

# PECAN SUMMER INDIGENOUS OPERA IS HERE

## YES, I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A PATRON OF PECAN SUMMER

Dutala	\$100,000 and above	Star filled sky
Nurtja	\$50,000 - \$99,000	Forest
Biyala	\$10,000 - \$49,000	Red Gum
Dhungala	\$5000 - \$9999	River
Woka	\$1000 - \$4999	Earth
Gurtji	all gifts up to \$999	Friend

Dutala, Nurtja, Biyala, Dhungala, Woka and Gurtji are words which come from the ancient language of the Yorta Yorta people. The Yorta Yorta language is undergoing a revival driven by only a handful of custodians. The Prelude of Pecan Summer will be sung in this ancient language.

You can support our 2011 Melbourne season and future Short Black Opera productions of Pecan Summer by making a donation via our sponsorship and grants partner for 2011, The Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust.

The Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust nurtures operatic development by providing scholarships, mentoring and performance experience for Australia's promising young singers. In 2011, as part of its Indigenous Program, the Melba Opera Trust proudly assists Short Black Opera in its Melbourne premiere of Pecan Summer.

The Melba Conservatorium Gift Fund is a tax deductible fund listed on the Register of Cultural organisations under Subdivision 30-B of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997

Donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible.



## YOUR GIFT

### Personal details:

I request that my gift contribute to the Indigenous Program:  
**Short Black Opera**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Gift Details:

In the amount of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Cheque Details:

Please make cheques payable to:

**Melba Conservatorium Fund** and return with this form to:  
Short Black Opera, 3 Cunningham Lane, Newport. VIC 3015

### Electronic Funds Transfer

Account name: Melba Memorial Conservatorium of Music  
BSB 013 304

Account: 513133028

Narration: Short Black Opera

Please send an email to [shortblack@me.com](mailto:shortblack@me.com) letting us know the transaction has taken place and what name the Tax Deductible receipt should be made out to.

## A NOTE FROM THE COMPOSER

In July 2006 Pecan Summer was little more than the title. Ten years on from the autobiographical White Baptist Abba Fan I knew it was time for my next major theatrical effort, but what was it to be?

After almost 20 years as a freelance soprano I felt that I wanted to do something to encourage other Indigenous singers to consider a career in the world of Classical vocal music.

In 1949, a 25 year old Aboriginal tenor emerged from the cane-fields of Queensland. After gaining his diploma at Melba Conservatorium, he began a career that was to span almost 30 years. His name was Harold Blair. Praised in 1962 for his lead in a popular burlesque of Uncle Tom's Cabin in Melbourne and as Mundit, he sang alongside a very young Lyndon Terracini, in the Aboriginal themed opera, Dalgerie, at the Sydney Opera House in 1973. He made numerous concert appearances.

Harold Blair was the first. It is never easy to be the first.

Harold was a leader at a time when Australia wasn't sure what to do with Aboriginal or Indigenous leadership. But Harold could sing. With his voice and dedication to his professional development he far transcended the status of Flora and Fauna imposed on Aboriginal people prior to 1967.

I also bore this status for the first three years of my life, until the referendum in 1967 allowed me to be counted as a human being and a citizen of this country.

Although I have written other scripts, Pecan Summer was my first libretto. The score is my first operatic score. This is my first opera. It is dramatic and melodic and at times nostalgic, I make no apology for this. It comes from a very deep place, from genetic memory, from life's experiences.

I set out to create a pathway for Indigenous singers who wish to pursue a career in the intensely emotional world of Classical vocal music. I have built it and they have come. Thank you for helping us celebrate the creation of Pecan Summer.

Deborah Cheetham  
Soprano/Composer/Yorta Yorta Woman