



BENNELONG

Four weeks until the world premiere of Stephen Page's brand new work

This month 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, and his first full-length work since 2014's acclaimed *Patyegarang*. Renowned for his richly nuanced storytelling abilities, Page has selected key moments in Bennelong's life to weave a moving portrait of a complex and conflicted man.

Woollarawarre Bennelong was one of the first Aboriginal men to be taken from his people and introduced to European ways. He was also one of the first Aboriginal people to have their life story recorded and documented through the early diaries of the British military, even travelling to London as a guest of Governor Arthur Phillip who ordered his initial capture.

Page explains there's an urgency in telling Bennelong's story in a contemporary context.

"Bennelong is in all of us, as we navigate the ancient and the contemporary elements of our lives. The question of how we move forward whilst still being connected to our culture and heritage has inspired much of my life's work," says Page.

"More than two centuries after his death, telling his extraordinary story and sharing his journey is a powerful reminder that there is still a long way for us to go before we can say we're at a place of true equality."

Collaborating with the 18-strong dance ensemble on choreography, Page has created a work that

reverberates with Bangarra's signature authenticity and spirit.

Supported by an extraordinary creative team comprised of set designer Jake Nash, costume designer Jennifer Irwin, lighting designer Nick Schlieper and composer Steve Francis, *Bennelong* will unpack the post-colonial chapters of Australia's story to reveal the deeply resonant struggle of a man trying to bridge two worlds.

Bangarra, Stephen and the dancers will also draw strength from the ongoing legacy of Music Director David Page. Through the unique sound blueprint he created the company, his memory will continue to inspire us throughout this season and into the future.

This season is the only opportunity to see *Bennelong* performed at the Sydney Opera House, nestled upon Bennelong Point. This utterly fascinating and beautifully realized dance theatre story is one you cannot miss in 2017.

ABOUT WOOLLARAWARRE BENNELONG

Woollarawarre Bennelong was a senior man of the Eora, from the Port Jackson area in Sydney. Believed to have been born around 1764, he is one of the most mythologised and celebrated individuals from the days of First Contact. He was captured on the order of Governor Arthur Phillip in November 1789.

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.

But that achievement came at great personal cost, and Bennelong was exiled by both his traditional and

CONNECT WITH BANGARRA



For all media enquiries, please contact:

Nicole Lovelock, Media & Communications Manager
Bangarra Dance Theatre M: 0412 564 238 E: Nicole@bangarra.com.au



European communities. He died at Kissing Point on 3 January 1816.

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BENNELONG (2017)

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

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