



A window to the studio...  
Sydney Dance Company's  
**FRAME OF MIND**  
SYDNEY | CANBERRA | MELBOURNE

Week 3, 2015...

The hall is buzzing with the sound of children's voices, excited young dancers aged 8 to 18 are here in droves for our School Holiday Workshop program, a unique opportunity to learn from some of Australia's best dance teachers. Not to mention getting a behind the scenes peek at their idols, the full-time dancers of the Sydney Dance Company ensemble, in rehearsal for the Company's upcoming show, a double bill featuring a new work from Artistic Director Rafael Bonachela called *Frame of Mind* - from which the show takes its name, alongside William Forsythe's acclaimed masterpiece, *Quintett*.

# SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY

In between classes they stand enthralled outside Studios 2 and 3, where the Company are in rehearsal, hoping for a glimpse of the action as doors open and close, unaware that the music they hear – strong, emotive, classical, is written by none other than rock guitarist Bryce Dessner from hit US band The National, also a renowned classical composer, working with some of the world's premier musicians.

Behind those closed doors the music is played over and over, as Rafael Bonachela, in deep concentration, works with his dancers to create, refine, finesse.

It is week three of Bonachela's development period, an intense six-week block in which he will finalise the choreography for **Frame of Mind**, 35 minutes of movement set to three tracks taken from Dessner's 2013 CD *Aheym*, all performed by renowned San Francisco-based string quartet The Kronos Quartet, with Bryce and his brother Aaron (also from The National) on guitar.

Over the day the rehearsal moves from solos to duets to trios, quartets and ensemble pieces. When they're not in front of Bonachela, the dancers work individually or in pairs, responding to challenges the choreographer has given them, or pushing their bodies to perfect movements decided on earlier that day or week.

Each morning before the rehearsal starts, and over his lunch breaks, Bonachela makes notes ahead of an upcoming meeting with his creative partners for this dancework – esteemed Australian designer Ralph Myers, Artistic Director of Sydney's Belvoir Theatre, who will oversee set and costumes, and long time Sydney Dance Company collaborator, lighting designer, Ben Cisterne, who this week was honoured with a Sydney Theatre Award for his work on Belvoir's *A Christmas Carol*, (Best Lighting Design of a Mainstage Production).

The three have already devised a skeleton plan and model for Myers' set, a physical departure from Bonachela's minimalistic style, but one he says he feels is right.

It's just a matter now of working together to resolve how the dance, set and lights will interact, to emphasise the mood and feel of the dance work and pay tribute to Dessner's music, which Bonachela describes as 'complex, demanding, driven and glorious'.

'Every new work that you make, you hope that it's a step on, from what you've done so far,' Bonachela comments. 'With **Frame of Mind**, I'm just really excited by this amazing piece of music, and I'm really connected to the dancers in the way that we're working, so the creative challenges keep getting answered, and we get better at what we do.'

Now in his sixth year as Sydney Dance Company Artistic Director, Bonachela says he is 'privileged to have a set of dancers in which I can grow as a choreographer, and they grow as performers. Five years on I can read dancers better – the dancers who have been here for five years, I can put people together who I know will have an interesting collision of whatever I'm looking for. And with some new bodies and minds in the mix (this year, Sydney Dance Company welcomed four new dancers and one returning ensemble member), there is enough consistency but also something fresh.'

**Frame of Mind** opens at Sydney Theatre on March 6, ahead of seasons at Canberra Theatre Centre, opening April 30, and Southbank Theatre, Melbourne, opening May 6.

Book now for:

Sydney - <https://www.sydneytheatre.org.au/whats-on/productions/2015/sdc-2015-packages>

Canberra – [www.canberratheatrecentre.com.au/site/what-is-on.php?detail=frame-of-mind-0807](http://www.canberratheatrecentre.com.au/site/what-is-on.php?detail=frame-of-mind-0807)

Melbourne - <http://www.mtc.com.au/plays-and-tickets/other-companies-2014/frame-of-mind/>

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ENDS

Image: Sydney Dance Company dancers Charmene Yap and Richard Cilli in rehearsal. Photo by Peter Greig.

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## **MEDIA INVITE**

Media are invited to get behind the scenes at Sydney Dance Company for a look at Rafael Bonachela's *Frame of Mind* in creation. Interviews are available with Bonachela, Ralph Myers, Benjamin Cisterne, and the Sydney Dance Company dancers. Limited interviews are available with Bryce Dessner, in Paris.

We're also looking forward to welcoming Europe based, former Forsythe Company dancers Thomas McManus and Ana Catalina Roman Horcajo, to our studios on February 2, to oversee the staging of our production of William Forsythe's *Quintett*, one of the most renowned contemporary dance works of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Sydney Dance Company couldn't be more proud to be one of only six dance companies around the world given permission to perform this incredible work, originally created in 1993, and to present it for the first time to Australian audiences.

Fresh behind the scenes images and video content of both danceworks will be available over the coming weeks for media use, or you're welcome to come in and get your own, by appointment.

Email or telephone [juliec@sydneydancecompany.com](mailto:juliec@sydneydancecompany.com) / 0409 517 738.

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## **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](http://www.sydneytheatre.org.au), phone 02 9250 1999

Canberra Theatre Centre  
30 April – 2 May 2015  
Bookings [www.canberratheatrecentre.com.au](http://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

## **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](http://www.sydneydancecompany.com)



## CHOREOGRAPHER BIOS

### **William Forsythe**

William Forsythe is recognised as one of the world's foremost choreographers. His work is acknowledged for reorienting the practice of ballet from its identification with classical repertoire to a dynamic 21st century art form. Forsythe's deep interest in the fundamental principles of organisation has led him to produce a wide range of projects including Installations, Films, and Web based knowledge creation.

Raised in New York and initially trained in Florida with Nolan Dingman and Christa Long, Forsythe danced with the Joffrey Ballet and later the Stuttgart Ballet, where he was appointed Resident Choreographer in 1976. Over the next seven years, he created new works for the Stuttgart ensemble and ballet companies in Munich, The Hague, London, Basel, Berlin, Frankfurt am Main, Paris, New York and San Francisco. In 1984, he began a 20-year tenure as director of the Ballet Frankfurt, where he created works such as *Artifact* (1984), *Impressing the Czar* (1988), *Limb's Theorem* (1990), *The Loss of Small Detail* (1991, in collaboration with composer Thom Willems and designer Issey Miyake), *A L I E / N A (C) T I O N* (1992), *Eidos:Telos* (1995), *Endless House* (1999), *Kammer/Kammer* (2000), and *Decreation* (2003).

After the closure of the Ballet Frankfurt in 2004, Forsythe established a new, more independent ensemble. The Forsythe Company, founded with the support of the states of Saxony and Hesse, the cities of Dresden and Frankfurt am Main, and private sponsors, is based in Dresden and Frankfurt am Main and maintains an extensive international touring schedule. Works produced by the new ensemble include *Three Atmospheric Studies* (2005), *You made me a monster* (2005), *Human Writes* (2005), *Heterotopia* (2006), *The Defenders* (2007), *Yes we can't* (2008/2010), *I don't believe in outer space* (2008), *The Returns* (2009) and *Sider* (2011). Forsythe's most recent works are developed and performed exclusively by The Forsythe Company, while his earlier pieces are prominently featured in the repertoire of virtually every major ballet company in the world, including The Kirov Ballet, The New York City Ballet, The San Francisco Ballet, The National Ballet of Canada, England's Royal Ballet and The Paris Opera Ballet.

Awards received by Forsythe and his ensembles include the New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award (1988, 1998, 2004, 2007) and London's Laurence Olivier Award (1992, 1999, 2009). Forsythe has been conveyed the title of Chevalier des Arts et Lettres (1999) by the government of France and has received the German Distinguished Service Cross (1997), the Wexner Prize (2002) the Golden Lion of the Venice Biennale (2010) and the Samuel H Scripps / American Dance Festival Award for Lifetime Achievement (2012).

Forsythe has been commissioned to produce architectural and performance installations by architect-artist Daniel Libeskind, ARTANGEL (London), Creative Time (New York), and the City of Paris. His installation and film works have been presented in numerous museums and exhibitions, including the Whitney Biennial (New York), the Venice Biennale, the Louvre Museum, and 21\_21 Design Sight in Tokyo. His performance, film, and installation works have been featured at the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich, the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, the Venice Biennale and the Hayward Gallery, London.

In collaboration with media specialists and educators, Forsythe has developed new approaches to dance documentation, research, and education. His 1994 computer application, *Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytical Dance Eye*, developed with the ZKM / Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe, is used as a teaching tool by professional companies, dance conservatories, universities, postgraduate architecture programs, and secondary schools worldwide. 2009 marked the launch of *Synchronous Objects for One Flat Thing*, reproduced, a digital online score developed with The Ohio State University that reveals the organisational principles of the choreography and demonstrates their possible application within other disciplines. *Synchronous Objects* is the pilot project for Forsythe's *Motion Bank*, a research platform focused on the creation and research of online digital scores in collaboration with guest choreographers.

As an educator, Forsythe is regularly invited to lecture and give workshops at universities and cultural institutions. In 2002, Forsythe was chosen as one of the founding Dance Mentors for The Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. Forsythe

is an Honorary Fellow at the Laban Centre for Movement and Dance in London and holds an Honorary Doctorate from The Juilliard School in New York. Forsythe is also a current A.D. White Professor at-Large at Cornell University (2009-2015).

### **Rafael Bonachela**

Rafael Bonachela was born in Barcelona where he began his early dance training before moving to London, and in 1992 joined the legendary Rambert Dance Company.

He remained with Rambert as a dancer and Associate Choreographer until 2006 at which time he successfully set up the Bonachela Dance Company (BDC) to concentrate on the rapid rise of his choreographic career.

As a choreographer, Bonachela has been commissioned to make works for Candoco, George Piper Dances, ITDANSA Danza Contemporanea de Cuba, Transitions Dance Company and Dance Works Rotterdam amongst others.

In 2008, he premiered his first full-length production *360°* for Sydney Dance Company. Less than six months later, he was appointed Artistic Director making headlines around the dance world.

Bonachela's vision for the Company embraces a guiding principle that has seen the repertoire grow with the addition of commissioned dance works from Australian and visiting international guest choreographers.

The premiere works are often programmed alongside his own creations, ensuring diversity for audiences and providing much sought after opportunities for his remarkable ensemble of dancers to be exposed to the work of some of the most in-demand choreographers of our time.

Rafael Bonachela's internationally recognised talent has seen him work not only with contemporary dance at the highest level but also with artists from popular culture, such as Kylie Minogue, Tina Turner, Sarah Blasko and Katie Noonan as well as leading fashion designers Dion Lee and Toni Maticevski. Such collaborative efforts reflect the inspiration he finds and utilises from culture today.

Since the premiere of *360°*, Rafael has created several pieces for Sydney Dance Company including *we unfold* (2009), *6 Breaths* (2010), *LANDforms* (2011), *2 One Another* (2012), *Project Rameau* (2012), *Emergence* (2013), *Les Illuminations* (2013), *2 in D Minor* (2014) and *Scattered Rhymes* (2014). In addition, he has remounted outstanding repertoire from BDC such as *Soledad* and *Irony of Fate* (2010) and *The Land of Yes & The Land of No* (2011).

In April 2013, Kaldor Public Art Projects brought Bonachela on board to develop the choreography for artists Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla's work *Revolving Door*, which was part of the acclaimed live performance art exhibition *13 Rooms*.

Bonachela was named winner of the dance category for The Monthly's 2013 Arts Awards and listed as one of Sydney Magazine's Top 100 Most Influential People in 2012 for his efforts to popularise dance since taking on the job of Artistic Director with Sydney Dance Company and as curator of Australia's international festival of contemporary dance, Spring Dance at the Sydney Opera House.

In February 2013, Bonachela was honoured with an Officer's Cross of the Order of Civil Merit by His Majesty the King of Spain.

Bonachela's *2 One Another* won the 'Best Ensemble' Award in the 2012 Green Room Awards and the 2013 Australian Dance Award for 'Outstanding Achievement in Choreography' and 'Outstanding Performance by a Company'.

For Sydney Festival 2015, Rafael Bonachela collaborated with artist Mira Calix to choreograph for the *Inside There Falls* installation.

Rafael is currently working on a new piece for Sydney Dance Company's *Frame of Mind* season (6 March – 16 May in Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne).