



BENNELONG

A legacy brought to life through distinctive dance theatre

In 2017, Bangarra returns with *Bennelong*, a bold new creation from Artistic Director Stephen Page. *Bennelong* will premiere at the Sydney Opera House on 29 June before travelling to Canberra, Brisbane and Melbourne.

Bennelong is Page's 24th work for Bangarra. In an abstracted narrative, told through the company's transformative dance theatre language, Page will unravel Bennelong's story. The work explores the life of this infamous man – the namesake of Bennelong Point whose legacy has influenced the past, present and future of Australia's history and people.

Woollarawarre Bennelong was a senior man of the Eora, from the Port Jackson area in Sydney. He is one of the most mythologised and celebrated individuals from the days of First Contact.

Bennelong was one of the first Aboriginal men to be taken from his people and introduced to European ways and one of the first Aboriginal people to have their life story recorded and documented through the early diaries of the British military.

With extraordinary curiosity, courage and diplomacy, Bennelong led his community to survive a clash of cultures, and left a legacy that reverberates through contemporary life.

A collaboration with set designer Jake Nash, costume designer Jennifer Irwin, lighting designer Nick Schlieper and composer Steve Francis, the work will unpack the post-colonial chapters of Australia's story to reveal the evolution of activism that continues today.

Artistic Director Stephen Page says Bennelong can be seen as an archetype of all experiences linked to the Western system.

"In a way, we are all Bennelong – forever trying to navigate our way through two worlds.

"Everyone has heard of the name Bennelong, however his extraordinary story is not really understood in the way that shows the enormous capacity of a man who opened up the conversation between European and Aboriginal people."

Bangarra's 18 dancers have entered 2017 with fire and fluidity. Working closely with Page on the *Bennelong* creative development process, the company is now in our Sydney studio, embodying new movements, characters and songlines.

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Choreography Stephen Page with the Bangarra dancers

Costume Design Jennifer Irwin

Set Design Jacob Nash

Lighting Design Nick Schlieper

Music Steve Francis

Dramaturg Alana Valentine

[BENNELONG](#)

Sydney Opera House | 29 June – 22 July 2017

Canberra Theatre Centre | 3 August – 5 August 2017

QPAC Brisbane | 24 August – 2 September 2017

Arts Centre Melbourne | 7 September – 16 September 2017

CONNECT WITH BANGARRA



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