



Media Release
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FIRST • LIGHTS

Boodja Dwordak Wirn

Esperance Tjaltjraak Native Title Aboriginal Corporation (ETNTAC) is partnering with Fremantle Biennale and the First Lights team to present Boodja Dwordak Wirn – Bringing Country’s Spirit back to Life – on 12 and 13 May.

This spectacular cultural event will feature 160 drones creating a light show over the bay. The drones will lift off from the James St pier just after 7pm on both evenings and will be visible from the Kepa Kurl (Esperance) Foreshore. The second performance on 13 May will also be live streamed on the First Lights website (<https://firstlights.com.au/>).

Boodja Dwordak Wirn is narrated by Wudjari Nyungar Elders Kevin Reynolds Snr and Annie Dabb and accompanied by an original music composition by Noongar musician and linguist, Maatakitji (Clint Bracknell). The performance shares stories about the deep, continuous cultural connections of Wudjari people, the Traditional Custodians for Kepa Kurl, to their Boodja - land, sea and sky Country.

The script and images were developed over many months in close consultation with Wudjari Elders combined with technical expertise of Noongar artist Ilona McGuire and animator Jarrad Russell and led by local Wudjari artist Jennell Reynolds (Nannapa).

This partnership with Fremantle Biennale, supported locally by the Mt Burdett Foundation, marks the beginning of 12-month arts-based project centred around the idea of bringing the spirit of the Country back to life - Boodja Dwordak Wirn. This ongoing project is supported by funding from the Australian Government’s Indigenous Languages and Arts (ILA) Program.

The performances on May 12 and May 13 will include contemporary cultural songs and dances that have been created on Country with students over two years by Clint Bracknell and Wanika Close, supported by visiting Noongar artists Rubeun Yorkshire, Ebony McGuire and Kyle Morrison. These dances will be performed before the drones take to the sky by First Nations students from the Stars and Clontarf programs at Esperance Senior High School, accompanied with music by Clint Bracknell. This component of the project has been supported by ILA , Edith Cowan University and University of Queensland.



ETNTAC is also taking this opportunity to publicly launch a series of 6 original digital animations which have informed the development of the Boodja Dwordak Wirn First Lights performance. These animations celebrating Wudjari Wadarn Boodja (Sea Country) were commissioned by Parks Australia and created from the narratives and artwork of traditional custodians by visiting animator Bernadette Trench-Theideman. The animations will be introduced and played on a large LED screen just after 5.30pm on both evenings.

These two free family events will both include a formal Welcome to Country and a smoking ceremony on the beach. These will also be live streamed along with the dance performance. A link will be provided closer to the event.

Community members are invited to arrive at 5pm. The Program will run from 5.30pm - 7.30pm.

Media Contact

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