Danièle Hromek
Spatial Designer | Artist
WINYANBOGA YURRINGA

Set and costume design
Staged at
Carriageworks, Sydney and
Geelong Performing Arts Centre
2016
WINYANBOGA YURINGA
Danièle Hromek, 2016

An interdisciplinary design practice spanning the fields of spatial design, performance design and Indigenous studies, the work questions how Indigenous narratives sit in colonised spaces of theatre. As a theatrical design relating to the Aboriginal experiences of Country and contemporary Indigenous identities, it addresses themes such as Indigenous women's worldviews, ongoing effects of colonisation, and intergenerational women's business.

The work includes set and costume design and construction for Winyanboga Yurringa, a play set in Yorta Yorta Country. Written and directed by Andrea James, it features six Aboriginal women camping on Country, reconnecting with the land and each other, and finding resilience and strength in doing so.

As a female Indigenous designer working with a primarily Indigenous cast and crew, the project challenges whether the enduring relationships Indigenous people have with Country can be designed into a colonised theatrical setting in both a culturally and aesthetically respectful way. Incorporating installation art and spatial design with Indigenous methodological approaches, the design features stylised shell shapes in abstracted sculptural forms, such as those that might be found in middens indicating thousands of years of Indigenous inhabitation to create the forest that surrounds the campground.

Staged at Carriageworks, 3-6 August 2016, travelling to Geelong Performing Arts Centre, 17-20 August 2016, the project was featured on ABC Radio and reviewed in Real Time Arts magazine. It was supported by Carriageworks, Arts NSW, Moogahlin Performing Art Inc, Australia Council, Australian Government.
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Cast
Matilda Brown
Kylie Coolwell
Alexis Lane
Angeline Penrith
Tessa Rose
Pamela Young
Danièle Hromek
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Winyanboga Yurringa Design Reviews

Winyanboga Yurringa opens and closes ritually. Initially a lone female elder bearing a ceremonial digging stick stands astride a small circular rise and finally a teenage girl is dressed in the centre of a sacred site with traditional female attire... Below the rise is another circle—camping space and sacred site—girded above by a semi-circle of exquisite suspended sculptures and several in the distance, from which hang curled, leaf-like shapes. Transforming dramatically with the play’s mood shifts they suggest a magical place, of serenely floating trees that can become eerie presences... Designer Daniele Hromek’s ‘tree’ sculptures make her set a work of beauty...

Real Time Arts

I’ve got a beautiful designer, Daniele Hromek, who is studying at UTS. This will be her first big design for theatre. It’s really abstract: a big round campfire and forms that hang in space that could be trees, they could be shell middens. In my country, river country, on the River Murray, middens are really important. They could be spirits, they could be female energy—Bindi Cole has photographed the actors and their images will be embedded in the design. The idea is that people have come to this place for hundreds and hundreds of years. It’s pretty simple really.

Real Time Arts

On entering the theatre the audience is invited to contemplate a mystical place. Long pale clusters like spectral trees are suspended in space, drifts of mist suggest remoteness and solitude, and a mysterious stone disc compels us to question its significance.

South Sydney Herald