



## ***BANGARRA WELCOMES FIVE NEW DANCERS IN 2019***



Photo: 2019 Bangarra Dance Theatre Ensemble. Photo credit: Daniel Boud.

As [Bangarra Dance Theatre](#) celebrates 30 years of sharing and maintaining the culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions in 2019, the company welcomes five new dancers to its world-class ensemble: **Courtney Radford**, **Jye Uren**, **Kassidy Waters**, **Kallum Goolagong** and **Gusta Mara**.

The new dancers join Bangarra's current dance ensemble as the company prepares to remount the 2017 landmark production [Bennelong](#), which will tour to regional Victoria, Queensland and the Northern Territory, as part of a five-stop tour across Australia through February and March.

Bangarra is committed to the development of emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creative talent and proudly welcomes two young dancers into the Russell Page Graduate Program in 2019. **Kallum Goolagong**, a Wiradjuri and Darkinjung man, and **Gusta Mara**, a Angamudthi, Atembiya, Goba, Argun and Wagadthagum man, will join the company as Graduate Program recipients and recent graduates from NAISDA Dance College.

The Graduate Program proudly offers young Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artists a year of professional development; providing the new dancers the opportunity to learn Bangarra repertoire, be mentored by senior dancers and artistic staff, and gain professional experience dancing on stages across Australia and overseas. Named after the late Russell Page – brother to Stephen and David Page, a founding member of Bangarra and one of the company's most revered dancers – who passed in 2002, the Graduate Program was established to build on his legacy and passion for sharing knowledge with the younger dancers. Made possible through the generosity of the Sherry-Hogan Foundation, and individual donors, the Russell Page Graduate Program has helped launch the career of seven Bangarra dancers to date.

Artistic Director of Bangarra Dance Theatre **Stephen Page** said *“It’s really exciting to welcome five new dancers into the company as we enter our 30<sup>th</sup> year. When you’ve got a whole next generation of dancers coming in, there’s this beautiful raw energy and formation of new relationships with existing senior dancers. As we prepare to tour Bennelong regionally, it’s a great opportunity for the new dancers in the company to not only learn and develop their practice, but also embody and connect with our stories. Our Russell Page Graduates are also able to take so much from the Program; reflecting on who it’s named after, and working with our senior dancers and traditional Elders. The diversity of the program makes it truly special.”*

Bangarra warmly welcomes each of the new dancers as they embark on their journey with the company.

- **Courtney Radford** is a proud descendant of the Noongar people. She spent most of her childhood in Port Headland (Pilbara) Western Australia, where she first found her passion for dance. Courtney completed her classical ballet training in Perth before moving to Brisbane in 2015 as part of Queensland Ballet’s pre-professional program. A highlight of this year was having the opportunity to tour to London with the Queensland Ballet to perform *La Sylphide* at the London Coliseum. In 2016, she accepted a position with the West Australian Ballet (WAB), where she performed both classical and contemporary works. While working with Annabelle Lopez Ochoa on one of her famous creations *In Transit*, Courtney recognised her love for contemporary dance. During Courtney’s two years with WAB she was fortunate enough to work with a range of choreographers such as David Dawson, David Nixon and Lucette Aldous.
- **Jye Uren** is a proud descendent of the Worimi and Dunghutti Tribes and also holds lineage to Portuguese, Irish, and English descent. Jye was born in New Lambton on Awabakal Country and raised in the Port Stephens town of Raymond Terrace on Worimi Country. Jye began studying Dance in his last two years of schooling before enrolling at NAISDA Dance College in 2014. Since graduating in 2017 with a Diploma of Professional Dance, Jye has worked with one of Aotearoa’s leading contemporary Dance Companies, Atamira Dance Company, with whom he performed at the Commonwealth Games, and at the Q Theatre in Auckland, performing alongside works choreographed by Frances Rings and Louise Potiki Bryant.
- **Kassidy Waters** is a descendant of the Wanaruah People in the Hunter Valley, NSW. Kassidy completed fulltime training with Sydney Dance Company’s Pre Professional Year of 2017 and with NAISDA Dance College, graduating in 2016 with the prestigious Chairman’s Award. Kassidy has worked with choreographers and artistic bodies such as Ausdance for the *Big Dance*, Craig Bary and Dale Collier for Catapult Choreographic Residency and EARTH Visual and Physical Inc’s ‘The Liminal Hour’. Matt Cornell’s *I learn’t my cultural Dance from YouTube*, Jannawi Dance Clan, Lucky Lartey’s *Full Circle*, the Wagana Aboriginal Dancers and Vicki van Hout. She has also educated and performed locally and internationally at Festivals representing Wagana Aboriginal Dancers at Porirua, The Honolulu Festival in Waikiki and Jannawi Dance Clan at Rainbow Serpent Festival. Kassidy completed her DirtyFeet Choreographic Lab in 2018 and is a Romana’s Pilates Apprentice at Cynthia Lochard’s Pilates Studio, thanks to being awarded the Joanne Harris Pre Professional Scholarship for 2017.
- **Kallum Goolagong** is a proud Wiradjuri and Darkinjung man from the Galari clan. He also has Mediterranean, Italian and Irish ancestry. Born on the Central Coast, Kallum starting dancing at NAISDA Dance College in 2015. Throughout his 4 years at NAISDA he worked with teachers and choreographers Craig Bary, Frances Rings, Sani Townsend and Raymond D Blanco. In 2018, Kallum graduated from NAISDA with a Certificate in careers in Dance and a Diploma of professional Dance Performance. Kallum also has a sporting background and before dance was training for the Olympics in athletics as an all-rounder. Kallum is excited to learn more about himself and his culture through his journey with Bangarra.

CONNECT WITH BANGARRA



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- **Gusta Mara** was born on Thursday Island and is an Angamudthi, Atembiya, Goba, Argun and Wagadthagum man from the tip of Queensland and the Western islands of the Torres Strait. Gusta first started dancing at the age of 16 at the Graham Academy of Dance. He auditioned for NAISDA in 2015, and completed his final year of studies in 2018. In Gusta's short time training and dancing he has worked with many choreographers, including Vikki van Hout, Pamela Williams, Craig Bary, Raymond D. Blanco, Frances Rings, Sani Townson and Jack Grey. He has also performed with Atamira Dance Company at the Tempo Dance Festival in New Zealand.

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