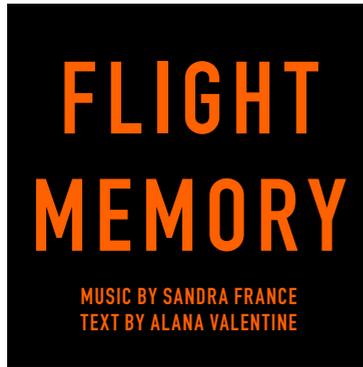


WORLD PREMIERE

A NARRATIVE SONG CYCLE ABOUT
AUSTRALIAN GENIUS

FLIGHT MEMORY

MUSIC BY SANDRA FRANCE
TEXT BY ALANA VALENTINE



14 — 17 NOVEMBER 2019
THE STREET THEATRE, CANBERRA



PRODUCTION CREDITS

CAST

Liam Budge
Leisa Keen
Michelle Nicolle

MUSICIANS

Brendan Clarke
Tom Fell
Gary France
Sandra France
Jess Green
Ben Marston

CREATIVE TEAM

COMPOSER

Sandra France

LIBRETTIST

Alana Valentine

DIRECTOR

Caroline Stacey

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Sandra France

STAGE AND COSTUME DESIGN

Imogen Keen

LIGHTING DESIGN

Niklas Pajanti

SOUND DESIGN

Kimmo Vennonen

PRODUCTION TEAM

STAGE MANAGER

Indigo Trail

LIGHTING PROGRAMMER

Stephen Rose

SOUND OPERATION

Kimmo Vennonen

PRODUCTION TECHNICIANS

Andrew Meadows, Stephen Rose,

James Tighe

LIGHTING OPERATOR

William Mallam

SET BUILD

Luke Laffan

Tony Theobald

PUBLICITY

Su Hodge

SOCIAL MEDIA

Jessica Conway

PHOTOGRAPHY

Shelly Higgs

MARKETING ARTWORK

DAMS

STUDENT SECONDMENT

Elaine Choi (Telopea Park School)



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SYNOPSIS

Flight Memory, tells the sometimes frustrating, sometimes elating, ultimately triumphant story of visionary Australian scientist David Warren and an indisputable Australian genius invention - the Black Box Flight Recorder. A homage to invention in our country that will inspire and challenge the belief 'everything good gets invented somewhere else'.

Commissioned by The Street Theatre, *Flight Memory* is a feast of live music, theatre and visual design taking us from blues, Broadway, funk, pop and Latin to minimalism, free improvisation and beyond. Mixing up musical styles *Flight Memory* examines how Australia treats its scientists and asks can we live out the absolute bounds of our potential as a nation?

SONG LIST

Crystal Set

David's father gives him a radio receiver, a crystal set.

That's Not Why

David's father dies in one of Australia's first aircraft disasters, neither the plane nor those on board are ever found. Did this tragedy influence his invention of the black box flight recorder?

Beginnings

David graduates with honours in science and is employed at the Australian Department of Defence as combustion investigator. In his lunch hour he works on the flight memory recording device.

Fatal Fog

The tragic loss of children in a plane crash off Mackay galvanizes the desire for progress in air safety.

Stones for Bread

David's invention of a device that would record both pilot speech and inflight data is met with crushing indifference and hostile rejection. But he is determined to press on.

The Family Jewels

Having created a prototype, the ARL (Aeronautical Research Laboratories) team test the recording device. In the cramped cockpit of the Dutch built Fokker aircraft, the device can hear a pilot mumble 'Up she goes and mind the family jewels', a wry protective mantra against squeezing the groin of the pilot with the control stick!

Corner of Hell

David's team at the ARL have developed an operational prototype but there is still no interest from any aviation authority. The team hit rock bottom.

The Whispered Truth

It was an English Air Vice Marshall, Robert Hardingham, who recognized the boldness of the 'flight memory' device, and flew Warren to London to debut it in the UK.

Red Tap Reg

The naysayers are vanquished and the flight memory device, in it's essential components – a voice recorder and data recorder housed in an indestructible box – is manufactured in England. Though David Warren and the ARL team never recoup their investment, they can be triumphant at the many lives they have saved.

Voices of the Dead

Now someone can listen to a crash and help to prevent them occurring in future. But the question why is about more than problems with engineering.

COMPOSER'S NOTE

I am honoured to have had the opportunity to respond, through song, to David Warren's journey in his quest to invent the Black Box Flight Recorder. A deeply personal story that resonates with creative people around the world in their quest of discovery, *Flight Memory* exposes the extremes of treatment that Warren endured in a stifling culture of protocol, correctness and insecurity. With such a rich tapestry of emotions on a topic of profound importance, the task of setting Alana Valentine's clever and poignant lyrics to music has been a challenging and rewarding experience. To this end, I have attempted to reflect the complexity of Dr Warren's brilliant mind and his emotional responses to rejection, ridicule and disrespect by composing 10 contrasting songs which reference Baroque, Classical, Minimalism, Blues, Swing and Hip Hop. Together with Valentine's sculpted lyrics, and under the bold, sensitive direction of Caroline Stacey, *Flight Memory* aims to move, uplift and inspire audiences, so that they might understand the complex personal story behind the Black Box, one of the most important inventions in aviation history.

Sandra France

LIBRETTIST NOTE

We have called *Flight Memory* a narrative song cycle to valorise the fact that the tale this work tells is engaging, compelling and in some ways an archetypal Australian story. But although I hope our audiences will be intrigued and made curious about the life of David Warren and his achievements, the narrative of *Flight Memory* should primarily be a gateway into a more profound experience through the music, sound, and visual beauty of this work that Sandra France and I have created with Caroline Stacey and these extraordinary creatives and crew. As a playwright, I have always been conscious of the way in which drama can bring audiences into empathetic intimacy with people and situations that may be unfamiliar to them personally. But it has been an absolute revelation to work with Sandra and Caroline on the ways in which we might attempt through music, especially the ambition and sustained focus of a song cycle, to move audiences to joy, pain, sorrow and reflection in utterly unique and transformative ways. There is strong narrative here, a dramatically structured journey to take you deep into this musical landscape. But please don't imagine that our aim is only to tell you a biographical story, or even one of information, psychological realism or historical acuity. Rather than characters, all of the singers embody voices – sometimes of David as an individual, sometimes the voices in his head, the naysaying voices in the world, narrators, pilots, journalists and sometimes all three sing in unison as a collective voice of David and the Aeronautical Research Laboratories team. Our deepest and most sincere artistic goal has been to create, emotionally, a way in which this sometimes frustrating, sometimes elating, ultimately triumphant story of an indisputable Australian genius invention might resonate with us, today, in an Australia where we continue to hope for solutions to our ongoing social problems and where we just might find them among our best scientists.

Alana Valentine





SANDRA FRANCE
COMPOSER

Sandra France, represented artist with the Australian Music Centre, is a Canberra based composer who has written works for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Opera, Synergy and many of Australia's finest classical musicians. Her CD, *Fluctuating States of Calm*, was recorded in 2004 by Tall Poppies (TP177), and is a collection of her early classical compositions. In

2008, France was the recipient of an ACT Creative Fellowship Award, which led to the creation of her opera *From a Black Sky* (Directed by Caroline Stacey, Libretto by Helen Nourse). For this work, France won a Canberra Critics Circle Award for Composition and was a finalist for the ARIA's 2014 Art Music – Vocal Work of the Year Award. France's most recent work, *Flight Memory*, is a collaboration with renowned Australian playwright, Alana Valentine. A uniquely innovative work, *Flight Memory* is a Jazz Song Suite that fuses genres, styles and structural forms. www.sandrafrance.com.au



ALANA VALENTINE
LIBRETTIST

Alana Valentine's acclaimed work for Canberra audiences includes *Cold Light* (Street, 2017), *Letters to Lindy* (CTC, 2016), *Head Full of Love* (Street, Drover Award winner 2016) and she worked with director Caroline Stacey previously on *MP* (2011). *Butterfly Dandy* played Street Two in 2005. Alana is co-writer, with Ursula Yovich, of the multi Helpmann-award

winning (Best Musical, Best Original Score) *Barbara and the Camp Dogs*, first seen at Belvoir 2017 and around Australia 2019. As well as the recent production of original plays *Made To Measure* (Seymour 2019), *The Sugar House* (Belvoir 2018), *Ear to the Edge of Time* (Seymour 2018), Alana worked with Bangarra Dance Theatre as dramaturg on Helpmann-Award winning Best New Australian work *Bennelong*, *Dark Emu*, *Patyegarang*, *Dubboo*, and *ID*. In 2020 she will work with the Brandenburg Orchestra on a narrative concert *Notre Dame* and develop a community sourced work *Wayside Bride* with Belvoir. www.alanavalentine.com



CAROLINE STACEY
DIRECTOR

Caroline Stacey is the Artistic Director/CEO of The Street Theatre, Canberra's leading creative producer of contemporary theatre and live performance and the creative hub for professional and independent artists. A multi-award winning director in 2012 Caroline received the Canberra Artist of the Year Award for her outstanding contribution to theatre and

the performing arts. Caroline has an extensive career as a festival director leading Castlemaine State Festival for seven years and as a stage director of theatre and opera working for companies as diverse as West Australian Opera, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne International Arts Festival, Sydney Opera House, Queensland Music Festival, Victorian Opera, Canterbury Opera, Melbourne Opera, Saltpillar Theatre, and Downstage Theatre (NZ). Works directed for The Street include: *A Doll's House, Part 2*, *Venus in Fur*, *Diary of a Madman*, *The Weight of Light*, *Boys Will Be Boys*, *Cold Light*, *Constellations*, *The Chain Bridge*, *The Faithful Servant*, *MP*, *To Silence*, *The Give and Take*, *Where I End & You Begin*, *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well* and *Living in Paris*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *Capital*, *Medea*, *The Jade Harp*, *Albert Herring*, *The Six Memos* and *From A Black Sky*.



CAST



LIAM BUDGE

Liam Budge released his debut jazz album to critical acclaim and a four star review in *The Australian* and continued to establish himself as one of Australia’s leading vocalists and song-writers. In 2014 Liam relocated to New York City to begin working on new musical ventures and projects, and has performed on many of New York’s finest and storied stages, including Blue Note Jazz Club, Jazz at the Lincoln Center and Rockwood Music Hall.

During 2014, he recorded and played with New York City’s finest musicians including Chad Lefkowitz-Brown, Kris Bowers and Brad Williams. Liam also studied under Grammy-Winning Jazz Vocalist Kurt Elling. Most recently Liam launched his jazz project *Creswick* and released a self-titled Debut EP in 2018, featuring guitarist Nir Felder (John Mayer, Chaka Khan) and saxophonist Troy Roberts (Van Morrison, Jeff Tain Watts). Written about the Syrian refugee crisis, this work combined a modern jazz approach with lyrical story-telling.



MICHELLE NICOLLE

Michelle Nicolle is one Australia’s most celebrated jazz performers Bell Award (2017), Mo Award 2001, 2003 & 2004, National Jazz Award (1998) winner and A.R.I.A Finalist 2001, 2004, 2009 – touring and recording for the last two decades. Known for her ability to get right to the heart of a song, as well as being an in the moment improviser Michelle has released 8 CDs and toured extensively throughout Australia and internationally,

with performances including Tokyo Jazz Festival, Jarasum Jazz Festival (Korea), Turkey, Estonia, Finland, North Sea Jazz Festival (Netherlands), Asia Pacific Festival (Russia), Prague Jazz Festival 2015, 2018 (Cz Republic), London 2016 and JEN Conference, New Orleans 2017, Frost School of Music (Miami) and JazzVox Seattle, (USA) 2017, 2019, University Of North Texas 2019, Oceanside Jazz Festival 2019 (USA).



LEISA KEEN

Leisa Keen has been working in the Australian music industry for over 25 years, in both jazz and musical theatre/cabaret. Since 1990, Leisa has musically directed and performed in over 150 shows, including *Beauty and the Beast*, *Chess*, *A Chorus Line*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *West Side Story*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Phantom Of The Opera*, *Cats* and many others. Leisa studied jazz vocals at the Canberra School of Music, under the direction

of Gery Scott, for 6 years. It was here that she also gained the valuable writing and arranging skills that have assisted in her musical direction and performance, making her one of Canberra’s, Sydney’s and the Gold Coast’s most sought-after accompanists and musical directors. In 2013, Leisa was awarded a Canberra Critics Circle Award for her services to music in Canberra.

MUSICIANS

SANDRA FRANCE
RED EGGS BAND LEADER / PIANO

*Bio previous page



BRENDAN CLARKE
DOUBLE BASS

Brendan Clarke is one of Australia’s premier bassists. Equally at home on electric and double bass Brendan has been at the forefront of the Australian jazz and

contemporary scene for over 20 years. He has toured extensively here and abroad and has performed at every major jazz festival in Australia several times and was the winner of the national jazz award at the Wangaratta Jazz Festival in 2001. Clarke has played bass on over 60 albums including three of his own releases and he continues to be a first call bassist for many of Australia’s leading jazz artists. He also has experience in music theatre having played in the productions of *Beautiful*, *The Carole King Story* and *The Book of Mormon* both at the Lyric Theatre in Sydney. Brendan is now based in Canberra and is an Associate Lecturer at the ANU School of Music Jazz and Contemporary course.



TOM FELL
SAXOPHONE

Tom Fell has been living and performing in Canberra since graduating from the ANU School of Music in 2010. A versatile and sought after instrumentalist, Tom has worked with many of Canberra's best-loved bands (including Brass Knuckle Brass Band, Key Grip, NYASH Afrobeat Collective and Dub Dub Goose) as well as sharing the stage with some of Australia's finest jazz musicians (including Miroslav Bukovsky, John Mackey, Steve Barry, Hetty Kate, Brendan Clarke, Hugh Barrett and Alex Hirlian). Performance credits include the Capital Jazz Project, Jazz at the Gods Concert Series, Floriade, National Multicultural Festival, Canberraang Swing Dance Festival and the Australian Blues Music Festival. Tom is also a dedicated educator. He currently works as a tutor and examiner at the ANU as well as in many schools in Canberra as an instrumental teacher and band leader.



JESS GREEN
GUITAR

Jess Green was born in Canberra and completed a Bachelor of Music (Jazz Studies) at the Canberra School of Music (ANU) in 2001. Her primary instruments are electric guitar and voice. She has recorded for television and dance, composed and performed for theatre and released several albums under various stage and band names (The Green Septet, The New Dynamites, Jess Green's Bright Sparks and Pheno). Critically acclaimed, Jess has worked extensively as a guitarist and guitarist/singer with many well-known Australian musicians and groups including: The Catholics; Jim Conway's Big Wheel; Petulant Frenzy, and Alyx Dennison. She has performed on many of Australia's great stages and festivals and toured through Europe and Asia, including being a part of the all female band led by Katie Noonan at the Commonwealth Games closing ceremony (2018), support for NYC artist Joan as Policewoman (2019) at The Street Theatre and composer in residence for the Canberra International Music Festival (2019).



GARY FRANCE
DRUMS

Gary France performs professionally in the widest range of musical genres including jazz, commercial, world and classical music. Gary was recruited from the USA to Australia in 1986 by Richard Gill as the inaugural Lecturer in Drumset and Percussion at the Western Australian Conservatorium of Music. Prominent positions include: Head of Music – Edith Cowan

University, Associate Professor of Percussion and Head of ANU School of Music, Features Editor of DRUMscene / PERCUSscene Magazine, Board of Directors Percussive Arts Society International, President and founder of the Australia Chapter of PAS and Board member SPEAK Percussion. Gary is no stranger to The Street having performed in several productions such as Nigredo Hotel, Repercussions, QED and The Illad. Gary France is the founder and director of The Groove Warehouse, an innovative institution that merges music educational practice with entrepreneurship.



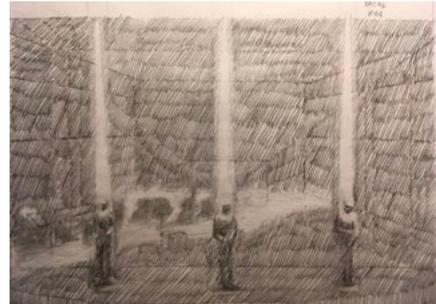
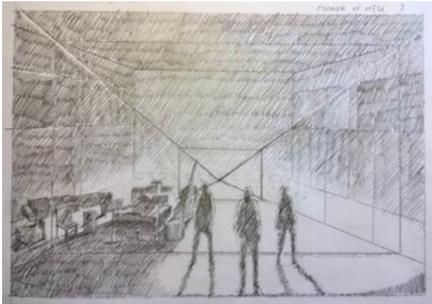
BEN MARSTON
TRUMPET

Ben Marston was born in Canberra and started playing the trumpet at age 9 in the primary school brass band. He studied at the ANU School of Music completing an honors degree in jazz performance and then a masters in jazz composition. His time studying composition helped him to write the music for his first album and the success of that encouraged him to pursue writing

and performing original music. His playing career has led him to perform with some of Australia's great jazz musicians including Bob Bertles, James Morrison and Emma Pask. Ben was shortlisted for the 2014 Freedman Fellowship Jazz awards and awarded a grant for travel to Norway to study with the world pioneer in live remix Jan Bang.

IMOGEN KEEN
SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER

Imogen is an award-winning set and costume designer for professional theatre production. She has enjoyed a long collaboration with The Street Theatre, including design for: *Fragments*, *Metamorphosis*, *A Doll's House, Part 2*, *Venus in Fur*, *Diary of a Madman*; *The Weight of Light*; *Boys Will Be Boys*; *Under Sedation: Canberra verse Remixed*; *Constellations*; *Cold Light*; *The Faithful Servant*; *The Chain Bridge*; *MP*; *Where I End & You Begin*; *The Give & Take*; *To Silence*; *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*; *Lawrie and Shirley*; *Albert Herring*; *Dido and Aeneas*. Imogen has received Canberra Critics Circle Awards for Theatre Design (2009; 2011) and an MEAA Peer Acknowledgement Award (2011). She has worked on a wide variety of theatre, film, music and cross-disciplinary productions for: Aspen Island Theatre Company, This Band Will Self Destruct, COUP Canberra, Handel In The Theatre, Barking Spider Visual Theatre, Polyglot Theatre, Canberra Youth Theatre, Little Dove Theatre and Urban Theatre Projects. Imogen graduated from the ANU School of Art in 1993.

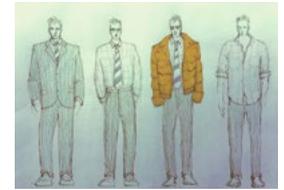
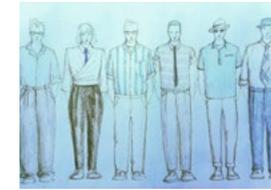


NIKLAS PJANTI
LIGHTING DESIGN

Nik is an award-winning lighting designer whose practice ranges across contemporary art forms and performance styles including theatre, dance, opera, circus, musical theatre, comedy, events, exhibitions and public spaces. He has designed for leading Australian and international companies including The Street (*Boys Will Be Boys*; *Diary of a Madman*) Sydney Theatre Company, Belvoir Theatre (*Angels in America*; *The Wild Duck*), Melbourne Theatre Company, Malthouse, Chunky Move, Victorian Opera, Brink, Ilbijerri, Dance North, Dancehouse, The Eleventh Hour, Ranters Theatre, BalletLab, Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne Festival, Sydney Festival, Adelaide Festival, Melbourne International Comedy Festival and Commonwealth Games Festival Melbourne. Niklas designed lighting for the theatre interiors of Fred Schepisi's film *The Eye Of The Storm*. Niklas is a graduate of Victorian College of the Arts (BA) and has a postgraduate qualification in Lighting Engineering (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology).

KIMMO VENNONEN
SOUND DESIGN

In 2010 Kimmo won the MEAA Green Room Award for creative and innovative sound design. In 1991 his work on Collaborations with Jim Denley won the prestigious Prix Italia for the ABC. He studied immersive sound in a geodesic dome, becoming an ANU Visiting Fellow in the late nineties. He has run a music mastering studio at Gorman Arts Centre since 1997. Designs for The Street include: *Metamorphosis*, *Icarus*, *Revolt*. *She Said*. *Revolt Again*; *Cold Light*; *The Chain Bridge*; *Where I End and You Begin*; *Bartleby*; *All This Living*, and *The Faithful Servant*. Other work includes *The Slip Lane* (AITC); *Ghosts in the Scheme* (bigHart); *Verbatim*; *Antigone* (CYT); *Blue Roof*; *The Lost Thing*; and, *Pearl vs the World* (Jigsaw Theatre). He collaborated with Denise Higgins and Gary Smith on *Vox Nautica* (ANCA), *The Barbed Maze* (CCAS) and on *Anthology* (Morris & Buining) at Westlake.



INDIGO TRAIL
STAGE MANAGER

Indigo fell in love with theatre late in life, at age 5. Ever since, she has been performing, writing, working and expanding her love of the theatre however she can. In 2017, she worked as part of the team developing the musical *Camelia* at The Street Theatre, and in mid-2019 she was part of a music theatre showcase with David Sisco. Indigo is thrilled to be one small part of the dedicated, bright and wonderful team working on *Flight Memory*, and has loved Stage Managing for such a gifted cast and crew. This year, she is also graduating from the Australian National University with Honours in Arts, where she wrote a thesis on musical theatre. In her downtime, Indigo loves nothing more than watching a new production and refusing to shut up about it for several days, annoying everyone in the immediate vicinity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project would not have been possible without the support of ACT Government, Defence Science Technology (DST), and the Department of Communications and the Arts.

Supported by



LIBRETTIST ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I was honoured to be able to interview Kenneth Fraser, the last surviving member of the Flight Memory Aeronautical Research Laboratories team, via telephone. Ken is one of the electronics experts who worked on a prototype of the black box and has a website about the invention www.kenblackbox.com. Thank you also to Ken's wife Sandra for her assistance and further insights. I gained remarkable and deeply affecting perspectives on what it was like to be the daughter and son of David Warren from Jenny and Peter Warren, which deeply informed this work. Dr Marlene Kanga, President of the World Federation of Engineering Organisations (WFEO) and who has recently overseen UNESCO's induction of World Engineering Day gave me valuable insights into the working lives of engineers. Thank you to Alexandra Harrington for that introduction. I thank my agent Wendy Howell and my partner Vicki Gordon as well as all the performers, musicians, production crew, creatives, marketing and social media, cleaners and box office staff who have contributed to the making of *Flight Memory*. Sandra France is a cherished collaborator who I will hold onto with a determined grip and vow to work with again. Caroline Stacey is an asset to Australian culture and a breeder of excellence in the ACT Arts.

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ABOUT THE STREET

The Street is Canberra's leading creative producer and theatre company dedicated to contemporary performance. We also present bold work from other places. Inspired by our geography, history and people, we champion creative process alongside finished work; rich dialogue with our community, and in our city of ideas, inquisitive artists who have something to say about the world.

Over 26 years, the company has established itself as an essential part of Canberra's cultural and imaginative life. Our home is The Street Theatre in City West, where cast, creatives, artists, and audiences meet in our three performance spaces and café. We are dedicated to bringing distinctive and diverse Australian stories to the stage, with many of the finest and much loved creative talent in the region and beyond, including Canberra's diaspora, on our stages. Original works developed and produced include: *Flight Memory*, *Epitaph*, *Icarus*, *The Weight of Light*, *Tourmaline*, *Cold Light*, *The Iliad Out Loud*, *Pigman's Lament*, *The Faithful Servant*, *The Chain Bridge*, *From a Black Sky*, *M.P.*, *Bartleby*, *Where I End & You Begin*, *How to be (or not to be) Lower*, *In Loco Parentis*, *Johnny Castellano is Mine*, *The Jade Harp*, and *Underage House Party Play*.

Through our development programs, The Street promotes the creation of high quality original performance work contributing towards a body of stage work encouraging debate on the social, economic, cultural and political relationships central to the reality of lives of Canberrans.

THE STREET — STAFF

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PRODUCER

Dean Ellis

TECHNICAL COORDINATOR

Andrew Meadows

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Daniel Berthon

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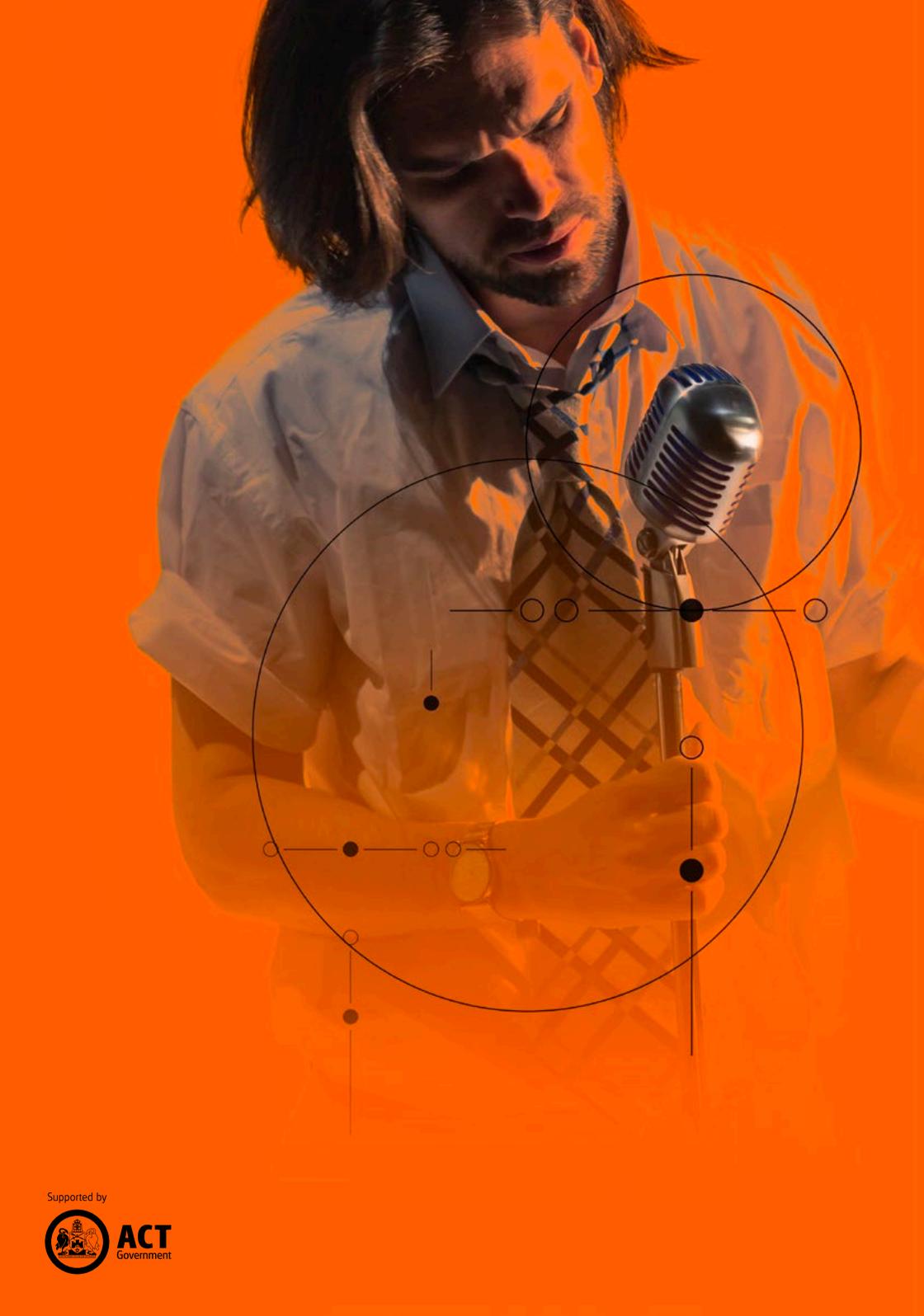
The Street acknowledges the Ngunnawal peoples, the First Peoples of Country on which The Street Theatre stands, and we pay our respects to their ancestors and Elders, and to our shared

The Street is managed by The Stagemaster Inc., a not-for-profit organisation. The Street is supported by the ACT Government through artsACT and is an ACT Government arts

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