Thank You

ILBIJERRI would like to thank Uncle Noel Tovey for sharing his story with such generosity and eloquence; Robina Beard and the creative team of Little Black Bastard for making the work so beautiful; Angharad Wynne-Jones and the fabulous Arts House staff for all their support; as well as Janina Harding, Sarah Bond and the Melbourne Indigenous Arts Festival, Asha Holmes publicity, Michaela, Richard and Brock from Megafun and Aidacare for helping us to make such an incredible season.

Arts House

Arts House presents contemporary arts in programs encompassing performance, exhibitions, live art, residencies and other activities that nurture, support and stimulate cultural engagement. We value work in which artists at different stages of their careers, as well as our diverse audiences and communities, are actively involved in creating an imaginative, just and environmentally sustainable global society.

Arts House’s programs include two curated public seasons of multidisciplinary work each year. Approximately half of this work is selected through an Expression of Interest process. We seek artists who are responding to the urgent issues of our time in imaginative and surprising ways, taking artistic risks and offering multiple ways for audiences to engage with or co-author their work.

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

521 Queensberry Street
North Melbourne VIC 3051
(03) 9322 3720
artshouse@melbourne.vic.gov.au
artshouse.com.au

Creative Team

Writer/Performer: Noel Tovey
Director/Dramaturge: Robina Beard
Rehearsal Director: Isaac Drandic
Set Designer: Richard Roberts
Lighting Designer: Rachel Bourke
Sound Designer: Sarah de Jong
Production Manager: Richard Dinnen (Megafun)
Stage Manager: Brock Brocklesby (Megafun)
artshouse.com.au
ilbijerri.com.au

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Image: Steven Rhall

Little Black Bastard
ILBIJERRI Theatre Company

Arts House, North Melbourne Town Hall
Thu 13 – Sat 15 February 2014
1hr 30min, no interval
Post-show Q&A, Sat 15 February
A Note from Robina Beard

I have been in the theatre since age 16, as a dancer. Here in Melbourne you may remember me as Madge the Manicurist in the very long-running advertisements for Palmolive dishwashing liquid. My relationship with Noel Tovey began in 1957, and I have worked with and for him many times since then. I have an intense interest in Aboriginal dance and theatre. Working with Noel on Little Black Bastard is the most exciting project of my life, and I consider Little Black Bastard, and Noel, to be amongst the most important theatre icons in this country.

About Little Black Bastard

Abandoned by his parents at a young age, Noel Tovey struggled through a rough childhood on the streets of Melbourne. At 17 he ran away to London and reinvented himself as a dancer, actor, singer and choreographer on some of the world’s great stages. Little Black Bastard is his story; a gripping and tender monologue told in his own words.

Uncle Noel describes his life with candour, warmth and humour – from post-War Melbourne to swinging sixties London and beyond, where his peers included film and theatre’s artistic elite. His journey from street kid to show-biz star is one of our country’s greatest success stories. Having conquered the ghosts of his early years, Tovey approaches Little Black Bastard with a sense of resolution, healing and completion.

After touring internationally for over a decade, Little Black Bastard returns to the suburb where it all began – North Melbourne, where Tovey spent some of his harshest childhood years.

Biographies

Noel Tovey
Writer/Performer

Australia’s first Aboriginal male ballet dancer, Noel Tovey, has a career that spans almost six decades. He has been a dancer, actor, singer, choreographer, designer, director, teacher and writer across Europe and Australia. Of his many career highlights, being a Principal Dancer with the Sadlers Wells Opera Ballet, choreographing the 1966 revival of The Boyfriend in London’s West End, performing in the world premiere of Oh! Calcutta!, co-founding the London Children’s Theatre and directing the groundbreaking Indigenous production of A Midsummer Night’s Dream for the 2000 Olympics at Sydney Theatre Company stand out as but a few.

Robina Beard
Director/Dramaturge

Robina Beard has had a long and varied career since her dancing debut in 1955. From performing on a number of prime-time television. She was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for Services to the Theatre and director, teacher and writer across Europe and Australia. Of his many career highlights, being a Principal Dancer with the Sadlers Wells Opera Ballet, choreographing the 1966 revival of The Boyfriend in London’s West End, performing in the world premiere of Oh! Calcutta!, co-founding the London Children’s Theatre and directing the groundbreaking Indigenous production of A Midsummer Night’s Dream for the 2000 Olympics at Sydney Theatre Company stand out as but a few.

Richard Roberts
Set Designer

Since his first professional engagement in 1977 as a resident designer at the State Theatre Company of South Australia, Richard Roberts has worked for all the major performing arts companies in Australia. As a teacher, he has been Head of Design at WAAPA, Head of Production at the VCA, and Head of Design at The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.

Rachel Bourke
Lighting Designer

Rachel Bourke has worked as a freelance lighting designer with leading Australian arts companies including The Australian Ballet, Malthouse Theatre, Melbourne Theatre Company, Sydney Theatre Company and Belvoir, for more than two decades. She is the recipient of six Green Room Awards and was nominated for a Helpmann Award and a Sydney Theatre Award in 2005 for Malthouse Theatre’s Black Medea.

Sarah de Jong
Sound Designer

Sarah de Jong has been composing for theatre, dance, radio and film since 1978. Some of her most notable scores include the films Flirting (1989) and Sparks (1989), both winners of Australian Film Institute Awards; and the radio plays Summer of the Aliens (1988) and The Lights of Jericho (1993), both of which won the Prix Italia.

Megafun
Technical & Production Management

Megafun provides creative and technical services to theatre, events, exhibitions, public art and interactive multimedia.