

"THIS IS NOT A DREAMTIME STORY.
IT IS REAL."

- BATUMBIL BURARRWANGA



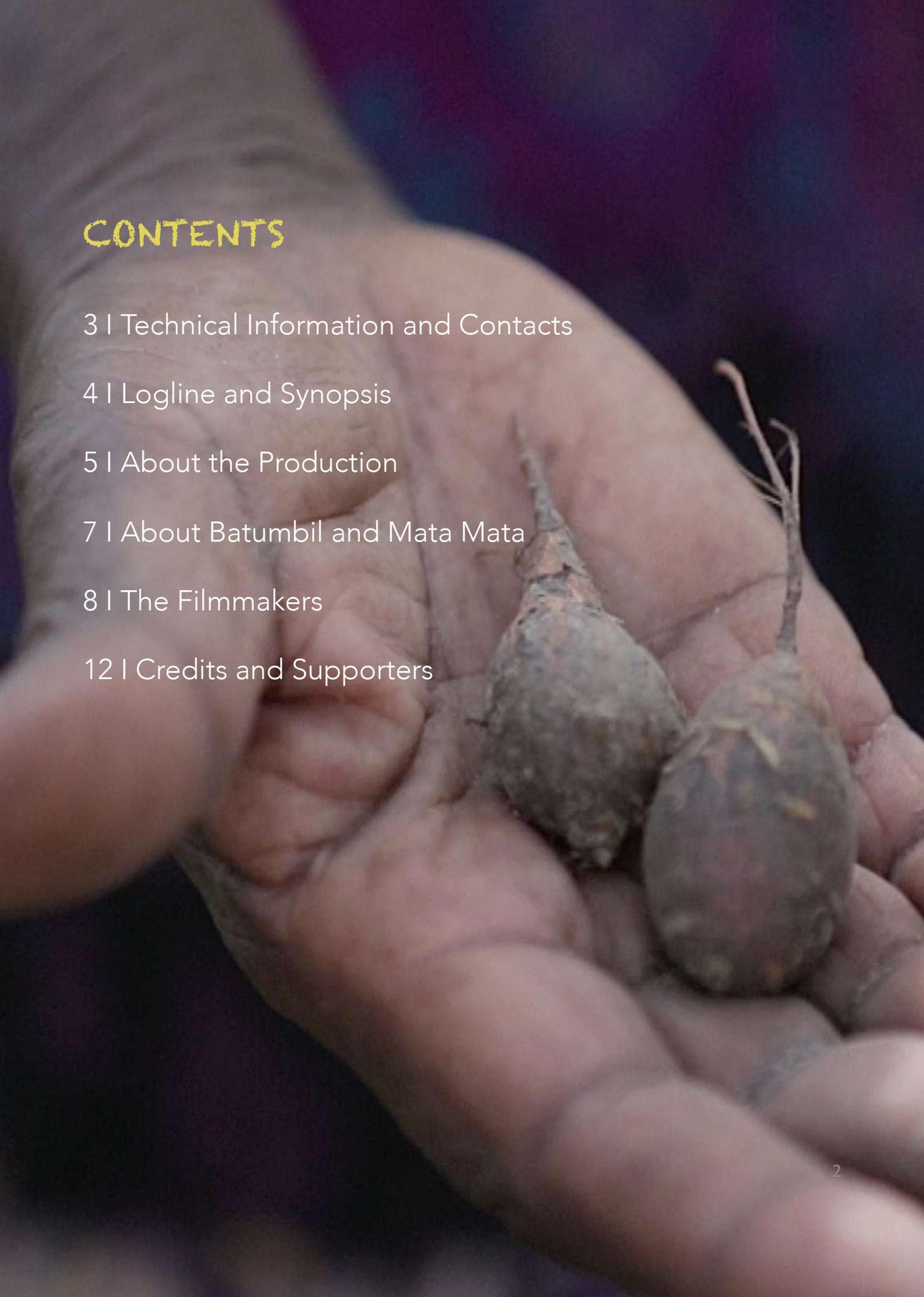
DHUKARR YÄKHTUN
REMAKING THE PATHWAY

PRESENTING "DHUKARR YÄKHTUN: REMAKING THE PATHWAY" EXECUTIVE PRODUCER BRIGITTE ROSS

PRODUCED BY BATUMBIL BURARRWANGA, DORIS YELTHUN DHAMBING BURARRWANGA, DAISY GUNYGULUL BURARRWANGA AND PETER BOTSMAN

ANIMATION DIRECTORS MARIEKA WALSH AND JAKE DUCZYNSKI MUSIC BY AARON KENNY

DIRECTED AND PRODUCED BY EMMA HUDSON

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding two batumbil tubers. The tubers are dark, elongated, and have a rough, textured surface. The hand is positioned in the center of the frame, with the fingers slightly curled around the tubers. The background is a dark, blurred gradient of purple and blue.

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TECHNICAL INFORMATION & CONTACTS

Duration: 31 minutes

Language: English and Yolngu Matha

Presentation Format: DCP 2K

Sound: 5.1 Surround

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[documentaryaustralia.com.au/
films/4232/remaking-the-pathway](http://documentaryaustralia.com.au/films/4232/remaking-the-pathway)



SYNOPSIS

REMAKING THE PATHWAY follows Batumbil Burarrwanga and her sisters Daisy and Doris, as they replicate a 60km walk they had done with their father in 1964 when they were young children. As elders and leaders of the Gumatj clan in North East Arnhem Land, the sisters joyously relive their life experiences. Batumbil's recurring dreams and visions of her father inspired them to retrace their journey which was the path of sacred dogs along the coastline of the Arafura Sea in North East Arnhem Land. In a dream Batumbil's father tells her she carries the fire, power and wisdom necessary to protect the Yolngu estates entrusted to them.

REMAKING THE PATHWAY follows the Burarrwanga sisters as they speak to the land. Batumbil and her sisters show us how we can connect to the land as gurrutu (family) relations. As Doris says, "It is everyone's story now".

LOGLINE

"This is not a dreamtime story. It is real."

- Batumbil Burarrwanga

When Batumbil Burarrwanga retraces a journey she made by foot as a child, she speaks to the land and recalls stories passed down by her father. In doing so she revives her family's connection to their homelands.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

WALKING THE YOLNGU ROAD: AN EMPOWERING WALK FROM THE PAST TO THE FUTURE.

Batumbil Burarrwanga is a Gumtaji elder of the Yolngu people in North East Arnhem Land. In 1964, when Batumbil was nine years old, she and her family made a 60km journey with her father; walking from her home in Mata Mata to Cape Wilberforce through the remote bushland and mangrove areas that run along the Arafura Sea. During this walk, Batumbil's father and other relations shared deep knowledge of the land with her and her sisters. It was on this walk that their father died.

For many years, Batumbil yearned to retrace her father's pathway by walking the same track. In late 2016, during Rarranhdhar (dry season) Batumbil recommenced the walk of her childhood. Batumbil not only wanted to walk the track, she wanted to document the walk for her family. As the walk progressed, it became clear that the whole of Batumbil's vision needed to be shared more widely. This became the task which with Batumbil's encouragement, Brigitte Ross, Emma Hudson and Peter Botsman took on. The plan was to keep the production as modest as possible and it was hoped that a film would create greater awareness about the challenges elders face living on their homelands and protecting their cultural legacy.

The actual filming of *Dhukarr Yakthun: Remaking the Pathway* was loaded with technical and physical challenges. Food and water was collected along the way, not carried as provision from the outset, and each night fires were lit to ward off snakes, buffalo and crocodile. The entire filming apparatus was carried in one backpack dependant on solar chargers. It was necessary to return to Mata Mata to collect pick-ups for the edit, including aerial coverage of the Mata Mata and Gi'kal homelands. There was an unanticipated trip to Darwin in early 2017, because Batumbil had suffered a minor stroke. A week was spent in Darwin with Batumbil and her sister, Doris. During her stay in hospital, Batumbil and Doris' master interviews were recorded.



As much as possible, Batumbil and her sisters were to tell their story in their own voice and language, but in putting the film together, more was needed to cover the spiritual and historical dimensions of the story. One of the most sensitive parts of the film is a recording of Mr. C. Burarrwanga, a renowned Gumatj songman known as a Yolngu 'encyclopedia' and a great orator of the land. This recording is significant because it names many places of the walk and alludes to their ceremonial context, and has been included with the express permission of the Burarrwanga family. Batumbil's painting, which appears in the first part of the film, was painted to inaugurate the walk and is very much a living blueprint of the deep forces of the land at Mata Mata. Peter contributed a large collection of recordings that he had assembled over many years and Emma transcribed key elements of one particular interview and asked if it could be re-recorded. Batumbil permitted her granddaughter, Shakiera, to read the transcription on her behalf. It was this recording that catalysed Emma's vision to animate part of the film. The animation was an extensive process which began with a visit to Sydney by Batumbil, Doris, Daisy, Terence Gurruwiwi and Mitchell Rang Garawirritja, and which reached its full potential through two acclaimed animation directors, Marieka Walsh (*The Turning*) and Jake Duczynski (*My Grandmother's Lingo*).

The rushes of REMAKING THE PATHWAY will be held by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AITSIS) for Batumbil's family.



ABOUT BATUMBIL AND MATA MATA

Over the past decades, as a result of the federal and Northern Territory government's intervention, there has been a push to ensure families leave their homelands and move into regional centres. Consequently, support has fallen away for Mata Mata. From a Yolngu perspective, homelands are places where people are healthiest and happiest. Batumbil and Mata Mata are credited with 'saving' several young people who had become lost and got into trouble with police and prisons in the towns and cities. For many complicated reasons, the organisations that have responsibility for supporting homelands are also struggling. Through all this, Batumbil has continued to maintain Mata Mata and the neighbouring Gikal homeland; Batumbil was instrumental in getting solar power for Mata Mata in 2004 and has helped several people to attain anthropology degrees and write books on Yolngu culture.

Batumbil's main dream is to see Mata Mata (Yirritja Gumatj) and Gikal (Dhuwa Galpu) develop as two Yothu Yindi learning centres for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. She says "If you come with an open heart, don't worry about rupiah (money), I will teach you." The object is not money, it is heart and soul, but the fact is, steady income flow is needed and important. Moreover, it needs to flow into the community in ways that support the natural authority of the elders. Mata Mata homeland needs several layers of investment and the first and most important layer is to support Batumbil as the community leader.

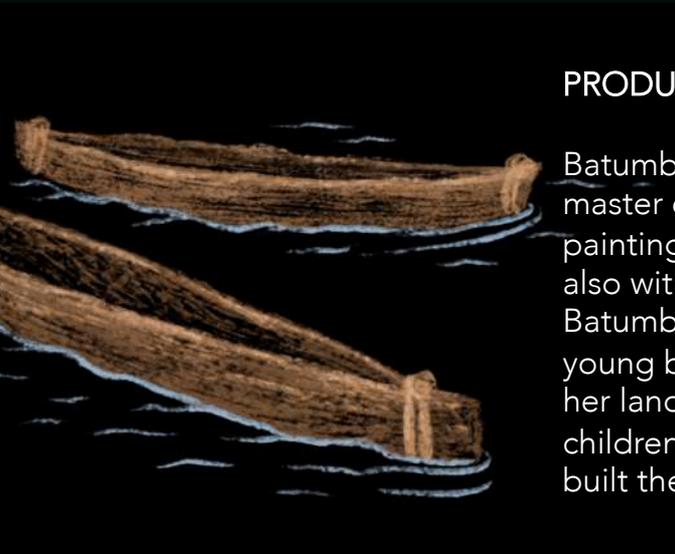
- Peter Botsman



THE FILMMAKERS

DIRECTOR | EMMA HUDSON

Emma Hudson is a graduate from the Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS), having completed the Foundation Diploma in Film and Bachelor of Arts (Screen). In 2013, Emma was awarded the ASTRA Graduate Program for excellence in her studies. She has worked in multiple production management roles across both film and television with some of Australia's most acclaimed filmmakers. Emma's studies have been taken abroad through participation in film-training workshops in Portugal and attendance at the 2014 Festival de Cannes and Marché du Film. Emma now focuses on producing documentaries that express the importance of evoking ideas of humanity and ecology into tangible paths of action. Her films have been screened in film festivals worldwide as well as broadcasted and made available on-demand. Her work has been recognised by screen industry leaders such as, Documentary Australia Foundation and Journeyman Pictures.



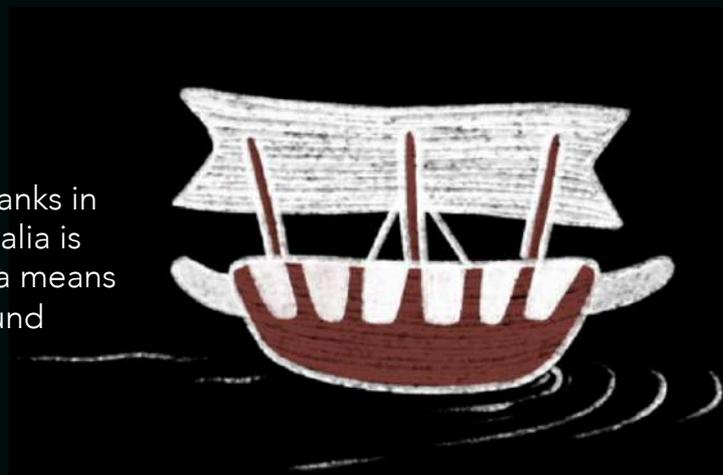
PRODUCER | BATUMBIL BURARRWANGA

Batumbil Burarrwanga is a national living treasure. She is a master craftswoman and artist. Her pandanus mats and paintings are renowned not only by the European world but also within the Yolŋu world of sacred ceremony and manikay. Batumbil came to her beloved Mata Mata homeland as a young baby and has never left. She draws her strength from her land and life here. Batumbil home schooled all of her children and hearing of this Rev Shepherdson ("Sheppie") built the Gatirri School at Mata Mata around her as teacher.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER | BRIGITTE ROSS

Brigitte Ross is a philanthropist and mother.

Brigitte is involved in multiple independent think tanks in Australia and abroad. Her work in Aboriginal Australia is centred around the preservation of homelands as a means to protect, honour and celebrate Australia's profound cultural heritage.



ANIMATION DIRECTOR | MARIEKA WALSH

Marieka Walsh is an Australian Director, Writer and Animator. Marieka has received four Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts Awards (AACTA) nominations as well as two Australian Director's Guild (ADG) nominations. In 2013 her graduation film THE HUNTER, a unique sand animation (SXSW, Palm Springs, Sydney International Film Festival) won several international awards as well as an AACTA for Best Short Animation. In 2014 she directed and animated the opening short 'ASH WEDNESDAY' as part of THE TURNING (Berlinale, MIFF) and worked on THAT SUGAR FILM a feature documentary, where she illustrated the history of sugar for a scene with Hugh Jackman. Last year she completed THE CROSSING, an animated short that went on to win 'Best Short Animation 2016' at The Sydney Film festival. Marieka co-directed 4 short animated documentary stories for the Australian feature film AFTER THE APOLOGY by Larissa Behrendt. One of the animations 'BARBARA' was nominated for a 2018 AACTA, was 'Highly Commended' in the 2018 Director's Guild Awards and nominated for a Dendy Award in the 2018 Sydney Film Festival. Marieka has a background in visual art and holds a Hons degree in Visual Art (SCA – USYD). In 2014 she took part in the Graphic Festival with an illustrated story for RWP at The Sydney Opera House. Her animation/ video art installations have screened at galleries in Sydney/ Melbourne including a work in the public collection at the Australian Centre for Moving Image (ACMI).





ANIMATION DIRECTOR | JAKE DUCZYNSKI

Jake Duczynski is a graduate from the University of Technology Sydney having completed a Bachelor of Animation. He has long known about the beautiful synergy between Aboriginal culture and animation in the art of storytelling. In the brief period since completing his studies in 2017, Jake has already begun to make an indelible impression on the Australian artscape, with his animation commemorating the 25th anniversary of the landmark Mabo High Court decision to be projected onto the outer skin of Sydney's Maritime Museum this year. Jake believes interactive stories bridge imagination and reality, appeal to our curiosity, and enable us to share history. He credits the inspiration of his strong, loving family network for motivating him to reach wider audiences. Witnessing many of his relatives overcoming adversity has encouraged Jake to tell real life stories that provoke thought. Jake sees the challenges inherent in this, particularly in an animation industry that gives primacy to commerce over art. In 2016, Jake and his small team at SBS won the 2016 Walkley Award for Multimedia Storytelling and the award for Best Responsive Website at the SXSW Festival in Texas for their interactive animated Indigenous language app, My Grandmother's Lingo.

PRODUCER | PETER BOTSMAN

Peter Botsman is one of Australia's most creative public intellectuals. For the last 20 years he has lived at Eramboo Farm in Kangaroo Valley on the NSW south coast where he raises Scottish Highland cattle. He has been voluntary national secretary of the Indigenous Stock Exchange (ISX) for the past 15 years and worked in many areas of Aboriginal economic development, in Cape York, the Pilbara, the Kimberley, Arnhem Land, Timor Leste, Shepparton and the NSW South Coast. Some of his earlier public policy work was carried out as Executive Director of the Evatt Foundation, Australia's premier left wing think tank of the nineties, and as Professor of Public Policy, University of Queensland and Executive Director of The Brisbane Institute. Peter Botsman was also the Foundation Director of the Whitlam Institute. He was adopted into the Yolngu people of Arnhem Land. Peter Botsman currently divides his time between Kangaroo Valley and Arnhem Land, in the company of his three sons Chenier, Dashiell and Declan Moore, and his Yolngu family.

COMPOSER | AARON KENNY

Featured by ASCAP as a "Composer to Watch," Aaron Kenny is a composer for Concert hall, Stage and Screen. Award-nominated and award-winning for his work, some of his accolades include the Australian Young Composer of the Year award and a prestigious nomination for the Zurich Film Music Competition's Award for Best Score. Currently in the position of Music Assistant to Alan Menken ("The Little Mermaid," "Beauty And The Beast," "Aladdin"), Aaron is also a selected composer participating in the BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop. A graduate from the University of Adelaide's Elder Conservatorium of Music with Honors in Composition, he also graduated from the Australian Film, Television and Radio School with a Diploma in Screen Music. Aaron most recently received his Masters in Music Composition from the Steinhardt School at New York University, where he was also a recipient of both the Steinhardt and Alan Menken Scholarships.

CREDITS AND SUPPORTERS

DIRECTOR

Emma Hudson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Brigitte Ross

PRODUCER

Batumbil Burarrwanga

PRODUCER

Doris Yelthun Dhambing Burarrwanga

PRODUCER

Daisy Gunyugulil Burarrwanga

PRODUCER

Peter Botsman

ANIMATION DIRECTORS

Marieka Walsh

Jake Duczynski

COMPOSER

Aaron Kenny

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Hunter Carlberg

Andrew Hudson

Danny Ross

Viv Scanu

ADDITIONAL CAMERA AND DRONE OPERATOR

Samantha Hawker

ADDITIONAL ANIMATION

Jonathan Delbridge

AUDIO POST PRODUCTION PRODUCER

Dave Miller

SOUND DESIGNER

Brendan Croxon

DIALOGUE EDITOR AND RE-RECORDING MIXER

Doron Kipen

FEATURING

Yulula Shakiera Munungurr

Peter Djelirr Gurruwiwi

Terrence Gaypalwini Gurruwiwi

Marcus Dhuakthun Gurruwiwi

Jacqui Hing

Byron Ross

Ludmilla Ivanovic

Les Sinn

THE PRODUCERS WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK

Jennifer Abbott

Tony Armstrong

Oscar Carlberg

Elizabeth Criner

Milena Dambelli

Aidan DeLorenzo

Nat Denning

Mark Halliday

Bridie Hayes

Michael Hayes

Emma Herbert-Smith

Jeff Herbert-Smith

Tilly Herbert-Smith

Sam Hudson

Sue Kelly

Honey Long

Edward Macdonald

Soraya Rennie

Bernadette Ryan

Dianne Thomas

William Versace

Faith Agugu

Emilie Cacace

Peter Clark

Lily Rose Dambelli

Judith DeGroot

Louise DeLorenzo

Michael Gupta

Zelimir Harasty

Charlie Hayes

Chloe Herbert-Smith

Jenny Herbert-Smith

Tessa Herbert-Smith

Lucy Holm

Tom Hudson

Andy Lewis

Nici Long

John Poche

Bethany Ryan

Eliza Solomon

Bennett Walker

"GUMTATJ MANIKAY"

Performed by

Charlie Matjuwi Burarrwanga

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SUPPORTED BY



*“I have renewed the pathway
so we can find our way forward.”*

- Batumbil Burarrwanga