



THE BALNAVES FOUNDATION ARTIST IN RESIDENCE AT SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY

The Balnaves Foundation and Sydney Dance Company announce choreographer Jasmin Sheppard as the inaugural recipient of The Balnaves Foundation Artist in Residence.

The Balnaves Foundation and Sydney Dance Company are thrilled to announce The Balnaves Foundation Artist in Residence, an exciting and invaluable new initiative for emerging choreographers to work with all departments of Sydney Dance Company on-site for one year.

Choreographer, dancer and Tagalaka Aboriginal woman, Jasmin Sheppard, has been selected as The Balnaves Foundation Artist in Residence for 2024. Jasmin was part of Sydney Dance Company's *New Breed* season in 2021, creating the critically acclaimed work, *Given Unto Thee*, and has previously worked as a dancer with Bangarra Dance Theatre for 12 years.

This opportunity will provide Jasmin with unparalleled industry experience by exposing her to a complete artistic, production and administrative cycle within Australia's pre-eminent contemporary dance company.

Jasmin will be able to continue her own artistic practice and development, whilst being embedded within the fast-paced Sydney Dance Company environment, providing networking opportunities, guidance and practical assistance; all facilitating her artistic growth and professional development as an emerging choreographer.

This unique Artist in Residence opportunity, made possible by The Balnaves Foundation, will equip Jasmin with the skills, contacts and experience necessary to continue to build and develop her artistic voice.

Sydney Dance Company and The Balnaves Foundation have been supporting emerging choreographers for a decade with the *New Breed* season held at Carriageworks each year, and are proud to continue their commitment to the future of Australian contemporary dance through this important new initiative.

2024 The Balnaves Foundation Artist in Residence, Jasmin Sheppard said: "Thank you to The Balnaves Foundation for supporting *New Breed*, and now the Artist in Residence position. These opportunities are so vital for independent artists to explore what is possible for our choreographic practice."

Sydney Dance Company Artistic Director Rafael Bonachela said:

“The Balnaves Foundation have provided such generous and invaluable support for New Breed over the past 10 years, and we are incredibly grateful that they are committed to deepening and broadening their relationship to the future of contemporary dance with this important new initiative.

I am thrilled to announce the Balnaves Foundation Artist in Residence Program today, an exciting and important new initiative for emerging choreographers to work with all departments of Sydney Dance Company on-site for one year. We look forward to Jasmin Sheppard joining us at Sydney Dance Company next year.”

Victoria Balnaves of The Balnaves Foundation said: “The Balnaves Foundation is delighted to be supporting this transformational position, elevating the opportunity for the alumni of New Breed choreographers to continue their association with Sydney Dance Company in a formal, long-term capacity. Sydney Dance Company is the preeminent Australian contemporary dance company, and the new Artist in Residence position offers a unique opportunity to further the growth and development of an emerging choreographer and to hone their craft within a dynamic company. We are excited by this expansion of our support for Australian choreographers and congratulate Jasmin on her appointment as the inaugural recipient of The Balnaves Foundation Artist in Residence in 2024.”

ABOUT JASMIN SHEPPARD

Jasmin is a contemporary dancer, choreographer and director, a Tagalaka Aboriginal woman with Irish, Chinese and Hungarian ancestry.

Jasmin spent 12 years with Bangarra Dance Theatre, performing numerous lead roles such as ‘Patyegarang’, in which critics described her performance as “powerfully engaging, fluent dexterity” (*Sydney Morning Herald*). She choreographed one major work for the company, *MACQ*, on the 1816 Appin Massacres under Governor Macquarie, which toured Australian capital cities, regional Australia and Germany.

Other short works include: *No Remittance* for Legs on the Wall and *Choice Cut* for Yirramboi festival, which made its proscenium arch debut at Ryerson Theatre, CA, at Toronto’s *Fall For Dance North* Festival, 2019.

Jasmin premiered her first full length work *The Complication of Lyrebirds* in 2021 at Sydney Festival; Campbelltown Arts Centre. This work was also supported Native Earth Theatre Company. *The Complication of Lyrebirds* has most recently been shared with new audiences as part of Sydney Dance Company’s 2023 *INDance*, a performance opportunity for independent artists at Sydney Dance Company’s Neilson Studio.

In 2021 Jasmin co-directed *Value For Money* alongside Sara Black (Guts Dance Araluen Arts Centre and Darwin Festival).

Jasmin created *Given Unto Thee* for Sydney Dance Company’s *New Breed* program, and most recently was performer, movement director and associate writer for the major theatre work by S Shakthidharan: *宿 (stay)*.

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 and recently refurbished studios at Wharf 4/5 in Sydney's Walsh Bay Arts Precinct. Its studios house the largest public in-studio and online dance class program in Australia, attracting nearly 100,000 attendances each year. A legendary force in contemporary dance in Australia, Sydney Dance Company celebrated its 50th year in 2019.

More information at www.sydneydancecompany.com

ABOUT THE BALNAVES FOUNDATION

The Balnaves Foundation is a private philanthropic organisation established in 2006 by Neil Balnaves AO to provide support to charitable enterprises across Australia. The Foundation disperses \$3 million annually to not-for-profit organisations that aim to create a better Australia through education, medicine and the arts, with a focus on young people, the disadvantaged and Indigenous communities.

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