

QUEENSLAND THEATRE

APRIL, 2017

Queensland Theatre announces Isaac Drandic as Resident Dramaturg based in Cairns

Strong extends ground-breaking vision to lead the theatre industry from Queensland and Walk the Walk

Acclaimed and award-winning Australian actor, dramaturg and director **Isaac Drandic** has been announced Resident Dramaturg at Queensland Theatre, and in a ground-breaking move, he will be based out of Cairns. This latest announcement under the Artistic Direction of **Sam Strong** sees the company continue its innovative approach to artists and leadership, across both the country, and the State.

The announcement follows Strong's creation of the National Artistic Team in late 2015, the appointment of Associate Artistic Director Paige Rattray in 2016, and the launch of the Independent Artists @ Queensland Theatre program in 2016. It also comes as the company celebrates 20-year high subscriptions, and record-breaking box office success just three productions into Strong's standout 2017 program, with the fourth work, *Once in Royal David's City* set to mark his much-anticipated directorial debut and opening in Brisbane later this month.

As Resident Dramaturg, Isaac Drandic will provide literary management and dramaturgy support to Queensland Theatre's Programming department. His role will include dramaturgy on various works under commission or slated for production including *My Name is Jimi* (which will have its world premiere in Cairns later this year, in another first for the company under Strong), *The Longest Minute* and *The Murder of Nellie Duffy* and he will join the judging panel for the 2018/19 Queensland Premier's Drama Award.

"Isaac's appointment speaks to so many of Queensland Theatre's goals and our ambition to lead our industry from Queensland. As a company focused on the future of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander theatre, it's wonderful to have a practitioner of national standing as part of our core staff," said Strong.

"Isaac will be an integral part of our artistic leadership and join National Artistic Team members **Jimi Bani**, **Wayne Blair** and **Nakkiah Lui** and our Indigenous Reference Group chaired by **Wayne Denning**. As leaders in the creation of new Australian stories, it's a coup to have a dramaturg whose extensive practice straddles Indigenous and non-Indigenous work.

"As a company dedicated to our vast State, we are delighted to grow our engagement with Far North Queensland by having a Queensland Theatre staff presence in Cairns. Isaac's ground-breaking appointment is Queensland Theatre walking the walk of making theatre company leadership more diverse and meaningfully engaging with our whole State."

Isaac said there wasn't a better job anywhere else in the country.

"With Queensland Theatre's commitment to engaging, developing, nurturing and celebrating the diverse voices from regional Queensland and beyond, and their focus on the future of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander theatre, there isn't a better job anywhere in the country," he said.

"This trailblazing vision and commitment toward the growth of our industry is something I'm very passionate about. My base in Far North Queensland (Cairns) on Yidinji country - the land of my children's great grandmother - is simmering with creativity and rich with untapped stories that reflect the heart of our nation.

"It is a privilege to be part of this intrepid stage at Queensland Theatre and working alongside Sam Strong and the entire Queensland Theatre team."

ABOUT ISAAC DRANDIC

Father, actor, dramaturg and director, Isaac trained in the Aboriginal Theatre course at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, and made his professional acting debut in *One Destiny* by Black Swan State Theatre Company in 2001.

Isaac has been the associate director of ILBIJERRI Theatre Company 2012-15 and resident artist at Playwriting Australia in 2014.

He is a recipient of the Victorian Indigenous Performing Arts Award in the category of Uncle Jack Charles Award 2008, recognising 'Best achievement by a Victorian theatre practitioner' and was recently nominated for a 2016 Green Room award in the Independent Theatre category for direction of *Blood on the Dance Floor* which won most outstanding independent theatre production.

Acting credits include: *Bindjareb Pinjarra* an improvised comedy about one of the most documented massacres in Western Australian history which Isaac performed and co-created (Pinjarra Project); *A Black Sheep Walks Into A Baa* (ILBIJERRI) which he performed and co-wrote for the Melbourne International Comedy Festival; *Chopped Liver* (ILBIJERRI) prisons and communities Australian tour; *Romeo & Juliet*, (Sydney Theatre Company); *Fitzroy Yank, Steal Away Home, Smack Happy* (NightShift Theatre Asylum) *Inkata* (Racing Pulse Productions/State Opera of South Australia) *The Birthday Party, Australia The Show!!!* (Melbourne Theatre Company) *Bare Witness* (fortyfivedownstairs) *Mothers Tongue*, (Yirra Yaakin) *Stolen* (Ilbijerri/Playbox) and most recently played the role of Harry in *Cleverman*, season 1 and 2, a high concept drama for ABC television

As director: *The Season* (Sydney Festival, *Ten Days on the Island Festival* (2017) a Performing Lines production, *Blood on the Dance Floor* (ArtsHouse and ILBIJERRI 2016, Sydney Festival 2017) *Astroman* (National Play Festival) *Coranderrk* (Belvoir) *Coranderrk We Will Show The Country* (LaMama/Melbourne Indigenous Arts Festival/Sydney Opera House) an ILBIJERRI production, Archie Roach's national concert tour *Into The Bloodstream* which opened the Australasian World Music Expo and toured to Woodford Folk Festival, Sydney Festival, Perth International Arts Festival, Adelaide Festival, Darwin Festival and Melbourne Festival. He was director and dramaturg at Yellamundie Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Playwriting Festival (Moogahlin Performing Arts 2013/15) Blak Writers Lab (ILBIJERRI) *Peter Pan* (Belvoir) Assistant Director and *Waltzing The Wilara* (Yirra Yaakin) Assistant Director.

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