

SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY WELCOMES NEW FACES IN 2015



Sydney Dance Company welcomes a bevy of new faces to the studio in 2015 - new dancers Daniel Roberts, Chloe Leong, and Sam Young-Wright, trainee Josephine Weise, and Rehearsal Director Lee Johnston; and is also thrilled to announce the return of dancer Richard Cilli, following two years working independently in Australia and Europe in 2013 and 2014.

All of the new recruits are currently in the studio, working with Sydney Dance Company Artistic Director, Rafael Bonachela, on the creation of his new work for the Company's upcoming premiere season, *Frame of Mind*, opening at Sydney Theatre on March 6, and touring to Canberra and Melbourne in April and May.

Welcome to...

Originally from Melbourne, seasoned dancer and choreographer **Daniel Roberts** is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School and the Australian Ballet School. In 2009 Daniel joined the Singapore Dance Theatre, working with David Dawson, Jorma Elo and Choo San Goh. In 2011 he became a member of West Australian Ballet, and in 2013 he created *Jubilate* for the company's *Ballet at the Quarry*. In 2015 his latest West Australian Ballet work, *Hold the Fourth*, will premiere in Perth.

Chloe Leong started dancing at the age of six at Sydney's Brent Street studios, and later studied at Lindfield's Ecole Ballet and Dance Theatre. In 2010 she completed three years training at London's Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance, and joined the junior contemporary company, IT Dansa, under the direction of Catherine Allard, where she performed works by Rafael Bonachela, Alexander Ekman, Ohad Naharin and Sidi Labi.

Canberra's **Sam Young-Wright** trained with Quantum Leap Youth Dance Company under the artistic direction of Ruth Osborne. In 2013 Sam completed a secondment with Sydney Dance Company as part of his training at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, performing in the Australian premiere of Alexander Ekman's *Cacti*, as part of the

De Novo season. In 2014 Sam was awarded a scholarship to attend the Nederlands Dans Theater Summer Intensive. At the end of the same year he graduated from Sydney Dance Company's inaugural Pre-Professional Year (PPY), a program which enabled him to rejoin Sydney Dance Company for their acclaimed *Louder than Words* season. We are thrilled to welcome Sam, our first PPY Graduate to be offered a full-time contract with the Company.

Queensland dancer **Josephine Weise** was born in Longreach, and commenced her dance training at the Pamela Marshall Academy of Dance, in Pialba, Hervey Bay. In 2013 she graduated from the Queensland Dance School of Excellence (QDSE) in association with Kelvin Grove State College. In 2014, Josephine undertook full-time study as part of Sydney Dance Company's inaugural Pre-Professional Year, and was selected to tour with the Company on a two-month trainee contract performing Rafael Bonachela's *2 One Another* in Western Australia, Queensland and central western New South Wales. Josephine is currently dancing in Mira Calix's art installation *Inside There Falls* during its world premiere Sydney Festival 2015 season, and will continue on a traineeship with the Company until the end of May 2015.

Originally from Sydney, Rehearsal Director **Lee Johnston**, trained at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. In 2004 she joined National Dance Company Wales after dancing with LINK Dance Company. She has performed throughout the UK, Europe, China, Cuba and India, and in 2012 toured with English National Ballet and Scottish Ballet as part of the London Cultural Olympiad. In August 2013, Lee became Rehearsal Director for National Dance Company Wales and from January 2014 was also Interim Director and House Choreographer. She has taught technique and repertoire masterclasses throughout the UK and Sydney including Dartington College of the Arts, Chester University, 2Faced Dance, Howell's School and Sydney Dance Company's Pre-Professional Year.

And welcoming back...

Richard Cilli

Helpmann Award winning dancer **Richard Cilli** graduated from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, and commenced his career as a member of the Sydney Dance Company ensemble in 2009. In 2010 he won the Helpmann Award for Best Male Dancer for his performance in Rafael Bonachela's *We Unfold*. Richard departed Sydney Dance Company at the end of 2012 to pursue his independent interests. In 2013 he danced for London based choreographer Alexander Whitley in *The Measures Taken* at Sadler's Wells Theatre, restaged Rafael Bonachela's work *The Land of Yes and the Land of No* on students of the New Zealand School of Dance, and developed and performed *Qualia*: a short work in collaboration with Natalie Allen for Perth's STRUT Dance. Richard spent 2014 as a member of K.Kvarnström & Co in Stockholm, Sweden. He also choreographed and staged an excerpt of his work *Corpus Callosum* on the dancers of the Australian Ballet for their emerging choreographers' season *Bodytorque.DNA*.

Sydney Dance Company Artistic Director Rafael Bonachela says, "It is fantastic to start 2015 by welcoming this new energy, talent and expertise to the Company. Each of these individuals brings different experience, skills and perspective to the studios, and I can't wait to see how their contributions inform and influence our new works and initiatives."

The fresh faces join Sydney Dance Company dancers Alana Sargent, Bernhard Knauer, Cass Mortimer-Eipper, Charmene Yap, David Mack, Fiona Jopp, Holly Doyle, Janessa Dufty, Jesse Scales, Juliette Barton, Petros Treklis and Todd Sutherland.

In 2014, Sydney Dance Company bid farewell to dancers Chen Wen (Kevin), Tom Bradley and Jessica Thompson. Paul Knobloch, who was on a short-term contract, also moved on to his next project, and Chris Aubrey started a 12-month sabbatical. We wish each of them all the very best in their new endeavours.

For full dancer and Rehearsal Director bios, go to www.sydneydancecompany.com/people/.

And for all of the latest Sydney Dance Company news and behind the scenes happenings subscribe at www.sydneydancecompany.com, or follow us at: www.facebook.com/sydneydanceco



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Image: Sydney Dance Company dancers in the studio with Rafael Bonachela, rehearsing *Frame of Mind*. Photo by Peter Greig.

MEDIA CONTACT

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ABOUT SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY

Sydney Dance Company is Australia's leading contemporary dance company, presenting new works in Sydney, around Australia and internationally under the artistic direction of Rafael Bonachela. The Company celebrated 45 years in 2014. More information, www.sydneydancecompany.com

ABOUT FRAME OF MIND SEASON INFORMATION

FRAME OF MIND

Australian premiere, William Forsythe's *Quintett*
World premiere, Rafael Bonachela, *Frame of Mind*

Sydney Theatre
6 March – 21 March 2015
Bookings, www.sydneytheatre.org.au, phone 02 9250 1999

Canberra Theatre Centre
30 April – 2 May 2015
Bookings www.canberratheatrecentre.com.au, phone 02 6275 2700

Southbank Theatre, The Sumner, Melbourne
6 – 16 May 2015
Bookings <http://www.mtc.com.au/>, phone 03 8688 0800