MEDIA RELEASE

EMBARGOED until 16 November 2020

**JACOB BOEHME ANNOUNCED AS THE INAUGURAL FIRST NATIONS RESIDENT AT LUCY GUERIN INC**

A new residency program for Senior First Nations dance artists has been announced by Lucy Guerin Inc and BlakDance, with Narangga and Kaurna artist Jacob Boehme appointed the inaugural First Nations Resident.

Starting in 2021, this annual opportunity has been created through a new multi-year partnership between BlakDance, the national industry and producing organisation for First Nation contemporary dance based on Turrbal and Yuggera Country in Meanjin (Brisbane, Queensland) and Lucy Guerin Inc, the critically-acclaimed contemporary dance company located on the lands of the Kulin Nation in Naarm (Melbourne, Victoria).

Each year, the funded studio residency will support one Senior First Nations artist with a fee, production support and four weeks of dedicated studio time at WXYZ Studios – Lucy Guerin Inc’s rehearsal space in North Melbourne. They will also be invited to take part in a range of other opportunities to deepen engagement with the local dance and First Nations communities.

Alumnus of the Victorian College of the Arts, Jacob Boehme is a multi-disciplinary theatre maker and choreographer, creating work for stage, screen, large-scale public events and festivals. During his residency at Lucy Guerin Inc, Jacob will be developing an aspect of Wild Dog, a multi-year research and revival project that connects Wild Dog/Dingo Dreaming, its songlines and ceremonies, from South Australia to Far North Queensland.

*"Over the past 5 or so years, Lucy and LGI have demonstrated a dedication to First Nations dance through various commissions and appointments. They have done the work mostly under the radar with a quiet commitment to lifting up the voices and work of Indigenous choreographers and dance makers, so it is with great honour that I accept the LGI First Nations Residency as I embark on the development of a major new work with contemporary and traditional dancers from across Australia"*

- Jacob Boehme

This new partnership between BlakDance and Lucy Guerin Inc reflects the organisations’ shared goal to support First Nations artists at various career stages and create stronger connections between First Nations artists and non-Indigenous organisations. This opportunity is designed to both celebrate and support senior First Nations dance artists’ work by providing a space for the development of new work or ongoing research into their artistic practice.

The program will develop with artistic self-determination at its core. In addition to determining the cultural protocols and allocation of resources for their own residency, the current Resident will also be invited to play a key role in choosing the artist for the following year.

*“The First Nations independent contemporary dance sector is severely underfunded. There are no companies on Federal multiyear funding and of the hundreds of artists making work only a handful have producers, which means that securing funding for the development of their work is disadvantaged resulting in minimal visibility and significant disempowerment of our culture bearers -  from the world’s oldest surviving dance canon. Compounding this issue is the overlooking of Senior artists, therefore we are delighted to be addressing these sector issues in partnership with Lucy Guerin Inc.”*

*–* Merindah Donnelly, Executive Producer of BlakDance

This program is an important part of broader efforts by Lucy Guerin Inc to improve the representation, opportunities and career pathways available for First Nations artists in contemporary dance. Also starting in 2021, Lucy Guerin Inc recently announced a multi-year partnership with NAISDA Dance College, the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts training organisation based on Darkinjung Land on the NSW Central Coast. This program will provide a new pathway into the professional world with a paid graduate internship and two secondments for current students with Lucy Guerin Inc annually.

*“This new partnership between Blakdance and Lucy Guerin Inc generates a new connection with seminal dancer and choreographer Jacob Boehme. It celebrates First Nations artists and acknowledges the vital role their creativity plays in our culture and our identity as a nation. We are delighted to welcome this exceptional and knowledgeable artist as our inaugural resident. I’m looking forward to seeing this program grow in the coming years with an ethos of self-determination planted firmly at its centre.”*

*–* Lucy Guerin, Artistic Director of Lucy Guerin Inc

During its first year, this program has been generously supported by the Linnell/Hughes Trust. Lucy Guerin Inc is also assisted by the City of Melbourne, Creative Victoria and the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

BlakDance is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

The Wild Dog Project is supported by Country Arts SA, Insite Arts, Tarnanthi Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art through the Art Gallery of South Australia, Narungga Nations Aboriginal Corporation, Mirndiyan Gunana Aboriginal Corporation, Artback NT, The Australian Government's Indigenous Languages and Arts Program, Arts South Australia, Arts QLD, the Australia Council for the Arts and The Ministry of Culture Taiwan.

**ENDS**

**Contact details:**

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**Key Information:**

- BlakDance is based on Turrbal and Yuggera Country in Meanjin (Brisbane, Queensland).

- Lucy Guerin Inc and WXYZ Studios, is located on the lands of the Kulin Nation in Naarm (Melbourne, Victoria).

- Jacob Boehme is a Melbourne born and raised artist of the Narangga and Kaurna Nations, South Australia.

- New multi-year partnership between the national industry and producing organisation for First Nation contemporary dance (BlakDance) and one of the country’s foremost contemporary dance companies (Lucy Guerin Inc).

- The 4-week funded residency will take place at WXYZ Studios – Lucy Guerin Inc’s rehearsal venue in North Melbourne.

- The residency will develop through a self-determination model for the selection of future residents, ensuring the artists’ key role in decision making around the program’s development.

- More information and the media release for the partnership with NAISDA Dance College can be found via the link below.

- **Please include funding credits.**

**Background information:**

- Lucy Guerin Inc: <https://lucyguerininc.com/about#company-overview>

- BlakDance: <https://www.blakdance.org.au/about>

- Jacob Boehme: <https://www.jacobboehme.com.au/about>

- Information on the Wild Dog Project: <https://www.jacobboehme.com.au/1st-gallery?pgid=ivmbx5xj-2376015a-4634-4967-b2f2-1a19d4e91d00>

- LGI and NAISDA partnership announcement: <https://lucyguerininc.com/news/new-partnership-for-emerging-first-nations-artists>

**Images:**

- Image from ‘Blood on the Dance Floor’ by Jacob Boehme. Image Credit – Bryony Jackson

- Additional images available by request.

**Logos:**

- Logo strips for the First Nations Residency and Wild Dog Project supplied. Original logo suites available by request.