



## Special Announcement New Dancers

Sydney Dance Company is thrilled to welcome five exceptional new dancers to the Company in 2024, **Timmy Blankenship**, **Ngaere Jenkins**, **Ryan Pearson**, **Anika Boet** and **Tayla Gartner**. We are delighted to announce their arrival, ushering in an exciting new chapter at the home of contemporary dance in Australia.

American dancer **Timmy Blankenship** was born on the Lands of the Arapaho Nation/Colorado, and completed his early training in contemporary dance and choreography at Artistic Fusion in Thornton, Colorado and Dance Town in Miami, Florida. He continued his training at the prestigious University of Southern California's Gloria Kaufman School of Dance on scholarship, graduating with a BFA in 2023 where he performed works by William Forsythe, Jiří Kylián, Merce Cunningham and Yin Yue.

Born in Aotearoa/New Zealand, **Ngaere Jenkins** is of Te Arawa and Ngāti Kahungunu descent. Ngaere trained at the New Zealand School of Dance, graduating in 2018. Throughout her studies, she worked with influential mentors including James O'Hara, Victoria (Tor) Columbus, Taiaroa Royal and Tanemahuta Gray. Ngaere represented the school as a guest artist in Tahiti at the Académie de Danse Annie FAYN fifth International Dance Festival and Singapore Ballet Academy's 60th Anniversary Gala. From 2019 Ngaere was a dancer with The New Zealand Dance Company and was the recipient of the Bill Sheats Dance Award.

**Ryan Pearson** was born and raised in Biripi Country/Taree, New South Wales and is of Biripi and Worimi descent on his mother's side and Minang, Goreng and Balardung on his father's side. Ryan began his dance training at NAISDA at age 16, after taking part in the NSW Public Schools' Aboriginal Dance Company, facilitated by Bangarra's Youth Program Team in 2012. Ryan joined Bangarra Dance Theatre in 2017 as part of the Russell Page Graduate Program and was nominated in the 2020 Australian Dance Awards for Most Outstanding Performance by a Male Dancer for his performance in Jiri Kylian's *Stamping Ground*.

Raised in Christchurch, Aotearoa/New Zealand, **Anika Boet** is of South African and Dutch descent. Moving to Sydney in 2020, Anika completed two years of full-time training at Brent Street School of Performing Arts, receiving her Diploma of Dance (focusing on Contemporary) with Honours. Anika made her professional debut in Sydney Festival in January 2022 performing a work *Grey Rhino*, choreographed by Charmene Yap and Cass Mortimer Eipper. Anika completed a post-graduate course at Transit Dance, performing works by Chimene Steele Prior, Prue Lang, and Paul Malek.

Originally from Wadawurrung Country/Geelong in Victoria, **Tayla Gartner** commenced full-time training at the Patrick Studios Australia Academy program in 2018 before undertaking the Sydney Dance Company's Pre-Professional Year in 2022, where she performed works by choreographers including Melanie Lane, Stephanie Lake, Jenni Large, Tobiah Booth-Remmers and Rafael Bonachela. In 2022, Tayla worked with and performed repertoire by Ohad Naharin and was a finalist in the Brisbane International Contemporary Dance Prix. After graduating from the Pre-Professional Year, Tayla joins Sydney Dance Company as Trainee in 2024.

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The new ensemble's first performances will in Orange and Tamworth in February, where they perform the triple-bill *Ascent* featuring works by Marina Mascarell, Antony Hamilton and Rafael Bonachela.

These performances will be followed by an extensive [European, UK and USA tour](#) in March and April, performing repertoire including Rafael Bonachela's critically acclaimed *Impermanence*, the ferociously physical and heartfelt *ab [intra]* and the smash-hit *Ascent*.

Timmy, Ngaere, Ryan, Anika and Tayla will join Sydney Dance Company's existing ensemble of leading contemporary dance talent;

**Lucy Angel, Naiara de Matos, Dean Elliott, Riley Fitzgerald, Liam Green, Luke Hayward, Morgan Hurrell, Sophie Jones, Connor McMahon, Emily Seymour, Piran Scott, Coco Wood, Chloe Young and Mia Thompson.**

#### **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 dance class program in Australia, attracting nearly 100,000 participants each year. A legendary force in contemporary dance in Australia, Sydney Dance Company celebrated its 50th year in 2019. More information, [www.sydneydancecompany.com](http://www.sydneydancecompany.com)

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