

MEDIA RELEASE – for immediate release March 2010

MALTHOUSE THEATRE

Playbox Theatre Company
trading as
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MALTHOUSE THEATRE PRESENTS

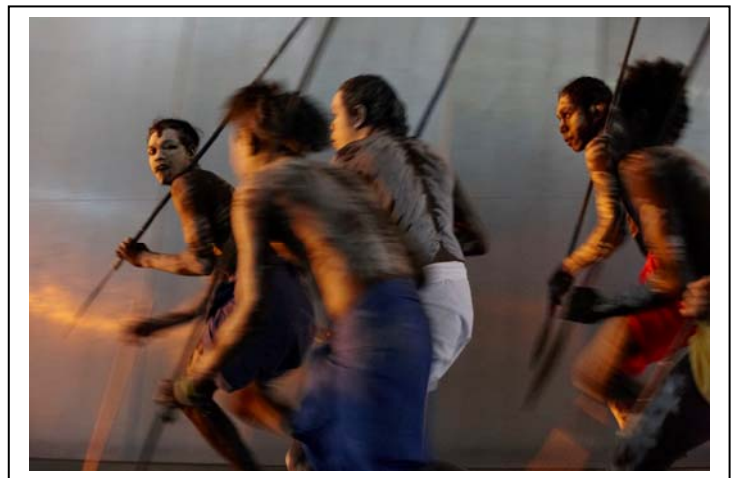
NGURRUMILMARRIRIYU [WRONG SKIN]

**MERLYN THEATRE
MARCH 18 – MARCH 28 2010**

DIRECTED BY NIGEL JAMIESON
IN ASSOCIATION WITH JOSH BOND,
THE COMMUNITY AND ELDERS OF
ELCHO ISLAND AND THE CHOOKY DANCERS.

PERFORMED BY THE CHOOKY DANCERS

PRESENTED IN MEMORY OF FRANK.
'THE FATHER OF MUSIC' IN NORTH
EAST ARNHAM LAND.



A MALTHOUSE THEATRE, ADELAIDE BANK FESTIVAL OF ARTS, SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE AND DARWIN FESTIVAL COMMISSION

The young Indigenous men known as the **Chooky Dancers** from Elcho Island, were arguably Australia's [YouTube](#) sensation of 2009. Their homage to *Zorba the Greek*, which hilariously fusing infectious Indigenous dance, hip hop and their cheeky demeanour, gained them fans across the globe. Now Malthouse Theatre presents a new work created by the young men of Elcho Island, and some of Australia's most exciting theatre artists, including award-winning director **Nigel Jamieson** in *Ngurrumilmarririyu*.

Wrong Skin is a story of forbidden love and clan loyalties, which explores the pressures faced by Australia's remote Indigenous communities, determined to maintain their identity and culture while finding a place for their children in the contemporary world. The richness, diversity and complexity of Yolngu culture from Elcho Island will literally explode on the Merlyn stage as seven young Chooky Dancers and other performers explore their take on the perennial story of *Romeo & Juliet*.

Set around the extraordinary outdoor Saturday night disco on Elcho island – where the Chooky dance style was created – *Ngurrumilmarririyu* explores what happens when half the population is under 20, and over 22 different clans are represented – a mass of gorgeous young people thrown together in close proximity. An exhilarating fusion of Yolngu dance, Chooky disco dancing via Bollywood, and home grown digital footage shot on mobile phones and projected with the latest video technology, this promises to be a new synthesis of media and live performance.

For a small island with a population of just over 2000 inhabitants, Elcho Island, north east of Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory has already produced an extraordinary array of cultural talent. As well as the Chooky Dancers, singer and musician **Geoffrey Gurumal Yunipingu** has sold out concerts around the world, and visual artist **Gali Yalkarriwuy Gurruwiwi** is receiving critical acclaim with his award winning installation of *Banumbirr / Morning Star Poles*.

Joined and supported by senior artists, songmen and leaders of the community *Ngurrumilmarrmiriyu* will explore the complex parallel lives that these extraordinary young men from Elcho Island lead. Coupled with the epic vision of theatre making impresario **Nigel Jamieson** - who has displayed his ability to combine highly charged theatrical magic with political content in critically acclaimed productions around the world, most recently seen in Malthouse Theatre's *Honour Bound* - this promises to be a landmark in Indigenous theatre and performance making in Australia.

Ngurrumilmarrmiriyu literally translates from Yolngu as "Njurra" (nose), "mil" (eye), "marr" (heart), "miriou" (nothing). It is a rough idiom for the English word "elope" with the implication that if you follow your heart and body and marry outside the dictates of your family and community, you lose everything – kinship, your place in the world, the system of law and justice that lays down all the relationships by which you live. To convey the broader meaning of eloping outside your clan, the production has been titled **Wrong Skin** in English.

MALTHOUSE THEATRE'S INDIGENOUS THEATRE PROGRAM IS MADE POSSIBLE WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM THE POOLA FOUNDATION (TOM KANTOR FUND)

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN ASSISTED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S **MAJOR FESTIVALS INITIATIVE** MANAGED BY THE **AUSTRALIA COUNCIL**, ITS ARTS FUNDING AND ADVISORY BODY, IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE **CONFEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVALS, ADELAIDE FESTIVAL, DARWIN FESTIVAL, MALTHOUSE MELBOURNE AND SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE**

PRODUCED BY PERFORMING LINES

MELBOURNE SEASON INFO:

Merlyn Theatre, The CUB Malthouse

18 March – 28 March 2010

Opening night: Saturday 20 March at 8pm

Season: Wednesday – Saturdays at 7pm, Sun 28 at 5pm, Tuesday 23 at 6.30pm;

Matinees on Thursday 25 at 1pm, and Saturday 27 at 2pm.

Booking info: www.malthousetheatre.com.au / 03 9685 5111

Ticket Prices: \$16.50 – \$49 + min booking fee \$1.50

Duration: 1hr 20mins (no interval)

Suitable for children aged 10 and over

ADELAIDE FESTIVAL: 11 – 14 March 2010

DARWIN FESTIVAL: 27 – 28 August 2010

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE: 6 – 18 September 2010

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