



GUTS DANCE VALUE FOR MONEY



 **Brown's Mart Theatre**



Fri 20 & Sun 22 Aug 8pm Sat 21 Aug 1pm & 8pm

Duration 1hr

Darwin Festival takes place on the land of the Larrakia people.

We wish to pay our respects to the traditional owners of this Country and to their ancestors. As the Festival welcomes contemporary artists and art from around Australia, we also celebrate the continuing culture of the Larrakia.

Scroll through to read more about this performance of *Value for Money*.

Enjoy the show!

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DIRECTORS' NOTES

Value for Money began its journey many years ago with what I thought would be explorations for a short solo. The concept came as I was traveling through the Middle East during the Arab Spring uprisings. The way I was treated or valued traveling throughout these places in relation to local or neighbouring people was stark and most apparent when I arrived in Israel. As a foreigner, but a non-practicing Jewish woman, I felt a warm welcome from the locals (not immigration) in a way that their neighbours did not. I always find this thin thread of commonality is enough to bring a strong bond with other Jewish peoples, even though my direct family line with Scottish and English heritage is non-practicing for three generations. It sparked a fascination on how we choose to place our value, what makes us feel safe around others and what information we use to come to these conclusions.

After two developments of *Value For Money* it was clear to me that the themes we were exploring were bigger than I could direct as a white woman. For our final development into presentation, I asked the incredibly intuitive Jasmin Sheppard to come on board as co-director to thread her voice into this work and help us craft it into its final incarnation.

– **Sara Black**

What excited me the most about coming on as co-director for *Value for Money* was to work with Sara. We've known each other for well over a decade and our careers have almost existed parallel to one another. To bring this relationship into the room felt right. The conversation on human value spoke deeply to me, and as a First Nations woman with mixed heritage, I felt I could bring a different lens with which to view the creative process. There's so much depth that can be explored conceptually, and the many rich discussions have led to a multi-layered work, which I believe can speak to audiences from a vast array of diverse human experiences.

– **Jasmin Sheppard**

We all come from a common place – land, dust, molecule. The human journey separates us from other animals by our drive to find our individual worth. What makes us a valuable and unique addition to this place? How do we value human life? Is it the calculable economic value or the intangible emotional and physical value of a person we should be considering? In addition, this human desire to discover our individual and collective value contradicts a human need to control and have dominion over other humans, animals and land; to project collective value onto objects, deities, other individuals: the polarity of power and vulnerability inherent within us all. *Value For Money* interrogates how relationships, community, proximity and place change our perception of a life's worth.

Along this journey many people have shared their stories and voices in the making of this work, bringing their power and vulnerability and spilling their lived experiences into the process. From previous developments in London and Alice Springs we would like to thank Carl Harrison, Laure Bachelot, Megan Adair, Thomas E.S Kelly and Kelly Beneforti for being involved in the creation of this work.

The final cast of performers/collaborators/choreographers/creatives for *Value for Money* have been integral in this creation.

Their voices are thread through this work and it would not be what it is if it was if not for their contribution. We thank Ashley McLellan, Gabriel Comerford, Waangenga Blanco, Tom Snowdon and Chris Mercer for all that they have given to this work. Thank you Lizzy Verstappen and Andrew Treloar for all of their work in the land of costumes and design, Jonny Rowden and Tessa Snowdon for their dramaturgical and research intelligence, and Letitia Firth for her support and drive of all things technical in the Araluen theatre and Amanda Harris for stepping up into a new role. We thank John and Yvonne Mercer for their support and care for our babies, we couldn't have been here without you.

Finally, Frankie Snowdon and Madeleine Krennek are the reason this show has come to fruition at all. It is through their hard work and tenacity that these ideas have come to the stage. We thank them for all that they have done and continue to do for us in the many hats they have worn during this adventure, as performers, collaborators, producers and friends.

**– Sara Black & Jasmin Sheppard,
Co-Directors**

Read more about the background to *Value for Money* [here](#).

BIOGRAPHIES

Sara Black

Choreographer & Director

Sara Black was born in Canberra with a rural upbringing and has had an interest in the performing arts from a young age training in dance, theatre and music. After working with Canberra youth company Quantum Leap (now QL2) she completed a Bachelor of Dance from the Victorian College of the Arts. Sara has worked as a choreographer, performer, teacher and collaborator in Australia and internationally over the past 14 years. As a choreographer she has worked in theatre and commercial events whilst developing her own contemporary choreographic practice.

She has performed and collaborated with Punchdrunk (UK), Protein Dance (UK), The Australian Ballet, Lucy Guerin Inc, NYID (David Pledger) and as a main collaborator and performer for Gideon Obarzanek's Chunky Move where she toured extensively internationally.

In 2008 she was awarded a Helpmann Award for best performer in a dance/physical theatre piece and has since been nominated for two Green Room awards in the same category.

Jasmin Sheppard

Choreographer & Director

Jasmin Sheppard is a contemporary dancer, choreographer and director, a Tagalaka Aboriginal woman with Irish, Chinese and Hungarian ancestry.

Jasmin spent 12 years with Bangarra Dance Theatre, performing numerous lead roles and choreographing one major work for the company, *MACQ*, on the 1816 Appin Massacres under Governor Macquarie which toured Australia and Germany.

In 2012 Jasmin was nominated for an Australian Dance Award for Best Female Contemporary Dancer and her work *MACQ* was nominated for a Helpmann Award for best dance work as a part of 'OUR Land People Stories' in 2017, and in 2018 received a Helpmann for best regional touring program.

Her other works include *No Remittance* for Legs on the Wall and *Choice Cut* for Yirramboi festival, which was presented at Toronto's Fall For Dance North Festival, 2019.

In 2020 Jasmin created works for NAISDA Dance College, Sydney Dance Company's PPY program, and Catapult Dance.

Additional performer and creative biographies can be found [here](#) and by clicking on the individual names below.

CREDITS

Concept & Choreography

Sara Black & Jasmin Sheppard

Collaborating Performers

**Waangenga Blanco, Gabriel Comerford,
Madeleine Krenek, Ashley McLellan &
Frankie Snowdon**

Sound Designer & Composer

Tom Snowdon

Lighting Designer

Chris Mercer

Dramaturg

Jonny Rowden

Research Assistant

Tessa Snowdon

Production Manager

Amanda Harris

Costume Designer & Consultant

Elizabeth Verstappen & **Andrew Treloar**

Remount Director (Darwin Festival)

Amber Haines

Produced By

GUTS Dance // Central Australia

Value For Money was made possible with assistance from the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, the Regional Arts Fund, The Northern Territory Government through Arts NT, Artback NT and through individual donations via Creative Partnerships Australia's BOOST initiative. It has also been supported locally by the Araluen Arts Centre and Studio B school of dance.

GUTS would also like to acknowledge the Arrernte people, on whose country they are based and this work was created, and whose sovereignty was never ceded. They pay respect to their elders, and to all First Nations people and countries.



THANK YOU

GUTS and the team would like to thank our families, who have supported, endured and cared for us and our work throughout the days, weeks, months and years it has taken to get this show to this point. We are very lucky to be supported to do what we love, especially in these strange times.

To the funding bodies, peers, partnering organisations, festivals and private sponsors whose support has made this work and season possible and our collaborators past and present for their generosity and prolific talent. Finally, to all the brave dance makers who continue to defy convention and unsettle the status quo – we are forever indebted to your contributions to our practices and the world at large – and to you, our audience, for sharing this with us.

DARWIN FESTIVAL

Darwin Festival is the centre piece of what makes August in Darwin the best time of year. Loved by locals and adored by visitors, this tropical winter festival invites you to experience the very best in First Nations, Territory, Australian and international art, culture and music – not just as a spectator but to be one with it.

DARWIN FESTIVAL 2022
RUNS 4 – 21 AUGUST

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#HOTAUGUSTNIGHTS