

## Burning daylight

November 21, 2009

**Arts House, Meat Market,  
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Reviewer Liza Power**

THE first striking thing about *Burning Daylight* is its set. To the left of the stage huddles a small building with a corrugated iron roof, saloon doors and a rooftop garden. To the right sits a park bench guarded by a street sign, its address spelt out in four languages. Centre stage has a stand of purple boab trees, to their right a drive-in cinema screen.

The setting is Broome at the turn of the last century, and the building is the local drinking spot. "Thursday night is wet T-shirt competition, Sunday night is crab racing and Monday night is karaoke," draws a barmaid beside the beer taps.

Before long she is throwing her inebriated regulars on to the street and a dance begins. It's the first of many, each exploring not simply the stage's various corners and nooks, but the multitude of cultural identities that once earned Broome its nickname "the Asian Wild West".

Presented by the Marrugeku Theatre company, *Burning Daylight* draws on iconic figures - the Aboriginal stockman, the geisha, the pearl diver - to tell its story of Broome through song and movement.

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.