

Creative Team Interview

—Choreographer, Antony Hamilton

How did you become involved in dance?

I was very young when I began dancing. My cousins were dancers so it was a normal part of our family life. I was really active as a kid, and my mum thought it would be great to do something with my energy, I loved being creative and moving a lot, I didn't enjoy sports so dance was a really great solution for me. I started with ballet and took it more seriously and as I grew older I began training in contemporary dance. When I was 15 I decided I wanted to study dance fulltime so I changed to a Performing Arts High School and then afterwards I studied at WAAPA, in Perth for university.

What skills do you think are important for a choreographer to have?

I think it's really important to be open and to not push any ideas away or leave any stones unturned in terms of what is possible. I think of the theatre space as a black box which is a window into the mind and a magical room where you can create any picture you want. You need to allow your imagination to be very open. I love that we can create pictures we've never seen before that come from somewhere in our minds.

Crazy Times

In a more practical sense I think it depends on what type of dance or art you want to create. I value not attaching myself to a specific discipline, I feel it gives me more freedom to create because I'm not restricted by what is expected of that discipline. I think a choreographer has to balance the physical and technical side of choreography really well. The physical side is about combining movement ideas with individuals or groups of bodies and exploring their relationship to space and combining all of that with a vision. The technical side is more about understanding how to use lighting, music, costumes and the space itself to support your vision. You then have to work out how to combine those two things and balance how much energy you put into each side.

How do you choreograph the movements?

I do a few different things: it's usually a mix of me making movement up spontaneously on the spot and the dancers learning that movement. The dancers need to be really alert and quick, because they need to remember what I've done and then re-create it! I also sometimes give them tasks or challenges

Resource Pack

to do to help them come up with their own movements, then we work together to modify and develop their ideas to work in the whole piece.

What do you hope children watching Crazy Times will think about?

I want to entertain them. So it would be great if they could sit back and enjoy the performance. If you're being entertained by something it's because an idea is being planted in your head, and there might be a direct link of how it could be applied in your life. I want them to be swept up in what they're seeing and to forget the outside world when they're in the theatre.



Antony Hamilton working in the studio.

Photo Credit: Jack Saltmiras