

bangarra

DARK EMU

Bangarra premieres new dance work, directed by Stephen Page, next month



In superb form after the sold-out season of *Bennelong*, [Bangarra Dance Theatre](#) returns with a major new dance work, *Dark Emu*, directed by one of Australia's most accomplished creatives, Stephen Page.

The much-anticipated creation is Page's 25th work for Bangarra and premieres at the **Sydney Opera House** on 14 June, before travelling to **Canberra, Perth, Brisbane, and Melbourne** in September.

Inspired by Bruce Pascoe's award-winning book of the same name, *Dark Emu* explores the vital life force of flora and fauna and challenges the 'hunter-gatherer' myth of pre-colonial Aboriginal Australians.

The 70-minute work is choreographed by Artistic Director **Stephen Page** and long-time Bangarra dancers and collaborators **Yolande Brown** and **Daniel Riley**, with input from the 18-strong ensemble of dancers.

Stephen Page says *Dark Emu* is a creative and emotional response to Bruce Pascoe's non-fiction account of the sophisticated farming, fishing and landcare practices used by Aboriginal people across the continent before the disruption of European settlement.

"Before colonisation, Aboriginal people were one with the land and respect for earth, sky and ocean was central to life. We want to make people aware of the strength and resilience of Aboriginal people and celebrate their profound knowledge of agriculture and aquaculture, which belongs at the epicentre of Australian history," Page said.

Through a series of interconnected dance stories set in four distinct worlds, *Dark Emu* conveys the devastating assault on land, people, spirit and knowledge experienced by First Nations Peoples.

Choreographer and senior Bangarra dancer, Daniel Riley says: "Inspired by some of the stories in Bruce's book, we've created a dance work that mourns our losses and shines a light on the incredible achievements of Aboriginal Australia, which have sadly been overlooked in the history books."

Choreographer and former Bangarra dancer, Yolande Brown says: "Each dance story is a reminder to recognise and harness the rich knowledge Aboriginal people have held for thousands of years and to use what we know to navigate today's environmental issues."

Dark Emu promises to be a sensory delight, with Bangarra collaborators Steve Francis (music), Jacob Nash (sets) and Jennifer Irwin (costumes) bringing their impeccable aesthetic to the production.

Thanks to the generous support of The Balnaves Foundation, affordable tickets will be made available for Community Night performances in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne.

Soon to enter its third decade, Bangarra is one of Australia's leading performing arts companies, internationally acclaimed for combining more than 65,000 years of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture with powerful contemporary dance, immersive soundscapes, music and design.

This season is the only opportunity to see *Dark Emu* at the iconic Sydney Opera House this year: a must-see dance experience in 2018.

For more information and tickets, please visit www.bangarra.com.au/whatson/productions/darkemu-2018

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

[WATCH THE DARK EMU TRAILER](#)

[BOOK TICKETS](#)

[DOWNLOAD HIGH-RES IMAGES](#). Please credit to photographer Daniel Boud.

DARK EMU (2018)

Artistic Director Stephen Page

Choreographers Stephen Page, Daniel Riley, Yolande Brown, and the dancers of Bangarra Dance Theatre

Costume Designer Jennifer Irwin

Set Designer Jacob Nash

Composer Steve Francis

Lighting Designer Sian James-Holland

Dramaturg Alana Valentine

Author of original book Bruce Pascoe

TOUR DATES

Sydney | Sydney Opera House, 14 June – 14 July

Canberra | Canberra Theatre Centre, 26 – 28 July

Perth | State Theatre Centre of WA, 2 – 5 August

Brisbane | QPAC, 24 August – 1 September

Melbourne | Arts Centre Melbourne, 6 – 15 September

CONNECT WITH BANGARRA



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