



Wesfarmers Arts

# SYNOPSIS & CASTLIST

West Australian Opera in association with Perth Festival present

## WUNDIG WER WILURA

9 – 15 February 2024

His Majesty's Theatre

### A Wesfarmers Arts Commission

**Composers** Gina Williams and Guy Ghouse

**Arrangement & Orchestration** Dr Chris Stone

**Conductor** Aaron Wyatt

**Director** Matt Reuben James Ward

**Choreographer** Ian Wilkes

**Set Designer** Matt McVeigh

**Costume & Cultural Props Designer** Peter Farmer Designs

**Costume & Cultural Props Associate Designer\*** Rae Cottam

**Lighting Designer & Video Content** Mark Howett

**Sound Designer** Jeremy Turner

**Digital Content Creator** Roly Skender

**Repetiteur** Joshua Haines

**Wundig** Jarred Wall

**Wilura** Jess Hitchcock

**FULL CAST** online at [waopera.asn.au](http://waopera.asn.au)

### West Australian Symphony Orchestra

**\*Supported by Bruce & Charmaine Cameron**

Wundig wer Wilura is a very old love story of the two hills, Mt Bakewell and Mt Brown in York, Western Australia.

A very long time ago, there was an old man who was a much loved and respected Burdiya (leader) of his Moort (family). He made sure his Moort and the Boodja (land) they lived on was well taken care of.

As time passed, the family grew very big and it was becoming unsustainable for a group so large to stay in one place. The Burdiya sent his sons out to the hills to see if the land would be able to support them and grow their families. The sons went away and returned with a wide variety of food, showing their father the land was abundant and they would be ok to set up camps elsewhere.

The sons and their families were sent away with blessing of the Burdiya; the families continued to grow this legacy of living harmoniously on country with each other.

The Burdiya grew very old and as it became apparent his passing was imminent, the sons were called back to pay their respects to their father.

The sons and their families returned to the valley, bringing food with them and gathered to celebrate their Burdiya's life with music, dance, storytelling and sporting contests.

The old man passed, surrounded by the love, respect and care of his descendants.

Those who remained agreed to come back regularly to celebrate with sporting contests and music and dancing to commemorate their much-loved burdiya. The families continued to meet in this way, until a time when things went irreparably wrong.

Wundig came down from the hills with his family. He was a good hunter; he was known for having "moorditj mart" (good legs) and for being able to run fast.

Wilura was from the valley people, she was beautiful, but she was related to Wundig.

But oh, the heart's desire! Wundig loved Wilura and Wilura loved Wundig. The two youngsters took off without telling anyone.

The valley people went up the hill to look for their daughter. The hills people thought Wundig was with them. The valley people didn't believe them, and a massive fight broke out.

The hills people were too good on their own patch and the valley people were being wiped out. The valley people, realising they were at risk of being wiped out, retreated and called on their Mubarn (spirit man) to deal with the situation.

The Mubarn stopped the fight – turning the hills men into Balga (grass trees).

Now that the fighting had been dealt with, the Mubarn turned his attention to the two lovers. He banished Wundig's spirit to Walwalling (the place of tears) and Wilura's spirit to Wongborel (sleeping woman). Before their deaths, the Mubarn told them they would not be reunited unless the two hills crumbled.

He sealed this division by making the river run between the two hills.

Today, Walwalling is known as Mt Bakewell, and Wongborel is known as Mt Brown. Nowadays, you cannot go up Walwalling unless you are prepared to go all the way up to the top.

Scan QR code to read the program:



### GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



West Australian Opera is supported by the State Government through the Department of Local Government Sport and Cultural Industries and Lotterywest, and the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its arts funding and advisory body.

