

ON CUE



COMPANY
BLACK SWAN
STATE THEATRE

WINTER 2026



THE SPACE BETWEEN US





"The stage lights flare, the sounds rise, and the world quietly shifts before us."

Dear readers, friends, theatre goers; lovers, supporters, creators, first-time attendees and veteran audiences who show after show, sometimes night after night, join us each year for the ephemeral experience that is, going to the theatre.

Black Swan wants to take this time, inside these few pages, to bring you further into the realm of creativity and introduce you to some familiar faces, some new artists making their Black Swan debut, and to the processes that start well before you receive your tickets. Walk into the theatre, take your seat, and wait in anticipation to be transported to the world; that with your help, we take that leap, something not too far from home and sometimes further than we thought our imaginations dared to go.

None of us will be able to say exactly why we continue to commune in the dark and smile or shiver when the stage lights patter and flare, the sounds so carefully thought out simmer louder, or an actor takes their first deep breath and makes that journey across the stage and into the beautiful unknown with us.

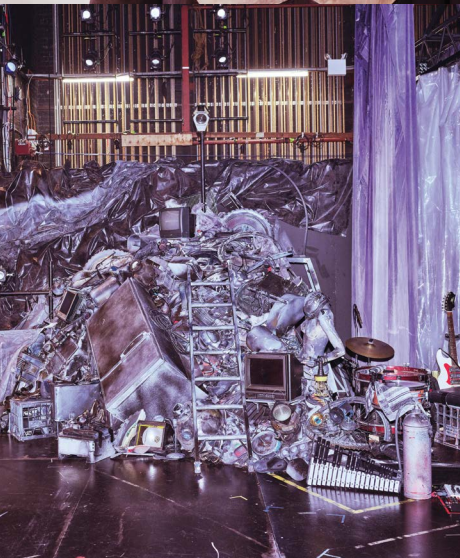
No one show will ever be the same, no one actor's interpretation of a character will repeat. The only constant we can rely on is you, the audience, and for joining us in this beautiful space we all love so much, we thank you. - Black Swan

PRINCIPLE PARTNER





BEHIND THE RED SHOES



Step behind the curtain with us as we take you backstage at His Majesty's Theatre for the Perth season of *Meow Meow's The Red Shoes*, created by the siren, the chanteuse, the diva, the showgirl! Meow Meow...

Audiences across the country fell in love with Meow Meow's investigation and reinvigoration of Hans Christian Anderson's tragic tale, *The Red Shoes*. As a rare, rare treat, we were invited backstage to see where all that magic that we got to witness on stage began each night.

CO-PRODUCED WITH
**MALHOUSE
THEATRE**

**BELVOIR ST
THEATRE**

PRESENTED BY
**PERTH
FESTIVAL**





INTO THE UNFORGIVING LANDSCAPE

A tragedy, a lie, an unforgiving landscape, a man at the end of his life and a boy at the precipice of the rest of his...Hope can be violent and the courage to change is a metamorphosis that can sometimes be irreversible.

There are many constants that are reliable when a story is followed by: "written by Tim Winton". We instantly know the character and their journey will be as rich and complex as the landscape of Western Australia that continues to inspire the WA local.

Throw into the mix a playwright like Tim McGarry (*Boy Swallows Universe* & *Tim*) whose ability to bring from the page such accuracy and emotion is almost unparalleled.

Shepherding these pages, this story, together for you is director Matthew Edgerton (*The Tempest* & *The Seed*). A familiar name and face to many, Matt is directing *The Shepherd's Hut* with the care and attention he brings to every show; audiences will feel every word, ache with these characters, and breathe in the landscape of this world.

We interviewed these three as they mapped their way towards the world premiere of *The Shepherd's Hut*.

"Behind his (Jaxie's) racism and misogyny, there's something decent trying to break free."

Tim Winton

COMMISSIONING PATRON

A & M FINI FOUNDATION



“Whatever the process, stage adaptations need to find their own voice, world, be different, in some ways strive to be better.”

Tim McGarry

How did this adaption first come across your path?

"I'd worked on Tim Winton's *The Buglug's Bum Thief* back in 1997. I'd read *The Shepherd's Hut* back in 2018 when it was first published and loved it. Absolutely adored it. But I visualised it very 'filmically' and originally didn't consider it for the stage. Over time I re-read the work and began to think about different ways it might work theatrically. Then Kate Champion and I first talked about the possibility of adapting the work in late 2022. I approached Tim with an idea of how the novel could be reimagined for the stage. I felt rather cheeky suggesting quite a dramatic rearrangement of the narrative. He graciously accepted and the rest is history!" – Tim McGarry

Books and theatre are channels for humans to express and explore; do you have a journey in mind you hope your readers travel?

"In the book I shoved this spiky, foulmouthed boy in the reader's face and make the facts of his life unavoidable. He's not exactly a congenial presence. Jaxie's someone most folks would cross the street to avoid. But he's the bearer of the story, his profane language is the only medium available, so the reader has to come to terms with him, and if they persist they see and feel more than the initial revulsion and get an insight into what's made him this way and what he's really like. I guess it's enforced intimacy! Jaxie wants to be a better version of himself. He has aspirations and ideas that aren't ugly. Beneath his racism and misogyny, there's something decent trying to break free, and Fintan is one of the unlikely factors that let you believe that maybe he will." – Tim Winton

Is there a place you start or a way you like to approach adapting a text for the stage?

"Every new work is different. I guess because I trained as an actor, I approach everything in the first instance from an actor's point of view. I read and reread the novel many times, imagining how different moments might develop. I became very familiar with the vernacular of each character, as you inevitably write new dialogue which must seamlessly mould into the dialogue from the novel. Whatever the process, stage adaptations need to find their own voice, world, be different, in some ways strive to be better. The play will never be the novel but carries the spirit of the original work. It needs to be sharper, faster, more dramatic, akin to a railway train speeding up, leaving the audiences leaning forward, surprised, delighted, in a state of wonder." – Tim McGarry

The Shepherd's Hut, let's start big, why this story and why now?

"One of our modern sicknesses is this disfigured version of masculinity. Virtues from a previous era are perverted, repackaged and sold to young men. So traditionally 'masculine traits' like courage or sacrifice or a sense of adventure or creative risk taking are bent into uglier shapes – and the aspirational ideal that's offered to young men is about dominating and humiliating others, about dominating and winning in whatever environment they're in. But what a landscape like the one in *The Shepherd's Hut* teaches is a kind of humility, actually. That you may wish the world was a particular way, but eventually you will have a collision

course with reality and you will be confronted with your own flaws, frailty and vulnerability, and you'll have to have a reckoning with that.

In the theatre, 'character' is often imagined as a series of traits: your height, your job, your ethnicity, etc. But this play depicts character in a more old-fashioned sense: 'showing your character' – i.e. your true nature revealed or forged under pressure. That essential character of Jaxie crystallises through crisis. And it's complex. It's about courage and a kind of strength but it's also about kindness and purpose." – Matthew Edgerton

Male relationships are central to this story, and "male loneliness" is a key topic of debate currently. What reactions have you experienced, from men specifically, towards the themes of *The Shepherd's Hut*?

"When the book came out, I was surprised at how many men wrote to me and spoke to me about the absence of positive, nurturing male role models, of feeling wounded by that and distressed by the emotional poverty and social ugliness it produces. They also spoke of how isolating and conflicting it is. Very few men were upset by my portrayal of Jaxie. I was, though, surprised by the number of women who felt I was being too hard on boys, expecting too much of them. There's a deep vein of maternal indulgence that sees boys as uniquely fragile. I find that interesting – and deeply unhelpful." – Tim Winton



'ANA

*we are all playing the
the same game
always playing the*

CHAT

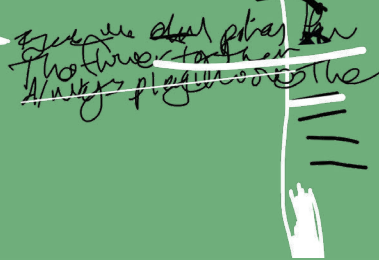
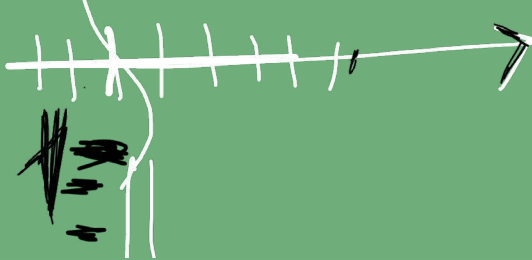
Not the play, but the phrase
“The Almighty Sometimes”,
what does that phrase mean to
you?

Alison: It can mean so many things,
it's really hard to answer! For me,
right now, the “sometimes” are when
we question norms. The (some)
times we don't do what we normally
would. When we break with routine
and tradition, or “how things have
always been done”. Maybe shaking
off that feeling of obligation. It's
the brave choice to sometimes look
inside and think *what is my truth*. It's
a privilege to have the time to ponder
these questions but just accepting
how things are, bottling things up
like anger and resentment – I don't
think that makes for a happy family or
community.

WITH THE
ALMIGHTY
SOMETIMES
CAST



ALISON



Ana: It feels like something that you keep coming back to. Like a question you can't answer or "what ifs" or even insecurities or beliefs that you might sometimes doubt. It reminds me of the play *Doubt*. It reminds me of those existential questions and those off days that we all have where you kind of go; *what the hell am I doing?* How did I end up with this life? In the good ways and not so good. It makes me think about mortality, to be honest. I think we all have those quiet moments where we really question everything or where we have to pull ourselves together. It makes me think about how we hold onto hope when things feel impossible. That's something I love about people – our resilience and will and survival. "The Almighty Sometimes" feels like the exception to the rule. Like that tiny bit of light peeking through clouds or a thread you just want to pull.

What have you been loving at the moment?

Alison: I'm a bit of a birdwatcher and I have to say I am loving my garden at the moment. Our house had very little garden when we moved there in 2023. I've put a heap of plants in, focusing on natives. Proud to say I now happily sit in the garden with a coffee and watch all sorts of birds visit. I love providing them a cool spot to rest, eat and drink.

Ana: *Bridgerton*. Bad Bunny. A chilled red. Rewatching *Gilmore Girls*. I love a collage and a vision board. I always cut out and stick images in my journal for roles, and have been loving doing all that prep for *The Almighty Sometimes*. I've been listening to a lot of Blondshell. I just saw her play in Sydney and last year saw her play in London. I never get sick of her song *Sepsis*. I also have been loving my Shakti mat! I've just started using one before bed, and I usually really struggle to get to sleep but it's been so much easier since using the mat! I've been loving working with my personal trainer, which is relatively new for me. She's the perfect amount of scary and caring.

Are there any elements of chaos you're embracing for 2026?

Alison: My eldest child is in Year 12 this year so there is definitely a low level hum of chaos/excitement in our household...Interesting how closely chaos and excitement sit together! It's a special time in his life. For me it's about (reluctantly) releasing the parental handbrake, and I'm sure I could draw out some bird metaphors about nests and fledglings and taking first flights; aagh the push and pull of being a parent. I'm grateful for it every day. *The Almighty Sometimes* is about all that. I got a whole "life mirroring art" thing going on!

Ana: I'm definitely embracing the year of the horse, honestly, which already feels chaotic to me in a great way. The forward momentum, commitment, jumping into things before I feel 'ready'. It feels like this year is already pulling us along into change or things we've been waiting to start. I've been moving house which has been chaotic. Moving is always bittersweet I reckon. Saying bye to one chapter and hello to a new one! Bring on the chaos!

This play offers the audience complex questions, themes of autonomy and choice, love and fear, creativity and chaos. Is there a moment you can remember embracing 'the sometimes'?

Alison: I think every time you step on stage you're embracing the "sometimes"! I once worked with an actor who worked with a director who said before a show 'go onstage and forget everything we did in rehearsal'. More chaos maybe? No, everything you did in rehearsal is all there, but you've got to embrace that this audience have never been together with THIS cast watching THIS play at THIS moment. It's wondrous. It's why we love it. And sometimes it works and absolutely sometimes it doesn't! Every time I walk on stage I wonder *what will happen this time?*

Ana: Usually I try to make the smart decision, but I think I embrace "the sometimes" when I don't worry so much about doing what's smart or right, and instead I either just do what my gut's telling me, or I push myself to go outside the safety of my comfort zone. Like when I went solo travelling last year. I was a bit nervous to go to the other side of the world by myself and all that. I was in London and went to this amazing place that I'd been recommended, called Pockets. It's a hole in the wall in East London that does these amazing falafel pita pockets. Then later that night I was at a gig by myself (to see Blondshell) at Electric Brixton, all the way over in South London, and there was this person standing near me and I was like, I swear that's the person that served me at Pockets? So I plucked up the courage to start talking to her, and it turns out it was the same person, and she turned out to be a film director, so we ended up having a great chat about filmmaking and followed each other on Instagram and it all felt very serendipitous. That definitely felt like a sign from the universe to keep embracing the sometimes.

“Interesting how closely chaos and excitement sit together.”

Alison





AMY

*The moment I met her
for the first time as I was
about to end up at
the beach club game
that we did a night*



*you are all playing for
the first time for the
first time playing over the*

“Sometimes
things fall
into place
and being alive
and existing
is a gift.”

Amy



HARRY





Not the play, but the phrase “The Almighty Sometimes”, what does that phrase mean to you?

Harry: For me, it actually feels kind of simple. I feel like the more you think about it, the more complex meanings you can find in it. But for me, straight off the bat, it feels like diving into the unknown and a space where you're not sure what's going to happen next, what direction you're going to go, what pathways are going to open up or close.

A metaphor I've found I've drawn back to a couple of times is it feels like being in the mud. Being in that sort of almost icky place where you can't be fully confident about what's happening and the direction you're taking, but it's also a really important space to acknowledge that you're there and embrace it because whether it's good or bad, things open up, pathways present themselves to you and it provides choices for you to take. It's that “sometimes” area that holds a lot of potency as well, despite feeling sort of almost foggy at times. “Almighty” really gives it that bold sort of powerful surge behind it, that it's a space that's really important and can really shape so many things. So, I really love that.

Amy: I think it's a beautiful phrase, and a beautiful title for a piece of art or play because it's open to interpretation. There's a question mark already around it, which I think is great. For me, it means that although life is really hard, that's the bargain and that's our contract with being born; that life is difficult. I really believe that in the best way. That can be a really positive thing. And this idea of “The Almighty Sometimes” is that sometimes things fall into place and being alive and existing is a gift, and it is so perfect and irrepressible and

delightful. But that is interspersed with sometimes a lot of grind and pain and conflict and compromise and things that aren't that. And I kind of think that's a beautiful idea.

What have you been loving at the moment?

Harry: I pay about \$13 a month for the Sydney Morning Herald subscription because I love the quiz. I don't really pay for the news aspect. I'd literally pay to do this quiz every day. So, I'm absolutely loving doing that every day – it's the quiz, then Connections, then Wordle with the morning coffee. I'm also really loving Greek yogurt. I'm just really, really loving Greek yogurt and the Sydney Morning Herald quiz. Sometimes I have my yogurt while I'm doing the quiz, and it just feels like life's a little bit too good at that point. That's Nirvana.

Amy: During Perth Festival I saw *Lé Nør [the rain]*, a show by incredible Perth theatre company The Last Great Hunt. It was really beautiful and different and evocative. It's just exceptional, modern theatre making, and it was such a great night and really made me feel inspired. I also love National Theatre Live. It's sort of the next best thing to being able to see things on stage and to also see what people are doing internationally. I think it's a really good initiative that they've done. I sort of treasure my NT Live subscription because I get to watch these incredible theatre performers that I would not get to see normally on my little home screen.

Are there any elements of chaos you're embracing for 2026?

Harry: Balancing the bigger, more adult things like my other work that's not acting, and the goal to have a career when it can just be solely acting – which I'm very excited

about. Not that I don't like my casual jobs, I'm so grateful for them! I think I'm embracing the feeling of not necessarily having a base or a foundation. I'm very fortunate to be going back home to my family in Perth. They're so supportive and have been my number one friends throughout this whole experience, but I guess being home will be chaotic. In terms of big, big picture, I think moving across the country is chaotic, it sounds kind of obvious and a bit cliché; “you're by yourself now, you're on your own” etc. You love it at times, you hate it at times, you're scared. It feels chaotic, but then also your creativity flies through the roof. I guess I found that to be quite a harsh realisation, but also incredibly rewarding at the same time.

Amy: I feel like as a working freelance artist, I embrace chaos on a daily basis because I never know what my year is going to pan out like. I have to make contingencies that there won't be much, or there'll be feast and I'll have to organize my life around it. So I think the definition of committing myself to being an actor is embracing chaos on a daily basis. At the beginning of the year, I have a couple of jobs already slated so that I know what's happening. And other than that, it's wide open. I have to figure it out as I go. And that can sound really scary, but I wouldn't have it any other way, really. There's no alternative for me. I take the good and the bad, feast and the famine, in order to be able to make art that people can see themselves in.



The Almighty Sometimes
for at least 100 years
and what
the book plays - we
that we did a risk



If you've never had the pleasure of experiencing Heather Mitchell perform live in person, then we suggest you set up a Google alert, following us and Heather's socials to find the next opportunity.

QUIET

After wowing WA audiences with another blockbuster, sold-out season of Sydney Theatre Company's, *RBG: Of Many, One* by Suzie Miller, we are still savouring the time we got with Heather and by extension her incomparable portrayal of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, as the show continues its national tour. We sat down with Heather to talk all things RBG and more.

I adore the show. I love it. I think it's a really important show. Last year when they said, "would you do it again?" I thought, "why would we do it again?" And now I'm so glad that we are, because I think that things have changed so greatly in such a short period of time since last year. To do with the law – to do with democracy, to do with the checks and balances and everything that's going on in the world. That there's so much of life that we take for granted that could even be at risk.

The work is almost crafted in a way, that its themes and its messages, although centred around one person, are not centred around one person's journey – it involves so many. But it's almost pertinent that the work is coming back, because you can substitute so many of the laws or justices, but the kind of guiding principle is really, autonomy.

It feels very – I don't want to say "important" to do it – but I feel like it's a wonderful time to be revisiting the ideas of Ruth and also the way Suzie Miller has written this and Priscilla Jackman has directed it. I think it's an incredibly timely and very entertaining and funny show for people to be seeing, but a great reminder of things that are at stake in the world at the moment, and the rational and reasonable ideas that Ruth had, her incredible intelligence, and how and what she put her faith in, which are now all being questioned.

I think that one thing I have discovered is that by having Ruth's voice in my head all the time, "when challenges come along do not let the small ones overwhelm you". And I think I so easily, naturally myself, will let small things overwhelm me. When I say overwhelm, you know, I think they're bigger than they are. And I think what I've learned most from Ruth is taking one step at a time, look to the future, always thinking about where something might land. but don't let all the little things get in the way of that vision. So, I think I've definitely been influenced in a very good way by hearing her voice.

Some nights I really sort of try and

"There's so much of life that we take for granted that could even be at risk."

highlight just very gently things to do with different areas. Sometimes it's to do with her relationship with the presidents, other times her feelings about Trump, other times her fight for women's rights. So just for me, I do that to keep things fresh and interesting for myself. I think that when we did it last year, I was able to find a little more humour. I don't think she was a particularly funny woman, but she appreciated humour, that's for sure. But we were able to find a bit more humour in the show last time. And I think that was simply to do with me being more relaxed in it. But I think if anything, my approach is very similar. I mean, they'll be the same, just trying to honour how she lived, what was important to Ruth, her passions.

I discovered that I was actually, not that I was brought up similarly to her,

but I guess my parents' ethos was very similar to her mother's. My father was a Quaker, he was a pacifist and I was brought up very much to listen and to not overly respond. Don't be outraged. Don't lean into outrage. Try to listen more. All those things that are to do with reasonableness, which I think leads to the idea of how we're living at the moment, which is very, much more about being unreasonable, about not listening to reason. We're very much about responding immediately, having opinions immediately, taking sides immediately. And that's very un-Ruth. I think I've learned a lot just about how she conducted herself, how she structured her thoughts.

I also had discovered before I did it that there were a number of similarities in her personal life that I had to mine. I discovered that her mother was Jewish and my mother was Jewish. I wasn't brought up necessarily within the Jewish faith, but I had two children, she had two children. My son had meningitis, her sister died from meningitis. We've both had cancer. I had cancer twice and Bruce had cancer multiple times. She had a husband called Marty. My husband's name's Marty. We've been together 40 years, and he complements me incredibly well.

So I think, I find being with Ruth a resting place really. I don't find her exhausting. I find her very calming, really. So yeah. That's fascinating. There's something reassuring about her. – Heather Mitchell

POWER

WITH RBG'S HEATHER MITCHELL

A SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRODUCTION
SYDNEY THEATRE
COMPANY

SEASON PARTNER
CLAYTON UTZ



get to
know
will

Will O'Mahony, who is no stranger to the Black Swan community, will be switching gears slightly on his next production.

We've fallen in love with Will's ability to find humour, compassion and urgency in the complex array of characters he's portrayed, but now he brings this and more to his latest full-length play, commissioned and presented by Black Swan State Theatre Company.

DAY (AFTER DAY) IN THE LIFE OF THE USELESS by Will O'Mahony is a bold new comedy responding to the ever-changing intersections of love, work and belonging in an increasingly automated world.

Are our AI overlords already among us? Is this really the end? We sat down with Will to get an inside scoop on his latest project.

Will let's rapid fire. Are you ready. First thing that comes to your mind. Who is Pete?

I guess he's a well-meaning everyman. He makes mistakes. He tries his guts out. And he seems to get caught up in forces that are beyond him. Sounds a lot like me.

Why is he useless?

Useless is...harsh. But through some fault of his own, he quickly finds himself cut-off from the world that he knew and in ever-increasing damage control.

What can we do if we think we are useless?

I am not a mental health professional, but doing something kind for someone else (or yourself) is never a bad place to start.

What's your favourite day of the week?

Monday am

What's your least favourite day of the week?

Monday pm

Can the ordinary Joe, Pete, we, me, be saved from the ever-crushing and seemingly random flow of events outside of our control?

Probably not. But do we want to be saved? Doesn't thermodynamics say the universe is always chasing a higher state of entropy? To try and fight that would be swiping at the ocean with a sword. Increasingly I try to live by the mantra, "I don't mind what happens." A bit fatalist maybe, but it does offer a sense of peace, especially in these confused times.

Will, thank you for playing. Can you tell us a little about Pete?

Well, sadly for Pete, the little we know of him is mostly unfortunate: we know he was engaged, that he was left days before his wedding, and that he is in a job that seems a bit soulless. But he's determined to turn his life around and mend his broken heart. We wish him luck...

Can you give a little insight into the process of writing this play?

It started as a series of scenes where a guy just seemed to be haunted by Murphy's Law and that anything that could go wrong, did go wrong. I won't be so indulgent as to talk about how that directly relates to my own life (writing a play about it seems indulgent enough), but I think a lot of people understand the idea that "it never rains, it pours." Sure, life can be joyful and precious. But sometimes it can also be absurdly cruel. I challenged myself to write a comedy that captured the unrelenting hardship of what it is to be human. And that sometimes we just can't catch a break. And with the emergence of AI, simply being human has maybe never felt more radical.

AI is a key jumping off point for this work, how has AI affected your artistic practise? And if not, how do you think it impacted the creative world at large?

I don't think it has affected my artistic practice yet – or at least it hasn't let me know. But for silly life-stuff I've used it with mixed results. It is sick to death of helping me with my golf swing, for instance. And I somehow let it convince me to shave my head. Regarding the creative world at large, AI slop is a thing. I connect with art that has something compellingly imperfect about it, and I want to believe that AI will never truly be able to recreate that. But I'm probably naïve.

What are some of the big questions this work is asking?

Can we ever truly mend a broken heart? Are we going extinct without even knowing it? In an increasingly inorganic world that is always on, what happens to rest and recovery and refuge? Has late-stage capitalism cornered us into a world where we are alienated from each other at the same time as we are living on top of each other?

Art can be chaotic and AI is meant to bring "order". Where are you embracing the chaos this year?

Gardening. Cooking. My nieces saying and singing and drawing wild things. I'm also turning forty. Things are getting creaky...

What are you loving at the moment?

Honestly...rugs. Handmade rugs. I have bought over a dozen rugs in the past 12 months for myself and others. No one can explain it, least of all me.

“Simply being human has maybe never felt more radical.”



Raised in Big Spirit Country, which had a sold-out season here in Perth in 2025, is making its journey back home to Broome, this September!

While *Raised In Big Spirit Country* is brought to audiences by a range of talented artists and creatives, we got the chance to sit down with the musical director, Bart Pigram, to get the scoop on the upcoming season.

Can you let our readers know a little bit about how the music/songs of RIBSC first came to together?

The songs come from an extremely important social turning point for Broome and the Kimberley region, the 80's and early 90's where cultural expression and freedom collided with northern development, land rights movements, and the Native Title policy. As kids in that era, it was music and community that we absorbed the most. These days it's not quite like that. The music in those songs is an interesting mix of rock, reggae, ska and Kimberley country music. There are also original songs in the production that are our expressions of the current state of affairs, and some beautiful old memories.

THE SOUND OF BROOME

WITH MUSICAL DIRECTOR,
BART PIGRAM

PIGRAM PRODUCTIONS
Backtracks to the Big Stage



Music is such a compelling, and, as artforms go, a very direct way to connect to and tell stories. What do these stories mean to you in 2026?

I think it's the best of "true telling" and being able to connect our truth to the audience and leaving them with an empathetic insight to who we are as multicultural people in Broome. These stories are stories we have lived, not read about. It's not subject matter; it is living matter. That's why the audience will feel a range of emotions in the show that has the authentic Broome sound that's developed over decades.

How has the music evolved across this journey?

We have tried to remain true to the original sound of when these songs were played in the pubs of Broome right down to the instrumentation.

As much as we would like to add this instrument and that instrument, the musicians in the production have the heritage and the sound that we need to tell the story, so we are happy with remaining true to the old sound.

What is a something you would like audiences to take away from RIBSC 2026?

I would hope that audiences familiar with the old songs can reminisce and appreciate what those songs gave to the community throughout that era, but for the contemporary part of the production I really want audiences to be able to understand that Broome is not just about sandy beaches, pearls and camels. I want them to be able to connect to our story and have deeper appreciation for the people and culture of Broome.

Has this musical journey inspired other projects for you?

Definitely! We have had many lightbulb moments throughout the production, and we've parked them for future endeavours. This production highlights our experiences, but we know there is much more to tell, so I suspect moving forward that we will be collaborating with other people with different stories.

What have you been loving at the moment?

I love being a part of playing these classic old songs that I have heard all my life, and to be able to place my own song amongst the set list of these legends, or "giants" as Naomi refers to. This is our musical heritage, and I am fully invested in sharing it and paying our respects to those who created it!

"It's not subject matter; it is living matter."





WHERE CREATIVE FUTURES BEGIN

At Black Swan we are passionate about championing and supporting the next generation of creatives.

Since its creation in 2013, our Student Ambassador Program has seen over 141 Black Swan Ambassadors.

Our Student Ambassador Program is a unique opportunity to connect with Black Swan Theatre on a more personal level. Throughout the year participants will enjoy developing important creative leadership skills, attending special events, workshops and growing friendships with like-minded peers.

This year-long program comprises of attending performances in our annual season, quarterly Ambassador catch-ups, and invitations to special events and workshops.

Many of our Ambassadors go on to complete internships and work experience with us at Black Swan, like Abbie, who joined us last November during our season of *Carol* by Andrea Gibbs.

What first sparked your love of theatre?

I've always loved watching live performance, but I didn't always realise it was something I could do for work. Many of my friends are in acting or media programs, so I'm often surrounded by theatre conversation. Seeing their performances and being in that world helped me realise it was something I loved and couldn't imagine my life without.

What drew you to seeking a placement with Black Swan specifically?

To me, Black Swan is legendary in Western Australian theatre. It had been a bit of a wild dream to get work experience here, so when I received the email back that it was a possibility, I was over the moon. In the WA theatre world, to me, Black Swan is the place to find the refined productions that showcases people's voices and stories.

What excites you most about spending time inside a professional theatre company?

Entry into the industry can be a tricky pathway, finding contacts and gaining experience, but being given the opportunity to see how things are run on the inside and talk to people who work in the area professionally, was invaluable. It's incredibly exciting to be able to see the inner workings of taking a production to the stage. All the moving parts that bring a story to

life just amaze me. It truly is such a valuable experience.

You mentioned an interest in stage management, lighting, sound, and set building – can you tell us what you enjoy about working behind the scenes?

There's something so magical about constructing a space that can bring a performance to life. I've always loved building and creating things, and my love for theatre has led me to find a perfect mesh of two passions in a career path I can follow. I find so much joy in putting effort into detail when creating something for the stage and then seeing it up there or seeing actors using it.

Is there a theatre artist, writer, designer, or backstage role model who inspires you?

So many! It may be a bit cliché, but I love reading some of the classic Shakespeare plays. They truly are all so timeless and really capture theatre at its core. I don't think I have a specific role model, but some recent production's sets and designs have stayed with me. Max Webster's production of *The Importance of Being Earnest* is just beautiful. I adore its playful and full-of-colour set designs and costumes, they're just so full of joy!

When you imagine your future in theatre, what kinds of roles or experiences do you see for yourself?

I'd love to just work backstage on a proper professional play. Building sets and props, running lights or assisting backstage! I'm hoping to get into WAAPA to study live production and technical services, so I'm really looking forward to all those potential experiences! I'm open to a lot of different roles within the technical/behind-the-scenes space of working on a production.



ACCESS THE STAGE BELONGS TO EVERYONE

Providing entertaining and high-quality live theatre is at the core of what we do at Black Swan, and we apply this same philosophy to all our audiences.

We strongly believe that live theatre is for everyone, and that's why we wanted to highlight some of the strides we are taking with our Access initiatives to make live theatre more accessible to more people.

As part of our Friends program, a portion of the funds raised from memberships goes directly to providing some of our Access services.

Recite Me

Recite Me is an integrated accessibility toolbar feature on our website, which provides a range of services that

allows users to customise website content for individual needs, including text to speech, font styling, colour adjustment and language translation. This incredible toolbar has been utilised over 100 times since the start of 2026, and continues to increase in usership. Services like Recite Me help remove barriers for people wanting to engage with our services and book tickets, alongside our incredible Ticketing Team who are always happy to provide in-person assistance with bookings. Recite Me offers support 24 hour a day.

Vision Australia Partnership

In 2026 we began a partnership with Vision Australia Radio which allowed us to offer audiences a full audio described version of our annual brochure for the very first time. This allows customers with low or vision impairment to access our 2026 program.

Afterglow Interpreting Services

Another exciting partnership we've made this year is working with Afterglow to create our Auslan interpreted show videos! This meaningful step in offering Deaf and hard of hearing customers with up-to-date information, in conjunction with our Auslan interpreted performances, helps us provide access to world-class, live theatre to more people.

Alongside our Auslan interpreted performances, we are also proudly continuing our core Access services within our regular show seasons, which include our Audio Described performances, Tactile Tours, and Open and Closed captioned performances.

We look forward to continuing our commitment to provide more access to live theatre for everyone in Western Australia.



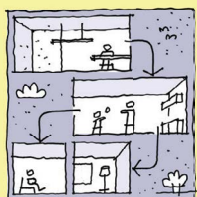
DESIGN ACTIONS FOR BETTER HOUSING

Hassell

We see good design as a critical part of conversations – and more importantly, actions – around housing availability and affordability.



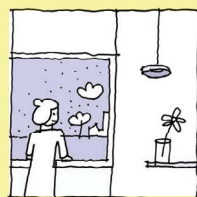
Start at the neighbourhood scale



Adapt now, adapt forever



Generous shared space, well crafted private space



Build less to give more



And get everyone working together!

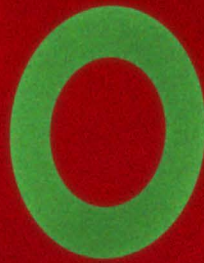


Download our action paper or visit hassellstudio.com.au





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Black Swan State Theatre Company

P.O. Box 337, Northbridge, WA 6865

T (08) 6212 9300

E hello@blackswantheatre.com.au

W blackswantheatre.com.au



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