

ON CUE

BLACK SWAN STATE
THEATRE COMPANY OF WA

2024 SUMMER



BLACK SWAN
STATE THEATRE COMPANY



THEATRE THAT MAKES A SPLASH

AT THE POOL WITH STEVE RODGERS



CHANGING THE LAW

HEAR FROM SUZIE MILLER,
WRITER OF *RBG: OF MANY, ONE*
& *PRIMA FACIE*



BEST ON GROUND

WITH *BARRACKING FOR
THE UMPIRE*



HIGHLIGHTS OF '23 WITH KATE AND IAN

KATE CHAMPION, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

1. IF TRUTH BE TOLD

I loved directing Andrew Bovell's *Things I Know to be True* back in May/June. It was such a significant event, making my directorial debut with the company and at the same time being the newly appointed Artistic Director. The cast, the creatives and the crew - all Perth-based - were simply extraordinary. It will remain a highlight of my career and something I am immensely proud of.

2. POWERFUL IMPRESSIONS

Cyrano, *The Bleeding Tree* and *Jurrungu Ngan-ga [Straight Talk]* were such powerful, meaningful shows. They brought a sense of immediacy and thematic importance to our engagement with our audiences. It was a thrill to experience their impact and their reach.

3. RISK AND REWARD

New work has been my lifeblood as an artist. There is nothing more challenging or exciting to me as being part of bringing something new and original to the stage. *Dirty Birds* was this and more. Mandy and Hayley McElhinney put

their creative spirits on the line and delivered an exceptional piece of truly original theatre. The creatives, production, costume and crew brought their very best to bear on this labour of love. *Dirty Birds* is a perfect example of our local and exceptional creative talent at its peak.

I'm excited to be heading into 2024 with the incredible support of each and every member of the Black Swan Staff and Board, along with our appreciative and diverse audiences. It makes all the effort and hard work extremely worthwhile. I think *The Pool* will be the perfect way to begin the year - sitting by the water on a summer's night, gathered together to experience tales of humanity at close range. My idea of a perfect evening.

IAN BOOTH, CEO

There have been many highlights, not to mention working alongside each day with an amazing, dedicated and hard-working team. But if I had to narrow it down...

1. OUR SUPPORTERS

This year I had the chance to get to know many of the people who support Black Swan, and share some of the behind the scenes action with our White Swans, Donors and Friends. We had a tour of our Bassendean Workshop facility, rehearsal visits, and even sneak peaks of plays we're working on for next year and beyond. A big thank you to all the wonderful supporters who share our vision, and an extra special thanks to our White Swans co-ordinators Mimi, Natasha and Jane.

2. POWERFUL DISCUSSIONS

To name one of the many excellent Beyond the Stage discussions we have held; in the lead up to our season of Marrugeku's *Jurrungu Ngan-ga [Straight Talk]* we presented a panel discussion, hosted by Lucy Shea, from our legal partner Clayton Utz. To have former Chief Justice of WA, The Hon Wayne Martin AC KC; CEO of the Aboriginal Legal Service WA, Wayne Nannup; and Marrugeku's Artistic Co-Directors, Dalisa Pigram and Rachael Swain, share their personal experiences and professional insights was a privilege and honour.

3. BLACK SWAN IN THE REGIONS

I've enjoyed connecting with communities across the state and was pleased to welcome Naomi Pigram, a proud Indigenous person of the Yawuru and Wajarri people as our newest Associate Artist. She is based in Broome and it's fantastic the company has a terrific connection to the Kimberley. We have also enjoyed working with the City of Karratha and in Port Hedland thanks to our ongoing partnership with our principal partner Fortescue, which has led to a variety of activities and opportunities.

Most excited for in '24...Having a legal background myself, I'm really looking forward to the WA premiere of *Prima Facie* and of course *RBG: Of Many, One*. The stories are so compelling and so different in the way they give insight into the inner workings of the law. They're both incredible one-woman shows, something our audiences haven't seen for a while, and I know audiences are going to love them!

Black Swan State Theatre Company of Western Australia acknowledges the Whadjuk people of the Nyoongar Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live. First Nations People have been telling stories on this country for many thousands of years, and we acknowledge their incredible contribution to the cultural and environmental landscape we reside in. In addition, we acknowledge and recognise all First Nations People with whom we work and whose lands we travel to in Western Australia. We pay our respects to all Elders past and present, and their ancestors that walked this country before them, as we stand united towards a shared future.





THEATRE THAT MAKES A SPLASH: AT *THE POOL* WITH STEVE RODGERS

STEVE RODGERS IS NO STRANGER TO WA AUDIENCES, WITH MEMORABLE PERFORMANCES IN *THE TORRENTS* BY ORIEL GRAY, *EIGHT GIGABYTES OF HARDCORE PORNOGRAPHY* AND, MORE RECENTLY, AS A CO-WRITER ON THE WA AWARD-WINNING COMING-OF-AGE FEATURE FILM *SWEET AS*.

Black Swan caught up with Steve directly from the setting of his new play, *The Pool*, at Bold Park Aquatic Centre.

What inspired you to write *The Pool*? Since I was very young, swimming pools have been my happy place. Oceans and backyard pools, water holes, rivers, and public swimming pools. In the summer months, I spent all my time at the pool, pretty much until my hair turned green from the chlorine! These days, I still swim laps regularly and, sitting at my local a few years back, I was struck by the diversity of people who use the pool, for health, to compete, to socialise, to have fun. Old and young, it felt like the whole world was there, and I started to imagine all the different stories playing out in front of me.

Why are swimming pools important to communities? Swimming pools represent the best of Australian society. They're a true celebration of what it means to be egalitarian. They aren't exclusive, but inclusive. They bring

us together and enhance community spirit because we are literally all bathing together. Sharing the freedom of being in water. *The Pool* belongs to all of us.

How have you balanced your acting career with your writing? For me, writing and acting go hand in hand. It's all storytelling. Some of my best experiences have been on stages in WA, which goes back to performing in Tim Winton's *Cloudstreet* at Perth Festival in 1998, in the boat shed down in Freo. We'd literally fish and swim off the wharf there during the show. It's the show I met the fabulous Kate Champion, who's directing *The Pool*.

You were born in Newcastle and grew up in Tasmania. Why have you chosen WA to premiere *The Pool*? The chance to co-write the film *Sweet As*, with Jub Clerc, a Nyulnyul and Yawuru film director and writer from WA, meant I recently spent a bunch of time with her up in Broome as well as down south in Dunsborough. But my WA connection goes back further than that; my wife's family are from Perth and she's a West Aussie through and through. Life and stories are abundant here, they're so rich, so of course I want to work here when I can.

What does the future hold for you? Writing, getting overseas, getting back on stage maybe, and always swimming - in the pool!

GET TO KNOW

***THE POOL* PERFORMERS EDYLL ISMAIL AND TOBIAS MUHAFIDIN, WHO ARE BOTH MAKING THEIR THEATRE DEBUTS WITH THE COMPANY.**



EDYLL

What excites you about Black Swan's 2024 season? Being a part of the season is definitely one of the most exciting things. I've met some incredible people on the team already which makes starting the rehearsal process even more thrilling.

What were your highlights at WAAPA? This is a hard one, hmm... I'd say that every single opportunity I had to perform with my graduating company was a highlight for me. Especially working on *Much Ado About Nothing* (directed by Clara Voda) and being able to play the role of Beatrice, as well as Nora Chance in *Wise Children* (directed by Adam Mitchell).

Who was your top artist in your Spotify wrapped? I played a lot of Beyoncé last year. *Renaissance* was just too good.

What have you been watching? I've been watching a bunch of things, a little too much true crime, but if we are talking series, I just started watching *Narcos* and I'm loving it.

Where is your favourite place on earth? The beach. It brings me peace, unlike anywhere else.

Who are your three ideal dinner party guests? Viola Davis and Spike Lee, to just pick their brains. And Gordon Ramsey for a delicious meal.

Do you have an interesting pastime? I sometimes DJ, as a little hobby. I've been doing it on and off for about two years.

Who are performers you admire? I really admire actors and performers like Issa Rae and Michaela Coel. I've listened to interviews and read up about how they've come to their success, and I truly respect their hard work and perseverance, especially when it comes to creating their own work in an industry that perhaps didn't have space for them when they started.

TOBIAS

What excites you about Black Swan's 2024 season? Is it conceited to say what excites me is that I'm in it? I mean being a part of such an amazing line up of creatives is a very exciting thing for me and I hope it means many more years of getting to work with Black Swan to share these stories.

What were your highlights at WAAPA? I only did one year, and I don't think I ever shared this publicly, but I had NEVER seen theatre until I went to WAAPA. It opened me to a world that I fell in love with, and I am thankful every day for it.

Who was your top artist in your Spotify wrapped? Well, I actually use Apple Music, and I encourage everyone to swap because it pays artists more than double what Spotify does! But my most listened to artist this year is The Kid Laroi.

What have you been watching? Right now, I have just started *Scott Pilgrim Takes Off* and I'm loving it. This year has been pretty wicked for my TV watching, I've really enjoyed *The Bear*, *Beef*, *The Boys* and always a special mention for *Lord of The Rings: The Rings of Power* on Amazon Prime.

Where is your favourite place on earth? Sizzler. RIP.

Who are your three ideal dinner party guests? Kenny Beats, Michael Jackson, Jay Z.

Do you have an interesting pastime? I started tufting rugs a couple years ago. I give them away at my headline gigs so if you want a custom rug for free, come through to a show and you might get a rug as well as a sick performance from me and my band. You can listen to Tobias on Spotify <https://open.spotify.com/artist/3rxZNKt0FzxfoqcDC5dYpi>

Who are performers you admire? My number one has always been Michael Jackson, seeing videos of how he could command a crowd and a stage without even moving has always been so inspirational.

BRINGING FOOTY BACK TO SUBI ONCE AGAIN

THE SMASH-HIT SHOW *BARRACKING FOR THE UMPIRE*, WILL BE BRINGING FOOTY BACK TO SUBI ONCE AGAIN, RETURNING TO SUBIACO ARTS CENTRE FROM 23 APRIL UNTIL 5 MAY BEFORE HITTING THE ROAD ON A REGIONAL WA TOUR IN MAY AND JUNE.



Barracking for the Umpire celebrates the remarkable talent of first-time playwright Andrea Gibbs, best known for her work as an ABC Weekend presenter and *Barefaced Stories*.

Winner of the 2022 Performing Arts WA (PAWA) Award for Outstanding New Work, the play follows Doug Williams, Donnybrook Football Club's greatest son, as he's set to be honoured with a lifetime achievement award. But after years of the game he loves, the sure hands of Williams are starting to fumble the ball.

Funny, sad, and timely, *Barracking for the Umpire* tackles 'blokes' and their vulnerability, the fragility of the human body, and the impacts of sport-inflicted brain injuries on ourselves, our families, and our community.

PORT HEDLAND - MATT DANN
Sat 11 May

BROOME CIVIC CENTRE
Sat 18 May

KARRATHA - RED EARTH ARTS PRECINCT
Thurs 23 & Fri 24 May

GERALDTON - QUEENS PARK THEATRE
Wed 29 May

MANDURAH PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE
Sat 1 June

ALBANY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE
Thurs 6 & Fri 7 June

ESPERANCE CIVIC CENTRE
Wed 12 June

MARGARET RIVER - NALA BARDIP MIA (HEART)
Sat 15 June



PIPPA GRANDISON AND STEVE LE MARQUAND PLAY DELVEEN AND DOUG WILLIAMS IN *BARRACKING FOR THE UMPIRE*, BUT THEIR ONSTAGE CHEMISTRY IS NO FLUKE – THE TWO ARE MARRIED IN REAL LIFE AND HAVE BEEN TOGETHER FOR 23 YEARS!

They recently moved back to WA after forging successful careers on a national scale. Pippa has been in musicals such as *Georgy Girl: The Seekers Musical*, *Into the Woods*, and *Muriel's Wedding: The Musical* and Steve has been in just about every major Australian TV series including films *Last Train to Freo*, *Beneath Hill 60*, *Two Hands*, *Red Dog: True Blue*, and the recently released film *Christmas*, just to name a few. How do they feel about *Barracking's* return? So glad you asked...

How does it feel to be reuniting the Williams family once more?

PIPPA: I'm thrilled to be reuniting with my gorgeous stage family and so excited to be playing in *Barracking* again. I'm really looking forward to taking it on the road and seeing some of the beautiful towns in WA I've either not been to or haven't visited for a very long time. I can't wait to share it with a wider audience.

STEVE: We're very excited to be doing a return season and subsequent tour of the show. It's such a great play and an awesome cast – what's not to love? Plus, we get to visit some amazing WA towns.

As well as playing Doug and Delveen Williams in the play, you're also married in real life! Have you worked together before and what is it like working with each other?

PIPPA: We have worked together quite a few times.

Most recently in a TV series we shot for *Stan* up in Derby. Husband and wife in that too. Actually, the last four roles I have played have been alongside Steve as his wife. There's a pattern forming, I think! I really love working with him though. He's such a great actor and we have a comfortability with each other that makes it easy. We trust each other. I can sometimes get anxious when I'm acting, but with Steve there I feel safe.

STEVE: This is about the fourth time in five years that we've played husband and wife. It seems that since we've moved back to WA we've been signed up as a double package deal! It makes portraying a married couple a lot easier when you bring the full 23 years of shared history onto the stage or on set. And we feel comfortable with each other.

You have both had hugely successful careers both in theatre and TV. You have recently moved back to Perth from Sydney. What has brought you back to the West?

PIPPA: We decided as a family that it was time for a change. My family are in Perth, and we had the opportunity to move to WA and have a little bit of land, which we have always wanted, so we sold up in Terrigal NSW and made the big move over. These days you can self-test from anywhere, so we can live on and run our lovely property down in Lake Clifton and work when the right roles come along. We're really lucky.

STEVE: The hot weather!

The play explores some very topical themes, most prominently 'blokes' and their vulnerability, the fragility of the human body, and the impacts of brain injuries. Did you receive any audience feedback about the power of the piece?

BOTH: Yes, the subject matter is important and there was quite a bit of feedback after the shows in the 2022 season. Particularly when it came to the impact on the family. Many people were quite moved and wanted to let us know how they had related to the play.

Are you both footy fans?

PIPPA: I do like footy, but I'm not a die-hard fan like my character. I support the Dockers.

STEVE: I follow the NRL, but I will often watch the GWS Giants if they're playing. Pip and I once played a celebrity charity game of AFL on the SCG in front of 30 000 people before a Swans vs. Dockers match. It gave us a good appreciation for the game, how fast it is and the fact it is played in 360 degrees.

For anyone who missed *Barracking* in 2022, why do you think people should come and see it?

PIPPA: People should come to see it because it is such a fantastic play. It's a piece everyone can relate to in some way – even if footy isn't their thing. Although deeply moving, it has moments of side-splitting humour which Andrea has crafted beautifully and woven into one family's journey through an evening that will change their lives forever.

STEVE: I think it's the kind of show that doesn't feel overly theatrical. It just knuckles down and tells the story – the story of a family and footy. It touches on some very real issues.



HEAR FROM SUZIE MILLER, WRITER OF *RBG: OF MANY, ONE & PRIMA FACIE*

Trigger Warning: This article includes references to rape and sexual assault.

CONTEMPORARY PLAYWRIGHT AND SCREENWRITER, SUZIE MILLER, IS KNOWN FOR HER EXPLORATION OF COMPLEX HUMAN STORIES AND THEMES OF INJUSTICE.

Suzie's work is set to feature in Black Swan's 2024 season with two of her plays, *RBG: Of Many, One and Prima Facie*, the latter of which achieved significant international acclaim in 2022, making its West End debut before transferring to Broadway in 2023. The production secured the Tony Award for Best Actress for Jodie Comer (*Killing Eve*) and the Olivier Award for Best New Play and Best Actress, in addition to other prestigious honors.

Suzie Miller in her own words: My background has always been in the law. First, as a human rights lawyer, then a Children's and Young People's lawyer, and finally as a criminal lawyer where I also ran civil matters in discrimination, immigration, and victim's compensation matters.

When I was at law school at UNSW, I remember studying criminal law and questioning how rape law seemed to be out of sync with other crimes. As a defence lawyer, I always believed that innocent until proven guilty is everything; but what I didn't understand was how in rape and sexual assault law there was a 'double negative' – i.e. the prosecution needed to prove that not only did the rape occur, and then that the (usually) female complainant was not consenting, but also that the (usually) male defendant did not know that they were not consenting. There were all sorts of things done in court to complainants that just felt wrong; so many things that were back to front and that had been defined and not interrogated appropriately.

Then, when I was a practising criminal justice and human rights lawyer, one of my jobs was to take statements from young women who had been sexually assaulted and raped. Often, I was the first person their social workers took them to for the purposes of making a statement. There were hundreds and hundreds of cases, and in each of them such similarity in reporting; in the way the victim responded, managed to survive, and endure it, and yet I could count on one hand the ones who reached a conviction at court. I was shocked at the figures and at how few cases the police prosecuted. I was also devastated on behalf of my clients because their lives often fell apart in the aftermath. They were victimised again by the system or by society in general blaming them or just simply not believing them.

When I wrote *Prima Facie*, I knew I had to show the audience how the law works before I could show them how it doesn't. Every lawyer always gets asked 'how can you act for someone who you know did it?' in criminal law. I wanted to explain through the play how lawyers are just one part of the system; they argue the best version of their client's story and that is all. They do not decide on guilt or innocence, that is for the jury and the judge.

When the show first previewed at Griffin Theatre, it felt different to any other time I had been in the theatre. Women were weeping in the audience, and everyone leapt to their feet at the end. This occurred throughout the entire premiere season in Sydney, and then for every other touring location. It was beyond what I had expected. The reaction from audiences and reviewers was one thing, but the effect it had from the law community completely blew me away. The NSW Law Reform came to a matinee, the Governor General of NSW came with her security, the judges and law makers came in droves, politicians and women who had experienced rape and sexual assault. It was overwhelming. Then, Griffin put on one show just for women who were trained in law – we had an entire audience of women politicians, barristers, judges, solicitors, and policy makers. After the show the doors were closed, and we had a Q&A that went on for hours. It was the most incredible discussion. These were the women at the forefront, the ones who had the power to make suggestions to the senate and band together to make change. These powerful women talked about their own experiences of rape and sexual assault within the profession, their experiences of watching and participating in trials of such nature. It was mind-blowing.

Then came London.

When the play was produced in London, the London bar and judges came out in massive support. The judges of the Old Bailey all came to see it and discussed the work, barristers old and young came as did the legal profession in general. After the show, I had a call from one of the senior judges at the Old Bailey who told me that she had seen the play the night before. She was the judge who wrote the 'directions to the jury' that must be read at trials and she redrafted the direction for rape and sexual assault to include language from the play; to point out that just because someone does not recall the event in neat chronological detail, does not mean they are lying, and she also referred to the concept of 'freezing', and how it is a perfectly legitimate victim response to an assault.

LONDON, James Bierman and Suzie Miller with the Best New Play award for *Prima Facie* onstage at the Olivier Awards 2023 at the Royal Albert Hall on 2 April, 2023, in London, England.

"All of this was incredible. Still, it got even better."

One judge instituted that every new judge in Northern Ireland must watch a video of the play (with Jodie Comer), before they are allowed to sit on rape and sexual assault cases!

Furthermore, 3000 police officers in North Yorkshire also watched the film and discussed the way they interview and support complainants. I have had letters from them recognising where they had made mistakes in the past and determined to do better.

The progress continued.

A group of fabulous female barristers established the TESSA project. Named after the protagonist in *Prima Facie*, it stands for The Examination of Serious Sexual Assault law. These women are redrafting the old legislation as an offer to the senate.

This one-woman show was having a profound effect on the law community and the theatre world on an international scale. It won every AWGIE award, and many other awards around Australia. It won various awards in the UK, was nominated for four Tony Awards – including a win for Jodie Comer as Best Actress – and was nominated for five Olivier Awards in London, of which it won Best Actress and Best Play. This was beyond my wildest dreams. Of course, I had always wished for such an award, but to stand up there in Royal Albert Hall and accept it against incredible competition, was surreal and a life changing moment.

"The awards and accolades were all a playwrights' dream, but it was the thousands of emails, letters, and online messages that Jodie and I both received from mainly women audience members that was something I could have never expected. It completely blew our minds."

I am so excited to have these important conversations with West Australian audiences. I am an enormous fan of Kate Champion and have admired her for so many years so I can't wait to see what she does with *Prima Facie*. Right now, there are 30 productions of the play in 25 different languages around the world, and this WA version, directed by someone I admire so much, will be an incredible new Australian version from WA's own State Theatre Company.

I am thrilled to be bringing, not one, but two of my plays to Black Swan's stage in the 2024 Season, that showcase the power and tenacity of two remarkable women; a fictional woman with Tessa in *Prima Facie*, and a historical icon in *RBG: Of Many, One*.

When I was at law school, Ruth Bader Ginsburg was an icon of mine; a woman who was brilliant, powerful, and uncompromising in her commitment to social justice. She was changing the world step by step towards giving women an equal voice in the US. Her case arguments and judgements were incredible; she was years beyond her time. I adored her and her judgements.

RBG is not as intense of a play as *Prima Facie*, and often there is a feel-good moment afterwards. In fact, a male solicitor friend of mine, who is married to a female judge, gave me a fabulous analysis. *RBG*'s husband in the play, Marty, is based on her own husband who did more than just talk about feminism, but actively shared domestic tasks in their family. I included Marty as a template to what a good, feminist-leaning man really is. Upon viewing the show, my friend Steve said that when everyone was leaving the theatre, the women were bonding, weeping and talking about how impactful it was; while the men (usually married to these women) walked out feeling quite chuffed, thinking to themselves 'I'm a Marty!' This made me laugh.

To be able to present these two shows at Black Swan is to be able to hold a conversation about contemporary society, to speak to audiences and to use story to offer ideas and empathy. I see the arts as the way we develop and grow as a community and society. Artists are amongst us; they see and experience what we experience, then filter it through their art form to mirror it back to us with a different perspective.

I can't wait to see these perspectives mirrored back to me on the Black Swan stage in 2024 and I look forward to WA audiences joining me.

- Suzie Miller



Actor Heather Mitchell as Ruth Bader Ginsburg



THANKS TO OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH FORTESCUE (PRINCIPAL PARTNER) AND CITY OF KARRATHA, BLACK SWAN CONTINUES TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS WITH REGIONAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES BY PRESENTING PRODUCTIONS AND WORKSHOP OPPORTUNITIES.

Last year, Sweden-born teaching artist David Vikman facilitated devising workshops at Hedland Senior High School, marking his very first visit to the Pilbara! In an experience exchange, a cohort of Arts students from the school were given a special behind-the-scenes experience with Head of Production Katie Moore, and Senior Producer Kathleen Higgs, at the State Theatre Centre of WA during their Drama camp in Perth.

In the Wheatbelt, Jo Morris and Teaching Artist Lea Simic, coached students at Dowerin District High School, award-winning playwright Hellie Turner provided dramaturgy to Karratha Writers' Group, and seasoned performer, Brendan Hanson, coached local theatre company Pitter Pat Productions for their upcoming musical.

In addition to annual Family Day activities at historic town of Cossack, Creative Learning Manager Christie Sistrunk facilitated a range of workshops with secondary students and youth at community hubs, and libraries in and around Karratha.

2023

38

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

725

PARTICIPANTS

"This exposure to industry professionals has been a transformative experience for our students, encouraging their passion for the performing arts and providing a clear vision of possible future careers."
Teacher – St Luke's College, Karratha



THE BRIDGE PROGRAM
INTEGRATING ARTS PROCESSES ACROSS SUBJECT AREAS

Our fantastic team of Teaching Artists have now completed the first pilot of The Bridge Program in Perth schools! They hosted weekly workshops throughout Term 3 in Year 7-9 English, Drama, and Humanities & Social Sciences at Belmont City College, Cannington Community College, Darling Range Sports College, Girrawheen, Governor Stirling, and Swan View Senior High Schools. High-fives all around!

Here's what the students had to say about the program:

"It's a lot easier to learn things because we do more activities, not just sitting at a desk and writing notes."

"My favourite activity was when Jo dressed up as Ötzi, an Iceman that was in the Italian Alps 5000 years ago and his body got frozen. And we got to ask him questions about when he was alive. We weren't just writing it down and getting questions off Google."

Our Teaching Artists also immersed themselves in professional development sessions which included highly engaging cross-cultural training with Mustafa Al-Mahidi and Farah Al-Robaiei from The Australian Next Door (<https://australiannextdoor.com>).

This initiative is proudly supported by the Department of Local Government, Sport, and Cultural Industries.

To learn more about the program and our workshops <https://blackswantheatre.com.au/school-programs/school-workshops>



NEW EMERGING WRITERS' PROGRAM

NURTURING NEW AUSTRALIAN PLAYS AND VOICES IS ONE OF BLACK SWAN'S CORE MISSIONS.

CURRENT FORGE WRITERS

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| Chelinay Gates
(aka Malardy Murlardy) | Rachel McMurray |
| Medina Dizdarevic | Sian Murphy |
| Donna Hughes | Sam Nerida |
| Sam Ireland | Lainey O'Sullivan |
| Laura Liu | Andrew Sutherland |

Over the last year, exciting new initiatives have been introduced to ensure that there is a strong pipeline for the development of WA work. This includes Black Swan's Emerging Writers' Program, FORGE, designed to enhance participants' craft in playwriting and storytelling, whilst connecting them to fellow playwrights and industry professionals.

Over the last six months, the FORGE group has been meeting fortnightly to discuss plays and playwriting, ethical questions currently affecting writers in the world, and different processes in developing plays. Guest speakers at the meetings have included English playwright Stephen Laughton and Australian playwrights Anchuli Felicia King, Andrew Bovell and Kate Mulvany.

In 2023, the Company, in partnership with the Malcolm Robertson Foundation, introduced the PIGGY-BACK-DRAFT Commission, designed to provide an opportunity for a WA writer to take the next step in their career. Black Swan is excited to announce writer Laura Liu as the inaugural recipient of this commission. Laura is a Chinese-Australian emerging performance maker, playwright, and director. An Honours graduate from WAAPA's Bachelor of Performing Arts (Performance Making) course, Laura is a FORGE member, and her short play *Chiko Roll*, written for ATYP's National Studio, has been published by Currency Press (2023).

Laura's proposed pitch for the PIGGY-BACK-DRAFT Commission is a bi-lingual new work which intends to explore the multi-faceted aspects, effects, and repercussions of population restrictions.



The biggest opportunity in the business world, is the world.

KPMG.com.au

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Shari Sebbens



Andrea Gibbs



Lucy Birkinshaw



Joel Jackson (left), with Steve Le Marquand and Jo Morris



Meyne Wyatt

RECENT AWARDS: PAWA, CREATIVE AUSTRALIA AND IMPACT

THE PERFORMING ARTS WESTERN AUSTRALIA (PAWA) AWARDS CELEBRATE THE LIVE PERFORMING ARTS IN WA. THE CEREMONY FOR THE 2022 PERFORMANCE SEASON WAS HELD ON 30 OCTOBER. CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL BLACK SWAN WINNERS AND NOMINEES!

WINNERS

WINNER Outstanding Performer in a Leading Role – Meyne Wyatt (*City of Gold* produced by Black Swan and Sydney Theatre Company for Perth Festival)

WINNER Outstanding Achievement by an Interstate Artist – Shari Sebbens, Director (*City of Gold* produced by Black Swan and Sydney Theatre Company for Perth Festival)

WINNER Outstanding New Work – *Barracking for the Umpire* by Andrea Gibbs

WINNER Outstanding Performer in a Supporting Role – Joel Jackson (*Barracking for the Umpire*)

WINNER Outstanding Lighting Design – Lucy Birkinshaw (*The Glass Menagerie*)

NOMINATIONS

Best Mainstage Production – *City of Gold*, *Barracking for the Umpire*

Outstanding Ensemble – *City of Gold*, *Barracking for the Umpire*

Outstanding Direction of a Mainstage Production – *Barracking for the Umpire*

Outstanding Performers in Leading Roles – Ian Wilkes, Pippa Grandison, Steve Le Marquand (*Barracking for the Umpire*), Hayley McElhinney (*Oil*)

Outstanding Performers in Supporting Roles – Mathew Cooper (*City of Gold*)

Outstanding Newcomer – Abbey Morgan (*Oil*)

Outstanding Costume Design – Zoe Atkinson (*Oil*)

Outstanding Composition or Arranging – Tom O'Halloran (*The Glass Menagerie*)



CREATIVE AUSTRALIA

Julia Hales is a theatre-maker, performance artist and disability advocate, and beloved by Black Swan audiences. On 3 December, Julia was presented with the prestigious Creative Australia National Arts and Disability Award (Established Artist \$50K). This incredible achievement was celebrated by the Company with Julia's family, friends and arts industry members from DADAA, Perth Festival, My Place and Performing Lines. Special guests included Creative Australia's Pip Wittenoom (Director Project Investment), and Caitlin Vaughan (Manager Diversity Impact) pictured with Julia Hales, Irene Jarzabek (Black Swan Public Relations Manager) and Ian Booth (Black Swan CEO).

"Winning this award is very exciting to me because I get to share my work and to keep helping the voices of people with disabilities. This award makes me feel like I can stand up for myself and my practice, and for other artists (and people) with a disability. I want to make a difference in the world by making work that speaks the truth and making it in a way that works for us." – Julia Hales

AT THE 2023 PAC AUSTRALIA IMPACT AWARDS, DISABILITY ADVOCATE SIMONE FLAVELLE WAS ACKNOWLEDGED FOR EXCELLENCE IN PERFORMING ARTS LEADERSHIP, NEW THINKING, AND BEST PRACTICE.

For over 30 years, Simone has worked with numerous artists with a disability on the development of individual and collective works and brokered many partnerships with performing arts companies. She was co-founder of the state-based arts and disability organisation, DADAA, and worked as Screenwest's Diversity and Inclusion Manager. Simone continues to be engaged as a producer for WA artists with a disability through her work with My Place. She was also the originating producer for Black Swan, Perth Festival and DADAA's production of *You Know We Belong Together* with Julia Hales and six co-performers who have lived experience with Down syndrome. Congratulations Simone!

Photo credits: Frances Andrijich, Daniel J Grant, Jessica Russell, Alex Sibbison, Prudence Upton, Jessica Wyld. Design by Troy Barbitta



COMPLETE OUR QUIZ AND WIN!

ANSWER THE QUICK FIVE QUESTIONS AND SEND TO COMPETITIONS@BLACKSWANTHEATRE.COM.AU TO BE IN THE RUNNING TO WIN THE FOLLOWING PRIZES:

- A signed copy of the recently released novel, *Prima Facie* by Suzie Miller.
- One night's accommodation thanks to TFE Hotels.
- A bottle of 2021 Vasse Felix Cabernet Sauvignon, thanks to our wine partner Vasse Felix. See below to find out more about this special release marking 50 years of Margaret River Cabernet.
- Double pass to a Black Swan 2024 show of your choosing.

Competition ends 31 March

- 1 Name an award won by *Prima Facie*?
- 2 Where is the Black Swan ticketing office located?
- 3 Where will the first play of the 2024 season *The Pool* be held?
- 4 Which play is touring to regional WA in 2024?
- 5 Which AFL team do actors Pippa Grandison and Steve Le Marquand support?

THE 50TH VINTAGE

VASSE FELIX HAVE BEEN PARTNERING BLACK SWAN SINCE 2021, AND AUDIENCES HAVE LONG BEEN ENJOYING THEIR WINES AT OPENING NIGHTS, SEASON SHOWS AND SPECIAL EVENTS.

The release of the 2021 Vasse Felix Cabernet Sauvignon marks 50 years of Margaret River Cabernet.

Made at Vasse Felix every year since 1972, each vintage of this historic Cabernet, Margaret River's original, embodies a faithful pursuit of excellence, purity, and wine artistry.

This wine is an archetypal expression, possessing all the hallmarks of the finest Margaret River Cabernet, elegance, power, and age ability.

A timeless original that has graced dinner tables for five decades.

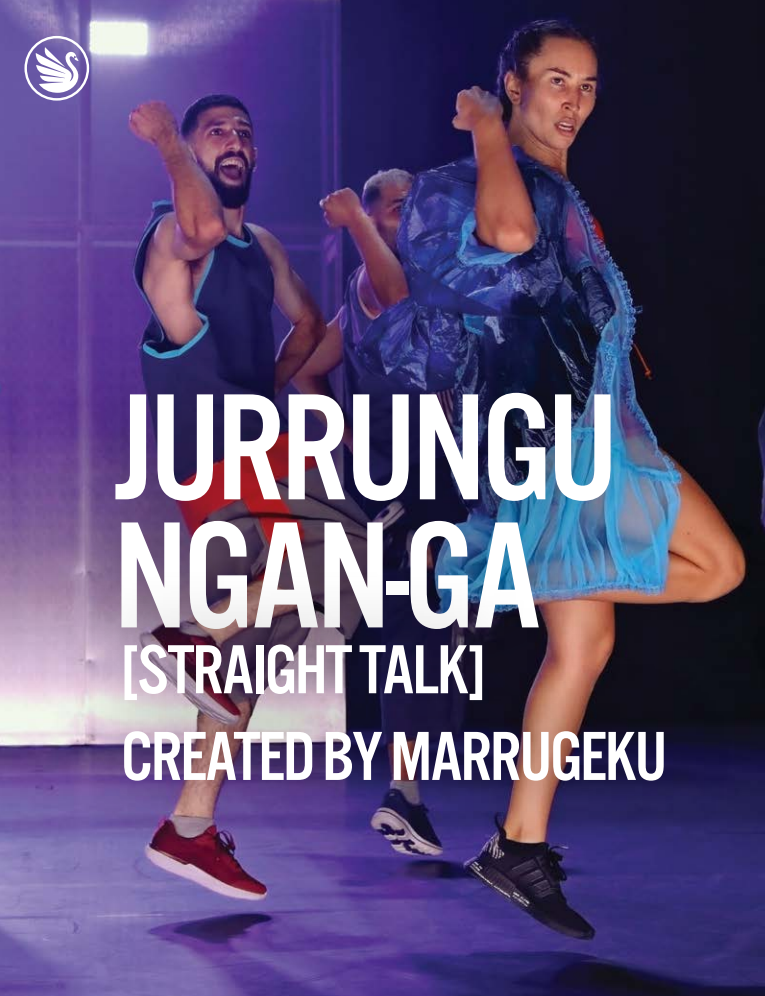


Find out more about this historic vintage and range of Cabernet experiences at the Vasse Felix Estate this summer via the QR code.



Proud to be the Principal Partner of Black Swan State Theatre Company of WA





JURRUNGU NGAN-GA [STRAIGHT TALK] CREATED BY MARRUGEKU

★★★★★

Wildly inventive and fearlessly confronting.

ISOLATED NATION

★★★★★

A defiant work ... and features a highly diverse and talented cast of performers.

ARTSHUB

★★★★★

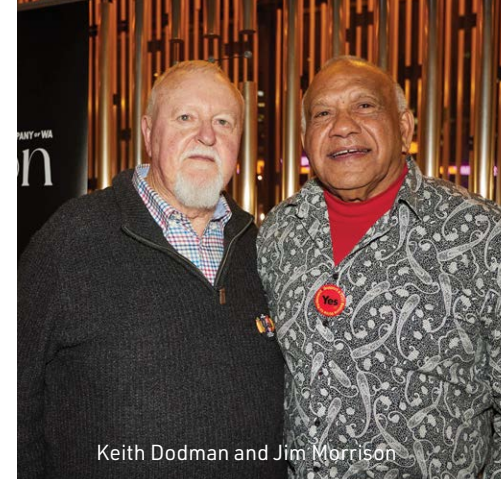
Bold, confronting and thought-provoking.

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN

★★★★★

...the show, rather than offering answers, is a call to action through awareness.

AUSTRALIAN THEATRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



Keith Dodman and Jim Morrison



Cast and creatives



Kevin Williams, Rick Brayford, Emmanuel James Brown



Luke Currie-Richardson, Vinka Barunga, Meredith Lindsay, Roxy Bin Swani



Deanne Lightfoot, Nawoola Davey, Vaughn McGuire



DIRTY BIRDS WRITTEN BY HAYLEY McELHINNEY AND MANDY McELHINNEY

★★★★★

Dirty Birds is a play that needed to be written...joyful, hopeful and undeniably entertaining theatre.

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN

★★★★★

Hilarious.

ARTSHUB

A work of art...absurd, playful, poetic and full of heart.

MAGAZINE 6000

A spectacular showcase... exquisite physical comedy.

THE CONVERSATION



Francois Witbooi, Derek Gnauck, Alison Terry, Natasha Witbooi



Steph Thackray, Matthew Erren, Leigh Murray, Isabella Taylor, Maddie Young



Sarah Reuben, Michael Sitwell-Mogridge, Kymba Cahill, Tim Sitwell-Mogridge



Hamish Robertson, Jonathan Paget, Iain Grandage, Zoë Atkinson



Deanna Faust, Danielle Hadley, Virginia Withers



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RBG

OF MANY, ONE

BY SUZIE MILLER

13 – 23 JUNE HEATH LEDGER THEATRE
TICKETS ON SALE 20 MARCH

A SYDNEY THEATRE
COMPANY PRODUCTION

SYDNEY
THEATRE
CO



2023 OLIVIER AWARD WINNER
FOR BEST NEW PLAY.

PRIMA FACIE

BY SUZIE MILLER

1 – 21 JULY HEATH LEDGER THEATRE
TICKETS ON SALE 20 MARCH