Composer and Sound Designer)**

Dease's artistic practice encompasses art music, film and theatre scoring, installation and songwriting. Graduating from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, she won the inaugural Martin Sims Award at Fringe World, the Melbourne Fringe Music Award and received critical acclaim at New York Fringe Festival for her contemporary song cycle *City of Shadows*. Her composition and sound design for theatre include the Helpmann Award-nominated *It's Dark Outside* (The Last Great Hunt), *Sunset* (Strut Dance/Maxine Doyle) and *REST* (WAYTCo). Installation includes *Black Mass* (PICA) *Winter Feast* 2018 & 2019 (Dark Mofo), *Museum of Water* (Perth Festival), and *Like Embracing Ice* (Fremantle Arts Centre). Dease was awarded the 2017 Department of Culture and The Arts Performing Arts Fellowship, won the Performing Arts WA award for Best Music for *Let The Right One In* (BSSTC) and has been a Besen Fellow at Malthouse Theatre. Residencies include PICA, Proximity Festival, Lumen Studios Italy and The Arctic Circle. She is currently a Prelude Composer In Residence at Gallop House, Western Australia.

**LUCY BIRKINSHAW (Lighting Designer)**

Lucy Birkinshaw is a lighting designer and artist, a co-founder of Filament Design Group whose design work spans theatre, music theatre, concert lighting, opera, dance, film and television. She graduated from the WA Academy of Performing Arts with an Advanced Diploma of Lighting Design for Production and Performance, and Curtin University with a Bachelor of Art, Fine Arts. Lucy has designed lighting for companies including Sydney Theatre Company, Black Swan State Theatre Company, Perth Theatre Company, Malthouse, Griffin Theatre, Barking Gecko, The Aphids, Melbourne Opera, Lyric Opera Melbourne, St Martins Youth, Performance 4a, My Darling Patricia, OpticNerve, Side Pony Productions, Hayloft Project, School With No Walls, Magnormos, Red Ryder, Perth International Arts Festival, Opera in the Park, Australian Opera Studio and many others. She has collaborated with a diverse range of directors, choreographers and composers. Her distinctive approach to depth, contrast and beauty within her designs make her an identifiable theatre artist.

**ZOE ATKINSON (Production Designer)**

Zoë Atkinson studied Scenography at the Prague Academy of the Performing Arts, the International Institute of Figurative Theatre (Czech Republic), and at the Institute International de la Marionette in France, under Josef Svoboda. Since returning to Australia in 1997 she has designed for theatre, dance, puppetry, opera and museums. In 2020 Zoë is designing set and costumes for *Hecate* with Yirra Yaakin Theatre, *The Cherry Orchard* and *York* for Black Swan State Theatre Company and *The Return* with Malthouse Theatre. Her previously designed productions of *Cloudstreet* and *The Importance of Being*

*Earnest* will tour Perth and Melbourne, respectively. In recent years Zoë has designed for *The Life of Galileo*, an adaptation by Tom Wright for Belvoir Street Theatre, *Cloudstreet* with Malthouse Theatre, designed for Perth International Arts Festival's *The Museum of Water* with English Artist Amy Sharrocks; as well as *HOME*, the Perth Festival's opening spectacle, which celebrated 40,000 years of Western Australian culture, and brought together some of Australia's most celebrated writers, artists and musicians. Zoe was Artistic Associate and Designer for PIAF's 2017 opening event *Boorna Waanginy* which was presented again in 2019.