



GEELONG ARTS CENTRE 28 JAN
MEDIA RELEASE 2022

THE TRUE STORY OF LEGENDARY FIRST NATIONS CRICKETER, JOHNNY MULLAGH: DON'T MISS ENSEMBLE THEATRE'S *BLACK COCKATOO* AT GEELONG ARTS CENTRE

Following the coveted success of Australia's 2021/22 Ashes series campaign, and the momentous Test debut of Indigenous cricketer, Scott Boland, Geelong Arts Centre kicks off their *Our Season 2022* program in March with Ensemble Theatre's *Black Cockatoo*.

Inspired by the true story of legendary First Nations cricketer, Johnny Mullagh, and Australia's first ever international sporting team, *Black Cockatoo* is a story of strength, resilience, hope and possibility.

Running from Tuesday 22 to Saturday 26 March in Geelong Arts Centre's state of the art Studio 4, *Black Cockatoo* is a funny and incredibly moving new artistic collaboration between iconic Australian writer Geoffrey Atherden (*Mother and Son*, *Babakiueria*) and former Sydney Festival Artistic Director Wesley Enoch (*Black Diggers*).

Each performance runs for 90 minutes, with the performance held at 7:30pm on Friday 25 March also including a post-show Q&A opportunity with members of the show's cast and creative team.

Tickets are on sale now at geelongartscentre.org.au/our-season-2022/black-cockatoo/. Capacity in Studio 4 is limited – get in quick!

Featuring 11 vital stories that you won't want to miss, *Our Season 2022* showcases the voices of those who have overcome hardship, broken down barriers and fought for their place upon the world stage.

For full program details, online bookings or to subscribe to the season, visit geelongartscentre.org.au/our-season-2022/

Geelong Arts Centre: Our Season 2022 is proudly supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, Major Artistic Partner, Deakin University and Innovation Partner, Costa Asset Management.

Bookings can be made via the website, or by phoning the Box Office on 1300 251 200 between 9:00am and 5:00pm, Monday to Friday.

Geelong Arts Centre is moving to e-ticket delivery for *Our Season 2022*. Confirmation of your booking will be emailed

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to you immediately, and all e-tickets for performances will be emailed to you three days prior to the performance.

Geelong Arts Centre scrupulously adheres to COVID Safe principles. Please make sure to check our website for the most up-to-date information regarding current COVID Safety measures and conditions of entry prior to each performance.

Information on what to expect on site, including helpful FAQs, can be found on our website at geelongartscentre.org.au

Full show details can be found over page.

QUOTES ATTRIBUTABLE

“We are thrilled to be opening Our Season 2022 with Black Cockatoo. It is incredibly important to Geelong Arts Centre that we support Australian stories that need to be told, and what could be more fitting than a Victorian story inspired by legendary First Nations cricketer Johnny Mullagh?”

Geelong Arts Centre Senior Producer - Programming & Creative Engine,
Penny McCabe

ABOUT THE SHOW

APPROVED COPY

BLACK COCKATOO
AN ENSEMBLE THEATRE PRODUCTION
STUDIO 4, GEELONG ARTS CENTRE
22-26 MAR 2022

Inspired by the true story of legendary First Nations cricketer Johnny Mullagh and Australia’s first-ever international sporting team, this is not just about cricket.

This is a story of strength, resistance, hope and possibility.

Over 150 years ago, 13 brave Aboriginal men in Western Victoria picked up their cricket bats and embarked on a treacherous voyage to England and into the unknown – all in the name of sport. Risking illness and persecution, Australia’s first international cricket team – including Australia’s first Indigenous sporting hero, Johnny Mullagh – amazed the English crowds with astonishing talent, personality and grit. They should have returned to Australia as celebrated heroes. Instead, they came back to find the world they once knew was no longer there.

This is not just a story about cricket – this is a story of strength, resistance, hope and possibility. When a group of young present-day activists sneak into the Wimmera Discovery Centre to expose the truth of what happened to Johnny and his teammates, a hidden legend of triumph and tragedy unfolds. Funny and incredibly moving, Black Cockatoo is a new artistic collaboration between iconic Australian writer Geoffrey Atherden (Mother and Son, Babakiueria) and former Sydney Festival Artistic Director Wesley Enoch (Black Diggers).

BILLING

Black Cockatoo
An Ensemble Theatre Production

CAST BILLING

Joseph Althouse (Wunujaka)
Colin Smith (Jagera)
Mark Nannup (Yamaji/Noongar)



Phoebe Grainer (Djungan)

CREDITS

Producer Ensemble Theatre

Writer Geoffrey Atherden

Director Wesley Enoch (Noonuccal Nuugi)

Associate Director Yolande Brown (Bidjara Clan)

Cultural Consultant Uncle Richard Kennedy (Wotjobaluk

Traditional Owner and Descendant of First XI Team

Member, Dik-a-Dik)

Set & Costume Designer Richard Roberts

Lighting Designer Trent Suidgeest

Composer & Sound Designer Steve Francis

Dramaturg Jane Fitzgerald

Assistant Stage Manager Vanessa Martin

Costume Supervisor Sara Koliijn

Associate Lighting Designer Shiloh Jarrett (Anmatjere
/Gumbyngirr)

Sound Design Intern Tim Gray

Hero Image Christan Trinder

VENUE, DATES & TIMES

DURATION 90 minutes, no interval

VENUE Studio 4, Geelong Arts Centre – located at 81 Ryrrie
Street, Geelong

DATES & TIMES

TUE 22 MAR 7:30PM

WED 23 MAR 7:30PM (SOLD OUT)

THU 24 MAR 7:30PM

FRI 25 MAR 7:30PM (INCLUDES POST-SHOW Q&A)

SAT 26 MAR 3:30PM

SAT 26 MAR 7:30PM

TICKETS & BOOKINGS

TICKET PRICES

FULL PRICE \$64

SENIOR/CONCESSION/STUDENT \$58

CHILD \$42

GROUPS OF 10 OR MORE \$54

BOOKINGS

geelongartscentre.org.au/our-season-2022/black-cockatoo/

TESTIMONIALS

“A sincere and tender proclamation, paying tribute to Indigenous identities past and present.”

Suzy Goes See

“This amazing Australian story rings with authenticity, humour and quirky compassion.”

Stage Noise

Issued by Georgia Allen - Communications & Social Media Lead, Geelong Arts Centre
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“A vibrant, fascinating and challenging production.”

ArtsHub

AVAILABLE SPOKESPEOPLE

Joel McGuinness - CEO & Creative Director, Geelong Arts Centre

Penny McCabe – Senior Producer Programming and Creative Engine, Geelong Arts Centre

Talent interviews and photo opportunities may be available upon request. Contact Georgia Allen – Geelong Arts Centre Communications and Social Media Lead to discuss interview opportunities further.

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