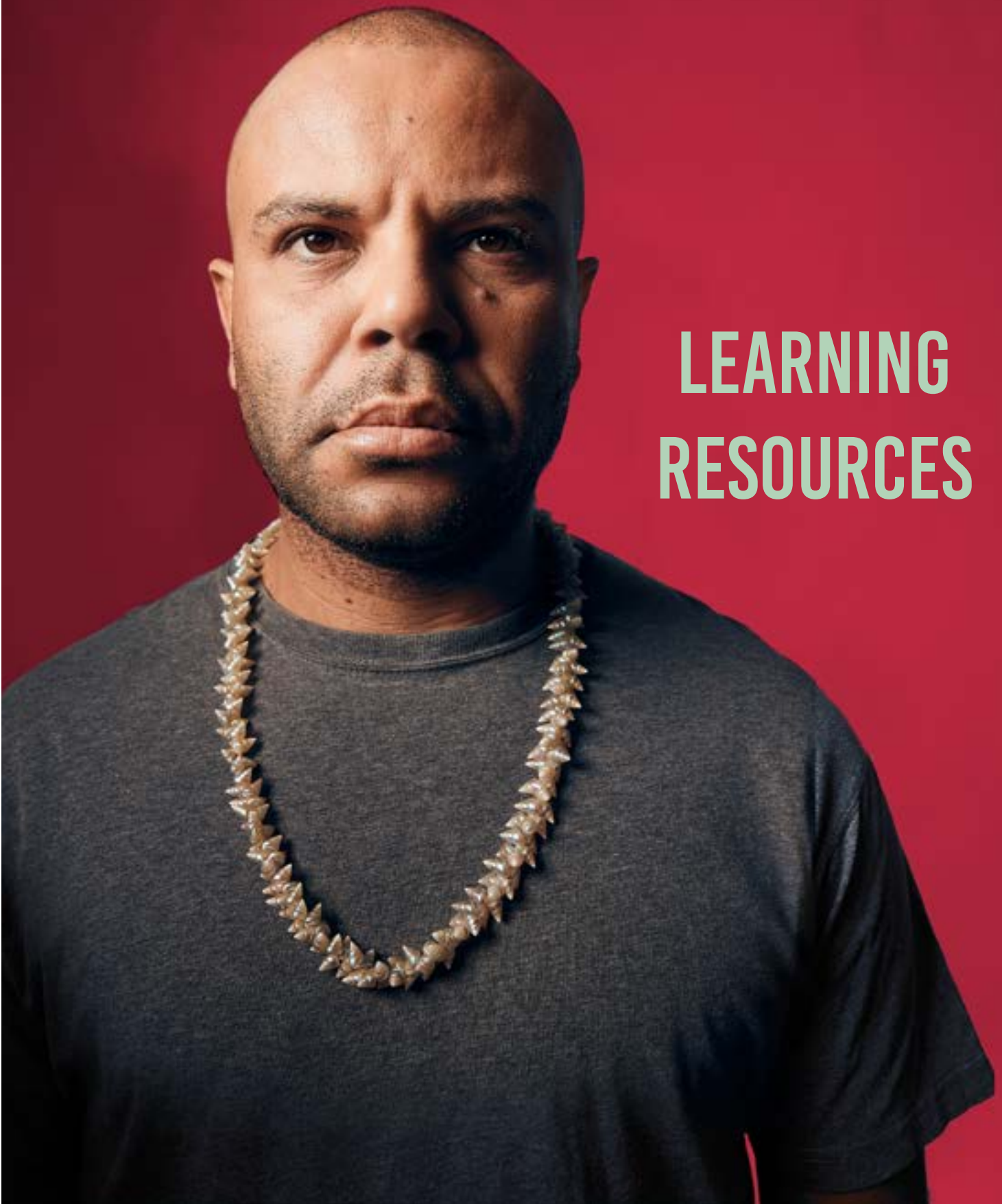




AT WHAT COST?

29 JAN - 20 FEB 2022



**LEARNING
RESOURCES**

Belvoir presents

AT WHAT COST?

By **Nathan Maynard**
Directed by **Isaac Drandic**

This production of *At What Cost?* opened at Belvoir St Theatre on Wednesday 2 February 2022.

Set Designer **Jacob Nash**
Costume Designer and Set Realiser **Keerthi Subramanyam**
Lighting Designer **Chloe Ogilvie**
Associate Lighting Designer **Kelsey Lee**
Composer **Brendon Boney**
Sound Designer **David Bergman**
Intimacy and Fight Director **Nigel Poulton**
Stage Manager **Natalie Moir**
Assistant Stage Managers **Jennifer Jackson & Brooke Kiss**

With
Luke Carroll as Boyd
Sandy Greenwood as Nala
Alex Malone as Gracie
Ari Maza Long as Daniel

Indigenous theatre at Belvoir is supported by **The Balnaves Foundation**.

We acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation who are the traditional custodians of the land on which Belvoir St Theatre is built. We also pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging, and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that the following resources contains names of people who have died.

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ABOUT BELVOIR

ONE BUILDING. SIX HUNDRED PEOPLE. THOUSANDS OF STORIES

When the Nimrod Theatre building in Belvoir Street, Surry Hills, was threatened with redevelopment in 1984, more than 600 people – ardent theatre lovers together with arts, entertainment and media professionals – formed a syndicate to buy the building and save this unique performance space in inner city Sydney.

Thirty years later, under Artistic Director Isaac Drandic and Executive Director Sue Donnelly, Belvoir engages Australia's most prominent and promising playwrights, directors, actors and designers to realise an annual season of work that is dynamic, challenging and visionary. As well as performing at home, Belvoir regularly takes to the road, touring both nationally and internationally.

BELVOIR EDUCATION

Our Education Program provides students and teachers with insights into the work of Belvoir and first hand experiences of the theatre-making process.

Belvoir Education offers student workshops, teacher professional development workshops, work experience, VET placements, archival viewings and a wealth of online resources designed to support work in the drama classroom. Our arts access programs assist schools in Regional NSW and Western Sydney to access the company's work.

Explore our education pages at www.belvoir.com.au/education

CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM



Nathan Maynard
Writer



Isaac Drandic
Director



David Bergman
Sound Designer



Brendon Boney
Composer



Luke Carroll
Boyd



Sandy Greenwood
Nala



Jennifer Jackson
Assistant Stage Manager



Brooke Kiss
Assistant Stage Manager



Kelsey Lee
Associate Lighting Designer



Alex Malone
Gracie



Ari Maza Long
Daniel



Natalie Moir
Stage Manager



Jacob Nash
Set Designer



Chloe Ogilvie
Lighting Designer



Nigel Poulton
Intimacy and Fight Director



Keerthi Subramanyam
Costume Designer and Set Realiser

WRITER'S NOTE

NATHAN MAYNARD

Thank you, Belvoir!

In none of the COVID storms have you left me without your shelter.

You have my eternal gratitude for your commitment to getting this story on your stage.

I thank EVERY ONE of you. But special thanks to Mercer, Flack, Beach, Donnelly, David and Louise Gough, ex-Belvoir gun dramaturge.

I'd also like to thank-

Tasmania Performs.

Their annual artist retreat is the place where I first pitched the idea of the play to other humans.

The Unconformity Festival,

For giving me time and space to finish the play's first draft.

Moogahlin Performing Arts and the Yellamundie

First Nations Playwriting Festival:

For giving me the means to workshop and finish the play's second draft.

Playwriting Australia, (now deceased)

For giving me time and space at their First Nations playwriting retreat, where I wrote the play's third draft.

This is also where I met the gun, Louise Gough, who brought the play's attention to Belvoir.

Peter Matheson,

Peter's not an organisation or a venue, but if he was, he'd be a library stacked with books on playwriting. Thank you for sharing this knowledge with me, mate.

Rachael Maza.

For supporting the work from its early days and for supporting me in my journey as a theatre maker.

At What Cost? Director, Isaac Drandic.

Whose work is beautifully nuanced, layered and filled with cultural integrity. In you we trust Drandic.

The Balnaves Foundation

Who walk the talk by supporting First Nations stories and artists, and who awarded me the Fellowship way back in 2019. We made it!

And last but not least-

The AT WHAT COST? cast and crew.

COVID hasn't made it easy, but your hard work and sacrifices have got us there. Thank you!

I won't go into detail about the themes of the play, I'll let the work speak for itself.

However, I will say-

I had to write *AT WHAT COST?* in order for me to write anything else.

In the past, the sad destructive realities attached to the main theme of the play completely consumed me.

The writing of *AT WHAT COST?* -broke my fever.

The catch cry of the day is TRUTH TELLING.

This play is my truth.

I dedicate this work to my sister *Sara Maynard.*

She lives her life in the trenches fighting for our people.

We love you and appreciate your strength and dedication to our cause.

Nayri nina-tu.

Nathan Maynard.



Nathan Maynard



Luke Carroll, Dom Mercer, Alex Malone, Nathan Maynard

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

ISAAC DRANDIC

Making theatre through a pandemic has had its challenges and I have to say it is a relief to finally have this work up and in a theatre. The care and support from the Belvoir team has been enormous and I thank everyone who has had a hand in getting this work to the stage.

The following note might be a spoiler, so I recommend you read after the show.

It is every human's desire, in-fact need, to belong. We as the First People of Australia have always had a deep connection to country, community and kin. We've always belonged. Who would we be if we didn't? Belonging makes you feel safe and protected. It feels like you are part of everything, and everything is part of you. It feels like a warm hug, a warm eternal hug. It's a special feeling.

At What Cost? is the third collaboration between Nathan Maynard and I and it's a real pleasure to be directing another one of his plays. I always take my responsibility as the lead realiser of a play seriously as a lot of the stories I've had the privilege of directing are very personal to the playwrights who pen them. This is no different. This is a particularly timely play that explores and attempts to address a significant and ongoing problem in the political, cultural and social sphere in Australia. Identity and claiming to be Aboriginal or in the case of *At What Cost*, palawa, when you're not, is at the centre of the unfolding drama in this play. I don't want to get into the politics of Tasmania and the palawa so much because it is not my place to and my job as a theatre maker is not necessarily to talk just about politics but to explore the human condition within the political sphere.

There are well known and documented problems that exist in Aboriginal communities across Australia. We are a community of people who have experienced a similar history in some ways. The hardships Aboriginal people face as a result of colonisation have bonded and united us no matter where we come from. Against the colonisers' intention to dislocate, disperse and destroy, colonisation has created the biggest and most cohesive community in the world. Haha! I can go to the other side of this vast continent, and someone will greet me "hey brother" and I'll reply "hey bro" or "hey sista" even though we're not related but we are connected because of our shared experiences as The First People. When I look into the eye of another Aboriginal person who has lived as an Aboriginal person, I can instantly recognise them and they me. There's a knowing in their eyes, a texture to their voice, a smile that only exists because of the endured pain behind it and we know we belong to a community. A community who has experienced the greatest of hardship on our own land and survived. A community who continues to not just survive but thrive in the face of adversity on our own land. We continue to build our connection to claim back and deepen our sense of belonging

with every act of resistance. Victory of land rights, or the return of a sacred shield, or the repatriation of one of our ancestors from a museum across the world. We are building and strengthening our connection to country and to each other every day but boy oh boy it is hard work when today we are still fighting colonisation. The fight to keep our cultures alive and strong is very real and very urgent.

First Nations people remember you're belonging. You are part of the largest community in the world and the fight is not over. Protect your culture. Protect your country. Protect our future.

"If you look after country, country will look after you." It feels like a warm eternal hug.



Isaac Drandic, Directing via video conference into the rehearsal room



Luke Carroll, Nathan Maynard, Dom Mercer, Alex Malone. Nathan speaks to Isaac via video conference.

WHERE IS PUTALINA?

The story of At What Cost, takes place at the location known to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community as putalina...putalina is also known as, Oyster Cove, and it is located to the south of Hobart, Tasmania, Australia.

From At What Cost? by Nathan Maynard

ABORIGINAL HISTORICAL PLACE PUTALINA / OYSTER COVE

For thousands of years Aboriginal people lived in the area around putalina / Oyster Cove. A quarry site near putalina is a continuing reminder of the strong ancestral connections to this area.

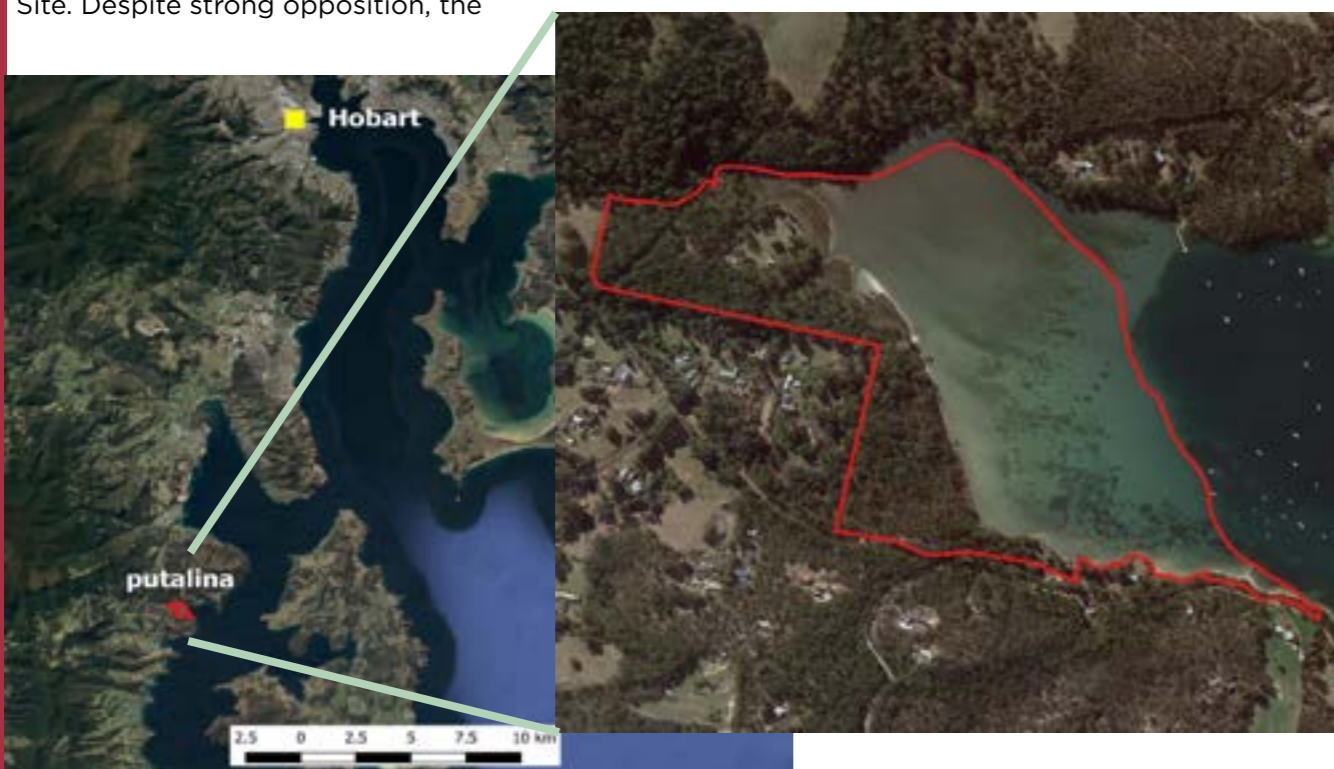
In the 1840s, a convict probation station was established in the putalina area for the convicts who worked around the D'Entrecasteaux Channel, south of Hobart. This closed in 1846 when its buildings became too dilapidated. At that time, 47 Aboriginal people were living at the Government settlement called Wybalenna on Flinders Island. Wybalenna was closed by Governor Denison in October 1847, and the Tasmanian Aboriginal people were removed to putalina.

For several people, such as Trukanini and My.yung.ge, also known as Davy Bruny, son of Wurati, putalina was close to their Nununi home country which is also known as Bruny Island. Life at putalina was harsh, as conditions in the valley were often wet and cold and the buildings were in great need of repair...

Aboriginal people lived at the ex-probation station, and sometimes away in the bush. Occasionally they visited the public house in nearby North West Bay. They also hunted, performed ceremonies and continued making traditional cultural items...By 1858, only ten women and five men survived...

The station effectively closed in 1862. From this time, Trukanini lived with the Station Superintendent and Mrs. Dandridge in Hobart until she died in 1876. The surgeon, William Crowther, infamously raided the graves at putalina and removed skeletal remains of many Aboriginal people.

For most of the next 100 years, parts of the former station land were sold, while some remained as Crown land. In 1976, after a successful campaign, Trukanini's remains were returned to the Aboriginal community. Her remains were then cremated and her ashes scattered near her home country in the D'Entrecasteaux Channel. In 1981 most of the former station area was proclaimed as a Historic Site. Despite strong opposition, the



Aerial view and location of putalina. Images courtesy of Tasmania Aboriginal Centre

Aboriginal community reoccupied the site on 16 January 1984.

In May 1985, ancestral remains from the Crowther Collection were returned to the Aboriginal community. Further successful campaigns resulted in the return of the remains of other ancestors, most of which were cremated at putalina. A building was later erected for a caretaker of putalina, and a larger hut was named in honour of Aboriginal community Elder, Morgan Mansell. Each year since occupying the putalina site, the Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation has held an annual music and cultural festival.

In 1995, the State Government formally handed the title of Oyster Cove to the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania. The site continues to be managed by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation. Today, the putalina festival attracts hundreds of people each January to enjoy local and interstate musicians, cultural activities and interactions with extended family and community.

Excerpt from Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania
Natural and Cultural Heritage Division

READ ALL



Re-occupation hut. Image courtesy of Tasmania Aboriginal Centre

Other Resources

National Museum Australia

COMMUNITY STORIES: putalina (Oyster Cove), Tasmania

<https://www.nma.gov.au/learn/encounters-education/community-stories/putalina-oyster-cove>

SEE MORE



putalina (also known as Oyster Cove), Tasmania. Photo: Kraig Carlstrom

CHARACTERS

WHO'S WHO IN AT WHAT COST?



Boyd Mansell

palawa man and the caretaker of putalina, a leader of the community and representative to the land council.



Nala Mansell

palawa women. Married to and supportive of Boyd. Nala is currently pregnant with their first child. Nala lives in putalina.



Daniel Mansell

Boyd's cousin, a young palawa man who was born in putalina but grew up on the mainland.



Gracie Ranson

an outsider, a PhD student visiting putalina for research. Gracie's research is on Crowther.

WHO IS WILLIAM LANNE?

William Lanne (or Laney) is thought to have been born in 1835, though his exact date of birth is not known.

Lanne lived with his family in north west Tasmania and his family is believed to have been the last Tasmanian Aboriginal family to live a traditional life on mainland Tasmania before George Augustus Robinson 'found' them in 1842 and took them to Wybelenna on Flinders Island.

Lanne lost his traditional name as he was just seven years old when he was moved to Wybelenna and given the English name of William.

He later became known to many as King Billy.

"He lives on not just in the name of an endemic Tasmanian species, but with all sorts of other mythologies and misunderstandings surrounding him," says Greg Lehman, author and member of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery's Aboriginal Advisory Council.

Lanne was moved to the Oyster Cove Aboriginal settlement after a just a few years on Flinders Island, and from there he was taken to an orphan school in New Town.

He then joined a whaling ship and he worked on a number of whalers for many years.

"He was actually really well known across the Pacific as having the best set of spotter's eyes of any whaler in the south Pacific," says Greg.

Lanne was the third husband of Truganini and like Truganini, he is often referred to as the last full-blooded Tasmanian Aboriginal man.

But it is what happened to Lanne after he died in 1869 that led to changes in Tasmanian law.

William Lanne died in March in 1869 from a combination of cholera and dysentery.

After his death, a morbid battle over his remains grew between the Royal College of Surgeons and the Royal Society of Tasmania, as both groups wanted to study the remains of what they thought was a dying 'breed' of people.

The argument over who would get to examine what part of Lanne's body led to his skull being stolen by William Crowther (later to become Premier of Tasmania) who cut the skull from Lanne's head and replaced it with another man's skull.

Lanne's hands and feet were also removed and what was left of his remains were buried.

"The Aboriginal community today after a very very long campaign succeeded in obtaining the return of Lanne's skull from Edinburgh and his remains were buried in his tribal land," says Greg.

The Tasmanian community at the time was shocked by the fighting over Lanne's remains and the theft of his body parts.

The uproar led to legislation being passed in the Tasmanian Parliament, the Anatomy Act of 1869. The Act made it law that medical experiments of any sort could only take place if the deceased had agreed to it before they died or the relatives gave permission.

Because of the indignity done to William Lanne, all Tasmanians can rest in peace.

Excerpt from King Billy's lasting legacy for all Tasmanians (2011), Carol Raabus, ABC Local

LISTEN



The Whaler's Tale (2021), Roger Scholes and Greg Lehman. City of Hobart – YouTube video (12:52)
WARNING: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewers are warned that the following may contain references and images of deceased persons. This story and subsequent conversations may be upsetting as the details of our dark past are told.

WATCH NOW

PRODUCTION ELEMENTS

The elements of production are the technical and visual elements used to manipulate the elements of drama in order to effectively tell a play's story.

In these notes we are going to look at *At What Cost?*

Costume reference images

Set model box

RENDERINGS DESIGN - WORKING WITH 'STATES'

For a designer to communicate their vision often they will create a series of renderings or models demonstrating various, important 'states' within the play.

In *At What Cost?* designer Jacob Nash has identified three states which are rendered to demonstrate the vision.

In the examples here you can see:

- Furniture
- The Stars and
- The Pyre

Three states that the play takes place in.

You may notice that the lighting is in integral part of this design.



SET DESIGN

MODEL BOX DESIGNS



Initial Design: *At What Cost?* Model Box - by Jacob Nash



Final Design: *At What Cost?* Model Box - by Jacob Nash



Model Box of At What Cost? by Jacob Nash



The set of At What Cost? by Jacob Nash



*The realisation of the set for At What Cost? (left)
The rendering for 'furniture' within the set (right)
Set Design by Jacob Nash*



The set of At What Cost? by Jacob Nash

Questions to consider after seeing this production

1. What are the key differences between the early model box design & the final set design?
2. Why might this change have taken place?
3. How many different locations were represented in the production?
4. How are set pieces and the curtain used to change the space? What impact does this have?
5. How has the designer used stage space, texture, colour and composition to enhance dramatic meaning?

COSTUME DESIGN

BOYD MANSELL



AT W
BOYD - LUN

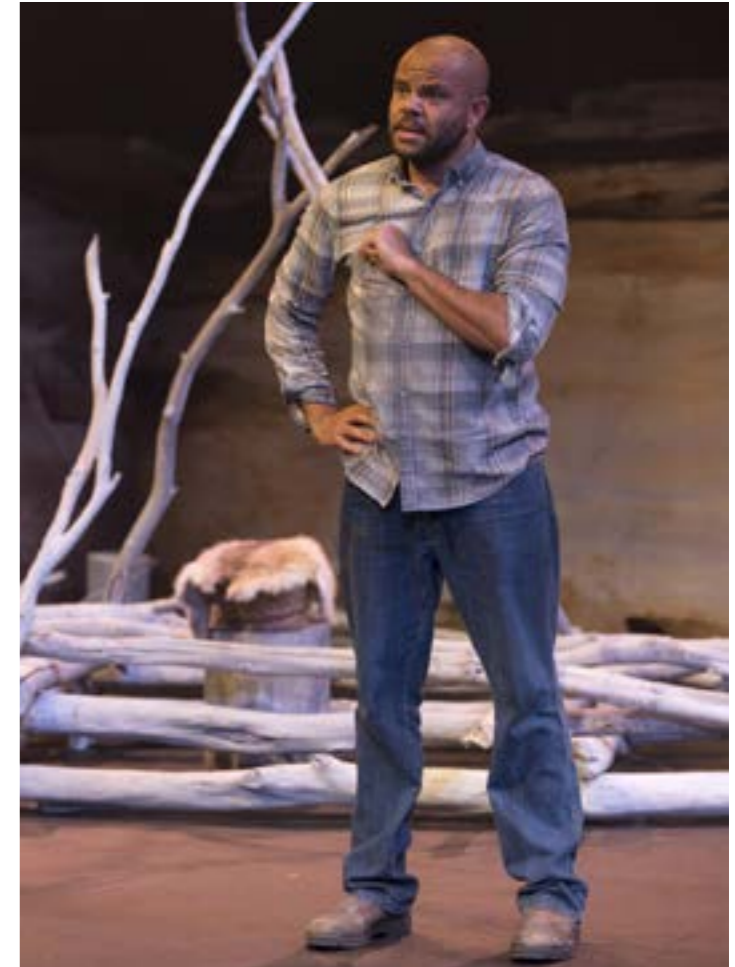
Reference images by Keerthi Subramanyam



AT WHAT COST
BOYD - LUKE CARROLL

Costume renderings by Keerthi Subramanyam

BOYD MANSELL



Luke Carroll, Costume design by Keerthi Subramanyam

NALA MANSELL



Reference images by Keerthi Subramanyam



Costume renderings by Keerthi Subramanyam

NALA MANSELL



Sandy Greenwood, Costume design by Keerthi Subramanyam



DANIEL MANSELL



Reference images by Keerthi Subramanyam



Costume renderings by Keerthi Subramanyam

DANIEL MANSELL



Ari Maza Long, Costume design by Keerthi Subramanyam



GRACIE RANSON



Reference images by Keerthi Subramanyam

GRACIE RANSON



Alex Malone, Costume design by Keerthi Subramanyam



Costume renderings by Keerthi Subramanyam

REHEARSING AT WHAT COST?

PROGRAM

TEXT

DESIGN

PRODUCTION

MEDIA



Alex Malone, Dom Mercer, Luke Carroll, Nathan Maynard

1. What do you think is happening in this scene? Give reasons for your answer
2. What evidence is there that this is a rehearsal?



Alex Malone, Sandy Greenwood

1. Describe what you see in the photo above.
2. What do you think is happening in this moment?
3. What do you think the relationship is between these characters? Give reasons for your answer



Luke Carroll, Dom Mercer, Alex Malone, Nathan Maynard

1. Describe what you see in the photo above
2. What do you think is happening? Give reasons for your answer.



Luke Carroll, Keerthi Subramanyam

1. Describe what you see in the picture above.
2. What do you think is happening in this moment? Give reasons for your answers

POST SHOW DISCUSSION

PROGRAM

TEXT

DESIGN

PRODUCTION

MEDIA



Luke Carroll, Sandy Greenwood

What themes do you think the play was exploring?

How did the discussion within the play inform your opinion or change your mind?



Luke Carroll, Ari Maza Long, Alex Malone

How does the play explore themes of community and belonging?



Luke Carroll, Ari Maza Long, Sandy Greenwood, Alex Malone

Describe the relationships between the characters in this play.

How did these relationships increase the stakes within in the play?



Luke Carroll

How did the play explore tradition and spirituality?

WHAT MOMENT IN THE PLAY HAD THE MOST IMPACT ON YOU AND WHY?



Luke Carroll

WATCH & LISTEN



Interview with Writer, Nathan Maynard
Contemporary Palawa playwright, Nathan Maynard chats with our Artistic Director, Eamon Flack about *AT WHAT COST?*

WATCH NOW



Maireener Shell Necklace by Lola Greeno
Learn more about the beautiful Maireener Shell Necklace that features in the *AT WHAT COST?* production, created by acclaimed Palawa artist, Lola Greeno.

WATCH NOW

Blak excellence on the page and stage

Hear playwright Nathan Maynard and Director, Isaac Drandic on ABC Radio National's Away! program:
abc.net.au/radionational/programs/away/saturday-12-february-2022/13750752
starting at 14 mins

LISTEN



Social Media | *At What Cost?*

Lots of sneak-peek content, and promotional information can be found on social media.

Take a look at the grid and the stories for more content during the run.





Finely wrought story and perfectly alive dialogue knit together to ask knotty questions with ferocity and grace in equal turn.

THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

READ THE REVIEW

A great political tragedy grows out of comic domestic beginnings in this slow-burning play by Nathan Maynard... like all great tragedies, it builds towards pity and terror in its ending.

THE AUSTRALIAN

READ THE REVIEW

Directed with a flawlessly controlled intensity by Noongar man Isaac Drandic, the fury of irreparable injustice burns in the belly of this made-for-right-now tragedy, which builds inexorably towards a devastating and defiant end.

LIMELIGHT

READ THE REVIEW



Luke Carroll

CONTACT EDUCATION

PROGRAM

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TEXT

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DESIGN

Belvoir Education would like to thank Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, Jacob Nash, Keerthi Subramanyam, Jake Severino, Xu Yang Chua for their support creating these resources.

PRODUCTION

MEDIA