

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## ***MEWEI 3027 – an original theatre work based on a remarkable cross-cultural wartime story***

**Mewei 3027** brings to life a most fascinating wartime story inspired by Ngarrindjeri Digger Roland Carter from the Raukkan community in the Coorong, South Australia, and the lifelong friendship he developed with Jewish German ethnologist Leonhard Adam.

This important new theatre work will have its first reading at Raukkan on 22 April at 5pm, to be followed by a reading at the Dunstan Playhouse on Anzac Day 25 April, at 3pm. Both play readings are free.

Roland Carter (*Service No. 3027*) became the first Ngarrindjeri man to join the Australian Imperial Forces during World War I. Whilst interned in Germany, he met Jewish German ethnologist Leonhard Adam, employed by the German government to collect information on the culture and customs of the ethnic prisoners. During meetings between the two, Roland gave Leonhard valuable insight into the customs, history, language and daily life of the Ngarrindjeri people back home in Australia. It was these meetings that led the two men from very different cultures to form what would become a lifelong friendship.

Forced to flee his German homeland, Leonhard eventually found himself in an Australian internment camp and a new life in Melbourne. The two friends were never to meet again, but through Leonhard's sister-in-law, who travelled to Raukkan in 1947, were reconnected and continued to correspond by mail.

It is through these letters, consultations with family, and workshops with the Raukkan community, that Ngarrindjeri Wathaurong playwright Glenn Shea has developed the original work **Mewei 3027** (Mewei is the Ngarrindjeri word for Soul).

Creative Producer, Aboriginal Diggers Project, Lee-Ann Buckskin said *"An untold story in our country's military history, the friendship between Roland Carter and Leonhard Adam is a unique one. **Mewei 3027** is the story of their enduring friendship built on the respect for Roland's beloved Ngarrindjeri culture, and the parallels between the two men whose lives transcend the perils of politics and war and ultimately the enormity of human sacrifice."*

**Mewei 3027** is the second stage of Country Arts SA's broader 3 year *Aboriginal Diggers Project*. The first stage, a short film *'Coming Home'* premiered in 2017, and the final stage scheduled for 2019, will be a visual arts program focussing on Aboriginal servicemen and women in the Vietnam War.

Country Arts SA has been working with the State Theatre Company of South Australia, Raukkan Community, Anzac Brains Trust and Melbourne University and is grateful for the support from Australian Government's Anzac Centenary Arts and Culture Fund, Gandel Philanthropy, Arts South Australia and Australia Council for the Arts, all of whom have been vital to the development of this project.

Please register to attend at [www.countryarts.org.au/events/mewei-3027](http://www.countryarts.org.au/events/mewei-3027)

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