

MEDIA RELEASE

SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY appoints new Artistic Director

Julian Knights, Chair of Sydney Dance Company, officially announced today the appointment of Barcelona-born, London-based choreographer **Rafael Bonachela** to the position of Artistic Director, a role left vacant more than a year ago by the sudden death of director-designate Tanja Liedtke on August 17, 2007.

Julian Knights spoke of the extensive and thorough process the Board of Directors had undertaken to choose and appoint "the new artistic leader of Australia's most high profile contemporary dance company.

"In continuing its search, the Board acknowledged the legacy of innovation and excellence established during the 3 decade directorship of Australian dance legends Graeme Murphy and Janet Vernon.

"The Board has unanimously endorsed the selection of **Rafael Bonachela** as a dynamic choreographer for the 21st Century, whose fresh and exciting vision will enable the Company to meet new challenges in a changing world."

"During a year-long period of meticulous search and contemplation, the Board encouraged the Company to continue to make new work under the watchful eye of Executive Director Noel Staunton. In 2008, Sydney Dance Company premiered a variety of commissioned works by Canadian choreographer Aszure Barton, Australian choreographers Meryl Tankard, Shaun Parker and Reed Luplau and Rafael Bonachela."

Bonachela's **360°** was staged at Sydney's CarriageWorks in July, drawing praise for 'creative precision and exhilarating energy' and for 'absolutely dazzling dancing from the performers'.

In receiving news in London of his appointment, **Rafael Bonachela** said: "I am over the moon that the Board of Directors has chosen me for this important role. My goal will be to inspire every individual in the Company and infect them with enthusiasm and commitment, out of which truly excellent dance will evolve through my own work and the work of other international and Australian-based choreographers."

Rafael Bonachela and Sydney Dance Company will announce details of the 2009 season at a launch to be held in Sydney in late November.

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"His dance is like a spray of bullets that hit their target..." The Times, London

*"It is modern art engraved in steel; thrilling in its newness....
Rafael Bonachela is of the moment.."* Dance Europe

"Pacing is one of Bonachela's strengths... a sure sense of when to still the raging storm and turn down the dynamic to a shiver." Independent on Sunday

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