

REFERENCE MATERIAL

BY ALISDAIR MACINDOE

Can artists compete with the internet?



**DAREBIN ARTS SPEAKEASY
NORTHCOTE TOWN HALL
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ARTIST'S STATEMENT

While creating *Reference Material*, I have been thinking a lot about my own dance lineage and the impact it has on what I make and do. The more I think about it, the more I realise that my artistic voice is shaped by those around me; choreographers making work and dance teachers sharing their methods and approaches. I love that dance appreciation, creation and training requires direct interaction and physical presence, and 2020 only made that clearer for me. Through making this work, I have begun to wonder whether understanding dance as an abstract series of historical events and figures is a fraught perspective. The same goes for understanding the dance landscape as an endless scroll of images and short videos of what dance makers are up to at the moment. I am interested in thinking of dance lineage as a complex, intertwined network of ideas and languages shared in physical spaces and passed down through intimate experiences.

From an outsider's perspective, dance can seem to employ regressive power structures, as it can require extreme levels of discipline for dancers to achieve excellence and depth in the form. It's a form of creative expression that requires failing at what you are physically doing in front of at least one other person to make progress. So there are inbuilt emotional and psychological barriers that must be worked through; I love this about dance. I love that it is hard, frustrating, challenging and confronting. There is no hiding behind a good marketing campaign or a snazzy post with cool effects and photography.

In many ways, this work is a reflection on how dance is incompatible with the tools we have been using to work together in 2020 and, more broadly, the internet based systems and services that are becoming the new normal form of "connecting". It is an exploration of the conundrum of being relevant, humble, and developing a creative voice in a world saturated with media and technology, where the entire "history" of dance and "every" choreographer is one click away.

Reference Material is dedicated to my favourite choreographer and mentor Lucy Guerin. Her support and encouragement over the last 15 years has had a profound effect on my personal and professional growth. Her impact on the Melbourne dance community since returning from New York 25 years ago is immeasurable and her contributions to the mesh of knowledge that is Australian dance culture is worthy of the many accolades she has received.

CREDITS

Director, Choreographer & Sound Designer
Performer & collaborator
Visual Designer (object/costume)
Lighting Designer & Production Manager
Producer
Costume Design Assistant & Construction

Alisdair Macindoe
Geoffrey Watson, Harrison Ritchie-Jones, Rachel Coulson
Andrew Treloar
Thomas Roach
Freya Waterson
Hailey Scott

FUNDING PARTNERS



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CREATIVE TEAM

ALISDAIR MACINDOE

Alisdair Macindoe is an Australian dancer, sound designer and choreographer. His experience in these fields has taken his work to many countries world-wide, earning critical acclaim in the media and receiving local and international awards including five Greenroom awards, a Helpmann, and a New York Dance & Performance 'Bessie' award. Notable collaborations include his work as a dancer for Lucy Guerin Inc, Chunky Move, Antony Hamilton, Stephanie Lake and DanceNorth, and his work as a sound designer for Chunky Move, Antony Hamilton, STOMPIN and DanceNorth. His independent choreographic work includes commissions for DanceNorth, Lucy Guerin Inc, Next Wave, Performance Space, and STOMPIN. Alisdair's unique multidisciplinary interests extend across artforms, and in 2018 he presented the major installation *NONCOMPETE* at The Substation, exploring electronics, creative coding and physical computing. As a multidisciplinary artist, whose work spans performance and technology, the intersection of humans and technology in both dance and music is one of his recurring interests.

ANDREW TRELOAR

Andrew is an artist working between contemporary art, choreography and fashion design. His work has developed from a 2014 MFA which pursued a shifting nexus between these disciplines. From 2016 to 2019 he inaugurated and ran Treloarland, his own dance-specific development and performance studio. Recent works include the design, production and choreography of *Insufficient Therapy Dance* 2018, *Splintering* 2017 and *The Venusian Slip* with Harrison Hall in 2018 and 2020. Andrew has worked extensively in costume and set design with leading choreographers, such as Jo Lloyd, Lucy Guerin, Marrugeku and Dancenorth. Andrew and Alisdair Macindoe have worked alongside one another on many projects, however *Reference Material* is their first direct collaboration.

GEOFFREY WATSON

Geoffrey is an experimental artist whose work is rooted in dance, and has branches in costume/set design, fashion and sculpture. Geoffrey's work has been presented and supported by bodies including Next Wave Festival, Uferstudios (Berlin), Lucy Guerin Inc, Chunky Move and Melbourne Fashion Week. Geoffrey was awarded the Temperance Hall Artist in Residence and the Tanja Liedtke Fellowship in 2019 and the 2020 Chunky Move Solitude1 residency. Geoffrey has performed in work by artists and companies including Alisdair Macindoe, BalletLab, Nana Bliuš Abaffy and The Australian Ballet, and his designs have appeared in work by Lilian Steiner, Brooke Stamp and BalletLab. Geoffrey's own work includes: *Reverse Fruit* (supported by Chunky Move, 2020), *Rachael Wisby* (Newport Substation, 2019), *Geoffrey's Corps parts 4:5 and 5:5* - John Spurlock (Uferstudios Berlin, 2019), *DISTRACTION: Smackdown* (Melbourne Fashion Festival, 2017), *DISTRACTION: The Old Tim is a Piece of Shit* (Counihan Gallery, 2017) and *Camel* (Arts House, 2016).

CREATIVE TEAM

HARRISON RITCHIE-JONES

Harrison Ritchie-Jones is an independent artist based in Naarm (Melbourne). He graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Dance) in 2014. In 2013, he was awarded a Victorian College of the Arts Most Outstanding Undergraduate Creative Scholarship. In 2018 he was nominated for a Green Room Award for Best Male Performer for Stephanie Lakes *Pile of Bones*. He was also selected for Next Wave's Kickstart program and premiered his work *Shimmer Of The Numinous* in the 2018 Next Wave Festival. Harrison has worked with, and performed in creations by Stephanie Lake, Graeme Murphy, Jo Lloyd, Anthony Hamilton, Alistaire Macintoe, Shelly Lasica, Rebecca Hilton, Prue Lang, Natalie Cursio and Rebecca Jensen.

RACHEL COULSON

Rachel (she/her) is based in Naarm (Melbourne). She began her dance career in 2011, performing in Stephanie Lake and Robin Fox's *A Giant Theremin*. She has gone on to perform in works by Antony Hamilton (*Blood & Bone*, Melbourne International Arts Festival 2012; *Nyx*, Melbourne International Arts Festival 2015), Keith Deverell and Shelley Lasica (*Grace Note #5*, Sugar Mountain Festival 2013), Rebecca Jensen and Sarah Aiken (*Overworld*, Next Wave Festival 2014; *Dance Massive* 2015), and Melanie Lane (XO Space's *DARK* program, Asia TOPA 2017). Rachel trained at Newtown High School of the Performing Arts and The Victorian College of the Arts.

THOMAS ROACH

Tom has been working in the theatre since he was 14, starting in community theatre in Townsville, moving on to Venue Technician at Dancenorth. He later moved to Melbourne in 2017 and is now a lighting technician for The Malthouse Theatre, Melbourne Theatre Company, Temperance Hall, and The Australian Shakespeare Company. Tom has also toured all around Australia with Dancenorth and Guts Dance.

FREYA WATERSON

Freya is an Independent Producer working across art-forms. She works with a small group of ambitious contemporary performing artists and companies to create new work, driving projects from inception through to production. Freya has worked across Europe, Asia and North America to facilitate the presentation of over 85 performance seasons across 22 countries and now provides strategic consultancy and market development planning and advice to colleagues across the sector. She has worked in senior roles for organisations in Australia and the UK, most recently as Senior Producer for Chunky Move, where she co-lead the company alongside the executive team from 2019-21. Freya's experience working across scale, context and form has provided a platform to initiate research projects, collaborative investigations and to advocate for personal and professional expressions of independent practice in its diverse and multifaceted forms. Freya is a member of the Asian Producers Platform and a resident of The Meat Market.

THANKYOU

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Alisdair would like to personally thank Freya Waterson for her thoughtful and diligent work as his producer; Jenny Kinder for commissioning what became a pilot of the idea, and the 2017 graduating students of dance at VCA: Madaleine Armstrong, Sade Brown, Freddie Chen, Crystle Chin, Luke Fryer, Gabriel, Holton, Rachel Huf, Tahlia Klugman, William Lim, Camille Naisbitt, Momoko Nanri, Grace Shepherd.



Images by Pia Johnson

The *Reference Material* team, along with the City of Darebin, acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional custodians of the land upon which this work is performed, and pay our respects to elders past and present. We extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to First Peoples from across the world.