

Sydney Dance Company's Executive Director, Anne Dunn to move on after 12 years



Sydney Dance Company has announced that Executive Director, Anne Dunn is to step down after almost 12 years in the role.

Dunn is to be appointed Executive Director and Co-Chief Executive Officer of Sydney Theatre Company and will leave Sydney Dance Company in January 2022.

Anne's tenure has seen the organisation transformed into Australia's leading national contemporary dance company. It is now financially stable and commercially sustainable with an enviable international reputation as one of Australia's pre-eminent cultural exports.

Anne's achievements have been many, culminating in the delivery of the redevelopment of Sydney Dance Company's iconic Wharf Studios to a world-class standard, to which the Company returned last December. Over the past eighteen months, Anne's clear-eyed and visionary leadership has steered Sydney Dance Company through the extreme disruption to the arts industry caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Her demonstrable passion for Australia's dance sector has been reflected in an unwavering leadership of the arts community and her skills and influence were recognised in her appointment as a Trustee of the Sydney Opera House.

During her time as Executive Director, Sydney Dance Company has more than doubled its turnover and significantly extended its reach, both nationally and internationally. Regular tours to Europe, Asia, the USA and South America have consolidated Sydney Dance Company's position on the world stage and only a global pandemic stopped the Company's first residency in London at the Royal Opera House in 2020.

The expansion of the Company's outreach, public class and education program has been instrumental to Anne's achievements. Australia's largest public dance class program is now digital and globally accessible and an education program previously aligned to a physical tour is now delivered to students across the country.

Sydney Dance Company Chair Brett Clegg commented that Anne's financial management of the Company has been exemplary, with a surplus posted across each year of her tenure, and a major uplift in Sydney Dance Company's philanthropic income aligned to this leadership.

Mr Clegg added "Anne has made an exceptional contribution to Sydney Dance Company, which we celebrate. Her tenure has witnessed a remarkable transformation in our organisation. She played a vital role in steering us out of a difficult chapter more than a decade ago, into our current position; strong financial foundations, international acclaim and incredible artistic and commercial momentum. She leaves us in a great place, testament to her leadership given the significant external challenges of the past 18 months. Her partnership with Rafael has been formidable, and I know that she will make a tremendous contribution to our friends upstairs at STC. On behalf of the four Chairs and all of the Board members with whom Anne has worked, I thank her deeply. She has been a wise, generous and passionate colleague, steward and advocate for our organisation."

Artistic Director Rafael Bonachela said, "It has been both a pleasure and a privilege to work with Anne over the last decade. Her arrival as Executive Director closely followed my appointment as Artistic Director and we have been on this incredible journey together. She is an inspirational leader with a tremendous business brain who has combined vision with an unwavering passion for the Company, the staff and all of our audiences. Anne's exceptional stewardship of Sydney Dance Company has resulted in an amazing renovation of the Wharf Studios and a firm financial footing on which we can confidently build an exciting future as we emerge from the pandemic. I am incredibly excited for her as she embarks on this new venture and delighted that she will still be our next-door neighbour in Walsh Bay!"

Anne Dunn said, “It is with great pride that I take my leave of Sydney Dance Company, a Company that I have loved leading and one which is a shining light in the Australian and international dance landscape. I am proud of what I have achieved there and the strong position that the Company is in. Working closely with Rafael over 12 years has been a joy and privilege and I know that the Company will continue to thrive under his visionary Artistic Direction. I want to thank Chair Brett Clegg, and each of the Chairs and Board Directors I have served under for their guidance and support. I want to pay tribute to the incredible dancers and administrative team at Sydney Dance Company and whilst I am leaving the Company, I am thrilled to be staying at the Wharf and in the milieu of these incredible artists.”

Anne Dunn will leave Sydney Dance Company in January 2022 and the Chair and Board have appointed Challis & Company to assist the Board in the recruitment of her successor. Artistic Director, Rafael Bonachela, the Executive Team of Sydney Dance Company and the Board of Directors will continue to steer the Company through the intervening period.

Ends.

Notes to Editors: Anne Dunn’s Bio here

Media Enquiries:

For information, images or interviews contact:

Alexandra Barlow
Sydney Dance Company
Publicity Manager
alexandrab@sydneydancecompany.com, 0416 128 282