

MEDIA RELEASE

## HISTORY COMES TO LIFE ON LAKE MONGER'S SHORES

### Galup

Ian Wilkes and Poppy van Oorde-Grainger with an oral history from Doolann Leisha Eatts

Co-produced by Same Drum and Performing Lines WA



Image cr: Daniel Grant

On the shores of Lake Monger, step back in time to the 1830s as Noongar performer **Ian Wilkes** guides you through real events from our city's collective past.

**Galup** is the Noongar word for Lake Monger, meaning "place of fire" where Whadjuk Noongar families lived and maintained their home campfires for millennia.

Today, thousands of people visit Lake Monger and its famous black swans every week without knowing the events that happened there or understanding the significance of this important site in suburban Perth.

**Galup** seeks to change all that by inviting people to take a walk around the lake at sunset to hear, watch and participate in retelling of some of its largely unknown stories.

*Kaya wanjoo ngany boodja, Galup.*

*Welcome to my home, Galup – place of fire.*

Created by Wilkes and fellow Western Australian artist/filmmaker **Poppy van Oorde-Grainger**, **Galup** is an interactive 3.5km walking performance on-country that will be one of the highlights of **Perth Festival**. With an oral history from Elder **Doolann-Leisha Eatts**, this intimate, truth-telling performance will resonate long after it ends.

'I have lived my whole life dreaming that this story would be told. It was my greatest desire, right from when I was 10 years old,' says Doolann-Leisha Eatts. 'Seeing the performance at the lake was one of the proudest days of my life.'

An hour before sunset, Wilkes meets his audience at the foot of a bridge over the Mitchell Freeway. As the rush-hour traffic passes below, the centuries slip away as participants are guided towards the tranquil lakeside and a greater understanding of Noongar culture and the impact of settler colonialism.

During the show, Wilkes takes on the roles of different characters, including young Noongar man Jack Monger-Bennell, Lieutenant Robert Dale and Noongar warrior Yagan, while audience members are invited to take on the role of other characters.

‘I remember being in my father’s car as a kid driving past Lake Monger along the freeway,’ Wilkes says. ‘Dad would tell us to look out the windows towards the lake, he would always say, ‘Something bad happened there, never forget it. Always remember what really happened,’ Wilkes says.

**Perth Festival Artistic Director Iain Grandage** says *Galup* will be a rare opportunity to experience Noongar culture in an intimate setting.

‘The spiritual and cultural links between the river and the lakes of Perth are many and complex for the Noongar custodians of Whadjuk Boodjar,’ he says. ‘*Galup* promises to be a profound experience in a Festival whose Bilya (river) theme honours and celebrates the river of connection that runs through us all.’

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audience members are advised that this production references and contains stories of people who have passed away. Co-produced by Same Drum and Performing Lines WA. Originally commissioned by International Art Space as a part of the Know Thy Neighbour #2 program.

**WHAT:** Galup

**WHERE:** Lake Monger Reserve / Keiermulu / West Leederville

**WHEN:** Various dates 19 Feb – 13 Mar

**HOW MUCH:** \$49

**BOOKINGS AND FESTIVAL INFO:** [perthfestival.com.au](http://perthfestival.com.au)

Click here for a [media kit](#) and [images](#). For further information, interviews or images please contact:

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***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.***

#### **ABOUT 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 67 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.*