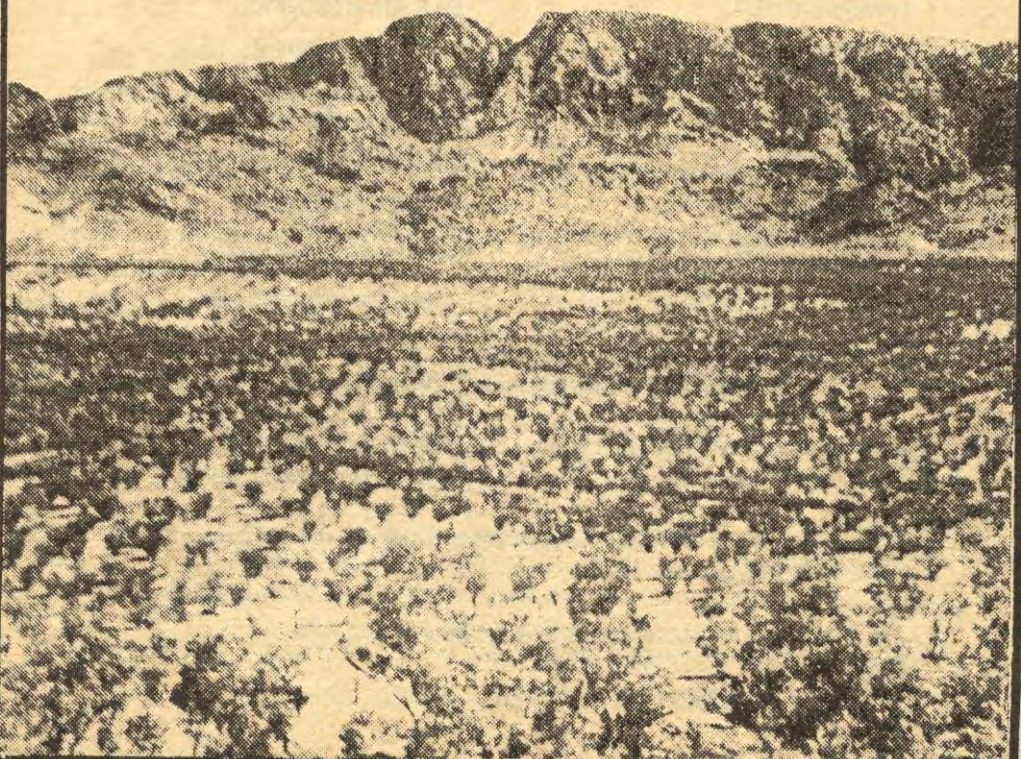


# The Inkata's Wife





BROWN'S MART COMMUNITY ARTS, in association with  
PERFORMING LINES, The Northern Territory Arts Council and  
Darwin Performing Arts Centre presents -

# The Inkata's Wife

|   |  |
|---|--|
| WRITER  | SUZANNE SPUNNER                                |
| DIRECTOR  | JANET ROBERTSON*                               |
| PRODUCER  | KEN CONWAY                                     |
| DRAMATURG   | RICHARD LAWRENCE                               |
| DESIGN<br>CONCEPT                                       | SUZANNE SPUNNER                                |
| REALISATION/<br>SET, PROPS, COSTUMES                    | GREG CLARKE                                    |
| CHOREOGRAPHY  | LAURENCE CLIFFORD<br>& JANET ROBERTSON         |
| ORIGINAL MUSIC/SOUND DESIGN                             | MICHAEL HAVIR                                  |
| Prologue MUSIC  | SARAH HOPKINS                                  |
| LIGHTING DESIGNER<br>PRODUCTION MANAGER                 | CRAIG GAMBLE                                   |
| STAGE MANAGER   | TRISH LATHAM                                   |
| PUBLICIST   | CHRIS BOND                                     |
| POSTER DESIGN<br>Photograph<br>Mparntwe Dreaming Design | TODD WILLIAMS<br>JUDE SWIFT<br>WENTON RUBUNTJA |
| ARTIST'S LIASON   | JOANNE BONIFACE                                |

\* The services of the director, Janet Robertson are provided by courtesy of RQTC, Queensland's State Theatre Company.

MAP in ACT TWO reproduced from PMERE : Country in Mind-Arrernte Landscape Painters, by courtesy of Tangentyre Council, Alice Springs.

THE INKATA'S WIFE was first performed at The Araluen Centre, Alice Springs on August 30th, 1990.

The production has been assisted by the Performing Arts Board of THE AUSTRALIA COUNCIL, the Federal Government's Arts Funding Body.

# The Inkata's Wife

CAST

|                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>The Inkata's Wife</i>       | JENNY VULETIC     |
| <i>The Watcher</i>             |                   |
| <i>The Aranda Man</i>          |                   |
| <i>The Arrernte Elder</i>      | LAURENCE CLIFFORD |
| <i>The Arrernte Activist</i>   |                   |
| <i>The Lutheran Pastor</i>     |                   |
| <i>The Land Commissioner</i>   |                   |
| <i>The Inkata</i>              |                   |
| <i>The Barrister</i>           |                   |
| <i>The Land Council Lawyer</i> | TOM CONSIDINE     |
| <i>The Foundation Man</i>      |                   |
| <i>The NT Politicians</i>      |                   |
| <i>The First Wife</i>          |                   |
| <i>The Court Stenographer</i>  | ANNIE GASTIN      |
| <i>The News Reporter</i>       |                   |

PROLOGUE Music: Cello Chi Variation, for Cello and voice composed and performed by SARAH HOPKINS

## ACT ONE: THE DESPAIR OF LOSS The Library, The Desert

Hymn: *Kareai, wolambarinjai* Aranda Hymnal no. 309; Trans. Carl Strehlow, revised T.G.H. Strehlow  
*Wake, wake for night is flying*; Australian Lutheran Hymn Book no. 577  
*Wachet Auftruft uns bie Stimme*; Philipp Nicolai, 1608

Songs: *The tjimbarkNa Plaits\**; Singer - JENNY VULETIC  
*Song of the pmara Kutata of Intia* (the ring necked parrots)  
*The Song of the Kwalba Chief of Tera\**; Singer - LAURENCE CLIFFORD  
*Song of the Termite Women of Iloata\**; Singer - ANNIE GASTIN

All the song texts are translations by  
T.G.H.STREHLOW from SONGS OF CENTRAL AUSTRALIA  
\* MUSIC by MICHAEL HAVIR performed by the company and the choir.

## ACT TWO: THE LEGACY OF POSSESSION The Courtroom

There will be ONE INTERVAL of 20 minutes and the play ends at 11 pm.



## THE INKATA'S WIFE - SOURCES

### ACT ONE

*Lake Amadeus/Luritja Land Claim*, September 1987;  
*Strehlow Research Foundation Newsletters 1977-86*;  
*Aboriginal Lands Rights* by Mrs T.G.H. Strehlow, 1977-78;  
*The Strehlow Collection-Preserved in Vitriol*, Kathy Strehlow interviewed by Janet Hawley, *The Age*, August 28 1987  
*Aborigines, Artifacts and Anguish* by Ward McNally 1981;  
*A Camel Trip to the Petermann Ranges Across Central Australia* by Bertha G. Strehlow. *B.A. Royal Geog. Aust.* 1945;  
*Journey To Horseshoe Bend* by T.G.H. Strehlow, 1969;  
*Anthropology And The Study of Languages* by T.G.H. Strehlow 1947;  
*Some Comments from Mr T.G.H. Strehlow*, Reader in Australian Linguistics, University of Adelaide to Native and Historical Objects and Areas Preservation Ordinance, 1955;  
*Aranda Phonetics and Grammar* by T.G.H. Strehlow M.A. 1942-4;  
*Various Letters* cited by Ward McNally.

### ACT TWO

The Courtroom text is taken verbatim in sections, from the cross-examination of, and evidence given by Kathleen Stuart Strehlow before The Land Commissioner, Justice Michael Maurice, in *The Lake Amadeus Luritja Land Claim*, in Alice Springs, 8 September, 1987;

*The Flight of the Sacred Stones* by Tim Duncan,  
*The Bulletin*, November 13, 1984;  
*Northern Territory Parliamentary Reports*, April, August 1985, November 1988;  
*The Strehlow Research Centre Act 1988, NT Parliament*;  
*Various newspaper reports and interviews - NT News and Centralian Advocate*,  
*The Australian*, *The Age* 1981-88.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Books and articles by T.G.H. STREHLOW;

*Songs of Central Australia*, Angus & Robertson, 1971  
*Aranda Traditions*, Melbourne University Press, 1947  
*Journey To Horseshoe Bend*, Angus & Robertson, 1969  
*Aranda Phonetics and Grammar*, Oceania Monograph No. 7 1944  
*Anthropology and The Study of Languages*, 1947  
*Altjira Rega Ekalta: Praise to the Lord Almighty*, Yearbook 1979 Lutheran Church of Australia

### Books and articles about the Strehlows:

*Aborigines, Artifacts and Anguish*-Ward McNally, Lutheran Publishing House, 1981  
*The Strehlow Collection: preserved in vitriol* - Janet Hawley,  
*The Age Good Weekend*, August 28, 1987  
*Whose Final Word? The Troubled History of The Strehlow Collection*-Alex McGregor, *The Age Monthly Review*, 1989  
*Sacred Relics' Role in Right's Fight Against Land Rights* - Frank Walker, *The National Times*, 1985

*Many of the books mentioned in this programme are difficult to find - Try PAUL FRANCE FINE & RARE BOOKS specialist bookseller (The Australian Aborigines & Northern Territoriana), P.O. Box 663, Alice Springs NT 0871*

# The Inkata's Wife

## WRITER'S NOTE

I began THE INKATA'S WIFE with real people, their own published works, actual events and the published commentary on them, drawn from the recent history of the Northern Territory. But the nature of making a play is to imaginatively distill and abstract the documents on which it is based; to make characters and in turn metaphors from the real people, and to create myths and stories from actual events and moments in history.

You will realise very quickly in watching this play that it is not Realist or Naturalist Drama, but Poetic Drama that at times more closely resembles Opera or Dance in its form. So even though documents make up a large part of the found text of the play, it is about dramatic characters who people a metaphorical landscape. In no sense are the actors impersonating real people in physical appearance, voice or mannerisms.

I have read all the available published material and talked to many people who have been professionally associated with the Strehlows, but I have not spoken with Kathleen Strehlow nor any members of the Strehlow family or their friends. I made this choice actively from the beginning of my research, because my task as I saw it was not to write an authorised biography but to retain an objective attitude to the people and the events.

THE INKATA'S WIFE is based on the life and circumstances of Kathleen Strehlow, but the character and much of her conduct is the creation of the writer, the director and the actor, and not intended to be interpreted literally by the audience. Nor does the play purport to recreate private conversations between the historical protagonists, rather I have imaginatively created possible contexts for dialogue between the characters based on the facts available from the public record.

It is only during The Courtroom scenes in ACT TWO that the real names of the historical figures are used and referred to. This indicates that the extracts from Transcript are of a different status to other text in the play. In ACT ONE and in other scenes in ACT TWO, the play is dealing with dramatic characters - The Inkata's Wife, The Inkata, and The First Wife. The Watcher is purely an invention of the play, although at times he speaks the words of real people including Wenton Rubuntja and Obed Raggett.

A NOTE on ARUNTA, ARANDA, ARRAN'DA, ARENDER, ARUNDA, ARRERENTE; all refer to the same group of people and culture. Baldwin Spencer called them ARUNTA, T.G.H. Strehlow called them ARANDA and today they call themselves ARRERENTE; so I have tried to retain these particular variants as a way of indicating the different historical epochs.



## BIOGRAPHIES

**WRITER/DESIGNER: SUZANNE SPUNNER** began her theatre career as a critic and teacher. She was a co-founder of Home Cooking Theatre Co. in Melbourne and wrote NOT STILL LIVES 1982, RUNNING UP A DRESS 1986, THE ACCOMPANIST 1987, EDNA FOR THE GARDEN 1989. She has also written and directed a film TEA & PICTURES, and written a radio play SAFE'N'SOUND. In 1988 she was awarded a Literature Board Fellowship and the HCTC production of RUNNING UP A DRESS toured to Expo and around the NT; and it was published by McPhee Gribble/Penguin. In 1987 Suzanne moved to Darwin where she co-founded Paradise Productions and wrote and designed DRAGGED SCREAMING TO PARADISE, which toured the Territory earlier this year.

**DIRECTOR: JANET ROBERTSON** completed theatre studies at Melbourne State College in 1980. In 1983, she began working as a tutor/director for Canberra Youth Theatre. She was Associate Director from 1984 until 1986. In 1987 she moved to Darwin as Director of Corrugated Iron Youth Theatre where she directed LIVING IN ISOLATION, a touring programme by young Territory writers and BLACK RAINBOW. In 1989, Janet directed TAKEN FOR GRANTED with Mainstreet Theatre Company for the Come Out Youth Arts Festival in Adelaide. She returned to the Territory for a residency at Lajamanu, a Warlpiri community, and workshopped THE INKATA'S WIFE in Darwin. Janet is currently Artistic Director of BROLGAS - the youth arm of The Royal Queensland Theatre Company.

**COMPOSER/MUSICIAN: MICHAEL HAVIR** completed Music studies at Melbourne State College in 1980. Since then he has worked extensively as a freelance composer/musician and performer in Dance, Theatre, Film and Television. He first came to the Territory in 1987 as Composer in Residence for FEATS UNLIMITED, the dance company of the NT, and in 1988 he was composer for BLACK RAINBOW produced by CIYT. He is currently Musician in Residence with Brown's Mart and the NT Arts Council, and he also plays with THE MORT CHIADO FAMILY, JELLYFISH ROLL and BLEK BALA MUJIK.

**COMPOSER/MUSICIAN: SARAH HOPKINS** has a background in classical and contemporary cello performance. Since 1976, she has been working in the area of Sound Art and has toured Australia, New Zealand, Britain, Europe and America performing her own music. She recently moved to Brisbane after eight years based in Darwin where she worked with Brown's Mart, Darwin Theatre Co. and the NT Arts Council; as well as instigating solo and group projects including THE SOUNDWORKS series, SKY SONG 1988, and HEART SONG 1989. In 1990 Sarah was awarded a Composer Fellowship by The Australia Council.

**ACTOR: JENNY VULETIC** graduated from NIDA in 1984, and has since worked with S.A. Opera and Stage companies, The Universal and Princess Theatres in Melbourne and The Sydney Theatre Company. She toured the Territory in 1988 with the Belvoir St production of CAPRICORNIA and soon afterwards returned to Darwin. She joined Darwin Theatre Co in 1989. She has also been involved as a writer/performer in Darwin's MAYDAY Event, worked with CIYT as musical director/composer and is well known for her singer/song writer performances. Jenny also performed at the 1990 National Playwrights Conference in Canberra.

**ACTOR: LAURENCE CLIFFORD** completed two years training with Sydney's Q Theatre in 1984 and since then his film and television work has included SWAP SHOP, DANCING DAZE (ABC TV), WATCH THE SHADOWS DANCE and THE DREAMING. His stage credits include SWEET BIRD OF YOUTH (Wilton Morley & Assoc.), BLOOD RELATIONS (Sydney Theatre Company), CURRENCY LASS (Q Theatre), BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE by Tony Strachan. In 1988 Laurence won the Zac Martin Award from The Aboriginal National Theatre Trust for his performance as Norman in CAPRICORNIA. He recently played The Arbiter in the Australian production of the musical, CHESS.

**ACTOR: TOM CONSIDINE** graduated from Flinders University Drama Centre in 1975. Since then he has worked as an actor for The Hunter Valley Theatre Company (NSW), The Mill Theatre Company (Vic), The SA State Theatre Company, Nimrod Theatre, Belvoir Street Theatre, The Sydney Theatre Company and in Melbourne at La Mama and The Church. He has worked as an actor in film and television. He also performed at the 1990 National Playwrights Conference in Canberra. This is Tom's first visit to the Northern Territory.

**ACTOR: ANNIE GASTIN** was a well-known Jazz/Blues singer in Melbourne's cabaret/theatre restaurant scene. She moved to Alice Springs in 1986 and to Darwin three years later. Whilst living here she has performed at Araluen and Brown's Mart, toured with the NT Arts Council, run vocal workshops for Darwin Theatre Co and performed with DTC in THE THREEPENNY OPERA and AS YOU LIKE IT. Annie has recently become renowned for her work with JELLYFISH ROLL, and her recording of "Dragged Screaming to Paradise".

**DESIGNER: GREG CLARKE** began his design career with Unley Youth Theatre in Adelaide. He graduated from the NIDA design course in 1987. Since then he has been based in Sydney and has worked as a designer for New Mercury Theatre, One Extra Company, Jane Street 88, Crossroads Theatre and Griffin Theatre Company. In 1989 he moved to Brisbane to work with Royal Queensland Theatre Company as Assistant Designer where he has designed ZED HEADS for Brolgas (RQTC) ROSY APPLES NEED SHINING for TN Theatre Co. and most recently SHIMADA for RQTC.

**PRODUCTION MANAGER: CRAIG GAMBLE** graduated from the NIDA Technical Production course in 1985. Since then he has worked in various technical capacities, including ASM for the Sydney Theatre Company, SM for Gary Penny Productions, electrician for The Theatre Royal, Sydney, Head Technician for the Gordon Frost Organisation, Production Manager for NIDA, and for Michael Edgley International. Craig has toured shows around Australia but this is his first time in the Territory.

**STAGE MANAGER: TRISH LATHAM** came to Darwin in 1984. In 1986 she commenced work at Brown's Mart as secretary/office manager which led inevitably to her becoming the Coordinator of Mixtures at the Mart for two years. In 1989 she was awarded a Community Arts Administration traineeship which took her around Australia. She is now the Administrator of Corrugated Iron Youth Theatre. Trish has also worked as a performer with CIYT and is a member of the wacky women's performing troupe, SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING.



## THANKS

Steven Gration, Marita Smith, Terry Kenwick, Tessa Pauling, Conrad Page and Ken Conway for their creative assistance in the development of this production.

THE CHOIR - Paul Lawler, Janet Robertson, Trish Latham, Conrad Page, Le Cameron, Marianne Piercy, Ken Conway, Bruce Campbell, Robbie Fletcher, Alex Bridge, Lucinda Shaw-Lamont, Anna Phillips, Hugh Bramwells, Wendy Attenborough, Jane Carpenter.

Darwin Performing Arts Centre, Rod Wilson, Tom Pauling, Tim Brown, Barbara Tiernan, Christine Dunstan, Ray Scanlan, Aku Kadogo, Wendy Blacklock, Corrugated Iron Youth Theatre, David James, Mark Crossin, David Ritchie, Yvonne Forrest, Pamela Lyon, Paul France, David Parsons, Brenda Thornley, Clair Howie, Geoff Eames, John Von Sturmer, John Avery, Hilary Furlong, Elliot Johnston QC, Wendy Attenborough, Christine Colton, Margaret West, the Coates', Ian Gray, Jane Lloyd, Peter Bracher, Jeannie Devitt, Bonnie Moss, Robyn Kershaw, Mick Dodson, John Morton, Michelle Dewar, Toni Bauman, Vai Stanton, Keza Hall, Tony Walker, David Allen, Pip Hodge, Maggi Phillips, Peter Latz, Clive Scollay, Ross Howie, Pat Waller, Bridget Whitelaw, Adrian Welke, David Ross QC, Tom Kiele, Bruce Donald, Justin Fleming, Colin Golvan, John Mundine, Tim Rouse, Ingrid Hoffmann, Mary Anne Zhang, John Henderson, Marcia Langton, Gordon Williams, Neil Bell, Catherine Miliken, Gary Lang, Ken Mulvaney, Lill Smith, Phil Gerner, Steve Sparkes. Capricorn Industries - Darwin, Eight Top FM; Harvest Audio Visual Pty. Ltd and the many others who gave invaluable research advice and support.

**FURTHER READING:** Bruce Chatwin - *The Songlines*, *Utz*; Robyn Davidson - *Tracks*, *Travelling Light*; Rex Ingamells - *Aranda Boy*; Beth Dean and Victor Carrell - *Dust for the Dancers* (about the Ballet, Corroboree); Donald Stuart - *Yaralie*; Roland Robinson - *The Feathered Serpent*; Patrick White - *Voss*; Nadia Amadio, Jonah Jones, Daniel Thomas - *Albert Namitjira: The Life and Work Of An Australian Artist*.