



**MEDIA RELEASE – 3 APRIL 2017**

**For immediate release**

## **Production Fund - A Game Changer for Black Swan**

**Black Swan State Theatre Company announces the establishment of the Black Swan Production Fund – a long term future fund for the company**

The Black Swan State Theatre Company has launched its new Production Fund at its sold out inaugural Philanthropy Gala Dinner on Thursday 16 March 2017.

“The fund has been established to provide long term security for Black Swan, and will enable the company to continue to develop works of exceptional quality,” the Chair of the Board of Directors, Mark Barnaba AM said.

“It is a game changer for Black Swan and would ensure the company is in good stead for the next stage of its journey,” he said.

The success of the fund was assured when Andrew and Nicola Forrest’s Minderoo Foundation offered to match every donation made on the night by generous donors, including Angela Roberts, Tim Roberts Giving, Mimi and Willy Packer and Michelle and Tony Grist.

“We are extremely grateful to the donors of the Production Fund and all our financial stakeholders that enable us to bring Black Swan’s vision to create theatre that matches the boldness and beauty of the state we live in to life,” Mr Barnaba said.

Amongst those in attendance on the evening was Black Swan’s Founder Janet Holmes à Court AC who spoke about the Black Swan’s 25year history, including the many successful artists who had commenced their careers with the company and the staging of ground breaking productions such as *Bran Nue Day*. She added that this was a remarkable legacy, as was the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the partnership with Rio Tinto, recognised as one of the state’s most enduring and successful Business Arts Partnerships.

Black Swan’s new Artistic Director Clare Watson, also announced the establishment of the Artistic Reference Group with Founding Director of Black Swan of Andrew Ross, as Emeritus Artist, who will collaborate and advocate for the company.

The Artistic Reference Group will be made up of cultural luminaries including Andrew Lewis, Caroline McKenzie, Andrew Ross, Dr Richard Walley OAM and Jack Thompson AM.

Black Swan Board member and Chair of the Artistic Reference Group, Nicola Forrest said she was delighted with the depth of experience and knowledge the group would bring, and the role it would play to enhance Claire’s vision as she develops future seasons.

“The combination of the Artistic Reference Group with the new Production Fund will take the Company to exciting new levels,” she said.

Australian film icon Jack Thompson attended the dinner and provided a moving recital of “*The Road Less Travelled*”.

The highly successful Gala, held at Wildflower, Como The Treasury was organised by the Black Swan Philanthropy Committee chaired by Mrs Michela Fini. Guests were entertained by Black Swan artists including Brendan Hanson who performed a pattersong highlighting the 25year history of the company.

Black Swan’s 2017 season officially opened last night with *Once in Royal David’s City*, by acclaimed Australian playwright Michael Gow in a co-production with Queensland Theatre.



**black swan**  
STATE THEATRE COMPANY

**About Black Swan State Theatre Company:**

Black Swan is a theatre company of national significance, creating exceptional theatre that nurtures Western Australian audiences and artists, and promotes our artists within the state, nationally and internationally. In addition to the wonderful work we produce on stage, Black Swan's underlying strength is in artist development and broadening access and engagement with our state-wide community. Over the past five years, we have seen enormous growth in our audiences, built our internal capacity and established a benchmark for quality productions of scale in Western Australia. Looking to our future, our three areas of core strategic focus are artist development, education and regional engagement.

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