

In Repertoire

A guide to Australian contemporary dance



Dear reader

This guide introduces you to a wide range of Australian contemporary dance works available for international touring.

You can find out more about the works, artists and companies on the Australia Council website, <www.ozarts.com.au>, an interactive online service promoting Australian arts and culture internationally. You'll also find touring histories, projected tours, technical specifications and contact details.

The overview essay on pages 31-33 provides an accessible introduction to the history and context of Australian contemporary dance and there's also a brief introduction on page 34 to Australian dance on film and video.

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Left	Bangarra Dance Theatre, <i>Bush</i> , photo Greg Barrett
Right top	Shelley Lasica, <i>History Situation</i> , photo Rohan Young
Right bottom	Gerard Van Dyck, <i>Collapsible Man</i> , photo Nat Cursio

Produced by RealTime for the Australia Council
The Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body

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October 2003
Second edition
ISBN 1 920784 09 8



RealTime

dance performance movement installation virtual dance multimedia dance theatre

Introduction

Since the appearance of the first edition of this guide in 2000, Australian dance has consolidated and expanded its international presence, performing idiosyncratic and innovative works to appreciative audiences around the world.

In recent years the Australian Ballet, Sydney Dance Company, Australian Dance Theatre, Chunky Move, Bangarra Dance Theatre, Lucy Guerin and Ros Warby are just a few of the companies and artists who have enjoyed successful tours while others, like Rosalind Crisp, are developing significant collaborations with European partners.

This new edition is part of Australia Council initiatives for the long term marketing of the Australian arts, including dance, in North America, Europe and Asia with dance-specific ventures such as the Franco-Australian Contemporary Dance Exchange with Michel Caserta of la Biennale nationale de danse du Val-de-Marne. In 2002 Australian artists appeared in Caserta's program, Novembre Australien, and in 2003 the Melbourne International Arts Festival hosted a number of visiting French dance companies. The value of this exchange was enhanced by the 2003 Melbourne Festival's focus on dance, welcoming international presenters with a feast of Australian dance in the context of forums, conferences, a dedicated dance-on-film program and international masterclasses.

Diverse as it is in form and geographical distribution, the character of Australian dance reveals a continuing and deepening fascination with the body, with place, popular culture, the riches of multicultural society and the potential of new technologies. The engagement with popular culture has been invigorating, as it absorbs and reshapes the energies and dexterities of break dancing, hip hop and other forms. Readily available technology has facilitated the greater use of film and video onstage, allowing dancers to 'perform with themselves' and to inhabit magical virtual spaces. Choreographer-filmmakers are creating award-winning films for international distribution and other artists are producing multimedia dance installations, some with opportunities for audience interaction. For a form traditionally wary of anything beyond the primacy of the live dancing body, Australian dance is proving to be the most consistently adventurous of art forms.

Australian dance is also thematically rich, embracing issues of environmental deterioration, surveillance, sexuality, disability, media manipulation, racial discrimination and the plight of the refugee, and, importantly, the impact of science on the body. Equally serious and mature attention is given to formally abstract works and reflections on choreographer-dancers' lives. In all of this you are likely to encounter, to some degree, a distinctive, ironic Australian sense of humour.

Much more detail about each of the works and artists in this guide can be found on the Australia Council website, <www.ozarts.com.au>, including specifications for touring as well as contact details. *In Repertoire* celebrates the breadth and excellence of Australian dance, its capacity for innovation and cultural engagement. Some of the works presented here already have strong touring credentials, some are new—all are ready to go.

Jennifer Bott
Chief Executive Officer
Australia Council

...a seamless merging of projected, corporeal and sound media.

RealTime

Bonemap

The Bridge Song

A unique new media performance for solo dancer, musicians and projection that leads the audience on a journey over bridges through the lens of urban and environmental ecology. *The Bridge Song* explores environmental sensitivity and the fragile relationship between a body and its surroundings. 50 mins, 3 performers

An intermedia arts partnership between Russell Milledge and Rebecca Youdell, the Bonemap project is a hybrid mesh of live art, dance, visual art and new media framed by an overarching ecological philosophy. It has been awarded the first interdisciplinary Asialink award with a residency at The Substation, Singapore.

Fiona Cameron

Inhabited

Originally performed in public spaces including laneways, museums and nightclubs, this work explores human interaction with city environments. From self-consumed salsa to a claustrophobic game of train twister, two women navigate the suffocating metropolis with an accompanying sound artist. Highly mobile and adaptable street-theatre

designed to pop up where dance is least expected.

Well known for her performing career with Chunky Move and Alias Compagnie (Geneva), Fiona Cameron's work displays a raw physicality and dramatic realism, dynamic in its extreme investigation of the body's physical capabilities.

She is committed to creating new dance works that question social purpose, using non-traditional performance spaces and direct audience interaction.

...such elegance, poise and confidence...[the] merest physical inflection is eminently satisfying. *RealTime*



...staggeringly brave, original choreography and an equally brave stand against this age of unbeauty.

dB Magazine

Australian Dance Theatre

The Age of Unbeauty

Garry Stewart's extreme mix of combative and breathtaking choreography, using hapkido, gymnastics and fearless attitude, moves through an avalanche of potent images in which violence, torture and incarceration are interspersed with unanticipated moments of tenderness and shattering vulnerability. Winner of three 2002 Australian Dance Awards and the Adelaide Critics Circle's Group Award. 65 mins, 11 performers

In one of the most influential dance companies in the country, dancers train in a fusion of forms that results in a unique choreographic palette, producing fast, aggressive, technically demanding work fraught with risk and charged with an urgency that is riveting to watch. The company has taken their acclaimed *Birdbrain* to the UK. US and UK tours of *The Age of Unbeauty* are scheduled for 2004-5.

...an amazing troupe...at home with the beautiful high extensions and whipping fouettes of ballet as they are with the alarming pops and rolls of breakdancing... [*Birdbrain* is] one of the most hazardous explosions of movement seen in London in years.

The Times, London



The Fondue Set

Blue Moves

A bumpy ride through the world of the female psyche, exploring the humour, pain and peril of a night on the town. With nods to David Lynch and Alfred Hitchcock, this work visits female archetypes from the worlds of film—the femme fatale, the damsel in distress and the paranoid wall flower. A short, sharp, accessible work.
50 mins, 3 performers

Bringing laughter and tragedy back to dance, The Fondue Set (Elizabeth Ryan, Emma Saunders, Jane McKernan) have performed at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival, the Adelaide Fringe Festival, the Antistatic dance event, Sydney's Performance Space and the 2003 Melbourne International Arts Festival.

An ode to...femme[s] fatale, the sadness underlying humour and the darker side of a girls' night out...an engaging and riveting piece of dance.
Revolver



Queensland Ballet

Double Take

Two strongly contrasting works showcase the creativity of artistic director and chief choreographer, François Klaus, and the physicality and musicality of the Queensland Ballet dancers. A joyful exploration of the strong rhythms and perpetual motion of four movements from Bach's keyboard concerti followed by a powerful interpretation of Stravinsky's monumental *Rite of Spring*.
75 minutes, 18 performers

With a reputation for freshness and energy, the company's eclectic repertoire ranges from short works for children to new, full-length story ballets. Klaus, a Hamburg Ballet Principal for 19 years, has a strong commitment to nurturing emerging choreographers and to exposing dancers and audiences to the world's most vital and creative dance, performing works by major contemporary European choreographers such as John Neumeier, William Forsythe, and Stephan Thoss.

Lucy Guerin Inc.

Melt/The Ends of Things

In an intensely focused and dynamic duet amplified with motion graphics, *Melt* explores each degree of a rise from freezing to boiling point in the relationship between two women. *The Ends of Things* explores the resonance of endings. As one man's life draws to a close, boundaries between reason and chaos collapse, unleashing wild and humorous fantasies.
85 mins, 4 performers

One of Australia's leading choreographers, Lucy Guerin has been commissioned by Chunky Move, Dance Works, Tasdance, Ros Warby, Woo Co (Denmark) and Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project, USA. She is the recipient of the Sidney Myer Performing Arts Award; several Green Room Awards; the Prix d'auteur from the Rencontres Choreographiques Internationales de Bagnolet (France); and a 'Bessie' New York Dance and Performance Award. Her work has toured the USA, Europe and Australia. *Melt/The Ends of Things* has toured to seven cities in the US and Canada.

Trevor Patrick's portrayal...is a stunning performance, crammed with subtle nuances of affecting humility and daring.
The New York Times



...quintessential Guerin: deliciously detached and saturated with sophisticated optical illusions.
The Oregonian





...a most remarkable moment in the...evolution of Butoh history.
Cut In, Tokyo

Tony Yap, Yumi Umiumare

How could you even begin to understand?

A highly original ongoing 'devotional work' with versions 1 to 29 performed over 7 years in Australia, Japan and Malaysia in gallery, church, landscape and performance spaces. A synthesis of Asian shamanistic trance-dance, Butoh and contemporary western traditions, this work investigates the principles of yin-yang as a sensibility in performance, as an expression of Asian identity and as a possibility for cultural harmony and transformation.
40 mins, 2 performers

Tony Yap is an accomplished dancer, director, choreographer and visual artist and has worked extensively in Australia and internationally. His dance theatre language is informed by psycho-physical research, Asian dance forms including Butoh, voice and visual design. For Yumi Umiumare see *Tokyo DasSHOKU Girl*. Winner of a 2001 Victorian Green Room Award, *How could you...* received an outstanding response at JADE 2002 in Tokyo.

In a stunningly compelling performance, they shift from one meditative state to another, the dynamics changing from quiet composure to frenzied ecstasy.
The Age

Yumi Umiumare

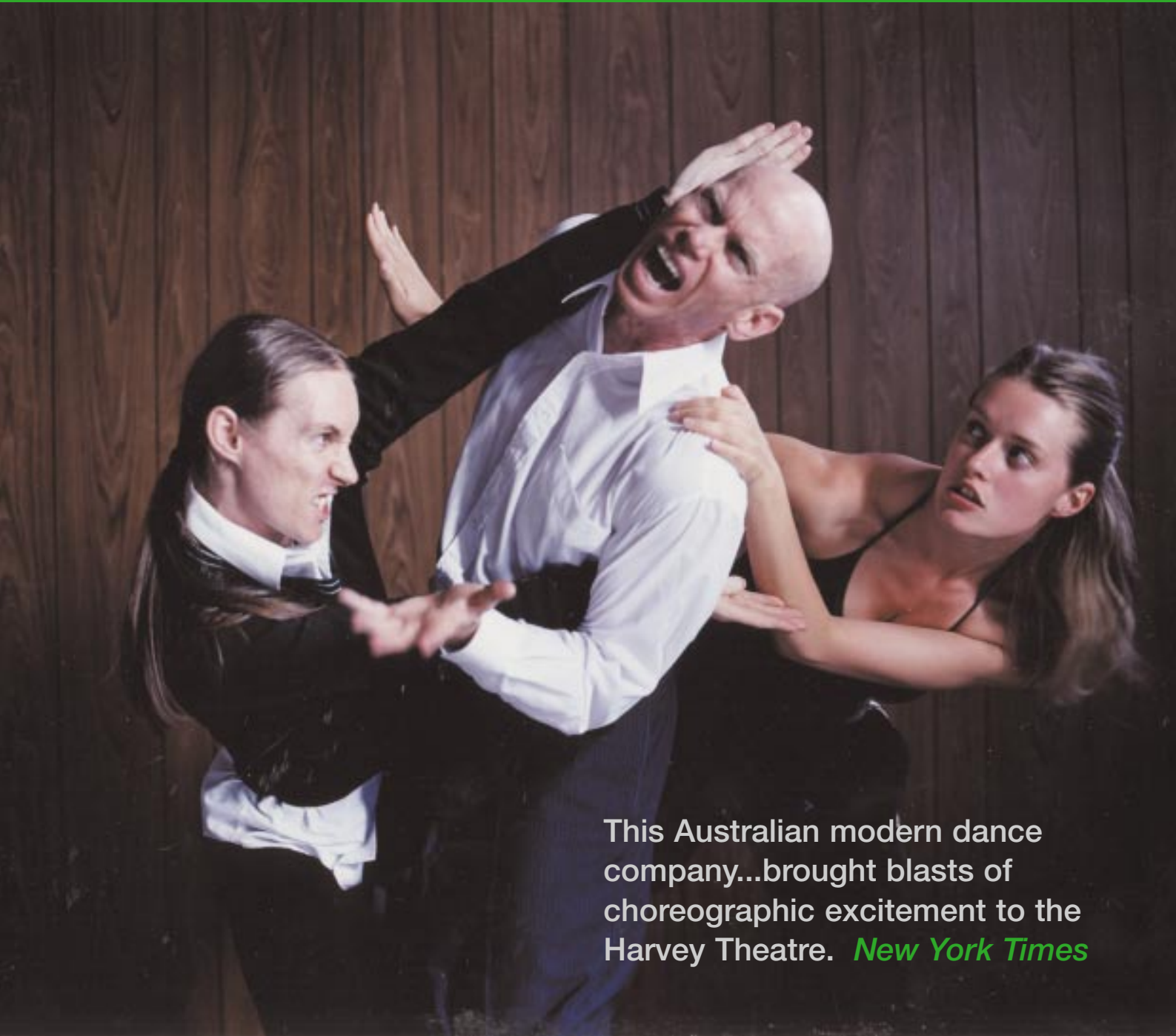
Tokyo DasSHOKU Girl

A breathtaking torrent of choreographic, theatrical and musical ideas, this work explores the underbelly of contemporary Tokyo. DasSHOKU, which translates as 'bleaching', strips the color from the happy face of consumerism and challenges the myth of the polite and compliant Japanese woman. Winner of the 2000 Green Room Award for Most Innovative Use of Form.
70 mins, 3 performers

Yumi Umiumare came to Australia as part of the internationally acclaimed Butoh company Dai Rakudakan. Since migrating here she has focused on solo and collaborative dance projects. *INORI-in-visible* was presented at Traces 2003—a post-Butoh festival at Dansescenen, Copenhagen. Her collaborative work with Tony Yap has toured to Brisbane, Sydney, Tokyo and Kuala Lumpur.



...a shocking, sprawling, comedic assault of a cabaret...daring and exceedingly entertaining.
The Age



This Australian modern dance company...brought blasts of choreographic excitement to the Harvey Theatre. *New York Times*

Chunky Move

Tense Dave

A bold theatrical exploration of hidden impulses and covert acts. Dave stumbles through the worlds of five anonymous characters who, isolated in their individual spaces, are living in worlds full of neurosis and perversity. As the stage turns they are caught in the spotlight of unexpected scrutiny in actions that usually pass unseen, until the walls melt and Dave is left in the middle,

surrounded by elegiac thoughts of love and tawdry routines from forgotten musicals. Premiered at the 2003 Melbourne International Arts Festival.
65 mins, 6 performers

Chunky Move is the state of Victoria's major contemporary dance company. Artistic director Gideon Obarzanek's choreographic

credits include commissions for Graz Opera Ballet (Austria), Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company (Israel), Nederlands Dans Theater (Holland), and the Repertory Dance Theatre (USA). He has received the Sir Robert Helpmann Scholarship, the Prime Minister's Young Creative Fellowship, a Mo Award and has been nominated for Russia's

Benois de la Danse Prize. Chunky Move has an impressive record of international touring.

Ultra-contemporary dance, kitsch and techno...poetic and furious. An incredible visual tornado.
La Provence, France



Branch Nebula

Sentimental Reason

In the summer of 1999 a newspaper reported that a man had stolen a horse, bound its legs, stripped off his clothes and had sex with it in broad daylight. A sense of ever-present danger and lurking darkness pervades this intensely visceral, fast, funny and sexy work drawing on dance, acrobatics and theatre.
23 mins, 2 performers

Branch Nebula, founded by Lee Wilson and Mirabelle Wouters, combines sound, installation and physical theatre to create an idiosyncratic performance style informed by a critical engagement with contemporary culture. The company has toured internationally and nationally and undertaken a residency at Les Bain Connective, Brussels.

...leaves Peter Shaffer's *Equus* in the dust. Fast, loud, sexy, funny, dangerous and disturbing...
The Sun-Herald

Tracks Inc.

Janganpa

Performed by Warlpiri and Anmatyere singers and dancers from the Central Desert of Australia, *Janganpa* comprises songs and dances as performed by traditional elders as deeds to their ancestral lands. This is the first time they have been performed together outside their traditional sites. The elders approached Tracks in order to invigorate the passing down of traditional culture to the young. This is a complex and hauntingly beautiful performance.
60 mins, 14 performers



In large scale performances that powerfully connect place, people and spirit, Tracks has a national reputation for producing dance events that bring together artists and communities, giving voice to Northern Territory culture. The *Janganpa* dancers are a group of Warlpiri and Anmatyere singers, dancers, painters and actors.

Grave, gripping, traditional, the debut Western performance by the Central Desert's Janganpa Dancers...was the signature event of this year's Alice Springs Festival.
The Australian



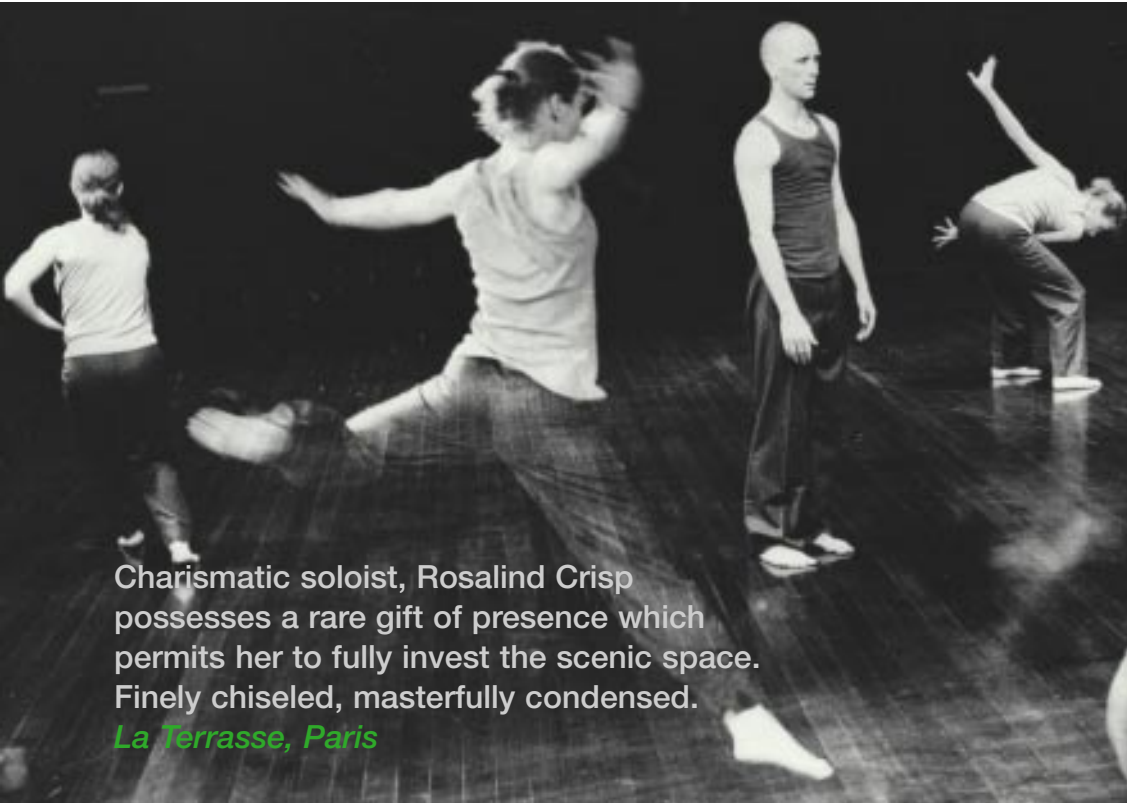
Kay Armstrong

Rara Avis

With pathos, humour and a keen sense of the absurd, Kay Armstrong fuses movement, imagery and spoken text, hijacking that icon of Australian machismo, the motor vehicle, and taking us on a very personal road trip. In suburbs littered with beer cans and memories of sex on the back seat, Armstrong transforms into a transcendent swan only to crash into a driverless car on a long, flat, straight road.
50 mins, 1 performer

Kay Armstrong is a freelance dancer and theatre performer who has produced three solo works since 2000 and enjoyed a long-standing relationship with One Extra Dance Company.

...a singular talent with a sharp dance theatre sensibility.
RealTime



Charismatic soloist, Rosalind Crisp possesses a rare gift of presence which permits her to fully invest the scenic space. Finely chiseled, masterfully condensed.
La Terrasse, Paris

Force Majeure/Kate Champion

Same, same But Different

Taking its inspiration from our enduring ability to keep on struggling for love, this co-commission of Sydney and Melbourne International Arts Festivals uses a dexterous blend of film, dance and theatre. Live action interacts with life-sized film imagery in a tour de force production that defies categorisation. Recipient of the 2000 Helpmann Award for Best Visual or Physical Theatre Production, and the Australian Dance Award for Best Female Dancer for Roz Hervey's performance.
60 min, 8 performers

The Force Majeure ensemble is a highly-regarded creative team under the artistic direction of Kate Champion, multi-talented dancer, DV8 collaborator, choreographer, director and writer who has received a Green Room Award and a Mo Award.

...handsome, entertaining and beautifully performed.
The Australian



Captivating from start to finish...fresh, stylish, thought-provoking, entertaining.
The Sydney Morning Herald

Rosalind Crisp

raft/tread

raft is a solo composed of a series of visual songs, each created by taking a thread from another and treating it to interruptions, enlargements and distortions. *tread* is a work for 4 dancers exploring the exchange and slippage that can occur between body ecologies. *raft/tread* was commissioned by Michel Caserta of la Biennale nationale de danse du Val-de-Marne, Paris, 2002.
52 mins, 4 performers

Rosalind Crisp's work has been presented in Australia, Japan, Korea and Europe. She has been awarded a Women and Arts Fellowship, an Australian Dance Award for Best Female Dance Performer of the Year and a Fellowship from the Dance Board of the Australia Council. She established the Omeo Dance Studio in 1996, a significant focal point for contemporary choreographic research and improvisation in Sydney.



BalletLab

Amplification

Researched at a hospital emergency ward and at the Melbourne morgue, *Amplification* magnifies the 1.6 seconds 'dissociation' freeze time which occurs at the moment of impact in a car accident. Skidding, sliding and crashing into a world of body bags, this work deconstructs and reconstructs the site of impact with a fascination for the body in chaos. A densely layered, highly technical and studied partnering of dance and installation. 60 mins, 5 performers

Established by artistic director Phillip Adams, BalletLab is one of Australia's most experimental and challenging contemporary dance companies, critiquing contemporary culture and provoking dialogue between dance and hybrid arts practice. The company has toured nationally and to Germany, England and Mongolia.

...resonates like a Gothic story book ballet... possibly the city's best this year.

The Australian

Clare Dyson

Intimate Drowning

A pond of milk, suspended falling letters, a waterfall of salt and light globes frozen in blocks of ice dripping onto static performers. A promenade theatre where the audience peeps through slits in the installation's walls, walks on stage and is seated for a reflective exploration on death, loss and the rituals of grieving. 40 mins, 3 performers

Clare Dyson's process involves a melding of practices between movement, visual installation, light and audience involvement. She has created works in Australia, Europe and America. She has been awarded an Emerging Artist Fellowship, a Choreographic Centre Fellowship and a Queen's Trust Award.

...beautiful, lingering images and riveting moments of movement and stillness that pierce the soul...another compelling, affecting work by Dyson [that] will stay with me for some time.
RealTime



One Extra Company Ltd

Oysterland

Three idiosyncratic women—one overcome by inertia, one bound by her past and one finding her way through a wind storm—explore modes of 17th century courtly dance in a very personal dance work. A collaboration between director/choreographer Michael Whaites and performer/choreographers Jan Pinkerton, Julie-Anne Long and Kay Armstrong. 60 mins, 3 performers

Michael Whaites is known for his powerful performances as a dancer, working in the US and Germany for many years. His choreographic credits include numerous Australian productions and 3 independent works in New York. One Extra Company is a Sydney-based facilitator and producer with a long history of creating innovative dance.



...modern dance informed by a sense of mission seems almost miraculous. **Los Angeles Times**

Bangarra Dance Theatre Company

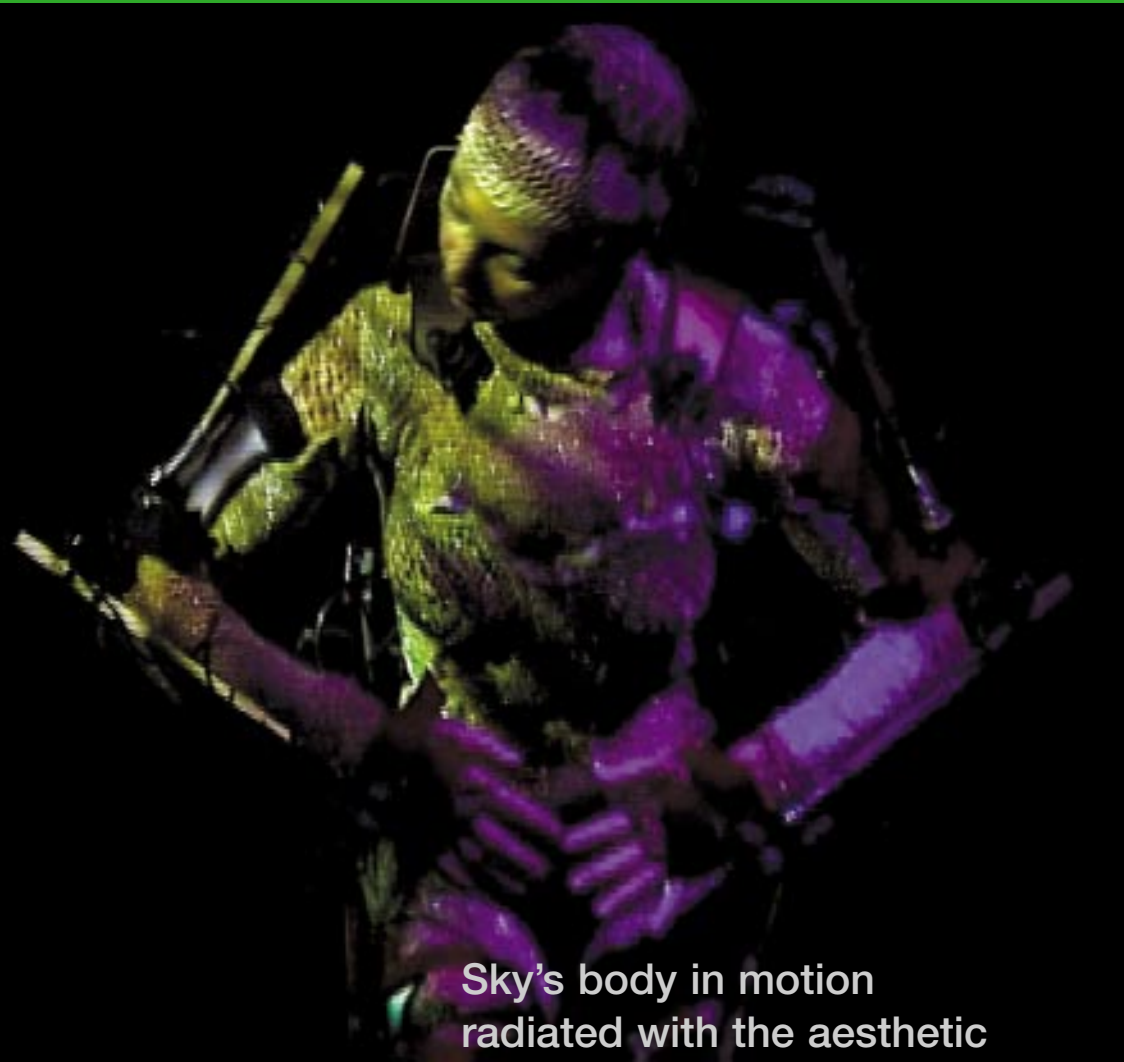
Bush

Bush is inspired by the Dreamtime creation stories of Arnhem Land in northern Australia. Between the last breath of sunset and the first light of dawn is a mysterious and secret space—reptilian creatures slither from dark caves, a moth emerges from its cocoon, the land erupts pushing up mountains and carving waterholes. The world is being born.

Bangarra Dance Theatre finds its spiritual energy and inspiration in the cultural values and traditions of Indigenous Australia, creating ground-breaking works that are artistically innovative and technically accomplished. Bangarra's productions have toured nationally and internationally to critical and popular acclaim and have received the Matilda and numerous Helpmann awards. In 1997 the company and the Australian Ballet joined forces in *Rites*, choreographed by artistic director Stephen Page to Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* for the Melbourne Festival and in 1999 toured to the Sydney Opera House and New York's City Center. In 2002 *Corroboree* was performed in Beijing, Hong Kong and Guangzhou and the Monaco Dance Forum.

An extraordinarily muscular production whose focused energy rarely lapses and whose surrealist edge never compromises the integrity of the traditional stories being depicted.
The Australian





Sky’s body in motion radiated with the aesthetic beauty of exposed machinery...her live movement [is] doubled into animated screen imagery. *Eyeline*

company in space

C03

C03 is a live virtual reality performance capturing the tensions between the human and augmented body, the organic and cybernetic, in a merging of live dance, animation and live cinema. Surrounded by 3D film environments and animated characters, a lone performer wearing a motion-capture suit embarks on a journey through abstract terrain in a remarkable exploration of body and identity. 45 mins, 1 performer

Founded by artistic directors John McCormick and Hellen Sky, the ground-breaking Company In Space applies technology to movement with works that create dialogues between visual, aural and kinetic perceptions. The company has performed in major national and international festivals with C03 appearing in the UK and China.

Kage Physical Theatre

Nowhere Man

Exploring issues of identity through gymnastics, dance and theatrical illusion, this is the story of a man who has been seemingly left behind, unable to relate to modern life. Finding nothing familiar, he ventures into a world of rich visual imagery where the ordinary is magically transformed into the exotic. Cameo roles include a female body builder, an ex-Olympic gymnast and a 12 foot python. 85 mins, 9 performers

Kage Physical Theatre aims to discover new ways to integrate drama and theatrical illusion with dance, creating dance theatre which is rich and raw in its physicality and humour. Founded in 1996 by Kate Denborough and Gerard Van Dyck, Kage has toured internationally, winning the Grand Jury Prize at the 12th Saitama International Creative Dance Contest, Japan.

For originality, content, theatricality and sheer entertainment Kage was outstanding. *The Sydney Morning Herald*



Dean Walsh

Flesh: Memo

A virtuosic solo dance/theatre work about memory that involves the gaps in familial relationships, performed in extraordinarily contrasting dance phrases. A culmination of 10 years of solo work exploring domestic violence, homophobia and male sexuality with humour, candour and fearlessness. 70 mins, 1 performer

Dean Walsh has devised and performed 16 short solos and one full-length work, touring nationally and in the UK. He has also collaborated and performed with many performance practitioners. In 2002 he won the Australian Dance Award for Outstanding Performance by a Male Dancer (in ADT’s *The Age of Unbeauty*) and the prestigious Robert Helpmann Scholarship which has allowed him to research and develop new work with Lloyd Newson of DV8 Physical Theatre in London and Paul Selwyn-Norton in Amsterdam.

...a sublime mover who is not afraid to open his mouth...beautifully articulated...a mesmerising body in motion... *RealTime*

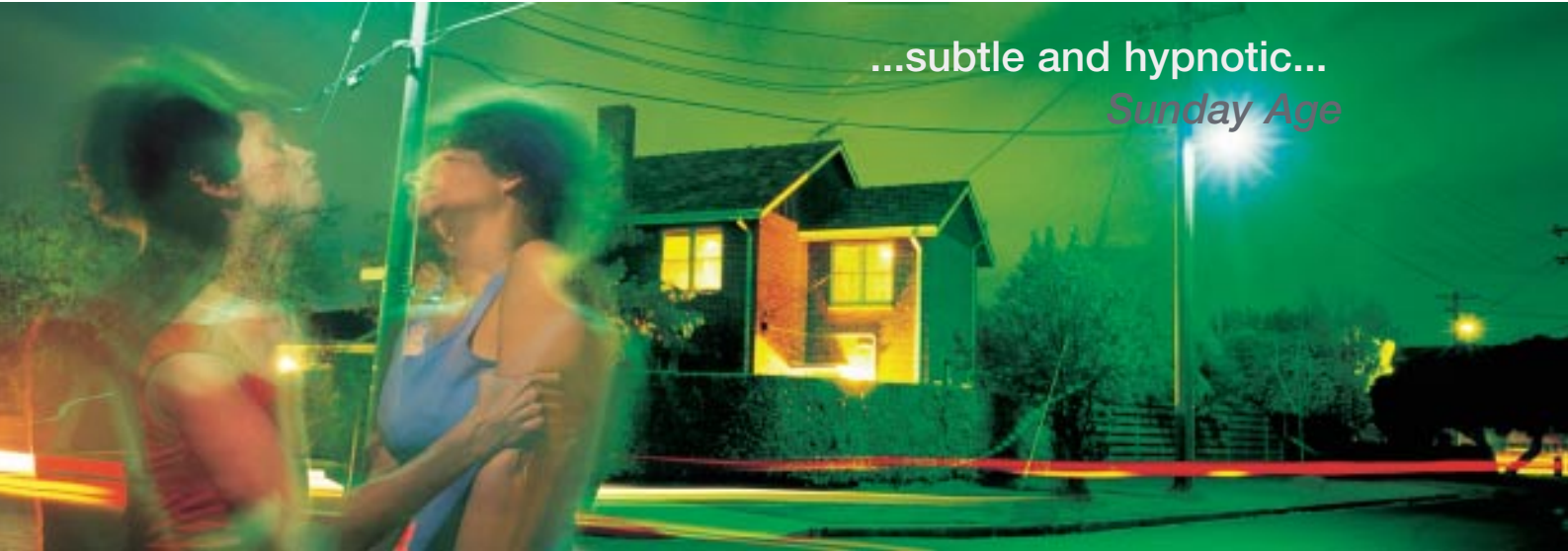
Helen Herbertson & Ben Cobham

Morphia Series

From Morpheus, son of Hypnos and the God of Dreams, a series of visual haikus, richly phantasmal and intimate. Audiences of 12 only are taken to a secret location and enter a pitch black silence; as light grows a figure moves in the gleaming stillness of a subterranean world. 45 mins, 1 performer

Helen Herbertson has been creating intense, confronting and highly detailed dance performance for over two decades winning Green Room Awards including Outstanding Creative Collaboration in 1999 for *Delirium*. Ben Cobham’s lighting and design work has been an influential contributor to dance and theatre in Melbourne, with yearly Green Room nominations and awards. *Morphia Series* has been presented at the Melbourne and Adelaide Festivals, New Moves (new territories), Glasgow and Asian Next Wave, Tokyo.

...a combination of powerfully simple stage mechanics and compelling, perfectly distilled visuals, this insinuatingly emotive piece tapers down to a point of touching human vulnerability... *The Guardian, UK*



...subtle and hypnotic...
Sunday Age

Dance Works

Murray-Anderson Road

Two duets, *Kelly-Ann* and *Sue*, feature young female characters on voyages of sexual self-discovery. Abstract yet accessible and intimate, this work displays Sandra Parker's pleasure in the detailed subtlety of the body as memories of adolescence are pondered and explored. 50 mins, 3 performers

Engaging many of Australia's leading choreographers and

dancers, Dance Works has produced over 140 new dance works in its 20 year history. With a strong focus on choreographic development and research as well as an outstanding performance history, the company has performed in major Australian and international festivals and venues including Les Plateaux 2000 de la Biennale nationale danse du Val-de-Marne, France and the Almada Festival, Portugal.

Igneous

Body in Question

An appealing and accessible multimedia dance-theatre work incorporating live performance, video and slide projections and a life-sized puppet. *Body in Question* portrays the true story of an Australian dancer who—after paralysing an arm in an accident—journeys through rehabilitation and disability in recovery of self-expression, finding new angles on perceiving the body, and new ways to move. 55 mins, 1 performer

Igneous' interests lie in research, process, interactions, exploring diversity, challenging values, and interdisciplinary and cross-cultural research and collaboration. Dancer-choreographer James Cunningham and director-choreographer-photographer-multimedia artist Suzon Fuks utilise true stories, details of daily life, the spectacular and the unspectacular in multimedia performances with a strong dance base. *Body In Question* has been presented in Australia, Europe and Asia and will return to Europe in 2004.

Reinventing the choreographic space... A flag-ship show of the festival [2003 Biennale Internationale des Arts de la Marionette].
Telerama, Paris

Bernadette Walong

Savage Burn

Based on a poem, *Savage Burn* refers to the tidal motions of the sea as a metaphor for the flow in relationships and continues an ongoing exploration of dancing en pointe. On surfaces such as river stones (*Slipstream*, Australian Ballet, 1998), gravel (*The Seed*, NORPA, 2000) and natural ochre (*Ochres*, Bangarra Dance Theatre, 1994-96), pointe work has been explored in an evocation of the movement of long-legged water birds such as cranes and brolgas. *Savage Burn* premiered in 1999 with the Australian Dance Theatre. 30 mins, 10 performers

Bernadette Walong has worked in dance, theatre, education and film. She has created works for leading national and international companies including Bangarra Dance Theatre where she co-created the acclaimed *Ochres*. She has been a choreographer-in-residence in Scotland, Cuba and Asia.

Walong gives the girls in particular great moves—feet sharply en pointe at the end of loosely drooping bodies.
Dance Australia



Gravity Feed

Host

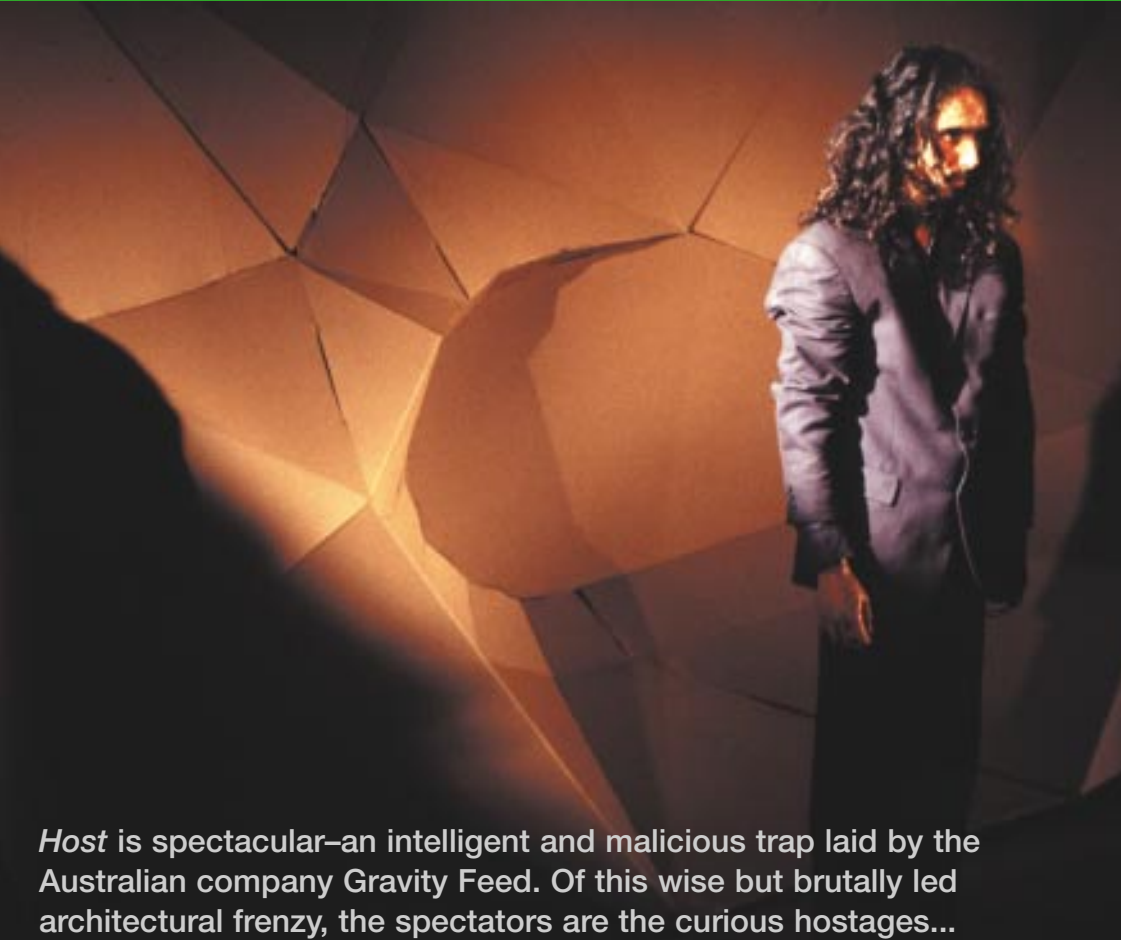
An innovative collaboration between Gravity Feed Performance Ensemble and digital artist Horst Kiechle, *Host* is an event in which architecture is put into motion, and human emotions, which have their source in place, respond. In a monumental cardboard environment which shifts around the spectators, the movement style of Gravity Feed evokes a suspension of the everyday consciousness that is shaped by the traditional box within which most of our lives are contained. 60 mins, 8 performers

Gravity Feed is an all-male performance ensemble that has evolved a unique architectural performance-theatre, employing large sets to create potent, subversive and densely atmospheric events. Movement, objects, sound, light, live-feed video and audience are equal partners in a traversal of visual arts, architecture and theatre. *Host* toured to Paris as part of the Novembre Australien season in 2002 produced by la Biennale nationale de danse du Val-de-Marne.

Host is spectacular—an intelligent and malicious trap laid by the Australian company Gravity Feed. Of this wise but brutally led architectural frenzy, the spectators are the curious hostages...

[the] Australians succeed without any concessions in weaving an artistic link between themselves and the audience.

Le Monde



Paul Gazzola

Bird Talk #1 – 7

The transformation of self is ongoing—we are in a constant state of becoming other/another. Exposing the dancer's life of mimicry, this work investigates the notion of the self and movement as expenditure: replaceable, reusable. The *Bird Talk* series has toured to festivals in Melbourne, Johannesburg, Portugal, Sydney and Perth. 50 mins, 1 performer

Paul Gazzola's diverse arts practice includes dance, performance, video, installation and set design.

He resides between Berlin and Perth, presenting works both in Australia and internationally. He was the inaugural recipient of a WA Performing Arts Exchange to South Africa and a founding member of the Perth-based id339 dance group who have performed in Europe, Australia and South Africa.

...an intimate choreographic study integrating mixed media with integrity.
The Star, Johannesburg



Chapel of Change

Tearoom

In an experiment with depth of field, spatial consciousness and illusion, the audience peers down into a mysterious tearoom, witnessing the fantasies of the proprietor and his female clients. *Tearoom* is a world of unconscious wanderings, magic and metaphor where erotica is a vehicle for metaphysical speculation.
85 mins, 3 performers

Chapel of Change is an innovative company working in physical theatre and dance forms. Touring has included Jordan, Lebanon and Syria and opening the 9th Cairo International Festival at the Cairo Opera House. *Tearoom* was awarded 2 Green Room Awards including Most Innovative New Form Theatre.

...a haunting, beautifully inspired episodic movement piece...one of our most extraordinary companies.
Sunday Art, ABC Radio



...intense, many-layered, intricately worked creations where the body, decentred and edgy, negotiates the mutated, arcane landscape of contemporary culture. De Quincey and her collaborators have created an epitaph for our time. *Saturday Age*

Tess de Quincey

Nerve 9

Weaving between the work of three acclaimed Australian artists, poet Amanda Stewart, digital sequencer Debra Petrovitch and new media artist Francesca da Rimini, and in response to writings by Julia Kristeva, dancer Tess de Quincey invites the audience into a feminine space where body and word coexist. A raw and edgy layering of visual and sonic poetry interwoven with a choreography drawn from Eastern and Western dance traditions.
60 mins, 1 performer

Choreographer and dancer Tess de Quincey has worked extensively in Europe, Japan and Australia as performer, teacher and director. Her company De Quincey Co has its base in Body Weather—a synthesis of eastern and western performance traditions with an emphasis on site-specific and durational works. *Nerve 9* was presented as part of Novembre Australien produced by la Biennale nationale de danse du Val-de-Marne, Paris in 2002.

Stuttgarter Zeitung
Julie-Anne Long

MissXL

A 3-part solo which slips between dance, theatre and contemporary burlesque. With grand theatrical manners and unnerving intimacy MissXL cavorts, recites and serenades as she transforms from terrifying ice-cream vendor to tantalising femme fatale and fading dance star.
90 mins, 1 performer

Formerly associate director of One Extra Company, Julie-Anne Long is a freelance performer/choreographer who creates her own idiosyncratic and provocative solo works as well as choreographing extensively for



...dangerous...rife with irony, erotica, fear and loneliness.
Revolver

Expressions Dance Company

Virtually Richard³

Tracing the fortunes of Shakespeare's Richard III as if he is on the slow, inexorable cycle of a wheel of fortune, this work focuses on the women in the play and their anguish, fury and terror as the attractive and wicked rogue goes about destroying their lives.
82 minutes, 8 performers

Under the direction of Maggi Sietsma, Expressions creates works in which speech, dance and visual media combine and confront each other. Radical yet accessible, Expressions has performed in 13 countries and in 1997 was the recipient of the prestigious Sidney Myer Award for Excellence in the Performing Arts. The company's extensive touring includes international dance festivals in Taipei, Stuttgart, Linz, Beijing and Tokyo.

Explosive dance theatre.





Christos Linou

Amphibitos: a militant dance ritual

In a sinister, comical investigation of corporeality and militancy, a man responds to meeting a frog with trance and apocalyptic utterances. *Amphibitos* examines the fragility of boundaries between self and environment and how the human inability to metamorphose leads us instead to alter that environment. The work incorporates ritual acts, vaudeville comedy, voice, film and text from The Book of Job, The Koran and the Dead Sea Scrolls. 40 mins, 1 performer

Christos Linou is a choreographer and performer integrating dance, performance, literature, visual imagery and voice with new and



Delia Silvan

Night Vision

Four musicians and one dancer inhabit a world of hidden impulses, alienation and compelling beauty, interacting in the parallel languages of dance and music. The boundaries separating dreamer and dreamed dissolve. Perspectives between musicians and dancer shift, kaleidoscope and emerge re-formed. 55 mins, 5 performers

Delia Silvan has worked with the Australian Dance Theatre, Lucy Guerin, Neil Adams and Dance Works and was a founding member of Leigh Warren + Dancers. She appears in the Paul Cox film *The Diaries of Vaslav Nijinsky*. She was awarded Outstanding Performance by an Individual at the Australian Dance Awards in 1999. In 2001 she launched her career as an independent dancer and choreographer.

...a dancer of spellbinding presence who has that rarest quality of giving the impression that every part of her body has a unique intelligence and expressiveness, and yet the whole always coheres. *The Australian*

dance and performance companies. **Dance North**

Double Thrill

In this dance theatre double bill, *Bodies in the Library*, choreographed by Brian Lucas, explores the analogy between human bodies and books—dancers' stories are embodied as literary genres. *Elegy*, about the need to dance, is choreographed by artistic director Jane Pirani and dedicated to the memory of her dance mentor mother, Anne Roberts. 100min, 7 performers

Dance North tours nationally, with a strong commitment to regional and remote communities in Queensland, and to China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam and Thailand.

...a host of outstanding pieces which combine to make a beautiful tribute to the company's founder. *The Townsville Bulletin*



traditional technologies. **SHOTT dance theatre**

The Morning After, the Night Before

A flirtatious, farcical, sassy solo show that careens across the spectrum of love, lust and indifference. Laying bare the search for Mr or Ms Right, the work is driven by athletic dance, humour and monologues that leave the audience blushing. 45 mins, 1 performer

SHOTT dance theatre generates challenging and engaging

performances that shift expectations of physical and dance theatre. Shannon Bott is a choreographer, performer, workshop facilitator and teacher of dance and physical theatre. She received the Dancer to Watch, Dance Australia Award in 2000.

...a compelling performer, dancing with strength and elasticity and prepared to take risks.

Sue Healey Company

Fine Line Terrain

Fine Line Terrain explores the fragile spaces we inhabit—the fine lines separating order from chaos, gravity from levity—with emotionally charged dance that maps the precariousness of our relationship to the world and to each other. 60 mins, 5 performers

Choreographer Sue Healey is a recipient of an Australia Council Dance Board Fellowship and has a reputation for creating dance of sensual, physical and imaginative complexity, traversing film, installation, performance and

international collaboration. Her award winning film *Niche* was a finalist in the IMZ Dance Screen (Monaco Dance Forum 2002) and she has an ongoing relationship with The Aichi Arts Centre in Nagoya Japan, creating 4 major performance events with Japanese and Australian performers (1997-2000). 02).

...a dynamic mix of natural and highly stylised movement, sharp and creamy phrasing...a memorable performance. *The Sydney Morning Herald.*





Shelley Lasica

History Situation

Five characters in an unidentified, enclosed interior. Something happens. The drama unfolds. Set in a particular time and place without ever describing or limiting its possibilities for the audience, *History Situation* explores narrative as architecture in its structuring of character and identity. 50 mins, 5 performers

Shelley Lasica makes and performs dance work in Australia and abroad, generally locating her work in non-theatre spaces. She works solo and with small ensembles of visual artists, video makers and composers.

Unlike Lasica's earlier more emotionally austere dances, this is a compassionate piece. While the choreographic language is as complex, it seems to mark a departure...blessed with dancers who give beautifully defined performances.

The Age

skadada

Electronic Big Top

An innovative multimedia multi-artform performance combining breathtaking circus, virtuoso dance, martial arts, aerial dance, cutting edge visuals, original live music, acrobatics, illusion and electronic soundscapes. *Electronic Big Top* has been performed in major festivals including the 4th Shanghai International Arts Festival in 2002. 70 mins, 12-18 performers

skadada is an innovative multi-artform company featuring performances that are exciting, enthralling and entertaining. skadada has toured extensively throughout Australia and Asia to public and critical acclaim.



...a new style performance of multi-media dream acrobatics...an intense and excellent experience.

Shanghai Xinmin Evening Post



Sydney Dance Company

Ellipse

Ellipse is a mesmerising work that combines bold physicality with subtle artistry. Abstract and non-narrative, it was created by Graeme Murphy in response to the powerful and eclectic music of Australian composer Matthew Hindson. Nine scores form small chapters that take the dancers through moments of introspective beauty and dazzling virtuosity. 85 mins, 17 performers

This premiere contemporary dance company has been led since 1976 by artistic director Graeme Murphy who is widely recognised for his uncanny ability to illuminate music in a definitive choreographic language.

...a miracle of daring, dance technique, athleticism and intelligence.

The Financial Review

His repertoire includes works for The Australian Ballet, Nederlands Dans Theater, the Royal New Zealand Ballet, Mikhail Baryshnikov and The Metropolitan Opera, New York. He has led Sydney Dance Company on more than 20 international tours to Asia, Europe, North and South America, and has numerous Australian Dance awards and a Helpmann Award for Best Choreography.

[Murphy] gives us a space, music, light, forms and movements, then fuses and animates them with his typically generous spirit. *The Australian*



Restless Dance Company

Starry Eyed

We all have dreams. Between the passionate desire for stardom and the reality of shifts at factories, fast food outlets and part time work, the Restless youth ensemble dancers explore definitions of success and the pathways and obstacles to achieving their goals. 50 mins, 11 performers

Restless Dance Company works with young people aged 15-26, with and without disabilities, to create inspiring dance theatre and workshop programs. The company believes that people with disabilities can be powerful, expressive and distinctive performers and create dynamic dance theatre which redefines the nature of dance.

Do most of the Restless dancers have the kinds of bodies usually associated with dance? No, they don't...[Restless] confirms the power of movement to stir the imagination and the emotions. *The Australian*

Fiona Malone

The Obcell

Disturbingly beautiful interactive dance theatre, multimedia performance using sensors and surveillance cameras, reflecting the relationship between humans, movement and technology. A human experimental subject is placed in isolation and regulated by an interactive behaviour modification cell. The performer wears sensor-based technology designed for the use of dancers and composers at the Danish Institute of Electro-acoustic Music. 65 mins, 1 performer

Fiona Malone's extensive work with dance companies and independent experimental artists has included the CH-Tanztheater in Zurich, Opera Australia, The Australian Dance Theatre and the Belgian multimedia, dance and technology company, Charleroi Dansers. Malone was awarded a 2003 Fellowship by the Australian Choreographic Centre.

Viewing live performance as a 'temporary autonomous zone' where difference, multiplicity and the non-homogenised can be acknowledged



Helen Omand and Co.

Up Front and Naked

What do we allow and what do we keep hidden? Pushing the boundaries of the unspoken consensus underlying social behaviour *Up Front and Naked* is an investigation of new media, sound, text and dance, testing our borders as both performers and viewers in public spaces. 30 mins, 4 performers

and celebrated, Omand creates challenging yet accessible works. She has worked with companies in Europe and Australia including the Rose Street Theatre (NY), Danswerk Plaats, Muiderpoort Theatre, the Liminal Institute (Netherlands), Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Performance Space and the Australian Dance Theatre.

Omand...pushes the boundaries of conventional theatre and dance...a compelling performer. *Dance Australia*



Swift's synergy between artforms reaches a rarely obtained balance... Warby's harmony is spectacular. *Herald Sun*

Ros Warby

Swift

An elegant and humorous interweaving of dynamic vignettes that traverse the many physical, physiological and emotional states of a female character, *Swift* centres on the complex, often unknowable qualities that prompt transformations. Ros Warby continues her explorations with film, composition and solo dance, appearing with long time collaborators, cellist Helen Mountfort and designer/filmmaker Margie Medlin. 50 mins, 2 performers

A highly respected performer and dancemaker for 15 years, Warby's choreographic work stems from her ongoing commitment to the development of improvisation and solo performance practice. Her three Green Room Awards include Best Solo Performance (2002). She has toured her work to the Adelaide Festival and to Europe and the USA, 2002-03.

Warby has turned out to be one of Australia's leading dancer-choreographers. *The Australian*

TasDance

Fair Game

Fair Game is inspired by imagery from contemporary Australian author Carmel Bird and an 1832 lithograph by Alfred Ducote in which women are depicted as butterflies. The work explores themes of entrapment and release, physical and intellectual, as interpreted by choreographers Phillip Adams and Natalie Weir. 80 mins, 8 performers

TasDance is a dynamic regionally based dance company which develops challenging and accessible, innovative contemporary dance. Natalie Weir has created work for most of the nation's major dance companies as well as the American Ballet Theatre and the Houston Ballet. Phillip Adams worked in New York for over a decade before returning to establish BalletLab and has been widely commissioned by national dance companies and the Guangdong Modern Dance Company in China.

Makes sharp points about objectification, brutalised emotions and potential terror. *The Australian*





Paul O'Sullivan

Shopping Fashion Travel...and Genocide!

This solo work explores our duplicity in the state of the world and explodes buzzwords like globalisation, terrorism and weapons of mass destruction in a combination of frenetic movement, stand-up comedy, slapstick, argument, theatre, dance and the low tech world of camcorders. 40 mins, 1 performer

Paul O'Sullivan has worked with significant Australian dance companies for the past 13 years and collaborated on diverse projects in dance, theatre and film. He has created solo shows exploring the use of voice as well as body to layer meaning.

...he flings himself into his attacks with ferocious abandon...O'Sullivan has the rare gift of being able to meld pure dance and verbal theatre. *The Canberra Times*

Sue Peacock

Tempting Fate

In an attempt to change the course of a fatal shooting, 4 dancers and 2 actors play out alternate scenarios. As the plot unravels, the flaws in their relationships are set against technicolour iconic images from the golden age of Hollywood. 30 mins, 6 performers

This project company, led by respected Perth choreographer Sue Peacock, showcases six Australian artists of significant national experience and reputation. Peacock has been a member of the innovative id339 Dancegroup and an instigator of STRUT, the support organisation for independent dance artists in Western Australia. Her latest work, *Give up the Ghost*, premieres at the Perth International Arts Festival in 2004.



Walton et al

No hope no reason

Originally performed in a disused pool hall, this blend of dance, projections, song and text is based on dreams and the dichotomies of reason and feeling, love and terror. 50 mins, 7 performers

Walton et al brings together artists from different disciplines to

collaborate on a project-by-project basis in impressive multimedia creations. Directed by dancer-choreographer Jude Walton, the company makes work for a variety of spaces: art galleries and theatres as well as specific sites.

...beautiful and intriguing. *Eyeline*

This is an ambitious and subtle idea, constantly surprising with its juxtapositions of suspense and humour, sudden pauses and transitions from close connection to cool separation. *West Australian*



Trevor Patrick

Cinnabar Field

A contemplation on the transformations of self that disguise the boundaries between our internal and external worlds. In the first chapter, body movement seems to unlock real and imagined memories embedded in the surface of a wall. In the second, projected images (such as the performer as a boy, and bodies caught between action and stillness) blur with the live action. The highly textured sound and movement vocabulary is based on the sensation of collapse in the body-falling down and falling up. 40 mins, 1 performer

Dancer and choreographer Trevor Patrick has received Green Room Awards for Direction, Outstanding Creative Collaboration and Best Male dancer. His dance films have been shown in Videodanza, Italy, Le Biennale Internationale du film sur l'art, Paris and the Dance on Screen Festival, London. He has taught and danced in Australia and internationally.

Lisa O'Neill

Fugu San

A solo work in which a series of dramatic shifts in focus draw the audience into the performer's emotional world. A cycle of entrances and exits, strange stage traversals and transformations plus shifting soundscape from DJ Emma Pursey create an hypnotic dance reverie. 25 mins, 2 performers

Lisa O'Neill is a performer and choreographer whose practice is informed by the focus, clarity and power of the Suzuki actor training method and philosophy, creating and performing work that is transcendental in its intensity. O'Neill has received a Matilda Award and her solo works have toured nationally and to New Moves (new territories) Glasgow, 2000, 2002 and Asia Contemporary Dance Festival, Osaka, 2002.

...a host of moods through gesture and gaze--astounding, brilliant, utterly captivating. *The Herald, Scotland*

[A] consummate dance artist... [Patrick] transcends dancing to suggest that he inhabits a different time and place. *The Bulletin*



She is funny, confrontational, erotic. She left her audience cheering for more.

The Observer Review, UK





Nalina Wait

sole

A trio of interdisciplinary artists explore the relationship between movement, light and sound in a dynamic loop of influence and response. In three distinct movement territories, shifting landscapes of colour and intensity, the rhythms of movement and live sound create a complex and unexpected dynamic. 15 mins, 3 performers

Nalina Wait has a history of improvised performance and was a founding member of Rosalind Crisp's stella b. She has toured

nationally and internationally and is currently working as part of the performance group Devastation Menu with dancer Lizzie Thomson and musician Clayton Thomas who also join her in sole.

[Wait's] limbs are articulate and neat, the lines of her body are sharp and clear, sometimes expressing mere quivers of sensibility...The rhythms of her movement are complex, unexpected and pleasingly uneven.

RealTime



STEPS Youth Dance Company

Edge Test

Playing off the competitive tension fundamental to reality TV and quiz shows and bringing it into a dance context, *Edge Test* pushes to the limit 16 curiously compelling contestants in a 'dream home' setting that is destined to come crashing down. 55 mins, 16 performers

Stompin Youth Dance Co.

SYNC

What goes on when young people get together and hang out pool-side? Performed in a swimming pool, breathtaking choreography reminiscent of Esther Williams movies combines with intense youth energy straight from mosh pit thrashes, carving up the water with synchronised precision. 50 mins, 9 performers

Led by artistic directors Luke George and Bec Reid and with a commitment to taking the arts into extraordinary landscapes and public spaces, Stompin Youth has built a reputation for relentless fast paced action in dance.

...encourages young people to use and delight in their bodies so skillfully [that] the spirit generated by their work is still palpable.

RealTime

STEPS is a vibrant and energetic dance company of young people, aiming to empower them to create their own culture through accessible, relevant and appealing works. With a national reputation for high calibre workshops and performances, the company tours regionally and nationally.

...a fascinating, multi-layered show that deserves to be seen more than once.

The West Australian



Buzz Dance Theatre

Fracture

Inspired by the charming and alarming versatility of the living skeleton, this work looks at bones and their wondrous capacity to grow, move, break and heal.

Teacups and plates, x-rays and other images feature in Paige Gordon's choreography. 65 mins 6 performers

Buzz Dance Theatre is a company for children and young people, nationally and internationally recognised for its contribution to the inseparable fields of arts and education. Buzz creates exhilarating performances and workshops that increase the awareness and experience of contemporary dance and movement.

...visually and aurally compelling...

The West Australian



[*Munaldjali* is] stunning...the dancers appear possessed by the spirit of the land...one of the standout performances of the Perth International Arts Festival 2001.

The Sunday Times, WA

West Australian Ballet

Scorched

A dynamic program from three Australian choreographers: Stephen Page's *Munaldjali*, a work of enormous power drawing on the choreographer's Indigenous heritage; Simone Clifford's dramatic and inventive, hauntingly poetic ballet *Going Home*; and Simon Dow's magnificent interpretation of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* where primal rhythms, folk themes and ritual emerge. 120 mins, 18 performers

West Australian Ballet, the longest established ballet company operating in Australia, is an accessible, adventurous and dynamic contemporary ballet company of international standards and the most prolific commissioning dance company in Australia, showcasing the country's finest talent.



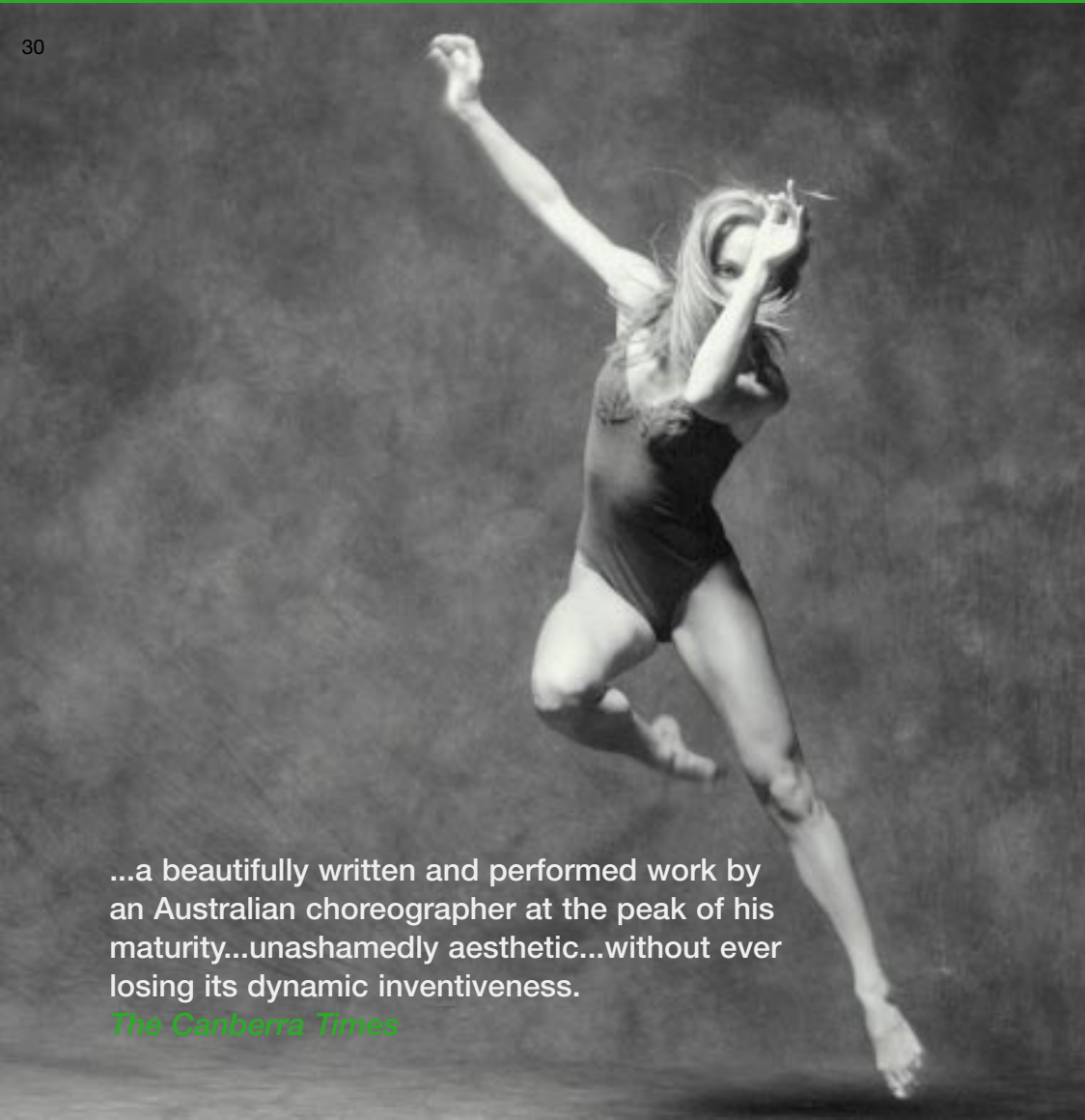
Gerard Van Dyck

The Collapsible Man

In a surreal, vaudeville setting a hapless preacher lacking humility attempts to interact with the collapsible world around him. Influenced by the silent films of the 1920s and utilising dance, drama and puppetry, this solo performance is about a man who learns to accept the principles of uncertainty. 50 mins, 1 performer

Gerard Van Dyck is a dancer, actor, choreographer and co-founder of Kage Physical Theatre. *The Collapsible Man* won two Melbourne Fringe Festival awards in 2002.

...an immediate hit at this year's Melbourne Fringe Festival...Van Dyck uses all his dancery skills in a very understated fashion, the result is an endearing presentation. **RealTime**



Leigh Warren + Dancers

Quick Brown Fox

Elegant, quirky and visually stunning, this collaboration between William Forsythe and Leigh Warren creates a unique movement vocabulary, a 26 letter alphabet that follows the pangram, Quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. 62 mins, 7 performers

Leigh Warren + Dancers has toured nationally and internationally with its unique style of presentation. With sensuous movement, technical virtuosity and choreography that reveals an exquisite attention to poetic detail and subtlety, the company has won the Adelaide Critics Circle Award, three Australian Dance Awards and the Sidney Myer Performing Arts 2000 Group Award. *Quick Brown Fox* won three 2001 Green Room awards. Since its formation in 1993 the company has performed in 3 Adelaide Festivals and toured to Europe and Asia. Leigh Warren danced with the Australian Ballet, Ballet Rambert, Nureyev and Friends and the Nederlands Dans Theater and directed the Australian Dance Theatre.

...elegant lines and puckish good humour. *The Australian*

...a beautifully written and performed work by an Australian choreographer at the peak of his maturity...unashamedly aesthetic...without ever losing its dynamic inventiveness.

The Canberra Times

softcore inc

Private Dancer

Bringing the flesh back into dance, the animal back into the act, the devil into the light, *Private Dancer* journeys beyond the comfortable in a confronting and darkly comic work that plays with notions of public and private sexual desire. This is a one-woman cabaret in 13 parts, moving between karaoke bar, sex club, game show, bingo hall and stand-up comedy, and requiring active audience participation. 55 mins, 1 performer

Wendy McPhee performs entertaining and provocative work that blends popular forms and media, and has worked with contemporary dance, performance and circus companies nationally and internationally. McPhee is acclaimed for edgy, unsettling one-woman shows that investigate female sexuality.

...her particular blend of cabaret, dance, burlesque and strip tease generates a unique experience. *RealTime*



Australian contemporary dance: an introduction

Australian contemporary dance enjoys an almost embarrassing abundance of artists for a population of near 20 million and a profession that is barely 40 years old. Sydney Dance Company leads the 15 companies which form the spine of this profession, celebrating a record 28 years under one artistic director, Graeme Murphy who, like his sinuous, quirky and often irreverent choreography, is now a household name.

Adelaide's tempestuous history found Australian Dance Theatre (ADT), established in Adelaide by Elizabeth Cameron Dalman in 1965, welcoming its sixth director Garry Stewart in 2000, while in 2003, Queensland's Expressions Dance Company celebrated nineteen years under its founding director Maggi Sietsma. Since 1997, under artistic director Gideon Obarzanek, Chunky Move's funky popular culture stamp has fiercely courted a younger club and design-savvy audience both here and overseas.

In smaller companies such as Queensland's Dance North (founded 1985) and Tasmania's Tasdance (founded 1981), Jane Pirani and Annie Greig respectively balance mainstage, education, development and extensive touring to survive while continuing to attract significant choreographers and designers to work with their companies.

Dozens of small project groups and independent artists, many of them represented on these pages, provide the crucial and dynamic counterpoint to the more established companies. The combined platform of company, project and independent sectors offers audiences anything from unadorned movement process to high-end technology and realtime

linkups across the globe, from glossy, fluid dance to hip hop, from fusions of Aboriginal and new forms to dance on film.

Origins

To many, the very multiplicity of genres makes the term 'contemporary dance' redundant, suggesting a maturing field where anything seems possible and orthodoxies, even recent ones, need no longer constrain creativity. The influences shaping today's contemporary dance differ markedly from those of its instigators such as Viennese-born Gertrud Bodenwieser whose expressive, circular Central European Dance offered a liberating non-ballet aesthetic to Australian dance from the 1940s onward. Nederlands Dans Theater's intellectual seriousness and visceral movement built on Graham technique was introduced by Jaap Flier at the Australian Dance Theatre and Dance Company NSW (subsequently Sydney Dance Company), a dance theatre which would inform most of the companies which followed in the 1970s. Other American influences such as Merce Cunningham, Yvonne Rainer and Trisha Brown and the advent of release technique, quickly replaced Graham and her progeny.

Yet all this, like early cinema, seems like ancient history wiped out by the sheer weight and rapidity of change wrought by computer technology, cross-arts hybridity, contact improvisation, popular culture and fusions of styles and genres. All this plus the new wave of influential European dance, from Wim Vandekeybus and Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker in Belgium to Maguy Marin and Mathilde Monier in France, have guaranteed a new look to Australian dance since the early 1990s. What characterises this look is an organic collaboration between

choreographers, visual and installation artists, composers, DJs, lighting designers and dramaturgs.

Recent developments

This new look takes two broad sweeps. Helen Herbertson's quiet but high-impact *Descansos* (1996), *Delirium* (1999) and *Morphia Series* (2002) reveal movement scaled down to portentous fragments with space and light manipulated to conjure the disorienting image of performers floating from one plane to another. Ros Warby's improvisations with cello and soprano or found sound sources (*original home*, 1999) and projections (*Swift*, 2003), like Rosalind Crisp's performances with sound artists (*raft/tread* 2003) achieve a striking architectonic quality by creating immense visual and aural tensions moving between line, shape and weight.

At the other end of this new look spectrum, Phillip Adams, Gideon Obarzanek, Lucy Guerin, Garry Stewart and several emerging artists explore sexuality, popular culture and end-of-millennium anxiety with DJs mixing sound in situ, explosive, robotic and repeated, refracted movement in designer gear, and a deeply questioning and ironic tone.

These developments suggest a desire to move beyond the seemingly more interior processes enjoyed by an earlier generation working from the early 1980s with Nanette Hassall at Dance Works, Russell Dumas at Dance Exchange, Kai Tai Chan (with his distinctive dance theatre approach) and Graeme Watson at One Extra, all significant artists with a pivotal influence and legacy.

Cultural riches

Indigenous identity and the crucial freedom to fuse contemporary ideas with traditional dance have

seen Stephen Page lead this part of the field for over a decade. The surprising co-location of Page's Bangarra Dance Theatre dancers performing his *Rites* (1998) to Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* with the Australian Ballet, proved a critical New York success in 1999.

What distinguishes Page's choreography from his peers' is the transformation of authentic Aboriginal material by a gutsy urban aesthetic. The taut sinuousness of a grounded reptilian solo for his late brother Russell in *Fish* (1998) combined anthropomorphism with erstwhile rap moves. Bernadette Walong's quieter work shaped the women's subtle nurturing movements in *Ochres* (1997), developed with Page and Djakapurra Munyarrayan, Bangarra's then cultural adviser and totemic performer. The advent of Bangarra dancer Frances Rings as a new choreographic voice was warmly welcomed in 2002 when she revealed an unpretentious and judicious use of metaphor with narrative, traditional and contemporary moves in *Rations*, her first major work.

In the vast area of the Northern Territory, Tracks Inc., directed by David McMicken and Tim Newth, engages in collaborations with Aboriginal communities to shape new work in traditional homelands. These are important works for the Territory's hugely diverse population and provide a contrast to the burgeoning contemporary Indigenous arts scene elsewhere in the country. Torres Strait Islander and sometime Bangarra performer Albert David is making works that celebrate the distinctive culture of his people (*The Giz*, 2003).

Australia's relationship with Asia has been reflected in the taking up of butoh, Min Tanaka's Body Weather (exemplified in the work of Tess de

Quincey and Nikki Heywood) and the methodology of Suzuki Tadashi (Lisa O'Neill, Frank Productions and Zen Zen Zo). Tony Yap, who explores butoh, trance and shamanism, performs with his idiosyncratic collaborator Japanese-born butoh artist Yumi Umiumare in the ongoing work, *How could you even begin to understand?* Umiumare is fast becoming Australia's funniest stand-up dance comedian. These works are a sure sign that Australian contemporary dance has come of age.

Developing choreographers

The challenge to develop new choreographers is a considerable one and is being encouraged by federal and state government arts funding bodies and met by a number of companies and special projects. The outcomes are as yet intangible but are anticipated with optimism. The Australian Choreographic Centre (artistic director Mark Gordon) in Canberra, the national capital, is another case in point. Since it opened in November 1996, the centre has offered 30 mentored fellowships for emerging and independent artists, 80 residencies for established and mid-career artists as well as building work with gifted older dancers. It has also commissioned 25 new works, the latest from ACT-based emerging talent, Paul Zivkovich.

Expressions Dance Company and the Queensland and West Australian Ballets fostered the early work of Natalie Weir whose *Mirror Mirror* (2000) was the first full-length contemporary dance work commissioned by the flagship Australian Ballet. Contemporary choreographers are invited into this previously alien space, including Gideon Obarzanek and Stephen Page whose indigenous-contemporary *Munaldjali* for the West Australian Ballet in 2002 was a great success.

The Melbourne-based Australian Ballet has, it should be noted, spawned many senior contemporary dance artists over its 41-year history, like Leigh Warren, whose South Australian company Leigh Warren + Dancers won three of the prestigious 1999 Australian Dance Awards for its work including Warren's Shaker-inspired *Shimmer* (1998). Under all seven of its artistic directors, the Australian Ballet has a long history of commissioning new works and since 2002 David McAllister has expanded its contemporary profile by commissioning its second full-length contemporary work, *Wild Swans*, from another former company member Meryl Tankard for 2003.

Nurturing dance

If Victoria seems to dominate the scene, that is because its five tertiary dance courses graduate large numbers of new artists each year as well as offering supported opportunities for emerging and mid-career artists. Their number and visibility have exploded, mirrored by more than 40 nominations in the new independent category of the 2003 Australian Dance Awards. Dancehouse, under its artistic director Helen Herbertson is stimulating new activity such as partnering Ausdance Victoria in choreographic development workshops, and enhancing its status as a hub for the dance community. Chunky Move has initiated creative mentoring and management brokerage for emerging artists.

New South Wales has seen a major shift with the centring of studio practice and improvisation at Omeo Studio where Rosalind Crisp leads by demonstrating both fine work and entrepreneurship which have resulted in her being invited to Paris' Biennale nationale de danse du Val-de-Marne (with other Sydney artists, Gravity Feed and Tess De Quincey) and several European centres. Her involvement in the berlinXchange at Performance Space demonstrates how cultural exchange, not just touring is highly valued by artists. The Antistatic 2002 dance event and an emerging choreographers' workshop hosted by Sydney Dance Company initiated by former Ausdance NSW director Gregory Nash are just two responses to the need for aesthetic development. Support and mentorship are offered by Sydney's One Extra Company (executive producer Amanda Card), a producer and facilitator for the city's expanding independent dance sector, and Performance Space.

Smaller cities thrive with independent dance. In Brisbane a series of collectives including, most recently, The Emergency Project, have featured work by Brian Lucas, Lisa O'Neill, Jean Tally, Shaaron Boughen and others. New cross-cultural groups like polytoxic including Leah Shelton, Fez Fa'nana and others, are exciting interest. Bonemap (Rebecca Youdell, Russell Milledge) in Cairns in Northern Queensland innovatively integrate dance with new media. Western Australian independent artists, led by choreographer and dancer Sue Peacock, have formed STRUT to secure significant new creative opportunities. Members include Claudia Alessi, Jo Pollitt, Margrete Helgeby, Shannon Bott and Stefan Karlsson. The Perth Institute of

Contemporary Arts (PICA) produces Dancers are Space-eaters, a festival of dance, forums and workshops with local (Paul O'Sullivan, Sete Tele and Olivia Millard among others) and interstate artists.

South Australia too is enjoying an improved focus on dance with ADT at its new home at Wonderland Ballroom. Its *Ignition* program, like the Adelaide Festival Centre's *Inspace*, encourages new work from a growing number of younger artists like Naida Chinner, Helen Omand, Astrid Pill and director-choreographer Ingrid Voorendt or dancers from the two resident companies, ADT and Leigh Warren + Dancers.

The tertiary dance sector has proven fertile ground for choreographers across the country by commissioning new work made with students. The Victorian College of the Arts, the West Australian Academy of the Performing Arts and Queensland University of Technology are outstanding. Responding to education funding cuts which have limited student performing opportunities, Nanette Hassall has established Link (directed by Chrissie Parrott in 2003), a graduating dancers company at WAAPA and, with Cheryl Stock at QUT, has arranged prestigious performance opportunities for students in Asia.

A key supportive role is played by Ausdance, the national professional service organisation. With offices in all states it provides information, research resources, advocacy and a network of invaluable contacts.

Going international

Internationally, Australian artists and companies are regularly invited to tour and appear in festivals across the northern hemisphere or to take up residencies across Asia. Following the participation in March 2000 of a large contingent of Australian artists at Glasgow's New Moves (new territories) festival several have been invited back as guest artists. International attention does mean however that some of our most adventurous artists make their careers in Europe and the USA. The list of dancers alone is enormous. However after significant overseas experience, many Australians—Russell Dumas, Meryl Tankard, Phillip Adams, Lucy Guerin, Kate Champion, Rebecca Hilton and Michael Whaites—do return to enrich dance here. Film, video and new media have provided fertile ground too for the export of work from technology-happy Australia. Tracie Mitchell, Sue Healey and Cazerine Barry are just three Australian choreographer-

filmmakers shown at the IMZ Dance Screen (Monaco Dance Forum 2002). Erin Brannigan's introduction to this phenomenon follows.

Hellen Sky and John McCormick, directors of Company in Space, have made dramatic inroads into computer technology, satellite linkups and virtual dance in real time. Their investigations are earning international and local respect, reducing the sense of distance between Australian and the rest of the world. A different kind of international connectedness is evident in work informed by gay culture coming from Dean Walsh, Trevor Patrick, Phillip Adams, Brian Carbee and others—surely contributors to a global sub-genre.

Audiences and markets

Thanks to continuing government-funded programs, the Playing Australia touring program and Australia Council and state arts ministry presentation grants, a growing body of new choreography travels far beyond originating cities, revitalising existing audiences and attracting dance-curious first-timers. The decommissioning, however, of the national touring program Made to Move in 2001 while reducing some opportunities has simultaneously generated more entrepreneurial activity and innovative marketing across the ever-evolving dance sector.

If audience building is the major challenge for Australian dance, marketing it has become a growth industry thanks to agents, producers and federal and state funding agencies promoting work at international markets. In recent years successful overseas tours by Chunky Move, Australian Dance Theatre, Lucy Guerin, Ros Warby and others have consolidated Australia's presence internationally. Rosemary Hinde's company Hirano has staged five Little Asia Dance tours with a handful of artists from Australia and Asia, boosting Australia's profile in a context of cultural exchange. This small scale promotion of independent artists is crucial in the wider dance ecology. Recent Australia Council initiatives in New York, Berlin and Japan will support smaller companies and independent artists while assisting better known companies secure greater overseas exposure. The Council's Australian Performing Arts Market held every two years in Adelaide continues to be crucial for dance companies new to the international producers and agencies who come to see them.

In one of the most significant events for dance here in recent times, the Franco-Australian Contemporary

Dance Exchange, Michel Caserta of la Biennale nationale de danse du Val-de-Marne chose four Australian works for the Novembre Australien festival in Paris 2002 from Chunky Move, Tess De Quincey, Gravity Feed and Rosalind Crisp. The 2003 Melbourne International Arts Festival reciprocated by hosting Odile Duboc's Centre Choréographique National de Franche-Comté à Belfort, Marseilles-based Kubilaï Khan Investigations, and Salia ni Seydou, from Burkina Faso in West Africa. The exchange also included a significant professional development program.

Thematically devoted to the body, the 2003 Melbourne Festival showcased numerous Australian dance productions side by side with major imports. With an industry forum, conferences, invaluable masterclasses and the presence of visiting dance presenters, the

festival provided Australian dance with a major opportunity to extend its growing international reach.

Lee Christofis

Lee Christofis is a Melbourne-based reviewer, writer, and broadcaster on dance and theatre.

This is a revised version of the essay that appeared in the 2000 edition of *In Repertoire, A Guide to Australian Contemporary Dance*.



The Australian Ballet

Australia's national ballet company presents some 200 performances each year and tours nationally and internationally.

The traditions of classical ballet are well represented in the company's diverse repertoire as is a wealth of 20th and 21st century choreography. Resident choreographers such as Stanton Welch and Stephen Baynes have been responsible for many of the new Australian works created on the company's dancers along with guest choreographers such as Graeme Murphy, Stephen Page and Meryl Tankard. For 2004, David McAllister, artistic director and a former principal dancer with the company, has commissioned new works from Christopher Wheeldon, Simone Clifford, Paulina Quinteros and Elizabeth Hill, and has appointed senior artist Adrian

Burnett as resident choreographer alongside Welch and Baynes.

Looking overseas for the best of international choreography has brought the works of luminaries such as George Balanchine, William Forsythe, Nacho Duato, Twyla Tharp, James Kudelka, Maurice Béjart, Jirí Kylián and Frederick Ashton into The Australian Ballet's repertoire.

Regular overseas touring involves seasons in the United States, Asia and Europe. In recent years The Australian Ballet has undertaken successful tours to New York, Singapore, Shanghai and New Zealand.

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Dance screen in Australia

In recent years, ‘dance screen’ has gained momentum internationally. This is not the documentation of dance but dance as the basis for cinema and as a key component of installation, performance and interactive new media.

Australian dance film and video has raised its profile locally but also overseas with films screening in Berlin, Riccione (Italy), Naples, Brighton (UK), Barcelona, Thessaloniki (Greece), Amsterdam, Krakow, San Francisco, New York, Manchester and Anchorage (Alaska). Given the geographic distance between Australia and the rest of the world, dance film and video enable the vision of choreographers to travel in new ways.

Explorations of contemporary choreographers collaborating with film and video artists emerged in the 1970s and 80s with works by Margaret Barr and Graeme Watson among others. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation produced two series for television in the 1990s, *Seven Deadly Sins* and *Microdance*, with many of the artists involved since continuing their investigations. Directors such as Stephen Cummins and Mahalya Middlemist created distinctive experimental works. Most recently, a major commission came from the ABC for a longer-form work, *Wet*, choreographed by Gideon Obarzanek and directed by Stephen Burstow.

Australian dance screen festivals have been developing along with dance film and video and stimulate activity in the field. Dancehouse in Melbourne ran Dance Lumiere from the mid-nineties to 1999 and Bodyworks on Screen in 2000. ReelDance International Dance on Screen Festival and Awards, produced by One Extra in Sydney, had its first season in 2000 and in 2002 opened at The Studio, Sydney Opera House followed by a national tour. It is hoped that it will continue biennially. As the

curator/director of ReelDance I was commissioned by Robyn Archer, artistic director of the Melbourne International Festival of Arts 2003, to create a film program, Body on Screen, an indication of the broadening interest in an interdisciplinary art form as old as cinema itself.

Australian filmmakers Margie Medlin, Michelle Mahrer, Samuel James, Louise Curham, Sean O’Brien and Cordelia Beresford have been collaborating with a broad range of choreographers. Medlin’s films with Sandra Parker’s Dance Works–*In the Heart of the Eye* (Winner, ReelDance Award 2000) and *In Absentia*–have a continuity of style that is elegant and intensely cinematic. Mahrer has created documentaries for both Bangarra Dance Theatre and Chunky Move and her most recent film, *Dances of Ecstasy*, looks at trance dancing around the globe. James has worked with Martin del Amo and Julie-Anne Long to create simple and engrossing motion studies. Curham has a long-standing collaboration with Sue Healey and her latest work with Michelle Heaven, *Transparent*, is a delicate Super-8 series. O’Brien has made an award-winning, exquisite black-and-white short film with dancers Yumi Umiumare and Tony Yap and is currently making a documentary on Asian-Australian cross-cultural dance artists. Beresford has worked with Narelle Benjamin and her documentary for

the Chunky Move company, *Chunky Move: Just Add Water*, was followed by beautiful close-up footage of dancer Nicole Johnston for the company’s interactive installation, *Closer*.

Choreographer-filmmakers who have been developing their craft for some time include Tracie Mitchell, Richard Allen, Karen Pearlman, Paul Gazzola and Jude Walton. Mitchell’s work, including her acclaimed short *Sure*, have done well here and overseas and she has just completed her latest film, *Solo*. Allen’s film featuring Bernadette Walong, *No Surrender*, has been screened at many festivals and won Best Experimental Film at the 2002 ATOM Awards in Australia. Pearlman’s most recent film, *Down Time Jaz*, combines animation, a fantasy narrative and dance sequences. Paul Gazzola’s short, *R.U.N.*, is a low-fi motion study and Jude Walton’s *Paralla-X* is a pristine analysis of dancer Ros Warby performing a sequence seen from below, close to her moving body, and from above.

More recently a new wave of choreographers has turned their hand to filmmaking. Rosetta Cook, Shaun Parker, Sue Healey, Louise Taube, Dianne Reid and Narelle Benjamin are all shifting their creative focus to the screen. Rosetta Cook’s first film, *Frocks Off*, was popular during the ReelDance tour and she won a commission to make a new film, *The Red Dress*, for

the *One Small Room* television series. Shaun Parker’s *NO*, and Reid’s short film, *Luke*, both did well at overseas festivals and Louise Taube has been honing her skills since she completed a course at the New York Film Academy. Sue Healey’s short film, *Niche*, was Highly Commended at ReelDance 2002 and was a finalist at the prestigious 2002 IMZ Dance Screen Awards in Monaco. She has just completed her latest film, *Fine Line*, which is premiering at the 2003 Melbourne Festival. Narelle Benjamin’s *Arachne* was Runner-Up at ReelDance 2002 and she has just completed *On a Wing and a Prayer*.

This is part of a broader shift within Australian dance toward utilising screen practices. Artistically, choreographers have taken to exploring the new space-time dimensions and kinetic possibilities afforded by the moving image, an exploration that extends to integration of projection into live performance. Tracie Mitchell’s critically acclaimed live work, *Under the Weather*, combined performance and film. Choreographers Russell Dumas, John Utans, Wendy McPhee, Sandra Parker, Trevor Patrick, Ros Warby, Sue Healey, Tess de Quincey, Michael Whaites and Kate Champion are among the many artists engaging in this hybrid practice. Innovative explorations into the relationship between the live and screened body extend to new media performances and installations from Company in Space and Chunky Move in Melbourne, transmute collective in Brisbane, and Cazerine Barry, Sarah Neville and Fiona Malone in Adelaide. Animators, programmers and sound designers join filmmakers and choreographers in collaborating on the growing and richly creative screen dance phenomenon.

Erin Brannigan

Erin Brannigan is a journalist and curator/director of ReelDance International Dance on Screen Festival.



Principal funding credits

Kay Armstrong - NSW Ministry for the Arts, Australia Council; Australian Ballet - Arts Victoria, Australia Council, NSW Ministry for the Arts; Australian Dance Theatre - Arts SA, Australia Council for the Arts; BalletLab - Australia Council, Arts Victoria, City of Yarra; Bangarra Dance Theatre - Australia Council, NSW Ministry for the Arts; Bonemap - Arts Queensland, Australia Council; Buzz Dance Theatre - ArtsWA, Australia Council; Fiona Cameron - City of Melbourne; Chapel of Change - City of Yarra, City of Melbourne; Chunky Move - Arts Victoria, Australia Council; Company in Space - Australia Council, Multimedia Victoria, Arts Victoria; Rosalind Crisp - Australia Council, NSW Ministry for the Arts;

Dance North - Australia Council, Arts Queensland, Townsville City Council; Dance Works - Arts Victoria, Australia Council; Tess De Quincey - NSW Ministry for the Arts, Australia Council; Clare Dyson - Arts ACT; Expressions Dance Company - Arts Queensland, Australia Council; The Fondue Set - Ministry for the Arts, Australia Council; Paul Gazzola/id339 - Arts WA; Force Majeure - Australia Council; Gravity Feed - Australia Council, NSW Ministry for the Arts; Helen Herbertson - Australia Council, Arts Victoria; Igneous - Arts Queensland, Australia-India Council; Kage Physical Theatre - Australia Council, City of Melbourne, Arts Victoria; Shelley Lasica - Arts Victoria, Australia

Council; Leigh Warren + Dancers - Arts SA, Australia Council; Julie-Ann Long - NSW Ministry for the Arts, Australia Council; Lucy Guerin Company - Australia Council, Arts Victoria; Fiona Malone - Arts SA, Australia Council; Helen Omand - Arts SA, Adelaide City Council; One Extra Company - NSW Ministry for the Arts, Australia Council; Paul O’Sullivan - ArtsWA; Trevor Patrick - Australia Council, Arts Victoria; Sue Peacock - Australia Council, Arts WA; Queensland Ballet - Arts Queensland, Australia Council; Restless Dance Company - Australia Council, South Australian Youth Arts Board, Arts SA; SHOTT Dance Theatre - Arts WA; Delia Silvan - Australia Council; skadada - Australia Council; softcore inc

(Wendy McPhee) - Arts Tasmania, Australia Council; Steps Youth Dance Company - ArtsWA, Australia Council; Stompin Youth - Australia Council, Arts Tasmania; Sue Healey and Company - NSW Ministry of the Arts, Australia Council; Sydney Dance Company - Australia Council, NSW Ministry for the Arts; TasDance - Arts Tasmania; Tracks Dance Collective - Australia Council, Arts NT; Yumi Umiumare - Australia Council; Gerard Van Dyck - Australia Council; Nalina Wait - Australia Council; Dean Walsh - NSW Ministry for the Arts; Walton et al - Australia Council, Arts Victoria; Ros Warby - Australia Council, Arts Victoria, City of Melbourne; West Australian Ballet - ArtsWA, Australia Council.

Photography credits					
Page	Work	Photographer			
4	Bridge Song.	Russell Milledge	19	MissXL	Heidrun Löhr
4	Inhabited	Rachelle Roberts	19	Virtually Richard ³	Aaron Tait
5	The Age of Unbeauty	Heidrun Löhr	20	Double Thrill: Elegy	Nick Tate
6	The Fondue Set	Suzanne Brown	20	The morning after...	Ashley de Prazer
6	Back to Bach	David Kelly	20	Amphibitos	Janet Williams
7	Melt	Virginia Cummins	21	Fine Line Terrain	Alejandro Rolandi/Sue Healey
8	How could you ever...	Koichiro Takagi	21	Night Vision (video still)	courtesy of Delia Silvan
8	Tokyo DasSHOKU Girl	Brad Hick	22	History Situation	Rohan Young
9	Tense Dave	Virginia Cummins	22	Electronic Big Top	Susan Porrett/Katie Lavers
10	Sentimental Reason	Jon Green	23	Ellipse	Branco Gaica
10	Janganpa	Steve Strike	24	Starry Eyed	David Wilson
10	Rara Avis	Heidrun Löhr	24	The Obcell	Kate Callas
11	tread	Heidrun Löhr	25	Up Front and Naked	Gus Kemp
11	Same, same But Different	Heidrun Löhr	25	Swift	Kristy Edmunds
12	Amplification	Jeff Busby	25	Fair Game	Paul Scambler
12	Intimate drowning	'pling	26	Shopping fashion...	Nick Higgins
12	Oysterland	Chris Gleisner	26	Tempting Fate	Ashley de Prazer
13	Bush (top left)	Greg Barrett	26	No Hope No Reason	Warwick Page
13	Bush (bottom & right)	Danielle Lyonne	27	Fugu San (video still)	David Granato
14	CO3 (video still)	Gesa Rinderman	27	Cinnabar Field	Jeff Busby
14	Nowhere Man	Rachelle Roberts	28	SYNC	Mark Webster
15	Flesh Memo	Heidrun Löhr	28	Edge Test	Ashley de Prazer
15	Morphia Series	Rachelle Roberts	28	Fracture	Jon Green
16	Body in Question	Suzon Fuks	29	Scorched: Munaldjali	Jon Green
16	Murray-Anderson Road	Rachelle Roberts	29	sole (video still)	Andrew Wholley
16	Savage Burn	Bernadette Walong	29	The Collapsible Man	Nat Cursio
17	Host	Heidrun Löhr	30	Quick Brown Fox	Alex Makeyev
17	Bird Talk #1 - 7.	Dieter Hartwig	31	Private Dancer	Carla Thackrah
18	Tearoom	Rainsford	33	Bella Figura	Jeff Busby
18	Nerve 9	Russell Emerson	34	NO (film still)	Shaun Parker

