WA Youth Theatre Company

Scenes from the Climate Era



Image: Stephanie Senior

PERTH FESTIVAL

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Perth Festival acknowledges the Noongar people who continue to practise values, language, beliefs and knowledge on kwobidak boodjar.

Noongar people remain the spiritual and cultural birdiyangara of this place and we honour and respect the caretakers and custodians and the vital role Noongar people play for our community and our Festival to flourish.

We also acknowledge all First Nations people, whose contributions make our Festival culturally and artistically richer.

Our hearts are happy that you are here, on the traditional lands of Whadjuk, part of the Bibbulmun nation and its people.

Perth Festival Noongar Cultural Authority Council
Roma Yibiyung Winmar, Vivienne Binyarn Hansen, Richard Walley, Barry McGuire & Mitchella Waljin Hutchins

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Welcome

Scenes from the Climate Era arrived at Perth Festival through Amelia, the remarkable Director of the West Australian Youth Theatre Company, who brought this work to me with absolute conviction. She was adamant (and right!) that this piece should come from young people, from those who are not only inheriting this era, but actively shaping how we respond to it.

This work understands that the climate crisis is not abstract or distant. It is lived, felt and negotiated every day by the generation standing on this stage. Their voices carry urgency, intelligence and emotional truth, not as a projection of the future, but as artists and global citizens right now.

I am deeply thrilled that this Festival is presenting and championing these young performers. Their insight, courage and clarity remind us that meaningful change does not wait politely for permission. It begins with those who are willing to speak, imagine and act and to invite all of us into that responsibility alongside them.

Anna Reece
Artistic Director



WA Youth Theatre Company

Scenes from the Climate Era

WA

13 – 22 Feb

Victoria Hall
Walyalup / Fremantle

Duration 70mins

Fri & Sat 7.30pm
Sun 6pm

- ↗ Tactile tour and audio described performance Fri 20 Feb
- ↗ Auslan performance Sat 21 Feb

Contains use of theatrical haze and some mild coarse language.

Suitable for ages 12+



A Note from the Director

Scenes from the Climate Era by David Finnigan is a play that I immediately recognised as essential for the WA Youth Theatre Company (WAYTCo) members to perform. This is because so many young people have been told that climate change is their problem to solve, their chance to turn the ship around. However, as the play quickly reveals, climate change was happening long before WAYTCo's young members were born, it's happening right now and it will continue to shape the future. I am eternally grateful to Anna Reece and the team at Perth Festival for believing in the resonance of Finnigan's writing, for championing youth arts and for co-presenting the production as part of the 2026 Festival.

A key stage of the creative process involved the cast selecting which scenes resonated most strongly with them, as the writer encourages flexibility depending on the context of the production. This has led the team to present a brand-new version of *Scenes from the Climate Era*. The age of the ensemble spans 12 to 24, as it was crucial that conversations about climate change included the full range of WAYTCo's youth membership. The cast were supported by a team of professional creatives, and this collaborative model is core to WAYTCo's way of working with young people – we empower young people to work alongside professional artists.

These experiences have a transformative impact on their lives by building skills, confidence and a sense of community that they can carry into all areas of their lives.

Tonight you are joining us in Victoria Hall, one of the few remaining gold rush-era buildings and one that has served many purposes: a parish hall, a dance hall, a theatre and events space. This history of community use makes it an ideal venue to host the multiplicity of perspectives represented in Finnigan's work. Thank you for being here and for affirming to WAYTCo's youth members that their voices are valued and necessary in shaping cultural conversations. Enjoy the show!

Amelia Burke



Credits

Director
Amelia Burke

Writer
David Finnigan

Performers
Dante Crean,
Derell Corunna,
Phoebe Eames,
Ben Ginbey,
Stella Hammond,
Adela Jung,
Odette Prince-Lizama,
Ionia Venoutsos

Set & Costume Designer
Charlotte Meagher

Lighting Designer
Matthew Erren

Music Producer & Sound Designer
Rebecca Riggs-Bennett

Cultural Consultation
Derek Nannup

Assistant Director
Clea Purkis

Senior Producer
Zoë Hollyoak

Production Manager
George Ashforth

Stage Manager
Kira Feeney

Social Media Manager
Leah Robyn

Images
Stephanie Senior

Thanks to:
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WA YOUTH THEATRE CO





Biographies

David Finnigan Writer

David is a writer and theatre-maker from Ngunnawal Country, Australia. He writes plays, creates performances and develops games at the intersection of science and art. David produces performances and writing that explores concepts from climate and earth science, complex systems and resilience science. He works regularly across the UK, USA, Australia and the Philippines.

David has worked with climate and earth system scientists from institutions including University College London, the Stockholm Resilience Centre, the Wellcome Trust and Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. He has spoken about his art-science work at the TED Conference in Vancouver and the European Geosciences Union Assembly in Vienna.

He has been commissioned to create work for the United Nations, World Bank, the Wellcome Trust, Nesta UK and Chatham House. He is a MacDowell Fellow (2025), a Churchill Fellow (2012) and an Asialink Fellow (2015).

Amelia Burke Director & WAYTCo Artistic Director

Amelia (she/her) is a theatre director who fuses her love of live performance with a passion for making work with young people. She has worked as a teaching artist and director for a variety of arts companies across the country. For NIDA Open, she directed and devised a new production of CompanyThree's *Brainstorm* and Lachlan Philpott's *Bustown*. For La Mama For Kids, Amelia directed and devised *Meet My Grandies* with a cast of teenagers. In 2023 she directed Maki Morita's debut play *Trash Pop Butterflies*, *Dance Dance Paradise* for Theatre Works in Naarm/Melbourne. She also directed Frieda Lee's *All His Beloved Children* for KXT on Broadway, for which she was nominated for Best Direction of an Independent Production in the 2023 Sydney Theatre Awards. Amelia is a graduate of the BPA (Performance Making) from Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) and the MFA (Directing) from National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA).

Zoë Hollyoak Producer

Zoë (she/her) is a director and creative producer. She holds a Bachelor of Performing Arts (Performance Making) from Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) and a Master of Fine Arts (Directing) from the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA). Zoë is one half of essential workers, a Sydney-based performance making group.

Zoë's producing credits include *Iacuna* (Griffin), *Everything I Know about this Water Bottle* (Old Fitz), *Gardener's Apprentice* (Force Majeure), *I Watched Someone Die on TikTok* (PACT), *The Comprehensive A-Z of Missing Persons Australia* (WAYTCo), *Never Closer* (Belvoir), *Horses* (Belvoir 25a) and *All His Beloved Children* (KXT). She has directed *First Love is the Revolution* (Belvoir x JMC), *Smart* (Martin-Lysicrates Prize), *Pity* (Belvoir x JMC), *The Changelings* (PACT), *Shitty* (Belvoir 25a), *Collapsible* (Old Fitz), *The Writer* (NIDA) and *Antigonick* (NIDA). She was the 2024 recipient of The Glorias Fellowship, completing an attachment with The Wooster Group (NYC) under the mentorship of Elizabeth LeCompte.

Charlotte Meagher Set & Costume Designer

Charlotte (she/her) is a multidisciplinary artist and writer with a passion for theatre, based in Boorloo. Having graduated from Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts design in 2022, Charlotte believes in developing high quality local work and creating opportunity for emerging talent.

With a background in both set/costume design and fine art, Charlotte is an advocate for creating alternative pathways for designers. An avid illustrator, she is always searching for ways to challenge theatre and exhibition spaces as a form, finding areas where they intersect. She feels she is a storyteller first and foremost.



Matthew Erren Lighting Designer

Matthew (he/him) is a lighting designer working across theatre, dance and exhibitions. A graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), he was nominated for a Performing Arts WA Award for Outstanding Lighting Design for *Catch 22* at The Blue Room Theatre. He has designed lighting for major organisations including Black Swan State Theatre Company, Melbourne Theatre Company, WAYTCo, WA Museum and Perth Festival, alongside a wide range of independent artists and companies.

Matthew's recent theatre credits include *LEGENDS (of the Golden Arches)* (Melbourne Theatre Company), *Blue* by Thomas Weatherall (Black Swan State Theatre Company), *The Comprehensive A–Z of Missing Persons Australia* and *Made in Boorloo* (WAYTCo), and works with Enneagon Movement, Fremantle Theatre Company and Stop Drop + Roll Theatre.

Matthew's exhibition lighting designs are created in partnership with Peter Young and include projects developed with WA Museum and international partners, such as Terracotta Warriors: Legacy of the First Emperor, Spinifex People: Art and Stories from Pila Nguru, Virtual Realms, and James Cameron: Challenging the Deep.

Rebecca Riggs-Bennett Music Producer & Sound Designer

Rebecca (she/they) is a music producer, award-winning sound designer and multidisciplinary artist. She works with sound as an immersive medium – one that transmits meaning, transports audiences and transforms environments in real time. Rebecca creates evocative sonic experiences that manifest as (and within) performances, installations and participatory experiences. She holds a Bachelor of Performing Arts from WAAPA and a Diploma in Sound Production from SAE Institute. Her composed designs have contributed to works including *Reasons To Stay Inside* (Barking Gecko Arts 2025), *The Seven Stages of Grieving* (Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company 2025), *Punkaliyarra* (BighART Sydney Opera House 2025 & Perth Festival 2023), *Time Reveals The Unseen* (MOD. Museum Adelaide 2022), *Habitats & Homes* (10 Nights In Port Festival 2021), and *Playthings* (Black Swan State Theatre Company 2021). Rebecca was recently awarded Outstanding Sound Design for the independently produced participatory audio project *UP THERE* (Walyalup 2024 & Boorloo 2025) at both the Performing Arts WA Awards and The Blue Room Theatre Awards 2025 and was previously nominated Best Electronic Producer at the WAM Awards 2021.



George Ashforth Production Manager

George is a multidisciplinary performance maker working and living in Boorloo. Their diverse experience in theatre and performance has included television and stage acting, writing and directing for theatre, live and recorded musical accompaniment and creative programming for interactive shows and digital arts. In 2010, they played Chas in the ABC produced children's television series *MAL.COM*. After studying Theatre Arts at Curtin University and discovering a passion for technical design, they have worked as a venue, production and technical coordinator for both The Blue Room Theatre and Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, and continue to engage as a freelance lighting, sound and projection designer. Since 2021, George has been writing new works for the stage as well as developing interactive, narrative-driven gallery installations, but finds most satisfaction in supporting live performance as a mentor, manager and technician.

Kira Feeney Stage Manager

Kira is a proud Palawa stage manager who grew up on Wathawurrung land in Victoria with a passion for the performing arts. They moved to Boorloo in 2021 to complete the Aboriginal Performance course at WAAPA and then went on to complete their Advanced Diploma of Stage Management in 2023. Kira has since worked in stage management teams with companies including Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company, ILBIJERRI Theatre Company, Black Swan State Theatre Company and The Last Great Hunt.

Derek Nannup Cultural Consultant

Derek is a Noongar man from Western Australia. A comic, actor, dancer, circus performer, didgeridoo player and much loved children's hospital clown doctor, he is also a cultural presenter for school kids and tourists.

Leah Robyn Social Media Manager

Leah (she/her) is a social media marketer, publicist and emerging artist based in Boorloo. She graduated from WAAPA with a Bachelor of Performing Arts (Honours with First Class) majoring in Performance Making. Leah is passionate about promoting local theatre and has worked independently as a publicist for productions such as *Everything Flickers* (2023) and *CRUSH* (2024) at The Blue Room Theatre, *UP THERE* (Walyalup, 2024) at Fremantle Arts Centre and *The Game* (2025) at State of Play.

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