



Company Information

About Marrugeku

Marrugeku creates contemporary intercultural dance theatre in Indigenous communities.

Marrugeku is at the leading edge of Australian contemporary intercultural performance. Founded in 1994, the company is currently under the artistic direction of Rachael Swain and Dalisa Pigram. Drawing from the lives of people and communities living in remote North West Australia, Marrugeku Theatre Company share the memories and traditions of Indigenous culture through contemporary dance-theatre. Place and identity, migration and misplacement, and the constant shifting world of cultural identities and globalised fantasies constantly inform the direction of their productions.

Their ambitious large-scale outdoor works are created through long-term collaborations with a multicultural cast of professional and community based artists. The company utilises flexible contemporary dance languages, relevant traditional and contemporary music, physical theatre, circus, installation and video art. Each visually spectacular production is designed to tour regional and remote communities as well as major Australian and international arts festivals.

Marrugeku's previous works have followed their world premiere seasons in WA (Mimi 1996, Crying Baby 2001, Perth Festival commissions), with significant touring lives. They've been presented by festivals as well as community events in carefully chosen cultural and environmental sites in Broome, Perth, Kunbarlanjana, Maningrida, Elcho Island, Yirrkala, Brisbane, Uluru, Sydney, Canberra, The Philippines, The Netherlands, New Caledonia, Belgium, Ireland, Germany, Switzerland and Brazil.

Quotes

"Pigram is an extraordinary dancer, her solo work and with the other heterogeneous collection of performers in Burning Daylight breathtakingly good. Like every one of the cast, she seems to move in entirely her own way, a body that is memory and future tense." The Australian, October 30, 2009

"Each vignette marries distinct dance languages in remarkable ways: acrobatics meld with classical ballet lines, traditional indigenous steps slide into hip-hop and Japanese martial arts manoeuvres. Innovative storytelling and sheer athleticism aside, the show is memorable for several stand-out performances. Trevor Jamieson, whose bare-chested pirouettes with a horseman's whip are nothing short of extraordinary, deserves special mention, as does Dalisa Pigram, whose fluid leaps and pounces neatly contrast Yumi Umiumare's Samurai stances."

The Age, November 21, 2009

"I am driven with the passion and urgency to help keep my culture alive. Through the telling of stories Marrugeku are privileged to explore, I believe we have a lot to offer in the process of reconciliation and sharing culture." Dalisa Pigram, 2009

"It is synthetic theatre at its boldest, most expressive and physical, where the imagination stalks unchained on stage, the spirits of the land move unseen among us ...Scope, ambition, projection and sheer physical skills of this order are scarcely the norm on the national stage, or indeed in productions held across Cahill's Crossing in the lush, forbidden country of Arnhem Land."

Nicholas Rothwell, *The Australian*, 2000

Core artist biographies

Rachael Swain Co-Artistic Director

Rachael conceives and directs multimedia performances in a unique synthesis of theatre, circus, video, and dance, in a variety of alternative locations nationally and internationally. Rachael co devised and performed in all of Stalker's earlier street theatre productions. She conceived and directed *Mimi*, *Blood Vessel*, *Crying Baby*, *Incognita* and *Burning Daylight* for Marrugeku and Stalker. Her works have toured throughout remote and urban Australia, Europe, Latin America and the Pacific. She was commissioned by the European Capital of Culture to create SUGAR an intercultural dance, project in the port cities of Marseilles and Liverpool (06/07). Rachael has written, directed and produced several multi-screen video projects for live performances and installation, including proXy co directed with Andr  Lepecki 02. In 2005 she wrote and co produced a dance documentary and three short Noodle Westerns for *Burning Daylight*.

Dalisa Pigram Co-Artistic Director

Dalisa was born and raised in Broome, northwestern Australia. Her family is part of the Yawuru people of Broome and Bardi people of One Arm Point.

Dalisa is a founding member and recently appointed Co Artistic Director of the Marrugeku Company, with which she has toured to the Netherlands, The Philippines, New Caledonia, Latin America, Ireland, Belgium, Germany, Zurich and all over Australia with shows *Mimi*, *Crying Baby* and latest piece *Burning Daylight*. Dalisa has also toured with Stalker Theatre Company's *Blood Vessel* in Australia and overseas and was a co-devisor and performer in Stalker's *Incognita* which also toured extensively. Dalisa hopes to help keep her culture alive and strong through performing arts and teaching.

Works

2009 *Burning Daylight*, Redevelopment / AUS tour; Broome, Perth, Sydney, Melbourne, Hobart

2007 *Burning Daylight*, World premiere, Zurich Theatre Festival, Switzerland

2006 *Burning Daylight*, Avant Premiere: Shinju Matsuri Festival, Broome

2002 *Crying Baby*, Sao Paulo, Brazil

2002 *Crying Baby*, Sydney Festival

2001 *Crying Baby*, European Tour; Holland, Belgium, Ireland

2001 *Crying Baby*, Opening of the new Australian Museum, Canberra

2001 *Crying Baby*, World Premiere: Perth International Arts Festival, Australia

2000 *Crying Baby*, Avant Premiere: Oenpelli, Arnhem Land, and Festival of Darwin

1999 *Mimi*, 2000 TODAY, ABC Millennium Broadcast. ULURU: New Years Eve

1998 *Mimi*, Noumea Tour

1998 *Mimi* All the Best of Australia, Manila

1997 *Mimi*, Festival of the Dreaming, Sydney

1997 *Mimi*, Stage X, Brisbane

1997 *Mimi*, European Tour

1996 *Mimi*, Arnhem Land Tour: Kunbarllajnja, Maningrida, Elcho Island, Yirkala

1996 *Mimi*, Festival of Perth, Production Premiere

Resources

[Marrugeku and Stalker Website](#)

[Marrugeku in Broome, Keith Gallasch talks to Rachael Swain](#) Realtime Arts #65

[Stalker Theatre Channel](#) Youtube

Images of selected works



Burning Daylight (2007-09) Perth, WA, Zurich, Switzerland; Images by Christian Altorfer



Crying Baby (2004)