

# DANCENORTH

AUSTRALIA



Annual Report

2023



Dancenorth acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which we make our work, the Wulgurukaba of Gurambilbarra and Yunbenun, and the Bindal of Thul Garrie Waja.

The Wulgurukaba and Bindal people continue to nurture a deep and respectful relationship to land and sea and it is our great privilege and honour to create on their incredible country.

We respectfully acknowledge neighbouring groups of our region – the Gugu Badhun and Nywaigi. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and their Elders past and present. We acknowledge the fact that sovereignty was never ceded and that Aboriginal people are Australia’s first dancers.



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## PURPOSE

Creating a culture of consciousness through the universal language of dance.

## COMPANY

A major champion of the Arts in North Queensland, Dancenorth Australia balances a dynamic regional presence with a commitment to creating compelling contemporary dance that tours the world.

Deeply committed to the creation of adventurous, thoughtfully conceived, and highly acclaimed new work; Dancenorth has presented work in more than 45 International Arts Festivals and venues around Australia and the world. As a model for making outstanding art in a regional community, Dancenorth has been recognised for its outstanding work with several accolades including the prestigious 2017 Sidney Myer Performing Arts Group Award, Australian Dance Award (Best Community Dance Award), Greenroom Award (Best Ensemble *If\_Was\_*), two Helpmann awards for the MFI Commissioned work *Attractor* (Best Dance Production and Best Choreography in a Ballet, Dance or Physical Theatre Production), a Greenroom Award for Composition / Sound Design for *Attractor*, and many other nominations.

Dancenorth has become an epicentre of cultural change by empowering, supporting and welcoming many artistic voices to its creative hub including a diverse range of choreographers, guest collaborators, Artists in residence and dancers.

Alongside the professional Ensemble and touring productions sits an equally vital pillar of focus: Community Experience. Dancenorth's dedicated team works with diverse and minority communities across Queensland using dance to support, enhance, inspire and heal - bringing communities together.

Led by Artistic Director Kyle Page (2017 Sidney Myer Creative Fellow), Executive Director Hillary Coyne and Associate Artistic Director Amber Haines, Dancenorth is an integral part of the Australian dance ecology making a significant contribution to the dance sector and building literacy around contemporary dance nationally.

## IMPACT

People are more isolated and disconnected than ever before. Dancenorth is an antidote to disconnection, a place of belonging. We are mobilising a community of engaged citizens by creating and sharing dance works and experiences that remind people of the essential qualities of life that arise when we connect with our bodies, hearts and minds, nature, and each other.

## CULTURE

We are curious and creative beings who believe that the body is central to all that we do, and we consciously loosen the grip of the mind to honour, cultivate, listen and know more deeply. We thoughtfully disrupt convention and provide a space in which connectivity between people and place nourishes the bodies, hearts and minds of our team, our collaborators and all those we encounter.

We collaborate and work according to our values and principles:

Robust friendship is central to our collective dance. We welcome difference, divergence and diverse points of view in celebration of our shared humanity.

Artistry is in everything we do. The liminal space between each and every human (heart, mind and body) is understood as the source of creativity and collaboration, where systems emerge via multiple perspectives and approaches.

Bravery is how we navigate the world. We embrace the not knowing as much as the knowing, and understand that systems are living, unfolding and evolving with new inputs shaping their course.

Integrity guides our relationships, decisions and approaches. When we listen, we listen deeply and actively. When we speak, we speak clearly. And when we move, we move with our whole being.

Balance is where we find harmony and strength amid change. We are creative beings who are not afraid of disruption, agitation and abrasion, and we choose to move towards openness, love and life.

## GOALS

- + Create new dance works that are virtuosic and relevant, made through our artistic process of enmeshing body, nature and community.
- + Share compelling dance works and experiences with our community in Gurambilbarra and Thul Garrie Waja (Townsville) before taking them far and wide to people around Australia and the world.
- + Invest in our national dance ecology by providing a creative hub for many Artists and makers, and be known as an epicentre of dance research and innovation.
- + Walk and work alongside First Nations Artists and makers by building relationships, creating new work and sharing knowledge, skills and space.

## FIRST NATIONS ENGAGEMENT

The Wulgurukaba, Bindal, Gugu Badhun and Nywaigi peoples have nurtured a deep and respectful relationship with the land and sea in our region for millennia. Dancenorth is committed to sustained Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement. We do this through dedicated and engaged consultation with Elders and community leaders, respectful adherence to cultural protocols and a commitment to deepening our understanding and perspective of the Traditional Custodians of this country.

Guided by our First Nations friends and community in Gurambilbarra (Townsville) and its surrounds, we are working and walking together to generate previously unknown possibilities and ways of understanding and being with each other.

We continue to connect and collaborate in ways that are not always outcome-focused; to breathe life and build community strength into this wonderful place. In so doing, seeds are sown, and opportunities to create and collaborate are identified. There are countless ways that we connect. Through gatherings, conversations, presentations, event hosting, and many cups of tea. In these exchanges we are afforded the time for reciprocity deep listening, and understanding. We are invited to consider new ways of working together; deconstructing and dismantling familiar processes and approaches that can at times be stultifying and rigid.



# BOARD + STAFF

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr Judith McLean	Chair
John Drummond Montgomery	Deputy Chair
Kathryn Deyell	Director
Margaret Naylor	Director
Debbie Rains	Director
Roshni Senapati	Director (from May 2023)
Courtney Thompson	Director
Jacinta Wight	Director

## STAFF

Kyle Page	Artistic Director, Co-CEO
Hillary Coyne	Executive Director, Co-CEO
Amber Haines	Associate Artistic Director
Eloise Grace	Company Producer
Liam Kennedy	Production Manager
Felicity Organ-Moore	Operations Manager
Alice Lee Holland	Community Experience Manager
Matthew Higgins	Marketing and Development Manager
Monique Roy	Marketing and Communications Coordinator
Aaron Ashley	Content Designer
Laura Àroha Douglass	Office and Administration Coordinator
Letitia Kowski, PVW Partners	Bookkeeper
William Koiki Mabo	First Nations Industry Placement
Madaleine Armstrong, Andrea Gillham, Jordan Galllott	Teaching Artists
Yoshie Kenny	Production Technician
Max Lenoy	First Nations Cultural Advisor

## ENSEMBLE DANCERS

Marlo Benjamin, Sabine Crompton-Ward, Tiana Lung, Damian Meredith, Felix Sampson, Michael Smith

## GUEST DANCERS

Tammy Bouman, Darci O’Rourke, Tara Jade Samaya, Kimball Wong



## COLLABORATORS AND ARTISTS

Alex Salvador, Alisdair Macindoe, Alison Currie, Amrita Hepi, Anida Yoeu Ali, Anna Whitaker, Anne Frances Watson, Ashley McLellen, Ashley Saltner Jnr, Bayley Griffin, Ben Hughes, Big Eye Theatre, Brenton Creed, Byron J. Scullin, Cameron Deyell, Chloe Greaves, Chris Dyke, Chucho Bruno, Clare Jaques Vasquez, Costa Hagiaglou, Debie Curd, Donna-Marie Maxwell, Felix Sampson, Gavin Rosetti, Georgia Rudd, Glen Thomas, Hailey Momo Scott, Hayden Saltner, Jennifer Ma, Jessica Brown, Jessica Moss, Lenny Donohue, Lil Mase, Liminal Spaces, Liz Zappala, MADE (Mature Artists Dance Experience), Matt Abrahams, Matthew Cocking, Michelle Heaven, Mohamed Bangoura-ke, Naomi Jean, Narelle Benjamin, Opera Australia, Rachel Arianne Ogle, RASNNQ (Regional Art Services Network North Queensland), Remo Vallance, Robert Larsen, Second Echo Ensemble, Tammy Bouman, Tanya Malouf, Urapun, Umbrella Studio Contemporary Arts, Victoria Hunt, Waangenga Blanco, Wulgurukaba Walkabouts, Yoshie Kenny, Zane Saunders.

## SECONDMENT DANCERS

Aimee Raitman, Alex Warren, Angelica Menta, Angus Syben, Avalon Ormiton, Brianna Shahin, Bridgette Mullamphy, Caitlin Mewett, Carmelita Buay, Charlotte Hoppe-Smith, Chris Wade, Cora Hughes, Gabrielle Martin, Grace Howard, Grace White, Helena May, Iris Elgar, Jack Riley, Jayden Wall, Jean Bennett, Jiawen Feng, Kerrod Box, Kiara Neves, Koko Mukai, Lukaa Rayment, Luke Romero, Macon Riley, Madaleine Armstrong, Madeleine Bowman, Melissa Yvonne Pham, Molly Haringsma, Oli Mathiesen, Ronan Armstrong, Sarah Francis, Shardae Matthews, Sofia Dimasi, Tammy Bouman, Tayla Gartner, Tayla Hoadley, Thomas Evans, Zoe White.

## THANK YOU

Dancenorth extends our warmest thanks to our wide community of members, audience, volunteers, participants, secondments, partners, donors, supporters and friends.



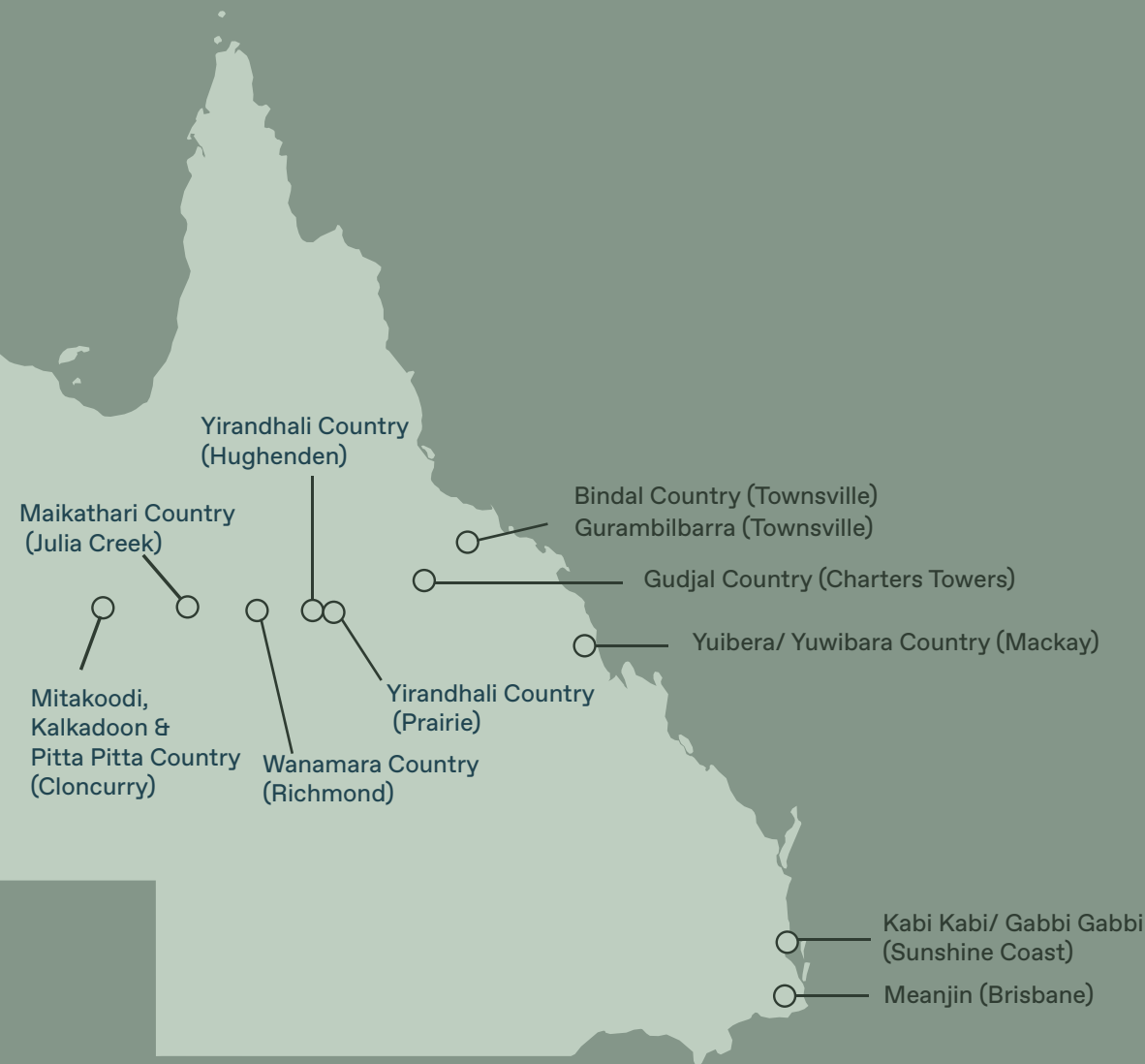
## National



## International



## State



115

Open Classes

1381

Open Class Attendees

132

Workshops

2726

Workshop Participants

597

Attendance at free showings, sharings, salons and conversations

348

Volunteers

41

Secondments and Interns



6759

Local Audience

37,294

National Audience

573

International Audience

44,626

Total Audience

88

Artists and Arts workers

03

New Works

HIGHLIGHTS



# CO-CEO REPORT

We dreamt of 2023 being a year of regeneration, honouring the exhaustion of our team and seeking to balance the immense creative output of the Company with more time and space for reflection and curiosity. In many ways we failed in this pursuit.



Hillary Coyne and Kyle Page  
Co-CEOs

The year’s activities included commissions, creative developments, tours, and collaborations. We shared *RED* with audiences in nipaluna (Hobart) at Ten Days on the Island and Meanjin (Brisbane) at QPAC, we dived deep into creative process in *No Show* with long time Ensemble dancer Felix Sampson, and Michelle Heaven; *Tomorrow Makers 6* brought the dancers’ creativity to the fore with a remarkable season of new works; we hosted 40 secondments throughout the year; created *Bambarra-ma Dariburu*, a new work in collaboration with the Wulgurukaba Walkabouts featuring 140 local volunteer drummers and Indigenous hip hop artist Lil Mase; presented to a local audience in excess of 7000 as part of the North Australian Festival of Arts; we premiered a new sunrise soundbath experience called *Still*, featuring an original composition by Jessica Moss; we delivered our Annual Regional Workshop Tour across

rural and remote towns between Gurambilbarra (Townsville) and Kalkadoon (Cloncurry); we toured *NOISE* to Horizon Festival (Kabi Kabi, Sunshine Coast), New Annual (Mulubinba, Newcastle) and Brisbane Festival, we re-awoke our international touring ambitions following a globally induced hiatus, sharing *Wayfinder* with a wildly appreciative audience in Hong Kong; we hosted Victoria Hunt, Rachel Arianne Ogle, Jennifer Ma and Zane Saunders as part of our Artist Residency in the Tropics (A.R.T.) program; we collaborated with Crossroad Arts to deliver C.R.U.S.H., hosted by nipaluna (Hobart)’s Mature Age Dance Ensemble (MADE) for a week of workshops with our Still Dancing community; we hosted Alisdair Macindoe and Alison Currie via our 4 Walls and a Floor program, we delivered a heart expanding event for International Day of People with Disability in collaboration with Townsville Community Learning

Centre (TCLC); we shared the studio with William Koiki Mabo, Tara Jade Samaya, Marlo Benjamin, Composer Cameron Deyell and First Nation’s Visual Artist Clare Jaques Vasquez, seeding new ideas for a project in 2025; and our Dancers appeared as Guest Artists in Opera Australia’s rendition of Wagner’s *The Ring Cycle*...

Whilst our efforts are to be celebrated, a year of regeneration was not what transpired. It is this which continues to elude us and for which we aim to do better. To not just talk the talk of energetic, financial, and environmental sustainability, but to truly embody a vision for the future that is implemented with honesty and integrity. To work in a way that understands and integrates seasonality, that recognises there is a time for working hard, juggling multiple projects and competing demands, and there is a time for going in, for being still and

nourishing. There is a time for wandering, a time for gathering and a time for cups of tea over lunch that don’t get cut short as we need to dash to catch the next meeting or meet the next looming deadline. We are not yet sure how we find this, but we are committed to asking these questions, remaining curious and listening to other, less familiar ways, to stay open and sense into what is possible.

This level of rigour, curiosity, and genuine desire to honour each moment is only possible through the extraordinary effort of our dedicated Board, our inspiring team, and our deeply engaged community all of whom form the living system that is Dancenorth. For your contribution we are deeply thankful.



# CHAIR'S REPORT

As you read the letter by Co-CEOs Hillary and Kyle, you'll find a reflection of the dynamic year that was 2023, marked by inspiring performances from a hardworking and joyous group of artists.

Their description of their failures is an important reflection: one to be taken seriously by those of us mandated to ensure appropriate governance and care exists within the companies we lead. Their reflections challenge us to discuss issues of morality and ethics in terms of human and planetary sustainability inherent in being an Artist | Arts worker | Arts company in Australia today.

I'm particularly struck by their question about why we failed when they write:

"We dreamt of 2023 being a year of regeneration, honouring the exhaustion of our team and seeking to balance the immense creative output of the company with more time and space for reflection and curiosity."

Balancing the need to stay fresh, relevant, and vital by creating time for regeneration to recharge our minds and bodies is an issue we are all struggling with professionally and personally.

The expectation is that our Artists | Arts workers | Arts companies will continually challenge us and lead us to parts of ourselves and the world where our cultural blind spots hide. It is Artists who 'lead out' (from the Latin 'educere').

Despite the promises, however, our technologies, screens, and social media continue to enslave us. Johann Hari's excellent book *Stolen Focus* claims they are stealing our minds, speeding up every

aspect of our lives. He warns us of the urgency to reclaim time for our humanity:

"The more our attention degrades, the harder it will be to summon the personal and political energy to take on the forces stealing our focus. The first step it requires is a shift in our consciousness. We need to stop blaming ourselves, or making only demands for tiny tweaks from our employers and from tech companies. We own our own minds – and together, we can take them back from the forces that are stealing them."

In creating our 2025-2028 Strategic Plan we have refined our purpose but remained committed to developing an ongoing culture of awareness about how we are together to improve the world we live in by *creating a culture of consciousness through the universal language of dance*.

It's my belief that Boards have collective responsibility to create space for Artists | Arts workers | Arts companies to 'make time' for creativity and innovation.

We have a vision for the future that understands seasonality, that recognises there is a time for working hard, juggling multiple projects and competing demands, and there is a time for going in, for being still and nourishing.

This is a big conversation: stay tuned.

I do want to recognise and celebrate the exceptional performances that define Dancenorth's artistic reputation. Importantly, I also want to celebrate the complementary work that happens behind the scenes in the confines of a small office in Gurumbilbarra (Townsville).

Like any business, running an Arts company involves demanding and precise operational planning, as well as astute and sensitive management of its people. It is a truism to say that many Artists and Creatives do not necessarily choose regional Queensland to advance their careers: finding and retaining great Artists and Arts workers to work outside of metropolitan centres is a major and ongoing challenge for all regional companies and Dancenorth is no exception.

In 2023, our Townsville born, Australian-trained Marketing and Development Manager, Matthew Higgins left the Company to return to 'the big smoke' of Brisbane: Creative Partnerships Australia is lucky to have you, Matthew. We also farewelled Alice Lee Holland in her full-time role of Community Experience Manager. Alice has helped build a legacy of gently connected, hyper-local community driven projects for the Company and leaves to take up the role of Artistic Director of QL2 (Canberra) in 2024. We also acknowledge Monique Roy and Laura Àroha Douglass who left to continue their careers further afield. We are eager to see where their journeys take them.

Unique to our location is the incredible relationships with First Nations Artists that are deep and deepening. The co-created presentation of *Bambarra-ma Dariburu* with Ashley Saltner Jnr and the Wulgurukaba Walkabouts for the North Australian Festival of Arts is testament to this friendship. I also extend my appreciation for the many conversations and cups of tea enjoyed with Traditional Owner Ashley Saltner Jnr, Elder and Artist Aunty Ros Sailor (and her family), William Koiki Mabo, and Max Lenoy: there is much to learn, and much to listen to.

It is with deep appreciation that I recognise the incredible partnerships and support from Arts Queensland and Creative Australia, the Ian Potter Foundation, and the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation – your leadership and insight in support of Dancenorth is remarkable, as is your belief in the power of Dancenorth's regional artistic voice.

Lastly, I thank the incredible leadership, vision, tenacity, daring and artistry of Hillary and Kyle, the unwavering loyalty and ever-fresh insight of Eloise and Amber, and the whole team of hardworking Artists and Arts workers that make up Dancenorth. To work alongside you is a joy.



Dr Judith McLean  
Chair





NEW WORKS + TOURING





# BAMBARRA-MA DARIBURU

“WHAT A LOVELY SHOW – JUST WOW. WE ARE VERY LUCKY TO HAVE DANCENORTH IN TOWNSVILLE ... AND TO SEE THE WULGURUKABA WALKABOUTS EXPLORE A NEW FORM OF DANCE STYLE AND KEEPING CULTURE ALIVE IS AWESOME. THE ENERGY AND THE SKILL OF THE PERFORMANCES WAS ELECTRIC.”

Audience – Bambarra-ma Dariburu

*Bambarra-ma Dariburu* (It’s good to make good): a powerful collision and coming together of Gurambilbarra’s Wulgurukaba Walkabouts, Dancenorth and the local community in a celebration of resonance, spirit, and energy.

Taking place at dusk on Garabarra (Jezzine Barracks), the evenings were warm and welcoming community events celebrating local arts and culture, supported by the North Australian Festival of Arts (NAFA).

*Bambarra-ma Dariburu* began with world premiere performance by Wulgurukaba Walkabouts featuring a mesmerising nable (welcome) and bunu (smoking) ceremony, and explorations and extrapolations of traditional dance in a contemporary setting.

The Dancenorth Ensemble joined the stage with a dynamic community-driven, amplified presentation of *NOISE* with 137 local volunteer drummers who thumped out a scintillating live score.

The third act featured the Wulgurukaba Walkabouts, Dancenorth and Meanjin (Brisbane) based Hip Hop Artist Lil Mase, the volunteer drummers, and master drummer Mohamed Bangoura-ke.

Supported by Urapun, and featuring the Blak Arts and Culture Markets, *Bambarra-ma Dariburu* drew numbers in the thousands, all joining together to bring Gurambilbarra (Townsville) to life with the power of music and movement.

A highlight for 2023 was the organic integration of *Deeper than Dancing* with the Company’s mainstage work *Bambarra-ma Dariburu* at the North Australian Festival of Arts.

*Bambarra-ma Dariburu* included the presentation

of *NOISE* – an exciting, energetic work that celebrates rhythm and dance, with a live score played by 130 local drummers. Of significance is the djembe – an instrument that originated in West Africa more than 800 years ago. For *NOISE* 2023, we engaged Master Drummer, Mohamed Bangoura, originally from Guinea, West Africa. Mohamed visited Gurambilbarra (Townsville) twice for the project, initially in May to facilitate dance and drumming workshops, and again in June for the performances.

One of the May workshops was facilitated with and for *Deeper than Dancing* partner organisation Townsville Multicultural Support Group (TMSG) for 31 refugee/migrant participants. From this experience, five TMSG participants signed up for the two-month project. To facilitate their experience, we employed a cultural support worker who provided transport to and from participants’ homes, for every rehearsal and performance. Further, TMSG supported seven young dancers to perform onstage for the final dance in the production.

In the lead up to the production, Artists from Wulgurukaba Walkabouts and the Dancenorth Ensemble facilitated seven workshops for local school and community groups, to inspire and invite young people to perform onstage with rapper Lil Mase. We delivered online resources to enable teachers and organisers to support their students beyond our workshops. We engaged with 140 young participants across these workshops, and 17 young dancers opted to perform with us for the production.



PREMIERE  
North Australian Festival of Arts  
24 – 25 June 2023  
Garabarra (Jezzine Barracks),  
Gurambilbarra (Townsville), Queensland, AU

Number of Performances 2  
Number of Attendees 6,250

CREDITS  
Concept, Direction and Choreography  
Ashley Saltner Jnr, Kyle Page and Amber Haines  
Creative Consultants Lenny Donohue,  
William Koiki Mabo, Glen Thomas  
Live Musician Lil Mase  
Lighting Designer Yoshie Kenny  
Choreography and Direction – NOISE  
Amber Haines and Kyle Page  
Composition and Lead Drummer - NOISE Costa Hagiaglou  
Music Producer for Wulgurukaba Walkabouts  
Isadoré/ Isabelle Reynaud  
Original Lighting Designer – NOISE Jamie Schmidt  
Costume Design – NOISE Andrew Treloar  
Drumming Consultant Alex Salvador  
Master Drummer Mohamed Bangoura-ke  
Additional Arrangements and Guitar Orchestrations – NOISE Felix Sampson  
Additional Composition Support  
Debie Curd, Donna-Maree Maxwell, Alex Salvador  
Performers | Wulgurukaba Walkabouts Ashley Saltner Jnr,  
Lenny Donohue, William Koiki Mabo, Glen Thomas with  
Hayden Saltner, Mason Saltner, Les Tanna, Jesse Wilson  
Performers | Dancenorth Sabine Crompton-Ward, Tiana  
Lung, Damian Meredith, Darci O’Rourke, Felix Sampson,  
Michael Smith and Chris Dyke  
Assistant Stage Managers Joshua Siganto, Mali Thompson  
Featuring Blak Arts and Cultural Markets  
Pre-Show Performance Urapun

PROJECT PARTNERS



PLUS THE INCREDIBLE COMMUNITY OF  
DRUMMERS AND NOISE-MAKERS:  
  
Aileen, Alison, Ally, Ana, Ana, Angie, Angus, Anna, Artie, Astrid,  
Ayesha, Bernie, Brett, Catherine, Katelyn, Ciaran, Cheney, Jett,  
Brax, Christine, Darcy, David, Debie, Donna-Maree, Paige, Kayla,  
Jennifer, Elamef, Emily, Lucinda, Lochlan, Emmily, Evelyn, Ezra,  
Fiona, Sophie, Mathilde, Gail, Gail, Genevieve, Glen, Gopalan, Greg,  
Irem, Jacinta, Jacki, Craig, Meg, Jack, Jackson, Jade, James, Kimeon,  
James, Jasper, Joshua, Juanita, Barney, Julie, Julie, Justin, Karen,  
Sapphire, Kate, Kate, Kate, Kathryn, Ashton, Katisha, Katrina, Kerri,  
Ketki, Khaela, Theo, Kim, Laine, Lauren, Lauren, Sienna, Indie,  
Leah, Leanne, Lee, Leigh, Lia, Neil, Lila, Linda, Linda, Liz, Julian,  
Martin, Xena, Megan, Melanie, Charlie, Matthew, Melissa, Andrew,  
Emma, Mimi, Minna, Belinda, Miriam, Monica, Morgan, Leigh,  
Muriel, Sharna, Kaylon, Amelia, Narelle, Arielle, Nelleke, Jack, Nori,  
Pam, Pamela, Patricia, Paul, Penny, Renee, Ricardo, Robyn, Sandra,  
Senghor, Mufaume, Jeanne, Sharon, Sharon, Sharon, Shirin, Simon,  
Simon, Simone, Steven, Stephani, Laila, Stephanie, Susan, Vicki,  
Susan, Talia, David, Wil, Alice, Taj, Brock, Thomas, Tim, Josiah,  
Bethany , Ethan, Tony, Tracey, Jackie, Tracey, Tyson, Wendy

*Bambarra-ma Dariburu (It’s good to make good)* was  
commissioned by the North Australian Festival of Arts.  
  
This project was assisted by the Australian Government  
through the Festivals Australia program. This project was  
made possible by the Australian Government’s Regional  
Arts Fund, which supports the Arts in regional and remote  
Australia.

Wulgurukaba Walkabouts was assisted by the Queensland  
Government through Arts Queensland’s Queensland Arts  
Showcase Program.  
  
Dancenorth Australia is supported by both the Australian  
Government through Creative Australia, its principal  
Arts investment and advisory body, and the Queensland  
Government through Arts Queensland. Dancenorth  
Australia is supported by Townsville City Council through its  
Strategic Partnerships Program.

SUPPORTED BY







# TOMORROW MAKERS 6

“THE ANNUAL TOMORROW MAKERS SERIES IS A RARE GIFT FOR THE MAKERS, PERFORMERS AND TOWNSVILLE AUDIENCES ALIKE, A RECIPROCAL EXPERIENCE THAT BRINGS GREATER MEANING TO THE COMPLEXITY OF LIFE THROUGH THE INNATE POWER OF CREATIVE EXPRESSION.”

Fiona Perry - Townsville Bulletin

Supporting the next generation of dance Artists, the annual Tomorrow Makers series provides members of the Dancenorth Ensemble with the opportunity to cultivate their independent creative practice and create new dance performances with full production values, in a nurturing and supportive environment.

PREMIERE  
Dancenorth Australia  
27 – 29 April 2023  
Dancenorth Theatre,  
Gurambilbarra (Townsville), Queensland, AU

Number of Performances 4  
Number of Attendees 393

CREDITS  
Curator Amber Haines  
Lighting Design Yoshie Kenny

*TO BE HONEST* by Tiana Lung  
Performer/ Choreographer Tiana Lung  
Sound Design Felix Sampson  
Costume Design Liz Zappala

*MURMUR* by Marlo Benjamin with Narelle Benjamin  
Performers/ Choreographers  
Marlo Benjamin, Narelle Benajmin  
Sound Design Huey Benjamin

*LILY OF THE VALLEY* by Michael Smith  
Choreographer Michael Smith  
Performers Sabine Crompton-Ward,  
Tiana Lung, Damian Meredith  
Sound Composition / Design Anna Whitaker

*IS THAT THE HORIZON?* by Sabine Crompton-Ward  
Performer/ Choreographer Sabine Crompton-Ward  
Live Musician (Harp) Naomi Jean  
Featuring The Bubble Song, composed and performed by Naomi Jean

*BY PRODUCT* by Damian Meredith  
Performer/ Choreographer Damian Meredith  
Sound and Video Design Damian Meredith  
Costume Design Hailey Momo Scott  
Special thanks the TRASH CRAFT workshop participants

*TOUCH* by Chris Dyke  
Performer/ Choreographer Chris Dyke  
Soundtrack Daft Punk  
Special thanks Mum, Kyle, Felix, Amber, Damian, Marlo, Michael, Tiana, Sabine, Hillary, Liam, Yoshie, Felicity, Eloise, Matthew, Alice, Laura, and Aaron.

SUPPORTED BY



Presented by Dancenorth Australia through the support of the Ian Potter Foundation.





*Still* is a new work created by Dancenorth’s Artistic Director Kyle Page. Housed within a stunning architecturally designed space by Liminal Spaces, 22 guests collectively witness the dawn of a new day while being cradled by the sounds of Canadian Composer Jessica Moss (Thee Silver Mt. Zion, Black Ox Orkestar): An invitation to unwind as the rising sun paints the ocean in warm hues, the sky a subtle tapestry. A breathtaking canvas for this daily symphony of beauty, awe, and wonder. Sensing our interrelationship with the earth, we arrive here. Together, for this fleeting, magnificent moment.

This project was made possible by the Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund – an Australian Government Initiative, and The Canada Council for the Arts.

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

PREMIERE  
North Australian Festival of Arts  
4 – 9 July 2023  
Pallarenda foreshore,  
Gurambilbarra (Townsville), Queensland, AU

Number of Events 6  
Number of Attendees 116

CREDITS  
Concept Kyle Page  
Composition/ Musician Jessica Moss  
Sound Art and Design Byron J. Scullin  
Set Design Liminal Spaces/ Elvio Brianese  
and Peta Heffernan  
Fabrication Remo Vallance  
Engineering Services COVA Thinking

SUPPORTED BY





## WAYFINDER



Directed by Amber Haines and Kyle Page, Dancenorth Australia joins forces with three-time Grammy nominated Australian band Hiatus Kaiyote and Sound Artist Byron J. Scullin to create a soaring composition evoking pleasure and possibility. An undulating sound sculpture condenses and expands this scintillating score, immersing audiences in a new sonic dimension. Japanese-Australian Visual Artist Hiromi Tango offers her joyful, heart expanding artwork to both the stage design and costumes for this sublime new performance, featuring lighting design by Niklas Pajanti.

Speaking to our sensorial nature, *Wayfinder* reminds us of a state of being that transcends the words that have come to define us. Navigating bigger and more ancient reference points, *Wayfinder* recognises connection as the central axis of the universe.

By the stars, the waves, and the sun,  
we find our way.

### INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE

Government of Hong Kong

9 – 10 September 2023

Tsuen Wan Town Hall – Auditorium, Tsuen Wan,  
New Territories, Hong Kong

Number of Performances 2

Number of Attendees 573

### CREDITS

Concept, Direction and Choreography

Amber Haines and Kyle Page

Lighting Design Niklas Pajanti

Composition Hiatus Kaiyote

Sound Art and Design Byron J. Scullin

Sound Sculpture Design, Construction, and Implementation

Robert Larsen and Nicholas Roux

Visual Design Hiromi Tango

Design Associate Chloe Greaves

Design Assistant Jeanette Hutchinson

Polyrhythm Consultant Naomi Jean

Performers/Choreographers Marlo Benjamin, Sabine

Crompton-Ward, Tiana Lung, Damian Meredith, Darci

O'Rourke, Felix Sampson, Michael Smith, Kimball Wong

Production Technician Robert Larsen, Yoshie Kenny

## RED



“I HAVE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING  
LIKE THIS. NOBODY HAS.”

The Courier Mail

Tens of thousands of years ago, a genetic mutation gave rise to the physical manifestation of red hair in humans. Now, like many, they are endangered.

Nominated for three Matilda Awards – Best Set Design (David Cross), Best Composition and/or Sound Design (Alisdair Macindoe), and Best Circus or Physical Theatre Work

### Ten Days on the Island

10 – 11 March 2023

Studio Theatre, Theatre Royal, nipaluna (Hobart),  
Tasmania, AU

Number of Performances 3

Number of Attendees 291

### Queensland Performing Arts Centre

29 March - 1 April 2023

Playhouse Theatre Stage, Queensland Performing Arts  
Centre, Meanjin (Brisbane), Queensland, AU

Number of Performances 5

Number of Attendees 1,020

### CREDITS

Concept, Direction and Choreography

Amber Haines and Kyle Page

Composition/Sound Design Alisdair Macindoe, featuring  
Music by Ellen Arkbro and Vocals by Sara Black

Lighting Design Niklas Pajanti

Costume Design Harriett Oxley

Inflatable Set Design Consultant David Cross

Dramaturgy Gideon Obarzanek

Performers/Choreographers

Marlo Benjamin and Michael Smith

Previous Performers/Choreographers

Sarah Black, Georgia Rudd, James O'Hara and Nelson Earl

*RED* was originally commissioned by the Australian Government's Major Festivals Initiative, managed by Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body, in association with the Confederation of Australian International Arts Festivals Inc., commissioned by RISING, Brisbane Festival, Darwin Festival, Ten Days on the Island, and Queensland Performing Arts Centre.

### SUPPORTED BY



Tsuen Wan Town Hall  
Leisure and Cultural Services Department







*NOISE* is a gathering; a united force of percussive energy and powerful dance designed to pull audience members into the present moment, to wholly captivate attention and energy. *NOISE* is a powerful remedy created to excite a sense of community and togetherness anchored by our primal connection to rhythm.

This work is powered by the generous spirit of hundreds of volunteer amateur drummers and noise-makers across Australia.

CREDITS

Concept, Direction and Choreography

Amber Haines and Kyle Page

Composition Costa Hagiaglou

Original Lighting Design Jamie Schmidt

Costume Design Andrew Treloar

Percussion Coordinator – Horizon Festival

Chucho Bruno

Percussion Coordinator – Brisbane Festival

Matthew Cocking

Percussion Coordinator – New Annual Festival

Matt Abrahams

Additional Arrangements and Guitar Orchestrations

Felix Sampson

Performers Sabine Crompton-Ward, Tiana Lung, Darci

O’Rourke, Damian Meredith, Felix Sampson, Michael Smith

Horizon Festival

25 – 28 August 2023

Cotton Tree Park Foreshore, Gubbi Gubbi / Kabi Kabi Country (Sunshine Coast), Queensland, AU

Number of Performances 3

Number of Attendees 6,300

Brisbane Festival

23 September 2023

Victoria Park, Meanjin (Brisbane), Queensland, AU

Number of Performances 1

Number of Attendees 7,000

New Annual Festival

29 – 30 September 2023

Museum Park, Mulubinbu (Newcastle), New South Wales, AU

Number of Performances 2

Number of Attendees 4,000

PLUS THE INCREDIBLE COMMUNITY OF DRUMMERS AND NOISE-MAKERS IN GUBBI GUBBI / KABI KABI COUNTRY (SUNSHINE COAST), MEANJIN (BRISBANE), AND MULUBINBU (NEWCASTLE).

Adele, Adrian, Aimé, Aimee, Alberto, Aldana, Alejandra, Alex, Alex, Alfie, Alicia, Alicia, Alison, Amanda , Amelie, Angela, Angeline, Angelo, Angie, Angus, Anna, Annie, Anthea, Barbara, Blaze, Brent, Bruce, Cass, Catalina, Catherine, Chaterine, Chatryn, Chris, Chucho, CJ, Clare, Cordell, Dana, Daniel, Danny, Darcy, Dave, David, David, David, David, Deborah, Deborah, Denise, Dexter, Eddie, Edwin, Ella, Ella, Emerich, Emmet, Evaline, Fay, Fiona, Fiona, Gabor, Gemma, Ghislain, Gia, Gloriana, Gonzalo, Graeme, Greg, Hamish , Heather, Holly, Hudson, Imogen, Jackson, Jackson, Jakob, Jana, Jane, Janet, Janusz, Jaqueline, Jayne, Jen, Jenny, Jenny, Jenny, Jett, Jo, Jo, Jo, Jo, John, John, Jonathan, Judy, Julian, Julie, Juliette , Karen, Kathryn , Ken, Kendall, Kevin, Kimber, Kishen, Kylie, Lalita, Lauren, Layla , Lenny, Lesley, Lilla, Linda, Linden, Lisa, Liz, Louisa, Lyn, Lynne, Lynne, Malena, Margarita, Maria, Mario, Mary, Matthew, Meera, Melissa, Melissa, Michael, Miki, Milanda, Nadine, Nahuel, Natalie, Ned, Nelly, Nic, Nicholas, Nick, Nikky, Noah, Oliver, Olivia, Olympia, Pat, Patricia, Paul, Paul, Paula , Rachael, Rachel, Rafi, Rob, Roger, Rose, Ruby, Ruby, Rupert, Ryan, Sabine, Sally , Sally-Anne, Seanne , Shanny, Sharlene, Shaun, Simon, Sophie, Steve , Tabitha, Tanya, Té, Terence, Teresa, Tereza, Terri , Thy, Tilly, Tom, Tony, Tracey, Trish, Usha, Valentin, Veronika, Viena, Vivian, Vrinda, Wale, Wendy, Will, Yenny, Yolanda, Zakai and Zayne

NOISE was commissioned and originally presented by the North Australian Festival of Arts (NAFA) in 2019.



Wagner’s *The Ring Cycle* — the pinnacle of opera — a 15-hour epic performed over four nights. Dancenorth Dancers Sabine Crompton-Ward, Tiana Lung, Damian Meredith, Felix Sampson, Michael Smith, Tammy Bouman and Darci O’Rourke joined the collective power of 83 musicians and 102 voices performing some of the most transformative music ever written in this spectacular new production by visionary Chinese director Chen Shi-Zheng.

French Conductor Philippe Auguin led a cast of international stars and some of Australia’s most accomplished performers.

The 12-week engagement was an extraordinary opportunity for seven contemporary dancers from Dancenorth to experience what it is to perform a work of this scale for an institution of this size and calibre.

PREMIERE

Opera Australia

1 – 21 December 2023

Lyric Theatre, Queensland Performing Arts Centre, Meanjin (Brisbane) Queensland, AU

Number of Performances 12

Number of Attendees 18,683

CREDITS

Conductor Philippe Auguin

Director & Production Designer

Chen Shi-Zheng

Digital Content Designer Leigh Sachwitz,

Flora&faunavisions

Costume Designer Anita Yavich

Lighting Designer Matthew Marshall

Choreographer Akasia Ruth Inchaustegui

Performers

Sabine Crompton-Ward, Tiana Lung, Damian Meredith, Felix Sampson, Michael Smith with Tammy Bouman and Darci O’Rourke

PRESENTED BY





# ARTISTIC CAPACITY AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM





# Dancenorth's Artistic Capacity and Leadership Development Program (ACLD) is generously supported by The Ian Potter Foundation.

In partnership with The Ian Potter Foundation, we facilitate opportunities for independent Artists to develop their professional practice and to create an environment for collaboration, dialogue and creative exchange. We provide a suite of creative programs for myriad voices, including engaging and hosting a diverse range of choreographers, guest collaborators, Artists in residence, dance Artists and secondments.

In 2023, 68 Artists were engaged across the ACLD Programs – each Artist generously contributing to and benefiting from our living, breathing arts ecology with poly-layered reciprocity.

## NO SHOW

No Show offers Australian independent choreographers and makers the opportunity to work full time with the Dancenorth Ensemble, free from the omnipresent need for product or performance outcome. The invited Choreographers are afforded the time and space to focus purely on process and their own creative enquiry; a unique offering of reciprocal exchange providing an invaluable opportunity to both the invited Artist and the Dancenorth Ensemble. In 2023 our No Show Artists were Michelle Heaven and long-tenured Ensemble member Felix Sampson.

## A.R.T.

Artist Residency in the Tropics (A.R.T.) offers independent dance practitioners the opportunity to live and work in the spectacular environs of Tropical North Queensland – a landscape thoroughly conducive to creativity.

A.R.T. residents are afforded time and space away from the familiarity of their usual surroundings, enabling not just space for reflection, research and development, but entirely new experiences from which to draw creative inspiration. In 2023 we welcomed the return of previous A.R.T. resident, Zane Saunders and celebrated the

inclusion of new Artists to the program: Rachel Arianne Ogle, Waangenga Blanco, Victoria Hunt and Jennifer Ma (supported by Detour Dance).

## TOMORROW MAKERS

Supporting the next generation of dance Artists, the annual Tomorrow Makers series provides the Dancenorth Ensemble with the opportunity to cultivate their independent creative practice and create new dance performances with full production values, in a nurturing and supportive environment.

## SECONDMENT PROGRAM

Our annual Secondment Program invites young dance Artists from Australia and New Zealand to participate in a five-day full-time program working on class and skills training with members of the Dancenorth Ensemble, as well as a three-day intensive workshop for dance Artists interested in exploring the intersection between dance and community engagement. We also offer a series of ongoing guest secondment positions throughout the year. Dancenorth is committed to offering all Secondment Program opportunities to participants free of charge to reduce the barriers of access to these kinds of professional development opportunities - as Dancenorth believes in investing in the next generation of dance Artists. Dancenorth was thrilled to welcome 41 enthusiastic emerging dance Artists to participate in the 2023 Secondment Program.

## 4 WALLS AND A FLOOR

4 Walls and a Floor provides free space to independent Artists, movers and makers, offering a place for reflection, research, development and creative inspiration. 4 Walls and a Floor is a discretionary program available to Australian movement-based Artists all year-round, dependent upon opportunity and availability of space in our annual schedule.

# NO SHOW

MICHELLE HEAVEN

Michelle Heaven is a choreographer, performer, and collaborator whose performance career spans working nationally and internationally with Artists and companies including Gideon Obarzanek (Chunky Move), Lucy Guerin, Helen Herbertson, Leigh Warren, Michael Kantor, Phillip Adams (Balletlab), Sandra Parker, Sue Healey, Polyglot, Ben Cobham (Bluebottle) and Walter Dunderville (NY). Her independent work has been presented at Melbourne Festival, Beijing Dance Festival, Dance Massive and Castlemaine State Festival. Michelle is a Helpmann Award nominee, multiple Australian Dance Award nominee and recipient of several Victorian Green Room Awards. Her movement practice continues alongside study in Play Therapy – creating and dancing alongside others enriches her life.

“It was an incredible pleasure to undertake a No Show residency with Dancenorth. The positive energy that pulsates at the heart of this Company and working environment is conducive to creating, learning and professional artistic development. I cannot emphasise enough the generosity of spirit, support and welcome I experienced.

I utilised the No Show residency to investigate themes and images of interest from my current research and to respond to creative outcomes from set tasks, structured improvisations and material generated within the room.

I felt supported to challenge myself as a choreographer within a leadership role, guiding the dancers through a creative process and to make full use of the time and space/theatre/facilities including stored props, costumes and materials, which facilitated unforeseen avenues of experimentation. The two-week period enabled me to process daily outcomes and to pursue, divert and deepen explorations, and further key concepts.

The opportunity to work with multiple highly skilled professional dancers is limited for independent Artists.



Funding constraints typically dictate solo, duet or trio work. The rare and delightful experience of working with seven professional dancers and two secondments was exciting and revealed new options and possibilities in choreographic partnering and formation. Witnessing the creative energy cavort among the dancers also provided additional content and fresh stimuli to consider and explore each day.

The extremely talented, hard working and willing Dancenorth collective enabled a meaningful, playful, insightful and productive experience. The individual attitudes, intellectual capacity and physical contributions from each member of the collective was a dream to engage with and highlight for me at this point of my career. Despite not having to show outcomes, the dancers and I became excited to share the material in progress with Dancenorth staff, local Artists and members of the broader community.

The No Show residency offered by Dancenorth is a rare and precious gift for movement-based Artists. It is an important, major contribution to practicing choreographers and inspiring creative exchange for all of the Artists involved. I feel honoured to have had this incredible opportunity and am excited about the potential of ideas generated during this residency.”

- MICHELLE HEAVEN



# NO SHOW

FELIX SAMPSON



In 2023, Dancenorth was delighted to engage Dancenorth's long-serving Ensemble Dancer, Felix Sampson, as guest choreographer in residence as part of the No Show program.

A celebrated feature in the Dancenorth Tomorrow Makers' program, Felix's work is often concerned with the dissection of expectation and identity, using the keen knife-edge of post-comedic irony to explore the liminal spaces between painful truths and absurdity. Felix took the opportunity during his No Show residency to explore these ideas more fully. William Koiki Mabo and secondment dancers Sofia Dimasi, Aimee Raitman and Jayden Wall joined the Ensemble for this two week period.

"No Show in its very essence is a reciprocal development. It speaks to the importance of sharing Artists' practices and allowing a space where these practices can be nurtured in an environment that is safe and without the pressures of an outcome.

I think one of the most profound examples of reciprocity is one that is quite personal for me. I feel that over my time at the Company I have witnessed a very real exchange between Dancenorth and myself on a daily basis. Being given this opportunity to create for the No Show development was a testament to this reciprocity.

As an emerging maker, an opportunity such as No Show has been invaluable to my development as an Artist, in the sense that it allowed me to hone my practice and discover new modalities and tools that I can begin new processes with. My brief career as a maker has always had the expectation of a performance outcome. There has always been a goal to work towards performatively and this has quite often shaped the direction of the development. However in having no direct performance outcome, I was able to actually hone in on the processes I used to make rather than thinking of the product itself, thus helping me dive deeper into my creative methods."

- FELIX SAMPSON

# A.R.T.

## ZANE SAUNDERS

2023 saw rise to Zane Saunders' seventh A.R.T. residency with Dancenorth. Based in Kuranda in Far North Queensland, Zane is an interdisciplinary artist and performer with Butchulla, Gunggari and Jarrovia ancestry.

Drawing from strong visual art motifs, traditional dance, sound, screen media and contemporary performance, Zane crafts remarkable performances embedded in story and location – a deep theatrical play in particular space and time; entwining cultural roots, corporeal language, religious influences and spiritual ancestry.

Zane's visual art is included in the National Gallery of Australia, and the National Gallery of Victoria.

Over the seven years, the relationship between Dancenorth and Zane has deepened into a formal partnership between Zane, Dancenorth, Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC) and Regional Arts Services Network North Queensland (RASNNQ). The partnership is supporting Zane's unique and important research and creative practice with the long-term view of ensuring his work be shared beyond the limits of the residency program.

"As usual, once I arrive and settle into the upstairs studio space – it's a process of grounding myself contextually to the Townsville culture – I meet and talk with the Dancenorth family of amazing staff, Ensemble and any other visiting Artist/arts supportive personnel or community person. This year's residency allowed me the opportunity to get to see and be a part of some of the dynamic community cultural experiences and events where I was able to view and meet up with local mob and Elders from this region. I've always appreciated my time and place when participating in these A.R.T. Residencies. A privilege and honour to allow me to further develop my work and practice and contribute further to the ongoing conversations and development of Indigenous interest in this country. Dancenorth - and particularly their staff and all personnel - and their contacts in the community have always made me feel welcomed and allowed me to create not only stunning works but relationships that I now take with me beyond each residential outcome."

- ZANE SAUNDERS

## RACHEL ARIANNE OGLE

Rachel Arianne Ogle is a Western Australian dance Artist with an extensive career as a dancer, performer, choreographer, educator and Arts worker; and has created work for Sydney Dance Company, Tasdance, Maya Dance Theatre (Singapore), Proximity Festival, Link Dance Company, Western Australian Academy for Performing Arts (WAAPA), Nat Cursio Company, STRUT Dance and STEPS Youth Dance Company. Her work has been presented in Australia, France, Netherlands, Singapore and Nigeria.

"A personal highlight of the residency was undertaking Company class with Dancenorth on a daily basis. This provided structure to my day, and an opportunity to engage with the Company dancers; while also opening my awareness to the unique and valuable information that is integrated into the Dancenorth philosophy and creative approach.

Townsville is a rich and unique landscape, with geological escarpments distinctive to this area. I spent time undertaking ritual walks of 'The Goat Track', which not only connected my interest in walking with the environment, but it also offered a different perspective of Townsville with a 360-degree view of the area at the culminating peak of the track. These ritual walks provided time outside of the studio to connect my in-studio research with the surrounding environment and sense of place; as well as providing additional insights, and valuable time and space for creative thinking and dreaming - to then take back into the studio to integrate into my research."

- RACHEL ARIANNE OGLE



WAANGENGA BLANCO

Waangenga Blanco is a proud Indigenous man who descends from the Pajinka Wik in Cape York and Meriam Mer the furthest eastern island in the Torres Strait.

He is an award-winning, globally touring performing Artist, specialising in contemporary dance, choreography and acting.

Waangenga’s classes are centred on a uniting of hearts and bodies away from the thinking mind.

Drawing on his Indigenous heritage, Waangenga creates an experience connecting you to Country and your own inner landscape, anchored in breath, using the dynamism of the human vessel to transcend and integrate embodiment.

“With the generosity of Dancenorth, I recently had the opportunity to indulge and explore my creative and curious choreographic ideas.

Buried deep within my dilly bag I was allowed for the first time in my 20-year career as a dancer-choreographer-storyteller to reflect upon my practice and my life in the world of dance – a process of unpacking what dance has meant to me how it has shaped me and those in my life.

Dance has long been a means of expression in my culture, an expression and celebration of life.

An umbilical cord to the divine – time to heal. The healed will become the healers.”

- WAANGENGA BLANCO

JENNIFER MA

Jennifer Ma is a Naarm (Melbourne)-based Taiwanese-Australian dancer, choreographer and producer. Jennifer’s collaborative dance practice sees her working with dancers across street and contemporary dance, actors, and non-dancers; and directing multidisciplinary works for theatre, film and public spaces. At its core, Jennifer’s practice aspires to elevate the presence of culturally diverse Artists. Her collaborative processes house her keen interest in the embodiment of multiplicity within personal narratives.

In her time at Dancenorth, Jennifer worked with ceramic Artist Baylee Griffin, musician Naomi Jean, and photographer Pippa Samaya, exploring a shared improvisation practice that can build worlds through embodied memories, mapping and desires in belonging.

“The generous energy of reciprocity, exchange, porosity and collaboration from not just the Artists but also the staff at Dancenorth makes the time and place feel like home. Apart from creating world class dance works, what I love most about Dancenorth is the bond of the community that comes with it and its infectious energy that inspires all those that come in contact with it.”

- JENNIFER MA

VICTORIA HUNT

Victoria Hunt is an Indigenous-Maori Artist, born on Kombumerri and Yugambeh Country in QLD, and currently lives on unceded Bidjigal Country, Maroubra (place of Thunder) in Eora, Sydney.

Her ancestral affiliations are Ngati Ohomairangi, Te Arawa, Rongowhaakata, Kahungunu Maori, Irish, English, Finnish.

Victoria traverses the visual and performing arts as a dancer, choreographer, director, mentor, photographer and filmmaker.

Victoria’s work stems from Indigenous epistemologies within diasporic concepts of identity formation and belonging. Her work is liminal, inter-cultural, inter-disciplinary and reinstates the power of Indigenous creativity within the politics of Rematriation – inserting the body into frameworks of power, for future ancestors, in a reciprocal imagining. Central to this is Whakapapa (kinship/genealogies), Mana Atua Wahine (feminine principal/tapu/energy), Body Weather and IndigiQueer revitalisation within creation practices. Her work is a gradual binding of intimate collaboration between Artists, Elders and communities.





## SECONDMENT WEEK

In 2023, the five-day Secondment Program ran from 15 – 19 May.

Secondment Week 2023 incorporated various movement methodologies within elongated morning classes, creative workshops and task processes, environmental responsive sessions within the stunning Gurambilbarra (Townsville) landscape, and interrogation of Dancenorth repertoire.

The Dancenorth Community Experience team once again offered an additional three day intensive workshop focused on collaborating with communities in dance. Led by Alice Lee Holland, this intensive was held after Dancenorth's Secondment Week, from 22 – 24 May, and was open to dance Artists interested in exploring the intersection between dance and community engagement.

“The Dancenorth Secondment Program is an energising and enriching 10 days and incredibly valuable for professional Artists. It is eye-opening and validating to have such an open, caring, nurturing space for the body - while challenging yourself with nuanced and physical repertoire. My perspective of my own dance practice has shifted from a sense of pressure and expectation of myself, to a place of compassion and ease with and in the body. I plan on taking the practices from, and essence of, this week-long [experience] into my dance future and life generally.”

- SECONDMENT WEEK DANCER



## 4 WALLS AND A FLOOR

In 2023, the 4 Walls and a Floor Program supported Amrita Hepi, Wulgurukaba Walkabouts, Big Eye Theatre and long-time collaborators Alisdair Macindoe and Alison Currie.

Alison and Alisdair were developing their new work, *Multi-solo* following the success of their solo work *Progress Report* (FRAME Biennial 2023 & Vitalstatistix 2021). *Multi-solo* is a dance solo to be performed by multiple people at the same time. A funny, angry, and absurd theatrical dance work, *Multi-solo* unpacks the 21st century philosophy of the self.

The Dancenorth 4 Wall and a Floor residency saw them undertake creative research developing themes, images, video, set and costume concepts, improvisational scores and choreographic phrase work.

“Our time at Dancenorth through the 4 Walls and a Floor residency program gave us the requisite time and space to really delve into a deep and thorough creative period. The support that Dancenorth put in place throughout made our time productive.

We felt wholly welcomed and supported by the team who went out of their way both practically and socially to include us and engage us: it was blissful.

Opportunities like this are the bedrock to a rich creative community, these kind of exchanges are immeasurably valuable to independent choreographers and we could not be more thankful!”

- ALISON CURRIE AND ALISDAIR MACINDOE





# COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE





2023 expanded the web of connection between our community and the Company through our Community Experience Program.

*Tomorrow Makers 6*, *Bambarra-ma Dariburu*, and *Secondment Week* offered significant opportunity for local intersections in the first part of the year and yielded outcomes spanning education, audience development, participation, and professional development.

*Tomorrow Makers 6* included one “Under Construction” event, where local people were invited to engage with the Ensemble about their works in development. More than 100 local high school students attended the school matinee performance and post-show discussion.

*Bambarra-ma Dariburu* for the 2023 North Australian Festival of Arts (NAFA) engaged 137 volunteer drummers. The pool of volunteers included diverse members of the

local Gurambilbarra (Townsville) community, some of whom are regular participants in our community programs *Still Dancing* and *Every Body Dance*, and connections with Townsville Multicultural Support Group (TMSG). A significant partnership with TMSG brought 12 members of the community into the project as performers.

In the second part of the year, we developed a bespoke education resource package for the 2024 national tour of *Wayfinder*. Alice and Kyle worked with Queensland Arts education specialist Kath Cadd to design a resource as innovative and engaging as the production itself. A special feature is Artist interviews spliced with performance footage, edited into chapters linked directly to curriculum-focused lines of enquiry.



## DEEPER THAN DANCING

2023 activity focused on the integration of community participants in Company activity, the curation of bespoke creative experiences for participants, and sharing practice with other regionally-based companies.

*Bambarra-ma Dariburu* demonstrated the emerging success of our *Deeper than Dancing* project. Of the 130 volunteer performers for this production, 30 were from the project’s focus communities – Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) peoples, older people, and people with disability. Key to this success was engagement of Master Drummer Mohamed Bangoura-ke (Guinea, West Africa) and a strong partnership with Townsville Multicultural Support Group (TMSG).

The project’s network expanded with the engagement of two companies based in nipaluna (Hobart) - Second Echo Ensemble (SEE) and Mature Artist Dance Experience (MADE). SEE features Artists with disability and MADE is specifically focused on older dancers. It was rich and illuminating to welcome these Artists to Gurambilbarra (Townsville) to share their creative rigour. Immersive creative experiences were curated for local participants, facilitated by Artists from SEE, MADE, and Dancenorth Australia.

In March, Community Experience Manager Alice Lee Holland facilitated workshops for 21 members of our *Still Dancing* community, focused on explorations of creative task work including generating movement, improvisational processes, and diversifying movement vocabulary.

In August, SEE facilitated a two-day workshop for 12 local participants. Kelly Drummond Cawthon (SEE Creative Director) and Luke John Campbell (SEE Ensemble) guided the group through various tasks, drawn from SEE methodology for devising dance-theatre work. Participants were particularly inspired by using props to create new movement.

In November we welcomed Shirley Gibson and Felicity Bott from MADE (nipaluna, Hobart) to facilitate a week-long workshop for thirteen of our older participants. Daily workshops included dance technique and creative play. Our second last day took us to Yunbenun (Magnetic Island) to explore dance connected to and inspired by nature. The five-day workshop offered clear and generous insight into creative process, highlighting the focus and commitment necessary to the development of a new work for presentation.

Working with our communities in new ways continues to increase trust and understanding between facilitators and participants. Gradually, this is paving the way for creative, collaborative exchange in the final phase of the project.



## CLASSES AND CONNECTIONS

2023 was another rewarding year for our community classes and connections.

“PARTICIPATING IN THIS COURSE ADDED TO MY CONFIDENCE, MY MENTAL HEALTH INCREASED, I DON’T FEEL AS IF I HAVE TWO LEFT FEET ANYMORE.”

Dance for Absolute Beginners participant, 2023

Our fourth Dance for Absolute Beginners series ran in February and March. The series was rapidly over-subscribed, with a substantial waitlist by the time the course commenced. A total 24 participants spanned a wide age range from 25 to 65 years old. Each year, this course feeds and grows our community of local supporters; the shared act of dancing offering a deep and embodied experience of the ethos of our Company.

Our Vital Dance community expanded in 2023 – average weekly participants increased from nine to fifteen. New participants were generally attracted via word of mouth, which was enhanced by a handful of demonstrations led by Dancenorth facilitators at Parkinson’s Support Group meetings during the year. A 2023 highlight was the creation of a short video celebrating our Vital Dance community, shared on World Parkinson’s Day. This was part of a larger project instigated by Dance for Parkinson’s Australia.

We introduced a new weekly class Every Body Dance – for people who are d/Deaf or disabled. This program

is part of the evolution of our work with this community, supported by our Deeper than Dancing program. We engaged with a pool of 20 participants across the year. Notably, this is a long-term commitment; routine is vital for members of this community, so new activities must be consistent over time, to reveal their potential.

We facilitated workshop experiences on request for four local schools and the STARS Foundation. Workshop content was varied, spanning introductory experiences through to Company repertoire.

Once again, Dancenorth facilitated the dance workshop component for Crossroad Arts’ C.R.U.S.H. program. Workshop content was inspired by an exhibit at Artspace Mackay. It was a true pleasure to experience the magic of C.R.U.S.H. again, to be able to step back at the end of the three days and watch the participants take the spotlight with short works they’d created. It feels like an important step towards the Arts dialogue being genuinely reflective of the people in our region.



## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY



Dancenorth hosted its seventh event celebrating International Day of People with Disability in 2023, with performances by students from Townsville Community Learning Centre (TCLC) and participants from our new Every Body Dance (EBD) class. This year’s program was facilitated by Jordan Galliot and Madaleine Armstrong and supported by Alice Lee Holland.

The EBD performance was centred around the ‘mood mat’ – a new resource conceived by Alice and designed collaboratively with local Artists Jeanette Hutchinson, Liz Zappala, and Jordan Galliot. The ‘mood mat’ is made up of fabric fragments, curated for their diversity of colour and texture, and combined to create a large mat spanning

8m x 8m. The ‘mood mat’ offers participants the opportunity to express themselves non-verbally, as well as myriad improvisational structures and scaffolds, one of which was employed for this performance.

We welcomed our largest-ever cohort of 16 TCLC performers in 2023, which included a mix of new and experienced participants. This year’s theme “our favourite places” across Garumbilbarra (Townsville), with sections of choreography inspired by local shopping centres, swimming pools, creeks and waterfalls.



“Being born in Cloncurry and teaching as a First Nation Performer and Choreographer, I like to grab onto any opportunity to help our teachers, parents and students to expand their experiences in the world of Performing Arts and Culture. Dancenorth brought experiences, love, and laughter to my students..”

- TEACHER



## REGIONAL WORKSHOP TOUR

The 2023 Annual Regional Workshop Tour was a dusty, sun-drenched, outback adventure – a beautiful amalgamation of the strengths and talents of the Community Experience and Ensemble Artists.

“AS A RURAL AND REMOTE SCHOOL, OFTEN OUR STUDENTS ARE NOT EXPOSED TO THE ARTS, ESPECIALLY DANCE. THIS WORKSHOP PROVIDED OUR PREP TO YEAR 12 STUDENTS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES THROUGH DANCE AND PERFORMANCE.”

- Teacher

The two-week tour included 29 workshops across six locations, and three separate and unique Dance Break events in Gudjal Country (Charters Towers), Yirandhali Country (Hughenden) and as part of the 2023 Sedan Dip on Mitakoodi, Kalkadoon and Pitta Pitta Country (Cloncurry River). We received support from the Regional Arts Services Network North Queensland (RASNNQ) in producing these Dance Break editions.

Workshop content was designed around the basic elements of Dance Break, presented discretely, as well as extrapolated into imaginative, improvisational games and tasks. Participation was strong across the board; facilitating creative movement experiences that surprise and delight so many young people is deeply rewarding and affirms the incredible power of dance.

Alongside schools, workshops were delivered for community groups including the Deadly Dancers, and Cloncurry Performing Arts, Power Up Dance and Fitness in Gudjal Country (Charters Towers), and Branches Performing Arts. One workshop for Branches involved three students online, zooming in from locations as far as Iningai Country (Longreach and Barcaldine), up to 600km away.

The three Dance Break events were as unique as the towns that hosted them:

Our first Dance Break event was hosted by the new Mike Carney Creative Industries Centre (MCCIC) in Gudjal Country (Charters Towers) – in the outdoor space behind the centre, as the sun set. Excitingly, this was the first event to take place in this new space for the arts and representatives from the MCCIC were thrilled to welcome us. The second Dance Break event took place in the Saturday morning sun, by the Hughenden Lake. It was a lovely event with enthusiastic involvement. The third Dance Break took place at the 2023 Sedan Dip – a campdraft, rodeo and gymkhana. Significantly, some of the young people who participated at this event live are home-schooled on remote cattle stations, and would not have had the opportunity to dance with us otherwise.

“I really appreciate having the opportunity to build skills in teaching relatable content to children and people of different backgrounds and experiences and learning how to better facilitate a dance experience that is accessible and enjoyable. I love being able to visit regional and remote areas – I find it awakening, provoking and creatively inspiring. The connections I made and observed the others making were so fulfilling and engaging. I can’t wait to continue to do more of this kind of work in the future.”

- SABINE CROMPTON-WARD, ENSEMBLE DANCER ON THE REGIONAL WORKSHOP TOUR



# DONORS

With heartfelt warmth, we thank our generous giving community. Only through collaboration do shared instincts of our humanity come alive.

## Community Maker

\$20,000 - \$49,999

Dr Philip Bacon AM  
Liz Pidgeon and Graeme Wikman  
Anonymous

## Movement Maker

\$1,000 - \$4,999

Dr Judith McLean  
Gina Fairfax  
Kay Martinez  
Lucy Martinez  
Paul Martinez  
Debbie Rains  
Paul Spiro  
Sharon Lancini  
Stephen Neale  
Justice Thomas Bradley and Dr Matthew Yoong

## Innovation Maker

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Dr Maggie Mackay  
The Knights Family Jabula Foundation

## Change Maker

UP TO \$999

Anonymous x 2  
Charlotte Hoppe-Smith  
Courtney Thompson  
Eloise Grace  
Hillary Coyne  
Jacinta Wight  
Jacinta Wight and Chris Moore  
Joanne Eager  
Julie Englefield  
Kyle Page and Amber Haines  
Lucy Guerin  
Matthew Higgins  
Sarah Funkhauser  
Stephen Hill

# PARTNERS

## Government Partners



## Trusts and Foundations



## Commissioning and Presenting Partners



## Supporting Partners



## Project Partners





# 2023 FINANCIALS

Dancenorth Australia  
ABN: 98 010 440 678

Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended  
31 December 2023



# Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 31 December 2023

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Interest revenue	8,965	1,855
Revenue and other income	2,886,683	2,175,130
Employee benefits expense	(1,525,941)	(1,342,843)
Depreciation expense	(45,459)	(31,623)
Other operating expenses	(1,184,906)	(726,904)
Profit before income tax	139,342	75,615
Income tax expense	-	-
Profit for the year	139,342	75,615
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	139,342	75,615

# Statement of Financial Position

As At 31 December 2023

	2023 \$	2022 \$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,972,931	1,173,395
Trade and other receivables	237,991	81,446
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	2,210,922	1,254,841
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, plant and equipment	277,339	236,360
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	277,339	236,360
TOTAL ASSETS	2,488,261	1,491,201
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	124,501	135,488
Employee benefits	55,673	68,703
Contract liabilities	1,415,455	525,103
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	1,595,629	729,294
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	1,814	34,314
Employee benefits	54,104	30,221
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	55,918	64,535
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,651,547	793,829
NET ASSETS	836,714	697,372
EQUITY		
Reserves	44,530	44,530
Retained earnings	792,184	652,842
TOTAL EQUITY	836,714	697,372



## Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 31 December 2023

	RETAINED EARNINGS \$	CASH RESERVE \$	TOTAL \$
Balance at 1 January 2023	652,842	44,530	697,372
Profit for the year	139,342	-	139,342
Balance at 31 December 2023	792,184	44,530	836,714
Balance at 1 January 2022	577,227	44,530	621,757
Profit for the year	75,615	-	75,615
Balance at 31 December 2022	652,842	44,530	697,372

## Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 31 December 2023

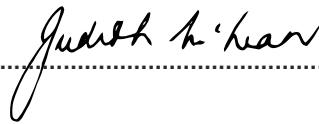
	2023 \$	2022 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Receipts from customers	4,012,446	2,174,051
Payments to suppliers and employees	(3,208,066)	(2,228,315)
Interest received	8,965	1,855
Interest paid	(322)	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	813,023	(52,409)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Proceeds from sale of plant and equipment	273	-
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(13,760)	(12,907)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(13,487)	(12,907)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	799,536	(65,316)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	1,173,395	1,238,711
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	1,972,931	1,173,395

## Responsible Entities' Declaration

The responsible entities declare that in the responsible entities' opinion:

- + there are reasonable grounds to believe that the registered entity is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable; and
- + the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Regulation 2022*.

Responsible entity 

Dated 24 April 2024

## Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of Dancenorth Australia

For the Year Ended 31 December 2023

### OPINION

We have audited the financial report of Dancenorth Australia (the Company), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2023, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the responsible entities' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Company is in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (ACNC Act), including:

- + giving a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 31 December 2023 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- + complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1, and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2022*.

### BASIS FOR OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110: *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.



EMPHASIS OF MATTER - BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the Company’s financial reporting responsibilities under the ACNC Act. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RESPONSIBLE ENTITIES FOR THE FINANCIAL REPORT

The responsible entities of the Company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the ACNC Act and the needs of the members. The responsible entities’ responsibility also includes such internal control as the responsible entities determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the responsible entities are responsible for assessing the Company’s ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the responsible entities either intend to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The responsible entities are responsible for overseeing the Company’s financial reporting process.

AUDITOR’S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL REPORT

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor’s report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards website at: [http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors\\_responsibilities/ar4.pdf](http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf). This description forms part of our auditor’s report.

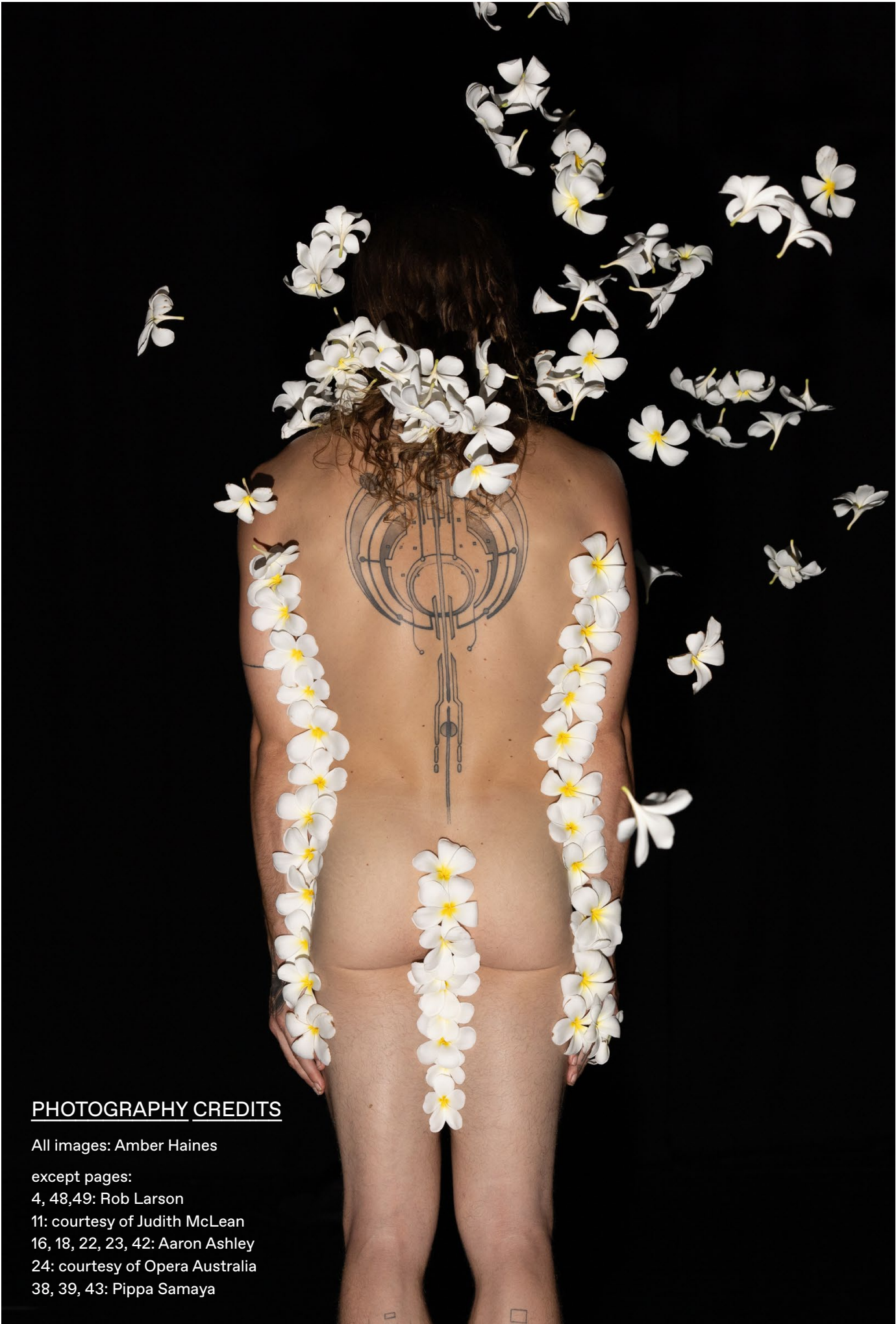
INDEPENDENCE

We confirm that the independence declaration required by the ACNC Act, which has been given to the responsible entities of the Company, would be in the same terms if given to the responsible entities as at the time of this auditor’s report.

Jessups



Paul Sapelli  
Partner  
Level 1, 211 Sturt Street, Townsville, QLD 4810  
Dated: 27 February 2024



PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

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A centre for dance making,  
collaboration and artistic exchange,  
based on the lands of the Wulgurukaba  
of Gurambilbarra and Yunbenun, and  
the Bindal of Thul Garrie Waja.