

Media Release

18 May 2020

COVID-19 brings the curtain down on *Bran Nue Dae* 30th anniversary tour

A new production of the Indigenous musical *Bran Nue Dae*, presented by The Opera Conference, that was scheduled for a full national tour in 2020 to celebrate the show's 30th anniversary, is the latest production to be cancelled because of the COVID-19 restrictions.

This latest cancellation follows the announcement last month that the return Sydney season, along with the Melbourne and Geelong seasons were not proceeding.

As the restrictions on mass gatherings are extended, it is no longer possible to stage the remaining legs of the tour in Brisbane, Canberra and Adelaide scheduled for July and August.

After successful seasons in Parramatta and Perth earlier in the year, the show was still due to run as part of Opera Queensland's 2020 program at QPAC in late July before moving to Canberra Theatre Centre for Opera Australia on 11 August and then on to Her Majesty's Theatre in Adelaide for State Opera of South Australia from 19 August.

Opera Australia CEO Rory Jeffes, speaking on behalf of The Opera Conference, wanted to thank all involved in the *Bran Nue Dae* project.

"I wanted to take this opportunity to pay tribute to everyone who has worked so tirelessly in bringing this production to the stage for this very special anniversary tour.

"This is of course a really difficult time for everyone. I know how devastating this news is for the whole extended *Bran Nue Dae* family that stretched across the country. All the performers, creatives and crew, everyone worked so hard on this project, that I know was very close to all their hearts.

"It is so terribly unfortunate that the ongoing government restrictions have left us with no choice but to cancel the rest of the tour, with the health and well-being of the touring company and the community remaining a top priority," said Mr Jeffes.

Written by the late Jimmy Chi in collaboration with the band Kuckles, *Bran Nue Dae* was recognised as the world's first Aboriginal stage musical when it premiered to great acclaim in 1990.



A dynamic young cast and a formidable creative team had been assembled for the anniversary tour that included original director Andrew Ross, original Kuckles members including musical director Patrick Bin Amat, associate director Naomi Pigram and choreographer Tara Gower along with set and costume designer Mark Thompson and lighting designer, Mark Howett.



The Opera Conference is an Australia Council initiative that unites Opera Australia, Opera Queensland, State Opera South Australia and the West Australian Opera, to collaborate on co-productions that all Companies will present in their respective states as part of a national tour.



Patrons who have purchased tickets will receive an email from the official ticketing provider outlining details on the refund process for cancelled performances and other options.

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