



Catapult Dance Choreographic Hub

February 2020: Newsletter



MIXED-BILL

MIXED - BILL is a night of exceptional professional contemporary dance. Under the curation of Catapult Dance Choreographic Hub's Director, Cadi McCarthy, four powerful and evocative new professional contemporary dance works by Australia's finest choreographers:

**Adam Blanch, Kristina Chan, Craig Bary and
Omer Backley-Astrachan**

Touring to Sydney for the March Dance Festival on Sunday March 8th, including Catapult's Youth Initiative: The Flipside Project performing a curtain raiser; excerpt from their upcoming work: *Whose World Is It Anyway?*

The program has original scores by Newcastle composers: James Hazel and Zackari Watt with a cast of nine professional contemporary dancers from Catapult Company – Newcastle’s professional dance company.

Catapult Company Dancers:

Eliza Cooper, Ella Driene, Alexandra Ford, Allie Graham, Nicholas Jachno, Jesse Murray, Mikayla Nangle, Skip Willcox, Georgia Van Gils

Newcastle Season:

Civic Theatre subscription season

March 6th -7th at 7.30pm.

Tickets Available Now:

www.civictheatrenewcastle.com.au

Sydney Performance;

Sunday 8th March @ 7pm

Venue: ARC Darling Quarter Theatre

1-25 Harbour ST, Sydney, NSW, 2000

Tickets Available Now:

www.eventbrite.com.au/e/mixed-bill-sydney-season-catapult-dance-choreographic-hub-tickets-86294094961?aff=ebdssbeac

Supported by: City of Newcastle, Create NSW, Newcastle Civic Theatre, Sidney Myer Foundation, March Dance Festival, Monkey Baa



Photo Credit: Paul Dear

5 minutes with..... Choreographer:

Omer Backley-Astrachan

'Human Remains'

Mixed-Bill Season

written by Belle Beasley



Photo Credit: Paul Dear

The new decade has got off to a powerful, visceral and exploratory start with the presence of Omer Backley-Astrachan in the Catapult house.

The Israeli-born choreographer, who now calls Sydney home, brings his unique energy and vision to Catapult to create brand new work.

Working with five talented dancers of the Catapult company, the piece “Human Remains” touches on the fragmentation of a fragile humanity.

Through Omer’s distinctive choreographic lens, the dancers pull apart and piece back together elements of cultural identity. The work is simultaneously a breaking down, and a rebuilding.

Omer chats to us at Catapult about why this dystopian work is not beautiful- and therefore, is.

QUESTIONS:

B: So, Omer, tell us about the inspiration for this piece? What was your initial stimulus for the birth of this work?

O: Human Remains is a continuation of my work dealing with humanity in this era of turmoil. This refers to my own humanity, as well as that of my dance collaborators. This piece in particular focuses greatly around our shared concern for our planet’s future. Coming from Israel, I also enjoy working from a point of tension between the Australian and Israeli cultures. There are many interesting meeting points and historical overlaps. But despite cultural differences, at a psychological and spiritual level we share similar desires and fears. In

this work I wanted to see what happens if we divert our focus from the story of the individual which is sometimes our go-to as contemporary artists and concentrate on our shared selves. My inspiration has been to experiment in breaking down some human characteristics such as culture, identity and social structures and then try to glue it back together to see what humanity remained in the end. Well, in the case of this work, not such a pleasant outcome.

B: I see. Have there been elements of this creative process that were previously unexplored?

O: I tackled choreography in a way that was very new to me. We produced heaps of material in the first week without caring too much about what it means. We created an abundance of interesting images and movement phrases. Then the work was created through a process of distillation, refining and layering rather than a linear process of building and adding. This proved extremely enjoyable and also very beautiful.

B: How have you found working with the dancers of Catapult Choreographic Hub? How does the energy within the space and the dancers affect the creative process?

O: I had a profound journey with the five company dancers. This work depended so heavily on their creative input and there was not one day in the process where they didn't offer their entire world of imagination and playfulness. We laughed, cried, shouted, sang, stomped, spoke and so much more in a space of only three weeks. This was enriched and enabled by the creative input of Artistic Director Cadi McCarthy who joined in many of the rehearsals. The atmosphere in Catapult is cozy and friendly which allows my creative juices to flow. I can't wait to see this work on stage in only a few weeks' time.

B: Thanks so much for your time, we are all excited to see this piece come to fruition!

Catch 'Human Remains' in Catapult Dance Company's 'Mixed Bill.' Premieres at the Civic Theatre on the 6th of March.

5 minutes with...Choreographer:

Kristina Chan

'Shimmering Towards Silence'

Mixed Bill Season

written by Belle Beasley



Photo Credit: Paul Dear

Kristina, having been a long-time collaborator with Catapult Dance Choreographic Hub as both a choreographer and a dancer, felt right at home returning to the Newcastle studios to create her new work “Shimmering Towards Silence.”

The piece explores the impermanence of nature and its persistence and ability to reform and adapt; a subject that resonates with many, throughout Australia and the world. And yet, Chan uniquely imbues the piece with an appreciation of regrowth and new-life.

We chat to Kristina about life in the studio and choreography in the works.

B: Hi Kristina! Thanks so much for joining us. Please tell the Catapult audience a little about your work new work ‘Towards Silence.’

Thanks Belle. ‘Shimmering Towards Silence’ is piece that focuses on three ideas, and each idea builds on top of the next. The first looks at the beauty of the natural world and considers both its fragility, and its persistent ability to reform and take new shapes. The second focus is on life cycles that are being silenced by extinction and the drastic environmental changes of our time. The third considers our place as humans as we attempt to coexist a kaleidoscopic world of species and life forces.

B: How exciting. How was the approach you took in creating this work similar or different to previous choreographic developments?

This piece was bound to be different from its birth due to the number of talented movers I had the chance to work with from the beginning- often it’s just me in the studio. To familiarise my dancers with my unique movement vocabulary, we spent the first week

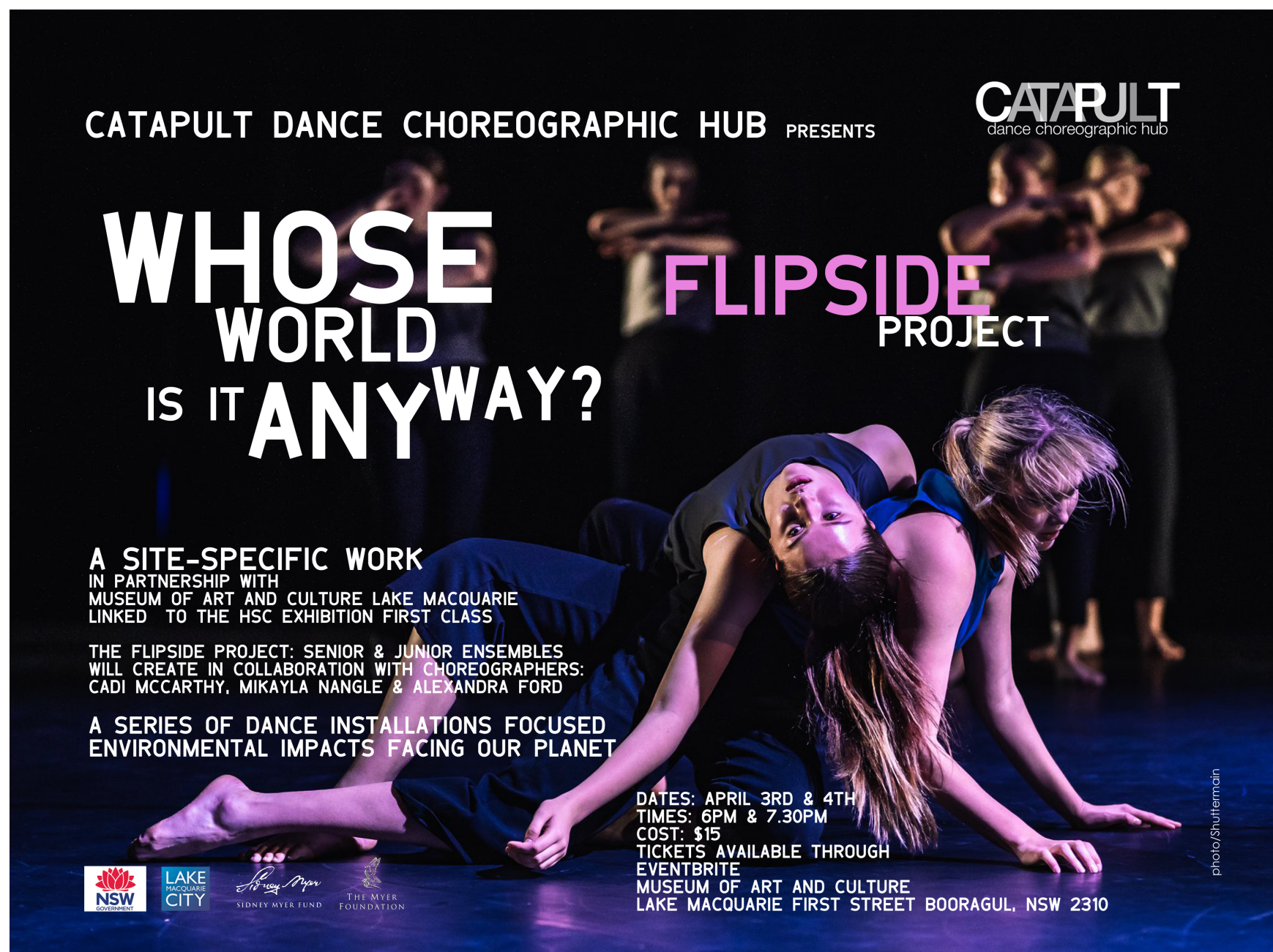
experimenting and developing our own expressive language with which to create from. Concurrently, James, the composer was also super connected to my concept which really allowed for a sense of harmony and continuity within the intention of the piece. It felt like a truly collaborative creative process.

B: In what ways do you feel the Catapult dancers have inflected their own unique interpretation on this subject? Has the work taken on a life of its own outside your initial plan?

Coming to Catapult I always feel welcomed and encouraged to explore my boundaries. I have full creative freedom, which is so rare. The team at Catapult have no agenda, so I can really allow my work to form organically and honestly. Furthermore, myself and my dancers know that paid contemporary dance work is few and far between in the current Australian artistic climate, so I can sense that they really approach the rehearsal process with an eagerness to create and gratefulness to the development.

B: Thank you, Kristina, looking forward to the premiere of this work!

Catch 'Shimmering Towards Silence' in Catapult Dance Company's 'Mixed Bill.' Premieres at the Civic Theatre on the 6th and 7th of March and ARC Theatre, Darling Harbour: 8th March



CATAPULT DANCE CHOREOGRAPHIC HUB PRESENTS

CATAPULT
dance choreographic hub

WHOSE WORLD IS IT ANYWAY?

FLIPSIDE PROJECT

A SITE-SPECIFIC WORK
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
MUSEUM OF ART AND CULTURE LAKE MACQUARIE
LINKED TO THE HSC EXHIBITION FIRST CLASS

THE FLIPSIDE PROJECT: SENIOR & JUNIOR ENSEMBLES
WILL CREATE IN COLLABORATION WITH CHOREOGRAPHERS:
CADI MCCARTHY, MIKAYLA NANGLE & ALEXANDRA FORD

A SERIES OF DANCE INSTALLATIONS FOCUSED
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS FACING OUR PLANET

DATES: APRIL 3RD & 4TH
TIMES: 6PM & 7.30PM
COST: \$15
TICKETS AVAILABLE THROUGH
EVENTBRITE
MUSEUM OF ART AND CULTURE
LAKE MACQUARIE FIRST STREET BOORAGUL, NSW 2310

NSW GOVERNMENT LAKE MACQUARIE CITY Sidney Myer THE MYER FOUNDATION

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CATAPULT DANCE CHOREOGRAPHIC HUB HOSTS

BANGARRA DANCE THEATRE

TERRAIN - STUDENT WORKSHOP

Choreographer: Frances Rings

Produced by: Bangarra Dance Theatre 2012

Working with Yolande Brown, former senior artist, and original cast member of Terrain. Students will explore this core appreciation prescribed work, while acknowledging the process of the Cultural consultants who guided the process

Terrain: Core Appreciation Workshop

Monday 16th March 2020

9am – 3pm

Catapult Dance Choreographic Hub : 880 Hunter St, Newcastle West

Cost: \$65.00 per student



Force Majeure & Catapult Dance Choreographic Hub present:

INCITE: NEWCASTLE

INCITE Intensive is Force Majeure's professional physical theatre program for emerging, mid-career and established artists. This will be a two-day program, led by Force Majeure's Artistic Director Danielle Micich & Catapult Dance Choreographic Hub's Director: Cadi McCarthy, that offers invaluable training in the company's devising process. The two - day intensive is open to emerging and mid-career theatre practitioners, directors, choreographers and professional dancers.



Dates: 16th & 17th April 2020

Times: 10am - 2pm

Cost: \$150

This workshop is limited to 15 participants

Register today by emailing Cadi McCarthy: director@catapultdance.com.au



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www.catapultdance.com.au

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