# SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY

*momenta* National Tour 2025

# Sydney Dance Company is based in Walsh Bay Sydney.

Our studios are situated on the lands and over the waters of the Gadigal of the **Eora Nation. We recognise** their continuing connection to the land and waters and thank them for protecting this coastline and its ecosystems since time immemorial. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all First Nations people.

### Welcome

Welcome to the national tour of *momenta*, an incredible full-length work from our Artistic Director Rafael Bonachela.

After a successful premiere season in Sydney and a tour across Australia in 2024, I am thrilled to once again bring this incredible work to theatres across Victoria, Tasmania and NSW.

I would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of the Australian Government delivered through Creative Australia and the NSW Government through Create NSW.

Through the unwavering commitment of our partners, supporters and those who have invested in our vision, we continue to share the joy and inspiration of amplifying voices in contemporary dance and offering high quality works to local, national and international audiences.

Thank you to everyone at Sydney Dance Company, on stage and behind the scenes, for their commitment, creativity and craft.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Sydney Dance Company Board for their leadership and support. Every member of Sydney Dance Company plays an important role in showcasing world class dance



performances in Sydney, across Australia and the globe.

Please join us in celebrating *momenta*, a season created and performed by some of Australia's most formidable artists.

Lou Oppenheim Executive Director

Photo By: Pedro Greig

### momenta

Choreography	Rafael Bonachela	
Music	Original Score by Nick Wales featuring <i>Distant Light</i> by Pēteris Vasks	
Lighting Design	Damien Cooper	
Set and Costume Design	Elizabeth Gadsby	
Associate Costume Design	Emma White	

### Rafael Bonachela Artistic Director

Rafael Bonachela is a Choreographer, Artistic Director and Curator whose career has seen him successfully span high art and popular culture, working across a range of art forms, including contemporary dance, art installations, pop concerts, musicals, film, commercials and fashion.

Bonachela was born in La Garriga near Barcelona (1972) where he began his early dance training before moving to London to join the legendary Rambert Dance Company where he danced from 1992 to 2004.

In 2008, Rafael premiered his first full-length production 360° for Sydney Dance Company. Less than six months later he was appointed Artistic Director, making international headlines and heralding a new era in Australian contemporary dance.

His vision for the Company embraces a guiding principle that sees commissioned dance works by Australian and international choreographers alongside his own critically acclaimed creations.

In 2022, Cartier announced Rafael as a new Friend of the Maison. From his internationally recognised talent as both a dancer and choreographer, to his commitments supporting a new generation of emerging artists and



choreographers, Bonachela embodies values cherished by Cartier: strength of character, virtuosity and the ability to find beauty wherever it may lie.

Bonachela's work is strong, sober and sharp. The exploration of pure movement is where he finds his unmistakable style. The result is an incandescent dance that springs from the power of movement, in which energy and muscle strength combine with a great emotional sensitivity.

Read more of Rafael's biography

### A note from Rafael Bonachela

The *momenta* creative journey began late in 2023.

Before I start to create the dance, I create a visual mind map that allows me to build an intuitive framework around the main idea.

'Momenta' is the plural of momentum, originated from the Latin word movimentum which means movement or motion. *momenta* implies a series of 'momentums.'

The development of *momenta* started exploring the concepts of momentum, force, movement, time and space. I was driven by the connection between the moment and the now, the cycles of time and how we could use these concepts as impetus in the creation of the work.

A moment in time. A moment between people. A moment of emotional encounters.

When starting conversations with my creative collaborators, we imagine what *momenta* will sound like, feel like and look like. What is the world that the dancers will inhabit and be part of?

For me personally, collaboration is a way of staying connected to an ongoing source of inspiration. I am thrilled I had the opportunity to put together a dream team to bring momenta to life. Always front and centre are the incredible and powerful Ensemble of Sydney Dance Company dancers, Rehearsal Director Richard Cilli and Rehearsal Associate Chamene Yap; the music of super talented and long-time collaborator Nick Wales; and lighting design by the inimitable master of light Damien Cooper.

It was so engaging to have someone I had never worked with in the creative team. I feel this contributed to the richness of the creative process. This time we had the privilege of working with Elizabeth Gadsby, an artist that I have admired for a long time, who alongside associate costume designer Emma White, designed the set and costumes.

momenta shows Sydney Dance Company dancers transcending physical limitations. They explore the full range of their bodies with grace, power and vulnerability. Each moment resonates through space, drawing the audience into a world of raw emotion.

Dance is made to be experienced. The invitation is to discover what momenta means for you.

Rafael Bonachela Artistic Director

## Nick Wales Composer

Nick Wales' music is a blend of classical, electronic, and contemporary styles, offering a visceral and immersive sonic experience. Renowned for his collaborations with the Svdnev Dance Company, he has contributed to eleven works. Recent projects include scoring the Netflix feature film True Spirit directed by Sarah Spillane, as well as creating compositions like Le Diable bat sa femme et marie sa fille for Ballet de l'Opéra de Lyon, and Cathedral for Bundanon Trust. Wales' diverse portfolio extends to collaborations with visual artists such as Lauren Brincat, Mel O'Callaghan and Hayden Fowler.

His partnership with choreographer Shaun Parker has yielded acclaimed works like the Helpmann-nominated score for AM I, Happy as Larry, and outdoor productions like Spill and Trolleys. As a founding member of the ARIA-nominated classical-fusion band CODA, he seamlessly traverses various musical genres. Noteworthy collaborations with artists like Sarah Blasko have resulted in the score Emergence for Sydney Dance Company, co-created with Blasko and released as a soundtrack in 2015. Throughout his career. Nick continues to push artistic boundaries while maintaining his innate contemporary music sensibilities.

### Note

Momentum manifests itself as a force of perpetual motion—an idea that once activated, things are set in motion and



continue to move. This motion can vary, from acceleration to deceleration, sometimes slowing down to a near halt. These concepts have served my primary inspiration behind the creation of the score for *momenta*.

On a macro level, I've explored the notion of waves of momentum coursing through the composition. The score becomes a continuous expression of climactic moments or waves. At a micro level, recurring musical motifs and gestures are used. Certain percussive motifs performed by Bree van Reyk gradually accelerate, conveying an increasing momentum, while others adopt a more textural and choral character, including vocals by soprano Jane Sheldon and myself. These motifs serve to thematically unify the work while suggesting that momentum operates cyclically, like planets orbiting the sun.

Comprising seven movements, momenta includes a prologue cadenza. Two of these movements feature existing music, the beautiful and dynamic violin concerto *Distant Light* by Peteris Vasks. I decided to speak to the idea of a 'concerto' by featuring a solo string instrument in my work. Opting for the mellower yet equally expressive viola, performed by Benedict Hames, principal violist of the Symphonieorchester des Bayerische Rundfunks, momenta begins with a building solo cadenza by Hames, who remains featured throughout the score.

Momentum isn't always linear. In the middle third movement, Zodiac, the piano solo that initiates the movement gradually slows to a near standstill before incrementally accelerating, slowly adding more ambient percussive and textural elements culminating in a thrilling yet almost chaotic climax reminiscent of a bursting dam.

To maintain a cohesive sonic identity, I've employed a limited musical palette, featuring viola, bass drums, accordion, voice, string orchestra, piano, wooden percussion, chimes and a select few synths and drum machines. This amalgamation of organic classical instruments and voice, the warmth of string orchestras, and the raw edge of electronic elements aims to capture the essence of life-both abstract and beautiful. I extend my heartfelt thanks to my team of musical collaborators and sound technicians, whose invaluable contributions have been instrumental in shaping the score.

Score produced and performed by Nick Wales - viola, voice, piano, electronics, keyboards.

Solo Viola	Benedict Hames	Orchestral Conductor	Joaquim Badia
Voice	Jane Sheldon		
Percussion, Piano Accordion	Bree van Reyk	Recording Engineer	Jem Hoppe and Phil Punch
Double Bass	Elsen Price	Music Score Prep	Jigsaw Music
String Orchestra	FAMES Macedonia		Suonho
Music Mix	Bob Scott	Sample	

With:

Photo By: Pedro Greig

### Elizabeth Gadsby Set and Costume Designer

Elizabeth Gadsby is an award-winning artist and set designer. She primarily creates work for live performance including theatre, dance, ballet and opera.

Elizabeth's most recent credits include set and costume design for *The President* for Sydney Theatre Company and The Gate Theatre, set and costumes for *Cosi Fan Tutte* for Opera Queensland and set design for *Yuldea* for Bangarra Dance Theatre, choreographed by Francis Rings.

Elizabeth designed the critically acclaimed operas Awakening Shadow and Antartica for Svdnev Chamber Opera, Additional opera highlights include co-director and costume designer for the Sydney Chamber Opera and Victorian Opera production of The Rape of Lucretia, presented at Carriageworks (Sydney) and the Theatre Roval (Hobart). Gadsby's theatre credits include set and costume design for Julius Caesar and costume design for The Tempest, both directed by Kip Williams; Appropriate directed by Wesley Enoch and Seven Stages of Grieving directed by Shari Sebbens, all presented by Sydney Theatre Company. Elizabeth served as Sydney Theatre Company's Resident Designer from 2016-2019



Elizabeth has been a recipient of numerous Australia Council and Create NSW grants, a William Fletcher Scholar and was the 2015 Artist in Residence for City of Sydney's Creative Living Work Space program.

She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Painting) from National Art School and a Bachelor of Performing Arts (Design) from NIDA and is studying a Masters of Curation and Cultural Leadership at University of New South Wales.

### SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY

# COME

# TWO SEASON SUBSCRIPTIONS

### Save 15% on tickets

### CONTINUUM

22 Oct – 1 Nov Roslyn Packer Theatre, Sydney

### **NEW BREED**

3 – 13 Dec Carriageworks, Sydney

### **SUBSCRIBE NOW**





### Emma White Associate Costume Designer

Emma White is a set and costume designer for stage and screen. Emma is a graduate of NIDA's Master of Fine Art Design course and has a Bachelor of Fine Art in Sculpture from UNSW Art and Design. In 2019, Emma was nominated for an APDG Award for Best Emerging Designer.

For theatre, Emma's design credits include: As You Like It for Queensland Theatre: set for Oil and costume for Lifespan of a Fact for Sydney Theatre Company; The Dismissal for Squabbalogic; set design for The Deb for ATYP; Godspell for Hayes Theatre Co; Green Park, As Is For Apple for Griffin Theatre; A Street Car Named Desire (set), Hand To God (co-designer), Seven Deadly Sins + Mahagonny Songspiel (costume) and Chorus for Red Line Productions: Kasama Kita for Belvoir 25A: Bad Machine for Campbelltown Arts Centre; The Knife for Bondi Feast: You've Got Mail for Blue Room Theatre/ Sotto: Natural Order for Milk Crate Theatre: Boom for National Theatre of Parramatta/Sydney Festival; Stay Happy Keep Smiling, Venus in Fur (costume) for NIDA; Homesick for Old 505; Safe for The Old 505/Sotto: and Daisv Moon Was Born This Way for Q Theatre.

For screen, Emma was production designer on the feature documentary Step into Paradise for Blackfella



Films, the television pilot *Gym Rat* for Guesswork TV, Taylor Ferguson's awardwinning short film *Tough* and short film *Beautiful They*. She was costume design assistant for *PM'S Daughter* and *Mr Inbetween S3*, and set designer for Shannon Murphy's short film *Fractal with AJE*. Emma has worked as production designer and costume designer on numerous TVCs.

Associate design credits include: On The Beach costume, American Psycho, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and The Tempest. Emma was assistant designer at the National Theatre London on Nine Night, Shakespeare's Globe on Richard II, and Sydney Theatre Company on Lord of the Flies and Appropriate.

Photo By: Pedro Greig 1

### A note from the Set and Costume Designer

The scenography for *momenta* is a series of environmental gestures that contemplate the notion of movement on a universal level as well as within the body. These gestures emerge and dissolve as they are corrupted by the moving bodies.

We wanted to make tangible the "cosmic background" of gravitational waves constantly vibrating through the universe, as well as drawing attention to breath as a constant force within the dancers' bodies.

We are interested in how, even in a state of stillness, there is constant movement, from the breath to blood flow to vibrating atoms. The lighting structure in the space creates force and disruption first through its physical presence and then through the direction force of the light. In collaboration with Damien Cooper, we created a series of ascending and descending movements that work to compress and expand the space around the dancers.

The costuming for the show created with associate costume designer Emma White aims for tonal neutrality whilst experimenting with sheerness and texture against the body. The textural palette of the clothing includes shredding, gathering, cut outs and rips.

We were interested in a sense of brokenness in the clothes that speaks to the physical exertion needed to maintain the intensity of movement over the duration of the work.

Photo By: Pedro Greig 

### Damien Cooper Lighting Design

Damien's credits for Sydney Dance Company include Somos, Ascent, Resound, ab [intra], Impermanence, Cinco, Ocho, Grand, Air and Other Invisible Forces, Orb, momenta and Love Lock. Other dance credits include Baleen for Adelaide Festival, State for Western Australian Ballet, Of Earth and Sky for Bangarra, IDK for Force Majeure, The Narrative of Nothing, Firebird and Swan Lake for Australian Ballet, Giselle for Universal Ballet, Birdbrain, Supernature, Habitus and Be Your Self for Australian Dance Theatre, The Frock for Ten Days on the Island Festival, Affinity for Tas Dance, Mortal Engine for Chunky Move and Grey Rhino for Performing Lines.

Other theatre credits include Counting & Cracking for Edinburgh International Festival/Belvoir, The Weekend, Into The Woods, Mark Colvin's Kidney, The Great Fire, Radiance, The Glass Menagerie, Coranderrk, Miss Julie, Stories I Want to Tell You in Person, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Peter Pan, Private Lives, Conversation Piece, Strange Interlude, Summer of the Seventeenth Doll, Neighbourhood Watch, The Seagull, Gethsemane, Keating!, Toy Symphony, Peribanez, Stuff Happens, The Chairs, The Spook, In Our Name, The Underpants and The Ham Funeral for Belvoir; On the Beach, White Pearl, Disgraced, Orlando, Arcadia, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Golden Age, Suddenly Last Summer, The Women of Troy, The Lost Echo, Riflemind and Tot Mom for Sydney Theatre Company; Macbeth and The Tempest for Bell Shakespeare; The Ring Cycle, Der Ring des Nibelungen, Aida and Cosi Fan Tutte for Opera Australia; A Midsummer Night's Dream for Houston Grand Opera, Canadian Opera, Lyric Opera Chicago; and The Magic Flute for Lyric Opera Chicago.

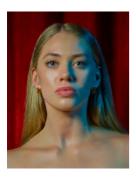
For lighting design, Damien has won three Sydney Theatre Awards, four Green Room Awards, and two Australian Production Design Guild Awards.



### Note

My father had a huge science fiction collection which I read during my childhood. Adams, Asimov, Burroughs, Clarke, Herbert, King, Le Guin, Tolkien. Fantastic worlds dripping in surreal imagery. I seem to have taken these stories, images, ideas into my work as a lighting designer. All that childhood imagery vastly different to the modern Hollywood interpretations. What an opportunity to create worlds of colour, angles of light, strange but familiar worlds.

I want to leave you with some of the thoughts I have as a lighting designer. Did you know that a perfect mirror is the darkest surface, it reflects all light away? I have always tried to find the biggest light for the smallest theatre, and vice versa. *momenta* has nineteen lights compressed into one three metre structure in a medium sized theatre. Huge! Rhythm for me is where it all comes back to, that choice of rhythm is influenced by many things: the hum of the universe, Raf's choreography, Elizabeth's design, my pulse rate, Nick's and Pēteris' music... Enjoy *momenta*.



#### Lucy Angel

Born and raised in Wollongong, NSW, Lucy began her training at Joanne Grace School of Dance at age eight before completing her Certificate IV in dance at the Royal Academy of Dance at age 15. Lucy joined The Sarasota Ballet in Florida, USA as a trainee for their 2018-2019 season. At the end of 2019, she performed in The International Divertissement Ballet Gala with Projection Dance, as well as being a finalist in The Brisbane International Contemporary Dance Prix. Lucy joined Sydney Dance Company's Pre-Professional Year in 2021 where she performed works by James Bachelor, Cloe Fournier, Stephanie Lake and Rafael Bonachela. Lucy commenced her traineeship with Sydney Dance Company at the end of 2022, premiering with the Company in Rafael Bonachela's *ab [intra]* at *DanceX*.



#### Mathilda Ballantyne

Mathilda is an Australian-Chinese artist from Melbourne/Naarm, whose movement blends classical ballet with contemporary dance. A graduate of the Australian Ballet School, they received the Graeme Murphy Award for Excellence in Contemporary Dance. After completing a Graduate Diploma in Classical Ballet, Mathilda shifted focus to contemporary dance, joining PROJECTion Dance Company in 2020. In 2022, they became a core member of Scimm. Dance Company, performing in works such as *Paracosm* and *Mechorstra*. In 2024, they collaborated with emerging choreographers Vourneen Ni'cainin and Ronan Armstrong for Lucy Guerin's Out of Bounds seasons. In 2025, Mathilda joined Sydney Dance Company, debuting in Rafael Bonachela's *Somos* and continuing to explore new artistic boundaries.



#### Timmy Blankenship

From the US, Timmy completed his early training in contemporary performance and choreography at Artistic Fusion in Thornton, Colorado and Dance Town in Miami, Florida, performing works by Loni Landon, Dana Foglia and Emma Portner. He continued at the prestigious University of Southern California's Glorya Kaufman School of Dance, where he performed works by William Forsythe, Jiří Kylián, Merce Cunningham and Yin Yue. Timmy premiered his choreography at Dance Town Miami's annual contemporary gala 2021 and debuted Intergenerational Traffic at the Trinity Laban School of Dance in London in 2023 in collaboration with composer Tom Bradbury and dancer Xavier Williams. Timmy performed with the Nederland's Dans Theatre Summer Intensive in 2023 before moving to Australia for his debut with Sydney Dance Company, performing in *New Breed*.



#### Mali Comlekci

With a Turkish background and born in Sydney, Mali has been dancing for as long as he can remember. He began formal dance lessons at the age of ten, outside of school hours as well as attending Newtown High School of the Performing Arts. After graduating in Year 12, he pursued full-time training at New Zealand School of Dance (NZSD). In those two years, Mali was invited to be a guest dancer, performing soloist roles with the Royal New Zealand Ballet Company in their 2016 season of *Wizard of Oz* and their 2017 triple bill *Three By Ekman*. After graduating from NZSD, Mali joined Queensland Ballet Company, performing various soloist and principal roles from 2018 – 2024. Mali joined Sydney Dance Company in 2025.



#### **Riley Fitzgerald**

Riley started dancing when he was ten, joining an all-boys hip-hop class in country Victoria. He guickly progressed to training with the Anita Coutts School of Dance before moving to Melbourne to study at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School. He made his professional debut in The White Prince by Stephen Agisilaou. Riley completed his Level 6 Diploma of Dance Performance at the New Zealand School of Dance training under James O'Hara and Tor Columbus, and performing works by Damien Jalet and Huang Yi. In 2019 Riley joined Sydney Dance Company, performing soloist roles nationally and internationally in works such as ab [intra], Lux Tenebris, Impermanence and Six Breaths. Riley moved to France, joining Ballet National de Marseille performing works by La Horde, Tania Carvalho, Oona Doherty, Lasseindra Ninja and Alexandre Roccoli, touring extensively throughout France and Europe. Riley returned to Sydney Dance Company in 2023.



#### Liam Green

Having grown up in Perth, Liam trained with a range of local schools, including Dynamic Performing Arts and The Graduate College of Dance. At 15, Liam was accepted into the Advanced Diploma of Dance at WAAPA, the youngest person to enter the program. Liam worked with the West Australian Ballet for five years, ending his time at the company as a Demi-Soloist, before joining Sydney Dance Company in 2019. Liam's repertoire is expansive and diverse, including works such as *Radio and Juliet* by Edward Clug, *In Transit* by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, and *Les Indomptes* by Claude Brumachon. These are just but a few Liam is proud to have featured in. In his spare time Liam studies a Bachelor of Commerce, majoring in Finance and Economics at The University of Western Australia.



#### Luke Hayward

From Alice Springs, NT, Luke studied a Bachelor of Dance at Palucca Hochechule für tanz Dresden, Germany, graduating with honours. Luke danced with Balet Moskva, Russia from 2016 – 2018, in both the Ballet and Contemporary Ensembles. He interned with Centre Chorégraphique National de Rillieuxla-Pape Lyon, France and, Semperoper Dresden, Germany in 2014 and participated in the 5th Biennale Tanzausbildung in 2016. Luke performed in Karin Ponties' *Every Direction is North*, which won The Golden Mask Award for 'The Best Performance in Modern Dance' in 2017. Luke has performed works from Rafael Bonachela, George Balanchine, Marina Mascarell, Melanie Lane, Ohad Naharin, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Karine Ponties, Robert Binet, Ihsan Rustem. He joined Sydney Dance Company in 2019 and made his choreographic debut in *New Breed* 2022.



#### Sonrisa Hubbard

Sonrisa attended Denver School of the Arts before earning a merit scholarship to attend Boston Conservatory, where she performed works by Aszure Barton, Bill T. Jones, Andrew Skeels and more. Sonrisa has participated in international intensives, including those at Arts Umbrella, The Juilliard School, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Dart Dance Company and Orsolina 28. She studied the repertoire of choreographers Crystal Pite, Sharon Eyal, Ohad Naharin, Jiri Pokorny, Jiri Kylian and more. She also performed in a guest artist performance at the Young Choreographers Festival in 2024. Sonrisa joined Sydney Dance Company in 2025 and makes her debut with the Company in Somos.



#### Morgan Hurrell

Born and raised in Mudgee, NSW, Morgan began her early training at age two and attended Dance Unlimited until 2019. Focusing on her passion for contemporary dance, Morgan had numerous offers for full-time placements at age 17. She accepted an offer to attend National College of Dance in Newcastle and completed her Diploma of Dance. In 2021 Morgan moved to Sydney to study an Advanced Diploma of Dance with Sydney Dance Company's Pre-Professional Year. She was offered a trainee contract with Sydney Dance Company at the end of 2021 and her first onstage performance with the Company was in Jacopo Grabar's work *Stereotipo* for *New Breed* 2021.



#### **Ngaere Jenkins**

Born in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Ngaere is of Te Arawa and Ngāti Kahungunu descent. She trained at the New Zealand School of Dance, graduating in 2018, working with James O'Hara, Victoria (Tor) Colombus, Taiaroa Royal and Tanemahuta Gray. She performed works by Damien Jalet, Huang Yi, Sarah Foster-Sproull, Malia Johnston and Gabby Thomas. Ngaere represented the school in Tahiti at the Académie de Danse Annie FAYN fifth International Dance Festival and Singapore Ballet Academy's 60th Anniversary Gala. From 2019 to 2023 Ngaere worked with The New Zealand Dance Company performing in works from Sean MacDonald, Nina Nawalowalo, Tom McCrory and Ross McCormack, Jo Lloyd, Stephanie Lake, Kim Jae Duk, Tor Colombus, Eddie Elliott and Xin Ji and Tupua Tigafua, as well as Mana Wahine by Okāreka Dance Company, working with Atamira Dance Company. In 2023 Ngaere was the recipient of the Bill Sheats Dance Award. Ngaere joined Sydney Dance Company in 2023, debuting in the tenth anniversary season of New Breed.



#### Sophie Jones

Sophie grew up in Angourie, NSW and trained with Adele Lewis School of Dance. At age 14 she moved to Burleigh Heads, Queensland to begin full-time ballet training and further her studies with Prudence Bowen Atelier. She received a traineeship with the Joffrey Ballet in Chicago. Whilst in Chicago she worked with numerous choreographers and performed *Études* by Harald Lander, and George Balanchine's *Serenade*. After discovering an interest in contemporary dance, Sophie completed her diploma and advanced diploma with Sydney Dance Company Pre-Professional Year in 2020 and 2021. She had the opportunity to perform works by Holly Doyle, Omer Backley-Astrachan, Jessica Goodfellow and Rafael Bonchela. Sophie joined Sydney Dance Company as a trainee in January 2022, supported by the David and Fee Hancock Foundation.



### Naiara de Matos

Naiara was born in Salvador, Brazil. In 2007 she began full time training with the Bolshoi Ballet School in Joinville (Brazil). Following her graduation in 2011, Naiara began working in the Young Company of Bolshoi Ballet Brazil until she was offered a position with the Salzburg Landestheater in 2013. Throughout her career Naiara has joined companies such as Leipzig Ballet, Konzert Theater Bern, Augsburg Ballet and Dance Company St Gallen. She has performed classical and modern repertoire including a number of soloist and principal roles, both in Europe and further abroad. Naiara has worked with internationally renowned choreographers such as Ohad Naharin, Johan Inger, Uwe Scholz, Nadav Zelner, Martin Zimmermann, Dimo Milev, Alba Castillo, Giovanni Insaudo, Mauro Astolfi, Francesca Frassinelli and more. She joined Sydney Dance Company in 2023.



#### **Ryan Pearson**

Ryan is of Biripi and Worimi descent on his mother's side and Minang. Goreng and Balardung on his father's side. From Taree, NSW, he began his dance training at NAISDA at age 16, after taking part in the NSW Public Schools' Aboriginal Dance Company, facilitated by Bangarra's Youth Program Team in 2012. At NAISDA. Rvan learnt from a number of renowned teachers and choreographers, attending a Professional Division Summer Intensive at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre in New York City, He joined Bangarra Dance Theatre in 2017, debuting in Bennelong, performing for seven years through Australia and internationally, led by renowned storytellers Stephen Page and Frances Rings. Rvan was nominated in the 2020 Australian Dance Awards for Most Outstanding Performance by a Male Dancer for his performance in Jiri Kylian's Stamping Ground. In 2023, Ryan presented his first choreographic work, 5 Minute Call as part of Dance Clan. He joined Sydney Dance Company in 2024.



#### **Eka Perunicic**

Eka is a dancer whose journey is shaped by her Indian and Italian roots and her upbringing in Melbourne, Australia. Eka trained at the National Theatre Ballet School and specialises in classical ballet and contemporary dance. Her professional career includes performing with West Australian Ballet, Ballet Cymru, and Kamea Dance Company (soloist) and collaborating with renowned international choreographers. Eka is also a certified Pilates instructor and through her passion for movement and wellness, seeks to inspire others and elevate the art of dance. Eka joined Sydney Dance Company in 2025.



#### **Amelia Russell**

Born in Sydney, Australia, Milly began her dance journey at a young age, studying various dance genres before focusing on ballet. She earned a scholarship to McDonald College, where she combined academics with ballet training. During her time at the college, she performed principle roles including Lilac Fairy and Giselle. In her final years, she developed a passion for contemporary dance through electives with Sydney Dance Company. After graduating, she joined Sydney Dance Company's Pre-Professional program, exploring contemporary dance under esteemed choreographers. Milly has created and performed works by notable artists including Rafael Bonachela, Charmene Yap, Francis Rings, Prue lang, Miranda Wheen, Melissa Thorogood and Lisa Marie McDonald. As the Sydney Dance Company 2025 trainee, she is excited to continue her career as a professional contemporary dancer.



#### **Piran Scott**

Born in Mackay, QLD, Piran trained under Lynette Denny AM at Theatre Arts Mackay. He completed the Professional Year program with the Queensland Ballet, joining the company as a full member in 2010, under the artistic direction of Francois Klaus. In 2013, Piran received a soloist position with the Leipzig Ballet in Germany under Mario Schroeder. Piran was a soloist with the Ballet Theater Basel in Switzerland, directed by Richard Wherlock, followed by successful seasons with the Dance Company St. Gallen under Kinsun Chan, awarded Dancer of the Year 2022 in tanz magazine Europe. Piran has performed in classical and contemporary works by renowned choreographers such as Ohad Naharin, Alexander Ekman, Sharon Eyal, Johann Inger, Ivan Perez, Nils Christie, Thierry Malandain, Natalie Weir, Dimo Milev, Uwe Scholz, Mauro Astolfi, Francesca Frassinelli, Nadav Zelner, Martin Zimmerman and Alba Castillo. Piran joined Sydney Dance Company in 2023.



Sam decided to pursue a career in dance during his time at the Victorian Collage of the Arts Secondary School. This aspiration led to him competing in the Prix de Lausanne, the world's biggest ballet competition. His performance in the competition awarded him a scholarship to the Hamburg Ballet School where he completed his dance training. He worked with the Hamburg Ballet during his time in the school but found his first full-time work in Tanzcompany Innsbruck under Enrique Gasa Valga. Sam worked in the company as a soloist for two years, performing a variety of works. Concluding these two years, he moved home to Australia to be closer to family, delighted to be working closer to the people he loves. Sam joined Sydney Dance Company in 2025.





# Classes On Demand

Take class anywhere, anytime with our online library of pre-recorded Sydney Dance Company classes offered in a range of styles and levels.

Start your 7-day free trial





NSW

# SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY

Join the movement! Your support keeps us dancing.

Donate today and experience the impact of Sydney Dance Company.

**Donate Now** 

Photo by: Pedro Greia







### **Richard Cilli Rehearsal Director**

Richard Cilli combines his expertise as a dancer with his passion for coaching, culture and excellence as Sydney Dance Company's Rehearsal Director. In this role he enjoys holding space for many talented and dedicated artists at the top of their game to keep developing their craft. As a dancer Richard won the prestigious Helpmann Award for Best Male Dancer in 2010 for his performance in Rafael Bonachela's *We Unfold*, and was also the winner of the Australian Ballet's 50th Anniversary Ballet Competition in 2012.

Throughout his performing career, Richard has interpreted the work of an impressive array of choreographers, including Rafael Bonachela, Lloyd Newson, Stephanie Lake, William Forsythe, Anouk van Dijk, Jacopo Godani, Lucy Guerin, Gideon Obarzanek, Alexander Ekman, Adam Linder, Emanuel Gat and Kenneth Kvarnström. Beyond his years as a dancer at Sydney Dance Company, Richard has performed with renowned companies such as Rambert (UK), Chunky Move, Lucy Guerin Inc, Australasian Dance Collective, Dancenorth, and K.Kvarnström & Co (Sweden).

Born on Whadjuk Noongar country (Perth), Richard trained at the Western Australia Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) and Taipei National University of the Arts (國立臺北藝術大學). He also studied Arts and Cultural Management at Deakin University. As a choreographer he has created work for Sydney Dance Company and the PreProfessional Year, The Australian Ballet, LINK Dance Company and WAAPA, as well as various independently produced works.

A certified Countertechnique teacher, Richard has taught at institutions around Australia and the world, including the One Body, One Career intensive in at Springboard Dance Montreal.



### Charmene Yap Rehearsal Associate

Charmene Yap is a multi award-winning dancer, rehearsal director, choreographer and movement director. She is a graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts and Purchase College, New York.

Charmene's performing career spans some of Australia's leading dance companies, including Sydney Dance Company, Chunky Move, Tasdance, Dancenorth, and Lucy Guerin Inc., as well as New York's Armitage Gone! Dance Company. As an independent artist, she has worked with acclaimed choreographers such as Gideon Obarzanek, Lucy Guerin, Antony Hamilton and the late Tanja Liedtke. Her screen work includes performances in Del Kathryn Barton's *Red* and Katie Noonan's *Quicksand*.

Joining Sydney Dance Company as a dancer in 2010, Charmene spent a decade performing the majority of works by Rafael Bonachela and other renowned choreographers, including William Forsythe, Alexander Ekman, Jacopo Godani, Emanuel Gat, Andonis Foniadakis, Stephanie Lake and Melanie Lane. She received multiple awards, including the Helpmann Award for Best Female Dancer in 2012 and 2014 and the Australian Dance Award in 2013.

As a choreographer, Charmene has created works for stage, film, music videos, and fashion. Her notable works include *Grey Rhino*, co-choreographed with Cass Mortimer Eipper for Sydney Festival 2022, as well as *Do We* and *Drunk Tank Pink*, performed by Sydney Dance Company and Perth's Co3 Company. She was Assistant Choreographer for Gideon Obarzanek's *Us 50*, celebrating Sydney Dance Company's 50th anniversary. Her choreographic collaborations extend across disciplines,



including movement direction for Belvoir St Theatre, runway choreography for Bianca Spender, and site-specific works with visual artist Lauren Brincat.

In September 2019, Charmene was appointed Sydney Dance Company's inaugural Rehearsal Associate, a role supported by the Nelson Meers Foundation and Sydney Dance Company's Dancers Circle, working across the company's artistic and education programs, mentoring and guiding the next generation of dancers.



Instrumental to Life

7



KAWAI



# Staff

### **Board of Directors**

Emma-Jane Newton (Chair) Larissa Behrendt AO Jillian Broadbent AC Michael Dagostino David Friedlander Emma Gray Andrew Hagger Alexa Haslingden Mark Hassell Sandra McCullagh Bianca Spender

International Patron Dame Darcey Bussell DBE

Founding Patron Dancers' Circle Julian Knights AO

#### Ambassadors' Council Sarah Myer, Chair, Victoria Balnaves, Pam Bartlett, Judy Crawford, Chum Darvall, Javcen Fletcher, Mandy Foley, Rebekah Giles, Bradford Gorman. The Hon. Don Harwin. Samuel Joyce, Alexandra Knights, Skye Leckie OAM, Amelia Liveris, Jules Maxwell. Andrew Muston, Rebel Penfold-Russell OAM. Peter Reeve. Ruth Ritchie. Keinwen Shephard, Stephen Thatcher, Bee Wood, Adam Worling, Susan Wynne, Mary Zuber.

Dance Noir Committee Co-Chairs: Mandy Foley

Peter Reeve

### Committee

Fuzz Ali, Sally Burleigh, Jane Clifford, Debbi Coffey, Simone Cunico, Irene Deutsch, Georgie Fergusson, Stephanie Glass, Alexa Haslingden, Mim Stacey, Stephen Thatcher, Jessica Yu, Michelle Walsh.

#### Management

Artistic Director Rafael Bonachela

Executive Director Lou Oppenheim

Executive Assistant Amy Burrows

Director of Programming Brendan O'Connell

Senior Producer Dominic Chang

Associate Producer - Ensemble Kerry Thampapillai

Associate Producer - Wharf Michael Sieders

**Director Finance** and Administration Kate Di Mattina

Accountant Melissa Sim

Payroll Assistant Carina Mision

Director Training and Education Polly Brett

Head of Open Programs & Learning Samantha Dashwood

Dance Class Manager Ramon Doringo

Learning Manager Justine Ocampo Learning Coordinator Jacqueline Cooper

Learning Administrator Eugenie English

Head of Training Linda Gamblin

**Training Associate** Juliette Barton (Maternity Leave) Madeline Harms

Learning Associate Lexy Panetta

Pre-Professional Year Course Coordinator Tobiah Booth-Remmers

Conditioning Studio Manager Felicity McGee

Customer Experience and Venue Manager Sue Neilsen

Customer Service Assistant Mardi Downing

**Director Philanthropy** and Partnerships Fiona Crockett

Head of Philanthropy Katharine Seymour

Philanthropy Manager Lachlan Bell

Trusts and Foundations Manager Madeleine White (Maternity Leave)

#### Philanthropy Coordinator Bianca Mulet

Events Coordinator Jasmine Cook

Director Market Development Olivia Blackburn

Marketing Manager Natalie Zagaglia

Digital Marketing Specialist Rebecca Nash

Marketing and Communications Coordinators Gabriella Lay Rohan Furnell

Head of CRM and Business Intelligence Thida Kyaw

Ticketing Specialist John Calvi

Technical Director Guy Harding

Company and Resident Stage Manager Simon Turner

Production Coordinator Tony McCoy

Head of Wardrobe Mary-Ellen Baxter

#### The Company

Rehearsal Director Richard Cilli

Rehearsal Associate Charmene Yap

Balnaves Foundation Artist in Residence Raghav Handa

#### Dancers

Lucy Angel Mathilda Ballantyne **Timmy Blankenship** Mali Comlekci **Rilev Fitzgerald** Liam Green Luke Havward Sonrisa Hubbard Morgan Hurrell Ngaere Jenkins Sophie Jones Naiara de Matos Rvan Pearson Eka Perunicic Piran Scott Sam Winkler

Trainee Amelia Russell

Head Physiotherapist Ashlea-Mary Cohen

Company Doctor Dr. Michael Berger

Sports Doctor Dr. James Lawrence

### **Company Teachers**

Emily Amisano, Anton. Lee Brummer, Joshua Consandine, Rachel Coulson, Tra Mi Dinh, Holly Doyle, Cathie Goss, Madeline Harms, Sue Healey, Samantha Hines, Paul Knobloch, Jenni Large, Chloe Leong, Rikki Mason, Yui Masukawa, lohna Mercer. Rhiannon Newton. Marnie Palomares, Jasmin Sheppard, Chimene Steele-Prior, Jessica Thompson, Annabel tom Dieck, Kimball Wong, Victor Zarallo, Zee 7unnur

Sydney Dance Company Wharf 4/5 15 Hickson Road DAWES POINT NSW 2000

### Join the Conversation

#SydneyDanceCompany #2025SDC sydneydancecompany.com

Facebook @sydneydanceco

#### Instagram

@sydneydanceco @sydneydanceco.training @sydneydanceco.classes

TikTok @sydneydanceco

YouTube @sydneydancecompany

### **Our Donors**

We would like to thank all our donors for their generous support and acknowledge those who have given anonymously. Our donors make it possible for us to create and present new work, inspire future generations of artists and audiences, extend our reach and plan for the future.

We couldn't do it without you!

If you would like more information about supporting Sydney Dance Company please contact our Philanthropy team at <a href="mailto:philanthropy@sydneydancecompany.com">philanthropy@sydneydancecompany.com</a>.

For a full list of our donors, head to our website.





Photo By: Pedro Greig

# **Our Partners**

### **Government Partners**





Sydney Dance Company at the Walsh Bay Arts Precinct is a unique venue situated in the heart of one of Sydney's most vibrant and active cultural hubs

Our venue features a variety of dynamic waterfront spaces ideal for creative, social and business-related events.

20111111

Visit our website or contact us to discuss your next function or event.

sydneydancecompany.com events@sydneydancecompany.com +61 2 9258 4884