

A full-page photograph of a dancer in a black, fringed costume performing in a large, orange, tent-like structure. The dancer is the central focus, with her arms extended and legs in a dynamic pose. The background is a vast, textured orange fabric that creates a sense of depth and enclosure. The lighting is warm and dramatic, highlighting the dancer and the texture of the fabric.

**bangarra**  
DANCE THEATRE  
AUSTRALIA

2025  
Annual Report



# Contents

## Introduction

Chair's Report	4
Artistic Director's Report	6
Executive Director's Report	7
Company Profile	9
Our Purpose, Bangarra Values	10
A Year in Review	11
Highlights	12
Governor-General	15

## Bangarra Experiences

Illume	17
The Light Inside	18
The Bogong's Song	19
An Act of Being	20
DanceX - Yuldea	21

## Cultural Immersion and Preservation

Cultural Immersion	23
Workplace Giving Program	24

## Youth and Engagement Programs

Rekindling	27
Education	28
Workshop Summary	28
Accessibility	29

## First Nations Employment Pathways

Russell Page Graduate Program	31
First Nations Staff Development Program	32
First Nations Emerging Producer	33
Safe Dance Program	33

## The Company

Dancers	34
Staff	36
Partners	38
Patrons	40
Board of Directors	42

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

Bangarra Dance Theatre would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the Gadigal people, upon whose Country we are based. We would also like to acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia whose customs and cultures inspire our productions, and whose strength and resilience keep our songlines strong.

Front cover: Courtney Radford, *Illume*  
Photo: Daniel Boud

Above: Amberlilly Gordon and Frances Rings at Sydney Opera House  
Photo: Daniel Boud

# Chair's Report

Bangarra Dancers in *Illume*  
Photo: Daniel Boud

The opening night of *Illume* at the Joan Sutherland Theatre, Sydney Opera House was a pivotal moment for Bangarra, reflecting our growth and evolution, sharing our stories on one of the world's great stages.

The production was a stunning presentation, marking our debut at the Joan Sutherland Theatre after many years in the Drama Theatre. This transition of venues is a significant achievement. It would not have been possible without the support of Sydney Opera House CEO Louise Herron and Chair Michael McDaniel, to whom we extend our heartfelt thanks.

What made that opening night even more momentous was the attendance of Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia, who serves as Bangarra's Patron. Her presence underscored the importance of our work in preserving culture and sharing important stories so generously passed on to us by knowledge holders throughout the country.

We take our responsibilities to the wider performing arts sector very seriously and are dedicated to contributing to the ongoing conversation on important issues. This year, we made significant progress in advocating for vital tax reforms that impact our industry. This dialogue requires participation from all stakeholders at every level.

I had the privilege of representing Bangarra at the Business Sydney 2025 First Nations Forum and Lunch, where I participated in a panel discussing Indigenous Procurement in Practice. This experience allowed me to witness the exciting new energy driving collaborative engagement between government entities, First Nations communities, and the arts sector, which I believe plays a crucial role in shaping our collective identity and heritage.

We were pleased to welcome Diat Alferink to the Bangarra Board of Directors in January 2025. Hailing from the Kala Lagaw Ya language group of the Western Torres Strait Islands, Diat brings invaluable perspectives as the CEO of the Torres Strait Islander Media Association, a seasoned performing artist, festival director, comedian, and creative producer.

In February, we farewelled two of our long-serving board members, Richard Eccles and Nadine McDonald-Dowd. Their contributions to Bangarra have been immeasurable, and we thank them warmly for their dedication and service on our Board.

We established a new Development Committee, comprising Board members Sara McKerihan, Jemima Myer, and Sally Scales, to focus on the crucial work of nurturing donor relationships.



We recognise that donors and partners are the lifeblood of our organisation, and the establishment of this committee will help us achieve our artistic aspirations and keep our cultural fires burning.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the entire Bangarra Board of Directors. Their collective skills and diverse experiences provide the foundation for our decision-making processes. My thanks also go to our Co-CEOs, Louise Ingram and Frances Rings, whose outstanding leadership and unwavering commitment to our vision have been essential in navigating this exciting chapter for our company.

We remain deeply appreciative of the many donors, foundations, corporate partners, and government funders who support our mission to share our culture with communities and audiences across Australia and around the globe. Together, we are ensuring that First Nations stories continue to resonate and inspire.

**Phillipa McDermott**  
Chair



# Artistic Director's Report

2025 was a year of vibrant cultural exchange and collaboration, marking significant milestones that enrich Bangarra's songline.

Of all the events in 2025, the entire life cycle of *Illume* will resonate deeply for years to come. From the walk on Country with visual artist Darrell Sibosado to a breathtaking opening night at the Joan Sutherland Theatre, Sydney Opera House, this work serves as a powerful reminder of our connections to each other and to the land.

A highlight was the research trip to Lombadina with the *Illume* creative team. We spent time on Bardi-Jawi Country, collaborating with Darrell Sibosado, a Goolarrgon Bard man, and Cultural Consultants, Trevor Sampi and Audrey (Pippi) Bin Swani. *Illume* represents Bangarra's first collaboration with a First Nations visual artist, enabling a powerful new form of expression and storytelling by integrating light, design, choreography and technology to bring Darrell's story to life. The work explores light as a glowing bridge between the physical and spiritual realms, examined through both choreographic and visual art perspectives.

*Illume* enjoyed a successful Sydney season and national tour, ultimately winning the Time Out People's Choice Award for Favourite Dance Production at the Arts and Culture Awards.

Cass Mortimer Eipper and I directed *An Act of Being* for Vivid Sydney, produced by a talented team of established film and television professionals, along with Cultural Consultant Karen Mundine from Reconciliation Australia. The extraordinary talent of our dancers — Cassidy Waters, James Boyd, Janaya Lamb, Jye Uren, Amberlilly Gordon, and Donta Whitham — shone brightly, honoring the 25th anniversary of the People's Walk for Reconciliation across the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Our performance of *The Light Inside* at WOMADelaide was a spectacular celebration, engaging thousands and showcasing the essence of our cultural expression. This event truly captured the spirit of what we aspire to achieve at Bangarra and continues a proud tradition of sharing our stories on the WOMADelaide stage since the late 1990's.

Our latest children's show, *The Bogong's Song* — co-written by Yolande Brown and Chenoa Deemal — offered valuable ecological insights woven with First Nations storytelling including song, dance and spoken word featured the brilliant talents of cast members — Benjin Maza and Tjilala Brown-Roberts. It was heartening to see families gathering on the wharf, making origami bogong moths and sharing their moth sightings. The production highlights care for Country, renewal, and builds connections between audiences and performers.

Our Youth and Education program, directed by Sidney Saltner, has been a source of inspiration for over a decade. Through its flagship initiative, Rekindling, the program builds cultural pride and artistry skills in young people. It plays a crucial role as a feeder into Bangarra, providing future career pathways.

Co-CEO Louise Ingram and I had the privilege of participating in the Under the Radar Symposium and the



Photo: Daniel Boud

International Society for the Performing Arts Congress in New York. Engaging in meaningful conversations with international industry leaders has opened exciting opportunities for us to share First Nations stories and culture on global stages.

We were also thrilled to welcome new dancers to Bangarra: Edan Porter (Gomerioi), Zeak Tass (South Sea Islands and Yuwibara), and Tamara Bouman (Biripi), alongside two Russell Page Graduates, Roxie Syron (Biripi & Worimi) and Eli Clarke (Arabana and Gurindji).

We bid farewell to our esteemed senior artist and Yuwuru woman, Lillian Banks, who joined us in 2018 through the Russell Page Graduate Program. Lillian has been a beacon of strength, integrity, and pride over her eight-year tenure. Beyond the stage, she has been a generous and steady force, leading with compassion and reminding us that excellence arises from quiet care and collective responsibility.

I extend my deep gratitude to each dancer for embodying the spirit and energy of the stories we share, and the Cultural Advisory Council for their guidance.

The Bangarra team is outstanding, and I am thankful for the hard work, integrity, and respect demonstrated every day in our workplace.

It is an honour to walk alongside Co-CEO Louise Ingram as we shape Bangarra's journey and remain committed to sharing cultural stories.

**Frances Rings**  
Artistic Director and Co-CEO

# Executive Director's Report

Bangarra is committed to its role as a national company, ensuring that audiences across the country can engage with and learn from our stories. In 2025, we performed in six states, returning to Perth and Darwin after several years away.

Over the year, 64,251 people attended our live performances and our works attracted over 1.8 million online views.

We continued expanding the diversity of our audiences, creating a new work for children, and delivering youth and education programs throughout the country. Bangarra's second dedicated children's work, *The Bogong's Song*, was created with a Queensland-based team and premiered at Queensland Performing Arts Centre before a Sydney season at our own Studio One Theatre at The Wharf.

The Youth and Education team successfully delivered programs nationwide, piloting Rekindling in South Australian high schools in partnership with Aboriginal Pathways, Student Pathways and Careers from the Department of Education.

In Community, the team worked in the Torres Strait and Sunshine Coast, Queensland, and in Shepparton, Victoria. The 16-year partnership with the Arts Unit from the New South Wales Department of Education continued with 1002 students engaging in the program in 2025.

We proudly opened Frances Rings' shimmering work, *Illume*, in the Joan Sutherland Theatre at Sydney Opera House, moving into this main theatre for the first time, and elevating the position of First Nations creative practice for the world to see. Audiences responded ecstatically to *Illume*, created with Cultural Collaborator and visual artist Darrell Sibosado. With stunning use of digital technology, *Illume* delivered its ambition to create a new integration of visual and performing arts.

Bangarra is a significant employer in the arts industry, and we are committed to mentoring and supporting First Nations creatives.

In 2025, we supported Associate Costume Designer Rika Hamaguchi, Production Trainee Peta-Louise Rixom, Emerging First Nations Producer Aroha Pehi and Russell Page Graduates Eli Clarke and Roxie Syron.

Cultural immersion and preservation, connection to Community and a deep respect for the stories shared by knowledge holders form the foundation of all our work. Our Cultural Advisory Council and Cultural Consultants are essential members of our team, ensuring that our activities are respectful, collaborative, and adhere to cultural protocols.



Photo: Daniel Boud

Following five years of strong financial results, in 2025 Bangarra moved into a more difficult financial environment, ending the year with an operating deficit of \$377,297, utilising Company reserves to fund this loss. We are focusing on cost management and building revenue streams to ensure we have the financial strength to support our artistic vision.

I extend my warmest thanks to Frances Rings for the strong partnership we share in leading the company. We offer our gratitude to our corporate sponsors, trusts and foundations, and generous individual donors whose support remains essential to help Bangarra achieve its touring ambitions, deliver our youth and education programs and create vital employment pathways for young First Nations people.

And finally, a heartfelt thanks to the Bangarra community of dancers, staff, creatives, teaching artists, Board directors, and audience members who help us achieve our vision to effect change and create lasting impact.

**Louise Ingram**  
Executive Director and Co-CEO



# 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 37 years. We were born in 1989 from the creative energy of NAISDA (National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association), inspired by its founder Carole Y. Johnson, alongside Cheryl Stone and a courageous group of NAISDA graduates who shared a vision for a professional First Nations dance theatre company. That vision was carried forward through the dedication of key Board, Committee and administrative members whose leadership and commitment were instrumental in shaping the company's foundation.

Stephen Page, Artistic Director for more than 30 years, is a creative icon. His vision and tenacity have made Bangarra one of the most successful First Nations performing arts companies in Australia. His exceptional contribution to First Nations arts and the national cultural landscape will be felt for generations to come.

Today, Artistic Director and Co-CEO Frances Rings and Executive Director and Co-CEO 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. Through our Youth programs and professional pathways, we support First Nations Youth and Storytellers to deepen their connection to culture and create a bright future.

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

Bangarra Dancers  
Photo: Daniel Boud

# Our Purpose

‘we are fire, we are kin, we are Country’

“The fire ignites us, the spear directs us, the digging stick grounds us, a coolamon of knowledge is passed and compels us to aspire to our cultural obligation to Community and Country.”

FRANCES RINGS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND CO-CEO

We, Bangarra, are ignited by our obligation to Country and Community, to nurture the transmission of Story, knowledge, history and experiences of our First Peoples to effect change and create lasting impact.

Bangarra's name, pronounced 'Bung-garra', was a gift from the Wiradjuri people and means 'to make fire'.

# Bangarra Values

## Reciprocity & Mutual Obligation

Our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are our most precious resource/ inspiration, that inspire and set the foundation of our work. With this comes the responsibility to give back to our communities.

## Cultural Exchange & Collaboration

We facilitate cultural exchange to share story and perspectives to foster mutual understanding, embrace diverse communities and encourage inclusion.

## Cultural Protocols

We uphold the integrity of cultural storytelling by abiding by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols.

## Care for Country

To integrate sustainable practices across all our activities and to care for Country for future generations and the thriving of our culture.

## Kinship & Respect

We are committed to supporting and nurturing the Bangarra clan by providing a safe and healthy work environment that is respectful and empowering.

## Resilience

We acknowledge 65,000 years of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural life and the vital role we play to shift societal attitudes, to promote understanding and create positive change.

# A Year in Review

64,251  
Live Audience Attendances

3,171  
Community Audience Attendances

35,893  
Digital Audiences

4,703  
Schools Audience Attendances

1,903  
Workshop Participants

1,103  
Individual Donors

65  
First Nations Creatives Employed

26  
Cultural Consultant/Elder Engagements


 70,672  
Facebook Followers

 51,329  
Instagram Followers

 3,990  
Youtube Followers

 708,588  
Website Page Views

 1,674  
TikTok Followers

 1,879,844  
Online Video Views

 47,267  
Songlines Newsletter  
Subscribers

# Highlights



James Boyd, Donta Whitham, Emily Flannery, Amberlilly Gordon and Frances Rings at Sydney Opera House  
Photo: Daniel Boud



Rekindling participants at the Community performance on Thursday Island, Gathering Three  
Still taken from video by Samuel Tainga Towa Savage



Benjin Maza and Tjilala Brown-Roberts in *The Bogong's Song*  
Photo: Jordan Munns

James Boyd and Donta Whitham on the Joan Sutherland Theatre Northern Foyer steps at Sydney Opera House  
Photo: Daniel Boud

# Bangarra Welcomes the Governor-General



Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and Bangarra Dance Theatre  
Photo: Andrew Dakin

In May 2025, we were delighted to announce Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, as Patron of Bangarra Dance Theatre.

A businesswoman and community leader, Her Excellency is known for her exceptional service to the Australian community.

Her Excellency attended the opening night of *Illume* at the Sydney Opera House, where she addressed company members and invited stakeholders, paying tribute to Bangarra's enduring cultural leadership and the vital role First Nations storytelling plays in Australia's national identity.

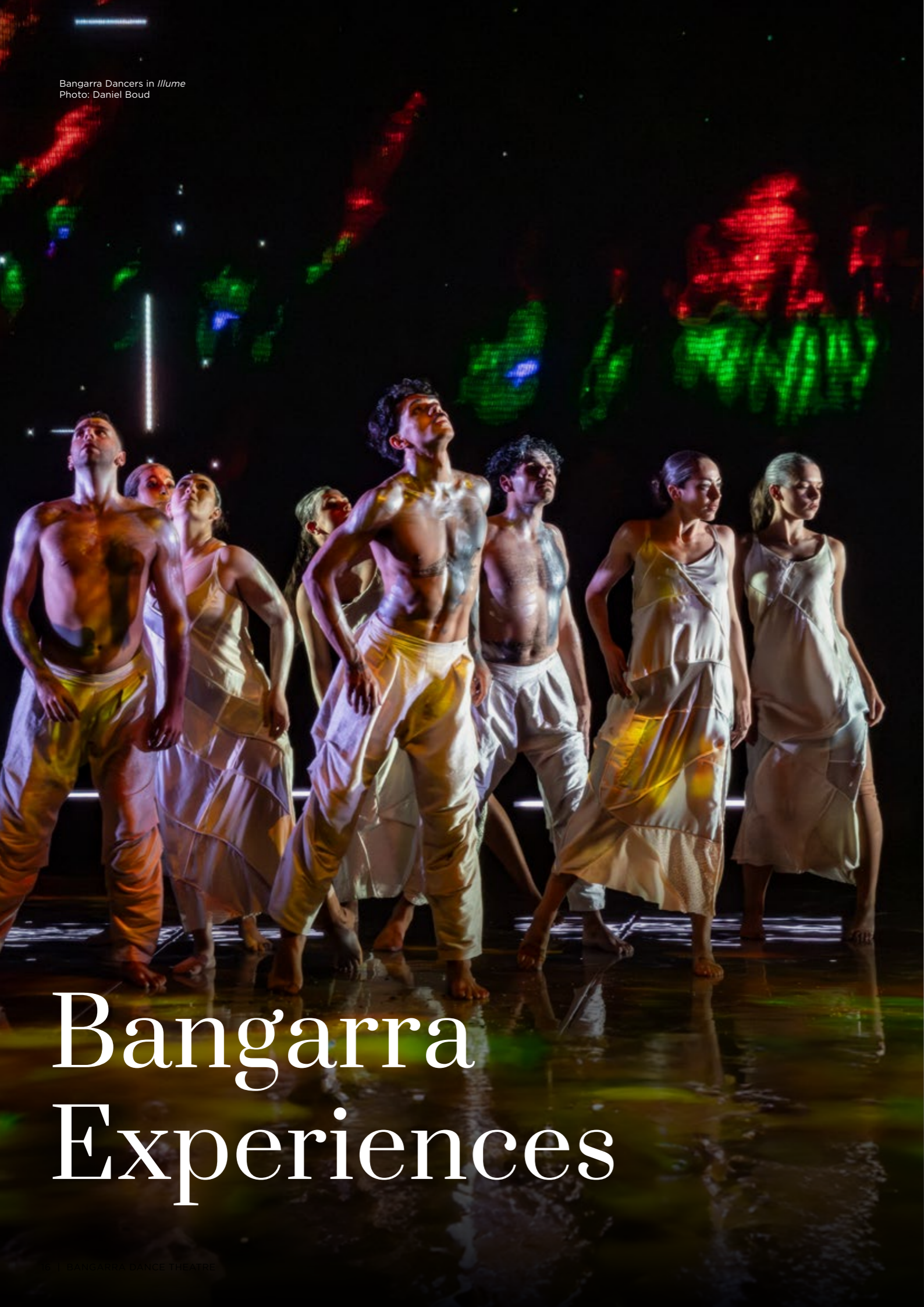
Her visit to Bangarra's home at Walsh Bay provided an opportunity to connect with the Bangarra team. Her Excellency toured production and costume departments, attended rehearsals with Artistic Director Frances Rings and the dancers, and enjoyed morning tea with the entire Bangarra team. We are grateful for the moments of powerful connection, shared conversation and celebration of the people who bring Bangarra's work to life.

Her Excellency's advocacy and patronage affirm Bangarra's place on the national and international stage and reinforce the importance of First Nations voices in shaping Australia's cultural future.

"To have Australia's Head of State as Patron of our Company represents a great step forward in embracing our shared history, and truth-telling. We welcome Her Excellency to the Bangarra Clan," said Phillipa McDermott.

The Governor-General said, "As a long-time audience member, I am proud to support Bangarra Dance Theatre. Bangarra forms an integral part of the Australian cultural landscape, promoting learning, understanding and celebration of First Nations Cultures."

Bangarra Dancers in *Illume*  
Photo: Daniel Boud



# Bangarra Experiences



Daniel Mateo in *Illume*  
Photo: Daniel Boud

★★★★★

“Exquisite dance show makes for an astonishing visual feast”

THE GUARDIAN

50

TOTAL PERFORMANCES

43,597

TOTAL ATTENDANCE

#### VENUE/DATES

**Gadigal Country**  
Roslyn Packer Theatre  
24 - 28 May

**Gadigal Country**  
Sydney Opera House  
4 - 14 June

**Nyoongar Nation**  
State Theatre Centre WA  
10 - 13 July

**Kinjarling Country**  
Albany Entertainment Centre  
18 July

**Ngannawal Country**  
Canberra Theatre Centre  
25 - 26 July

**Meanjin**  
Queensland Performing Arts Centre  
31 July - 9 August

**Garramilla Country**  
Darwin Entertainment Centre  
15 - 16 August

**Naarm**  
Arts Centre Melbourne  
3 - 13 September

## Illume

*Illume*, an iridescent new theatrical experience, draws together music, visual arts and dance to explore the ways light has captivated and sustained Indigenous cultural existence for millennia.

Today, artificial light pollution disrupts ecosystems and obscures the dark night sky, devastating First Nations peoples' connections to sky country and limiting their ability to share celestial knowledge and skylore. First Nations people stand on the precipice of the world under threat.

Mirning Choreographer Frances Rings and Goolarrgon Bard Visual Artist Darrell Sibosado's collaboration explores the awe of light, a bridge between the physical and spiritual worlds. It charts the impacts of light pollution in a climate emergency. *Illume* asks the urgent question: is the deep wisdom passed down from elders enough to illuminate a path forward from the shadows of a dark future?

For two decades, Bangarra Dance Theatre has performed in the Drama Theatre at Sydney Opera House on Tubowgule, now known as Bennelong Point.

In June 2025, Bangarra proudly illuminated its new home at the Sydney Opera House, the Joan Sutherland Theatre. *Illume* then toured nationally to Perth, Albany, Canberra, Brisbane, Darwin and Melbourne.

Artistic Director Frances Rings  
Choreographer Frances Rings and the Dancers of Bangarra Dance Theatre  
Artistic & Cultural Collaborator Darrell Sibosado  
Set Designer Charles Davis  
Costume Designer Elizabeth Gadsby

Associate Costume Designer Rika Hamaguchi  
Lighting Designer Damien Cooper  
Video Designer Craig Wilkinson  
Composer Brendon Boney  
Cultural Consultant Trevor Sampi  
Cultural Consultant Audrey (Pippi) Bin Swani

★★★★★

“*Illume* is a multidimensional experience that integrates sound, dance and visual design to tell the stories of First Nations people – and it does this with sophistication, spirit and grace.”

ARTSHUB

★★★★★

“An otherworldly spectacle”

TIME OUT



Bangarra Dancers in *The Light Inside*  
Photo: Daniel Boud

**13**  
TOTAL PERFORMANCES

**14,208**  
TOTAL ATTENDANCE

## The Light Inside

**VENUE/DATES**

**Dharawal Country**  
Illawarra Performing Arts Centre  
13 - 15 February

**Awabakal and Worimi Country**  
Civic Theatre, Newcastle  
20 - 21 February

**Kaurna Nation**  
Botanic Park, Adelaide  
7 - 8 March

**Dja Dja Wurrung Country**  
Ulumbarra Theatre, Bendigo  
3 - 4 October

**Dijiang Country**  
Geelong Performing Arts Centre  
10 - 11 October

**Bpangerang, Gunaikurnai,  
Taungurung & Yorta Yorta Country**  
Wangaratta Performing Arts  
& Convention Centre  
22 October

*The Light Inside*, one half of the double-bill *Horizon*, made its debut in 2024, which toured nationally. In 2025, *The Light Inside* toured regional locations in New South Wales and Victoria as well as two performances as part of WOMADelaide.

This production was Bangarra's first mainstage cross-cultural collaboration, with leading Māori choreographer and Arts Laureate Moss Te Ururangi Patterson joining beloved Bangarra alumna Deborah Brown. Together they directed Bangarra's award-winning ensemble in stories that honour their mother countries and the spirit that calls them home.

Brown is a proud descendant of the Wakaid Clan and Meriam people in the Torres Strait, and has heritage from far across the seas in Scotland. She carries strength and resilience from her ancestors. Patterson, born near Lake Taupō, is a proud mokopuna (grandson) of the Ngāti Tūwharetoa tribe, and describes his sense of home as something alive, a fire inside, that he carries like a beating heart.

*Choreography* Deborah Brown and Moss Te Ururangi Patterson with Bangarra Dance Theatre Dancers  
*Composition* Steve Francis and Brendon Boney  
*Set Designer* Elizabeth Gadsby  
*Costume Designer* Jennifer Irwin  
*Lighting Designer* Karen Norris  
*Associate Set Designer* Shana O'Brien

“Patterson excels in his group choreography, as pulsing organic masses move amoebic-like...the choreography is by end mesmerising and unceasing..”

**STAGE WHISPERS**

“Aural and visual riches are in abundant supply.”  
**THE AUSTRALIAN**



Benjin Maza and Tjilala Brown-Roberts  
in *The Bogong's Song*  
Photo: Daniel Boud

“An immersive, luminous work that draws young audiences gently into the Dreaming, a world of wonder, wisdom and laughter.”  
**DANCE AUSTRALIA**

**36**  
TOTAL PERFORMANCES

**3,558**  
TOTAL ATTENDANCE

## The Bogong's Song: a call to Country

**VENUE/DATES**

**Meanjin**  
Queensland Performing Arts Centre  
25 Sep - 4 Oct

**Gadigal Country**  
The Studio Theatre at Bangarra  
8 - 19 Oct

*The Bogong's Song* was commissioned by QPAC and Bangarra Dance Theatre and generously supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, the Australian Government's Indigenous Languages and Arts program, the Girgensohn Foundation and the Knights Family Jabula Foundation.



GIRGENSOHN  
FOUNDATION

This brand-new work from Yolande Brown and Chenoa Deemal follows Bangarra's award-winning *Waru - journey of the small turtle*, which enthralled more than 25,000 children. It opened in Brisbane in September before making its way to Bangarra's Studio Theatre for a season in October.

When a brother and sister turn out the lights for the night, they are swept into a world of imagination — a portal to their Dreaming. Seeking an elusive Bogong Moth, they journey into an extraordinary world where Country shares its secrets. In this place, the past speaks through stars, trees, and grasses. Healing begins in the silence between breaths.

*The Bogong's Song* is a rich blend of storytelling, shadow puppetry, dance, and song created especially for primary-aged children. As the children open their hearts to the stories of their ancestors, we are all invited to experience connection to Country and discover that even the smallest creatures have a vital role to play.

Featuring Benjin Maza and Tjilala Brown-Roberts, whose talents in dance, music, and spoken word bring this warm-hearted story to life, *The Bogong's Song* invites young audiences to listen, reflect, and wonder.

*Director, Co-Writer & Choreographer* Yolande Brown  
*Co-Writer & Provocateur* Chenoa Deemal  
*Composer* Brendon Boney  
*Songwriting & Composition* Yolande Brown  
*Set & Costume Designer* Richard Roberts  
*Set Design Associate* Annaliese McCarthy  
*Lighting Designer* Ben Hughes  
*Lighting Design Associate* Eben Love  
*Video Designer* Justin Harrison

*Cultural Consultant* Aunty Doris Paton  
*Cultural Consultant* Arthur Little  
*Illustrator* Cheryl Davison  
*Puppetry Consultant* Vanessa Ellis  
*Performers* Benjin Maza & Tjilala Brown-Roberts  
*Traditional Dance* Brent Watkins  
*Accompanying Music* Uncle Sean Ryan  
*Deaf Consultant* James Kerwin

“The children in the audience become transfixed ... as if responding to some deep, ancient summons that cuts through all the screens, lights, and noise.”  
**SYDNEY MORNING HERALD**

“*The Bogong's Song* is a meaningful and rewarding performance not to be missed.”  
**WHAT'S THE SHOW 4.5\***



Kassidy Waters in *An Act of Being*  
Photo: Daniel Boud

# An Act of Being

Commissioned by Bangarra Dance Theatre and Vivid Sydney, *An Act of Being* is an act of truth-telling — a reclamation of identity and a vision of a future shaped by the strength of generations past. The work was part of the Vivid Sydney 2025 program.

This evocative projection blends contemporary dance, physical theatre and cutting-edge goshMESH technology to explore the ongoing impact of government policies on First Nations communities. Created by Bangarra in collaboration with Reconciliation Australia, *An Act of Being* marks the 25th anniversary of the People’s Walk for Reconciliation across the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Historic documents, constitutional text and fragmented data were projected onto moving bodies — living, breathing proof of displacement and resistance. Suspended mid-air, tethered by elastic cords, they fight to break free.

The weight of history is undeniable, as these figures are pulled across and between four screens as if being dragged from the past and into the present, and back again.

*Co-Director & Editor* Cass Mortimer Eipper

*Co-Director & Choreographer* Frances Rings

*Consultant* Karen Mundine (Reconciliation Australia)

*Composer* Leon Rodgers

*Performers*

Kassidy Waters, James Boyd, Jye Uren, Janaya Lamb, Amberlilly Gordon, Donta Whitham

*Motion Design & Art Direction* Andy Noonan

*VFX* Tom Spiers

*Producer* Michaela Le

*Director of Photography* Tony Luu

*1st Assistant Camera* Anne-Sophia Marie

*Gaffer* Cameron Wintour

*Lighting Assist* Damian Seagar

*Sound Mix* Julian Schweitzer

*Vocals & Speech* Fred Leone

*Artistic Operations Director* Daniel Roberts

*Hair & Makeup* Desiree Wise

*Wardrobe* Sophie Raper

*Marketing Coordinator* Gisella Joy Mandaglio

*Art Director* Cat Studley

*Rehearsal Assistant* Rikki Mason

*Production Assistants*

Lucy Mitchell, Emjay Matthews, Ashleigh King,

Jessica Hodgkinson, Peta-Louise Rixom

*Runners*

Hewett Cook, Mariella Solano



Lillian Banks and Kallum Goolagong in *Yuldea*  
Photo: Kate Longley

# DanceX - Yuldea

5

TOTAL PERFORMANCES

2,888

TOTAL ATTENDANCE

**VENUE/DATES**

**Naarm**  
Arts Centre Melbourne  
15 - 18 October

**SECTIONS PERFORMED:**

Water diviners: Birds

Water diviners: Dingoes

Red Mallee

Steel Snake

Black Mist

*We are memory.*

*Glimpsed through shimmering light on water.*

*A story place where black oaks stand watch.*

*Carved into trees and painted on rocks.*

*North - South - East - West.*

*A brittle landscape of life and loss.*

At Yuldea, stories hover in the sky. The stars reveal a divine Songline, stretching between earth and sky.

Curated by The Australian Ballet, Bangarra joined eight boundary-pushing dance companies from Australia and New Zealand for the DanceX festival, performing excerpts from the celebrated work *Yuldea*. Frances Rings’ first work as Artistic Director is a ceremonial affirmation of history and heritage. *Yuldea* awakens the earth and sky worlds to tell the story of the Anangu people of the Great Victorian Desert.

*Yuldea* explores the moment traditional life collided with the industrial ambition of a growing nation. In 1917, the two halves of the Transcontinental Railway met at the precious water soak on the edge of the Nullarbor, Yuldi Kapi.

Great metal serpents scarred the landscape, draining all water from the sacred soak. Then came the black mist of the atomic testing at Maralinga, forcing the Anangu people to leave their desert homelands where they had lived for millennia. Now memories lay scattered, like the Anangu people, displaced from their home. Remnants of colonial progress are swallowed by sand. But the Anangu endure, determined to keep strong their knowledge systems of land and sky, honouring their eternal bonds of kinship between people and place.

*Yuldea* features original music by Leon Rodgers with featured songs by multi-award-winning duo Electric Fields (Zaachariaha Fielding and Michael Ross). Designers Elizabeth Gadsby (Set), Jennifer Irwin (Costume) and Karen Norris (Lighting) create a desert world on stage.

*Choreographer* Frances Rings  
*Set Designer* Elizabeth Gadsby  
*Costume Designer* Jennifer Irwin  
*Lighting Designer* Karen Norris  
*Composer* Leon Rodgers  
*Guest Composers* Electric Fields

*Mirning Cultural Consultant* Clem Lawrie  
*Yalata Cultural Consultant* Kumanara Smart (dec.)  
*Cultural Astronomer* Karlie Noon  
*Cultural Authority* Representatives from the Yalata Anangu Aboriginal Community Council  
*Aerial and Acrobatic Creative Consultant* Joshua Thomson

Frances Rings and Darrell Sibosado  
in Lombadina. Still taken from video by Cass Eipper.

# Cultural Immersion and Preservation

## CULTURAL IMMERSION AND PRESERVATION



Frances Rings in Lombadina.  
Still taken from video by Cass Eipper.

Cultural immersion is the beating heart of Bangarra, shaping our work and the way we walk together as artists and custodians of living culture.

Our deep connection to Communities embodies the authentic expression of our values — of reciprocity and mutual obligation, cultural exchange and collaboration, care and connection to Country, and a demonstration of our kinship and respect.

### On Country

At the beginning of the year, our creative team visited Lombadina, a small community north of Broome located on Bardi and Jawi Country in Western Australia, for On-Country research for our mainstage production, *Illume*.

Artistic and cultural collaborator Darrell Sibosado, alongside knowledge holders and Cultural Consultants Trevor Sampi and Audrey (Pippi) Bin Swani, welcomed the team with cultural activities and locally guided experiences on Country. These encounters offered profound insight into the stories, landscapes and traditions of the region, grounding *Illume* in Darrell's personal narratives and cultural inheritance.

### Cultural Preservation

In August, we returned to the Top End for the Darwin Festival — a place of enduring significance in Bangarra's story.

We gathered for a moment of reconnection and reflection with our Yolŋu cultural family: Djakapurra Munyarryun, Banula Marika, Rarriwuy Hick, and Bangarra founding member Janet Guypunura Munarryun.

We shared Yolŋu bungul, a continuation of cultural practice that reaches back to the company's earliest beginnings. This powerful exchange was a deeply moving experience, honouring the passing of knowledge across generations, and reaffirming the living lineage that sustains Bangarra's creative voice.

These moments of learning, exchange, and reflection lie at the heart of Bangarra's purpose. Our community engagement is not just about connection; it is about responsibility. Each year, we are reminded that the stories we tell and the art we make are gifts from Country and community, and it is our privilege to honour them on stage and beyond.

Bangarra's Cultural Advisory Council plays an essential role in ensuring that our creative processes, partnerships and engagements remain grounded in cultural integrity, accountability and care. Our deep gratitude goes to Elma Kris for her invaluable contribution during her tenure on the Council, concluding in December 2025.



James Webster (*The Light Inside*, Composer), Kassidy Waters, Moss Te Ururangi Patterson (*The Light Inside*, Choreographer) in Bendigo. Photographer unknown.

## Workplace Giving Program

Bangarra's Workplace Giving Program encourages staff members to donate to initiatives that strengthen cultural, social and wellbeing outcomes for First Nations peoples and communities.

In 2025, our Workplace Giving Program was shaped around the following key pillars:

- Community, Culture and Wellbeing
- Youth and Emerging Generations
- Elders and Cultural Custodians
- Disaster and Hardship Relief
- Arts Programs
- Staff and Family Support

The decision-making framework for Workplace Giving donations is founded on principles of cultural integrity, transparency, equity, and connection. All decisions are made collectively by the Workplace Giving Committee, and employees are encouraged to share their suggestions for consideration. Priority is given to communities where Bangarra has established relationships or cultural ties.

In 2025, our program supported young people to travel for international study trips and participate in sporting championships. It assisted Elders with funding for travel to cultural ceremonies and Sorry Business. Other contributions supported a family facing health challenges and a community project aimed at improving the lives of mothers and children.

Our arts program pillar provided sponsorship for dance training for a young and emerging talent and covered the travel expenses for James Webster, the cultural advisor and songman of *The Light Inside*, to attend opening night of the performance in Bendigo. Additionally, the program supported a First Nations regional project by paying for the freight costs of a tarkett, ensuring that performers had an appropriate floor at the Mullumbimby venue.

We cherish our connection with communities, and we are honoured to play a part in making a difference where we can.

Bundjalung Aunty with Bangarra dancers. Photo: Raquel Kerdal

Janaya Lamb in *Illume*. Photo: Daniel Boud



# Youth and Engagement Programs



Rekindling, Adelaide  
Photo: Adam Jenkins

## YOUTH AND ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS



Rekindling, Thursday Island  
Still taken from video by Luke Currie-Richardson.

### Rekindling

Rekindling inspires pride, kinship, and strength in young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders through dance residencies with secondary school-aged students. Participants spend time on Country, and gather stories from Community Elders to create thought-provoking performances and events.

Rekindling builds strong relationships with Elders and Community leaders over several years, allowing time for each project to develop in its own unique way.

In 2025, the Youth Program team revisited Shepparton in regional Victoria and the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. These visits allowed communities to prepare for local NAIDOC events, resulting in increased community engagement.

Additionally, Rekindling established connection with two new communities in Adelaide, South Australia, and Thursday Island, Queensland.

In collaboration with Aboriginal Pathways, Student Pathways and Careers, Department of Education South Australia, the youth and education team led a project culminating in a community performance at the Adelaide Festival Centre. In Thursday Island, students proudly shared cultural knowledge about the four winds and how they shape daily life and survival.

On Tiwi Island in the Northern Territory, the team facilitated workshops, reaching more than 150 primary school students.

### The Arts Unit

We continued to deliver our New South Wales Public School program in collaboration with The Arts Unit of the NSW Department of Education, providing both online and face-to-face workshops, as well as support for performance initiatives like the *Schools Spectacular*.

Throughout the year, workshops were provided to over 100 schools, engaging 1002 students. Notably, 9 students who showed exceptional potential were invited to participate in the 3-day Associate Program, where they interacted with representatives from NIDA and NAISDA.

From across the state, 27 students were selected to join the 2025 NSW Public Schools Aboriginal Dance Company, performing at the State Dance Festival and the *Schools Spectacular*. The Arts Unit alumni and Bangarra tutor Holy Faulds created this year's work.

### Other Activities and Partnerships

In 2025, we held our first on-site NAIDOC celebrations at Bangarra's home at the Wharf. Over two days, we offered dancing and art workshops for all age groups, which were well received.

We also delivered workshops with partner organisations such as the Sydney Swans GO Foundation, Matraville Chifley Public School and the Girls and Boys Brigade of Surry Hills.

# Education

Following Frances Rings’ 2012 work *Terrain* being the prescribed text for the NSW High School Dance syllabus from 2018 to 2024, Rings’ work *Yuldea* (2022) became the new Appreciation study in 2025, continuing to 2029.

Bangarra works recommended in other states and territories for dance studies include Stephen Page’s *Bennelong* (2017), *Mathinna* (2008) and *Patyegarang* (2013). These titles are available to Australian and New Zealand schools via the education platform ClickView, and in 2025 attracted more than 25,000 views.

In April, Frances Rings delivered the keynote address at the Dance Educators Professional Association (DEPA) Conference and Bangarra Rehearsal Director Rikki Mason conducted a dance practice workshop for conference attendees.

In October, Bangarra alumni Yolande Brown presented an online seminar to International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum developers and education specialists from the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Europe and Singapore. The presentation, titled *Indigenous Values and Perspectives in Teaching and Learning* supported the IB’s implementation of a new Dance Course for Diploma students (equivalent to Year 12).

## School Shows

Bangarra’s performances are highly recommended across various state curricula and subject areas, with school shows often selling out well in advance of the season. In 2025, 4703 students attended Bangarra performances.

The Bangarra Wilay Program (Wiradjuru for ‘brushtail possum’) is a dedicated initiative offering subsidised tickets for First Nations Students, fostering a stronger connection to the next generation.

The Wilay performance in Sydney for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students followed by a lively post-show meet and greet with the dancers, is one of the highlights of the year.



Rekindling, Thursday Island  
Still taken from video by Samuel Tainga Towa Savage

## Workshops

114  
total workshops

1,903  
total participants

## Community

25 workshops  
532 participants

## Rekindling

15 workshops  
369 participants

## The Arts Unit

74 workshops  
1,002 participants



Frances Rings at Sydney Opera House  
Photo: Daniel Boud

# Accessibility

Bangarra Dance Theatre is dedicated to enhancing Accessibility and Inclusion initiatives across the company’s programs.

In 2025, we offered audio-described performances for the national tour of *Illume*, *The Bogong’s Song* in Brisbane and Sydney, and *The Light Inside* regional tour in New South Wales and Victoria.

The audio description for *Illume* and *The Light Inside* featured over 200 pre-recorded text segments seamlessly integrated into the soundtrack, while *The Bogong’s Song* was described live. Sound and music composer Brendon Boney served as the describer for *Illume*. *The Bogong’s Song* was described by Chenoa Deemal in Brisbane and Brendon Boney in Sydney. Accessibility consultant Shane Carroll described *The Light Inside*.

All patrons attending audio-described productions received pre-show notes in accessible document format, alongside a vocal recording. Select performances also included a post-show tactile session led by our production and costume team, enhancing the audience’s engagement with the company.

As someone who is blind, attending a dance performance had never been on my radar until Bangarra introduced Audio Description. The opportunity to experience performances in this way was extraordinarily moving. The blend of music, the rhythm of the dancers on stage, and the cultural narrative created a breathtaking experience — truly a WOW moment.

— Donna Purcell, 2025

Our collaboration with Sydney Dance Company and the National Disability Recruitment Coordinator (NDRC), a Job Access program funded by the Australian Government, has concluded. This partnership has produced a comprehensive report to inform the next stages of improving workplace accessibility for people with disabilities.

In 2025, Bangarra hosted Leila Harris, an intern from the Accessible Arts New South Wales Next Level Creative Mentorship program, who engaged with our Development, Marketing, Production, and Accessibility teams.

# First Nations Employment Pathways



Tamara Bouman, Roxie Syron (2025 Russell Page Graduate Program Recipient) and Lillian Banks in *Illume*  
Photo: Daniel Boud



Eli Clarke (2025 Russell Page Graduate Program Recipient) and Bangarra Dancers in *Illume*  
Photo: Daniel Boud

## Russell Page Graduate Program

Russell Page holds a vital place in Bangarra's history, and his legacy will remain vibrant in perpetuity.

The Russell Page Graduate Program offers opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance graduates or early-career artists to develop their skills as professional dancers. Participants receive training and mentoring while being part of the ensemble for performances and touring seasons. The program supports each graduate to deepen their practice through Pilates, dance, and Strength and Conditioning, while also sharing their knowledge by leading workshops and masterclasses with communities across the country.

In 2025, we welcomed Eli Clarke, an Arabana and Gurindji artist from Mparntwe/Alice Springs, Northern Territory, and Roxie Syron, a proud descendant of the Biripi and Worimi Nations of the Mid North Coast, New South Wales.

Roxie and Eli performed in *The Light Inside*, *Illume*, and participated in the creative development of *Flora*, to be premiered in 2026. The graduates also participated in dedicated cultural activities in Darwin with the Munyarryun and Marika families, including founding member Janet Guypunura Munyarryun.

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



Sidney Saltner (2nd year MFA Cultural Leadership), Maylene Slater-Burns (1st year MFA Cultural Leadership) and Luke Hamlin (2nd year MFA Cultural Leadership). Photo: Travis Cardona

## First Nations Staff Development Program

The First Nations Staff Development Fund was created to ignite the potential of Bangarra staff members by exploring opportunities for professional growth, both within the arts sector and beyond. In 2025, three First Nations staff members undertook professional development through this program, each investing in pathways that deepen both creative practice and cultural leadership.

Donta Whitham commenced an Advanced Certificate of Fashion at the National Fashion School — a one-year program exploring communication, creative direction, retail management and business practice.

Sidney Saltner began a three-year Master of Fine Arts (Cultural Leadership) at NIDA. Through this program, he will engage in exchange and collaboration across innovative approaches to creative and professional practice, spanning governance, cultural policy, entrepreneurial leadership, advocacy, sustainability, and research-led methods for cultural transformation.

Roxie Syron commenced a two-year Specialist Award in Editing and Proofreading, supporting her ambition to work as an editor or proofreader for authors and journalists within the publishing industry.

Youth Programs Team members Sidney Saltner, Sani Townson, Amy Weatherall and Holly Faulds are participating in a one-year Teacher Training 2025 course (Certificate IV in Dance Teaching and Management) through Sydney Dance Company as part of the First Nations Staff Development Program.

The fund is an important company initiative enabling Bangarra staff to explore their passions and expand their skills. It helps them gain new perspectives by experiencing different industries, ultimately bringing fresh ideas back to their communities and workplaces.



Bangarra Dancers in Strength and Conditioning. Photo Michelle Wong

## First Nations Emerging Producer

Bangarra's core values of reciprocity and mutual obligation are demonstrated in our deep connection with Community, and in our dedication to creating opportunities for First Nations creatives. Our Emerging Producer's program ensures a culturally safe and accessible pathway for the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts workers.

The Emerging First Nations Producer Internship, was a structured 18-month, full time workforce development position. Supported by Creative Australia, the program was designed in collaboration with Moogahlin Performing Arts, a community-led First Peoples arts organisation. The Internship operated across both organisations' annual artistic cycles and ensured broad exposure to two distinct operational models.

First Nations Emerging Producer Aroha Pehi worked in both companies developing foundational skills in scheduling, budgeting, fundraising assistance, communications and internal coordination. The networks and knowledge developed through this placement are transferable across the industry – equipping Aroha to contribute well beyond the program.

*"The program helped me strengthen my core producing skills and understand how a First Peoples arts organisation operates... This role improved my ability to prioritise tasks and contribute to a smooth, caring workflow."*  
**Aroha Pehi, First Nations Emerging Producer**

## Safe Dance Program

Bangarra's Safe Dance Program is designed to enhance the health and well-being of dancers, tailoring the program to the company's needs and the demands of the repertoire.

Managed by Director of Performance Health Michelle Wong, with support from Company Manager Joseph Cardona, the program includes regular services such as Pilates, Massage Therapy, Physiotherapy, Performance Coaching, Sports Nutrition, and gym-based Strength and Conditioning.

In 2025, the Production team accessed Strength and Conditioning training, as well as other services such as Physiotherapy and Massage Therapy.

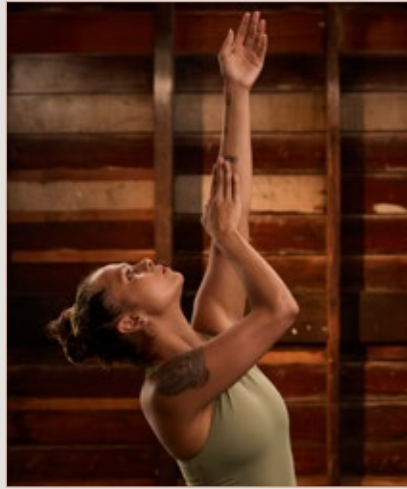
Along with the scheduled activities, the Safe Dance Program develops individual dancers through a holistic approach, considering their workload and fostering long-lasting proactive health and wellbeing habits.

Russell Page graduates Roxie Syron and Eli Clarke participated in extensive Pilates training as well as individualised and supervised gym programs, which helped them develop skills and healthy habits to manage their year-long workloads effectively.

The Safe Dance Program, and the combined efforts of the health team, Bangarra dancers and production staff resulted in minimal workplace injuries and compensation claims in 2025.

# Dancers

Photos: Daniel Boud



**Lillian Banks**

A proud Yawuru woman from Broome (WA)



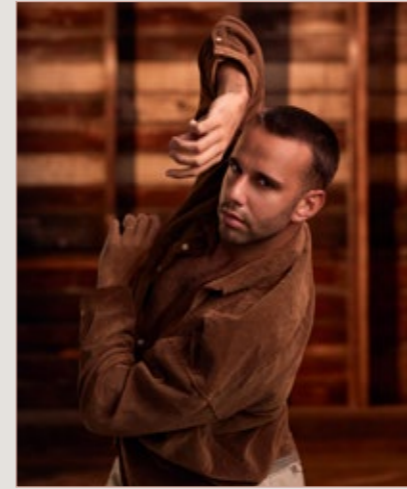
**Courtney Radford**

A proud Ballardong Noongar (WA)



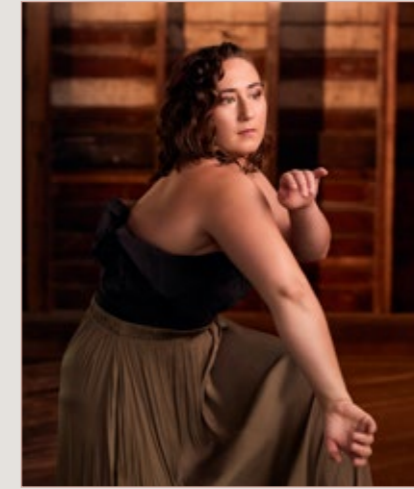
**Kallum Goolagong**

A proud Wiradjuri & Darkinjung man (NSW)



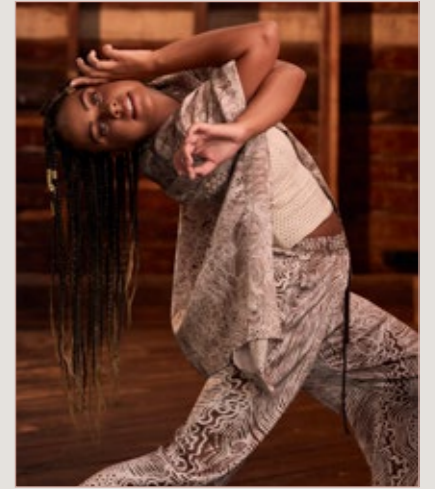
**James Boyd**

A proud Aboriginal man with connections to Kunja & Muruwari people & Kooma Nation (NSW, QLD)



**Chantelle Lee Lockhart**

Dharawal & Gadigal descendant (NSW)



**Amberlilly Gordon**

A proud Wiradjuri & Ngemba woman (NSW)



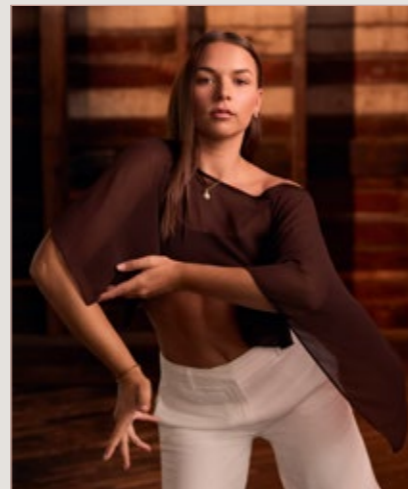
**Kassidy Waters**

A proud Wonnarua woman (NSW)



**Jye Uren**

A proud Worimi & Dughutti man and holds lineage to Biripi & Yorta Yorta Country (NSW)



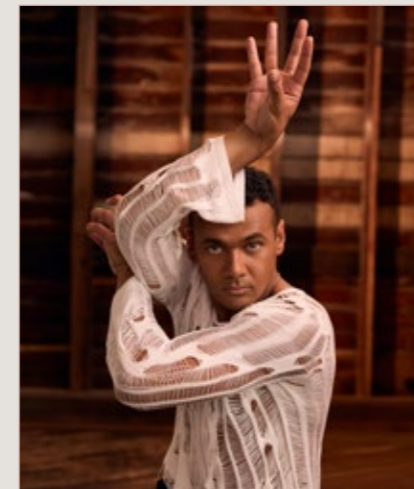
**Maddison Paluch**

A proud Wiradjuri & Bundjalung woman (NSW)



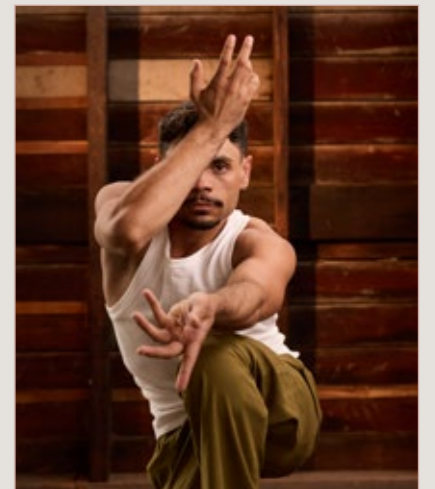
**Donta Whitham**

South Sea Islands descendant with connections to Ambrym Island



**Zeak Tass**

A proud South Sea Islander & Yuwibara man from Mackay (QLD)



**Edan Porter**

A proud Gomeri man (NSW)



**Daniel Mateo**

Gomeri man as well as Tongan heritage (NSW)



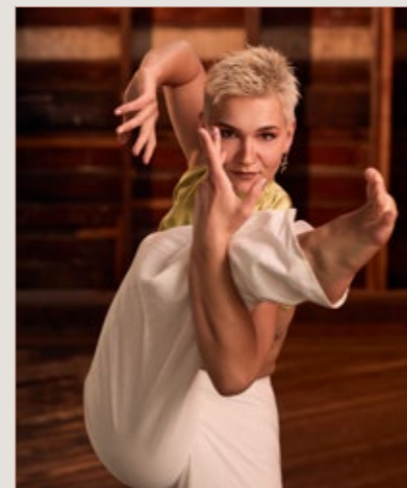
**Emily Flannery**

A proud Wiradjuri woman (NSW)



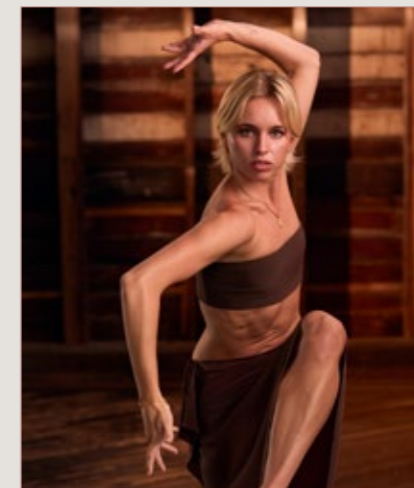
**Janaya Lamb**

A proud Wiradjuri woman (NSW)



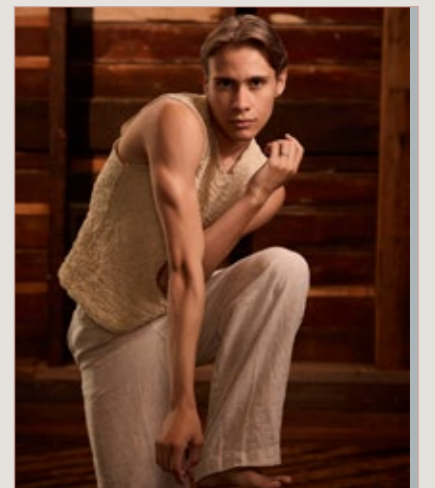
**Tamara Bouman**

Biripi woman (NSW)



**Roxie Syron**

A proud Biripi & Worimi woman (NSW)



**Eli Clarke**

A proud Arabana & Gurindji man from Alice Springs (NT)

# Staff

## Executive

Artistic Director and Co-CEO \_\_\_\_\_ Frances Rings  
Executive Director and Co-CEO \_\_\_\_\_ Louise Ingram  
Executive Assistant \_\_\_\_\_ Natasha Cudilla

## Artistic

Rehearsal Director \_\_\_\_\_ Rikki Mason  
Artistic Operations Director \_\_\_\_\_ Daniel Roberts (to May)  
Cloudia Elder (from March)  
Director of Programming \_\_\_\_\_ Phoebe Collier  
Clinical Director \_\_\_\_\_ Michelle Wong  
Community Engagement Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Raquel Kerdel  
(to November)  
First Nations Emerging Producer Intern \_\_\_\_\_ Aroha Pehi

## Production

Director, Technical and Production \_\_\_\_\_ John Colvin  
Production Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Catherine Studley  
Stage Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Rose Jenkins (to February)  
Ashleigh King (from January)  
Head Electrician \_\_\_\_\_ Lucy Mitchell  
Head of Wardrobe \_\_\_\_\_ Jessica Hodgkinson (to July)  
Sally-Anne Andrews (from September)  
Production Trainee \_\_\_\_\_ Peta-Louise Rixom (to May)

## Education & Youth Programs

Youth Programs Director \_\_\_\_\_ Sidney Saltner  
Youth Programs Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Sani Townson  
Youth Programs Team Tutor \_\_\_\_\_ Amy Weatherall  
Youth Programs Russell Page Graduate \_\_\_\_\_ Holly Faulds  
Youth Programs and Education Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Chantal Kerr  
Education & Accessibility Consultant \_\_\_\_\_ Shane Carroll  
(to January)

## Development

Development Director \_\_\_\_\_ Anna Matthews  
Philanthropy Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Gemma Frayne  
Corporate & Government Affairs Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Lola Pinder  
Philanthropy Officer \_\_\_\_\_ Alia Saire (to September)  
Rory Steele (from June)  
Corporate & Government Affairs Officer \_\_\_\_\_ Jaimee-lee  
Camkin

## Marketing

Marketing & Communications  
Director \_\_\_\_\_ John Quertermous (to May)  
Undine Marshfield (from May)  
Marketing Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Kye Maurer  
Ticketing & Customer  
Experience Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Kieran Dennis  
Brand and Pathways Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Sophie Raper  
Marketing Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Gisella Mandaglio  
Ticketing & Admin Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Melody Duan  
Venue Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Moira Kennedy (to January)  
Sharlini Williams (February to July)  
Katherine Hamilton (from September)

## Administration

Chief Financial Officer  
& Company Secretary \_\_\_\_\_ Roslyn Munday  
Finance & Operations Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Grace O'Malley  
Human Resources Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Atul Joshi  
Accounts Assistant \_\_\_\_\_ Tess Scully

## Cultural Advisory Council

Raymond Blanco (Chair)  
Elma Kris, Rheannan Port, Matthew Doyle, Mark Howett,  
Peta Strachan



# Thank you to our 2025 Partners

Courtney Radford on top of the  
Sydney Opera House Sails  
Photo: Daniel Boud

## MAJOR PARTNERS



## SUPPORTING PARTNER



## PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS



## COMPANY PARTNERS



## GOVERNMENT CORE FUNDING PARTNERS



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



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



# 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.

## Patron

Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

Dr Leigh Deves  
Dr Lyndell Fraser  
Nelson Estrella & Phil Rounsevell  
Turnbull Foundation  
Zareh & Ping Nalbandian

## Foundations

Annamila First Nations Foundation  
The Aranday Foundation  
The Balnaves Foundation  
The Bowden Marstan Foundation  
Canny Quine Foundation  
Dick & Pip Smith Foundation  
Girgensohn Foundation  
Greater Melbourne Foundation  
The Greatorex Fund  
The Knights Family Jabula Foundation  
MJW Foundation  
The Myer Foundation  
The Ross Trust  
The Scully Fund  
The Sherry-Hogan Foundation  
Todd Family Foundation  
Une Parkinson Foundation  
The Yulgilbar Foundation

## Guya – Fish

PRONOUNCED: GOO-YA  
**\$50,000 & Over**

Anonymous  
Canny Quine Foundation  
Hooper Shaw Foundation

## Bilawi – Sheoak

PRONOUNCED: BE-LAWI  
**\$20,000 – \$49,999**

In Memoriam for Uncle Rob Bryant  
Josephine Wolanski  
Marion Heathcote & Brian Burfitt  
Patagorang Foundation  
Patterson Pearce Foundation

## Wiiny – Fire

PRONOUNCED: WEEN  
**\$10,000 – \$19,999**

Alison Jacob & Douglas Bridge  
Aniek A Baten  
Belinda Kendall-White  
The Clark Family Foundation  
Helen Eager & Christopher Hodges  
James N. Kirby Foundation  
Jenny Durack  
The Rossi Foundation  
Russell & Jane Kift  
Scovell Gardner Family  
Sue Sheldrick  
Victoria Taylor

## Bargan – Boomerang

PRONOUNCED: BARK-ARN  
**\$5,000 – \$9,999**

Anonymous (3)  
C M Musgrave Memorial Trust  
Danny & Kathleen Gilbert  
Edwina Kearney  
Elizabeth Ramsden & Philip Ramsden  
Harry Kestin Foundation  
Jennifer Thurstun  
Jo Moss  
Joanna Collins AM  
Linda Herd  
Margaret Moreton  
Meredith Brooks  
Misho Vasiljevich  
Penelope Seidler AM  
Peter & Roz Owens  
Philippa Warner  
R Clay  
Richard Leonard & Gerlinde Scholz  
Sandra McCullagh & Nieces  
Sue Terry & Len Whyte

## Birrimal – Bush

PRONOUNCED: BI-RR-MAL  
**\$1,000 – \$4,999**

Anonymous (11)  
Alasdair Murrrie-West  
Alison & John Cameron  
Andrew Dunn  
Anna Bligh  
Bruce Trethowan

Caffrey Blair Foundation  
Catherine Lawrence OAM & Geoff Lawrence  
Cheryl Hatch  
Chris Shipway & Tahn O'Brien  
Chris Thomson  
Classa Martinuzzi  
The Cowell Mirisklavos Foundation  
Cynthia Nadai  
Dahni Houseman  
David Robb  
Debbie Belnick  
Denise Hellier  
Derek Watt & Cathy Brown-Watt  
Dexter Dunphy AM  
Diana Ashley  
Diana Bosworth  
Dominic Thurn  
Donna O'Sullivan  
EBD Architects  
Elizabeth H Loftus  
Elizabeth Mildwater & Stuart Schaefer  
Fi Mcqueen  
Fiona & Peter Murray  
Fiona Findlay  
Prof. Fiona Stanley  
Gayle Tollifson  
Gemalla Endowment at APS Foundation  
Gerard Harnan & Kelly West  
Gloria Dall'Alba & Jörgen Sandberg  
Heather Cole  
Heather Drew  
Jacob Mamutil  
James & Belinda Allen

James Martin  
Jane Barnes  
Janet Berwick  
Janice Adie  
Jann Skinner  
Jennifer & Scott Alison  
Jenny Schwarz  
Jill Keyte & Ray Carless  
Jill Maddox & Ian Evans  
Jill Redmyre  
Joan Ross  
John Keane  
Judi & Paul Taylor  
Katarina Cvitkovic  
Kate Arnott  
Katrina & David Whitham  
Kaye Hocking  
Keith Richards  
Kelvin Widdows  
Kerry Reid & Alan Croker  
Kristen Walker  
Louise Ingram  
Ms. Lynne M. Saunder  
Mara Moustafine & Andrew Jakubowicz  
Margot McDonald  
Maria Pate  
Marian Magee & David Castillo  
Marie Jamieson  
Martyn Thompson  
Matthew Johnson  
Melanie Mathieson  
Mike Thompson & Ian Kelly  
Mira Joksovic  
Osborn Family Fund  
Patrice & Craig Laslett  
Patrick Sze Tho  
Paul Lam-Po-Tang  
Paul Sugars  
Perpetual Foundation - Cara Endowment  
Peter & Lillian Armitage  
Peter Wise  
Dr Philippa Sawyer  
Robin Rodgers  
Rosemary & Dan Howard  
Rosemary Walls

S M Burnett  
Sally Crawford  
Sara McKerihan  
Sara Watts  
SG James  
Shane Carroll  
Silver Harris  
Stella Ginsberg & Rod Clarke  
Stephen & Joanne Norrish  
Stephen & Sophie Allen  
Sue & Alan Cameron AO  
Teresa Handicott  
Tony Ward & Gail Ryan  
Dr Trish Richardson  
Trudie Harriman  
Yvonne Hargrave  
Yvonne Langley-Walsh

## Garrabari – Corroboree

PRONOUNCED: GAR-RA-BRI  
**\$500 – \$999**

Anonymous (16)  
Anne Reeves  
Anthony Paull  
Barbara Jacob  
Belinda Gibson & Jim Murphy  
Carol Ladd  
Danielle Kavanagh  
Diana Cross  
Diane Grady AM  
Don & Leslie Parsonage  
Elizabeth Carpenter  
Frennie Beytagh  
Gabrielle Kuiper  
Gail Wright  
George & Maruschka Loupis  
Gillian Rubinstein  
GML Heritage  
Jan Williams  
Jane & Les Johnston  
Janelle Christofis  
Jeannette McHugh  
Jee Joan Lai

Jenny Vaughan  
Jenny Williams  
Jock & Jenny Jeffries  
John Duck  
Joshua Gordon-Carr  
JS & NS Turnbull  
Judith Ajani  
Julie Eisenberg  
Kate Williams  
Krysia Kitch & David Riggs  
Lachlan Bell  
Maria Hann  
Marian Hegarty  
Marjorie Colman  
Michael Deutscher  
Mischelle Devitt  
Nick O'Brien  
Mr. Peter Sands  
Mr. Peter Wolfe  
Priscilla Guest  
Rosemary Oxe  
Sarah Brasch  
Sarah McIntyre  
Sophie Keating  
Stefan Mystkowski  
Stuart Thomas  
Susan Bear  
Susan Cochrane  
Susanne de Ferranti  
Tamara Cirkel  
Vera Vargassoff  
Yvette Peterson

## Dhulubang Gifts

Gratefully acknowledging those who have supported Bangarra through a gift in their Will.

Camilla Ah Kin  
Carol Cruikshank  
Elizabeth Roberts  
Ellen Margaret Waugh OAM  
Marena Mazoufas  
Sally Nicholson  
Shirley Warland

## Dhulubang Circle

We gratefully acknowledge those who have made the visionary gesture of including Bangarra in their will.

Anonymous (15)  
Anna Viale  
Anne Bruce  
Anne Roussac-Hoyne & Neil Roussac  
Daniel Story  
Daphne Kavassilas  
Heather Attenbrow  
Helen McCormack  
Jan Williams  
Jane Maher  
Jane Packham  
Janet Stevenson  
Keith & Marguerite Mobbs  
Kellie McGregor  
Linda Herd  
Lynn Ralph  
Margo Garnon-Williams  
Mary McMenamin  
Monika Gaede  
Nicola Kaldor  
Ronja Sen  
Ruth Jelley  
Samantha May Jones  
Shona Lee  
Silver Harris  
Stephen Scrogings  
Teresa Handicott  
Tonia Marsh  
Victoria James  
Yvonne Langley-Walsh

# 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. Phillipa's goal is for an Australia that acknowledges and embraces our shared history and culture to build authentic, purposeful relationships with First Nations Peoples.

Executive Manager Indigenous Community Experience Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Board member Lloyd McDermott, Rugby Development Team and NSW Treasury First Nations Advisory Committee.

## Joshua Duke (Deputy Chair)

(OCTOBER 2021 - PRESENT)

A proud Dunghutti man, Josh has over eleven years experience providing commercial advisory services to a wide range of clients across Australia including Federal Government, listed and non-listed entities. Josh is a highly accomplished Fellow of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CA ANZ) who 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 Director within Deloitte's consulting business.

Josh is also a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and currently holds and has held a number of directorships including as the Chairman of Nguluway Design Inc, the Y Canberra and Chairman of its Audit, Finance and Risk Committee, Inaugural Chairman of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Panel for CA ANZ, Treasurer - Ausdance ACT, Deputy Chairman - ACT Young Chartered Accountants' Committee.

## Diat Alferink

(JANUARY 2025 - PRESENT)

Diat comes from the Kala Lagaw Ya Language group from the Western Torres Strait Islands and is a descendant of the Wakaid Clan of Badu and Wagadagam Clan of Mabuia Island.

Diat is a performing artist, festival director, comedian, film maker and creative producer. She's a skilled project manager with extensive experience over the last 30 years leading, developing and directing community arts organisations, large-scale festivals, community events and productions.

Diat was raised in Outback South Australia but now currently lives on Thursday Island in the Torres Strait, where she's CEO of the Torres Strait Islander Media Association (TSIMA) and Editor in Chief of the Torres News.

Diat is a strong advocate for the ongoing need and value of First Nations arts and media development opportunities in regional and remote communities.

She's passionate about the positive contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and media can make to the lives of all Australians.

## 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 Pitjantjatjarra 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.

## Louise Ingram

(APRIL 2024 - PRESENT)

Louise Ingram has over 30 years' financial management and corporate governance experience, specialising in not-for-profit cultural organisations. Louise is currently Executive Director and Co-CEO at Bangarra Dance Theatre and was previously Financial Controller at the Sydney Opera House. Earlier career experience includes 14 years with Australian Design Centre including as Associate Director, several commercial businesses and PwC (Audit). A Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, Louise is a Board member of the Australian Design Centre and Chair of the Finance Audit and Risk Committee.

## Sara McKerihan

(DECEMBER 2024 - PRESENT)

Sara McKerihan was recently Vice Chair of Markets and Securities Service for Australia and New Zealand, for Citi, relocating from New York to Sydney in 2020. She focused on growing the bank's strategic relationships with key Australian/New Zealand clients.

Prior to that Sara was in the Global Client and Relationship Management Group, based in New York, working with Citi's senior management and coverage teams to deliver best-in-class services to the most important global clients.

Sara initially joined Salomon Brothers in London and played a key role in forming the specialist European Government Group. In 1999 she was appointed Head of Fixed Income Sales for Asia Pacific and relocated to Hong Kong. She was also made a member of the Asia Pacific Management Team. In 2002 she relocated to New York.

Sara has a Bachelor's Degree in Commerce from Newcastle University and graduated from the Development Program for Managers from the University of New South Wales. She is a member of CEW and serves on the board of The Australia International Screen Foundation (NYC) and formerly on the boards of the American Australian Association, the American Friends of the National Gallery of Australia, and 100 Women in Finance.

## Jemima Myer

(FEBRUARY 2023 - PRESENT)

Born and educated in Narrm (Melbourne), Jemima Myer is a teacher based in Garramilla, Darwin. She is a graduate of the University of Melbourne where she studied Linguistics and Australian Indigenous Studies. The topic of her honours thesis was bilingual education in Indigenous communities. She also completed a Master's degree in Primary Teaching at Charles Darwin University, where she lived and worked in communities across the Northern Territory.

Jemima is Co-Convenor of the Mental Health Committee at The Myer Foundation. She is also the representative of The Myer Foundation at Mannifera, a grant-making collective of philanthropic organisations focused on supporting organisations working towards strengthening our democracy and building a fairer economy. Jemima has served the community sector in roles including policy, language, education and the arts.

## Ian Roberts

(AUGUST 2020 - PRESENT)

Ian Roberts is currently the Deputy Chair of the Annamila First Nations Foundation.

Ian is a novelist and freelance writer. His most recent work, *The Celestials*, was The Age and Sydney Morning Herald Fiction Pick of the Week in November 2023.

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.

# Board of Directors

## Frances Rings

(FEBRUARY 2023 - PRESENT)

Frances Rings is a descendant of the Mirning Tribe from the west coast of South Australia. Frances Rings was appointed Artistic Director of Bangarra Dance Theatre in 2023 and serves as co-CEO alongside Louise Ingram.

Frances made her mainstage choreographic debut with Bangarra in 2002 with *Rations* from *Walkabout*, receiving outstanding critical acclaim. Since then, she has created nine works for the company: *Bush* (2003, co-choreographed with Stephen Page), *Unaipon* (2004), *X300* (2007), *Artefact* (2010), *Terrain* (2012), *Sheoak* (2015), *SandSong* (2021, co-choreographed with Stephen Page), *Yuldea* (2023), and *Illume* (2025).

Her choreographic work extends across the industry, with commissions for West Australian Ballet, Leigh Warren & Dancers, and Tasdance. Internationally, Frances has forged significant intercultural collaborations with Kaha:wi Dance Theatre in Six Nations, Turtle Island (Canada), and Atamira Dance Company in Auckland, Aotearoa (New Zealand). She was a guest collaborator and performer in Atamira's 2015 production *MITIMITI*, choreographed by Jack Gray, and in 2018 created a new work for *Kotahi*, Atamira's triple bill program.

From 2016 to 2019, Frances was Head of Creative Studies at NAISDA Dance College, where she directed five end-of-year productions. She then served as Associate Artistic Director at Bangarra Dance Theatre from 2019 to 2022.

Frances Rings has received numerous major awards throughout her career, recognising her exceptional contributions to Australian dance and choreography.

## Sally Scales

(DECEMBER 2024 - PRESENT)

Sally Scales is a Pitjantjatjara woman from Pipalyatjara in the far west of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands in remote South Australia.

She was elected as Chairperson of the APY Executive Board Council in 2019 and was the second woman to hold the position.

Ms Scales has worked with the APY Art Centre Collective since 2013 in cultural liaison, elder support and spokesperson roles. She is part of the youth leadership team for the Uluru Statement reform, having been involved in the Referendum Council's Constitution regional dialogues in Ross River, Adelaide and the national convention in Uluru in 2017. Since then Ms Scales has been involved with the Uluru Dialogue leadership.

In 2020, she turned her focus to her artistic practice and held her first exhibition at the APY Gallery Adelaide in March 2021. It was a sell out exhibition.

Ms Scales is an independent elected board member of the Australian Children's Television Foundation and a board member on the Alinytjara Wilurara Landscape Board.

Ms Scales is Chair of the First Nations Advisory Group at the National Gallery Australia.



American Express is committed to building strong relationships with First Nations businesses, networks and communities.



BAI Communications  
is proud to support  
Bangarra Dance  
Theatre in showcasing  
our country's rich  
cultural heritage and  
inspiring future  
generations.



bai communications

# NRI

## Fearless commitment.

At NRI, we're fearlessly committed to success. For our clients, for ourselves, and for our communities. That's why we partner with Bangarra.

Together we are committed to playing a role in elevating our country's rich history and culture, and building the Indigenous leaders of tomorrow.



NRI

Transformative  
digital solutions



Celebrating 25 years of  
Qantas and Bangarra Dance Theatre



**Wesfarmers Arts**

Major Partner

# BANGARRA & WESFARMERS ARTS

Celebrating First Nations arts and culture  
with Australia and the world.




Bangarra Dancers in *Illume*  
Photo: Daniel Boud





**BANGARRA DANCE  
THEATRE AUSTRALIA**


ABN 96 003 814 006

Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia  
Gadigal Country  
Wharf 4/5, 15 Hickson Road  
Walsh Bay NSW 2000  
Phone +61 2 9251 5333  
Email [bangarra@bangarra.com.au](mailto:bangarra@bangarra.com.au)

 @bangarradancetheatre #bangarra

 /bangarra

 @BangarraDanceTheatre

 /bangarradancetheatre

