

YOUR DAYBILL

Text Only Version

Wudjang: Not the Past

WORLD PREMIERE SEASON

Bangarra Dance Theatre / Sydney Theatre Company

Choreographed and directed by Stephen Page

Written by Stephen Page and Alana Valentine

Music by Steve Francis

15 - 18 Mar 2022 / Festival Theatre

Duration 1hr 30 mins, no interval

Warnings This production contains political and social themes, including violence and sexual assault, which may cause distress. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this production contains the name, image and voices of people who have passed away. Utilises haze and smoke. Recommended for ages 12+

Bangarra Dance Theatre pays respect and acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which our Company calls home, where much of *Wudjang: Not The Past* was created – the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation.

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This daybill includes:

- Credits
- Welcome to *Wudjang: Not the Past*
- A Note from Alana Valentine
- Synopsis
- Connection to Language
- The Music of *Wudjang: Not the Past*
- Creative Team Biographies
- Actor & Musician Biographies
- Dancer Biographies

CREDITS

CREATIVE TEAM

Director **Stephen Page**
Choreography **Stephen Page, Bangarra Dancers**
Writers **Stephen Page, Alana Valentine**
Composer **Steve Francis**
Set Designer **Jacob Nash**
Costume Designer **Jennifer Irwin**
Lighting Designer **Nick Schlieper**
Dramaturg **Alana Valentine**
Language Consultant **Donna Page**
Music Director **Alan John**
Assistant Director **Kate Dunn**
Rehearsal Director **Daniel Roberts**
Associate Music Director **Véronique Serret**

ACTORS:

Elaine Crombie, Jess Hitchcock, Elma Kris, Kirk Page, Justin Smith

MUSICIANS:

Brendon Boney, Amaru Derwent, Tessa Nuku, Véronique Serret

BANGARRA DANCERS:

Beau Dean Riley Smith, Rikki Mason, Rika Hamaguchi, Glory Tuohy-Daniell, Baden Hitchcock, Ryan Pearson, Lillian Banks, Bradley Smith, Courtney Radford, Kallum Goolagong, Gusta Mara, Kiarn Doyle, Emily Flannery, Maddison Paluch, Daniel Mateo, Janaya Lamb, Jesse Murray

KEY CHARACTERS

Wudjang **Elma Kris**
Gurai **Lillian Banks**
Bilin **Kirk Page**
Maren/Yugambah Shearer **Elaine Crombie**
Duggai/Wheeler **Justin Smith**
Nanahng **Jess Hitchcock**
Mibunn/Musician **Brendon Boney**
Yarga/Musician **Tessa Nuku**
Musician/Associate Musical Director **Véronique Serret**
Musician **Amaru Derwent**
Black Sheep/Gujarong **Beau Dean Riley Smith**
Yilgahn **Glory Tuohy-Daniell**
Jahdjam (Child) **Baden Hitchcock**

PRODUCTION CREW

Production Manager **Cat Studley**
Stage Manager **Stephanie Storr**
Head Electrician **Marshall Bull**
Head of Wardrobe **Jessica Hodgkinson**
Front of House Sound Operator **David Trumpmanis**
Lighting Realisor **Chris Twyman**
Foldback / Radio Microphone Technician **Corey Wiles**
Rigger and Head Mechanist **Katie McDonagh**
Assistant Stage Managers **Rose Jenkins, Vanessa Martin**

WELCOME TO *WUDJANG: NOT THE PAST*

Stephen Page, Director, Choreographer and Co-Writer

Minyaghu. It is a special thrill to welcome you to this dance theatre work in the Language of my father's Country, the Country of my ancestry and birth, the Language of the Mununjali clan of Yugambeh Country.

Wudjang is our word for mother, but in this work we use the word as a metaphor for the way both urban and traditional clans can use knowledge of the past to build a strong future, to carry and own trauma, and build a shield of resilience for future generations.

Wudjang is our mother as the land is our mother; our sustenance, our wonder, our future. Our stories and our culture are not from the past or in the past – they are, as you will vividly see on stage tonight – alive in the present. Nor is the trauma or pain we have suffered in the past, that too is carried all too freshly and manifested all too tragically in the present. The way forward, the way that Wudjang teaches, is to own and speak our difficult truths together, to draw strength from our solidarity with those who respect culture, and to reconnect with patience.

The other occasion I made work in my own Language was 2018 when Bangarra was asked to present work at the Commonwealth Games on the Queensland Gold Coast. My father had gifted to David, my brother, a song in his Mununjali Language, a song about the eagle, Mibunn, that became central to that Commonwealth Games event, and which is literally at the centre of this work tonight. That song, that dance, that presentation in 2018 gave me a great gift of knowledge – an understanding that while I have spent a lifetime in the white system, learning how to communicate and progress, when it comes to cultural knowledge the only way to learn is to be on Country and learn from the old ones.

That is the journey you will see in *Wudjang: Not the Past* tonight. You will see a young woman who, when ancestral bones are uncovered by her Uncle Bilin, thinks she knows what it is to understand and carry culture into the future. But Nanahng, like many others, learns that the way of the Wudjang spirit requires all of us, urban, traditional or those between both worlds, to open up to deep knowledge – sacred, stirring and scalding – cleansing us of excuses and impatience, bleaching us of easy solutions and superficial understanding – and instead to sit quietly on Country, with culture, at ceremony, in solidarity, united in hope.

The creative collaborators who were with me on *Country* in 2018 witnessed and saw the rekindling that happened there – both to me and to my Countrymen who took part - composer Steve Francis, designer Jacob Nash, costume designer Jennifer Irwin, lighting designer Nick Schlieper and dramaturg/writer Alana Valentine. They all knew that, after the boldness of what we had attempted in *Bennelong* in 2017, I wanted to expand and build on the integration of forms we discovered in that work. Instead of Language in voice over, we would have Language sung live on stage by performers, played by musicians, sung in English and Mununjali. For their faith in this bold experiment, I thank these collaborators as I thank Kirk Page, Elaine Crombie, Elma Kris, the performers, the musicians and, of course, the extraordinary Bangarra Dancers who graciously share the stage with them tonight. A special thank you to the extended artistic team who have supported me: Kate Dunn, Daniel Roberts and Alan John. I thank our Production team led by John Colvin, and the Mununjali Elders who ground us with their unconditional love and support.

To my father Roy and brother David, thank you for this gift of Language and Story. I hope I have made you proud carrying our Story. And my big sister Donna, I love you, it's been so great to have you advise on Language and pass the knowledge on to us all involved on the *Wudjang* journey.

Wudjang: Not the Past is narrative dance theatre and contemporary ceremony. It shares with other performing arts work elements of opera, drama, musical and contemporary dance, but it is none of these, all of these, and more. It is the voice of living First Nations culture expressed in song, dance and story. I invite you to sit with us tonight like a small child, to open your spirit to Yugambeh culture, to this story and to the dedication, athleticism and cultural knowledge our performers carry.

A NOTE FROM ALANA VALENTINE

Co-Writer and Dramaturg

At the first production meeting for *Wudjang: Not the Past*, sitting at a long table surrounded by all the Bangarra collaborators, Stephen Page stood up and introduced each of the assembled participants to the room. Most of us knew each other having worked with Bangarra, in my case for ten years since 2011, but there were new administrators and production assistants in the room so Stephen took the time to focus on each person and introduce them to the rest of the clan – and always with the kind of loving pride and humour with which he is a superb leader. When he came to me, he said "Alana Valentine is a writer and dramaturg and the carer of Stephen's thoughts." Beside me Frances Rings laughed and said "That about covers it." It is now one of my most cherished memories and the description I use when I try to explain what my role is at Bangarra as writer/dramaturg. I have been delighted once again to work with Steve Francis whose astonishing gift is to both carry the legacy of David Page's traditional/contemporary musical mix but also to forge ahead into a style and expression that is both 'classic Bangarra' and utterly original. He too bends and shapes, keeps and discards the English words and Mununjali words to create a score both abstract and urgent.

I would like to pay my sincere respect and love to Donna Page whom I worked closely with to feed the performers Language and pronunciation. These are her words "Ngadhu yuwang neh Bujerum'. I am human and spirit."

SYNOPSIS

1 UNCOVERING

THE METAL MOUTH

*A metal mouth digging
A change unforgiving
A dam is constructed
The land is disrupted*

In the deep darkness just before dawn, a Yugambah man, Bilin, sits singing in Mununjali language, anticipating the finding of ancestral bones.

*Bullei manyay jigay nahrjam ngali
nguhr Ngulung kani ngali, Guria
nguhr ngali*
(You will feel wounded but you
have the future connected to you,
Gurai is with you).

The bones they find are Wudjang (meaning mother) and with her is Gurai (meaning wonder).

Full cast

2 RECLAIMING

BILIN'S HUT

*The dam builders have disturbed her
From the place she was interred
Now I must find a sacred place
Where she won't be disturbed*

Wudjang's spirit is awakened from deep under the earth and given breath – fresh and new – the birth of the old exposed to the present moment.

Kirk Page, Elaine Crombie, Jess Hitchcock, Elma Kris, Lillian Banks, Brendon Boney, Tessa Nuku, Musicians, Bangarra Dancers

BILIN'S LESSON

Nanahg, Bilin's niece, arrives. He uses the stones to explain Nanahg's ancestral maternal line, tracing it back to Wudjang.

Kirk Page, Jess Hitchcock, Elaine Crombie, Elma Kris, Lillian Banks, Musicians, Bangarra Dancers

WHAT DO YOU THINK OLD GIRL?

*Watch Listen Learn
Ngay binangmah nyuhmba*

*This is what she show you
Gale minyang nyahleh nyuhmba ngali*

Mi (eye) Penung (ear) Bareibunn (Dream)

*This is hers to know you
Gale ngulagani gu migany ngali*

*Watch, Listen, Learn
Ngay binangmah nyuhmba*

*She is not the last
Nyahleh yugam nyumbil*

Mi (eye) Penung (ear) Bareibunn (Dream)

*This is not the past
Gale yugam nyumbil*

*Nanahng
I already know
Stories from my culture
I will show respect
Listen to my elder
Then I have to go
Life is moving fast
These are only bones
This is still the past*

Jess Hitchcock, Elaine Crombie, Elma Kris, Lillian Banks, Bangarra Women, Kirk Page, Musicians

3 COLONISATION BY ORDER OF

A non-Indigenous male character, the Duggai, enters and plants a claiming flag.

*It is amongst the
other things enacted
Ineffectual things*

The order of His Majesty

The royal pigsty

Justin Smith, Musicians, Bangarra Dancers

ONE MILLION SHEEP

The Mununjali are confronted with the strangeness of sheep.

Why you talking to a sheep, ah?

I wasn't talkin', I was singin'

Why you singin' to a sheep, ah?

Same thing as talkin' to a muggai (ghost)

Kirk Page, Jess Hitchcock, Elma Kris, Lillian Banks, Musicians, Bangarra Dancers

BLACK SHEEP

A black sheep is sheared for Wudjang to create resistance in her clan.

*You tell all your whiteface sheep cousins ya
You tell 'em to go, Yugambah country*

*You tell them this place
blackface creature
And then the day Yalnun Yalnun
Bugalehn (very good)*

Beau Dean Riley Smith, Elaine Crombie, Elma Kris, Lillian Banks, Musicians

4 RESISTANCE

THE MEN CARRY FIRE

The Yugambah/Mununjali gather for seasonal feasting. They are inspired by the beauty and power of having the Wudjang spirit among them.

*The clan load their scalp with ochre and grease
Karal kayi janabi nguhr kudbi wajir*

*The women dive deep down for shellfish
Jalany kalgali gurul juy yugir kujing*

*The lorikeet scream, mullet in the stream
Bilam kanga kanihng bulun-dah*

*And the men carry fire
Kibar wahri jalu*

Full cast

5 CONFUSION

TWO SYSTEMS, ONE WAY

Wudjang is trying to connect Nanahng to the wisdom of the spirit of Wudjang and its purpose for generations to come. Bilin is trying to anoint Nanahng to become a leader for the next generation. But Nanahng is resisting their persuasion. She is aware of the trauma of the past and, fearful of the grief and pain, she becomes caught in the white system.

White System Calls

This's not my concern

Twenty First Century Now

What is there to learn?

Story of the land is pain

That's all in the past

This is not my shame

This is not my ask

Justin Smith, Jess Hitchcock, Elma Kris, Lillian Banks, Musicians, Bangarra Dancers

6 CARRYING TRAUMA

DUGGAI

This massacre recalls a series of murders on the banks of the Nerang River, on Yugambah country, under the direction of Frederick Wheeler.

Duggai spear those cattle,

Duggai raid those huts

*Duggai Shoot us dead with
spilling guts*

*Duggai Massacre with guns
and cuts*

Smallpox swells in sickly puss

Justin Smith, Kirk Page, Elma Kris, Lillian Banks, Véronique Serret, Amaru Derwent, Brendon Boney, Tessa Nuku, Elaine Crombie

NERANG RIVER MASSACRE

Here is the horror.

The torn and gouged bodies lying across the stage.

The innocent and the old, massacred.

We fought them hard, We fought them clever

We won't surrender, never ever

We used surprise and firesticks

*Sent out spies with hunting tricks
There is too much death*

*MALI YAH WALAL DAHBALEHN
My energy is disturbed
NGAYAH KAYAH MINYANGBA*

Kirk Page, Justin Smith, Musicians, Bangarra Dancers

FIVE POUNDS, TWO POUNDS

A Mununjali family talk about the price put on the head of Indigenous adults and children.

*You want to listen sister
You want to know what happened?
They give five pounds for every adult
Two pounds for every child*

Elma Kris, Lillian Banks, Beau Dean Riley Smith, Glory Tuohy-Daniell, Baden Hitchcock, Musicians

DISRESPECT

The women suffered terrible assaults at the hands of the colonisers.

*We are their daughters
We are their voices
We give them honour
Now.*

Tessa Nuku, Elaine Crombie, Jess Hitchcock, Musicians, Bangarra Women

MAREN'S REBELLION

Maren sings of her resilience and survival.

*A rage like the sea will crush men who take
Women like me will destroy men who rape
Rage won't go away
We will kill you white snake
We will make you pay for your violence*

Elaine Crombie, Elma Kris, Lillian Banks, Jess Hitchcock, Tessa Nuku, Musicians, Bangarra Women

**7 DE-COLONISING
NOT FORGOTTEN**

Duggai

*I am marked with blood
I am stark with regret
Shame comes in a thud
Truth will have its debt*

Nanahng

*Sing me into country
Dance me into land
Give me my inheritance
Now I understand*

Justin Smith, Full Cast

8 REGENERATING CEREMONY

Maren and Nanahng sing to each other of their understanding of Wudjang.

Nanahng

*How could I have thought
I knew how to listen
Everything is changed
Now my spirit opens
I am of this land
Call out to the old ones
Up my totem flies
Sing my ancient tongue*

Maren

*Look Gather Breathe
This is all our story
Mi Penung Bariebunn
We must know our history
Look Gather Breathe
We are not the last
Mi Penung Bariebunn
Never be the past*

Wudjang is restored to country and the clan celebrate her endurance.

*While the wind is fierce we are
While the trees clutch sky we are
While the moon shines soft we are
While the mountains wait we are
While the land is here we are
While the land still breathes
While the rivers run we are
We will never leave*

FULL CAST

CONNECTION TO LANGUAGE

REFLECTIONS FROM DONNA PAGE, LANGUAGE CONSULTANT

I feel a very big passion for language, I have been doing it for a while, which my family doesn't know. My role on Wudjang is to help get the Yugambah language right, and connect it to Stephen's storyline.

Back in 2009 I was studying language at the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education. I wanted to remind Dad of his childhood: granny, culture and language. I was recording Dad when he started speaking language and he sang a song in language that granny taught him when he was a little boy. David and I were so excited. From that moment I knew I was doing the right thing studying and that I would continue with it.

It ignited something in Dad too, it was the year before he died. He passed his language onto his oldest boy, David, and David used those words to compose the song Stephen used for the Commonwealth Games. I had the privilege to be with our Mununjali Elders at the Commonwealth Games. I saw their face transform when they heard David the Songman sing in language. It was like he was drawing them into it.

When Dad was a young boy, he never spoke language due to assimilation. If young people spoke in language at school they'd get in trouble. Mum never spoke her language nor did she know about her Aboriginality. Her brothers told her they were Maori, as it was more acceptable to be another Indigenous culture than to be Aboriginal.

Mum and Dad survived the racism of assimilation. When they married they had to work hard to keep their family together during those challenging and hard times. When I was a young girl I thought everybody was Aboriginal until I went into town with Mum in Beaudesert. During my schooling we were teased. I remember a teacher making me stand facing the back wall. I was in school but I was never taught anything. Mum and Dad couldn't do much about it. It's the way things were then.

I'm an artist, a painter, a weaver. I love singing and music. It's this burning inside me of who I am as a Mununjali Nughi woman. I knew I had to connect to the other thing inside me that was missing, and it was language.

I was terrified at first when asked to do *Wudjang: Not the Past* but I knew what my brothers Russell, David and Stephen had done together, creating story, dance and music. I feel a cultural tradition as Stephen's sister to be with him, to tell the storyline of the past of our people.

I loved watching David be the Songman creating music in language, Stephen create a storyline into dance and Russell creating his magic on stage. To watch Stephen create knowledge of our father's language and put into dance and singing in Wudjang connects me to him, and I am honoured. I feel we are being guided by our ancestors, and Dad, Mum, Phillip, Russell and David. They're spiritually watching over us on this journey.

As a Mununjali/Nughi woman, I acknowledge all traditional custodians of their lands and pay my respects to all elders past and present, and our young past and present, and to our emerging people and 'The Next Generation'.

ABOUT THE YUGAMBEH LANGUAGE REGION FROM [YUGAMBEH MUSEUM](#)

From the early 1800s, the people of the Yugambeh Language region encountered many non-Indigenous people coming to their country - shipwrecked sailors, escaped convicts, explorers, missionaries, government officials, military troops, settlers and pastoralists. While some of these visitors were merely trying to survive in challenging circumstances, it was when the pastoralists arrived, who by the 1850s had significantly taken up control of large tracts of land, that the so-called frontier wars took centre stage.

With many Indigenous people in the area being forced on to reserves, they were essentially written out of any economic benefits and were treated (and often impounded) by a legal system that was completely different to their own.

The Yugambeh Language region of South East Queensland includes traditional lands that lie within and between the Danggan Balun (Five Rivers), Christmas Creek (Migunberri Tribe), Beaudesert (Mununjali Tribe), Logan (Guginin Tribe), Coomera (Bullongin Tribe), Mt Tambourine (Wanagerriburra Tribe), Nerang (Kombumerri Tribe), Birinburra Tribe and Tweed River Valley (Minjungbal Tribe). **Spelling may vary between different sources.*

THE MUSIC OF WUDJANG: NOT THE PAST

Steve Francis, Composer

Since first collaborating with David Page on his work with Stephen for The Australian Ballet in 1997, I feel my journey has mostly been about learning. Initially, through embracing the unique style David created, then trying to find my own voice alongside him. And now, since his passing, supporting the Bangarra family with new works and continuing his legacy. Each show is a discovery.

Although it has had a long journey to the stage, due to COVID, from its very inception it was clear this production would be like no other. When Stephen, with Wesley Enoch, first hatched the idea for Bangarra to create a new work for the Sydney Festival, his first thought was to have singers, actors and musicians performing alongside the dancers onstage. That chrysalis of an idea would be the inspiration that has pushed me, Alana and all of the creatives to discover and collaborate to create a new world for this Wudjang story. Because we were going to have an amazing group of performers, Stephen and Alana started to infuse the story with poems very early on. I sat in on a lot a Zoom meetings with them, and by the end of the process we had 16 poems that I was now quietly calling lyrics. Armed with these and with Stephen's assurance to be brave, I set about the task of composing a new Bangarra work but this time with a bunch of songs. And what a journey it has been.

Luckily with poems that start with "While the land is here, we are" and Stephen's striking visual and story ideas, I wasn't short on ingredients to help me create. What challenged and has ultimately surprised and rewarded me is how the score has hopefully managed to sit in both the traditional Bangarra world, and also that of song cycle. Is it a dance opera?... I'm not sure...Does it even matter what we call it? It is Bangarra.

It goes without saying that Stephen is an inspiration to us all and what is beautiful about this show is that he is telling a story from his own land. He has worked with Mununjali Elders and I am especially grateful for the support and language knowledge that Donna Page has given me, and also her work with the cast.

So, a big thank you to both Stephen and Alana for everything. Especially for not laughing at my very rough guide vocals.

I also need to acknowledge my dear friend, our Music Director Alan John, for all his talent and help in realising the score. To our amazing cast of singers, musicians, and dancers... I love you and thank you for bringing the music to life beyond my expectations.

MUSIC CREDITS

Music and Songs © **Steve Francis**

Words © **Alana Valentine**

Language Translation **Donna Page**

Music Director, Additional Arrangements **Alan John**

Associate Musical Director, Violin, Percussion, Vocals **Véronique Serret**

Guitar, Percussion, Vocals **Brendon Boney**

Percussion, Vocals **Tessa Nuku**

Keyboards, Trumpet, Trombone, Percussion, Vocals **Amaru Derwent**

Vocals, Percussion **Elaine Crombie**

Vocals **Jess Hitchcock, Elma Kris, Kirk Page**

Vocals, Percussion, Bass **Justin Smith**

Vocals (The Men Carry Fire) **David Page**

CREATIVE TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

Stephen Page

Director, Choreographer & Co-Writer

Stephen is a descendant of the Nunukul people and the Mununjali clan of the Yugambeh Nation from South East Queensland. In 1991, Stephen was appointed Artistic Director of Bangarra and has developed a signature body of works that have become milestones in Australian performing arts.

Stephen continues to reinvent First Peoples storytelling within Bangarra and through collaborations with other performing arts companies. He directed the Indigenous sections for the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies and created a significant dance work for his dad's People, the Mununjali clan of the Yugambeh Nation, as part of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony. Stephen has choreographed over 27 works for Bangarra. His most recent works include the Helpmann Award winning work *Bennelong* in 2017 and the work *Dark Emu* in 2018, choreographed together with former Bangarra dancers Daniel Riley and Yolande Brown, and which went on to become one of the most successful productions in the history of Bangarra.

Stephen's first full-length film, *SPEAR*, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival before screening at various arts festivals around Australia in early 2016. He has also co-directed and choreographed the documentary *FREEMAN* (2020), directed the chapter *Sand* in the feature film *The Turning* (2013), and choreographed the feature films *Bran Nue Dae* (2009) and *The Sapphires* (2011).

In 2015, Stephen was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Creative Arts by the University of Technology Sydney. In 2016, he received both the NAIDOC Lifetime Achievement Award and JC Williamson Award. In 2017, Stephen was honoured with the Australia Council Dance Award for significant contributions to the cultural and artistic fabric of the nation, and was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO).

Alana Valentine

Co-Writer & Dramaturg

Alana previously worked as dramaturg with Bangarra on *Dark Emu* (2018), *Dubboo: Life of a Songman* (2018), *Bennelong* (2017), *Patyegarang* (2014) and *ID from Belong* (2011).

Most recently, *Barbara and the Camp Dogs*, which Alana co-wrote with Ursula Yovich, was awarded four 2020 Green Room Awards including Best Music Composition, Sound Design and Best Writing for the Australian Stage. In 2019, it won four Helpmann Awards including Best Original Score and Best Musical.

Alana has also had the honour to work with many other First Nations artists including Romaine Moreton in 2016 with whom she cowrote and co-directed *One Billion Beats*, and Rhonda Dixon-Grosvenor in 2014 with whom she co-wrote *The Fox and the Freedom Fighters*. Alana also co-wrote and directed *Barefoot Divas – Walk a Mile in My Shoes*, featuring six First Nations female singers – Ngaiire, Emma Donovan, Maisey Rika, Whirimako Black, Merenia Marin and Ursula Yovich. It premiered at the Sydney Festival in 2012 and sold out the Hong Kong International Arts Festival in 2015. Wesley Enoch directed *Parramatta Girls* at Belvoir in 2004 and *Head Full of Love* in 2010/2012.

In 2022, an oratorio *Watershed: The Death of Dr Duncan*, co-written with Christos Tsiolkas, will world premiere at the Adelaide Festival and *Wayside Bride* will be presented at Belvoir Theatre.

Steve Francis

Composer

Steve is a composer and sound designer originally from Adelaide. An opportunity to produce and mix David Page's work on *Alchemy* for The Australian Ballet in 1996 led to an ongoing collaboration with Bangarra. This is his 14th score for the company.

As composer and sound designer, Steve has worked with Australia's premier theatre companies including Sydney Theatre Company, Melbourne Theatre Company, Belvoir and Griffin. He has composed for a number of films, including *The Turning*, the multi award-winning *dik*, Leah Purcell's *She Say*, the Dendy Award-winning film *Black Talk*, Berlin Festival winner *Djarn Djarns*, the MMF Award-winning documentary *Mr Patterns*, the AFI Award-winning short film *Box* and the documentaries *Firestarter: The Story of Bangarra*, *How the Light Gets In*, *Macumba* and *Picture the Women*.

For television, Steve has scored for the Channel Nine series *Cops LAC*, the mini-series *Dangerous for Fox* and the internationally released series *Double Trouble*. With David Page, Steve also composed and produced music for the Sydney Olympic and Rugby World Cup opening ceremonies.

As well as two nominations for sound design, Steve has won two Helpmann Awards for Best Original Score for Bangarra productions (*Walkabout*, 2002 and *Belong*, 2011 with David Page). He has also won two Sydney Theatre Awards for Best Music and Sound Design.

Jacob Nash Set Designer

Jacob is a descendant of the Daly River people, West of Darwin, and has spent the past 20 years living, working and creating in Sydney on Eora country. He graduated from the NIDA Design Course in 2005. In 2010, he designed the set for *of earth & sky* for Bangarra and received a Green Room Award for Best Design in Dance. He was appointed Artist in Residence at Bangarra the following year and is now Head of Design.

Jacob has designed sets for Bangarra's annual productions since 2010, including *Dark Emu*, *Bennelong*, *Patyegarang*, *lore*, *OUR land people stories*, *Terrain*, *Blak*, and *Warumuk – in the dark night* and in 2021, *SandSong*. In 2018, he was awarded a Helpmann Award for Best Scenic Design for *Bennelong*.

In 2019, for Sydney Festival, Jacob created the work ALWAYS, a large-scale artwork at Barangaroo that become the backdrop for *The Vigil* and the *Wugulora Ceremony*.

Jacob was also the Production Designer and Co-Creature Designer for *Cleverman* Season 2; was the Production Designer for Stephen Page's 2015 film *SPEAR*; and has been the Design Director for Bangarra's five Vivid Sydney video installations on the Harbour Bridge Pylon. He is a Board Director of Belvoir St Theatre and a Creative Artist in Residence at Sydney Festival. His other theatre credits include: *Ruben Guthrie*, *Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train* and *Yibiyung* (Belvoir St Theatre); *Macbeth* (Bell Shakespeare); *Wonnangatta*, *The Long Forgotten Dream*, *The Removalists*, *Tusk Tusk/Like a Fishbone* (Sydney Theatre Company), and *Black Ties* (Ilbijerri Theatre Company).

Jennifer Irwin Costume Designer

Jennifer's career spans 40 years constructing and designing costumes for drama, opera, film, dance and ballet. She has designed for some of the largest scale productions staged in Australia, including the Sydney 2000 Olympic Opening Ceremony, and was co-designer of costumes for the Olympic Games Closing Ceremony. She has also designed for The Official Commemorative Ceremony marking the Centenary of Australian Federation, the Totem segment of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony and the international production of *Dirty Dancing – The Musical*.

She has worked closely with Stephen Page, designing for Bangarra Dance Theatre since its inception, including *Dark Emu*, *Bennelong* and *SandSong*. Costume commissions include multiple shows for Sydney Theatre Company, Sydney Dance Company where she designed 36 ballets for Graeme Murphy, The Australian Ballet, Belvoir, WA Ballet, Opera WA, Qld Opera, Singapore Dance Theatre, Royal New Zealand Ballet, Universal Ballet of Korea, Melbourne Theatre Co, Joffrey Ballet and Opera Australia.

Jennifer has been recognised for her contribution to design with multiple Helpmann, Green Room and Australian Production Design nominations and awards including nomination for Best Costume Design for the feature film *SPEAR* (2017 AACTA Awards). She received a Theatre Board Grant to

Study at La Scala Opera Milan and the Centenary Medal for Service to Community & the Arts. In 2017, Jennifer was awarded Service to Dance at the Australian Dance Awards.

Nick Schlieper

Lighting Designer

Nick's many previous productions for Bangarra include *Unaipon*, *Bush*, *Patyegarang*, *Bennelong* and *SandSong*.

His long-standing relationship with Sydney Theatre Company has most recently seen him light *Playing Beatie Bow*, *Wonnangatta*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Mosquitoes*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, and *The Real Thing*; for Melbourne Theatre Company, set and lighting design for *Photograph 51* and *North By Northwest*; and for Belvoir St Theatre, *The Cherry Orchard* and *Packer and Sons*.

Nick has worked extensively with Opera Australia, and all the state opera companies, including lighting and associate set designer for Wagner's *Ring Cycle* in Adelaide. His music theatre work has also been seen on London's West End and on Broadway.

His international credits include Reiman's *Lear*, and Cherubini's *Medee* at Salzburg Festival; *Private Confessions*, directed by Liv Ullman for National Theatre of Norway; *Love Never Dies* in Tokyo and Hamburg; Sydney Theatre Company's production of *The Present* with Cate Blanchett on Broadway. Further engagements have taken him to The Barbican, London; Hamburg State Opera; Royal Shakespeare Company; Theatr Clwyd in Wales; Deutsches Schauspielhaus Hamburg; Theater in der Josefstadt Vienna; Schillertheater Berlin; State Theatre of Bavaria; Kennedy Centre Washington; and *Hedda Gabler*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Maids* and *A Streetcar Named Desire* in New York.

Donna Page

Language Consultant

Donna is a Nughi / Quandamooka and Mununjali / Yugambah woman who has spent most of her life connected and belonging to Quandamooka country, her mother's country, and Mununjali country, her father's country.

Donna says:

As an Aboriginal Artist, I feel I have been spiritually 'nyuhmba' guided from my ancestors, mother and father in so many ways to my birthright to 'wayma' speak our language, weave, and be the artist to create from our culture. I feel it is imbedded within me to be able to pass it on and to tell our stories of the past of our people and country.

Therefore, it was an honour to 'nyeumbani' teach language on the production Wudjang: Not the Past and to be able to work with Stephen, Alana, the creative team, Wudjang cast and the Company.

Kurayha, thank you!

Alan John

Music Director

Best known as the composer of the opera *The Eighth Wonder* (produced by Opera Australia in 1995 and revived in 2000 and 2016), Alan has also worked as an actor, dramaturg, musician and musical director.

Over the past 25 years, Alan has developed close working associations with theatre companies, including the Adelaide Festival; State Theatre Company South Australia; National Theatre London (*I'm Not Running*); Sydney Theatre Company (including *Orlando*, *Under Milkwood*, *Pygmalion*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Season At Sarsparilla*, *Mother Courage*, *A Hard God*, *Hedda Gabler*, *A Man With Five Children*, *A Doll's House*, *Major Barbara*); Bell Shakespeare Company; Malthouse Theatre; and especially with Neil Armfield and Belvoir Street Theatre, including *Twelfth Night*, *Angels In America*, *Babyteeth*, *Diary Of A Madman*, *Snugglepoot And Cuddlie Pie*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Waiting For Godot*, *Small Poppies*, *The Judas Kiss*, *Death and the Maiden*, *The Government Inspector* and *The Tempest*.

His film and television credits include the reimagined feature film *Storm Boy* for Ambience Entertainment; *Holding the Man* with director Neil Armfield; *Three Dollars* and *The Bank* (both directed by Robert Connolly); *Looking For Alibrandi* (director Kate Woods); and *Edens Lost* (producer Margaret Fink, director Neil Armfield). Alan has been awarded an APRA/Australian Guild of Screen Composers Award for *The Bank* (Best Music in a Feature Film in 2002), *Human Contraptions* (Best Music for Short Film, 2003) and *The Shark Net* (Best Music for Mini Series or Telemovie, 2004).

Kate Dunn

Assistant Director

Kate won a scholarship to study at England's Royal Ballet School at the age of 16 and then joined the Royal Ballet Company. She has danced on the stages of opera houses around the world.

In Australia, she joined Graeme Murphy's Sydney Dance Company as a principal artist. As a founding member of Gideon Obarzanek's Chunky Move Dance Company, Kate collaborated on many of their productions. She joined Bangarra Dance Theatre for *Ochres*, and to perform at the closing ceremony for the Atlanta Olympic Games.

Kate played the role of Roxie Hart in *Chicago* (West End, Broadway) and has appeared in films including *Phantom of the Opera* and *Beyond the Sea*. She ran the Billy Elliot Broadway Company and subsequent US tours, before working on the Royal Shakespeare Company's production of *Matilda the Musical* and *Groundhog Day*.

Kate continues to choreograph and direct musical theatre whilst teaching master classes around the US, Europe and Australia.

Daniel Roberts

Rehearsal Director

Daniel is a professional dancer from Melbourne. He completed his high school education at The Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School before continuing his dance training at The Australian Ballet School, graduating in 2008 with an Advanced Diploma of Choreography. Daniel was the first student in the school's history to graduate with two Diplomas. He danced with The Singapore Dance Theatre for two years before accepting a contract with the West Australian Ballet where he danced many Principal Roles and was promoted to Soloist in 2014. In 2015, Daniel joined Sydney Dance Company under the directorship of Rafael Bonachela. He toured to Europe, Asia, South America and North America. In 2018, Daniel returned to musical theatre in The Production Company's *Oklahoma!* playing the role of Dream Curly.

Since joining Bangarra as Rehearsal Director in 2018, Daniel has assisted Stephen Page and Frances Rings on numerous productions, including *Bennelong*, *30 Years of 65,000*, *SandSong* and *Spirit*. Daniel has been fortunate enough to tour with the company to India, Japan, Canada, the US and throughout Australia.

Véronique Serret

Associate Music Director / Musician

Véronique is a violinist, vocalist and composer whose repertoire ranges from baroque to contemporary art music, folk, rock and improvisation.

She is a longtime member of Ensemble Offspring and Joanna Newsom's international touring band. She has worked extensively with Sydney Dance Company, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Darwin Symphony Orchestra and in collaboration with many Australian composers.

Recent projects include national tours with Kate Miller-Heidke and Archie Roach; the Australian premiere of Brian Howard's *Desires Ingrained* for solo violin; *CRIE* by Cathy Milliken (written for her); and *Heartland*, co-composed with didgeridoo master William Barton. Together, they have been commissioned by Artology to compose *Bushfire Requiem* and by MAAS at the Sydney Observatory composing *Songlines of our Universe*.

Véronique has directed string sections for contemporary artists including Jonsi, Fleet Foxes, Cinematic Orchestra, Neil Finn, Sarah Blasko, Neil Gaiman, Tim Minchin and Martha Marlow.

ACTOR & MUSICIAN BIOGRAPHIES

Kirk Page

Actor

Kirk is a proud Mununjali man with ancestry in Badu Island in the Torres Strait, Germany and Wales. He trained with the National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association and began his professional career with Bangarra in 1995.

As an actor, Kirk has worked extensively, including *The Harp in the South*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Sunshine Club* (Sydney Theatre Company); *Conversations with the Dead* (Belvoir); *Silent Disco* (Griffin); *My Girranjundji* (Bell Shakespeare); and for companies including Malthouse, Queensland Theatre Company, Black Swan and Ilbjerri.

He appeared in *Priscilla Queen of the Desert the Musical*; Kooemba Jdarra Indigenous Performing Arts' *Binny's Backyard* and *Goin' to the Island*; *4 on the Floor*, *Runners Up*, *EORA Crossing* and *On the Case* (Legs on the Wall).

Kirk appeared in *Redfern Now* (Logie Award nomination, Most Outstanding Actor) and *Mystery Road*. He writes for the *Koori Mail* newspaper.

Elaine Crombie

Actor

Elaine is a Yankunytjatjara, Warrigmay, South Sea Islander and German descended woman and proud mother of two brilliant sons. Elaine is an actor, singer, songwriter and writer with a career that spans over 20 years.

Elaine's extensive theatre work started with Queensland Theatre Company and she has since worked with Bangarra Dance Theatre (*Bloodland*), New Theatre (*Parramatta Girls*, *The Maids*), Belvoir Street (including *Barbara and the Camp Dogs*, *Conversations with the Dead*), Sydney Theatre Company (including *The 7 Stages of Grieving*, *The Sunshine Club*), Malthouse Theatre (*Blaque Showgirls*) and Melbourne Theatre Company (*Astroman*). In 2019, Elaine won a Helpmann Award for *Barbara and the Camp Dogs*.

Elaine has featured in films including *Top End Wedding*, *Jacky Jacky* and *Black Talk*, and her television credits include *8MMM Aboriginal Radio*, *Redfern Now*, *Rosehaven*, *Grace Beside Me*, *The Nowhere Boys* and *Firebite*.

Elma Kris

Actor

Elma is from Thursday Island (Waiben) and her clan is from the North Western and Central Islands of the Torres Strait. Elma studied at NAISDA and joined Bangarra in 1999.

Her choreographic credits include *Malu* (Bibir Dance Company, 1998), the Torres Strait Island element of the Sydney Olympics Opening Ceremony (2000), *Emeret Lu* (Bangarra, True Stories, 2007) and *About* (Bangarra, Belong, 2011). Elma's film credits include *Oscar and Lucinda*, *Reef Dreaming*, *Farscape* and *SPEAR*.

In 2017, she performed in Sydney Theatre Company's *The Secret River* at the Adelaide Festival, and then in London and the Edinburgh Festival. In 2007, Elma won a Deadly Award for Dancer of the Year and in 2016 she was awarded Outstanding Performance by a Female Dancer at the Australian Dance Awards for her performance in *Lore*. In 2017, she was nominated for a Helpmann Award for Best Female Dancer for her title role in Stephen Page's *Nyapanyapa*, part of Bangarra's triple bill *OUR land people stories* (2016).

Justin Smith

Actor

Justin has starred in productions including *Billy Elliot the Musical*; *Small Mouth Sounds* (Darlinghurst Theatre Company); *Jesus Wants Me For A Sunbeam* (National Theatre Parramatta); *The Long Forgotten Dream*, *A Flea in Her Ear*, *Arcadia* (Sydney Theatre Company); and *A Strategic Plan* (Griffin Theatre Company).

Justin made his professional debut in the 1992 Australian production of *Jesus Christ Superstar* alongside John Farnham and Kate Ceberano. In 1998, he performed in the original Australian cast of *Rent*.

He has appeared in Foxtel's drama *Wentworth* and *Secret City*; Channel Seven's *RFDS*; the ABC comedy *The Letdown*; and he played Glen McNamara in *Blue Murder: Killer Cop*. Other television credits include *The Other Guy*, *Deadline Gallipoli*, *Underbelly: Badness*, *The Straits* and *Bastard Boys* (AFI Award for Best Supporting Actor nomination).

Justin's films include the forthcoming *Carmen*; *Babyteeth*; *Pirates of The Caribbean: Dead Man Tell No Tales*, and Fred Schepisi's *The Eye of the Storm*.

Jess Hitchcock

Actor

Award-winning composer and singer-songwriter Jess Hitchcock has family origins from Saibai Island in the Torres Straits and Papua New Guinea.

Performing nationwide and overseas with Kate Miller-Heidke for the past six years, Jess has also joined forces in powerful performances with Paul Kelly, Archie Roach (2020) and Tina Arena (2021).

Jess devoted the last decade to working as a performer, composer and instructor with Australia's Indigenous opera company Short Black Opera with Deborah Cheetam AO. Jess has also proudly contributed to Mission Songs Project and Dhungala Children's Choir.

In 2016, Jess was awarded a prestigious Green Room Award for Best Female in Opera Australia's *The Rabbits*. In 2019, Jess received the Indigenous Music and Media Professional Development Award, Smuggler of Light.

2022 promises to be exciting, with the release of an anticipated studio album of original songs by Jess, and her debut season with Bangarra.

Brendon Boney

Musician

Brendon is a Wiradjuri/Gamilaroi man who grew up in Wagga Wagga. He has toured internationally as a recording and performing artist during the past decade and is an APRA Professional Development Award winner. Brendon has performed at Bluesfest Byron Bay, Woodford Folk Festival, Sydney Festival, Adelaide Fringe Festival, Brisbane Festival, Friendship Festival (Seoul) and

The Aussie BBQ (UK). He has written for and collaborated with artists such as PJ Harding, Jaguar Jonze, Becca Hatch, MXWLL, Tessa Thames, Xavier Dunn and Tasman Keith. His work is played on Triple J, FBI radio Sydney and community radio nationwide.

Brendon has composed for Bangarra Dance Theatre (*Dubboo*), Belvoir Theatre (*At What Cost?*, *Winyanboga Yurringa*) and Ensemble Theatre. He toured with Ilbijerri Theatre's acclaimed production *Black Ties* as Music Director and made his acting debut in the same production.

Brendon is currently Design Associate at Sydney Theatre Company for Composition and Sound Design.

Amaru Derwent

Musician

Amaru is a Sydney-based musician, singer-songwriter, producer and sound engineer. He plays a broad range of instruments including piano, trumpet, trombone and guitar. He began playing music at a young age and started to perform and tour professionally from the age of 15. In 2009, he graduated from the Conservatorium High School and went on to graduate from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music (The University of Sydney) in 2015. He has toured Australia and internationally, supporting music acts including Paul Kelly, Thundamentals and Ziggy Ramo.

Amaru draws upon the influences of Classical, Jazz, Brazilian and Cuban music and is creatively inspired by First Nations artists and storytelling. *Wudjang: Not the Past* will be his first experience working on an Indigenous stage production that combines dance, theatre and music.

Tessa Nuku

Musician

Tessa is a proud First Nations artist who grew up on Darkinjung Country on the New South Wales Central Coast where she currently lives, at Ettalong Beach. She is the voice of folk act Microwave Jenny, and has toured Australia, NZ, Asia and the UK. She has appeared at festivals including Bluesfest (Byron Bay), Woodford Folk Festival, Friendship Festival (Seoul) and The Aussie BBQ (UK). Her music has been featured on television series' *Gods of Wheat Street* (ABC), *Redfern Now* (SBS), *Offspring* (Network 10), *Winners & Losers* (Seven Network) and *Underbelly Files: Chopper* (Nine Network).

Tessa recently released her singles *Milk*, *50k Carat* and *Alone at Parties* under the name Tessa Thames and was shortlisted as a finalist in the 2021 APRA Personal Development Awards. She will soon release a new single, *Cherry Blossoms in Tokyo*, a collaboration with 18YOMAN, Becca Hatch and Tasman Keith that arose from APRA/AMCOS' first ever First Nations Songhubs' workshop. Tessa's work is played on Triple J, FBI radio, ABC radio and community radio nationwide.

DANCER BIOGRAPHIES

Beau Dean Riley Smith

Beau was born in Dubbo and grew up on the South Coast of New South Wales in Culburra Beach on Yuin country. He is an Aboriginal man from the Wiradjuri Nation of Central New South Wales and the Gamilaraay Nation of New South Wales. He joined Bangarra in 2013.

His career highlights include performing the title role in Bangarra's *Bennelong* (2017), *Black* from *Ochres* for the first time in Vietnam, and performing the Wiradjuri solo from *ID* on the Kinship regional tour on Country in Dubbo.

Miyagan, part of the 2016 triple bill *OUR land people stories*, was his first choreographic work for Bangarra – a work that Bangarra returned to Country as part of the 2018 regional tour.

In 2018, Beau won Best Male Dancer at the Helpmann Awards, Outstanding Performance at the Australian Dance Awards and was nominated for a Green Room Award for Best Male Dancer.

Rikki Mason

Rikki is a descendant of the Kullili people from South West Queensland and is from the country town of Inverell on land of the Gamilaraay people. Rikki also has Danish, German, Scottish and Irish heritage.

He grew up playing Rugby League representing NSW Country Catholic Schools, NSW CHS for Touch Football and was Junior World Champion in 2000 for Koshiki Karate. Starting dance at 17, he went on to train at the Australian Dance Performance Institute and L'Ecole-Atelier Rudra-Bejart in Switzerland.

Rikki has performed with Brisbane City Youth Ballet, Queensland National Ballet and Lucid Dance Theatre. Joining Bangarra in 2014, he's since toured regionally, nationally, internationally and On Country. Performing On Country is a highlight for Rikki, as well as performing the solo *The Call* from *Walkabout* on stages around the world.

"Connecting and performing stories gifted to Bangarra from communities around Australia is a great honour."

Rika Hamaguchi

Rika is from Broome in Western Australia. She is a descendant of the Yawuru, Bunaba, Bardi and Jaru people in the Kimberley Region. Rika also shares Japanese, Chinese and Scottish ancestry.

Rika joined Bangarra in 2015 after graduating from NASIDA Dance College. One of her highlights has been performing and consulting on a Kimberley work, *SandSong*, in 2021. She'd like to acknowledge The Kimberley community back home who have shaped her into who she is today.

Rika is honoured to have performed the solo in Brolga as part of *SPIRIT: a Retrospective 2021* regional tour, a role originated by Frances Rings. She has toured nationally (*Bennelong, lore, OUR land people stories, Dark Emu, 30 years of 65,000, SandSong: Stories from the Great Sandy Desert*), regionally (*Kinship, Terrain, OUR land people stories, Bennelong, Spirit: a Retrospective*) and internationally (Europe, Asia, America).

Glory Tuohy-Daniell

Glory is a descendant of Indjalandji Dhidhanu and Alyewarre Aboriginal tribes, in North West Queensland, and of Scottish, English, Irish, Welsh, Chinese and Spanish heritage. Glory joined Bangarra in 2016, one of two Russell Page Graduate Program recipients. She studied dance at NAISDA.

The experience that has made the biggest impact on Glory was attending a cultural residency, learning and performing cultural dance in community on Saibai and Moa Islands, in the Torres Strait and Elcho Island, North-East Arnhem Land.

Glory first saw Bangarra in 2011's *Belong*, and it has been a long-held goal of hers to join the company. *OUR land people stories* in 2016 was her debut season with Bangarra, and she has since toured nationally with *SandSong* and *Bennelong*, regionally with *Terrain* and *OUR land people stories*, and internationally.

Baden Hitchcock

Baden is a descendant from Saibai (Umai Clan), in the Top Western region of the Torres Strait Islands and is also from the Central (Hohodae clan, Hanuabada) and Western (Maravadai Clan, Mabaduan) provinces of Papua New Guinea. He also has English, Irish and Chinese heritage.

Baden joined Bangarra in 2017 as part of the Russell Page Graduate Program. In 2015, he completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts in dance at Victorian College of the Arts, where he was awarded the Creative Arts Outstanding Undergraduate Award. While training he worked with choreographers including Antony Hamilton, Lee Serle, Maria Randall, Lina Limosani, Rebecca Hilton, Jacob Boehme and Prue Lang.

He has performed as an independent dancer/ choreographer in the Melbourne Festival (2016), TPS Nomad Laboratory (2016), Asiatopa (2016), Black & Bright Literacy Festival (2016) and also Yirramboi Festival (2017). He has also worked as a singer and workshop teacher with Short Black Opera.

Ryan Pearson

Ryan is of Biripi and Worimi descent on his mother's side and Minang, Goreng and Balardung on his father's side. He was born and raised in Taree, New South Wales. He joined Bangarra in 2017 as part of the Russell Page Graduate Program.

Ryan began his dance training at NAISDA at age 16, after taking part in the NSW Public Schools' Aboriginal Dance Company, facilitated by Bangarra's Youth Program Team in 2012. During his time, Ryan learnt from renowned teachers and choreographers. A highlight during his training was attending a six-week Professional Intensive at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre in New York City.

Ryan has performed regionally, nationally and internationally, as well as at the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony. He was nominated in the 2020 Australian Dance Awards for Most Outstanding Performance by a Male Dancer for his performance in Jir'í Kylián's *Stamping Ground* (2019 Production, *30 Years of Sixty Five Thousand*).

Lillian Banks

Lillian is a Yawuru woman from Broome, Western Australia. In 2013, Lillian left her hometown and travelled across the country to study dance at NAISDA Dance College in Sydney. She was applauded for her thoughtful contemporary solo in the college's graduation showcase and following this, joined Bangarra in 2018 as a recipient of the Russell Page Graduate Program.

An opportunity Lillian will cherish forever is being part of the Cathy Freeman documentary, *FREEMAN*. The experience of going On Country in the Kimberley to learn dances from the Elders in preparation for *SandSong* in 2021 is another highlight for Lillian. She always looks forward to returning the work back to the community.

Lillian is passionate about teaching, educating and leading the way for the next generation and hopes to be an inspiration to anyone striving to achieve their dreams.

Bradley Smith

Bradley is a descendant of the Gumbaynggirr people and also has Fijian and English heritage. He is a Gumbaynggirr man, born and raised in Coffs Harbour, on the north coast of New South Wales.

Bradley joined Bangarra in 2018 as one of two Russell Page Graduate Program recipients, after completing four years of dance training at NAISDA Dance College.

He was praised for his standout performance in the college's annual showcase, *RESTORATION*, at Carriageworks in 2017.

Having enjoyed contemporary dance since high school, Bradley is inspired to learn more about his culture and share knowledge and traditional stories through dance.

Bradley is proud to perform these important stories on Australian and international stages. He's thankful to the communities whose customs and culture inspire him every day.

Courtney Radford

Courtney is a proud descendant of the Balardong people, whose land is on Noongar country. She spent most of her childhood in Port Hedland (Pilbara) Western Australia, where she first found her passion for dance. She joined Bangarra in 2019, and most recently performed in *SandSong*.

Courtney completed her classical ballet training in Perth before moving to Brisbane in 2015 as part of Queensland Ballet's pre-professional program. A highlight was touring to London with the Queensland Ballet to perform *La Sylphide* at the London Coliseum. In 2016, she accepted a position with the West Australian Ballet (WAB), where she performed both classical and contemporary works. While working with Annabelle Lopez Ochoa on one of her famous creations, *In Transit*, Courtney recognised her love for contemporary dance. During Courtney's two years with WAB, she worked with choreographers including David Dawson, David Nixon and Lucette Aldous.

Kallum Goolagong

Kallum is a proud Wiradjuri and Darkinjung man. He also has Mediterranean, Italian and Irish ancestry. He joined Bangarra in 2019 as part of the Russell Page Graduate Program.

Born on the Central Coast of New South Wales, Kallum starting dancing at NAISDA Dance College in 2015. Throughout his four years at NAISDA he worked with teachers and choreographers Craig Bary, Frances Rings, Sani Townsend and Raymond D Blanco. In 2018, Kallum graduated from NAISDA with a Certificate in Careers in Dance and a Diploma of Professional Dance Performance.

Kallum also has a sporting background and before dance was training for the Olympics in athletics as an all-rounder. Kallum is excited to learn more about himself and his culture through his journey with Bangarra. He was last seen in 2021's *SandSong*.

Gusta Mara

Gusta is an Angamudthi, Atembiya, Goba, Argun, Wagadthagum and Kaurareg man from the tip of Queensland and the Western islands of the Torres Strait. He joined Bangarra in 2019 as part of the Russell Page Graduate Program.

Gusta first started dancing at the age of 16 at the Graham Academy of Dance. He auditioned for NAISDA in 2015 and completed his final year of studies in 2018. In Gusta's short time training and dancing he has worked with many renowned choreographers, including Vikki van Hout, Pamela Williams, Craig Bary, Raymond D Blanco, Frances Rings, Sani Townson and Jack Grey. He has also performed with Atamira Dance Company at the Tempo Dance Festival in New Zealand.

Since joining Bangarra, Gusta has toured around Australia as well as internationally to Canada and Chicago. For Bangarra, Gusta has appeared in *SandSong*, and toured Australia and internationally to Canada and Chicago.

Kiarn Doyle

Kiarn is an Aboriginal man from the Dunghutti Nation. He was born in Mullumbimby (Bundjalung country) and raised in the Blue Mountains (Darug/ Gundungurra country). Kiarn joined Bangarra in 2020 as the Russell Page Graduate recipient.

Kiarn trained at PAWS (Performing Arts Western Sydney) 2012-2016. He then went on to pursue full-time dance training at the National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association (NAISDA Dance College). Kiarn received awards in Certificate III and IV in dance performance and graduated in 2019 with a Diploma of Dance.

Kiarn has performed in The Arts Unit's Aboriginal Dance Company and on *Australia's Got Talent*. He has worked with choreographers including Natasha Crane, James Barry, Stephen Tannos, Rebecca Lui- Brennan, Frances Rings, Craig Bary, Sani Townson, Raymond D Blanco, Patrick Thaiday, Sidney Saltner and Chantal Kerr.

Kiarn was last seen in 2021's *SandSong*.

Maddison Paluch

Maddison is a Wiradjuri woman born and raised on Dharug Country in Western Sydney. Maddison joined Bangarra in 2021 through the Russell Page Graduate Program.

She is a graduate of Newtown High School of the Performing Arts and NAISDA Dance College. While at school she was part of the NSW Department of Education's Aboriginal Dance Company working with Sidney Saltner and the Bangarra Youth Programs team. Maddison was the recipient of the Bangarra's 2020 Russell Page Professional Development Scholarship, which gave her the opportunity to study with Sydney Dance Company's Pre-Professional Year.

Her first choreographic work, *Murriyan*, was performed at the 2019 NAISDA graduation, and she has undertaken cultural residencies in both the Torres Strait and North East Arnhem. Maddison's first performance with Bangarra was *Spirit* at Sydney Festival in January 2021 followed by a Regional NSW Tour.

Daniel Mateo

Daniel is a descendant of the Gamilaroi people of central northern NSW as well as the Tongan people from the Pacifika region. Daniel was born and raised in Orange (Wiradjuri country) and later moved to Newcastle (Awabakal land). He joined Bangarra in 2021 as one of two Russell Page Graduate Program recipients.

Daniel started his dance studies at Catapult Dance in Newcastle before moving on to NAISDA Dance College in 2019. At NAISDA Daniel quickly demonstrated an impressive commitment to building both his technical and creative skills. In 2019, Daniel was part of Catapult Dance's Propel program, where he created his first choreography, *Boy, cries*.

Daniel's first performance with Bangarra was *Spirit* at Sydney Festival in January 2021 followed by a Regional NSW Tour.

Emily Flannery

Emily is a proud Wiradjuri woman from Forbes in the Central West of NSW. She joined Bangarra in 2021.

Emily studied at NAISDA Dance College where she was fortunate to spend time in both Yolngu and Moa Island communities. She was the recipient of the Young Regional Artist Scholarship (YRAS), enabling her to spend five months at Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company in Israel during her final year of study. Since graduating, Emily has performed with Opera Australia, Phunktional Arts, Catapult Choreographic Hub, Ensemble Offspring, Dance Makers Collective, Jannawi Dance Clan and Karul Projects.

Emily was an Artist in Residence at PACT Theatre with Lost All Sorts Collective, she was the First Nations Intern with Lucy Guerin Inc and was also a recipient of the Joanne Harris Graduate Scholarship.

Emily's first choreographic work, *Bulnuruwanha*, has been commissioned by Sydney Opera House and will premiere in 2022.

Janaya Lamb

Janaya is a proud Wiradjuri woman, born on Bunjalung country. She grew up in Tamworth on Gamilaraay country, and she also has Torres Strait ancestry. Janaya's first dance training was in hip hop at four years of age. During her school years, she was part of the NSW Department of Education Aboriginal Dance Company. On commencing studies at NAISDA in 2018, she further developed her skills in hip hop, as well as Indigenous contemporary dance. Janaya joined Bangarra in 2022.

Jesse Murray

Jesse is a proud Wiradjuri man of the Galari tribe and has been learning and performing his traditional dances on Wiradjuri country and around NSW since he was a young boy. Jesse was part of the NSW Department of Education Aboriginal Dance Company for three years before commencing his studies at NAISDA Dance College in 2018. While at NAISDA, he participated in several cultural residencies in North East Arnhem Land and Moa Island in the Torres Strait, and performed in many of NAISDA's seasons, dancing in works by choreographers including Frances Rings and Deborah Brown. He has also worked with Joshua Thomson (Legs on the Wall) and Craig Bary (Catapult Dance). Jesse joined Bangarra in 2022 as part of the Russell Page Graduate Program.