

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY appoints new Executive Director

Sydney Dance Company today announced the appointment of its new Executive Director **Mr. Noel Staunton** who will take up the position effective immediately.

Chairman, Tom Dery said "Mr. Staunton brings with him a wealth of theatrical experience across many artistic disciplines. With his notable background in Australian performing arts, Noel Staunton has long been a keen observer of Sydney Dance Company and its rise to prominence in the dance world. Mr. Staunton comes to the Company at a time of transition and great change", said Mr. Dery, "and at a time of great sadness at the sudden death of Artistic Director Designate Tanja Liedtke on August 17."

Noel Staunton stated that he is "thrilled and excited to take up the challenge to lead the Company. I am honoured, to be presented with the opportunity to build upon the fantastic foundation established by Graeme Murphy and Janet Vernon at Sydney Dance Company. I look forward to working with the dancers, technicians and administration team in building an exciting and strong future. Moving forward together we will achieve our long term vision for a fresh and reinvigorated future for the Company further enhancing its strong national & international presence."

Irish born Mr. Staunton came to Australia in 1987 from the English National Opera. He held the position of Technical Director of Opera Australia for 12 years. In recent years he has worked as Executive Producer for Bazmark Live where he oversaw all Bazmark Live projects from the opening of the Fox Studios Entertainment Precinct to the world-wide launch of *Moulin Rouge*. Mr. Staunton Produced Baz Luhrmann's smash hit Tony Award winning production of *La Bohème*, the longest running production of the opera in its history, and a sell-out success in Los Angeles, San Francisco and on Broadway. In 2004 he Executive Produced the South Australian State Opera's acclaimed production of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. Most recently Mr. Staunton was Co-Executive Producer of the Sydney Harbour Bridge 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.

Sydney Dance Company is currently on tour in Wollongong, performing Stephen Petronio's *Underland*. The Company will announce its plans for the 2008 program later in the year.

**For further media information please contact:  
Carli Ratcliff at Publicité  
0407 438 002 / carli@publicite.com.au**

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