

# BRISBANE FESTIVAL



BRISBANE FESTIVAL AND  
BRISBANE POWERHOUSE PRESENT

# Silence

Karul Projects

Brisbane Powerhouse

10 – 13 Sept

World Premiere

Principal Partner





Brisbane Festival is an initiative of the  
Queensland Government and Brisbane City Council

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## Acknowledgement of Country

Brisbane Festival expresses its respect for and acknowledgement of the Brisbane Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of country, including the custodial neighbouring communities on whose land works are created, performed and celebrated by Brisbane Festival. We acknowledge the continuing connection to land, waters and communities. We also pay our respects to Elders, past and emerging.

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### Brisbane Festival Artistic Director's Note

Late 2018, Merindah Donnelly insisted we head over to East Brisbane to Backbone Youth Arts so I could see the beginnings of Thomas E.S. Kelly's new work, *SILENCE*. A feeling rushed through my body and the power and urgency of this work was glaringly obvious. Thomas and Karul Projects were at the early stages of making something very special. It was clear that *SILENCE* would be part of my first Brisbane Festival. As the waves of COVID hit us all, moving *SILENCE* to 2021 was not an option any of us wanted to entertain. The conversation for Treaty has never been more critical. I whole heartedly applaud Thomas and the creative team behind *SILENCE*. It is the conversation we must have and time to stop the silence.

Finally, I extend my deepest gratitude and respect to Merindah, Emily and the team from BlakDance for the tireless effort in ensuring this work made it to the mainstage. The world premiere of this work is a testament to the artists and the producing team. It demonstrates what can happen when there is a compelling idea and unwavering determination. – **Louise Bezzina**

### Karul Projects Co-Artistic Director's Note

What a journey it has been to reach this moment. Presenting a new commissioned work at a major festival in the middle of a global pandemic. *SILENCE*. Highlighting a conversation we have been having for 250 years, the conversation about TREATY.

This work is an intergenerational outcry for change and a visceral way to see ourselves as part of a cultural continuum. Karul Projects wanted to add our voice to the movement and provide an opportunity for Meanjin/Brisbane to talk about this issue that is constantly silenced. It's quite ironic that during this pandemic it's the celebration of Cook that is cancelled, while thanks to such an awesome consortium of supporters and an incredible creative and performance team, our voice will be heard. Always Was. – **Thomas E.S. Kelly**

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### Be COVID Safe

Brisbane Festival is delivered under a COVID Safe plan. Patrons should download and run the Federal Government's official COVIDSafe app before attending Festival events. Do not attend events if you are experiencing symptoms. Our COVID Safe plan will be updated to align with the changing situation. Visit our website for more detailed COVID safe information.

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## Thomas E.S. Kelly

### Choreographer/Performer

Thomas E.S. Kelly is a proud Bundjalung-Yugambeh, Wiradjuri, Ni-Vanuatu man. Thomas graduated in 2012 from NAISDA Dance College and has since worked with Vicki Van Hout, Shaun Parker and Company, Branch Nebula, EARTH, Chunky Move, Dancenorth, The FARM, Tasdance, Outer Urban Projects and Urban Theatre Projects.

His choreographic credits include his Green Room Award winning work *[MIS]CONCEIVE*, *CO\_EX\_EN*, *SANDCIRCLE* and *SSHIFTT. VESSEL* for Outer Urban Projects, *MASS* for Chunky Move and *Junjeiri Ballun – Gurul Gaureima* for Tasdance. Thomas is the 2018 Dreaming Award Recipient, 2019 American Australian Association Alumni and the 2020 Mcknight Institute International Choreographer.

Thomas creates work that explores high intensity physical works stemming from a cultural practice fused with contemporary, which incorporates voice and physical percussion. Creating work that ebbs and flows whilst mimicking nature. Thomas creates work that reveals subject matters that offers an opportunity to learn and develop. Remembering the past to better understand the present so we can move forward into the future.

## Karul Projects

Karul Projects is a performing arts company sharing stories of cultural relevance, Indigenous knowledge and responsibility in Australia's current and future identity.

Formed in 2017 by Thomas E.S. Kelly and Taree Sansbury, Karul is a Yugambeh word meaning 'everything'. Named so because Karul Projects will do everything they can to strengthen and empower the cultural knowledge of this land so future generations can continue to learn and enjoy Aboriginal Australia's rich heritage. Though Karul Projects mainly identify with dance and choreography, they will utilise every medium they feel best suits the story they are sharing. Karul Projects create and continue reconciliation through their art. We learn about the past to better understand the present, so together we can move forward into the future.

Karul Projects has developed and toured work nationally and internationally, including presentations at Next Wave in Melbourne, Australian Performing Arts Market in Brisbane, Dance Massive and Living Ritual in Canada. Karul Projects' vision is to have a repertoire of works in various stages of development and presentation, for engagement across various markets including locally throughout Queensland and Northern New South Wales, nationally across Australia and internationally. Karul Projects present their work as a beacon to promote and cultivate independent Indigenous dance and activate local communities.

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## Creative Team

Choreographer/Performer **Thomas E.S. Kelly**  
Rehearsal Director/Performer **Taree Sansbury**  
Performers **Amber Ray Nofal, Benjin Maza, Kiara Malcolm-Wilson, Tiana Pinnell**  
Composer/Performer **Jhindu-Pedro**  
Production Manager **Simon Cook**  
Producer **BlakDance**

Music Director **Sam Pankhurst**  
Stage Manager **Kate Brennan**  
Lighting Designer **Karen Norris**  
Costume Designer **Selene Cochrane**  
Dramaturg **Alethea Beetson**  
Choreographic Dramaturg **Vicki Van Hout**

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## Brisbane Festival

Chair **Alison Smith**  
Deputy Chair **Philip Bacon AM**  
Artistic Director **Louise Bezzina**  
Chief Executive Officer **Charlie Cush**  
Blak Curatorium  
**Alethea Beetson, Troy Casey, Merindah Donnelly, Amanda Hayman**

Indigenous Advisory Group  
**Michelle Tuahine, Chair**  
**Raelene Baker, Elder**  
**Bridget Garay**  
**Bob Weatherall, Elder**



*SILENCE* has been produced by BlakDance as part of Performing Country, and commissioned by HOTA Home of the Arts, Queensland Performing Arts Centre, Brisbane Festival and City of Gold Coast.

