

Preparing Ground

Co-Directed by Marilyn Miller, Jasmin Sheppard & Katina Olsen



Image Credit: Sam James, Simon Woods & Matt Cornell

Marketing Kit

Produced and toured by BlakDance, for Marilyn Miller, Jasmin Sheppard & Katina Olsen

PLEASE NOTE* All content that the presenter creates must only use Preparing Ground co-directed by Marilyn Miller, Jasmin Sheppard & Katina Olsen. Not Preparing Ground by BlakDance. Most venues using Artifacts or similar scheduling software will link the title of the work with the contractor (BlakDance). This needs to be corrected in all public facing materials.

Marketing Assets Google Folder Link

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1sfLxjCoqqDmlj5j-aHxM0m-FDZVgOsg4?usp=drive_link

Approvals

All approvals for marketing materials (including press, photography, print and digital) to be sent to BlakDance as listed below, allowing for a 24 hour turnaround.

Main Contact and Approvals

Marketing & Publicity
BlakDance
Nicole Reilly
nicole.reilly@blakdance.org.au
0431 322 774

Production Name

Preparing Ground

Company Name

Marilyn Miller, Jasmin Sheppard and Katina Olsen

Presentation Line and Billing

'Venue / Festival / Presenter'

The Art House Wyong
Presents
Preparing Ground co-directed by Marilyn Miller, Jasmin Sheppard and Katina Olsen.

LOGO BLOCK

The Art House Wyong, BlakDance, QPAC, Brisbane Festival, NAISDA, ILA, MFI, Creative Australia, Sydney Festival, Arts Queensland, RADF Sunshine Coast, City of Gold Coast, Bulmba-ja Arts Centre, HOTA, Brisbane Powerhouse and Judith Wright Arts Centre.

Guidelines for Logo Order

The Art House Wyong, BlakDance, QPAC, Brisbane Festival, NAISDA, ILA, MFI, Creative Australia, Sydney Festival, Arts Queensland, RADF Sunshine Coast, City of Gold Coast, Bulmba-ja Arts Centre, HOTA, Brisbane Powerhouse and Judith Wright Arts Centre.

Individual Logos are available for download

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1G6eov3CKl7pnWPFxYx6w4ChHMLuw7lX8?usp=drive_link

BLAKDANCE

Guidelines for Logo use

Logos must be included on all advertising and promotional material associated with the performances of Preparing Ground, unless explicitly agreed otherwise. This includes, but is not limited to, program launch invitations, performance invitations, festival programs, flyers, posters, advertisements, media releases, promotional videos and webpages.

Mandatory Acknowledgments

Presented by The Art House Wyong.

Produced by BlakDance.

Preparing Ground is co-commissioned by Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC), BlakDance and Brisbane Festival, with support from NAISDA Dance College, The Art House Wyong.

It is supported by the Australian Government's Indigenous Languages and Arts program, and the Major Festivals Initiative, managed by Creative Australia, its arts funding and advisory body, in association with Brisbane Festival and Sydney Festival, with additional project funding from Creative Australia. Preparing Ground is also supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, Sunshine Coast Council and the City of Gold Coast. Additional support has been provided by Bulmba-ja Arts Centre, HOTA (Home of the Arts), Brisbane Powerhouse and Judith Wright Arts Centre.

These should also be acknowledged in speeches and announcements where appropriate.
Preference for Horizontal lock up logos.

BlakDance is written always with capitalised B and capitalised D as one word BlakDance.

Performance Duration

60 minutes / No interval

Performance Venue

16 May 2025

Theatre, The Art House Wyong

Ticketing

The Art House Wyong: <https://www.thearthousewyong.com.au/whats-on/preparing-ground>

Age Suitability

General Admission

Warnings

Water based haze, strobe lighting / flash lighting, video projection and loud noises will be used in this performance.

No alcohol is permitted inside the theatre.

Key Messages

Top five key messages you want to highlight for audiences about the work:

1. Preparing Ground is an all-female First Nations-led dance work that brings together community, climate, and culture. Through movement and compelling imagery of this land, it explores our relationships - with Country, each other, and the future — offering a call to community, grounded in hope.
2. It's not just a show—it's an invitation to engage. Audiences are part of something real and ongoing. Preparing Ground includes locally driven engagement, shaped in collaboration with local First Nations communities and organisations. This isn't just for First Nations communities—it's for everyone who calls this place home.
3. This is a story for our children, and their children too. Preparing Ground looks toward a future Future—a climate-conscious world shaped by shared responsibility. It opens space for people to move beyond fear and take collective action, together.
4. The creative team brings prestige, heart and deep connection to place. Led by pioneering Blak artist Marilyn Miller, alongside Jasmin Sheppard and Katina Olsen—all three are former Bangarra dancers, now choreographers and cultural leaders in their own right—this team brings extraordinary integrity and creative power to the stage.
5. It's visually breathtaking—an artwork in motion. With lush, cinematic projections by Samuel James, sound by Samuel Pankhurst and lighting by Karen Norris, the show blends technical excellence with matriarchal reverence for Country. The result is a moving, immersive experience rooted in place and culture.

Key takeaway for audiences: *Preparing Ground dances of the future Future—a world where care for Country and community continues generationally. It reminds us that our survival depends on an enduring relationship with the land, and that the path forward is one we must walk together.*

Nominated creatives for interviews

Preferably all Directors for media calls:

1. Marilyn Miller (Co-Director)
2. Jasmin Sheppard (Co-Director)
3. Katina Olsen (Co-Director)

Requested Reviewers

Alongside local reviewers, we would like to invite programs / organisations that support the professional development of First Nations artists and writers to review First Nations works. Some First Nations writers of note; Vicki Van Hout, Kamarra Bell Wykes, Brian Andy, Timmah Ball, Davey Thomson, Kerry Lee Harding, Jack Wilkie-Jans to name a few. We are happy to be nominated for awards and have reviewers from Green Room Awards for example.

Suggested Media for Distribution List

- Koori Mail
- NITV
- Dance Australia
- ArtsHub
- AWAYE! - ABC Radio National
- SBS
- ABC Indigenous

- National Indigenous Times
- Art Guide Australia
- Koori Radio
- Local Indigenous Radio Stations (example BBM Cairns)

Suggested Questions / Topics / Key Moments for Media

PR guidance on key media highlights:

- Marilyn Miller's return to the stage – a powerful moment for the contemporary dance community, and a rare opportunity for audiences to witness an iconic artist perform again.
- The significance of intergenerational casting – this is not just about representation; it's about embodied cultural knowledge being passed through live performance.
- 6 years in the making – a slow, deliberate process grounded in cultural time and collective decision-making.
- First Nations-led, from concept to creation – the process for intra-cultural collaboration.
- Careers beyond Bangarra – a combined 130 years of dance practice from the choreographers, reflecting the ongoing evolution and influence of their artistry in the broader contemporary dance landscape.

Teaser (30 Words)

Preparing Ground invites audiences to consider, what does it mean to belong to a land that remembers? This new dance work is a call to join First Peoples' care of Land - an urgent act for our shared future.

Short Synopsis (80 Words)

What the world calls climate change, First Peoples call colonisation.

Preparing Ground, co-directed by Marilyn Miller, Jasmin Sheppard and Katina Olsen, is a powerful new dance work that speaks through movement and language - carrying the weight of history and the fire of resistance. Projections reveal a landscape both sacred and stolen, while sound and movement entwine to evoke a deep connection to Country. This world premiere invites audiences to consider, what does it mean to belong to a land that remembers?

Extended Synopsis (100-200 Words)

What the world calls climate change, First Peoples call colonisation.

Preparing Ground, co-directed by Marilyn Miller, Jasmin Sheppard and Katina Olsen, is a powerful new language that dances the weight of history and the fire of resistance. It holds the warmth of family voices, quiet moments of care, and the heartache of displacement.

This is a call to join First Peoples' care of Land - an urgent act for our shared future.

Three women share the stage - their bodies carrying stories through cycles of resilience and reclamation. Projections reveal a landscape that is both sacred and stolen, while sound and movement entwine to evoke a connection to Country for the audience, and for the performers one that cannot be erased. Over 60 minutes, Preparing Ground shifts between past and present, tradition and disruption, asking us all to listen, to witness, to remember.

Developed over six years through collaboration with the performers' communities on their Countries, Preparing Ground embodies First Nations storytelling sovereignty.

This world premiere is an invitation to consider, ***what does it mean to belong to a land that remembers?***

WHY THIS WORK NOW?

when Country is scarred
when language is silenced
when Indigenous Knowledges offer pathways to heal
when communities gather to lead change
when survival depends on care for the environment and each other.

Preparing Ground calls on us to come together, as communities and individuals, to care for the land and each other. In a time of environmental and social upheaval, this work offers a message of hope, resilience, and collective responsibility. It's about honouring the Knowledges of First Nations communities, whose deep connection to Country has endured for millennia, and bringing that Knowledge into the present to guide us toward a shared future.

This work is an invitation for audiences to engage—to listen to the land, to witness the strength of community, and to actively contribute to the reclamation and protection of our environment. By centering local voices, Preparing Ground calls on all of us to reflect on how we can care for the land and its stories together. We are all connected to this place, and we all have a role to play in its healing and future.

Preparing Ground envisions a "future Future"—a world where care for Country and community spans generations. It reminds us that our survival depends on an enduring relationship with the land, and that the path forward is one we must walk together.

Now, more than ever, is the time to work together—to unite in care, understanding, and action. Preparing Ground is a powerful reminder that through collaboration, we can create a sustainable and thriving future for all.

QUOTES

Tbc

Images

A selection of high res images are available to download

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1sfLxjCoqqDmlj5j-aHxMom-FDZVgOsg4?usp=drive_link

Hero image (preferred Hero Image) selection by Sam James, Simon Woods & Matt Cornell as per file names

Production images (use as additional images for showpage)

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1sfLxjCoqqDmlj5j-aHxMom-FDZVgOsg4?usp=drive_link

Image Credits

Please ensure images are credited as per photographer's name listed on filename.

Footage

Trailer (duration): tbc

Interviews clip (duration): tbc

Full Length Archival Recording (not for public sharing): tbc

Teaser clips for social media:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1sfLxjCoqqDmlj5j-aHxMom-FDZVgOsg4?usp=drive_link

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Other Content

Media coverage about the show or other content created to help promote.

[Jasmin Sheppard ft. on EastSide Radio 12 May 2025.](#)

Katina Olsen ft. on ABC Central Coast interview, 13 May 2025.

Education Focus

Education Resource with teacher notes available, dance workshops for students with curriculum links, upon request.

LINKS TO CURRICULUM

THE ARTS: DANCE F-10

CROSS-CURRICULAR

PRIORITIES:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures

Sustainability

GENERAL CAPABILITIES:

Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding, Intercultural Understanding

2025 Cast, Crew, Creatives List

The following is a complete list of the credits required on website and in house programs.

Co-Directors: Marilyn Miller (Kukuyalanji, Waanyi), Jasmin Sheppard (Tagalaka, Kurtitjar) & Katina Olsen (Wakka Wakka, Kombumerri)

Performers: Marilyn Miller (Kukuyalanji, Waanyi), Jasmin Sheppard (Tagalaka, Kurtitjar) & Katina Olsen (Wakka Wakka, Kombumerri)

Collaborative Understudy: Audrey Goth-Towney (Wiradjuri)

Dramaturg: Victoria Hunt (Te Arawa, Ngati Kahungunu, Rongowhakaata Maori, English, Irish, Finnish)

Lighting Designer: Karen Norris (Mori Maori)

Set and Projection Designer: Samuel James

Sound Designer: Samuel J Pankhurst

Costume Designer: Aleisa Jelbart

Production Manager: Simon Cook (Mamu), BlakDance

Production Coordinator: Emma Holgate (Mandaburra), BlakDance

Stage Manager: Zara Thompson

Executive Producer: Merindah Donnelly (Wiradjuri), BlakDance

Senior Producer: Nicole Reilly (Wiradyuri), BlakDance - previously Tom Pritchard and Emily Wells (Kamilaroi)

Associate Producer: Luke Peacock (Samsep/Meriam), BlakDance

Early Collaborators: raymond blanco (Yadhaigana and Erub), Yolande Brown (Bidjara), Tammi Gissell (Muruwarri).

On-Country Collaborators:

Kukuyalanji: Uncle John Hartley and Juan Walker

Tagalaka: Patrick Wheeler and Victor Steffenson

Wakka Wakka: Uncle Max Chapman, Aunty Yvonne Chapman, Shirley Olsen, Natalie Chapman, Corey Appo, Shannon Bauwens, Aunty Lurlene Henderson

Kombumerri: Uncle John Graham, Shirley Olsen, Justine Dillon, Maxwell Dillon, Clinton Brewer

Yuggera, Birri, Bindal and Warranghu: Raelene Baker

Websites

BlakDance: www.blakdance.org.au

The Art House Wyong: <https://www.thearthousewyong.com.au/>

Social Links

Instagram:

@jasmin.lee.sheppard

@katolsen

@blakdance

@thearthousewyong

@atqpac

@artsqueensland

@creative.australia

@naisda_dance_college

@audrey_125

@aleisajelbart

@wikitoria_hunt
@samueljamespankhurst
@samueljames21
@kazarri
@aleisajelbart
@nicolejodiiiiieeeee

Hashtags

#MarilynMiller
#PreparingGround
#BlakDance
#FutureFuture
#ArtHouseWyong
#Darkinjung
#FirstNationsDance

Facebook

<https://m.facebook.com/BlakDance/>
<https://m.facebook.com/TheArtHouseWyong/>
<https://m.facebook.com/naisdadancecollege/>
<https://m.facebook.com/atQPAC/>
<https://m.facebook.com/artsqueenslandAQ/>
<https://m.facebook.com/creative.gov.au/>

Awards & Nominations

Yet to premiere

Seeking nomination for awards

Green Room Awards
Matilda Awards

Previous Seasons / Tours

Date	Show	Presenter
WORLD PREMIERE May 2025	Preparing Ground	The Art House Wyong, NSW

Suggested Target Audience

Arts & Culture Audiences

1. **Contemporary Dance Communities** (Dancers, choreographers, dance schools, tertiary dance students, and teachers)
 - a. **Why:** Drawn to innovative, physical storytelling and choreographic language
 - b. **Messaging Angle:** "See the future of Australian dance led by First Nations voices"
 - c. **Outreach Channels:**
 - i. Industry newsletters (e.g., Dance Australia, DanceHub)

- ii. Dance training organisations (e.g., Ausdance)
- iii. Tertiary dance departments (e.g., QUT, VCA)
- iv. Dance festivals and showcases

2. Visual Arts Enthusiasts - Photography & Videography (Amateur and professional photographers/videographers, media students)

- a. **Why:** Interested in visual storytelling and Sam James' work
- b. **Messaging Angle:** "A cinematic experience in motion – storytelling through body, land, and lens"
- c. **Outreach Channels:**
 - i. Photography clubs and meetups (e.g., Instagram photography groups, local photography societies)
 - ii. Social media pages (FB groups, Instagram hashtags like #DancePhotography, #Cinematography)
 - iii. Local film/video collectives (e.g., Short Film Festival networks, independent film distributors)

Social & Environmental Audiences

3. Climate Action & Environmental Groups (School eco clubs, Extinction Rebellion, permaculture networks, Landcare)

- a. **Why:** Thematic resonance — connection to Country, climate justice, land restoration
- b. **Messaging Angle:** "An invitation to witness a First Nations-led response to environmental grief and renewal"
- c. **Outreach Channels:**
 - i. Local chapters (e.g., Landcare, Indigenous Climate Action)
 - ii. Newsletter placements (e.g., Green Left Weekly, The Guardian's environmental newsletter)
 - iii. Earth-focused events (e.g., Earth Day celebrations, climate strikes, environmental expos)

4. Gardening, Landcare & Regenerative Agriculture Communities (Community gardens, bush regen volunteers, First Nations ranger programs)

- a. **Why:** Interest in land stewardship, First Nations ecological knowledge
- b. **Messaging Angle:** "What does it mean to prepare ground — for healing, for growth, for future generations?"
- c. **Outreach Channels:**
 - i. Community gardens and permaculture networks
 - ii. Landcare and Indigenous rangers (e.g., First Nations Rangers Alliance)
 - iii. Sustainability festivals (e.g., Green Festivals, local horticultural shows)

5. High School & Tertiary Education Groups

- a. **Includes:** Teachers, drama/dance classes, social justice clubs
- b. **Why:** Curriculum links to First Nations culture, sustainability, performance
- c. **Outreach Channels:**
 - i. Education networks
 - ii. Teacher professional development mailing lists
 - iii. Curriculum resources (e.g., Australian Curriculum links, NESA resources)

First Nations Communities & Supporters

6. Local First Nations Communities (Local Elders, community organisations, cultural centres)

a. **Why:** Cultural resonance, local leadership, opportunity for intergenerational conversation

b. **Outreach Channels:**

- i. Direct contact with community organisations (e.g., local Aboriginal Cultural Centres, regional gatherings)
- ii. Community radio (e.g., Koori Radio, 3KND)
- iii. First Nations media outlets (e.g., NITV)

7. Broader Indigenous Audiences & Networks

a. **Includes:** Blackfulla creatives, leaders, and community across regions

b. **Why:** Cultural representation and sector development

c. **Messaging Angle:** "A new work by and for mob — grounded in story, sovereignty, and care"

d. **Outreach Channels:**

- i. First Nations artist networks (e.g., BlakDance, NAISDA alumni)
- ii. First Nations arts events
- iii. First Nations community and arts Facebook groups

Allies & Socially Engaged Audiences

8. Social Enterprise, Changemakers & Community Builders (Startups, social impact orgs, B-Corps, for-purpose community leaders)

a. **Why:** Interest in ethical storytelling, Indigenous innovation, community agency

b. **Messaging Angle:** "Performance as a tool for place-making, justice, and transformation"

c. **Outreach Channels:**

- i. Purpose-led conferences (e.g., Social Impact Summit)
- ii. Impact newsletters (e.g., B Corp community updates, Social Traders)
- iii. Changemaker networks (e.g., Social Enterprise Council of Australia)

Evaluation

If you already survey your audience online, it would be good to compare questions and see if we need to add anything to your existing survey to meet our KPO requirements.

Key Creatives Biographies

Marilyn Miller

Kukuyalanji, Waanyi

Marilyn Miller, born in Cairns, is a distinguished figure in Australian dance, renowned for her extensive contributions as a performer, choreographer, and arts leader. She began dancing at the age of five, training in classical ballet, tap, and modern dance techniques, while also learning traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance forms. Marilyn's professional journey includes touring with the Aboriginal Islander Dance Theatre and Bangarra Dance Theatre, performing in productions such as *Ochres* in Berlin, Arnhem Land, Tokyo, and Noumea. As the founder of BlakDance, Marilyn has been instrumental in advocating for First Nations dance. Her leadership roles encompass serving as a Cultural Council member, Chair of the NSW Dance Committee, Artistic Director of the Festival of Pacific Arts, Deputy Chair of Ausdance National, and Festival Director of the Laura Aboriginal Dance

Festival. Notably, she facilitated four Indigenous Dance Forums, including the National Indigenous Dance Forum in Melbourne in 2017 and Blak Futures in 2024.

Jasmin Sheppard

Tagalaka, Kuritjar

Jasmin Sheppard is a contemporary dancer, choreographer, and director of Tagalaka heritage, with Irish, Chinese, and Hungarian ancestry. She spent 12 years with Bangarra Dance Theatre, where she performed numerous lead roles, including the title role in *Patyegarang*, described by critics as "powerfully engaging, fluent dexterity." Jasmin's choreographic work is known for its political passion and evocative nature, with notable works such as *MACQ*, which toured Australia and Germany. Her creations have been showcased at international festivals and major Australian cities, solidifying her reputation as a dynamic storyteller and advocate for First Nations voices through dance.

Katina Olsen

Wakka Wakka, Kombumerri

As a teen dancer, Katina Olsen (Wakka Wakka Kombumerri) was told she was "too tan" and endured her skin being patted down with light makeup to fit a more desirable classical aesthetic. Twenty-four years on, we see that same brown skinned Murri, Katina, proudly gracing national and international stages and co-founding dance companies. Using her platform to disrupt the stagnated Western canon, performance and academy, she brings focus to elevating First Nations dance methodologies as a vehicle for climate justice.

Her trajectory as a maker and cultural activator has seen her forge her way through an often unassailable industry as an independent, especially a blak independent, to create work for over ten years consecutively including *Mother's Cry* for Sydney Dance Company's New Breed 2018, movement direction for the play *Sunshine Super Girl* (Sydney Festival 2021), the ABC series *Cleverman 2* and *Walking into the Bigness* (Malthouse Theatre). Katina presented her Independent solo work *namu nunar (mother, mountain, sky)* at numerous festivals: Supercell, Yonder, Horizon, Festival 2018 and March Dance 2019. Katina is founding member of Dance Makers Collective and collaborated and performed with them on Australian Dance Award nominated *DADS* and 2020 sold-out Sydney Festival show *The Rivoli*. She choreographed *Instar* for *Big-Dance-in-Small-Chunks* (Parramatta Riverside), and solo work *beneath* for *In Situ* (Sydney Festival 2021).

Katina is currently developing her most significant contemporary dance work to date, *Preparing Ground*, with co-directors Marilyn Miller and Jasmin Sheppard. Initiated in 2019, the lifelong endeavour has been developing in the Country with elders and community since 2020. Produced by BlakDance, *Preparing Ground* is supported through the Major Festivals Initiative as a work of scale and is considered to be pushing the edges of what is possible as an Independent First Nations dance artist.

As well as regularly collaborating with major companies, small to medium organisations and Independent artists, Katina is also an alumni of the 2015 Dana Waranara and 2020 BlakForm by BlakDance and 2022/23 Future Leader programs. In 2010 she completed *Birrang* delivered by

Bangarra over three years, which supported the development of skills in market, business, choreography and industry networks. She takes pride in informally mentoring a number of First Nations dance artists transitioning to the independent dance community and in doing so, sharing her knowledge with the next generation.

Audrey Goth-Towney

Audrey is a proud Wiradjuri woman currently based in Sydney on Gadigal land. She is a graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts and is currently training with Sydney Dance Company's Pre-professional year. Audrey has worked and collaborated with a number of Australia's esteemed contemporary dance artists such as Jasmine Sheppard, Ella Halveka, Stephanie Lake, Cathy Goss, Katina Olsen, Omer Backley-Astrachan, James O'Hara and Vicki Van Hout, Audrey is interested in exploring the Australian contemporary dance scene and is passionate about expanding her creative practice.

Victoria Hunt

Te Arawa, Rongowhakaata, Kahungunu (Māori), Irish, English, Finnish

Victoria Hunt is a transdisciplinary artist with ancestral affiliations to Te Arawa, Rongowhakaata, Kahungunu (Māori), Irish, English, Finnish heritages. Born on Kombumerri Country (Surfers Paradise, Australia), her extensive work as a dancer, choreographer, director, dramaturg, photographer and film maker delve into Indigenous epistemologies within diasporic concepts of identity formation and belonging. Grounded in Mātauranga Māori, Body Weather practice and IndigiQueer revitalization within creation practices, she traverses the politics of Re-matriation – inserting bodies into frameworks of power, for future ancestors. Her performances, installations and film works have toured nationally and internationally across six continents to critical acclaim.

Karen Norris

Moriori Maori

Karen Norris has designed productions throughout Australia and Europe. Based in London and Nice -1998 to 2008. Recent designs AU: Terrain, Lore, Yuldea Francis Rings Bangarra & NAISDA, Horizon Sani Townsend, Deborah Brown & Moss Patterson Bangarra, Songs Not To Dance To & Champions Martin del Amo, On View & Afterworld Sue Healey, In Glass-Hiding in Plain Sight & CELLA Germany SF 2019 Narelle Benjamin, KOTAHI Atamira Dance NZ, Barbara and the Camp Dogs Belvoir Sreet, The last Five Years & The Appleton Ladies Potato Race Ensemble, Blak Box Barangaroo & SF Urban Theatre Projects, Broken Glass Mooghalin SF 2018, The Weekend SF - Kai Mau NZ 2019 & Rainbows End Liza-mare Syron Mooghalin, Winyanboga Yurringa & Sunshine Super Girl & Swim Andrea James, Silence Karul Projects BlakDance, plenty serious TALK TALK Vicki van Hout, Blak Drop Effect Bankstown Arts Centre, Explicit Contents Rhiannon Newton & The Complications of Lyrebirds Jasmine Sheppard CAC SF 2021, Set Piece Anna Breckon Nat Randal, TWO Raghav Handa, 宿(Stay) Shakthiidhran SF2022, Brightness Christina Chan, The Visitors Wesley Enoch - Sydney Theatre Company/Moogahlin Performing Arts, PPY Sydney Dance Company, Gapu Nupan - AsiaTopia.

Samuel James Pankhurst

Sam Pankhurst is a contrabassist, composer, producer, and curator. His project Yirinda with Butchulla songman Fred Leone weaves ancient Butchulla songlines with holographic arrangements and production. Their debut 2024 album 'Yirinda/Yirinda' reached #1 status in Australia and 12 'albums of the week' in Australia and internationally. NME awarded the album 5 stars and Apple Music featured it amongst their best albums of the year. He has garnered the respect of children worldwide for his work as dialogue engineer and editor on Bluey. He is currently working with Grammy award winner Tobias Jesso Jr, Hiatus Kaiyote, Kirin J Callinan, Patience Hodgson (The Grates), Yirmal Marika; he has also worked with Oliver Coates (London Contemporary Orchestra/Radiohead), The Brodsky String Quartet (Bjork/Paul McCartney), Jake Miller (Bjork/Arca/Rosalia), Missy Higgins, Patience Hodgson (The Grates), Kate Miller Heidke, Erkki Veltheim (Gurumul), Andrew D'Angelo (USA), Brian Ritchie (Violent Femmes). As a member of the Australian Art Orchestra and has premiered works by Alvin Lucier (USA) and Nicole Lizée (CAN). Samuel scored the Stan original feature film Windcatcher starring Jessica Mauboy and directed by Tanith Glynn-Maloney, and the films 'City Crush' and 'Leisure' by filmmaker Mia Forrest which premiered at the Cannes film festival. He has worked extensively in contemporary dance including scores for prominent Indigenous choreographer Thomas E. S. Kelly whose groundbreaking work SILENCE continues to tour nationally. Pankhurst collaborated with Warraba Weatherall and Tony Albert on a large-scale installation Dirge for the NGV in 2024 and is developing a large-scale installation and performance work with Archie Moore who won the Golden Lion at the 2024 Venice Biennale.

Samuel James

Sam James has collaborated on more than 250 works over thirty years with contemporary Australian performance companies and independent dancers. His projection work is often seen in the major Australian Festivals as well as smaller developments with experimental companies. He regularly works with Indigenous dance companies in Australia and internationally such as Blakdance, Dance NT, Marrugeku, Miku Performing Arts and their collaborations in Taiwan. He has toured with Back to Back Theatre making the performance video The Democratic Set (Europe and Canada 2018-20), and has designed several 360VR projects in 2019-20 with Theatre Kantanka. He designed projections at the National Theatre of Korea, Seoul, a VR installation for Blik Blik Festival 2020 Czech Republic and has participated in international residencies in Norway, Czech Republic, Reykjavik, Finland, The Banff Centre, Kolkata and Berlin developing and presenting performative videos which map onto urban and natural spaces. He also exhibits his own work at Artspace Sydney, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Performance Space, Tanks Arts Centre, Articulate Gallery and Drawspace.

Aleisa Jelbart

Aleisa Jelbart is an award winning, Sydney/Gadigal based Costume and Stage Designer, specialising in design for movement, dance and cross disciplinary performance.

Aleisa has collaborated with companies including The Australian Ballet, The West Australian Ballet, Sydney Dance Company, The Royal New Zealand Ballet, Opera Australia, Bangarra Dance Theatre, Bell Shakespeare, Legs on the Wall, The Australian Theatre for Young People, Singapore Ballet and

the Komische Oper Berlin. Her costumes have been featured in works presented at the National Portrait Gallery, the Biennale of Sydney, the Gertrude Contemporary, Perth Institute of Contemporary Art and the TarraWarra Biennial.

Aleisa has worked extensively with Sydney Dance Company since 2014. Credits include Costume Design for Rafael Bonachela's *Impermanence* 2021, *Lux Tenebris* 2016, *Anima* 2016, Tra Mi Dinh's *Somewhere between ten and fourteen* 2025 and Melanie Lane's *Woof* 2019. Aleisa has designed costumes and props for over 30 works in SDC's annual New Breed program.

As an educator, Aleisa has facilitated design workshops and classes for The Australian Museum, The Australian Theatre for Young People, Matriark Theatre, City of Sydney and Design Centre Enmore. In 2019 she was an Artist in Residence at the Chris O'Brien Lifehouse, working with patients through the Arterie program.

Aleisa is the recipient of the 2014/15 Hephzibah Tintner Fellowship for Production Design and the 2016 Berlin New Music Opera Award (the Opera Foundation for Young Australians).

BlakDance

Founded in 2005, BlakDance is the national industry and producing body for First Nations contemporary dancers and choreographers. Based on Turrbal and Yuggera Country in Meanjin (Brisbane) at the Judith Wright Arts Centre, BlakDance has been premiering and touring contemporary First Nations dance productions since 2020. Notable works include *SILENCE* and *Weredingo* by Karul Projects, *The Other Side of Me* by Gary Lang NT Dance Company, *Bunyi Bunyi Bumi* by raymond blanco and Priya Srinivasan, and *Garabari* by Joel Bray Dance and Chunky Move.