



Sydney Dance Company to return to the stage with *New Breed*

26 Nov – 12 Dec
Carriageworks
Sydney

Sydney Dance Company, in partnership with Carriageworks and The Balnaves Foundation, is proud to announce their return to the stage with the seventh edition of *New Breed*, continuing their collective commitment to emerging choreographers.

★★★★ "The program ends on a buzzing high; the world is on fire, but we still make art, and maybe that makes the art even more urgent, even more beautiful." - **Time Out**

New Breed is Australia's most exciting showcase of raw talent and fresh ideas from some of the country's most gifted emerging choreographers. The *New Breed 2020* choreographers are: Joel Bray (Melbourne), Raghav Handa (Sydney), Chloe Leong (Sydney) and Jesse Scales (Sydney).

Melbourne-based Joel Bray has travelled to Sydney to participate in *New Breed*, and has undertaken a two-week hotel quarantine period, using this time to begin developing his *New Breed* work.

These four talented choreographers will create new works featuring a rich diversity of choreographic ideas to be performed by Sydney Dance Company's company dancers.

A sign of the times, this year all *New Breed* works have been specially choreographed to adhere to COVID-safe restrictions; in each work, the performers will be socially distanced.

Sydney Dance Company will be the first major dance company in New South Wales to return to the stage following the easing of audience capacity restrictions. *New Breed* also represents the first live on-stage performance from Sydney Dance Company in 2020 after the company was forced to cancel all previously scheduled performances due to COVID-19.

Sydney Dance Company's Artistic Director Rafael Bonachela said, "This year's *New Breed* is very special for Sydney Dance Company, as it's the first time in twelve months that we'll be performing live on stage. We have been hard at work all year preparing for the time when we would finally get to dance live for Australia again – and now that time is finally here! *New Breed* is such an important program supporting the development of new work and emerging artists, and I'm excited that we will be able to share the work of four talented artists representing the next generation of Australian choreographers with audiences this year."

Carriageworks CEO Blair French said, "Carriageworks is delighted to again work with Sydney Dance Company and The Balnaves Foundation to present *New Breed*. This unique program of new works by the very best of emerging Australian choreographers is a highlight in our program every year. To be able to present such ambitious and risk-taking live work to on-site audiences after such a difficult year, for all involved in the arts generally and live performance in particular, is especially thrilling."

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Media release
For immediate release
14 October 2020

Victoria Balnaves of The Balnaves Foundation said, "The Balnaves Foundation is excited to continue supporting Sydney Dance Company with their *New Breed* program in 2020, which engages outstanding new emerging choreographic talent in Australia. This will be the Company's first season back for the year post COVID-19, as well as being the longest *New Breed* program the Company has presented to date, with a total of 15 performances. This will be a wonderful welcome back for the Company and the arts culture in general which has been greatly missed in these uncertain times. We look forward to seeing what the current climate has fostered creatively in the works of the four young choreographers that will be showcased this year."

"The annual Sydney Dance Company showcase of freshly minted choreography is always intriguing for its revelation of ideas that a new generation of choreographers wants to explore – physical and intellectual." - Sydney Morning Herald

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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. Since 1985 the Company has been resident in purpose-built studios at Pier 4 in Sydney's Walsh Bay, minutes which are currently undergoing significant renovation. Its temporary studios in Wattle Street house the largest public dance class program in Australia, attracting nearly 80,000 participants each year. A legendary force in contemporary dance in Australia, the company celebrated its 50th year in 2019. More information: www.sydneydancecompany.com

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CHOREOGRAPHER BIOGRAPHIES

JOEL BRAY

A Melbourne-based artist, Joel Bray is a proud Wiradjuri man, who trained at NAISDA and WAAPA and is an ongoing performer with Chunky Movie.

Joel's early career was in Europe and Israel with Jean-Claude Gallotta, Company CeDeCe, Kolben Dance, Machol Shalem Dance House, Yoram Karmi's FRESCO Dance Company, Niv Sheinfeld & Oren Laor and Roy Assaf. Joel's choreographic practice includes making dance, dance-theatre and works for young audiences.

Joel's solo performance *BILADURANG* sold out and won three Melbourne Fringe Awards. His second work *Dharawungara* was commissioned by Chunky Move and was a choreographic lament for the ceremony stolen from him by the Coloniser. *Daddy* was commissioned by the Yirramboi Festival, Arts House and Liveworks (Sydney). Joel's works have toured to the Brisbane, Sydney, Darwin, Midsumma, Auckland and Dance Massive festivals and to Arts Centre Melbourne.

Joel's practice springs from his Wiradjuri cultural heritage. His works are intimate encounters in unorthodox spaces, in which audience-members are invited in as co-storytellers to explore the experiences of fair-skinned Aboriginal people, and the experiences of contemporary gay men in an increasingly digital and isolated world. His body becomes the intersection site of those songlines- Indigenous heritage, skin-colour and queer sexuality.

RAGHAV HANDA

Raghav Handa is an Australian choreographer and performer of Indian heritage with training in modern and Indigenous contemporary dance. Inspired by his birthright – his works combine traditional kathak principles and contemporary movement to create multifaceted and engaging explorations of modern Australian cultural identity.

He has worked in a variety of dance roles including choreographer, performer, collaborator, dance lecturer, artist representative and mentor for young performers. His works: TUKRE' ("Pieces" in Hindi 2014-15), MENS REA (2016) and FOLLY & TIME (2018-19), have been performed across Australia and internationally to strong critical acclaim. Most recently, his short work featured in the Sydney Opera House digital season of Unwrapped. His creations are woven through collaboration, incorporating diverse dance languages, spoken word, film and sculptural set design.

CHLOE LEONG

Chloe 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.

Chloe moved to Barcelona in 2012 to join the junior contemporary company IT Dansa under the direction of Catherine Allard. During her two years with the Company she performed works by Rafael Bonachela, Alexander Ekman, Ohad Naharin and Sidi Labi Cherkaoui.

Chloe joined Sydney Dance Company in 2015 and won the 2015 Helpmann Award for 'Best Female Dancer' for her performance in William Forsythe's *Quintett*. That same year, Chloe also performed in *Frame of Mind* which won the 2015 Helpmann Award for 'Best Choreography in a Dance Work' and 'Best Dance Work'.

Chloe teaches body conditioning classes in the Virtual Studio. In June 2020, Chloe featured in Rafael Bonachela's latest online work *Cuatro*, a collaboration with Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

JESSE SCALES

Born in Hobart, Jesse is from Adelaide where she trained with Terry Simpson and was awarded her RAD Solo Seal. She received full scholarships to study with Complexions Contemporary Ballet in New York and Nederlands Dans Theatre in The Hague and went on to major in classical ballet at the New Zealand School of Dance.

Since joining Sydney Dance Company in 2012, Jesse performed a feature role in the Australian premiere of William Forsythe's *Quintett* for which she was awarded the 2015 Green Room Award for 'Best Female Dancer' and a nomination for the 2015 Helpmann Award for 'Best Female Dancer'. Jesse made her choreographic debut in Sydney Dance Company's 2016 *New Breed* season. In 2017 Jesse was named 'Most Outstanding Dancer' in the Dance Australia Critics' Choice Survey.