

For immediate release: 16 April 2026

Theatre Works proudly presents

Lazarus

By John Harding

Directed Kamarra Bell-Wykes

21 May - 6 June 2026

Theatre Works: 14 Acland Street, St Kilda

www.theatreworks.org.au

A powerful reclaiming of history, this May **Theatre Works** invites audiences to a vital Australian work by acclaimed playwright **John Harding**.

Running as part of the 2026 **By Theatre Works** season, **Lazarus** tells the extraordinary true story of **Larry Walsh**; a Taungurung Elder, activist, and storyteller. The play traces his life from 1955 - through his removal from his mother, his time in state institutions, and his eventual journey toward cultural reclamation and leadership.

Rich with evocative imagery and with more than 20 characters brought to life by an exceptional cast,

Lazarus is helmed by **multi-award-winning Director Kamarra Bell-Wykes**, and is a powerful celebration of culture, resilience, and the unbreakable ties between mother and child, community and Country.

*“This one asks something different of our audiences”, offers Theatre Works’ Executive Director Dianne Toulson. “A lot of work we present is about big ideas, new writing, and pushing form, and that’s still true here, but **Lazarus** carries a different kind of weight. It’s not trying to entertain in the traditional sense, it asks you to sit with it. I think what really sets it apart is that it’s grounded in a real story and a living cultural context.*

*We’re also staging this in the main **Theatre Works** space, which gives us the opportunity to fully realise the design. There’s scope here for a rich integration of video, sound, and staging, but always in service of the story, not overwhelming it. It’s a different kind of theatre experience, one that stays with you.”*

With an ensemble led by First Nations artists **Sermsah Bin Saad, Teresa Moore, Nathan Wright, and Riley Warner**, Director **Kamarra Bell-Wykes** is bringing a bold new interpretation of **Lazarus** to the **Theatre Works** stage. An electric reimagining of the work presented in the 2025 **Yirramboi Festival**, this latest season is also being spotlit for its cultural and educational significance, and is a featured work on the **2026 VCE Drama Playlist**. Developed with the support of **Australian Plays Transform** and playing for a limited season, **Lazarus** is poised to be a true highlight on the 2026 Melbourne Arts Calendar, not to be missed.

Based in St Kilda, **Theatre Works** has been home to bold, independent theatre for more than 40 years. They give artists the space, support, and freedom to take risks, and audiences the chance to discover powerful new Australian stories. Each year, they present dozens of productions across their three venues, from reimagined classics to brand new works, created in partnership with some of the country’s most exciting theatre makers.



Other 2026 **By Theatre Works** productions include *Australian Open*, *Savages*, *Beyond The Neck*, *Mara*, *Red Sky Morning*, *Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity*, *The Wolves*, and *Lord of the Flies*.

Directed by Kamarra Bell-Wykes

Performed by Sermsah Bin Saad, Teresa Moore, Nathan Wright and Riley Warner

Projection and visual design by Cobie Orger

Sound design by Todd Bennett

Set and costume design by Justin Greene

Produced by Theatre Works

21 May - 6 June 2026

Tues - Sat 7:30pm, Sat 2pm (30 May only), Tues - Fri 11am

Preview: Thurs 21 and Fri 22 May 7:30pm

Opening Night: Sat 23 May 7:30pm

Tickets: \$55 Full, \$48 Concession, \$40 Preview

Bookings: www.theatreworks.org.au/2026/lazarus

Venue: Theatre Works – 14 Acland Street, St Kilda

www.theatreworks.org.au

Duration: 75 mins no interval

Age suitability: 14+

Warnings: This production contains themes of death, grief, and cultural trauma, including references to colonisation and its ongoing impact on First Nations peoples. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences are advised that the work contains references to deceased persons