

Media Release

For immediate release

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WA debut of sizzling stone-age musical

THE stage is set to burn bright with the West Australian premiere of the musical *Firebringer* at Melville Theatre this May.

Created by American musical theatre company StarKid Productions in 2016 and directed by Craig Griffen, it's an irreverent, hysterical and entirely historically inaccurate story of early humans discovering fire.

At the dawn of humanity, one tribe of cave-people survives the many trials of prehistoric life under the wise leadership of peacemaker Jemilla.

But Zazzalil is always trying to invent things to make life easier for herself – and stumbles upon the most important discovery in history.

"*Firebringer* is full of meme-able lyrics and knee-slapping jokes and the perfect show to enjoy with friends for a wild night out," Craig said.

"The biggest challenge is the scale and scope of the story we are telling.

"Our production features almost 70 costumes, shelves and shelves of custom props and the largest set I have ever designed.

"Everything seen on stage has had to be crafted from scratch in our specific aesthetic to seamlessly create a complete world for this story to take place in."

Involved in theatre from age 10, Craig first appeared on stage in WA in *Hairspray* and *The Wizard of Oz* at the Koorliny Arts Centre – and was named "best other than a lead male in a musical" for both roles at the annual Finley Awards.

He has worked as a director, production designer, producer and behind the scenes for Fresh Bred Productions on *Closer*, *The Last Five Years*, *Spring Awakening* and *Sweeney Todd*.

In 2018, Craig directed and designed *Urinetown* at Melville Theatre, scoring six Finley Awards including best musical, best set and best director of a musical.

A year later he picked up several nominations and the technical achievement award for his work as director, designer and puppet-builder on *The Lion*, *The Witch* and *The Wardrobe* at the Koorliny Arts Centre.

Awards continued with Craig's production of *Next to Normal* at Melville Theatre in 2020, scoring best actress and runner-up best musical at the 2020-21 Finley Awards.

"After directing a show as heavy in content as *Next to Normal*, I wanted to work on something lighter and full of laughs," he said.

"People in my circle of friends suggested we consider a StarKid show and we eventually settled on *Firebringer* because we knew it would give us room to play aesthetically.

"What particularly excited me was *The Flintstones* 1994 movie, which has been one of my favourites in terms of production design, so I knew that would be my jumping off point for this show.

"Mix that with a few other stylistic references and I knew we could have a lot of fun with *Firebringer*."

Firebringer plays at 8pm May 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20 and 21 with a 2pm matinee May 15. Tickets are \$30, \$25 concession – book at www.TAZTix.com.au.

Melville Theatre is at 393A Canning Highway (corner of Stock Road), Palmyra.

Ends