

The Jungle and the Sea

- *The Jungle and the Sea* is a play written by S. Shakthidharan and Eamon Flack, who previously collaborated on *Counting and Cracking* in 2019 and *The Wrong Gods* in 2025.
- The production, directed by S. Shakthidharan and Eamon Flack, premiered at Belvoir on Wednesday 16 November 2022. It received significant acclaim, winning the Sydney Theatre Awards for Best Mainstage Production, Best New Australian Work, Best Ensemble and Best Original Score of a Mainstage Production.
- *The Jungle and the Sea* runs for approximately 2 hours and 50 minutes, including 2 intervals
- *The Jungle and the Sea* is set in Sri Lanka and Australia. The action of the play takes place at various location in the north of Sri Lanka and in Sydney, Australia and takes place moves back and forward in time between three years: 1995, 2009 and 2022
- The year in which each scene takes place is indicated on the stage on a physical signpost.
- The play is performed on a revolving stage, which turns constantly, at different speeds, during the show.
- The central characters in the play are a Sri Lankan Tamil family of six: Gowrie (amma) – the mother (who is Hindu); Siva (Sivapalan) (appa) – the father (who is Christian). And their children: Abi (Abirami) (akka) – older sister (who is Hindu); Madhu (akka) – older sister (who is Christian); Lakshmi (thangachi) – younger sister (who is an atheist); Ahilan (thumbi) – Sri Lankan Tamil, Hindu, male.
- There are eight actors and two musicians in the production. Six of the actors play multiple roles. Costume is used to indicate the change in character. Actor and dancer Anandavalli plays only one character (Gowrie). Musicians Arjunan Puveendran and Indu Balachandran create all the sound cues in the production live on stage.
- The show opens with a dance called *Bharathanatyam*, performed by Anandavalli, who plays the character Gowrie (amma).
- *The Jungle and the Sea* is set during and after the civil war in Sri Lanka.
- The Sri Lankan civil war was fought in Sri Lanka from 1983 to 2009 (over 25 years). The war was fought between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (the LTTE also known as the Tamil Tigers). The LTTE fought to establish an independent state called Tamil Eelam in the north-east of Sri Lanka due to decades of discrimination and persecution of the minority Tamil people by the Sinhalese-majority Sri Lankan government. In Sri Lanka, the Sinhalese people are the majority, and the Sri Lankan Tamil people are the minority.
- The production contains the loud sound of bombing, created by the musicians on stage.
- *The Jungle and the Sea* contains verbal and visual references to the aftermath of bombings as well as references to the deaths of civilians, including babies and the description of injuries.
- In some scenes actors appear on stage wearing uniforms representing the LTTE (Tamil Tigers) and the Sri Lankan Armed Forces and carrying weapons, including AK47s.
- **[SPOILER]** The plot of *The Jungle and the Sea* contains the deaths of four central characters by gunfire. The deaths are represented on the stage by each actor taking a blood capsule and rubbing it over their faces and exiting the stage neutrally. The sound of gunfire is created by the musicians.
- *The Jungle and the Sea* contains references to religion and atheism, and to marriage between people of different religious backgrounds. There is a reference in the production to the Tigers 'driving Muslims out of the North of Sri Lanka.'
- *The Jungle and the Sea* contains a scene set in Australia in 2022 where an adult character comes out to her father as a gay woman.
- There is the use of haze this production and the burning of incense in the foyer.
- Some students may need to be briefed about theatre etiquette. Please turn mobile phones off completely and refrain from eating in the theatre. Students need to know that the performance is live and that the actors see and hear them in the audience.
- The dedicated schools performance of *The Jungle and the Sea* will finish close to 2.30pm. There will be no Q&A at the conclusion of the performance. Please email education@belvoir.com.au with any questions your students may have about the production.

Schools performance tickets are not sent out beforehand, please collect your tickets from the Box Office in the foyer of the theatre upon arrival on the day.

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