

# Proppa Solid

By Steven Oliver



Proper Solid 2014 Season production shot featuring Leroy Parsons, Norah Bagiri and Mark Sheppard. Photo by Romy Photography.

## PRESENTER'S INFORMATION

*A JUTE Theatre Company Production*



# Contents

COMPANY PROFILE .....	3
ABOUT THE SHOW .....	3
PERFORMANCE SPECIFICS.....	8
AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT .....	9
MARKETING .....	10
PRODUCTION DETAILS .....	14
CONTACTS.....	15

## **COMPANY PROFILE**

JUTE came into being in 1992 when three passionate theatre makers living in Cairns met and the creative sparks began to fly. The three founding members of JUTE are Kathryn Ash, Suellen Maunder and Susan Prince. JUTE's first production launched International Womens' Day in March 1993 at the height of summer in the unairconditioned arts centre (shed!). The work was fiery, raw and unique in the region.....it was an instant success!

Since then, the company has dedicated itself to carving out a niche for its work. Within the first two years JUTE began to focus on new work, both text based and devised, that told stories from our region. Designed in collaboration with regional writers, the Enter Stage Write script development program has been the creative heart of the company from which JUTE draws almost all of its work.

Over two decades our theatre artists and audience have been part of an extraordinary outpouring of new Australian stories. JUTE is a unique company in the Australian theatre landscape through its high quality productions, depth and reach of development programs, artistic collaborations, and touring and networking of the regional theatre sector.

## **ABOUT THE SHOW**

### SHOW SYNOPSIS

It's 2067, Australia first Aboriginal President had made plans for the day, time travel wasn't one of them.

*Paul: My heritage?*

*Ruth: Your Aboriginality.*

*Paul: I'm not a practising Aboriginal. Or is it Aborigine?*

*Ruth: I get confused as well.*

A humorous story, brimming with Aboriginal vernacular and optimism, about how things are, what they could be and the importance of remembering your roots.

Paul Toppo, is your everyday Aboriginal President of Australia. The problem is Paul doesn't know much about being Aboriginal. All that changes, however, when, one day, while on the election trail, Paul steps onto country.

Paul is flung back to 2014, where disgruntled, and not to mention highly inconvenienced, he happens on a family of not-quite-so-tall (obviously unrelated) Toppys, who welcome this new (obviously crazy) Toppo into their home and their lives. During his time with the Toppo Clan, Paul starts to question his beliefs about family and identity, and begins to discover the true meaning of success, while the family learn what might be achieved with higher aspirations.

Oliver's dialogue crackles with black humour and hope, and the meeting of present with future results in some highly entertaining moments as the esteemed Paul Toppy encounters a past he'd rather forget.

In the tradition of 'Bran Nue Dae', 'The Sapphires', 'Redfern Now' and 'Mabo', 'Proper Solid joins a rapidly growing genre of contemporary Aboriginal story-telling which has an irresistibly wide appeal.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Initial Production Directed by** Nadine McDonald-Dowd

**Remount Directed by** Margaret Harvey

**Playwright** Steven Oliver

**Designers** Simone Tesorieri & Simona Cosentini

**Lighting Designer** Kelly Calder

**Sound Designers** Deb Sisson & Nigel Pegrum

**Featuring** Norah Bagiri, Leroy Parsons & Mark Sheppard

#### **JUTE Funding Bodies**

---

## LOGOS

These logos are mandatory and must be included on all print and digital material.

Logo lock up is available for download

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/dtmy2q91oalm34n/AAAGsXWAC\\_ASF79GNr73NI0Na?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/dtmy2q91oalm34n/AAAGsXWAC_ASF79GNr73NI0Na?dl=0)



#### BIOGRAPHIES

##### **Steven Oliver - Playwright**

Steven Oliver was born in Cloncurry and grew up in Townsville North Queensland.

He is a descendant of the Kukuyalanji, Waanyi, Gangalidda, Woppaburra and Bundjalung peoples. He went to study at the Aboriginal Music Theatre Training Programme in Perth and from there was accepted into the Music Theatre Programme at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA).

Upon his return to Queensland he took on the role of Assistant Artistic Director with the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts in Brisbane. He has worked with companies such as Yirra Yaakin Noongar Theatre,

Kooemba Jdarra Theatre, La Boite Theatre, Kite Theatre and the Queensland Arts Council.

He has had showings of his musical “Black Queen Black King” as part of Queensland Theatre Company’s Creative Development Series in Association with Playlab and also at the Brisbane Powerhouse as part of their World Theatre Festival Program. He is currently working on an Indigenous Comedy Sketch Show which is to air on ABC2 in 2014.

### **Nadine McDonald-Dowd – Initial Production Director**

Nadine was the Artistic Director of Kooemba Jdarra Indigenous Performing Arts Company from 2001 to 2004. She first joined Kooemba in 1996 facilitating workshops in youth detention centres and schools on theatre, music, reconciliation and performance. In 1998 Nadine performed as the nurse in Jimmy Chi’s National Tour of Corrugation Road. Nadine has been on boards such as the Queensland Theatre Company, Queensland Government’s Premier’s Indigenous Advisory Board and Q150 Advisory Committee and the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts. Nadine was a Senior Producer with Major Brisbane Festivals in 2010 and is now the Creative Director of the kuril dhagun Indigenous Knowledge Centre, State Library of Queensland.

### **Margaret Harvey – Remount Director**

Margaret works across the medium of live performance and film, creating and re-creating stories as a performer, writer, director and producer. She is of Saibai Island heritage in the Torres Strait - Ait Koedal and Samu clans – as well as English heritage. Recently she assisted directed the 2015 Circus Oz show BUT WAIT THERE’S MORE and in 2014 for the Melbourne International Arts Festival, she directed and co-devised the critically acclaimed MY LOVER’S BONES, an ancient gothic horror story about Jargon the bunyip of the Quandamooka people, set in modern times. For Ilbjerri Theatre she directed TIDDALIK and BODY ARMOUR, which toured Australia nationally. She has directed and produced many documentaries for NITV’s series OUR STORIES, OUR WAY from the Torres Straits, Central Desert, Arnhem Land and Victoria. In 2008 Margaret was awarded a fellowship from OZCO and is presently completing a PhD at Monash University in Melbourne.

### **Simone Tesorieri & Simona Cosentini – Designers**

Simone Tesorieri is an Italian scenic designer that has worked as a stage and prop designer in opera and musical plays and producer for the main Regional and Civic Theatre in Italy and with independent theatre companies. His stage design credits include Madama Butterfly (2000), Traviata (2001), Don Pasquale(2002), Boheme (2003), Cavalleria Rusticana (2004) with the Bonci Theatre. From 2005 to 2011, he worked as professional prop designer for the

TCB theatre in Bologna, and also started his independent production and creative development of opera plays and drama with Operaovunque and Teatro Colli.

At the Jute Theatre, Simone is currently working on the *Propelled* and *Proper solid* (Creative Development).

Simona Cosentini is an Italian scenographer, graduated in Stage Design in 2007 at the Fine Art Academy in Bologna. Since 2003 she started out as a stage painter, working both as charge artist and a prop, then she joined the dressmaking staff working to the chief of stage design in opera plays -for the main regional theatres in Italy- and in dramas with independent theatre companies. She continues her personal artistic carrier and research on Traditional Art and performances. Her costume design credits include "Paolo & Francesca" (TCB, 2006),"La serva padrona" and "Il Barbiere di Siviglia (Operaovunque,2007-2009).

She started her independent production and creative development in opera plays and dramas mainly for Operaovunque, and Teatro Colli. Recently arrived in Australia, Simona has worked at JUTE as costume designer for Half&Half, and is currently working on Propelled, Sentinel Chickens, and Proper solid (Creative Development).

### **Kelly Calder - Lighting Designer**

Kelly Calder graduated from The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts in 2011 after studying a three-year course in Lighting. Since Graduating from WAAPA she has become the resident lighting designer with THAT Production Company in 2013 and 2014, the Venue Supervisor at the Ipswich Civic Centre, she works as a technician at the Boondall Entertainment Centre, runs the college at the Brisbane Arts Theatre, and has taught lighting at the Gold Coast Institute of Technology.

She has worked with Opera QLD, Hairspray and Wicked. Kelly was the lighting designer on A Chorus Line, directed by Jason Langley (WAAPA), Envelope at Metro Arts Theatre, Assistant Lighting Designer on 42nd Street & Anything Goes LD Trudy Dalgleish (WAAPA).

### **Deb Sisson – Composer**

### **Nigel Pegrum – Sound Designer**

A classically trained musician, with a degree in Art Photography/Education, Deb has been a musician and performing artist for 30 years with 25 years' experience teaching adults and children. Originally trained as a classical pianist and violinist, Deb is well respected as a multi keyboardist. She has recorded and toured with Indigenous bands such as Reggae Bliss, One Drop Reggae, The Last Kinection and Zennith. She is also an active member of the Cairns Pan Stars Steel Orchestra which was awarded 2nd place at the International Panorama competition last year. She has co-written, arranged

and produced several songs, and now directing her efforts towards soundscapes for film and theatre.

### **Norah Bagiri – Actor**

Norah Bagiri was born on Thursday Island, Torres Strait Islands. She is from Moa Island, St Paul Village in the Western Cluster of the Torres Straits..She was raised by her grandmother who lived with her son and his family whom Norah grew up and called her parents to this day.. Bagiri has lived and gone to school in Cairns her whole life.

Norah started singing in Church in Choirs and part of the Cairns Choral Society which she made her debut as 'Blood Mary' in South Pacific... Bagiri is an accomplished stage and screen Actor, Singer-Songwriter, Playwrite, Comedian and Entertainer. She has been in many musical productions such as, 'Pirates of Penzance', South Pacific, Annie and Oliver. She played 'Lucy' in the SBS Mini-Series RAN (Remote Area Nurse) and 'Aunty Karen' in the ABC Mini-Series THE STRAITS

### **Leroy Parsons – Actor**

LeRoy studied at VCA for two years in the School of Drama, before leaving the College. He has worked professionally since 2000 and appeared in numerous theatre productions such as Jane Harrison's acclaimed Stolen, touring to London, Hong Kong and Tokyo; Richard Frankland's Conversations with the Dead in Ilbijerri/Playbox's Blak Inside season; Barry Dicken's Claustrophobia for La Mama and had his first classical role in Google's comical classic The Government Inspector for Hoist Theatre Company in 2003.

LeRoy was also seen in Walkabout adapted from the film by Jane Harrison and directed by Richard Frankland for Chamber Made Opera at 2003 Melbourne Festival and The Call for Melbourne's Workers Theatre. He has also volunteered his time to read for Actors for Refugees. He has taught acting at Swinburne University Indigenous Performing Arts Course. A career highlight for LeRoy was working in the Mildura Arts Festival with the Latje Latje dance group in the production A Midsummer Night's Dreaming for the Old Van Theatre Company.

### **Mark Sheppard – Actor**

Mark Sheppard is a Muluridgi-Mbarbarrum man hailing from Mareeba in the Atherton Tablelands.

A graduate from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, he has gone on to work with companies such as;

Yirra Yaakin Noongar Theatre Co. (Perth)  
Kooemba Jdarra (Brisbane)  
DeBase Productions (Brisbane)

Circus Oz (Melbourne)

It was during his time with DeBase Productions that he created his one-man show, "Chasing the Lollyman", which he toured extensively around Australia, including Jute Theatre Company and Northern Queensland.

Mark is currently based in Melbourne, and joins this production of "Proper Solid" after touring and performing with "Circus OZ".

## **PERFORMANCE SPECIFICS**

### DURATION

One Act - 1 hour

### SUITABLE VENUES

Proscenium Arch/Black Box/Thrust/Flat Floor Hall/Band Room  
Cabaret/Outdoor Stage or Outdoor Street

### MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES PER WEEK

8 performances

### MINIMUM BREAK BETWEEN PERFORMANCES

240 minutes

### LICENCING AGREEMENTS

10% writer royalties

### APRA OBLIGATIONS

None

### TOURING PERSONNEL

The touring party consists of 5 people.

Name	Role
Norah Bagiri	Performer
Leroy Parsons	Performer
Mark Sheppard	Performer
PJ Rosas	Stage/Tour Manager
Sam Gibb	Backstage Crew/Stage Manager

### PERFORMANCE HISTORY

Year	Venue	Number of performances
2016	Cooktown	1
	Mapoon	1
	Weipa	1
	Bamaga	2
	Lockhart	1
	Pormpuraaw	1
	Kowanyama	1



	Yarrabah	1
	Mount Isa	1
	Doomadgee	1
	Mornington Island	1
	Normanton	1
	Croydon	1
	Kuranda	1
	Cairns Trinity Bay	1
	Bwngcolman	1
	Hughenden	1
	Townsville	1
2014	JUTE Theatre, Centre of Contemporary Arts, Cairns	13

## **AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT**

### OVERVIEW

#### **Workshop Residency Program**

#### DESCRIPTION / DETAILS

Proppa Solid is currently touring to 16 locations in regional and remote North Queensland. In each centre the show is performed in the school/community showcasing positive Indigenous family life on stage. The artists then remain in the school/community for 3-4 days where they work with the young people to write, rehearse and perform their own aspirational stories of success back to their community. The project is integrated into the curriculum by the Queensland Department of Education and Training, forming part of the assessment for students.

This is a project that has the potential to change young lives in regional and remote Queensland, promote positive role models to remote Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, to promote positive stories of Indigenous lives and to place skills development and performance making at the centre of learning.

#### TARGET AUDIENCE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The targeted audience is year 6 - 10 School Students.

#### **2) Q&A Session open to the public**

#### DESCRIPTION / DETAILS

A Post show Q&A is a conversation with the cast following the performance. Immediately following the show, the actors will return to stage. It's a great opportunity to discuss the response to the show and ask questions about the process of creating the work and allow the audience to delve into the creative process.

Like a TED talk, it's only 20 minutes and the audience can come away knowing more about how theatre is created (the tricks of the trade), the problem solving that the creative team went through to come up with solutions, and an understanding of how these creative beings work. And of course it's a great opportunity to meet the cast after their performance.

### TARGET AUDIENCE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The targeted audience is a mix of Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people aged 11 – 15 years.

## **MARKETING**

### MARKETING COPY

*One line*

**Australia's first Aboriginal President made plans, time-travel wasn't amongst them!**

*Short*

Paul: My heritage?

Ruth: Your Aboriginality.

Paul: I'm not a practising Aboriginal. Or is it Aborigine?

Ruth: I get confused as well.

A humorous story, brimming with Aboriginal vernacular and optimism, about how things are, what they could be and the importance of remembering your roots.

Paul Toppo, is your everyday Aboriginal President of Australia. The problem is Paul doesn't know much about being Aboriginal. All that changes, however, when, one day, while on the election trail, Paul steps onto country.

*Extended*

Paul: My heritage?

Ruth: Your Aboriginality.

Paul: I'm not a practising Aboriginal. Or is it Aborigine?

Ruth: I get confused as well.

A humorous story, brimming with Aboriginal vernacular and optimism, about how things are, what they could be and the importance of remembering your roots.

Paul Toppo, is your everyday Aboriginal President of Australia. The problem is Paul doesn't know much about being Aboriginal. All that changes, however, when, one day, while on the election trail, Paul steps onto country.

Paul is flung back to 2014, where disgruntled, and not to mention highly inconvenienced, he happens on a family of not-quite-so-tall (obviously unrelated) Toppys, who welcome this new (obviously crazy) Topy into their home and their lives. During his time with the Topy Clan, Paul starts to question his beliefs about family and identity, and begins to discover the true meaning of success, while the family learn what might be achieved when hope is not lost.

Oliver's dialogue crackles with black humour and hope, and the meeting of present with future results in some highly entertaining moments as the esteemed Paul Topy encounters a past he'd rather forget.

In the tradition of 'Bran Nue Dae', 'The Sapphires', 'Redfern Now' and 'Mabo', 'Proppa Solid joins a rapidly growing genre of contemporary Aboriginal story-telling which has an irresistibly wide appeal.

### MARKETING SUMMARY

#### TARGET AUDIENCE:

- Women aged 35 – 52 (ticket buyers)
- Schools Students and Drama teachers
- Indigenous Community
- Indigenous organisations
- Government organisations
- Youth organisations

#### TOOLS USED TO REACH THEM:

- Several Enewsletter JUTE databases (approx. 5000 emails)
- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Google + etc)
- Youtube videos (1000+ views)
- Big banners on highways and venue
- Ads on local newspapers
- Listing on several Event listing websites
- Cross promotion with local events
- Strong publicity through editorial on newspapers
- Several radio interviews (ABC, Indigenous and commercial stations)
- Flyers & Posters distribution around town in coffee shops, restaurants, shopping centres etc
- Flyers in hotels and tour desks
- Social Clubs and Fundraising Organisations
- Cairns Chamber of Commerce & Young Chamber
- Hospital social groups
- High Schools Drama teachers database
- Visit of the over 45 Indigenous organisations (land councils, health departments, arts organisations etc)

### MEDIA QUOTES

*'The project is a sure-fire winner. In the tradition of Bran Nue Dae and The Sapphires, it deserves an Australia-wide audience,...'* **Glyn Davies, Arts**

**Hub** <http://performing.artshub.com.au/news-article/reviews/performing-arts/proper-solid-245146>

*'Director Nadine -McDonald-Dowd should be congratulated for the way she has brought Oliver's quirky and funny script to life [...].'* **Pasco Rogato, Cairns Sun**

<https://www.facebook.com/JUTETheatre/photos/a.423399900990.216982.400769590990/10152563154830991/?type=1&theater>

*'A show like Proper Solid doesn't come along every day, don't miss it!'*  
**Fiona Sewell, ABC Far North Radio**

*'JUTE Theatre Company is, as always, on the cutting edge of emerging theatre and Proper Solid suits locally and is yet another strong contender for the national circuit.'* **Denise Carter, The Cairns Post**

<http://www.cairnspost.com.au/entertainment/new-play-on-indigenous-culture-in-jute-theatre-companys-proper-solid/story-fnjput3w-1227006739236>

*'A must-see production that will have you in fits of laughter and reflective moments'.* **Kylie Reghenzani, Tablelands Advertiser**

<https://www.facebook.com/JUTETheatre/photos/a.423399900990.216982.400769590990/10152563166720991/?type=1&theater>

#### AUDIENCE REVIEWS

*'Edgy, funny and profoundly magnanimous script writing. This stellar performance lights up the imagination and delivers on a brand of Indigenous humour that is all inclusive and down right hilarious. Steven Oliver is the best.'* **Sonja Anderson**

*Had my attention the whole way through. Laugh, cry, laugh some more!*  
**Kristen O'Brien**

*Deadly! Thank you so much for this experience!* **Kym Crawford**

*"Proper Solid made me laugh so hard my stomach hurt, warmed my heart until it was glowing and left me feeling joyful and very delighted. The actors were amazing and I was on the edge of my seat throughout the performance – totally engaged. Proper Solid perfectly exceeded my expectations!"*

**Biannka Brannigan**

**Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs**

*'I attended opening night, and yes, it was a brilliant piece of theatre!'* **Clare Heath**

*An entertaining snapshot of Australia present and future with a provoking look at the Australian Aboriginal heart.* **Wayne Kadel**

*“Proper Solid’ by Steven Oliver has been the talk of Djarragun College. Our students loved the performance” **Francesca Shankaran, Deputy Principal Wellbeing, Djarragun College***  
<http://www.jute.com.au/img/shows/ProperSolid/DjarragunCollegeThankyouLetterforProperSolid.jpg>

#### COLLEAGUE RECOMMENDATIONS

*"it hit the nail on the head with the audience" **Peter Matheson, Dramaturg***

*"fantastic contemporary relevant fun and inspiring theatre." **Zelda Grimshaw, Producer Lush Cabaret***

*"Reached new audiences. Welcomed Indigenous audiences." **Amy Rodgers-Clarke, Producer Centre of Contemporary Arts***

*"Captured murri humour of course. just funny...Very funny and inspiring. Actors were fantastic" **David Hudson, Entertainer***

#### VIDEO LINKS

All videos can be found linked from

<https://www.youtube.com/user/JUTETheatre2011/search?query=solid>

#### IMAGES

All production images are linked from <http://jute.com.au/2015/whats-on/proppa-solid/>

Photos were taken by Romy Photography during the 2014 Season of Proper Solid. Higher resolution version of some images are available on request to JUTE Theatre Company.

#### MARKETING MATERIALS

*Included in sell-off*

- Media Releases
- Bios
- Production Photos
- Flyers
- Posters
- Videos – Trailer, Behind the Scenes

#### CONTENT WARNINGS / AUDIENCES TO AVOID

None

#### SPONSOR OR OTHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

# LOGOS

These logos are mandatory and must be included on all print and digital material.

Logo lock up is available for download

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/dtmy2q91oalm34n/AAAGsXWAC\\_ASF79GNr73NI0Na?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/dtmy2q91oalm34n/AAAGsXWAC_ASF79GNr73NI0Na?dl=0)



**ARTOUR**



## TEACHER'S RESOURCES

Teachers resources linked from <http://www.jute.com.au/whats-on/development-programs/ProperSolidforSchools.php>

## **PRODUCTION DETAILS**

### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Technical	C
Lighting Requirements	Venue specific LX plan to be provided.
Producer Supplies	Venue supplies lighting & 1 x hazer
Lighting	
Sample light design diagram at	
Sound Requirements	Company will tour laptop with Q-Lab. Require usual venue sound equipment
Producer Supplies	Q-lab laptop
Sound	
Min Stage Width	9 metres
Min Stage Depth	11 metres
Min Grid Height	5 metres

Min Wing            Access to 2 x wings area on OP & P  
Space

Set

Sample set  
design  
diagram at

Wardrobe            Washing machine & Drier & Hanging racks  
requirements

### EXAMPLE SCHEDULE

Bump In – 10 hours

Bump Out – 3 hours

First Possible Performance – Day 1, 7pm

### CREW REQUIRED FROM VENUE

#### **Bump In**

1 x Local LX crew for 6 hours

2 x Local mech crew for 4 hours

#### **Performance**

1 x LX crew for 3 hours

#### **Bump Out**

2 x Local mech crew for 3 hours

#### AV

None

### FREIGHT NOTES

1 x Tarago type van for people in the touring party, and 1 x cargo van for moving the set. Access to a loading dock will be required.

### CRITICAL ISSUES

None

### **CONTACTS**

JUTE Staff

Peta Cooke Events, Sales & Marketing 07 4050 9444 [peta@jute.com.au](mailto:peta@jute.com.au)

### MEDIA RELEASE

Peta Cooke Events, Sales & Marketing 07 4050 9444 [peta@jute.com.au](mailto:peta@jute.com.au)

### PRODUCTION

Sam Gibb Senior Technician 0458 073 898 [samdgibb@gmail.com](mailto:samdgibb@gmail.com)