

**SYDNEY
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EDUCATION



ON CUE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About <i>On Cue</i> and STC	2
Curriculum Connections	3
Cast and Creatives	4
In Conversation with the Playwright	5
Synopsis	7
Character Analysis	8
Themes and Ideas	12
Style	16
Elements of Production	17
Reference Guide	18

Compiled by Jacqui Cowell.

The activities and resources contained in this document are designed for educators as the starting point for developing more comprehensive lessons for this production. Jacqui Cowell is the Education Projects Officer for the Sydney Theatre Company. You can contact Jacqui on jcowell@sydneytheatre.com.au

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ABOUT *ON CUE* AND STC

ABOUT ON CUE

STC Ed has a suite of resources located on our website to enrich and strengthen teaching and learning surrounding the plays in the STC season.

Each school show will be accompanied by an *On Cue* e-publication which will feature essential information for teachers and students, such as curriculum links, information about the playwright, synopsis, character analysis, thematic analysis and suggested learning experiences.

For more in-depth digital resources surrounding productions, please visit the STC Ed page on our website.

Such resources include:

- Director documentaries
- Design sketchbooks

ABOUT SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY

In 1980, STC's first Artistic Director Richard Wherrett defined STC's mission as to provide "first class theatrical entertainment for the people of Sydney – theatre that is grand, vulgar, intelligent, challenging and fun."

Almost 40 years later, that ethos still rings true.

STC offers a diverse program of distinctive theatre of vision and scale at its harbourside home venue, The Wharf; Roslyn Packer Theatre at Walsh Bay; and Sydney Opera House, as its resident theatre company.

STC has a proud heritage as a creative hub and incubator for Australian theatre and theatre makers, developing and producing eclectic Australian works, interpretations of classic repertoire and great international writing. STC strives to create theatre experiences that reflect Sydney's distinctive personality and engage audiences.

Strongly committed to engagement in the community, STC's Education and Communities programs aim to inspire theatre appreciation and participation not only in theatres but also in schools, community halls; wherever people get together. STC offers an innovative School Drama™ program; partners with groups in metropolitan Sydney, regional centres and rural areas; and reaches beyond NSW with touring productions throughout Australia. Through these partnerships and initiatives, STC plays a part in ensuring a creative, forwardthinking and sociable future by engaging with young people, students and teachers.

The theatre careers of many of Australia's internationally renowned artists have been launched and fostered at STC, including Mel Gibson, Judy Davis, Hugo Weaving, Toni Collette, Rose Byrne, Benedict Andrews and Cate Blanchett. STC often collaborates with international artists and companies and, in recent years, the company's international profile has grown significantly with productions touring extensively to great acclaim.

STC is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, by its arts funding and advisory body, and by the New South Wales Government through Arts NSW.

sydneytheatre.com.au

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS



SUITABLE FOR

Students in Years 9 to 12

SUBJECTS

Drama and English Stages 5 and 6

2018–2021 HSC Drama Topic 2:
Contemporary Australian Theatre

Drama Stage 5:
Dramatic forms and performance styles

Aboriginal Studies Stage 5 and 6

English Stage 5 and 6

SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY AND ALLAN PRESENTS

THE LONG FORGOTTEN DREAM

BY H LAWRENCE SUMNER

SIMONE TUCKER/DEBORAH
JADA ALBERTS/ SHAKIRA
CLANTON (ALTERNATE)

JEREMIAH TUCKER
WAYNE BLAIR

NORTH/MANDEEP
NICHOLAS BROWN

YOUNG JEREMIAH
BRODI CUBILLO

GLADYS DAWSON/ERICA
MELISSA JAFFER

LIZZIE/SOUTH SPIRIT
NINGALI LAWFORD-WOLF

YOUNG JEREMIAH
WESLEY PATTEN

PASTOR HENRY GILLES/
OLD MAN GILLES/KEITH
JUSTIN SMITH

KING TULLA
IAN WILKES

DIRECTOR
NEIL ARMFIELD

SET DESIGNER
JACOB NASH

COSTUME DESIGNER
JENNIFER IRWIN

LIGHTING DESIGNER
MARK HOWETT

COMPOSER
WILLIAM BARTON

SOUND DESIGNER
STEVE FRANCIS

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
DEBORAH BROWN

VOICE & TEXT COACH
CHARMIAN GRADWELL

PRODUCTION MANAGER
MARK HASLAM

STAGE MANAGER
SARAH SMITH

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
JESSICA LAWES

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
JAYMII KNIERUM

HEAD MECHANIST
DAVID TONGS

BACKSTAGE WIG AND
WARDROBE SUPERVISOR
DYNAE WOODS

CULTURAL SUPPORT ADVISOR
SIGRID HERRING

CHAPERONE
ANNE CARROLL

REHEARSAL PHOTOGRAPHERS
LISA TOMASETTI

PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHER
HEIDRUN LOHR

2 HOURS 15 MINUTES, INCLUDING INTERVAL

THIS PRODUCTION PREMIERED AT THE
DRAMA THEATRE, SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE,
ON 27 JULY 2018

THE LONG FORGOTTEN DREAM RECEIVED DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY'S ROUGH DRAFTS PROGRAM

PRESENTING PARTNER

Allens >< Linklaters

PRODUCTION PATRON

THE GIRGENSOHN FOUNDATION



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THE WRITER IN CONVERSATION

H LAWRENCE SUMNER

What are the main themes and issues explored in *The Long Forgotten Dream*?

The play's main themes are the three R's: Reconciliation, Repatriation and Reparation. If the play is a landscape, they are the three big mountain peaks to tackle in the play. Family is the landscape through which the audience explores the three mountain peaks.

Different characters represent different themes. Simone represents the theme of repatriation, through her search to find her great-grandfather's bones. Henry represents reparation and the sins of the past that need to be atoned for, believing that restitution needs to be made. Reconciliation is a running theme that runs across the play and the character journeys. The overarching theme of the play is healing, both in a spiritual sense for the characters and in a national way.

I haven't set out to write a purely political play. We've had the Sorry days. However, there still needs to be an exploration of what reconciliation is and how we are moving forward with it, is it in the form of a treaty or something else?

Another theme in the play is generational difference. There is a bravado with the younger generation that the older generation don't have. Simone bravely goes on a quest to find King Tulla's bones. She is able to do this without having the weight of the past on her shoulders.

What is the predominant theatrical style of the play?

I would call the style Magic Naturalism, because of the naturalistic scenes in the play, particularly the scenes in Jeremiah's home. The naturalistic scenes combine with scenes in the spirit world and *The Dreaming*, with the two worlds existing on stage at the same time.

“THIS IS BASED ON THE NOTION THAT
ABORIGINAL PEOPLE BELIEVE THERE
ARE SPIRITUAL THINGS HAPPENING AROUND
US ALL OF THE TIME. I CAN LIKEN IT TO
RADIO WAVES AND WI-FI THAT WE CAN PICK
UP ON THAT ARE AROUND US ALL THE TIME”
— SUMNER, 2018 —

The main character in the play, Jeremiah, is oblivious to what is going on around him, he is unable to access the spiritual world. Jeremiah has reached the age of eldership and has probably been offered eldership, but knocked it back. At the start of the play, he has isolated himself from his community and seems alone and depressed.

The spiritual and the physical worlds start to meet in the play as Jeremiah becomes more aware. The catalyst for the change in his awareness is his daughter Simone. She leaves Australia for two years and goes on an arduous search to find her greatgrandfather's bones. By bringing back Mannie/King Tulla's bones, Jeremiah is forced to stand up as an elder in the community, do the Welcome to Country and speak over King Tulla's bones laying him to rest and healing the traumatic events of the past.

Can you explain the Dreaming scenes in the play and the spiritual aspects of the play and the characters?

The Dreaming scenes in the play are not in the past, they are continuous and present. The spirit characters in the play are Gladys, King Tulla, North and South. Gladys is trying to find her way back to Tyne, Newcastle, her hometown. Her guiding spirit North won't let her leave as she has unfinished business. She was forced to give up her child, having fallen pregnant to Mannie. She also lost Mannie's heart, which she needs to return before she can move on.

The Dreaming world and the natural world co-exist in the play as Jeremiah increasingly opens himself up to what is happening in the spiritual world. The theatrical, Dreaming scenes allow Jeremiah to say openly what he can't say in life. The Dreaming scenes feature Jeremiah as a child, searching for his mother, Deborah, whose body was never found. Jeremiah also calls out to the spirit of King Tulla in the Dreaming scenes.

The characters of Gladys and Tulla are spirits, because they haven't actually been disconnected from what is happening in real life. They're not ghosts that haunt or have malice. Guided by North, once Gladys finds out what happened to her daughter and Mannie, she is able to move on.

How did ideas for the set design come about?

When I saw the production of *Bennelong* at Bangarra Dance Theatre, I knew I wanted to work with [Set Designer] Jacob Nash. Nash and Neil [Armfield] [Director] came and visited my home town, Coorong. Nash took a series of photos of the natural surrounds, the beach, the water and the sand. The cloth that is the main set piece is based on these images and colours of the landscape in Coorong.

Ideally, I don't like the design to happen in the rehearsal room until the actors have workshopped and rehearsed in the space. As [influential theatre practitioner] Steven Berkoff says, “if this happens it can be like wearing ill-fitting clothes”. I like the set to be open, where things can be moved.

Nash has struck on this note of genius in terms of how to work with the actors. This comes from working with dancers and how to use the space in conjunction with bodies that are moving through the space.

What is the play about? What did you want to say through writing this play?

It's about people and their moments. This play came from people who went through heartbreaking circumstances, who lived and still live through fractured seasons of our nation's history. Looking into the abyss of that fractured history, we have survived. I wanted to say that the broken pieces of a nation's history can be repaired, without being removed or watered down. That people can be reasonable and that faith in the process of healing is, sometimes, more important than the healing itself. I wanted to very much say that the sins of the fathers can be atoned for and the generational repercussions of those sins can be included in an open dialogue, eventually leading to forgiveness and healing.



SYNOPSIS

Jeremiah Tucker is in his mid 50s. He lives tucked away on the windswept coastline of South Australia's Coorong region. Lately, he's been having strange turns. He fears he might be sick. But is there something wrong with his mind or his heart?

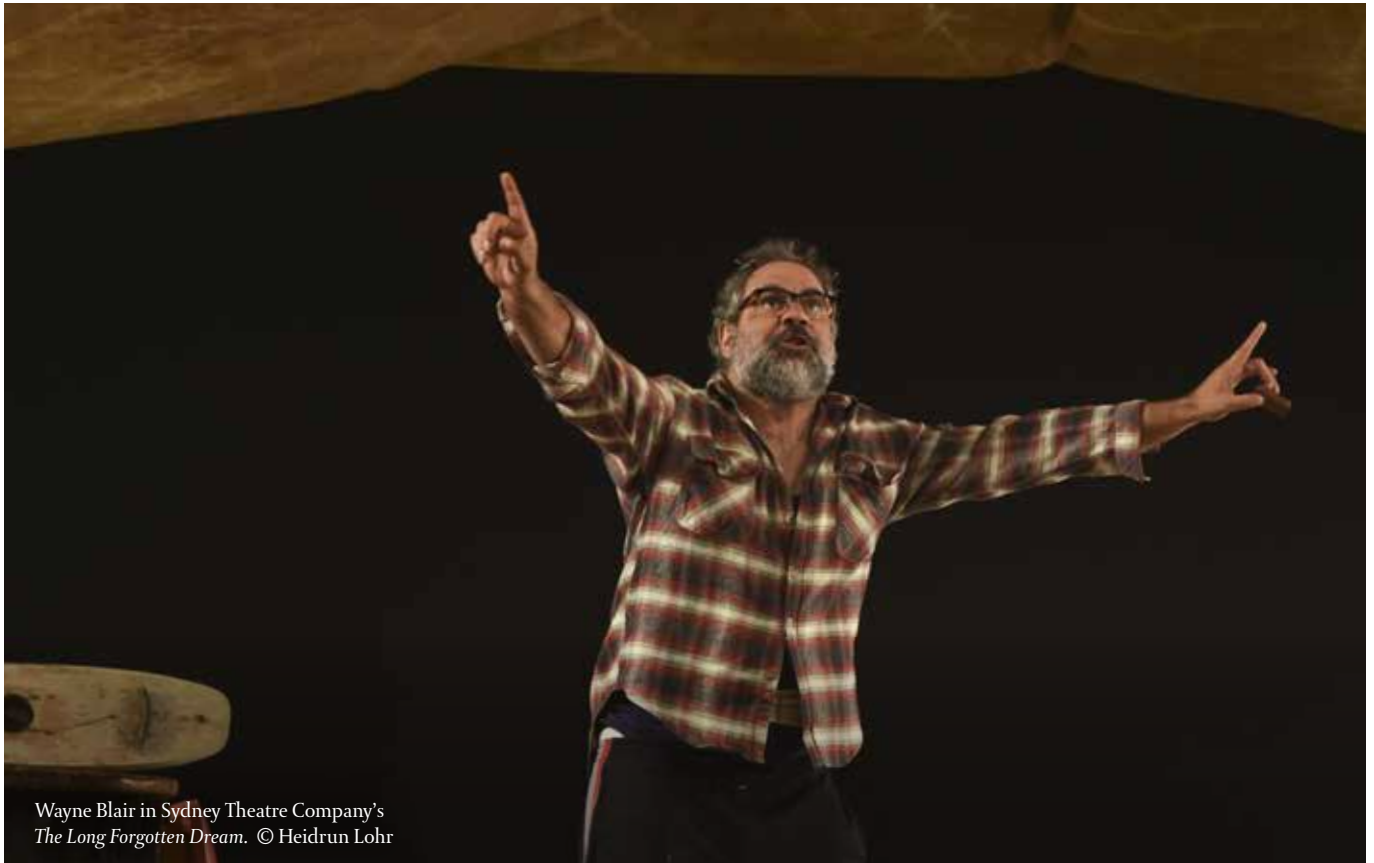
His daughter Simone has just returned from two years overseas. She's been researching a PhD in archaeology and tracking down the stolen remains of King Tulla, her great-grandfather.

Having located the bones of their ancestor, Simone is now working with the local pastor to organise a formal welcome home for Tulla's remains. Jeremiah has been asked to speak over the bones but is resistant, terrified of stirring up painful events from the family's past. But in the small town where they live, the past is always present. It has never been laid to rest.



Wayne Blair and Justin Smith in Sydney Theatre Company's *The Long Forgotten Dream*. © Heidrun Lohr

CHARACTER ANALYSIS



Wayne Blair in Sydney Theatre Company's *The Long Forgotten Dream*. © Heidrun Lohr

JEREMIAH

Jeremiah Tucker is the main character, the plot focuses on his spiritual journey and acceptance of his responsibilities. He is a mid 50s Indigenous man who is lost and depressed. Jeremiah can be caring and interested in others, but he also experiences feelings of loss and despondency. He has lived in the same town all his life. Jeremiah is retired and lives alone, until his daughter Simone returns from two years overseas, bringing back her great-grandfather's remains. His sister Lizzie is worried about Jeremiah's physical and mental state and visits regularly, shopping and cooking for him. Jeremiah's journey in the play is one of awakening to his responsibilities as a father and an elder. As he awakens to the spirit world, he starts to deal with the traumatic events of the past, with his daughter Simone as the catalyst for healing.



ALSO AVAILABLE ONLINE IS A DESIGN SKETCHBOOK
BY JACOB NASH AND JENNIFER IRWIN

CHARACTER ANALYSIS (CONT.)

SIMONE

Simone, Jeremiah's daughter, is an archaeologist and PhD candidate in her late 20s. She has spent the last two years overseas on a mission to find her great-grandfather's remains. Simone is an intelligent and headstrong young woman, representing the bravado of the new generation. She has searched for and returned her great-grandfather's bones to his birthplace. Simone wants Jeremiah to speak over his grandfather's bones at the ceremony and to accept his responsibility as an elder and a father.

Simone established a friendship and connection overseas with the scientist Dr Mandeep Singh as he assisted her in the process of repatriating her great-grandfather's bones. There is a possibility that the relationship between Simone and Dr Mandeep could become romantic. Simone is the catalyst for the important events of the play, the return of the remains and the healing of the family. She says to her father: "I did this so that you could speak over those bones and lay your grandfather to rest, like a leader. So that the community could see that" (Sumner, 2018, Act 1 Scene 1, p. 13).



CHARACTER ANALYSIS (CONT.)

LIZZIE

Lizzie is Jeremiah's sister, a sassy and maternal woman in her 40s. Lizzie owns a shop in town that sells Aboriginal art and gifts. Lizzie worries about Jeremiah; she recognises he is lost at this stage in his life and feels it is her role to look after him until he gets on his feet again. Lizzie and Father Henry had a romantic relationship when they were young, before he became a priest. Lizzie jokes with him about a romantic reunion.

FATHER HENRY

Father Henry is the local priest. He belongs to the Giles family, a wealthy land-owning family that have been living in the region for generations. Henry wants to atone for the sins of the men in his family, including their treatment of Aboriginal people on the cattle station. Henry was friends with Jeremiah and Lizzie when he was younger. The relationship between Henry and Jeremiah has been fractured, with Jeremiah pushing him away when his mother died. Henry tries to influence Jeremiah to talk over King Tulla's bones and lay him to rest but he is rebuked. At the end of the play, Jeremiah accepts that Henry's actions have been done out of goodwill and that he's not a bad man "for a white fella".



Justin Smith and Ningali Lawford-Wolf in Sydney Theatre Company's *The Long Forgotten Dream*. © Heidrun Lohr

CHARACTER ANALYSIS (CONT.)



SPIRIT CHARACTERS

KING TULLA/MANNIE

King Tulla or Mannie is Jeremiah's grandfather.

He appears as a spirit in naturalistic scenes and the Dreaming sequences. Mannie was an elder and a king of his community. In Simone's research she found that King Tulla was the youngest man of the clan to ever have that honour, as his father had passed away. In the play, Mannie is described as "A King whose land was now filled with the cattle of another man" (Sumner, 2018). Mannie fell in love with Gladys, a white English woman on the cattle station. When they declared their love and she became pregnant, he lost his job. His community and elders disowned him and wouldn't take him back. He became a vagabond and a beggar in his own land. King Tulla, dressed as a warrior with body paint and a spear, closes the play with the line "The Great Dream is Remembered" (Sumner, 2018, Act 2 Scene 8, p. 102) as Jeremiah pours sand over his body.

GLADYS

Gladys was Mannie/King Tulla's true love and Deborah's birth mother. After being forced to give up her child with Mannie, she remarried and started a new life. After her death, Gladys is trying to find her way back to Newcastle in England, her hometown, with her spirit guide North. North won't allow her to leave as she has unfinished business: she needs to return Mannie's heart and find out what happened to Deborah. Gladys is also a catalyst for Jeremiah's healing and awakening, listening and guiding him to accept his responsibilities as the head of his family.

NORTH AND SOUTH

North and South are Spirits in The Dreaming scenes.

THEMES AND IDEAS

RECONCILIATION AND REPATRIATION

Reconciliation is a core theme in *The Long Forgotten Dream*. In Australia, reconciliation can be defined as bringing Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians together to overcome inequality. Reconciliation has elements of truth, justice, healing and reparation (Korff, 2011). Repatriation and reparation are part of reconciliation, they are both important themes in the play. Sumner in the interview on page 5 states, “There is an overarching theme of healing, both in a spiritual sense for the characters and in a national way” (Sumner, 2018). The playwright poses questions about reconciliation, specifically what the next steps are for reconciliation in Australia.

Jeremiah seems to have given up on the idea of change or reconciliation. The character expresses his distaste for people who are engaged in Aboriginal activism as a trend, “An Aboriginal wannabe is singing protest songs or getting PhDs pretending they belong to a dreaming people, that shits me to no end” (Sumner, 2018, Act 1 Scene 5, p. 43). Jeremiah changes his attitude at the end of the play, realising the importance of the ceremony and the efforts of Father Henry, his family and the community.

Lizzie has a different attitude to reconciliation and reparation. She runs a shop selling Aboriginal art and gifts. Lizzie tells Father Henry that her gift shop will be the only one at the ceremony. She is a shrewd business woman, seeing the opportunity to capitalise on the ceremony and the guilt of white people in the town: “White guilt, best thing that ever happened around here” (Sumner, 2018, Act 2 Scene 3, p. 83).

The Repatriation of ancestral remains is one of the main themes in the play. Simone finds King Tulla’s bones and repatriates the bones from the UK to Australia with Dr Singh’s help. The United Nations Declaration states that Indigenous Repatriation enables countries around the world to seek repatriation of human remains in their possession through effective mechanisms developed in conjunction with Indigenous peoples (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, n. d.).

King Tulla’s story represents thousands of incidents where Aboriginal remains were stolen and illegally exported throughout the world until the 1940s (Korff, 2011). The remains were removed by academics and researchers and taken to museums, universities and private collections in Australia and internationally. The main reason for the exhumation of the ancestral remains was to explore human biological differences through scientific research. There are still thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestral remains in museums and institutions all over the world. It is believed there are over 10,000 skeletal remains in the UK awaiting repatriation (Department of Communications and the Arts, n.d.).

In an article, Atkinson describes how the removal of ancestral remains and sacred objects is a form of genocide (Atkinson, 2010). Atkinson comments on the cultural importance of the skeletal remains; “Some of my people were given burials according to the custom of each clan group, but there were people who were not given a chance of a burial and now live in an undignified manner all over the world” (Atkinson, 2010, p. 16). Atkinson described how his people were hunted and shot and put into barrels of spirits to preserve them on the long journey overseas. He states that there was no consideration of this person being a living human being. He questions how these spirits can rest when they have been subject to this type of inhumane treatment (Atkinson, 2010).

THEMES AND IDEAS (CONT.)

REPARATION AND ATONEMENT

Reparation is another key theme in the play. Reparation is described as “the willingness to commit to a process that Indigenous peoples would consider as an appropriate act of reconciliation, compensation and reparation relative to the unjust acts to which they were subjected to by the institutions of governments and their agents” (Human Rights Commission, n.d.).

The theme of reparation is presented through the character of Henry, who believes the sins of the past need to be atoned for and restitution needs to be made. Father Henry Giles comes from a wealthy, land owning family who have been living in the region for generations.

King Tulla/Mannie worked on the Giles cattle station as a stockman, where he met Gladys, a white woman working on the station as a cook. After Gladys became pregnant to Mannie, he lost his job and was kicked off the property for misconduct. He was also disowned by his Aboriginal community and stripped of his eldership: “Tulla paid a price for being in love. The elders wouldn’t take him back. He became a vagabond and beggar in his own land. Then killed and sold off” (Sumner, 2018, Act 1 Scene 7, p. 61).

Father Henry wants to heal the sins of his forebears and suggests to Jeremiah that “maybe the misdeeds of the past can be atoned for” (Sumner, 2018, Act 1 Scene 5, p. 43). However, Jeremiah doesn’t accept Henry’s offer of atonement. When Henry asks him to speak over the bones of his grandfather, he angrily replies: “I didn’t even know the man and the first time I get to acknowledge my own grandfather is in front of a bunch of cameras and lights? Is there any respect for that?” (Sumner, 2018, Act 1, Scene 3, p. 43). Jeremiah rebukes Henry, accusing him of washing the blood from his hands. The tension in the relationship between Jeremiah and Henry reflects the difficulties and sensitivities in authentic reparation as they try to heal the sins of the fathers and events of the past.

The theme of Reparation in *The Long Forgotten Dream* is explored through the characters of Simone and Jeremiah. Simone has returned from an arduous two year-long journey to find her great-grandfather’s stolen remains. The expectation is that Jeremiah will speak over his grandfather’s bones at the repatriation ceremony as the direct male descendant. Simone approaches him about speaking and he refuses, arguing “I was never a leader. You understand? I didn’t have a Father to teach me old ways” (Sumner, 2018, Act 2 Scene 2, p. 78).

Father Henry also tries to get Jeremiah to speak over the bones. He argues with Henry, “Do you have the man who took my grandfather? The men who sold his body. Are those men here to apologise?” (Sumner, 2018, Act 1 Scene 5, p. 41). By the end of the play, Jeremiah has awakened to his responsibilities and agrees to speak over the remains. Simone is the main catalyst for Jeremiah’s awakening and healing. The spirit character of North describes Simone’s efforts and achievement in bringing Tulla’s bones back and healing the family; “And now the young one has found him. She has woven the threads of life back together” (Sumner, 2018, Act 2 Scene 4, p. 85).

THEMES AND IDEAS (CONT.)



DREAMING AND SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality and the Dreaming are important themes in *The Long Forgotten Dream*. The Dreaming scenes interweave with naturalistic scenes, with living and spirit characters in the same space. In the play, the Dreaming scenes happen when Jeremiah is anxious and lost. He reverts to when he was a child, experiencing the trauma of his parents' car accident and losing his mother. In an emotional sense, Jeremiah also lost his father, as Ezekiel never recovered from losing his wife, becoming an alcoholic out of despair. In the Dreaming scenes, Jeremiah is searching for his mother and calling out for King Tulla. Gladys is present in many of the naturalistic scenes in the play, listening to and guiding Jeremiah towards his spiritual awakening.

THEMES AND IDEAS (CONT.)

FAMILY AND GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCE

Family is the through line of the play, with the relationship between Jeremiah and Simone being the central relationship. Jeremiah and Lizzie's sibling relationship is also an important relationship, with Lizzie caring for Jeremiah until he gets back on his feet. Simone is the catalyst for the healing that occurs in the family and with Jeremiah. At the end of the play, Jeremiah has an awakening, saying to Simone, "I want to say thank you. And that's hard for me to say, to anyone. I'm grateful. I'm glad he's home. I'm glad you got what you needed for your PhD. But this was never your fight" (Sumner, 2018, Act 2, Scene 8, p. 99).

At the beginning of the play, Jeremiah is unable to let go of the pain and anger about the past and has little hope for the future. Simone represents change and the bravado of a younger generation. She is hopeful about reconciliation and is able to imagine a better future.



Melissa Jaffer, Ningali Lawford-Wolf
and Jada Alberts in Sydney Theatre Company's
The Long Forgotten Dream. © Heidrun Lohr

STYLE

MAGIC NATURALISM

H Lawrence Sumner described the style of *The Long Forgotten Dream* as Magic Naturalism. The play is a hybrid of Magic Realism and Naturalism.

Magic Realism emerged in the 1960s. The plays are mainly realistic but have a completely non-realistic element in them, which is used by the playwright to transcend or move outside everyday reality. In Magic Realism, surreal dream and nightmare sequences are often used, and dreams are often more important than real events. In these plays, the appearance of supernatural characters, such as ghosts, gods and spirits is common. Ordinary characters can have extraordinary powers, such as the ability to read minds, to heal or to see into the future (Burton, 2011).

Naturalism is defined in the following way:

Émile Zola, the great French novelist and playwright, first outlined the elements of naturalism in 1873. He argued that all Drama should be based on Scientific observations of human behaviour and should exactly reproduce real life on stage. The first naturalistic plays did this, putting on stage a 'slice of life' that attempted to exactly duplicate the behaviour of ordinary people in their daily lives. This meant that a two-hour play depicted just two hours in the lives of the characters, and the actors tried to become those characters, living rather than performing them. The audience were observers and for them it was like looking through an invisible 'fourth wall' of someone's house, watching people go about their lives. (Burton, 2011, p. 156).

The majority of the naturalistic scenes in the play take place at Jeremiah's house, the scenes following a linear narrative. The Dreaming and spirit scenes phase in and out of the naturalistic scenes. There are Dreaming scenes with Young Jeremiah and the spirit characters; Gladys, King Tulla, North and South. The naturalistic scenes and the Dreaming scenes interweave, as Jeremiah increasingly tunes into the spiritual world. The scenes with young Jeremiah are written as dreamscapes with characters that are no longer living. The young Jeremiah represents Jeremiah's yearnings and loss, expressing what he can't say.

The scenes with Gladys and Jeremiah are a good example of the style of Magic Naturalism. Gladys, who is King Tulla's love and Deborah's mother, is a spirit character in the play. She is led by the spirit guide North to find Mannie's heart and to discover what happened to her daughter before her spirit can rest. Gladys is at the dock, in the same space as Jeremiah, both speaking their thoughts aloud, when Jeremiah "sees" her and panics. The scene moves to Jeremiah's house with Gladys willing Jeremiah to take out the photo of Deborah again, which he does. Gladys is overwhelmed with emotion and wants Jeremiah to stop talking when she hears about Deborah's tragic death. The style of Magic Naturalism is evident in this scene through the stage directions; "Gladys has stopped time. But only for a moment." (Sumner, 2018, Act 1 Scene 7, p. 63).

Magic Naturalism is the predominant style of *The Long Forgotten Dream* as the play co-exists in the real world and spiritual world, where boundaries between the worlds are erased. Neil Armfield uses shadow effects to create the spirit characters of North and South. The shadows create a magic, illusionary effect.

Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* is an example of the style of Magic Realism. Kushner's desire to see magic on stage came from a desire to push theatre's boundaries beyond "that whole sort of illusion-reality paradigm". Central to Kushner's vision is an acknowledgment of the "theatrical illusion" as stated in his stage directions for *Angels in America*: "It's OK if the wires show and it's OK they do" (Roundabout Theatre Company, 2015).

Sumner discusses the style of the play in an interview (see page 5). He expresses how we need to find a way of depicting Aboriginal spirituality and the Dreaming on stage.

Sumner sees the main challenge to achieving this as the need for the Dreaming scenes to feel authentic. According to the playwright, that will require us to create our own Australian theatrical form for contemporary Australian theatre. He states that we shouldn't always be looking to classic and overseas forms and styles for Australian plays.

THE ELEMENTS OF PRODUCTION



SET DESIGN

The Set Design for *The Long Forgotten Dream* was inspired by a visit to Coorong by Set Designer Jacob Nash and Director Neil Armfield. Nash found inspiration from the landscape, how the light shifts during the day, affecting the colours, the sand and the water. The two main features of the set are the cloth and the floor, which is covered with sand. With the burnt orange cloth, the designer wanted to evoke a feeling and connection with the landscape.

“The idea of the sand on the floor I came to early on – it just makes sense for the world we are in. That and the cloth, these two textures and surfaces, play against each other, and say a lot about the world we are in. We are just passing through this land and one day we will be swept away like dust, but the remnants of our life will still be there.” (Nash in STC program, 2018, p. 14-15).

Nash expressed that the cloth above (the sky) and the sand below (the land) should nurture the audience’s spirit, mind and body. But the two elements are not in sync; they don’t meet. The characters in the play also live in that space in between.

SOUND DESIGN/COMPOSITION

The sound and composition in *The Long Forgotten Dream* is unique. Steve Francis, the Sound Designer, worked collaboratively with William Barton, the composer and live musician, who is on stage during the production.

Barton describes the process in creating the live music for *The Long Forgotten Dream* as discovering how he conveys the story. “I’m a live musician, not just a composer. So, I’m working from two different perspectives – the composer can create something that’s there forever as notation or a recording, but as a performer I’m part of an oral tradition. As a live performer you know that every time you get up on stage it’s going to be a little bit different.”

The music in *The Long Forgotten Dream* was created in the rehearsal room. William Barton was set up in a corner with instruments and created the music in the space as Armfield was working with the actors on scenes. He describes the creative and production process in the rehearsal room as being like an orchestra, a united front conveying the story. The next stage was for him to be in his own world, writing out the musical notation, composed around the ideas and the thoughts that he came up with in the rehearsal room.

REFERENCE GUIDE

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