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North Melbourne  
Town Hall

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# Blood on the Dance Floor

## ILBIJERRI Theatre Company & Jacob Boehme

Image: Dorine Blaise

Arts House



Season 1

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Wed 1 – Sun 5 June 2016, 60min, no interval  
Post Show Q&A: Thursday 2 June

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## Creative Team

Writer & Performer:  
**Jacob Boehme**  
Director:  
**Isaac Drandic**  
Choreographer:  
**Mariaa Randall**  
Video Artist:  
**Keith Deverell**  
Sound Designer:  
**James Henry**  
Spatial Designer:  
**Jenny Hector**  
Costume Designer:  
**Kelsey Henderson**  
Movement Consultant:  
**Rinske Ginsberg**  
Script Dramaturge:  
**Chris Mead**  
Production Manager:  
**Emily O'Brien**  
Producers:  
**ILBIJERRI Theatre Company & Jacob Boehme**

## ILBIJERRI

### Theatre Company

Artistic Director:  
**Rachael Maza**  
Executive Producer:  
**Simeon Moran**  
Creative Producer:  
**Ben Graetz**  
Creative Producer:  
**Naretha Williams**  
Education & Learning Manager:  
**Kamarra Bell-Wykes**  
Development & Marketing Manager:  
**Iain Finlayson**  
Company Manager:  
**Lauren Bok**  
Finance Manager:  
**Jon Hawkes**

Image: Dorine Blaise



## Writer's Note

Why this story now?

After 30 years of dealing with the global epidemic of HIV, the experiences of stigma, discrimination and silence around the HIV virus are just as present today, and are still being felt by people living with and affected by HIV / AIDS.

By sharing my personal story, unapologetically, of being Blak, gay and poz, *Blood on the Dance Floor* is an opportunity to create a space for our mob to have a voice in the dialogue around HIV. A conversation at a table we have not been invited to in this country, which has so far been led by, and reserved for, gay white men.

Our mob have been dealing with HIV right from the early days, back in the 80s, mostly silently and with shame. And we are now seeing a spike in detection rates here in the state of Victoria, particularly among Indigenous women and IV drug users in our community.

Now, more than ever, we need to take our seat at that table, our silence broken and our voices heard.

*Jacob Boehme*

## Director's Note

Anyone who has ever been in love can access this work.

*Blood On The Dance Floor* is a semi-autobiographical, multi-art form experiment that employs dance and text to tell one man's story. It tackles big themes and ideas.

When Jacob first approached me to direct this work I was instantly humbled by his offer. To be entrusted to help tell someone's life story is a true privilege. I was Associate Director of ILBIJERRI Theatre Company at the time, and I had developed a passion for working with physical storytellers. The opportunity to work with a dancer of Jacob's calibre was an enticing thought. I have to take my hat off to Jacob for having the guts to share his story, his experiences, his fears, and his desires for all to see.

Ultimately, *Blood* is about love. It's about relationships, it's about strength and resilience, it's about courage, and it's about hope. It's about our fears of ending up alone. It's about overcoming those fears and continuing to take risks, to be vulnerable, in the pursuit of happiness. But are we deserving of happiness? Are we deserving of love?

While the world of this character, and his circumstances, are very specific to the challenges he's up against, his desire to be loved and have meaningful relationships is universal. Whether you are gay or straight, white or black, female or male, HIV positive or negative, a dance or theatre fan, as long as there is blood running through your veins, there is a way into this world.

*Blood* is one of the most challenging works I've undertaken. In many ways, delving into the unknown world of dance and text meant starting all over again. We didn't know the "rules" because there weren't any, so we made them up as we went along. We tried many different ways to lift this work off the page. It was experiment after experiment and each time we threw ourselves into a creative development we got a little closer to finding the way through. We could spend an eternity exploring the form and still be in a world of the unknown.

*Isaac Drandic*

## Choreographer's Note

*Blood on the Dance Floor* has been significant in that it has allowed me to witness, first hand, how an individual crafts their artistry. A place where words, ideas, dreams and intentions unfold to reveal the inner storyteller, whose voice you may be hearing for the first time tonight: Mr. Jacob Boehme. And although it's the first time, it is not without courage, without sorrow, without purpose, and nor the last time, I believe, you will hear it.

*Blood* has been an amazing, challenging, exceptional and inspiring work to be a part of. Thank you Jacob for having the courage and cracked-ness to find the words to share your story and for thinking of me to be beside you on this ride. I have loved sitting there with you, Isaac, James, Keith and the rest of the amazing team, holding on real tight and then throwing our hands in the air and laughing.

This creative journey has expanded the possibilities of what dance can be with text, and what movement can say without words. I feel I have only scratched the surface and there is still so much more to be uncovered. But those moments of uncertainty, while seeking clarity, have introduced me to other ways of generating, other ways of thinking, other ways of imagining. And can only be a part of pushing artistic boundaries into new positions, perimeters, possibilities.

*Blood* has also presented a moment to make conscious those practices that have existed in our Aboriginal cultures for many years through dance. Where text is the song and the gestures are the movement. Where repetition makes ritual and ceremony present. Where we pay respect to the dance styles that exist within our individual bodies as a means to reiterate our diversity while striving to remember the past.

*Mariaa Randall*

## Biographies

### **Jacob Boehme Writer & Performer**

Jacob Boehme is a Melbourne-born and based multidisciplinary theatre maker, of the Narangga and Kurna nations in South Australia.

Jacob trained in dance at NAISDA and is an alumnus of the Victorian College of the Arts, graduating with a Master of Writing for Performance (2014), and Master of Puppetry (2007). He is also an alumnus of the British Council's ACCELERATE Indigenous Leadership Program and has recently been appointed Creative Director of the Melbourne Indigenous Arts Festival.

*Blood on the Dance Floor* is Jacob's debut as a playwright, first developed as part of ILBIJERRI's Black Writers Lab.

### **Isaac Drandic Director**

Isaac Drandic is a father, actor, director and dramaturge. He trained in the Aboriginal Theatre course at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, and made his professional acting debut in *One Destiny* (Black Swan State Theatre Company, 2001). Acting credits include: *Bindjareb Pinjarra* (Pinjarra Project); *A Black Sheep Walks into a Baa* (ILBIJERRI, 2009) for the Melbourne International Comedy Festival; *Chopped Liver* (ILBIJERRI, 2007/8); *Romeo & Juliet* (Sydney Theatre Company); *Fitzroy Yank, Steal Away Home* and *Smack Happy* (Night-Shift Theatre Asylum); *Inkata* (Racing Pulse Productions/State Opera of South Australia); *The Birthday Party* and *Australia! The Show!* (Melbourne Theatre Company); *Bare Witness* (fortyfivedownstairs); *Mother's Tongue* (Yirra Yaakin); *Stolen* (ILBIJERRI/Playbox); and most recently the role of Harry in ABC TV's forthcoming drama *Cleverman*.

As director: *Astroman* (National Play Festival); *Coranderrk* (ILBIJERRI/Bevoir); *Coranderrk: We Will Show The Country* (ILBIJERRI/La Mama); Archie Roach's *Into the Bloodstream* which opened the Australasian World Music Expo and toured to Woodford Folk Festival, Sydney Festival, Perth International Arts Festival, Adelaide Festival, Darwin Festival and Melbourne Festival; Yellamundie Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Playwriting Festival (Moogahlin Performing Arts); Black Writers Lab (ILBIJERRI); *Peter Pan* (Belvoir); and *Waltzing The Wilarra* (Yirra Yaakin). Isaac was Associate Director of ILBIJERRI Theatre Company (2012-15), and was Resident Artist at Playwriting Australia in 2014.

Isaac received the Uncle Jack Charles Award at the 2008 Victorian Indigenous Performing Arts Awards, recognising 'best achievement by a Victorian theatre practitioner'. In 2012 he was a participant in the British Council ACCELERATE Program. He is also a member of Malthouse Theatre's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee.

### **Mariaa Randall Choreographer**

Mariaa Randall is a Bundjalung/ Yaegl woman from the Far North Coast of NSW. She currently resides on the land of the Dja Dja Wurrung. She is a graduate of NAISDA Dance College with a Diploma in Dance, a Graduate Diploma in Performance Creation, and a Master in Animateuring (by Research) through the Victorian College of the Arts and Music (VCAM).

Mariaa has been on the creative journey of *Blood on the Dance Floor* since 2014. Each new observation, idea and direction within the work have ignited possibilities of what could be and have contributed to the expansion of her practice. This learning resonates in her other works; *HALF* a solo work; *Poetry in Motion* created in collaboration with second-year dance students at VCAM (2015); *Painting the Dance*, a danced installation; and *Diversity*, currently part of the CultureLAB program at Arts House. Mariaa continues to teach, dance and make movement with others as an independent artist.

### **Keith Deverell Video Artist**

Melbourne and Hobart-based artist Keith Deverell has exhibited extensively in Australia and internationally. Working in post-documentary, his work meditates on the tapestries and politics of place and place-based identities. Keith is currently undertaking a PhD through the School of Art at RMIT University. He has exhibited at Dark Mofu, Tasmania (2016); Channels: the Australian Video Art Festival, Melbourne (2015); CLIMARTE, Melbourne (2015); Instalacje #3, Poland (2014); National Gallery of Victoria's *Melbourne Now* (2013); Art and About Sydney (2013); *Video, an Art, a History 1965 - 2010: A Selection from the Centre Pompidou and Singapore Art Museum Collections* (2011); Melbourne Festival (2010); Our Cities, Cambodia (2010); and The Laneways Commission, City of Melbourne (2009).

### **James Henry Sound Designer**

The multi-talented James Henry is involved in many aspects of the music industry: from singer/songwriter to engineer to musical director. His diverse skill set has seen him perform as a guitarist on the Black Arm Band tour of the UK, and as a choir member and guitarist as part of Archie Roach's *Into the Bloodstream* tour. His composition skills have attracted commissions from City of Melbourne to compose for experimental medias. James was also musical director of *Tanderrum* for the 2014 Melbourne Festival, and AFL's Dreamtime at the 'G performances.

### **Jenny Hector Spatial Artist**

In 2016, Jenny Hector has designed the lighting for Sandra Parker's *Small Details*; Aphids' *Howl* for FOLA; and *Another Other*, produced by Chamber Made Opera. Jenny's upcoming projects include designing the set, lighting and visuals for Jodee Mundy's *Imagined Touch*; lighting design for *Funeral* at Dark Mofu; and travelling with Back to Back Theatre with the work *The Democratic Set*. She has collaborated with Madeleine Flynn and Tim Humphrey, lighting their work *Gauge* at Brighton Festival (UK); co-designed the set and lighting for Tim Darbyshire's *Stampede the Stampede* for Dance Massive 2015; and lit the premiere of Jo Lloyd's Confusion for *Three* at Arts House.

Jenny developed the residential light installation *How Are You?*; performed in Shian Law's *Personal Mythologies*; and designed for artists and companies including Rimini Protokoll, Paul Kelly and Paul Grabowsky, The Light In Winter, BalletLab, Stephanie Lake and Robin Fox, Big West Festival, Astra Choir and Yellow Wheel.

Jenny has received two Green Room Awards, and is a current member of the Green Room Awards Dance Panel.

### **Kelsey Henderson Costume Designer**

Having graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts with a Bachelor of Production in 2011, Kelsey Henderson has a long and ever-growing list of skills and experience in the Melbourne theatre, dance and film scenes.

With credits including *Bad Jews* (Costume Designer, Technical Operation – 2015 and 2016 tours); *Australia Day* (Costume Designer – 2015 and 2016 tours); *Ballet and Beyond* (Stage Manager – 2015); and Comedy Festival Gala and Opening (Set Assistant, 2016) and more, Kelsey's real-world design style and passion for working within the industry is pushing her to do more in the creative world.

### **Rinske Ginsberg Movement Consultant**

Rinske Ginsberg has over 35 years' experience as a teacher, performer, deviser, dramaturge and artistic consultant. She is Lecturer in Actor's Body in Theatre at the Faculty of VCA & MCM, and regularly mentors artists across a range of art forms. A former Chair of Melbourne Fringe, Rinske is a valued consultant to the independent theatre industry. In addition to being a panelist for GRIT, Rinske sits on the Melbourne University Theatre panel and has been consultant, assessor and advisor to Creative Victoria, City of Melbourne and other arts organisations. Rinske is committed to fostering emerging practitioners, supporting the development of new work and continuing research into pedagogies for contemporary actor training.

### **Chris Mead Script Dramaturge**

Chris is Literary Director of Melbourne Theatre Company. Previous positions have included: Inaugural Artistic Director of Playwriting Australia; Literary Manager, Sydney Theatre Company; Literary Manager, Belvoir; Curator, Australian National Playwrights' Conference; and Festival Director, Interplay, the International Festival for Young Playwrights. Recent directing credits include Richard Frankland's *Walking into the Bigness* (co-directed by Wayne Blair, Malthouse 2014), Ian Wilding's *Rare Earth* (NIDA 2011) and *Quack* (Griffin 2010), and Damien Millar's *The Modern International Dead* (Griffin 2008) which won Best New Play (Sydney Theatre Critics' Awards) and the WA Premier's Literary Award. He has a PhD from Sydney University. His Platform Paper on institutional racism and outreach strategies was published in 2008.

## Biographies

### **Emily O'Brien**

#### **Production Manager**

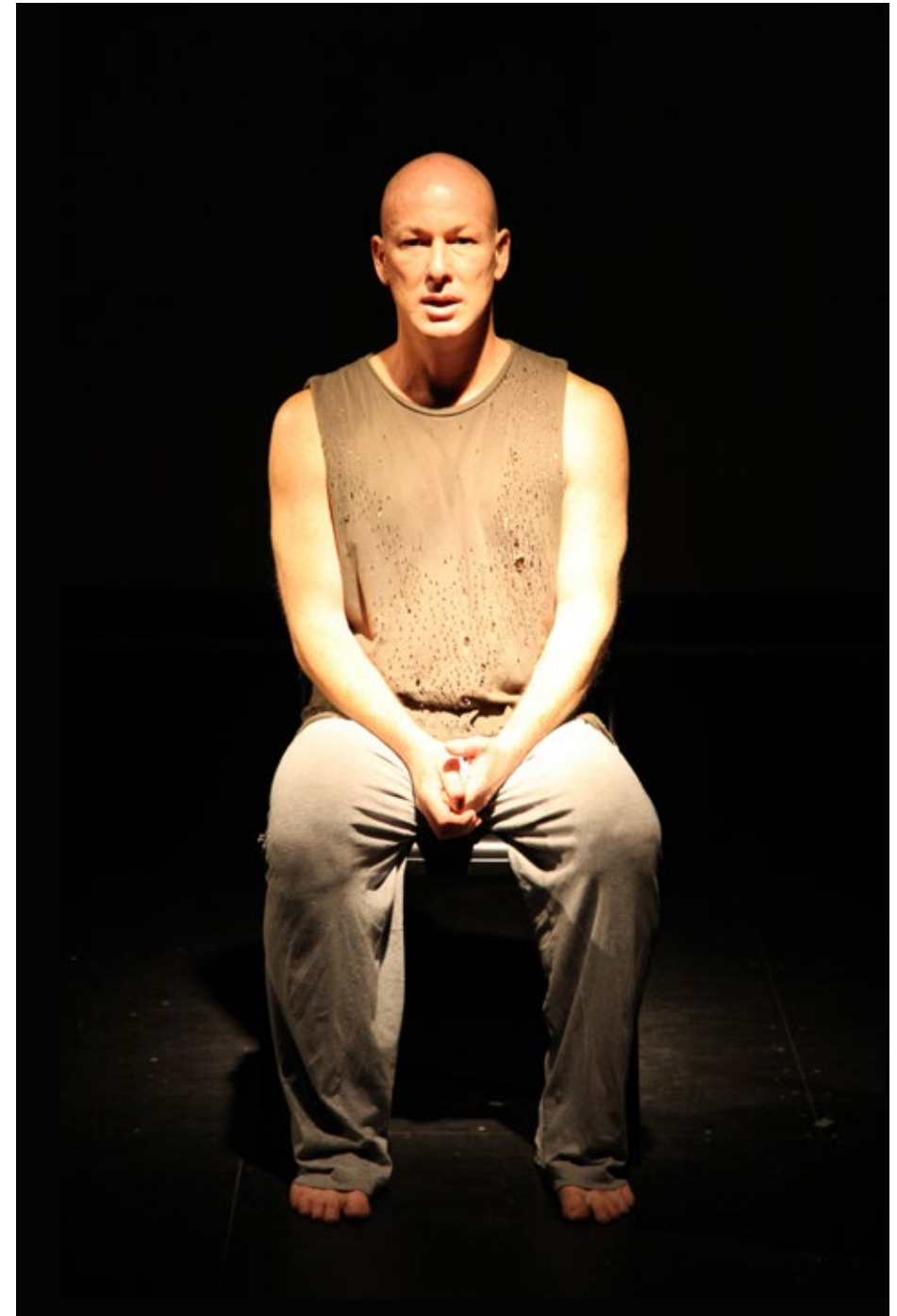
Emily O'Brien has worked extensively in the field of production both locally and internationally, primarily in production and project management across the fields of theatre and dance, cultural and corporate events, and festivals. She completed a Bachelor of Dramatic Arts at the VCA in 2002 and a Master of Arts Management from the University of Melbourne in 2012.

Emily's clients, collaborators and projects (current and past) include: *All the Queens Men*; All Tomorrow's Parties; Antony Hamilton; Arena Theatre Co; Auspicious Arts; BalletLab; Barkly Arts Centre; Black Lung Theatre & Whaling Co; Boogie Festival; Comedy@Trades; Commonwealth Games Cultural Festival (Melbourne 2006); Daniel Schlusser Ensemble; Easy Tiger Smith St; Emily Goddard; Federation Square; Feel Presents; Film Victoria; Harley Davidson; Harvest Festival; Insite Arts; James Brennan; KAGE; Lucy Guerin Inc; Luke George; Madeleine Flynn & Tim Humphrey; Melbourne Festival; Melbourne Fringe; Melbourne Salami Festa; Melbourne Worker's Theatre; Melinda Hetzel & Co; MONA; Nat Cursio Co; Next Wave; Nicola Gunn; Oz Comic Con; Peepshow Inc; Polyglot Theatre; Sans Hotel; Stuck Pigs Squealing; Tamara Saulwick; the Eleventh Hour; the Other Film Festival; The Village Festival; Token Events; Westside Circus; the Wheeler Centre; and White Night Melbourne, amongst others.

### **ILBIJERRI Theatre Company**

ILBIJERRI is Australia's leading and longest running Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander theatre company. We create challenging and inspiring theatre creatively controlled by Indigenous artists. Our stories are provocative and affecting, and give voice to our unique and diverse cultures. Each year we travel to national, regional and remote locations across Australia and the world.

Born from community, ILBIJERRI has become a spearhead for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in telling our stories of what it means to be Indigenous in Australia today. Our work possesses the power to reach out and remind audiences of every person's need for family, history and heritage. Our collaborative relationships with communities and artists are at the heart of our creative process and all our work empowers and enlightens our audiences.



## Thank You

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who has helped make this project possible over the past three years including Mari Lourey, Peta Murray, Stephen Borg, Julia Valentini, Ilana Russell, Joseph Mercurio, Brad Spolding, Bo Svoronos and the Footscray Community Arts Centre, Tanja Geuder and The Space Dance & Arts Centre, Victorian College of the Arts, Johannah Maza, Trent Nelson and all of our friends and family.

[ilbijerri.com.au](http://ilbijerri.com.au)  
[jacobboehme.com.au](http://jacobboehme.com.au)

*Blood on the Dance Floor* is supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria; the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body; and the Australian Government through its Indigenous Languages and Arts program; and the City of Melbourne through Arts House.

Warning: Adult concepts, coarse language & loud music

Image: Dorine Blaise



## Arts House

Arts House is a program of the City of Melbourne and our home is North Melbourne Town Hall. We support new and diverse ways to make and experience art providing a nexus for cultural expression and social connection in a city environment. Arts House develops work that is contemporary, experimental and participatory.

For more information, please contact us on the details below.

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