

ICONIC NAVIGATOR'S FINAL JOURNEY IN NEW SYDNEY MUSICAL

Sydney debut charts the last days of James Cook in July staged workshop performance

A new Australian musical brings to life the remarkable final journey of Europe's greatest navigator — James Cook. Set amidst 'first contact' with the Hawaiians, it shines light on the power of open-hearted understanding and love to overcome forces that can divide world peoples.

Following a three-week development workshop, *Between Worlds* will present 'staged workshop performances' with a large, stellar cast at the ATYP, Walsh Bay in July.

Says writer Nick Higginbotham: "Most Australians know that James Cook brought the *Endeavour* to Botany Bay almost 250 years ago, and then nearly sank her off the Barrier Reef on his way home. But most of us are a bit hazy about what happened next, at the end of his voyaging career. This show tells that captivating true story."

The show is set in 1779 when Cook was honoured by Hawaiians as their returning god, Lono but then – tragically – met his death in a sudden melee only a month later. For Australian audiences, *Between Worlds* reveals an unexpected side of James Cook's personality: his openness to embrace Polynesian culture, and single-minded ambition to go 'farther than it is possible for man to go' in the quest for immortality.



The show also explores how the desires and tensions between the British and Hawaiians shaped the ecstasy and tragedy that unfolded at Kealakekua Bay.

Created by award-winning Sydney theatre-makers Jason Langley and Michael Tyack, composer Gareth Hudson and writer Nick Higginbotham, *Between Worlds* was awarded a New Musicals Australia 'Snapshot Presentation' before industry judges in 2015. Now, it will receive its first public showing – a staged workshop presentation — at the Australian Theatre for Young People, Walsh Bay, Sydney, on July 15 & 16.

Over the past three years, Langley has drawn together an exciting collection of Sydney's seasoned and emerging musical theatre talent to progress the show from libretto to the professional stage. The mid-July workshop performance is a huge step towards the goal of a full cast production on a big stage in time for the 2020 commemoration of Cook's landing in Australia.

Langley recalls: "I was attracted to this new Australian work with strong female characters, a culturally diverse cast, the little-known story of the death of James Cook, an unexpected folk/rock score with Indigenous Hawaiian influences and a moral tale about the cost of overweening ambition."

The July workshop performances include Blake Erickson as James Cook, Pippa Grandison as Elizabeth Cook, Phillip Lowe as Admiral Isaac Smith, and Stephen Mahy as William Bligh. Actors in Hawaiian roles are Kuki Tipoki, Nic Starte, Nana Matapule, Chloe Zuel, Julian Kuo, Brendan Xavier & Marissa Saroca. British voyagers comprise David Hooley, Imraan Daniels, Maxwell Simon & Riley Sutton with Kayla-Maree Spiteri & Matilda Moran, ensemble.

BETWEEN WORLDS by Gareth Hudson and Nick Higginbotham

Directed by Jason Langley, Musical Director Michael Tyack;

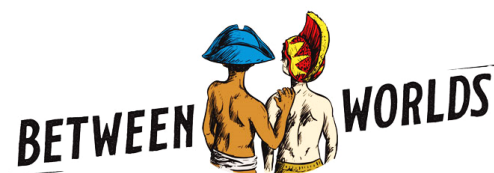
Hawaiian Cultural Advisor Kahi Wight;

Production Designer Megan Venhoek,

Lighting Designer Alexander Berlage.

Performances: Sat 15 July 3pm and 8pm; Sun 16 July 3pm.

More information and bookings: www.betweenworldsmusical.com



Media: for more information, images, interviews, tickets etc, contact Geoff Sirmai Arts Marketing
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