



Queensland Theatre Company's powerful *Black Diggers* to be broadcast live to regional Queensland in a state-wide first

The untold story of Indigenous soldiers in WWI to be shared state wide - Ayr, Bundaberg, Cairns, Mackay, Townsville, Mount Isa, Toowoomba, Rockhampton and Gladstone.

Regional Queenslanders will get the opportunity to see a unique stage depiction of the untold story of Indigenous diggers during the First World War in a simultaneous live telecast later this year. The powerful play will be telecast to theatres in Ayr, Bundaberg, Cairns, Gladstone, Mackay, Mount Isa, Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Townsville.

Minister Assisting the Premier on the Anzac Centenary Glen Elmes said a Brisbane production of the critically-acclaimed Queensland play, *Black Diggers*, on 8 October will be telecast live to venues in nine major regional centres.

“The play’s power comes from its exploration of the mateship between black and white soldiers on the front line contrasted with the discrimination felt by Indigenous soldiers on their return to civilian life,” Mr Elmes said. “*Black Diggers* uncovers the contribution of First World War Indigenous soldiers, following their exceptional stories from their homelands to the battlefields of Gallipoli, Palestine and Flanders. I hope it will provoke dialogue about a little-known part of Anzac history. The production draws from interviews with the families of 15 Indigenous soldiers who heard the call to arms – men who will step from the blank pages of history to share their compelling stories. After the curtain falls, we will remember them.”

Black Diggers is written by Australian playwright **Tom Wright** and directed by Queensland Theatre Company Artistic Director, **Wesley Enoch**, who said the play was long overdue.

“One hundred years ago, men all over the world enlisted to fight in the First World War – including hundreds of Indigenous Australians,” Mr Enoch said.

“Shunned in their own country, they took up arms to defend the free world. For them, the horror of war on a Gallipoli beach was an escape from the shackles of racism at home. Drawing upon new research and extensive consultation, the production reclaims a forgotten chapter of the story we tell ourselves about Australia’s wartime legacy, shying away from none of it.”

Mr Elmes said Queensland Government funding of \$300,000 to support the telecast is part of \$49.3 million the Queensland Government was devoting to Anzac Centenary commemoration events and projects during 2014-2018.

Queensland Theatre Company and Brisbane Festival in association with QPAC and The Balnaves Foundation present *Black Diggers*

Telling the untold story of Indigenous soldiers in WWI

A Queensland Theatre Company and Sydney Festival Production

By Tom Wright

24 Sept to 12 October at the Playhouse, QPAC

Director: Wesley Enoch

Set Designer: Stephen Curtis

Costume Designer: Ruby Langton-Batty

Lighting Designer: Ben Hughes

Dramaturg: Louise Gough

Cultural Consultant: George Bostock

Researcher: David Williams

Cast: George Bostock, Luke Carroll, David Page, Hunter Page-Lochard, Guy Simon, Colin Smith, Eliah Watego, Tibian Wyles.

Season 2014 Ticketing Details: Tickets are available at queenslandtheatre.com.au or by calling 1800 355 528.

Regional Centre Broadcast Details

AYR - Burdekin Theatre

161 Queen Street, AYR QLD 4807

Phone 07 4783 9880

Malcolm Calder - Manager 07 4783 9882 Malcolm.Calder@burdekin.qld.gov.au

Cairns Civic Theatre

Florence St, CAIRNS Queensland 4870

Phone 07 4050 7772

Katrina Mills, Operations Manager events@cct.com.au

Toowoomba - Empire Theatre

56 Neil Street, Toowoomba, Queensland 4350

Phone 07 4698 9900

Kerry Saul - Manager 07 4698 9902 kerry@empiretheatre.com.au

Gladstone Entertainment Centre

58 Goondoon Street, Gladstone QLD 4680

Phone 07 4972 2822

John - Marketing and Sales Supervisor 07 4977 8610 rogerj@gladstonerc.qld.gov.au

Mackay Entertainment & Convention Centre

252-258 Alfred Street, Mackay Queensland 4740

Phone: 07 4961 9700

Mark Fawcett 07 4961 9777 mark.fawcett@mackay.qld.gov.au

Bundaberg - Moncrieff Theatre

177 Bourbong Street

Bundaberg, Queensland

Phone 07 4130 4100

Maria Achurch mariaa@bundaberg.qld.gov.au

Mount Isa Civic Theatre (Mount Isa Entertainment and Tourism Venues)
23 West Street, Mount Isa QLD 4825
Phone: 07 4743 8316
Beau Thomas - Entertainment Manager entertainment@mietv.com.au

Rockhampton - Pilbeam Theatre
2 Cambridge Street, ROCKHAMPTON QLD 4700
Phone: (07) 4924 5600
Peter Owens - Manager Arts & Heritage. peter.owens@rve.com.au

Townsville Civic Centre
36-64 Boundary St, Townsville, Queensland 4810
Phone 07 4727 9013
Michelle McEwan -Michelle.McEwan@townsville.qld.gov.au