

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



## Merrigong Theatre Company Announces 2024 MERRIGONGX Artists' Program

Merrigong Theatre Company is excited to announce the 2024 MERRIGONGX Artists' Program, showcasing the outstanding breadth of local talent in the Illawarra region.

MERRIGONGX places artists and their practice at the centre of the community. From in-house creative developments to full-blown public presentations of new work, and everything in between, MERRIGONGX provides independent artists with valuable financial, technical, marketing, and artistic resources.

Beginning the season in August is Josh Hinton's ***A Place in the Sultan's Kitchen or How To Make the Perfect One-Pot Chicken Curry***, weaving together childhood memories and family folklore passed down through the generations, as Josh attempts to make his grandmother's chicken curry live on stage. Later that month is Nathan Harrison's ***Birdsong of Tomorrow***, a playful and heartfelt look at the birds around us, and what they might sing when we're gone. Concluding the MERRIGONGX season is ***The Cardinal Rules***, a nostalgic work of storytelling by Rose Maher, with Hurrah Hurrah, and is a reckoning with an upbringing in the Australian Catholic Church circa 1990.

MERRIGONGX also supports a number of artists developing new work with financial, technical and marketing resources. Artists include performance based collective Vaguely Adjacent, Alana Valentine, Catherine McKinnon and Aunty Barbara Nicholson, Siobhan Doran-Chaston and more.

Productions in MERRIGONGX are assessed by a panel that includes independent industry assessors.

MERRIGONGX will also present their annual ***Made From Scratch*** multi-artform performance night in March, June & September, offering artists space and support to test new ideas in front of a live audience.

**Simon Hinton**, Artistic Director & CEO of Merrigong Theatre Company says, "It's amazing to be able to announce another year of MERRIGONGX where we support a diverse range of artists. There are incredible

*new works that audiences will see this year, but also some work being made under wraps, through workshops at MERRIGONGX.*

*MERRIGONGX is the absolute heart of what we do here at Merrigong - supporting artists making exciting new work, and telling a range of stories that connect with communities and audiences.”*

This year, MERRIGONGX will pilot a Health and Wellbeing program. Created after a year of research, the program will provide tailored support, accessibility services, and workshops to nurture the holistic health of 2024 MERRIGONGX artists.

**Bonnie Curtis**, Artistic Associate – Artist Wellbeing, says, *“Witnessing firsthand the impact of the pandemic on our local artists, Merrigong is taking action to improve the health, wellbeing, safety and security of artists. The 2024 MERRIGONGX Artist Wellbeing pilot program aims to empower our artists to create and present new work in a safe, wellbeing-focused manner while developing skills for a sustainable arts career. As an independent artist and a passionate advocate for artist wellbeing, I'm excited to lead this initiative.”*

More information about the MERRIGONGX 2024 Season can be found at <https://merrigong.com.au/merrigongx/merrigongx2024/>

**MERRIGONGX 2024 SEASON**

<b>DATES</b>	<b>PRODUCTION</b>	<b>PRESENTED BY</b>
20 Mar	<i>Made From Scratch - March</i>	MERRIGONGX
26 Jun	<i>Made From Scratch - June</i>	MERRIGONGX
8 – 10 Aug	<i>A Place in the Sultan’s Kitchen</i>	Joshua Hinton
22 – 24 Aug	<i>Birdsong of Tomorrow</i>	Nathan Harrison
25 Sep	<i>Made From Scratch - September</i>	MERRIGONGX
31 Oct – 2 Nov	<i>The Cardinal Rules</i>	Rose Maher with Hurrah Hurrah Productions

**- ENDS -**

**Images and video are available for download [here](#).**

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**NOTES FOR EDITORS**

Merrigong Theatre Company is a not-for-profit company that operates Wollongong's premier performing arts venue, Illawarra Performing Arts Centre (IPAC) and the city's key civic and community venue, Wollongong Town Hall.

The company's name 'Merrigong' reflects the Dharawal word for the Illawarra region's distinctive escarpment, a landmark of supreme cultural importance. This name serves as a constant reminder that their venues rest on unceded First Nations land.

In all that they do, Merrigong Theatre Company seeks to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, seas and skies, and to show respect to all First Nations people who call the region home.