



bangarra

DANCE THEATRE
AUSTRALIA

2022
Annual Report



Elma Kris & Lillian Banks in rehearsals for *Wudjang: Not the Past*

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Cover: (L to R) Courtney Radford, Rika Hamaguchi, Maddison Paluch & Glory Tuohy-Daniell

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this publication contains the names of people who have passed away.

Bangarra Dance Theatre pays respect to and acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which our Company calls home, the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation.



Chair's Report

While Bangarra has had many achievements and challenges in 2022, the most memorable moment for me was sitting on the school lawn on Bunuba Country at Fitzroy Crossing with Wangkatjungka and Walmajarri Elders, watching *SandSong: Stories from the Great Sandy Desert*. Returning our works to Country, and reconnecting with Communities who have generously shared their stories and culture, is a deeply held privilege for the whole Bangarra family.

2022 was a historic year farewelling our beloved Stephen Page, Artistic Director for 32 years and welcoming Frances Rings as our new artistic leader, after such an enormous contribution as Dancer, Choreographer and Artistic Associate of the company. We are excited by Frances' plans continuing the extraordinary legacy of her predecessor.

In 2022, we also said goodbye to our Executive Director Lissa Twomey, who demonstrated resilience, persistence and grace steering the company through the pandemic-related challenges. We are pleased to welcome Mununjhali man Ken Markwell to our Bangarra Clan as our new Executive Director.

“Returning our works to Country, and reconnecting with Communities who have generously shared their stories and culture, is a deeply held privilege for the whole Bangarra family.”

Ken is from the Yugambah Language Region, part of the Bundjalung nation stretching from Logan (QLD) to the Clarence River (NSW). He is a respected Goorie leader with extensive experience delivering socio-economic impacts with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia. He brings a broad range of skills developed across corporate, public sector and Community, and at all levels of government.

I deeply value my fellow board members for their continued dedication, commitment and expertise. Their skills and knowledge have been invaluable in navigating Bangarra Dance Theatre through a year of transition and renewal.

I also extend my gratitude to our generous donors, corporate partners and state and federal government funders whose steadfast support has allowed Bangarra to continue sharing our rich and precious culture through dance.

Phillipa McDermott
Chair



“2022 was an artistically ambitious year undertaking our largest and most complex work to date, our first production created specifically for children, and offering two programs on the national tour in the first time in Bangarra’s history.”

Artistic Director’s Report

2022 was an artistically ambitious year, undertaking our largest and most complex work to date, our first production created specifically for children, and offering two programs on the national tour in the first time in Bangarra’s history.

Wudjang: Not the Past was a personal story inspired by the very things that shaped its creator, Mununjali man Stephen Page – his passion for his land, his family, his people and his heritage. It was Bangarra’s largest scale work to date with a cast featuring singers, actors and live musicians alongside Bangarra’s Dancers. *Wudjang* received high critical acclaim at the Adelaide and Sydney Festivals, and on tour in Hobart, with audiences warmly acknowledging Stephen Page’s final work as Bangarra’s Artistic Director.

Waru – journey of the small turtle, Bangarra’s first work for children, opened our new Studio Theatre in Walsh Bay and its success generated a significant national tour in 2023. In 2022, we reimagined our national touring schedules, offering *SandSong: Stories from the Great Sandy Desert* and *Terrain* to fulfil our commitments for shows cancelled in the previous year due to COVID.

In 2022, we farewelled Bradley Smith, Rika Hamaguchi and Baden Hitchcock after the *Wudjang* season and Beau Dean Riley Smith and Gusta Mara at the end of the year. Saying goodbye to each dancer is an opportunity to

thank them for sharing their knowledge and creativity, knowing that every individual makes their unique contribution to our Bangarra family. We welcomed four new dancers: Janaya Lamb, Chantelle Lee Lockhart, and Russell Page Graduates James Boyd and Jesse Murray. We also welcomed Karra Nam for the national tour and alumna Rika Hamaguchi covered roles in the Sydney seasons of *Terrain* and *SandSong*.

Our year ended by starting rehearsals for *Dance Clan*, our cultivator program that fosters the talents of a new generation of Bangarra storytellers. It is a great privilege to work with young choreographers, designers and composers, Bangarra Dancers and industry veterans to continue our generational responsibility of sharing knowledge and story, and watch young voices tell their own. This is how living cultures evolve.

And of course, in 2022, we honoured a man who has devoted his life to elevating our creative and cultural expressions that has transformed the way we share our stories. Stephen Page is an industry icon, and his legacy can be seen in our body of works, our diverse programs, our relationship with Communities and Elders and the deep imprint on the cultural and artistic fabric of our nation.

Frances Rings
Artistic Director



Elaine Crombie and women in *Wudjang: Not the Past*



“...our thanks go to the many loyal and supportive audience members, donors, sponsors and Community who enthusiastically champion our work”

Executive Director's Report

Bangarra started the year by presenting the premiere season of *Wudjang: Not the Past*, a collaboration with the Major Festivals Initiative and Sydney Theatre Company. This was followed by the company's first double season of *SandSong: Stories from the Great Sandy Desert*, and *Terrain* in Sydney, before a sell-out national tour.

The year showed promising signs of recovery and financial resilience. Net Comprehensive Income for 2022 was \$717k (2021: \$1,206k). After adjusting for the impact of one-off COVID funding injections of \$490k, the normalised surplus was \$228k. We achieved this result due to:

- Strong box office takings of nearly \$4m, a significant recovery from 2021 COVID impacted box office of \$808k;
- Core funding from government along with special grants and the COVID funding injection mentioned above;
- Generous support from private donors, and an increase in sponsorship including new partners.

This strong financial result enabled us to establish two new funds to support Bangarra's artistic aspirations – the Stephen Page Creative Fellowship, and the International Touring Fund.

My thanks go to our artistic leaders Stephen Page and Frances Rings for their generous contribution to Bangarra, and our performing artists, creative and administrative teams for their relentless pursuit of artistic and cultural integrity. My gratitude extends to Phillipa and her fellow board members who provide valuable advice and insight into strategic challenges and opportunities.

And finally, our thanks go to the many loyal and supportive audience members, donors, partners and Community who enthusiastically champion our work and reinvigorate our commitment to Bangarra's vision to promote awareness and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Louise Ingram
Executive Director (interim)



SandSong Sydney Closing Night

Company Profile

We are Bangarra Dance Theatre.

We are a company of professional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performers.

We are storytellers. We are fire makers.

As one of Australia's leading performing arts companies, we share our culture with Communities and audiences across Australia and the world.

We are contemporary dancers, drawing on 65,000 years of culture.

We create powerful works of theatre with dance, music, poetry and design.

We tell the stories of our Elders, create works on Country and return the works we create to the place they were made.

Each of our dancers is a professionally trained, dynamic artist with a proud Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background. Together, they represent the best of Australian talent.

We have been making our indelible marks on the Australian theatre landscape for 33 years.

We were born in 1989 from the energy of NAISDA (National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association) founder Carole Y. Johnson, Rob Bryant, Cheryl Stone and NAISDA graduates.

Today, Artistic Director Frances Rings and interim Executive Director Louise Ingram lead the company in our mission to promote awareness and understanding of our cultures.

Every year, we tour a world premiere work across the nation. We are at home performing on Country, in tiny venues in regional centres and on Australia's most iconic stages. We run education workshops, programs and special projects to nurture the next generation of storytellers.

We are for the hundreds of First Nations Communities across Australia — and for anyone who wants to be a part of our story.

A Year in Review



75,141
LIVE AUDIENCE
ATTENDANCES



3,305
COMMUNITY AUDIENCE*
ATTENDANCES



727,782
TV AND IVIEW DIGITAL
AUDIENCE



5
AWARDS
WON



63,595
FACEBOOK
FOLLOWERS



39,644
INSTAGRAM
FOLLOWERS



3,240
YOUTUBE
FOLLOWERS



9,036
TWITTER
FOLLOWERS



987,639
WEBSITE PAGE
VIEWS



896,463
ONLINE VIDEO
VIEWS



44,216
SONGLINES NEWSLETTER
SUBSCRIBERS



2,208
WORKSHOP
PARTICIPANTS



1,239
INDIVIDUAL
DONORS



285
CULTURAL CONSULTANT/ELDER
ENGAGEMENTS



115
LITRES OF PAINT USED IN
PERFORMANCE

*Community tickets across Bangarra's National and Regional tours are made possible through the generous support of The Balnaves Foundation.

Our Mission

To create inspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences that promote awareness and understanding of our cultures



Our Values

- Reciprocity and Mutual Obligation • Cultural Exchange and Collaboration
- Kinship • Cultural Protocols • Cultural Integrity • Respect
- Connection and Care for Country • Resilience



Our Company Goals

1

Create inspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences for all

- National Footprint
- *Winhanga-rra* Workshops for Teachers
- *Wilay* Program
- Digital and Film

2

Strengthen and maintain meaningful relationships with Communities

- Community Nights
- *Rekindling*
- Cultural Care and Pathways Fund
- On Country
- Return to Country

3

Develop and nurture the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Leaders of the future

- Russell Page Graduate Program
- Dancer Further Education Program
- Production Traineeship
- Creative Fellowships
- Future Cultural Leaders
- David Page Music Fellowship

4

Realise the opportunities afforded through the redevelopment of the Walsh Bay Studios

- Secondary Touring Production
- Bangarra at Home

5

Enhance financial sustainability and organisational strength

- Operational Efficiency
- Organisational Culture
- Revenue Management
- Commercial Activity
- Endowment Fund

Experiences



Courtney Radford and the cast of *Wudjang: Not the Past*

EXPERIENCE: STAGE

“There [is] little doubt that *Wudjang: Not the Past* was a production worthy of being Page’s last as the leader of Australia’s top Indigenous dance troupe.”

★★★★★

TIME OUT SYDNEY

Wudjang

NOT THE PAST

Stephen Page’s most personal work in Bangarra’s history, *Wudjang: Not the Past* is deeply rooted in his father’s Yugambah Country, in a story with branches spreading across the continent’s past and troubled present. Combining poetry, spoken storytelling and live music with our unique dance language, this profoundly evocative piece starred Bangarra alumna Elma Kris in the title role.

With a cast of four live musicians, five actors and the full ensemble of Bangarra Dancers, this epic work was a co-production with Sydney Festival and Sydney Theatre Company commissioned by the Major Festivals Initiative.

Despite the ongoing threat of COVID’s Omicron variant, the season successfully made it through Sydney Festival, followed by performances in Hobart, and a sold-out season in Adelaide.

Wudjang: Not the Past was honoured with critical acclaim, with Jennifer Irwin receiving the Jennie Tate Costume Design award at the 2022 Australian Production Design Guild Awards for her design.

This project was assisted by the Australian Government’s Major Festivals Initiative, managed by the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, in association with the Confederation of Australian International Arts Festivals Inc, supported through the Australian Government’s Indigenous Languages and Arts program. Commissioned by Sydney Festival, Bangarra Dance Theatre and Sydney Theatre Company.

Major
Festivals
Initiative



Australia
Council
for the Arts

37

TOTAL PERFORMANCES

26,397

TOTAL ATTENDANCE

VENUE/DATES

Gadigal Country
Roslyn Packer Theatre, Sydney
17 January - 12 February

Nipaluna
Theatre Royal, Hobart
18 - 19 February

Kaurna Yerta
Adelaide Festival Centre
15 - 18 March

CREDITS

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

Music Director Alan John

Assistant Director Kate Dunn

Associate Music Director
Véronique Serret

Rehearsal Director Daniel
Roberts

Language Consultant Donna
Page

(L to R) Lillian Banks, Kirk Page & Elma Kris
in *Wudjang: Not the Past*



The cast of *Wudjang: Not the Past*



EXPERIENCE: STAGE

“This beautiful work is again setting its spell with a new generation of dancers”

★★★★

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

Terrain



Terrain, Frances Rings' first full-length commission for Bangarra opened the 2022 national tour at the Sydney Opera House, ten years after its first highly successful season. Its themes of Connection to and Care for Country still resonate strongly, given the battles the world faces with climate change.

Its original season in 2012, exploring the timeless wonder of our largest salt lake, Kati Thanda - Lake Eyre, went on to win two Helpmann Awards including Best Ballet/Dance Work, toured again in 2016 and 2017 and was also selected as a text for the NSW HSC Dance curriculum as a defining piece of Australian choreography.

The company celebrated the 100th performance of *Terrain* during the Sydney Opera House season and went on to enjoy high attendances in Canberra and a sold-out season in Brisbane.

In 2022, Bangarra offered *Terrain* and *SandSong: Stories from the Great Sandy Desert* on its national tour to redress the forced COVID cancellations from the previous year.

30

TOTAL PERFORMANCES

20,862

TOTAL ATTENDANCE

VENUES/DATES

Gadigal Country
Sydney Opera House
9 – 25 June

Ngunnawal Country
Canberra Theatre Centre
28 – 30 July

Meanjin
Queensland Performing Arts Centre, Brisbane
4 – 13 August

CREDITS

Choreography Frances Rings
Cultural Consultant Arabunna Elder Reginald Dodd

Composer David Page (dec)

Set Designer Jacob Nash

Costume Designer Jennifer Irwin

Lighting Designer Karen Norris

(L to R) Chantelle Lee Lockhart,
Lillian Banks & Courtney Radford
in *Terrain*



(L to R) Emily Flannery, Chantelle Lee Lockhart,
Daniel Mateo, James Boyd, Janaya Lamb,
& Jesse Murray in *Terrain*



EXPERIENCE: STAGE

“A powerful display of
connection to Country”

★★★★★

ARTS HUB

SandSong

STORIES FROM THE GREAT SANDY DESERT

SandSong: Stories from the Great Sandy Desert tells the unique story of the Kimberley and Great Sandy Desert regions and the survival of its People, and is Bangarra's final work co-choreographed by Stephen Page and Frances Rings.

This work honours the legacy of Ms. N. Josie Lawford-Wolf (1967 - 2019), a close cultural collaborator of Bangarra whose spirit, stories and artistic contributions have inspired the company's works and enriched the broader arts landscape.

Created in consultation with Wangkatjungka and Walmajarri Elders from the Kimberley and Great Sandy Desert regions, *SandSong* premiered in Sydney in 2021 before the remaining season and national tour was curtailed due to COVID-19. The return of *SandSong* in 2022 was warmly welcomed with a sold-out season in Melbourne, our first season in that city after three years of pandemic disruptions.

36

TOTAL PERFORMANCES

20,981

TOTAL ATTENDANCE

VENUE/DATES

**Gadigal Country
Sydney Opera House**
30 June - 23 July

**Wurundjeri Country
Arts Centre Melbourne**
24 August - 3 September

**Djaara Country
Ulumbarra Theatre, Bendigo**
9 - 10 September

CREDITS

Choreographers
Stephen Page, Frances Rings

Cultural Consultants
Putuparri Tom Lawford, Eva Nargoodah, Wangkatjungka & Walmajarri Elders

Composer
Steve Francis

Set Designer
Jacob Nash

Costume Designer
Jennifer Irwin

Lighting Designer
Nick Schlieper

Lighting Realiser
Christopher Twyman

AV Designer
David Bergman

(L to R) Daniel Mateo, Rikki Mason, Bradley Smith,
Glory Tuohy-Daniell, Lillian Banks,
& Rika Hamaguchi in *SandSong*



(L to R) Maddison Paluch, Lillian Banks,
Chantelle Lee Lockhart, Ryan Pearson
& Emily Flannery in *SandSong*



EXPERIENCE: STAGE

“Small voices and echoing hand movements filled the studio space as children and their adults were invited to be involved, and the silence in between was equally impressive”

★★★★

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

Waru

JOURNEY OF THE SMALL TURTLE

Bangarra's first ever dedicated work for children, *Waru - journey of the small turtle*, tells the story of the green turtle Migi, in a journey of survival and discovery. The season opened Bangarra's newly renovated Studio Theatre in the company's home in Walsh Bay.

Waru was created by Stephen Page, together with his son Hunter Page-Lochard, whose experience working with Play School provided an even deeper appreciation of sharing Culture with young people. Bangarra alumni Dancers and Choreographers Sani Townson and Elma Kris were engaged as Cultural Creatives for the Torres Strait Islander story, with Kris starring as Aka Malu, the storyteller.

The audience experience was enhanced through a partnership with the Australian Maritime Museum, with activities in the foyer pre- and post-performance.

Waru - journey of the small turtle was generously supported by the Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund - an Australian Government initiative, the Girgensohn Foundation and the Knights Family Jabula Foundation.



24

TOTAL PERFORMANCES

2,866

TOTAL ATTENDANCE

VENUE/DATES

Gadigal Country
Studio Theatre at Bangarra,
Walsh Bay, Sydney
24 September - 9 October

CREDITS

Director Stephen Page
Cultural Creatives Sani Townson
Elma Kris
Writer Hunter Page-Lochard
Composers Steve Francis
David Page (dec)
Featured Songs By
Helen Anu
Leonora Adidi
Peggy Misi
Set and Costume Design
Jacob Nash
Lighting Design
Matt Cox
Language Consultant
Leonora Adidi
Aka Malu - Storyteller
Elma Kris
Performer
Aba Bero



Regional Tour

SANDESONG: STORIES FROM THE GREAT SANDY DESERT

Regional touring is deeply embedded in Bangarra as a means of connecting to Country and honouring our commitment to reaching audiences in all parts of Australia.

The life cycle of each Bangarra work begins and ends on Country, and a highlight of the *SandSong* tour was a performance in Fitzroy Crossing before continuing the tour to Alice Springs and Darwin.

Workshops with local schools and dance groups are undertaken in each city, and the demand for Bangarra Dance Theatre in regional communities remains strong, as evidenced by sell-out performances in several cities on tour.

“Thank you for a magnificent performance of *SandSong* at the Darwin Entertainment Centre on Saturday night. It was my first experience of Bangarra ever. Without a doubt it was one of the most powerful, moving and magnificent pieces of contemporary dance and theatre I’ve ever seen!”

AUDIENCE MEMBER VIA FACEBOOK

“Thank you @bangarradancetheatre watched tonight on Ngarluma country. Amazing show, thank you for touring regionally and sharing stories.”

AUDIENCE MEMBER VIA INSTAGRAM

VENUE/DATES

Minang Country
Albany Entertainment Centre
26 October

Kaniyang Country
Bunbury Regional
Entertainment Centre
29 October

Amangu Country
Queens Park Theatre, Geraldton
2 November

Ngarluma Country
Red Earth Arts Precinct,
Karratha
5 November

Arrente Country
Araluen Arts Centre, Alice
Springs
18 - 19 November

Larrakia Country
Darwin Entertainment Centre
25 - 26 November

CREDITS

Choreographers Stephen Page,
Frances Rings

Cultural Consultants
Putuparri Tom Lawford, Eva
Nargoodah, Wangkatjungka &
Walmajarri Elders

Composer Steve Francis

Set Designer Jacob Nash

Costume Designer Jennifer Irwin

Lighting Designer Nick
Schlieper

Lighting Realiser Christopher
Twyman

AV Designer Dave Bergman

EXPERIENCE: STAGE

“Gathering the companies a pas de triumph”

★★★★1/2

THE AGE

DanceX

In October 2022, Bangarra Dance Theatre was invited by The Australian Ballet to participate in a three-part festival celebrating the depth, range and diversity of Australian dance.

Bangarra performed excerpts from *Terrain*, alongside works from The Australian Ballet, Sydney Dance Company and Lucy Guerin Inc. The festival provided an opportunity for the four companies to work off-stage together taking class and rehearsing at The Australian Ballet’s Melbourne studios.

“This is the spirited embrace we are all craving after such a trying couple of years. Here we are in 2022, our collective resilience has seen us through. We now reunite through DanceX to embody what is most important in our lives – the beauty of movement.”

DAVID HALLBERG,
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET



Daniel Mateo & the men of *Terrain*

4

TOTAL PERFORMANCES

3,312

TOTAL ATTENDANCE

VENUE/DATES

**Wurundjeri Country
Arts Centre Melbourne**
19 – 22 October

CREDITS

Choreographer Frances Rings
Cultural Consultant Arabunna
Elder Reginald Dodd
Composer David Page (dec)
Set Designer Jacob Nash
Costume Designer Jennifer Irwin
Lighting Designer Karen Norris

On Screen



Bangarra's On Screen activities allow us to deepen our relationship with existing audiences, connect with regional and remote areas of Australia, and attract international followers.

Films and Documentaries

Firestarter: The Story of Bangarra continued to shine brightly winning the Walkley Award for Best Documentary at the 66th Walkley Awards Ceremony in February 2022. The film was also nominated for a 2022 TV Week Logie for Most Outstanding Factual or Documentary Program. *Firestarter* was acquired by Netflix for distribution in Australia and New Zealand, available for streaming from July 2022. *Firestarter* continued to be a feature at international film festivals around the world.

On Screen Performances

ABC iView streamed Bangarra documentaries and live performances including *Bangarra's World*, *Warumuk - in the dark night* and *Dubboo: Life of a Songman* providing an invaluable record of the company's work, and an important resource for educators and audiences wishing to enrich their knowledge of Bangarra's earlier works. Bangarra also featured in the final episode of ABC's *Inside the Sydney Opera House*, a behind-the-scenes documentary. This episode followed Bangarra creatives, performers and crews during the changeover process from *Terrain* to *SandSong*.

Bangarra Dance Theatre would like to acknowledge our cultural foundation families, its Board of Directors, artists, staff, creative collaborators, cultural teachers, Community advisors and their families past, present and future for the sharing of their knowledge, stories and language, entrusted to and cared for by the company that was exhibited within *Firestarter*.

FILM FESTIVALS (*FIRESTARTER*)

United Kingdom and Ireland

First Fortnight Festival, Irish Film Institute

Homeland: Films from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Filmmakers Barbican Centre, London

Canada

Re-Frame Peterborough International Film Festival, Peterborough, Canada

Victoria Film Festival, Victoria, Canada

Festival International du Film sur l'Art, Montreal, Canada

United States of America

ACT Human Rights Festival, Opening Night Film, Fort Collins, Colorado, USA

Dance on Camera, New York City, USA

*Average audience measures total minutes played (including co-viewing, where more than one person is watching one device) divided by content length and rounded to the nearest thousand.

Connecting with Community



Frances Rings and the female ensemble with residents of Juniper Guwardi Ngadu Residential Aged Care in Fitzroy Crossing, WA

Return to Country



SANDESONG: STORIES FROM THE GREAT SANDY DESERT

Every Bangarra work is developed in a circle of connectedness and reciprocity. The creative cycle begins with an inspiration, or a concept followed by an invitation to Country to seek permission to respectfully tell the stories. The final stage is a Return to Country to revisit the Community that generously entrusted its knowledge to Bangarra Dance Theatre.

The Return to Country is the most important part of the creative cycle, maintaining integrity of the work, reciprocating generosity and providing dancers with essential Cultural and Community connection.

In 2022, a convoy of 16 dancers, eight production crew, administrative staff, supporters and members of the Bangarra family travelled to Broome (Yawuru Country) and Fitzroy Crossing (Bunuba Country) to return *SandSong: Stories from the Great Sandy Desert* to the Walmajarri and Wangkatjungka people. After three days setting up in relentless heat on the lawn of the Fitzroy Valley District High School, audiences were shuttled in from hundreds of kilometres on buses provided by Bangarra.

More than 480 people in total witnessed the moving tribute to Ms N. Lawford-Wolf, celebrating her legacy as a trailblazer and cultural mediator, with family members Putuparri Tom Lawford, Eva Nargoodah and Ms N. Lawford-Wolf's children in attendance.

As well as the moving *SandSong* performances, the Bangarra team facilitated workshops with local schools and cultural Elders, and practiced traditional dances gifted by the Community with Elders and cultural authorities.

YULDEA

In early October, Frances Rings and the creative team researching the new work *Yuldea*, met with Yalata Anangu Aboriginal Board Members on Mirning Country on the far West Coast of South Australia. This visit, with composer Leon Rogers, and Zaachariaha Fielding and Michael Ross (Electric Fields) followed online meetings and conversations with Elders and Cultural Consultants during the Adelaide season of *Wudjang: Not the Past*.

The visit provided opportunity for a few days of cultural research, including a visit to the Ooldea site, and resulted in permission from the Yalata Council and Mirning Traditional Owners to tell the *Yuldea* story. The next stage will be a return visit in March 2023 with dancers and other members of the creative team for Country immersion, site visits, meetings with the Cultural authorities and Community members.

Yuldea explores the moment when traditional life collided with industrial ambition when the two halves of the Transcontinental Railway met at the precious water soak on the edge of the Nullarbor, Yuldi Kapi. *Yuldea* will be Frances' first new work as Artistic Director, telling this story of the Anangu people of the far West Coast and Great Victorian Desert.



Frances Rings at a smoking ceremony before SandSong in Fitzroy Crossing, WA



Lillian Banks in SandSong in Fitzroy Crossing, WA

“We have an obligation to our next generations to maintain our heritage, our songs, our dances and traditional ways.”

**SIDNEY SALTNER,
YOUTH PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

Youth Programs



REKINDLING

Rekindling is Bangarra's safe haven to strengthen bonds between generations in Communities, sharing stories and knowledge, expressing culture and creating contemporary ceremonial experiences. Since its inception in 2013 *Rekindling* has reached more than 1,000 young people in Communities, and its links to the Australian Curriculum include the development of intercultural understanding, critical and creative thinking, literacy and ethical understanding.

In 2022, *Rekindling* delivered three programs in Mackay and Theodore in Queensland and Broome, Western Australia. Mackay was a return visit from 2017 led by Bangarra Alum and former founding member of *Rekindling* Patrick Thaiday. Similarly, Broome was a return program led by Bangarra Alum Tara Gower.

The Theodore program, on Youth Program Director Sidney Saltner's Wullli Wullli Country, was developed as a two-week camp in response to Elders and Community wishing to immerse themselves in cultural practices without the disruption of school activities and time limitations. The two-week program allowed for Elders and young people to connect over meals and daily visits On Country.

BRISBANE BRONCOS

In 2022, Bangarra's Youth Program activities included a partnership with National Rugby League team Brisbane Broncos in the Beyond the Broncos mentoring program. The program is designed to improve school attendance and Year 12 attainment

rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The Youth Program Team worked with more than 200 students to create and present a pre-game performance at the NRL's Indigenous Round at Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium on Friday 27 May. The initiative also provided students from the Aboriginal Centre for Performing Arts with valuable experience in teaching and leading the groups in choreography and performance.

THE ARTS UNIT, NSW

School students enjoyed a welcome return to live performance at two initiatives produced by The Arts Unit, NSW – the State Dance Festival at the Seymour Centre and the Schools Spectacular at the Qudos Stadium, held for the first time since the outbreak of COVID-19.

26 students from across the state were selected to take part in the 2022 NSW Public School Aboriginal Dance Company as part of the State Dance Festival performing performing “Shields” and “Spinifex” from *Terrain*.

Regional online workshops continued in 2022 with more than 65 schools and 1,000 students engaged in the program.

ON COUNTRY

The Youth Program Team joined the Bangarra company for the *SandSong* Return to Country, leading workshops in Broome and Fitzroy Crossing, and deepening connection with Community for future *Rekindling* and other engagement activities.

Bangarra's *Rekindling* is generously supported by the Angela Wright Bennett Foundation, Besen Family Foundation, Bowden Marstan Foundation, The MJW Foundation, The James N Kirby Foundation, the Banana Shire Council and many generous individual donors.



The Youth Programs Team and *Rekindling* participants on Wulli Wulli Country in Theodore, QLD



Rekindling participants display their artwork on Wulli Wulli Country in Theodore, QLD

Education



In 2022, Bangarra consolidated its position as an important contributor in the building of respect and understanding of First Nations' histories and cultures across the curriculum by deepening engagement with the education sector, and delivering an expanded range of programs.

Winhanga-rra (hear, think, listen - Wiradjuri) Professional Development for educators saw 61 teachers from Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne work with us in full day workshops and another 46 in shorter online courses. This includes a bespoke series of online workshops with the Koorie Education Support Officer (KESO) network in regional Victoria, culminating in participants' attendance at a performance of *SandSong* in Bendigo. The collaboration with the KESO network was supported by Creative Victoria.

In 2022, Bangarra successfully applied for approval as a Professional Development provider for the NSW Education and Standards Authority accreditation.

In partnership with Dance Educators Professional Association (DEPA) Bangarra delivered a bespoke two part PD seminar for NSW HSC Dance teachers focusing on *Terrain*, which is a compulsory unit within the HSC Dance Course.

Our online classroom resources are frequently used, and income from the online education platform ClickView was the highest since having the four titles - *Terrain*, *Bennelong*, *Mathinna* and *Patyegarang* included in their library.

In-person engagement with teachers and students at schools' performances returned to a pre-pandemic level, except for one *Wilay* performance in Sydney which was unfortunately cancelled due to COVID.

<i>Wilay</i> attendances - <i>SandSong</i>	96 students and educators	
Schools' show attendances	2008 students and educators	
Classroom resources	9 resources	12,838 engagements
Knowledge Ground - Nandu Journeys	4 resources	624 engagements

Frances Rings leads Winhanga-rra Teachers' Workshops



Workshop Summary



123
TOTAL WORKSHOPS



2,207
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS



COMMUNITY
40 WORKSHOPS 907 PARTICIPANTS



REKINDLING
46 WORKSHOPS 183 PARTICIPANTS



THE ARTS UNIT
25 WORKSHOPS 982 PARTICIPANTS



WINHANGA-RRR
12 WORKSHOPS 135 PARTICIPANTS

Accessibility



In 2022, Bangarra offered Audio Described (AD) performances in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne for the productions of *Terrain* and *SandSong*.

After testing various models of delivery, it was determined that an integrated and pre-recorded transcript, crafted and woven into the sound score would provide the optimum experience for our blind and/or sight impaired patrons. This enables us to offer the AD service multiple times and have the recording available for any future touring. The recorded description ensures the listener receives not just the information about the visual aspects of the work, but also the energy, emotion, Story, and Cultural spirit, in a way that is as creative as the work itself.

We also provided each AD patron with a 'show bag' of tactile elements (costume and set materials) and invited AD patrons to stay in their seats after the show for a conversation where we shared more tactile elements such as 'gapan' (ochre) and the paper bark coolamons. Pre-show material was also provided in the form of accessible written information and recorded material, explaining the sections that cannot be spoken over, such as where there is loud music or traditional song.

“It was both a pleasure and privilege to be able to experience Bangarra in this way. I imagine such a lot of work has gone into the AD preparation, so thank you and the team again. As I said this was the first time I had experienced AD, however I believe even with that limited experience that you have set the bar pretty high ... I look forward to being able to tell my Access Consultant colleagues about the experience and the great work Bangarra is doing in this space.”

ELISA MOECHTAR:
ACCESS CONSULTANCY GROUP DLA

“Bangarra do such a fabulous job with the AD and supporting collateral to enhance the experience. The icing on the cake was to meet Frances Rings at the end! What a wonderful experience.”

JENNIFER MOON, PRINCIPAL ADVISOR,
ACCESS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT,
GUIDE DOGS AUST.

Russell Page Graduate Program



The Russell Page Graduate program, initiated in 2015 has seen over 20 artists become confident professional dancers. In 2022, three young artists joined Bangarra – Jesse Murray, James Boyd, and Amberlilly Gordon.

Jesse Murray, a proud Wiradjuri man of the Galari tribe who grew up in Cowra, performed in all 2022 performance and touring seasons starting with *Wudjang: Not the Past* in January. James Boyd, a descendent of the Kunja and Muruwari people of South West Queensland and the Wakka Wakka Nation of South East Queensland performed in his first season with the company in June at the Sydney Opera House. Amberlilly Gordon, a proud Wiradjuri and Ngemba woman, was Bangarra's second RGP Youth Trainee and from January 2022, immediately settled herself into the busy travelling and workshop facilitating schedule of the *Rekindling* and NSW Arts Unit programs.

We thank the Sherry-Hogan Foundation, the Canny Quine Foundation, The Ross Trust and generous donors for their ongoing support of this program.



James Boyd in *SandSong*
in Fitzroy Crossing, WA



(L to R) Jesse Murray,
Kiarn Doyle & Gusta Mara

David Page Music Fellowship



David Page Music Fellows, Leon Rodgers and Amy Flannery commenced their program in early 2022. In shadowing long time Bangarra composer Steve Francis during the creation of *Wudjang: Not the Past*, they had the opportunity to experience first-hand, the intricacies of bringing Story, sound and design together. Later in the year they were busy creating their own composition for the *Dance Clan* season.

Leon has since been commissioned by Bangarra to create sections of the 2023 work *Yuldea*. Amy was commissioned as a collaborator for the Taronga Conservation Society: *Yak* project in which Bangarra is a partner.

The David Page Music Fellowship is generously supported by Robert Albert AO and Libby Albert.

Workplace Giving Program



Our Workplace Giving Program (WPG) continues to be an important internal initiative that gives us the opportunity to support First Nations communities on a very personal level. A working group made up of dancers and administration staff meets regularly to bring opportunities forward for discussion and to facilitate distributions.

In March, WPG sent \$5000 to the flood relief program in Lismore coordinated by the Koori Mail, and in November we provided \$4000 worth of vouchers to Communities in Forbes and Eugowra who lost most of their belongings in the November floods. This included a 90 year old grandfather who was able to return to his house with some new cooking appliances. We are very grateful to Yoorana Gunya Family Healing Centre who facilitated the distribution of the vouchers.

At the beginning of the year WPG covered costs for the Djinma Yilaga Choir from South Coast NSW to attend a performance of *Wudjang: Not the Past* at the Roslyn Packer Theatre, and in June we subsidised the bus travel of Wingham High School's First Nations students to come to Sydney for a performance of *SandSong*.

For the Ngaruki Gulgul (NG Central School) in Kariong NSW, we were able to re-condition twelve iPads, buy some new covers and power cords and provide some much-needed IT resources for the school.

The Company



Dancers & Frances Rings
backstage at Sydney Opera House

The 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



MADDISON PALUCH



DANIEL MATEO



EMILY FLANNERY



JANAYA LAMB



JESSE MURRAY



CHANTELLE LEE LOCKHART



JAMES BOYD



KARRA NAM

The Staff



EXECUTIVE

Artistic Director

Stephen Page

Executive Director

Lissa Twomey
(until December)

Louise Ingram
(Interim from December)

Associate Artistic Director

Frances Rings

Executive Assistant

Tamesin Elliot (until February)

Natasha Cudilla (from May)

ARTISTIC

Head of Design

Jacob Nash

Rehearsal Director

Daniel Roberts

Head of Artistic Operations

Cloudia Elder

Company Manager

Lachlan Steel

Community Engagement

Manager

Michelle Ellis (until September)

Raquel Kerdel (from
November)

Touring & Project Development

Manager

Phoebe Collier

PRODUCTION

Director, Technical & Production

John Colvin

Production Manager

Cat Studley

Stage Manager

Stephanie Storr (until
September)

Rose Jenkins (from October)

Head Electrician

Marshall Bull (until July)

Lucy Mitchell (from October)

Head of Wardrobe

Jessica Hodgkinson

Production Trainee

Taneisha Madrill (until October)

EDUCATION & YOUTH PROGRAMS

Youth Program Director

Sidney Saltner

Youth Programs Coordinator

Sani Townson

Youth Programs Russell Page Graduates

Amberlilly Gordon

Youth Programs Tutor

Mitchell J Nalingu Harrison-
Currie

Education & Accessibility

Shane Carroll

DEVELOPMENT

Development Director

Anna Matthews

Philanthropy Manager

Freya McGahey

Corporate Partnerships Manager

Lachlan Bell (until April)

Corporate & Government Affairs Manager

Lola Pinder (from May)

Development Coordinator

Lola Pinder (until April)

Fundraising & Events Coordinator

Lakaree Smith (from August)

MARKETING

Marketing & Communications Director

John Quertermous

Marketing Manager

Shauna Maguire (until
February)

Sophie Raper
(March until August)

Erin Repp (from September)

Venue Manager

Moira Kennedy (from
December)

Ticketing & CRM Manager

Scott Bunn

Brand Manager

Sophie Raper
(from September)

Digital Marketing Coordinator

Erin Repp (until August)

Ticketing & Customer Service Coordinator

Moira Kennedy (until
November)

Marketing Coordinator

Gisella Mandaglio (from
November)

Marketing & Youth Programs Assistant

Zipporah Corser-Anu (until
August)

ADMINISTRATION

Director of Finance & Company Secretary

Rachel Hadfield (until
September)

Chief Financial Officer & Company Secretary

Louise Ingram
(from August until November)

Finance & Operations Manager

Grace O'Malley

Human Resources Manager

Cara Campbell (until May)
tul Joshi (from May)

Partners

MAJOR PARTNERS



SUPPORTING PARTNER



PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS

Annamila



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MARSTAN
FOUNDATION



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GOVERNMENT CORE FUNDING PARTNERS



Bangarra Dance Theatre is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body.



Bangarra Dance Theatre is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW.

OTHER GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



Bangarra's Bendigo residency and *Rekindling* program in regional Victoria is supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria.



Australian Government
Indigenous Languages and Arts

Wudjang: Not the Past and Rekindling (Theodore, QLD) has been supported through the Australian Government's Indigenous Languages and Arts program.



Australian Government
RISE Fund

Waru - journey of the small turtle is supported through the Australian Government's Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund.

Patrons



In consultation with Wiradjuri Elders, we have taken inspiration from the word ‘Bangarra’ – a Wiradjuri word meaning ‘to make fire’ – to describe the levels of donor support. This use of Wiradjuri language is part of Bangarra’s ongoing commitment to the survival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. Bangarra Dance Theatre would like to thank the following patrons for their generous contributions to the company.

FOUNDATIONS

Angela Wright Bennett Foundation
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GUYA – FISH (\$50,000 & OVER)

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Janice Adie
Jann Skinner
Jennifer Thurstun
Jenny Durack
Jessie Wang
Jill Maddox & Ian Evans
Jill Redmyre, Family & Friends

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Lisa Byleveld
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Margot McDonald
Mark Wright
Mike Bowen
Mike Thompson
& Ian Kelly
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Mira Joksovic
Miranda Stewart
Narina Dahms
Nicky Gluyas
Ondine Spitzer
Patrick Sze Tho
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Yvette Peterson

DHULABANG GIFTS

*Gratefully
acknowledging those
who have supported
Bangarra through a
gift in their Will.*
Carol Cruikshank
Elizabeth Roberts
Marena Manzoufas
Sally Nicholson

DHULUBANG CIRCLE

*We gratefully
acknowledge those
who have made the
visionary gesture of
including Bangarra in
their will.*
Anonymous (7)
Anna Viale
Anne Roussac-Hoyne &
Neil Roussac
Belinda Kendall-White
Helen McCormack
Jan Williams
Keith & Marguerite
Mobbs
Kelvin Widdows
Linda Herd
Lynn Ralph
Margo Garnon-Williams
Mary Mamenamin
Monica Gaede
Nicola Kaldor
Roger Hewitt
Silver Harris
Stephen Scrogings
Theresa Handicott
Yvonne Langley-Walsh



Janaya Lamb in *SandSong* in Fitzroy Crossing, WA

Board of Directors



PHILLIPA MCDERMOTT (CHAIR)

(April 2020 – present)

Phillipa is a Wakka Wakka and Mununjali woman. Phillipa is a committed public advocate and champion for diversifying workforces, the arts and media to best reflect contemporary Australia. With over 30 years' experience in media, arts and employment, Phillipa provides strategic thought leadership and direction to develop and drive corporate strategies, change and inclusion. Her goal is for an Australia that acknowledges and embraces our shared history and culture to build authentic, purposeful relationships with First Nations Peoples.

Director First Nations Talent Deloitte, Board member Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Team and NSW Treasury First Nations Advisory Committee.

JOSHUA DUKE

(October 2021 – present)

A proud Dughutti man, Josh has over seven years' experience providing professional services to a wide range of clients across Australia including Federal Government, listed and non-listed entities. Josh is a highly accomplished Chartered Accountant and was the recipient of the 2021 ACT Young Chartered Accountant of the Year award and the Indigenous Leaders Program Scholarship through the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Josh is currently a Senior Manager within Deloitte's Indigenous Services Group.

Josh is also a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, serves as a Board Director of the YMCA Canberra and is the Inaugural Chair and founding member of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Panel for Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand.

RICHARD ECCLES

(August 2020 – present)

Richard is a company director and consultant, with a background in senior Government positions. In addition to his role with Bangarra, he is a director of a number of companies including the Copyright Agency Ltd; the Public Interest Journalism Initiative; and Epilepsy ACT. He is Chair of the Canberra Health Services Governance Committee. He provides advisory services to a range of bodies including the National Gallery of Australia and the Department of Education.

Prior to 2020 Richard enjoyed a 30-year career in the Australian Public Service, including ten years in Deputy Secretary positions in a number of portfolios, including the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Department of Health and Aged Care, and the Department of Communications and the Arts.

JOHN HARVEY

(November 2019 – present)

John is a writer, director, and producer in theatre and film and the Creative Director of Brown Cabs.

John's theatre writing credits include: *The Return*, receiving the 2023 Victorian Premier's Literary Award for Drama; *Heart is a Wasteland*; *Black Ties* and he directed *A Little Piece of Heaven*.

In film his writing and directing credits include: *Katele*, winning the 2023 Flickerfest Best Australian Short Film; *Still We Rise*; Kutch's Koorioke; *Water*; *Out of Range* and award winning docu-series, *Off Country*. John produced Stephen Page's film *Spear* (Toronto International Film Festival) and Page's Sand for omnibus film *The Turning* (Berlinale); *The Warriors*; and several Indigenous short films.

John was commissioned by ACMI to create multi-channel video installation, *Canopy* along with a public art mural based on the work for Metro Tunnel. He created the video component for Ricardo Idagi's Telstra Award (New Media) winning work *Upi Mop Le*.

Previously, John has worked with: Ilbijerri Theatre; Access Arts; Kooemba Jdarra Indigenous Performing Arts; Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women's Council; and Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council. He also served as a Board Member of the Australia Council's Community Cultural Development Board.

Board of Directors (cont.)

NADINE MCDONALD-DOWD

(December 2019 – present)

Nadine is a Yuwi Woman from North Queensland. Nadine was formerly the Artistic Director of Kooemba Jdarra Indigenous Performing Arts Company from 2001 to 2004. Previously, Nadine has been a Director on the Boards of the Queensland Theatre Company, Queensland Government's Premier's Indigenous Advisory Board and Q150 Advisory Committee, and the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts. Nadine was a Senior Producer with Major Brisbane Festivals in 2010, was the Manager of the *kurul dhagun*, State Library of Queensland from 2006 – 2015, Creative Producer for the Commonwealth Games Arts and Cultural Festival 2018, Executive Producer at Queensland Performing Arts Centre 2018-2021, First Nations Creative Development Officer for Sunshine Coast Council and currently works closely with First Nations Artists in supporting and nurturing the next generations of storytellers.

IAN ROBERTS

(August 2020 – present)

Ian Roberts is currently the Deputy Chair of the Annamali First Nations Foundation and a Trustee of the Victorian Arts Centre Trust. He is also a freelance writer specialising in speeches and editing for daily press. Previously Ian served as CEO of the Harold Mitchell Foundation, General Manager of the Melbourne Festival, General Manager of the Geelong Performing Arts Centre, and as Interim CEO of Arts Centre Melbourne in 2014. Ian's board appointments have included terms as Chair of the Victorian Australia Day Committee, Deputy Chair of the Melbourne International Film Festival, and as Deputy Chair of the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. Ian has also served as a Board Director of Arts Centre Melbourne and a member of the Major Performing Arts Board of the Australia Council for the Arts.

LISSA TWOMEY

(January 2021 – December 2022)

Lissa was appointed Executive Director of Bangarra in March 2020. Lissa has more than 25 years' experience in the arts and cultural sector having worked in the UK, Australia and New Zealand. Her previous roles include Artistic Director of the New Zealand International Arts Festival, Artistic Director of the inaugural Wellington Jazz Festival and Associate Director of the Sydney Festival. Between 2013–2020, Lissa held a position on the Executive at the Australia Council for the Arts, as Executive Director Major Performing Arts and National Engagement.

Current appointments include board member of the Festivals Board, Create NSW and a member of the Executive Council of Live Performance Australia. Lissa was previously a member of the Local Government Authority Round Sub-Committee, Create NSW and a board member at 107 Projects.

STEPHEN PAGE AO

(June 1998 – December 2022)

Stephen is a descendant of the Nunukul people and the Mununjali clan of the Yugambah 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 Yugambah Nation, as part of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony. Stephen has choreographed over 27 works for Bangarra and directed films including *FREEMAN* (co-directed with Laurence Billiet), *SPEAR*, and *Sand (The Turning)*. He also choreographed the feature films *Bran Nue Dae* and *The Sapphires*. Recent awards and honours include: Honorary Doctorate of Creative Arts by the University of Technology Sydney (2015), NAIDOC Lifetime Achievement Award (2016), JC Williamson Award (2016), Australia Council Dance Award (2017), and appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 2017.

AMERICAN
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At BAI we are dedicated to connecting communities. The strength of our partnership with Bangarra is defined by our shared passion of connecting people across urban, regional, and remote communities.

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PETER LAMBOURNE,
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Citi is proud to support Bangarra's mission to create inspiring Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander experiences that promote awareness and understanding of our cultures.



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Inside back cover - Daniel Boud

Stephen Page & Elaine Crombie in rehearsals for *Wudjang: Not the Past*



**BANGARRA DANCE
THEATRE AUSTRALIA**

ABN 96 003 814 006

Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia
Gadigal Country, Eora Nation
Wharf 4/5, 15 Hickson Road
Walsh Bay NSW 2000

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