

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 12 June 2024
FOR IMMEDIATE USE

DANCENORTH
AUSTRALIA

Townsville to host Australian-first dance work ahead of World Premiere

Townsville audiences will be the first to see a groundbreaking new dance work by locally-based, internationally-acclaimed contemporary dance company Dancenorth Australia this weekend (14-15 June), before the show officially Premieres at Brisbane Festival in September.

Lighting the Dark will be the first time in Australia – potentially, the world – that an artist living with Down Syndrome has been commissioned to Direct a mainstage work for a professional company.

Director Chris Dyke, has been making work with Dancenorth's Artistic Directors Amber Haines and Kyle Page annually for more than a decade, with this show marking the first time he has commanded Dancenorth's full ensemble.

Dyke said his goal for *Lighting the Dark* was to create a show that takes inspiration from blockbuster superheroes and global rock stars and leaves the audience feeling a sense of happiness, love and connection with one another.

"My heroes – Batman, Superman, Queen and the street artist Banksy – all operate in the dark, so others can enjoy the light," said Dyke.

"These heroes reflect my own power back to me, and I hope everyone who sees the show will feel empowered by it, too."

Haines said it's been a joy for Dancenorth's Ensemble and creative team to work alongside Chris to bring his vision to life.

"Chris is such a creative force, and he has brought such incredible clarity and instinct to what he wanted to achieve with his first full-length, ensemble piece," said Haines.

"The creative team has just been tasked with stewarding that vision to the stage, and the result is nothing short of epic."

While *Lighting the Dark* will get its official World Premiere at Brisbane Festival in September, Page said it is important that local audiences have the first chance to see the work being created in Dancenorth's Gurambilbarra (Townsville) studio.

“We choose to base ourselves in regional North Queensland because of the endless creative inspiration we’re able to draw from the landscape and from our deeply supportive community,” Page said.

“It remains important to us that our home-crowd is always the first to see what we’re making before we take it to audiences across the country and around the world.”

The Preview Season of *Lighting the Dark* will be held at Townsville Civic Theatre on 14-15 June 2024 with tickets available from the [TicketShop](#).

The World Premiere of *Lighting the Dark* will be held at the Thomas Dixon Centre, Meanjin (Brisbane) on 12-14 September 2024, as part of the Brisbane Festival.

Acknowledgement of Funding: *Lighting the Dark* was commissioned by Brisbane Festival, and is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, and the Ian Potter Foundation.

Dancenorth Australia is assisted by both the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body, and the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.

MEDIA EVENT

TIME: 12.50pm for a 1pm start

DATE: Wednesday, 12 June 2024

LOCATION: Townsville Civic Theatre, 41 Boundary Street, South Townsville
Please assemble at the back door to the theatre.

TALENT: Chris Dyke, Director, Choreographer and Performer
Amber Haines, Concept Direction and Choreographer
Kyle Page, Concept Direction and Choreographer

Dancenorth Ensemble

VISION: A preview of the *Lighting the Dark*

NOTES: For backstage access attendees must be wearing enclosed footwear.

MEDIA CONTACT

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