

ILBIJERRI Theatre Company

Big Name, No Blankets

By Andrea James

with Anyupa Butcher and Sammy Tjapanangka Butcher



Image: James Henry

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Contents

Perth Festival acknowledges the Noongar people who continue to practise values, language, beliefs and knowledge on kwobidak boodjar.

Noongar people remain the spiritual and cultural birdiyangara of this place and we honour and respect the caretakers and custodians and the vital role Noongar people play for our community and our Festival to flourish.

We also acknowledge all First Nations people, whose contributions make our Festival culturally and artistically richer.

Our hearts are happy that you are here, on the traditional lands of Whadjuk, part of the Bibbulmun nation and its people.

Perth Festival Noongar Advisory Circle

Roma Yibiyung Winmar, Vivienne Binyarn Hansen, Richard Walley,
Carol Innes, Barry McGuire & Mitchella Waljin Hutchins

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ILBIJERRI Theatre Company

Big Name, No Blankets

By Andrea James
with Anyupa Butcher and Sammy Tjapanangka Butcher

AUSTRALIA

A Perth Festival Commission

Thu 27 Feb – Sat 1 Mar

Regal Theatre
Wandaragutttagurru/Subiaco

Duration 1hr 35mins

Thu – Sat 7.30pm



Tactile tour and audio description performance Fri 28 Feb

Join us after the show on Fri 28 Feb for a Q&A session. Hear directly from the artists and creators of the work.

Performed in English, Luritja and Gumatj (Yolngu Matha).

Contains images, representations and the names of Aboriginal people who have passed away.

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government's Major Festivals Initiative, managed by the Creative Australia, its arts funding and advisory body, in association with the Confederation of Australian International Arts Festivals Inc., commissioned by RISING, Sydney Festival, Darwin Festival, Brisbane Festival, Perth Festival and Adelaide Festival.





Image: James Henry

About the show

ILBIJERRI, in collaboration with the Butcher family, shares the untold story of Australian music icons Warumpi Band, from the perspective of founding band members the Butcher brothers, hailing from Papunya in the Northern Territory.

This show is a true embodiment of ILBIJERRI's practice of putting Community and social justice at the heart of everything we do. *Big Name, No Blankets* has been developed over five and a half years, with three creative developments on-country in Papunya and two in Melbourne, with the legendary Sammy Tjapanangka Butcher guiding us the entire way as our Story and Cultural Consultant.

We are thrilled that our show also features Sammy's extraordinarily talented children, Anyupa, Crystal, Jason and Jeremiah Butcher, and Sammy's niece Cassandra Williams.

Big Name, No Blankets represents hope and First People's strength in the face of the negative impacts of colonisation.

Like Warumpi band, this timely show is about bringing everyone together, Black and White Australia celebrating the First Peoples of this land and our collective stories.

ILBIJERRI: Bold, black and brilliant.



A note from the writer

It has been the greatest honour to write the story of Warumpi Band with Sammy Tjapanangka Butcher and his extended family.

The solid rock sounds of Warumpi Band formed the soundtrack to my youth; so when ILBIJERRI and the Butcher family invited me to work with them, I jumped at the chance.

My job was to listen very carefully to Sammy, to sit with him and his family on their beloved Country, and to sense and lay on the page the huge beating heart behind this iconic Aboriginal rock band that rose like a giant eagle from the desert in the 1980s.

It's all there in the music and lyrics that speak so strongly to the hopes and dreams of this band of

men from Warumpi – and, ultimately, that's been the key to this dramatisation for the stage. I've tried to capture the lilt, poetry and cadence of Sammy's yarns as he recollects a momentous time in Australia's rock history that he shared with his brothers.

Snaking throughout these dynamic rock songs are essential stories of family, culture, politics, determination and humour informed by the power and exquisite hues of the central desert. The ultimate elixir of language and lore underpins this story as well as a quiet sense of loss and regret.

At a time when Australia seems more divided than ever, Sammy points us to a time when Blackfellas and Whitefellas sought to truly understand each other through the medium of rock and roll.

The live music in this production brings into palpable being the unmistakable rock guitar sound of the Warumpis that cannot help but move you. While we mourn the loss of Sammy's brothers and remember them dearly, *Big Name, No Blankets* ensures the spirit and power of Warumpi Band remains forever etched into the landscape. We rest assured that the power of Warumpi Band lives on in a lineage of bloodline and talent that provides an ultimate sense of hope.

As Sammy so poignantly says 'music never dies, it lives on in our children and our children's children'. What a heartening legacy.

Andrea James

A note from the co-director

Working on *Big Name, No Blankets* has been one of those once-in-a-career highlights. To work alongside Anyupa, her father Sammy and the Butcher family has been such an honour and privilege. The journey for the whole team at ILBIJERRI of getting to know and understand the story behind the iconic Warumpi Band, as told by those at the heart it – the Butcher brothers – has been nothing short of extraordinary.

Sammy Tjapanangka Butcher is one of the wisest, most gracious, talented and generous people I have ever met. The next generation hasn't fallen far from the tree. Very early in the journey of making this work I asked Sammy what he wanted this play to be about, his answer was simply 'Hope', and in answer to 'who is it for?' again without hesitation: 'For the next generation – to give them hope'.

Warumpi Band represented a moment in time where Blackfullas and a Whitefulla were able to come together and make powerful magic together that spoke to the possibility of what we could be as a country. While making this work, we found ourselves asking questions that put a mirror up to us as a country and how we can move forward. Who has the

right to tell whose story? The question we wanted to explore in the making of this work was: Who owns a story? The one who spoke the story or the one who wrote it down?

ILBIJERRI is a fully self-determined First People's theatre company – we are about sovereign storytelling – re-righting and controlling the narrative.

What Sammy taught me is 'It doesn't matter what someone else thinks ... because if you know who you are, where you come from, where you belong – then you know whose story it is, and no one can take that away'.

In my role at ILBIJERRI I'm passionate about creating a platform for our stories told by those whose story it is to tell. Stories that celebrate who we are as strong, proud and knowledgeable people whose stories and cultures have been told and passed down on this, our Country, for well over 65,000 years. *Big Name, No Blankets* seems to have come at a time when we most need it. This country was – and is still – reeling from the disastrous Referendum, and we are still feeling the impacts of COVID. This is the musical we needed after the Depression. A celebration of a strong and talented family of musicians, the powerful and iconic songs that are a call to arms and are as relevant today as they were when first written.

Dr Rachael Maza AM



Image: James Henry

Warumpi Band lives on

Warumpi Band left an enduring legacy on Australia's music scene across three decades, three albums and three national ARIA Awards. Their music had a profound impact on the national consciousness and resonated especially deeply in the central desert where their journey began. Warumpi Band's electrifying rock anthems reverberated through Pintupi Luritja communities – Papunya, Mt Leibig, Haast Bluf and Kintore – forming the sonic backdrop to desert childhoods.

Growing up amidst the rise and peak of Warumpi Band's success set the stage for the next generation. Their radical, politically-charged calls to action instilled hope and provided a voice for audiences that echoed the realities of their lives. The three critically acclaimed albums – *Big Name, No Blankets* (1985), *Go Bush!* (1987) and *Too Much Humbug* (1996) – not only defined an era but birthed a new sub-genre, Desert Reggae music. Desert Reggae, primarily sung in language, emerged as a potent storytelling tool, echoing Warumpi Band's ancient storytelling traditions.



At the core of this musical evolution stood Warumpi Band's lead guitarist, Sammy Butcher. His influence and Warumpi Band's legacy provided a lifeline for youth grappling with profound challenges in the face of colonisation. Sammy's commitment to music as a positive outlet and a tool for empowerment is a beacon in the community and materialised in the setting up of a recording studio in Papunya in 2004. Warumpi Band's journey, encapsulated in their radical anthems, paved the way for a musical era that not only rocked stages but also resonated as a powerful force for societal change.

Warumpi Band was the first Aboriginal rock 'n' roll group to sing in language and incorporate traditional instruments such as didgeridoo, boomerang and clapping sticks. The band was formed in Papunya, 250 km West of Alice Springs in 1980. The original line-up consisted of George Rrurrumbu Burarrwanga on vocals and didgeridoo, Gordon Butcher Tjapanangka on drums, Sammy Butcher Tjapanangka on lead guitar, Brian Butcher Tjapanangka on bass guitar and Neil Murray on rhythm guitar and backing vocals. Warumpi Band built up a loyal following in Sydney's northern beaches pub rock scene and played as a support act to Midnight Oil. In 1985 the band signed with Midnight Oil's Powderworks label and released their debut album *Big Name, No Blankets* in April 1985. After three decades and numerous world and national tours, Warumpi Band brought their focus homeward to their family and their Community in the central desert.

Whilst recognising that Warumpi Band's influence reached far and wide, the place they cultivated the strongest support was at home in the central desert. Right back to Warumpinya where it all began. Back to the dreaming site of the honey ant tjukurra. Right back, full circle.

Crystal Butcher
Read more of Crystal's essay [here](#).

Credits

Writer

Andrea James

Story & Cultural Consultant

Sammy Tjapanangka Butcher
(a founding member of
Warumpi Band)

Co-Directors

Dr Rachael Maza AM
Anyupa Butcher

Music Director

Gary Watling

Cinematographer & Sound Designer

James Henry

Sound Arrangements & Composition

Crystal Butcher

Sound Arrangements & Composition Mentor

David Bridie

Set Designer & Costume

Emily Barrie

Lighting Designer

Jenny Hector

Original Costume Designer

Heidi Brooks

Video Content Designer

Sean Bacon

Animation

Patricia McKean & Guck

Core Band

Gary Watling (Band Leader & guitar)
Malcolm Beveridge (Bass)
Jason Butcher (Lead guitar)
Jeremiah Butcher (Drums & keyboard)

Performers

Baykali Ganambarr (Sammy)
Jack Hickey (Gordon & drums)
Jackson Peele (Neil)
Taj Pigram (George)
Corey Saylor-Brunskill (Brian
& Ensemble)
Cassandra Williams (Suzina,
Mum & Ensemble)

Producers

Nina Bonacci
Alexandra Paige

Theatre Consultant

Sarah Goodes

Dramaturg

Amy Sole

Production Manager

Nathan Evers

Stage Manager

Celina Mack

Assistant Stage Managers

Kira Feeney & PJ Rosas

Audio Engineer

Daniel Lade

Monitor Engineer

Tui Rapata Hohepa Campbell

Lighting Associate

Travis Kecek

Warumpi Family Consulting

Suzina McDonald & Marion
Burarrwanga



Image: James Henry

Acknowledgements

ILBIJERRI Theatre Company would like to thank:

Joy Butcher, Layi Layi Burarrwanga, Samara Fernandez, Neil Murray, Jesse Butcher, Aunty Frances Peter-Little, Thom Crawford, Pauline Clague, Ursula Yovich, Patricia Cornelius, Elaine Crombie, Nick Glen, Brock Brocklesby, William Lawson, John Phillips, Tom Skinner, Matthew Harrod, Sarah Plaits, Deiter Barry, Iona Howard, Ashley McNeil, David Batty at Rebel Films, Buddy Knox, Kati Elizabeth at Guck, Rychelle Vines at NT Airport Development Group, Mark Smith at Music NT, Leah Flanagan and Jacob Ridgeway at APRA, Stephen Burton at Circus O, Rod at Theatre Star, Jo Scott and Dom Bartolo at 21-19

ILBIJERRI Theatre Company would also like to thank the following supporters: Creative Australia, Creative Victoria, Indigenous Languages and the Arts Program, The Balnaves Foundation, John T Reid Foundation, Dennis Osborne Clarke Charitable Trust, Australian Plays Transform and Sage Foundation.

Music

'Djulpan'

Written by: Djilaynga/Datjing/
Gumbula
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Fitzroy Crossing'

Written by: Butcher/Murray
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'From The Bush'

Written by: Djilaynga/Murray
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Jailanguru Pakarnu - Out Of Jail'

Written by: Butcher/Murray
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Murrayilyil'

Written by: Djilaynga/Datjing/
Gumbula/Layilayi
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Ron Wanga'

Written by: Djilaynga/Murray
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Never Change'

Written by: Butcher/Murray
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Sitdown Money'

Written by: Butcher/Murray
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Blackfella/Whitefella'

Written by: Djilaynga/Murray
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Stompin' Ground'

Written by: Butcher/Djilaynga/Murray
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Sultans of Swing'

Written by: M. Knopfler
Straitjacket Songs Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Tjiluru Tjiluru'

Written by: Butcher/Djilaynga/
Murray/Anderson
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Waru'

Written by: Djilaynga/Murray
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Warumpinya'

Written by: Butcher/Murray
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Wayathul'

Written by: Djilaynga/Murray
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'We Gotta Be Strong'

Written by: Butcher/Djilaynga/Murray
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'We Shall Cry'

Written by: Butcher/Djilaynga/Murray
Universal Music Publishing Pty. Ltd.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd

'Wipe Out'

Written by: Berryhill/Connolly/
Fuller/Wilson
Miraleste Music, Robin Hood Music Co.
Administered by: Universal Music
Publishing Pty Ltd



Image: James Henry

Biographies

About ILBIJERRI Theatre Company

ILBIJERRI is the longest established First Peoples led theatre company in Australia, creating, presenting and touring powerful and engaging theatre by First Peoples artists that gives voice to our Cultures.

First Peoples voices are powerful in determining the future of Australia.

ILBIJERRI Theatre Company exists to:

- Create impactful theatre by First Peoples that tells our stories our way, embedding creative sovereignty in all our work and continuing our Songlines.
- Meet our responsibilities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including aspirations of voice and truth-telling, uplift, healing, opportunity, and access.
- Inform and encourage accomplices in the fight to eradicate racism.

Creative team

Andrea James Writer

Andrea is a Yorta Yorta/Gunaikurnai theatremaker and graduate of VCA. She was Artistic Director of Melbourne Workers Theatre 2001 – 08 where she is best known for her play *Yanagai! Yanagai!* that premiered at Playbox in 2004, was remounted in 2006 and toured to the UK. Andrea was the Aboriginal Arts Development Officer at Blacktown Arts Centre 2010 – 12 and Aboriginal Producer at Carriageworks from 2012 – 16 before launching freelance theatremaker career.

Andrea was recipient of the British Council's Accelerate Program for Aboriginal Art Leaders in 2013 and was awarded Create NSW Aboriginal Arts Fellowship in 2018. She wrote and directed *Winyanboga Yurringa* at Carriageworks and Geelong Performing Arts Centre in 2016 and remounted at Belvoir in 2019. Andrea's play *Sunshine Super Girl*, about Wiradjuri tennis star Evonne Goolagong-Cawley, premiered at Griffith in 2020, Sydney Festival in 2021 and underwent an extensive national tour in 2022.

Her play *Dogged* was written with collaborator Cath Ryan and premiered at Griffin Theatre in May 2021. Andrea is currently Associate Artistic Director at Griffin Theatre where she directed *Ghosting the Party* by Melissa Bubnic in May 2022, *Jailbaby* by Suzie Miller in 2023 and *swim* by Ellen Van Neerven. Andrea was recently awarded the Mona Brand Award for Women Stage and Screen Writers, Australia's most prestigious writing prize for women, and is co-writer of *Big Name, No Blankets* with Sammy and Anyupa Butcher. In 2025 Andrea will direct her newest play *The Black Woman of Gippsland* at Melbourne Theatre Company.

Sammy Tjapanangka Butcher Story and Cultural Consultant

Leader of the Papunya Community, Deputy Chairperson of the Central Land Council (CLC) and co-founding member of the legendary Warumpi Band, Sammy is the heart behind *Big Name, No Blankets*. A self-taught musician from the age of ten, Sammy is renowned as one of the best guitarists in Central Australia and one of the leaders in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music scene.

Dr Rachael Maza AM Director

Rachael is Yidinji from North Queensland, Meriam from Mer Island in the Torres Strait and Dutch on her mother's side. She is the Artistic Director of ILBIJERRI Theatre Company (2008 – present), with extensive experience in acting, directing and dramaturgy.

Rachael is known for her work in Australian film, television and theatre, including the AFI award-winning *Radiance* and *The Sapphires*. A WAAPA graduate, she has received a Green Room Award and Sydney Theatre Critics Circle Award. She has also worked as a presenter for ABC's *Message Stick* and coached on *Rabbit Proof Fence*.

Rachael joined ILBIJERRI in 2002 as director of *Stolen* and became Artistic Director in 2008, directing productions *Jack Charles Vs The Crown*, *Foley, Which Way Home*, *Heart is a Wasteland*, *Sisters of Gelam*, *Goodbye Auntie Flo*, *Black Ties* and co-directing *Big Name, No Blankets*, on their nation-wide tours.

She is co-Chair of Creative Australia's First Nations Board and serves on the ACMI Indigenous Advisory Group. Her artistic contributions have earned multiple awards, including the Touring Legend Drover Award (2017), the Australia Council for the Arts Award (2019) and an Honorary Doctorate of Performing Arts from Edith Cowan University (2019). Rachael was awarded an Order of Australia in 2020.

Anyupa Butcher Director

Anyupa is a Warlpiri, Pitjantjatjara and Luritja woman living in Mparntwe (Alice Springs), NT. As a descendant of the Warumpi Band and the daughter of the Butcher brothers, Anyupa is deeply committed to sharing her family story as Co-Director and Story Consultant on *Big Name, No Blankets*, working alongside her father, Sammy Butcher, and her brothers, Jason and Jeremiah Butcher. Professionally, Anyupa has built a diverse career, including serving as a Senior Campaigner in the First Nations Justice team at GetUp Australia. She has a background in journalism, having worked at the ABC, producing local radio and NEWS. Her passion for Indigenous art led her to work as an artworker at Papunya Tjupi Arts. Anyupa has previously been employed at ILBIJERRI as an Associate Producer.

Gary Watling Music Director & Band Leader

Gary Watling is an award-winning Wiradjuri musician, composer and musical director, known for his expertise as a guitarist and pedal steel player.

As a musical director and composer, Gary has worked on acclaimed theatrical productions, including Australian Dance Theatre's *Tracker* and ILBIJERRI Theatre Company's *Big Name No Blankets* and *Heart is a Wasteland*, the latter earning him a 2023 Green Room Award. He has a reputation as an in-demand session musician, contributing to soundtracks for films such as *The Last Daughter* and *Wild Dog*, and major scale Adelaide Festival 2024 commission *Guuranda*.

In 2023 Gary was selected for the prestigious Ngarra-Burria First Peoples Composers Program. His composition *Lotte* was performed by Ensemble Offspring in Sydney and Canberra and broadcast nationally on ABC radio.

James Henry Cinematographer & Sound Designer

James is a highly sought-after composer and sound designer known for his unique fusion of traditional Aboriginal and contemporary musical genres. His versatile skill set has led him to compose for prestigious ensembles including Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Philharmonia Choir, Melbourne String Ensemble and the Derwent Valley Concert Band. He has also held the role of musical director for notable events, including the Dreamtime at the G opening ceremonies and the Melbourne Festival Opening Ceremonies for *Tanderrum*. James has lent his musical expertise to various theatre and dance productions and has received numerous commissions for his work. In recognition of his exceptional talent, he for his outstanding work on *Freeman*. James also earned his first Green Room Award for Sound Design in collaboration with Gary Watling and Lydia Fairhall for ILBIJERRI's *Heart is a Wasteland*.

Crystal Butcher Sound Arrangements & Composition

Crystal is the daughter of Sammy Butcher by relation and represents the next generation Warumpi Band. She graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School (VCASS) and has been accepted into prestigious jazz schools across the world.

David Bridie Sound Arrangements & Composition Mentor

David has forged a distinctive path through an ever-evolving cultural landscape, staying steadfast to his unique vision and values. From the global influence of his pioneering alt-pop bands Not Drowning, Waving and My Friend the Chocolate Cake during the 1980s and 1990s, to his ongoing success as a solo artist and soundtrack composer, the breadth of his work and impact stands alongside the most significant Australian musicians. His remarkable contribution to music and culture was recognised with the prestigious Don Banks Award from the Australia Council in 2019, adding to a long list of accolades earned over three decades of dedication to his craft and community.

Emily Barrie Set & Costume Designer

Emily is a designer for multi disciplines of the performing arts. A graduate of the VCA (Bachelor of Theatre Production), her design work spans across theatre, circus, physical theatre, parades, film and TV and has toured widely. Emily's work with ILBIJERRI spans over 18 years, including the designs for *Jack Charles Vs. The Crown*, *Foley*, *Which Way Home* and *Heart is a Wasteland*.

Emily's work has been recognised by many nominations and awards for Design and Best or Outstanding Production. Most recently her designs have included set and costume for *Munangga Garlagula* with Mark Atkins and Erkki Veltheim, *Jacky* for Melbourne Theatre Company and Belvoir, costumes for Working Dog Productions' *Thank God You're Here*, and currently the costume design for Melbourne's annual Moomba Parade.

Jenny Hector Lighting Designer

A graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA), Jenny's designs have garnered acclaim both nationally and internationally. Her recent design credits include Monica Lim and Mindy Meng Wang *Opera for the Dead*, Aphids *Edging*, Speak Percussion *Digital Echos*, Guts Dance *SUB*, Decibel New Music *Twin Peaks is 30* and Cornelius, Dee and Wilks *Bad Boy*.

Her other notable contributions include lighting designs for Cornelius, Dee and Wilks *Runt*, Fraught Outfit's *Exodus II*, Prue Lang's *Stellar*, Sandra Parker's *Out of Light* and Jo Lloyd's *Overture*. Additionally, her work on Jacob Boehme's *Blood on the Dance Floor* and Jodee Mundy's *Imagined Touch* received Green Room Awards for Best Production, for which Jenny was responsible for both lighting and set designs.

Jenny is the recipient of two Green Room Awards for Balletlab's *Miracle* and Jenny Kemp's *Madeleine* and the 2016 Award for Technical Achievement.



Image: James Henry

Heidi Brooks Original Costume Designer

Heidi is a Daingatti woman of mid North Coast NSW now residing in Melbourne. When she isn't working on a theatre production in costume she's working on her own costumes, having been a cosplayer for over 12 years now. She's competed in Melbourne, Sydney and New Zealand in her costumes, having had displays at Melbourne Museum and comic book conventions of her work.

Sean Bacon Video Content Designer

Sean began his career in Tasmania, achieving First Class Honors in Photography, and from there moving into video. He began work in the performance scene with Salamanca Theatre Company. He moved to Sydney in 2003 to pursue his career and exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art. He also undertook a number of Australia Council residencies in New York and Paris. In Paris he went on to work as a video artist with dance company Experience Harrmatt. This collaboration culminated in performances at the Venice Biennale in 2001.

Sean's talent is his use of live video in performance. He is Australia's leading practitioner working with live capture and live mixing of the visual elements in performance, creating a unique and dynamic theatrical environment. It is his exceptional knowledge and ability to integrate the visual element into the performance that has seen him work with Australia's leading companies and artists.

Patricia McKean and Guck Animation

Guck is a technology company based in Melbourne, Australia, with expertise in mixed reality, mobile apps, games, UI and UX design and social media. Guck are currently developing Australia's first Aboriginal-led mobile game.



Core Band

Gary Watling Band Leader & Guitar

See biography above

Malcolm Beveridge Bass

Malcolm is a Melbourne-based musician with a long history on the live scene. A double/electric bassist and singer/songwriter, he has toured extensively around Australia and overseas with many different acts and various genres. He has worked previously with ILBIJERRI on *Jack Charles vs The Crown*.

Jeremiah Butcher Drums & keyboard

Jeremiah, the son of Sammy Butcher, is a versatile musician with a rich musical heritage. Drawing inspiration from his family's legacy with the Warumpi Band, he collaborates closely with his father, sisters and brothers to recreate the authentic sound that defined the iconic group for this production. Jeremiah's musical talents span across several instruments, including piano, drums, bass, and guitar – all of which he mastered by ear, learning from his family's musical influence and watching the Warumpi Band in action.

His musical journey includes playing alongside his brother, Jason, in the Tjupi Band, where they recorded three albums and toured extensively across Australia. Jeremiah is proud to have toured nationally with *Big Name, No Blankets*. His contributions to the Australian music scene continue to reflect his deep connection to his family's legacy while showcasing his own exceptional talent and passion for performance.

Jason Butcher Lead guitar

Jason, the eldest son of Sammy Butcher, is a talented and dynamic musician, deeply rooted in his family's musical legacy. Like his brother Jeremiah, Jason draws from the rich history of the Warumpi Band, working alongside his family to preserve and amplify the iconic sound that made the group famous. Jason plays lead guitar and is inspired by the music and teachings of his family and the Warumpi Band's distinctive style.

Jason's journey as a musician saw him join forces with his brother Jeremiah in the Tjupi Band, where they produced three albums and toured the country, sharing their music with audiences across Australia. Today, Jason is an integral member of the core band for ILBIJERRI Theatre Company's *Big Name, No Blankets*, and has performed in all of the production's seasons, both nationally at arts festivals and in prisons across Victoria and the Northern Territory. Through his performances and collaborations, Jason continues to honour his family's legacy while carving out his own path as a respected and passionate musician in the Australian music scene.

Performers

Baykali Ganambarr Sammy Butcher

Baykali was born in 1994 and is from the Yolngu people from Elcho Island Galiwin'ku. He joined the Elcho Island dance troupe Djuki Mala. While still with the group, he was cast in the film *The Nightingale* where he played an Aboriginal Tasmanian tracker named Mangana/Billy. Baykali has been performing the role of Warumpi's Sammy Butcher in ILBIJERRI's *Big Name, No Blankets* since it premiered in January 2024. He grew up with one of the Warumpi Band members, George Rrurrambu Burarrwanga, who used to spear fish with his family. Baykali received the 2018 Marcello Mastroianni Award for his role in *The Nightingale* and was nominated for the 2019 AACTA award for Best Actor in a Leading Role for the same role. He was also nominated for the 2021 AACTA Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role for *The Furnace*.

Jack Hickey Gordon & drums

Jack is a Gamilaraay man from Quirindi, NSW, and a multidisciplinary musician, living and working on Gadigal Country. He made his professional musical theatre debut in the 2019 national tour of *The Sapphires* and has since built a dynamic career across the music industry.

Jack is a member of the contemporary First Nations electro-soul trio Bow and Arrow and a freelance musician who has performed alongside respected artists including Dyagula, Delta Goodrem, Christine Anu, Jessie Lloyd, Aka Cindy Drummond, Akala Newman, Emily Wurramara, Dr. Shellie Morris and Merindi Schrieber.

Jack's performance highlights include Parrtjima Festival, Badu Gili at the Sydney Opera House, SXSW Opening, Phoenix Central Park, NITV's 10-Year Anniversary Concert, WOMAdelaide (Jessie Lloyd's *Ailan Songs Project*), Yabun Festival, Dhuluny Corroboree 2024, Sydney Festival: Vigil Gunya, Summer Sessions at Cockatoo Island, Warangesda Festival, Canberra International Multicultural Festival, Global Citizen Festival and Meredith Festival. Jack's work is driven by a love of music and storytelling, bringing culture, connection and energy to every stage he steps on. He dedicates this performance to Uncle Buck Brennan.

Jackson Peele Neil

Jackson (he/him) is a Naarm/Melbourne based actor, writer, musician, director and graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. Jackson originated the role of Neil Murray in ILBIJERRI's *Big Name, No Blankets*, and is grateful to continue playing the role throughout the show's run. As one half of writing duo Neylon & Peele, he has written, workshoped and produced five original Australian musicals. Their show *The Beep Test* has won multiple awards, including the Green Room Award for Best New Australian Musical Theatre Writing. In addition to his theatrical work, Jackson is a singer-songwriter who regularly performs at local pubs, weddings and events and can often be found busking on Bourke St.

Taj Pigram George

Born and raised in Broome, Taj is a proud First Nations Australian of Yawuru, Wadjarri, Pitjantjatjara, Noongar descent. Throughout his varied career, Taj has performed with companies including Marrugeku and Opera Australia, for whom he featured in their most recent production of Jimmy Chi's *Bran Nue Dae*. Taj also appears regularly in TV commercials and featured in SBS's groundbreaking drama series *The Circuit*. Taj is proud to play George Burarrwanga, the front man in ILBIJERRI's *Big Name, No Blankets*.



Image: James Henry

Corey Saylor-Brunskill Brian & ensemble

Corey is a mere mortal, born of flesh and blood, brought up in the distant lands of Tasmania/lutrawita, wielding his dynamic silver tongue, actively engaged in expressing his social truths through his acting, stand-up, spoken word and hip-hop. Though he has been acting for over 20 years now, he started his “professional” career in Melbourne Theatre Company’s First Peoples Young Artists’ Program, when he decided to chase his dreams of thespianism to Melbourne/Naarm, since The Isle seemed to create intense obstacles. Since making his way to the “Mainlands” Big Apple, his trajectory has launched him into becoming a member of ILBIJERRI Theatre Company’s youth ensemble in their production of *Conversations With The Dead* (2019).

Corey decided to keep up the good fight and partake in some other brilliant productions you may or may not have heard of, such as *CYBEC ELECTRIC* (2021), *Viral* (2022), *Whose Gonna Love Em* (A Daylight Connection 2023, in association with Malthouse Theatre), *Prime Time* (Born In A Taxi, 2024) and most recently even travelled back to Tassie to part take in Nathan Maynard and Rob Braslin’s *The Box* (Mudlark Theatre, 2024). Though Corey’s future aspirations are ingrained in film, being under the fresnel was Corey’s first love and he hopes you enjoy this show, which should definitely be a testament to the age-old craft that is theatre making. Corey can be seen playing Brian in ILBIJERRI Theatre Company’s *Big Name, No Blankets*.

Cassandra Williams Suzina, Mum & ensemble

Casii is a Western Aranda woman from the remote community of Ntaria/Hermannsburg in Central Australia. Raised in a revered musical family, she grew up immersed in a wide range of music, from Eddie Van Halen to Sade. A third-generation musician, Casii is the first woman in her family to pursue a solo music career.

Casii is a performer in *Big Name, No Blankets* where she portrays Suzina, mother and is also a key part of the ensemble. She has toured with the show nationally, showcasing her talents and further establishing her presence in the music and performance world.

Production team

Nina Bonacci Head of Producing (ILBIJERRI Theatre Company)

Nina is a senior producer and arts manager with over 25 years of experience. Her role as Head of Producing at ILBIJERRI involves leading, training and mentoring a team of First Peoples producers, and working on ILBIJERRI’s large scale and touring productions. She is proud to have collaborated as Producer on *BIG NAME, NO BLANKETS* since ILBIJERRI’s first research trip to Papunya in 2019. Previously, Nina was Company Manager at Malthouse Theatre for several years, where she enjoyed working with some of Australia’s finest artists. Prior to that she produced and toured contemporary Australian productions nationally and internationally while Associate Producer at Performing Lines, including Back to Back Theatre’s *small metal objects* and Stephen Sewell’s *Three Furies*. She has worked as an independent producer for many brilliant companies, including Sisters Grimm, Stuck Pigs Squealing, one step at a time like this and Angus Cerini’s Doubletap, among others. Nina has also worked as a Producer at Melbourne International Comedy Festival; Festival Director for Mudfest – Melbourne University’s student arts festival; Producer at Keep Breathing; Administration and Development Coordinator at Arena Theatre Company; Marketing Manager at St Martin’s Youth Arts Centre; and as Publicist at Miranda Brown Publicity.

Nina is a frequent guest speaker for university and TAFE students, has been a Fringe mentor and board member for performing arts companies, and has sat on panels for Performing Lines, Next Wave, George Paton Gallery and the Sydney Opera House. Nina is currently a peer assessor for Creative Australia, and recently completed Creative Australia’s Arts Leaders program for established arts leaders.

Alexandra Paige Producer (ILBIJERRI Theatre Company)

Alexandra is a proud Taungurung woman growing up in Melbourne/Naarm on Wurundjeri Country. She has over 15 years of experience in the arts, theatre and creative sectors, including theatre, dance, circus and opera. She has worked with Darebin City Council and Taungurung Land and Water Council, collaborating with First Nations artists across Victoria and Australia.

As a former member of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee, Taungurung Language Reference Group and City of Yarra’s Arts Advisory Committee, Alexandra has contributed to key cultural initiatives.

Currently a Producer with ILBIJERRI Theatre Company, she has played a central role in productions, such as *Heart is a Wasteland*, *Get your Geek On* and *Big Name, No Blankets*, which is touring nationally and has received widespread acclaim.

Sarah Goodes Theatre Consultant

Sarah is a Helpmann Award-winning theatre director recognised for bringing over 14 new Australian works to the mainstage. For Melbourne Theatre Company, Sarah's work includes *Sunday*, *Cyrano*, *The Sound Inside*, *Home*, *I'm Darling*, *Così*, *Golden Shield*, *Arbus & West*, *Astroman*, *A Doll's House: Part 2*, *The Children* (with Sydney Theatre Company), *Three Little Words* and *John*. Sarah directed the acclaimed sell out production in 2023 of *JULIA* for Sydney Theatre Company and the Canberra Arts Centre and as Resident Director at Sydney Theatre Company from 2012 – 16 she directed *The Hanging*, *Disgraced*, *Orlando*, *Battle of Waterloo*, *Switzerland*, *The Effect*, *Vere (Faith)*, *The Splinter* and *Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness*. Sarah's other directing credits include *Grace* (Red Stitch Actors' Theatre), which then played at the Comedy Theatre and will be a part of the STC season in November 2025; *The Sugar House* (Belvoir); *The Sweetest Thing*, *The Small Things*, *Elling* and *Black Milk* (B Sharp Belvoir); *Vertigo* and *the Virginia*, *The Schelling Point*, *Hilt* and *What Happened Was...* (Old Fitzroy Theatre). In 2023 she directed *The Weekend* at Belvoir Street and *Switzerland* at the Auckland Theatre Company. She also directed a sell-out season of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* at Red Stitch Theatre. She is currently enrolled in Masters of Screen Business at ATFRS.

Amy Sole Dramaturg

Amy is a proud Wiradjuri/Worimi person. A playwright, director, actor, dramaturg, producer and advocate, they are Creative Associate at ILBIJERRI Theatre Company and dramaturg for *Big Name, No Blankets*. They are a graduate of MFA (Directing) at NIDA and hold a Master of Theatre (Playwriting) from VCA. Recent works for theatre include *Benched* (director, Darlinghurst Theatre Company); *Burning* (writer/director, NIDA); *Nan's Place* (writer, ILBIJERRI Theatre Company); *Doing* (writer/director, Kings Cross Theatre). Amy regularly directs developments of new works, most recently Phoebe Grainer's *Sugarcane* for the Queensland Premier's Drama Award and Dylan Ven Den Berg's *way back when* at Darlinghurst Theatre Company. They have worked as assistant director on *God's Country*, *Metamorphoses* (NIDA); and *RENT* (Sydney Opera House). They are also Creative Director of *Big Blak Bang*, a festival of First Nations storytelling and Artist-in-Residence at Darlinghurst Theatre Company, Co-Founder of Puddle or Pond Theatre Company and a sitting Co-Chair of the Equity Diversity Committee.



Image: James Henry

Nathan Evers Production Manager

Nate has been a dedicated professional in the theatre and events industry for nearly 30 years. His journey began in Whyalla as a member of D'faces before advancing to the Centre of the Performing Arts in Adelaide. Over the years, Nate has built a distinguished career as a technician and, more recently, as a production manager. He has contributed to numerous prestigious Australian festivals, including the Adelaide Festival, WOMADEelaide, Melbourne Festival, Ten Days on the Island, RISING and Midsumma. In addition to his festival work, Nate has been actively involved with a wide range of productions and venues. Most recently, he successfully production managed the Victoria's Pride Street Party and is now back on the road with *Big Name, No Blankets*, completing its major festival run.

Celina Mack Stage Manager

Celina (she/they) is a contemporary theatre maker and production stage manager based in Naarm/Melbourne. Celina has worked with various companies and collaborators as a stage and production manager, director and collaborative deviser, focused particularly on new Australian work, Indigenous Australian storytelling, experimental dance theatre and participatory community-led projects. Recent projects include; *Big Name, No Blankets* national festivals & prisons tour (ILBIJERRI Theatre Company, 2024 – 25), *ButohBAR 番狂わせ OUT of ORDER II* (Asia TOPA, 2025), *OBANG* (Sydney Opera House, 2024), *Scar Trees* Victorian tour (ILBIJERRI Theatre Company, 2024), Australian Dance Theatre's *Tracker* (Brisbane Festival, 2023), Western Edge's *Edge Ensembles* (2023), Yumi Umiuamare's *Buried Tea Bowl - OKUNI* (OzAsia Festival, 2023), *Under My Tongue* (Next Wave, 2023), *GUTFUL* (APHIDS, 2022) and formerly co-artistic directed STRANGEkit Performance Collective.

Kira Feeney Assistant Stage Manager

Kira is a proud Pakana stage manager, who grew up on Wathawurrung land in Victoria with a passion for performing arts. They moved to Boorloo/Perth in 2021 to complete the Aboriginal Performance course at WAAPA, and then went on to complete their Advanced Diploma of Stage Management in 2023. She has since worked in stage management teams with companies such as Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company and Black Swan State Theatre Company. Kira is excited to be working again with ILBIJERRI Theatre Company to bring *Big Name, No Blankets to Perth* and Adelaide Festivals.

Peter J Rosas Assistant Stage Manager

Peter is an Indigenous man from the rainforest tribes of Far North Queensland. He is a graduate of Swinburne College in Prahran, Victoria, as well as the Victorian College of the Arts, where he earned a degree in Stage Management and Production.

Peter has worked with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous companies across various roles, including production and tour management, site management and cultural management. His work in cultural management has involved coordinating tours to Indigenous communities throughout Australia.

Tui Rapata Hohepa Campbell Monitor Engineer

Tui is an experienced Adelaide-based sound engineer with over 11 years of expertise in sound reinforcement. Throughout his career he has worked with a wide variety of bands, providing professional sound services across diverse and remote locations, particularly throughout northern Australia. One of the standout moments in his career was his role as production manager for the 2023 National Indigenous Music Awards, where he played a key role in ensuring the seamless execution of the event and is currently working as monitor engineer on *Big Name, No Blankets*.

Travis Kecek Lighting Associate

Travis is a freelance lighting designer, first starting in the drag queen scene. After being the personal designer for Sydney's infamous drag scene, Travis moved to stage and architectural designs. A multi-faceted artist, Travis has career highlights spanning multiple disciplines over the years including *Vivid Super Club* (2018 – 19) and Sydney Opera House Mardi Gras float (2020) representing Australia's most iconic building.

Travis has worked on dance and movement pieces *Intact!* (2021) and *Sambal* (2022), original musicals such as *The Siren's Return* (2022), *Carrie the Musical* (2023) and *Menopause the Musical* (2024), as well as working with international music artists such as John Butler (2024), Marcus Miller (2024) and Jalen Ngonda (2025), and continually supporting the indie theatre scene with shows such as *GunDog* (2022) and *Hedda Gabler* (2024).



Image: James Henry

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With thanks to Regal Theatre staff, management and board

The image features a solid yellow background. Overlaid on this are several white, irregular, torn-edge-like shapes that overlap each other, creating a layered, abstract effect. These shapes are primarily located in the upper half of the image. In the lower half, the text 'perthfestival.com.au' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font, angled upwards from left to right.

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