

## **WUNDIG WER WILURA**

### **OVERVIEW**

#### **WEST AUSTRALIAN OPERA**

West Australian Opera (WAO) has been Western Australia's State Opera company for nearly 60-years, sharing the power of sung stories with the community. WAO is considered crucial to arts & culture in WA and is known for producing high quality performances with an engaging and inspiring atmosphere.

#### **WUNDIG WER WILURA**

Premiering in February 2024, *Wundig wer Wilura* is a critically acclaimed Noongar opera by award-winning songwriters and storytellers Gina Williams and Guy Ghouse.

With the support of Principal Partner Wesfarmers Arts, West Australian Opera commissioned *Wundig wer Wilura* following on from Gina Williams and Guy Ghouse's celebrated first opera *Koolbardi wer Wardong* (2021).

*Wundig wer Wilura* (*Wundig and Wilura*) is an ancient Noongar story of star-crossed lovers, who break the bounds of lore and custom, and have their souls forever banished to Mount Brown (Wongborel) and Mount Bakewell (Walwalling) in York, Western Australia.

Family and connection to country, obligation and rebellion, adoration and betrayal, love and war. In the face of catastrophic consequences, how far would you go for love?

#### **KEY MESSAGES**

A Wesfarmers Arts Commission; with the support of Principal Partner Wesfarmers Arts, WAO commissioned this new work from Gina Williams and Guy Ghouse.

- Premiered in February 2024 at His Majesty's Theatre as part of Perth Festival.
- *Wundig wer Wilura* (*Wundig and Wilura*) is an ancient Noongar story of star-crossed lovers, who break the bounds of lore and custom, and have their souls forever banished to Mount Brown (Wongborel) and Mount Bakewell (Walwalling) in York, Western Australia.
- Written and sung entirely in Noongar language, starring a First Nations cast.

#### **STREET ADDRESS**

Level 3, His Majesty's Theatre  
825 Hay Street,  
Boorloo (Perth) WA 6000

#### **POSTAL ADDRESS**

PO Box 7052,  
Cloisters Square  
Boorloo (Perth) WA 6850

#### **CONTACT US**

+61 8 9278 8999  
administration@waopera.asn.au  
**waopera.asn.au**  
ABN 45 432 889655

**PRODUCTION DETAILS**

**PRODUCTION TITLE**

Wundig wer Wilura

**COMPANY NAME**

West Australian Opera

**GENRE**

Opera

**PERFORMANCE DURATION**

Duration 90 minutes (no interval)

**LANGUAGE**

Sung in Noongar with English surtitles

**AGE SUITABILITY**

Suitable for ages 8+

**TICKET PRICES**

Please find West Australian Opera's original prices below:

A Reserve: \$99 Adult, \$95 Concession

B Reserve: \$79 Adult, \$75 Concession

C Reserve: \$49 Adult, \$49 Concession

**STREET ADDRESS**

Level 3, His Majesty's Theatre  
825 Hay Street,  
Boorloo (Perth) WA 6000

**POSTAL ADDRESS**

PO Box 7052,  
Cloisters Square  
Boorloo (Perth) WA 6850

**CONTACT US**

+61 8 9278 8999  
administration@waopera.asn.au  
**waopera.asn.au**  
ABN 45 432 889655

## **MARKETING MATERIAL**

### **MARKETING TEASER**

Forbidden love, feuding families, and fatal consequences. An ancient Noongar story of star-crossed lovers.

### **MARKETING SYNOPSIS**

Wundig is a handsome young man, and much-loved member of the Hills people. Wilura is a beautiful young woman adored by her family, the Grass people.

*Wundig wer Wilura (Wundig and Wilura)* is an ancient Noongar story of star-crossed lovers, who break the bounds of lore and custom, and have their souls forever banished to Mount Brown (Wongborel) and Mount Bakewell (Walwalling) in York, Western Australia. Family and connection to country, obligation and rebellion, adoration and betrayal, love and war. In the face of catastrophic consequences, how far would you go for love?

Sung in Noongar, this acclaimed new opera from award-winning songwriters and storytellers Gina Williams and Guy Ghouse is a new Wesfarmers Arts Commission.

### **FULL SYNOPSIS**

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.

#### **STREET ADDRESS**

Level 3, His Majesty's Theatre  
825 Hay Street,  
Boorloo (Perth) WA 6000

#### **POSTAL ADDRESS**

PO Box 7052,  
Cloisters Square  
Boorloo (Perth) WA 6850

#### **CONTACT US**

+61 8 9278 8999  
administration@waopera.asn.au  
**waopera.asn.au**  
ABN 45 432 889655

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.

## **MANDATORY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Wundig wer Wilura is a Wesfarmers Arts Commission. This tour is supported by MM Electrical Data and Suppliers. Other touring partners to be added and acknowledged as negotiated.

### **STREET ADDRESS**

Level 3, His Majesty’s Theatre  
825 Hay Street,  
Boorloo (Perth) WA 6000

### **POSTAL ADDRESS**

PO Box 7052,  
Cloisters Square  
Boorloo (Perth) WA 6850

### **CONTACT US**

+61 8 9278 8999  
administration@waopera.asn.au  
**waopera.asn.au**  
ABN 45 432 889655

## MEDIA QUOTES

★★★★★ – [The West Australian](#)

“All the elements of grand opera are here in *Wundig wer Wilura*: love and war, trust and betrayal, intimacy and the sublime.” - [Limelight](#)

“It’s quite a rare privilege to witness a story such as this which educates us on the lore of the boodja we reside on. *Wundig wer Wilura* is a stunning and memorable opening for the West Australian Opera’s 2024 season, and we can only hope to see its return in another season soon.” – [Magazine 6000](#)

“A real crowd-pleaser.” – [Stage Whispers](#)

Please find all reviews here: <https://www.waopera.asn.au/reviews/wao2024-reviews-wundig-wer-wilura/>

## PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHY

Image credit to Dylan Alcock (West Beach Studio) / West Australian Opera  
[https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/42zq139etucafi1lyg03x/AKeQ6\\_bO\\_2-WntBFx5GwMHc?rlkey=7hlhe5bt3jcphg9zp80gmkbe1&st=6t5wf0c3&dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/42zq139etucafi1lyg03x/AKeQ6_bO_2-WntBFx5GwMHc?rlkey=7hlhe5bt3jcphg9zp80gmkbe1&st=6t5wf0c3&dl=0)

## KEY ART

To be supplied.

## POSTERS

To be supplied.

## TRAILER

To be supplied.

## PROGRAM

To be supplied with local children’s chorus details

### STREET ADDRESS

Level 3, His Majesty’s Theatre  
825 Hay Street,  
Boorloo (Perth) WA 6000

### POSTAL ADDRESS

PO Box 7052,  
Cloisters Square  
Boorloo (Perth) WA 6850

### CONTACT US

+61 8 9278 8999  
administration@waopera.asn.au  
**waopera.asn.au**  
ABN 45 432 889655

**WEBSITE**

[www.waopera.asn.au](http://www.waopera.asn.au)

**SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS**

Tag **West Australian Opera**:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/waopera>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/westaustalianopera>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/waopera>

Tag **Gina Williams & Guy Ghouse**:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/kalyakoorl>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/ginawilliamsGuyghouse>

Twitter – Gina Williams: <https://twitter.com/Milbindi>

Please use **hashtags**:

#WAO #WAOWundigWerWilura

**STREET ADDRESS**

Level 3, His Majesty's Theatre  
825 Hay Street,  
Boorloo (Perth) WA 6000

**POSTAL ADDRESS**

PO Box 7052,  
Cloisters Square  
Boorloo (Perth) WA 6850

**CONTACT US**

+61 8 9278 8999  
administration@waopera.asn.au  
**waopera.asn.au**  
ABN 45 432 889655