

# QUEENSLAND THEATRE

## Queensland Theatre's world premiere of *Dear Brother* tells a coming of age through dance

Queensland Theatre will present a powerful story of adolescence, self discovery and an unbreakable connection to Country, in the captivating, high-energy world premiere of *Dear Brother* at the Bille Brown Theatre from Saturday 7 September.

Conceptualised by Djabuganjdi man Lenny Donahue and Girramay and Kalkadoon man Tibian Wyles, and directed by multi-award-winning creative, Noongar man Isaac Drandic (*37, At What Cost?, City of Gold*) the bold, boundary-pushing original work is set to electrify the Queensland stage.

Presented with BlakDance as a part of Brisbane Festival, the thought-provoking story of brotherhood and Aboriginal masculinity is told through dance – to a level Drandic said will draw audiences in.

“We don’t often get to see dance on stage, and certainly not to this extent. The piece incorporates traditional and contemporary movement in a way that’s pivotal to the story-telling. It’s going to be magical and something we have never seen on a Queensland Theatre stage before,” Drandic, who is also Queensland Theatre Associate Artistic Director (First Nations) said.

“Through the movement, we see the inside story and history of a deep ancestral connection, with a distinct language from each actor's unique cultural journey. Their bodies are able to portray the story in such a way that we can feel the movements of generations of ancestors' past inbuilt in their bodies through each nuance of the performance.”

The new play will be the first project this trio of creatives will embark on together but follows Drandic’s prior projects working with both playwrights. He first met Donahue on local creative works in their shared hometown of Cairns and most recently worked with Wyles in Queensland Theatre’s 5-star powerhouse production featuring a 10-strong-cast, **37**.

“The play is a special story about brotherhood and solidarity, and how we can come together to support, uplift and empower one another,” playwright Tibian Wyles said.

“We are drawing from over 65,000 years of culture and storytelling, blending this with modern influences and experiences to show how stereotypes of masculinity can be used to heal generations. We want to show a different side to Aboriginal people and Aboriginal men.”

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The play's representation of brotherhood mirrors the sentiment of the collaboration between Lenny and Tibian in the writing and production of this project as they both take to the stage as first-time playwrights.

"Lenny and Tibian are such brilliant dancers, actors and storytellers, and it's been really special to see them draw from these backgrounds to embark on telling this story with a new and exciting lens. The form of the work is really rooted in who they are as individual performers." Drandric added.

The bold new play will welcome audiences back to Queensland Theatre's Bille Brown Theatre on a set transformed into an abstract culmination of Country and concrete, from Saturday 7 September until Saturday 28 September.

Tickets for **Dear Brother** are available now at [queenslandtheatre.com.au/plays/dear-brother](https://queenslandtheatre.com.au/plays/dear-brother)

**ENDS**

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Queensland Theatre acknowledges the Jagera and Turrbal people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work, and their unique relationship with the lands, seas and waterways. We pay our respects to their Elders both past and present, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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## ***Dear Brother***

By Lenny Donahue and Tibian Wyles  
Directed by Isaac Drandic

7 Sep — 28 Sep 2024  
Bille Brown Theatre

### **CREATIVES**

**Writers Lenny Donahue and Tibian Wyles**  
**Director Isaac Drandic**  
**Set Designer Kevin O'Brien**  
**Costume Designer Delvene Cockatoo-Collins**  
**Lighting Designer David Walters**  
**Composer and Sound Designer Brendon Boney**  
**Choreographer Waangenga Blanco**  
**Costume Mentor Nathalie Ryner**

**Stage Manager Sarah Connolly**  
**Assistant Stage Manager Sophie Watkins**

### **CAST**

**Ezra Lenny Donahue**  
**Jazz Benjin Maza**  
**Dad/Uncle Max/Grandad Kelton Pell**  
**Destyn Tibian Wyles**