

## TJAABI

An invitation into a privileged world of living culture - where the traditional and contemporary are intertwined through captivating performance, stirring music, and stunning visuals

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**Songs from the Pilbara - a living culture, a spectacle under the stars.**

Big hART's latest production Tjaabi provides a unique glimpse into the living Aboriginal culture of the Pilbara, through songs, story and image performed by Ngarluma man Patrick Churnside. Tjaabi springs from a long-term intercultural exchange, between different language groups - young and old, indigenous and non-indigenous, in Roebourne, the heart of the Pilbara, Western Australia.

The performance of Tjaabi has been created specifically for the community and will be a unique experience, in situ, under the stars, for those who know and love these songs. This showing, written and staged inclusively with Patrick, involves young people from the community dancing with him on stage, elders in translation of songs, on film and surrounding the stage in support. This will be a one-off performance in the heart of the community at the Ngurin Pilbara Aboriginal Centre Roebourne at **6:15pm on Wednesday 17th August**. Tjaabi will launch Roebourne's 150th anniversary, with a rich tapestry of image, sound, voice, song, movement, story and animation.

Tjaabi is a unique song form, perhaps best compared to a musical haiku, with crisp poetic language, capturing stories, dreams, thoughts, moments, which can be funny, sexy, profound or wistful. These songs are accessible and can be listened to by indigenous and non-indigenous audiences. Each tjaabi has an original singer and comes from a specific place in the Pilbara, handed down to subsequent singers and family members. The original tjaabi singers were men and women of great strength and power from many nations across the Pilbara. Patrick evokes these varied landscapes from the desert in the East, to the flood-lands of Roebourne, to the coast in the West where the desert meets the sea. Musicians Aaron Hoper and Mark Leahy work with Patrick to create a journey of sophisticated intercultural sound and design.

Tjaabi represents an intersection between the old and new, with the transmission of language and culture from elders to Patrick, and from Patrick to young people as the performance was devised. The Tjaabi Project has been developed by Big hART and backs Patrick's work with the community. It strengthens language and culture among young people, through camps on country and workshops building respect, literacy and resilience. In the light of recent events in Don Dale detention Centre in the NT, the Tjaabi Project is timely and important.

Tjaabi is produced by renowned national arts for social change organisation Big hART. Working in 50 communities across Australia for 24 years, Big hART has won 30 awards and is sought after for its innovative projects. After six years work in Roebourne, Tjaabi is part of Big hART's residency at the Ngurin Pilbara Aboriginal Centre. The project is supported and encouraged by cultural leaders, and the creative talent of Roebourne and wider Pilbara communities.

### CREATIVE TEAM

From the team that created *Hipbone Sticking Out*, *Ngapartji Ngapartji*, *Namatjira*, *Stickybricks*:

Performed by	Patrick Churnside
Writer/Director	Scott Rankin
Set Design	Genevieve Dugard
Sound & Music	Aaron Hopper and Mark Leahy
Choreography	Adelina Larsson
Video	Bodie Smith and Benjamin Ducroz
Lighting	Stephen Hawker