



40 Years at The Wharf

**Sydney Dance Company celebrates
40 Years at the Wharf**

**A curated public program
celebrates four decades of
creativity, community and
contemporary dance**

22 August - 16 October
Sydney Dance Company
Walsh Bay Arts Precinct

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Sydney Dance Company will celebrate **40 Years at the Wharf** with a program inviting audiences inside its home at the Walsh Bay Arts Precinct to discover the people, stories and creative energy that have shaped one of Australia's most significant homes for contemporary dance.

Running from **22 August – 16 October**, the celebration marks four decades since Sydney Dance Company established its home at Wharf 4/5, where generations of dancers, choreographers, artists, students and audiences have gathered to create, learn and connect on the land and over the water of the Gadigal. Through performances, workshops, community events, historical displays and newly commissioned oral histories, audiences will be invited to experience the Wharf not only as a rehearsal and performance space, but as a living creative hub where Australian contemporary dance continues to evolve.

At the centre of the celebrations is the company's season - *Current* (3–20 September), staged in Sydney Dance Company's intimate Neilson Studio. Presenting three world premieres by Raghav Handa, Jenni Large and Azzam Mohamed alongside the Australian premiere of Rafael Bonachela's acclaimed *E2 7SD*, the season embodies the company's enduring commitment to fostering new choreographic voices and creating ambitious contemporary dance from its home at the Walsh Bay Arts Precinct.

Audiences are invited to discover the stories that have shaped Sydney Dance Company's home over four decades. Developed in partnership with the Museums of History NSW, the display brings together historical photographs, interpretation and archival material to explore the people, stories and spaces that have shaped both the company and Walsh Bay over time. Historical images from the Museums of History NSW archives, and on loan from the State Library collections, including works by celebrated photographer Max Dupain, will be displayed throughout the foyer alongside earlier company season posters.

This display presents a visual history of the Wharf and its transformation into a thriving home for Sydney Dance Company through the generosity of the NSW Government and passionate support from the Company's capital campaign donors, allowing the Company to have an enduring presence at Walsh Bay.

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IMAGES available to download HERE

Main image credit:

Interior of Wharf 4/5, Walsh Bay

Wes Stacey, c1970

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A series of newly captured oral history films will also be presented throughout the foyer, presenting the voices of dancers, staff, students and long-time class participants whose experiences reflect the creativity, community and connection that have defined Sydney Dance Company's home over the past 40 years.

On 22 August, Sydney Dance Company will mark 40 Years at the Wharf with a special Open Day, inviting the public to explore the company's home through a vibrant program of free dance classes, Pilates sessions, family activities and performances. Highlights include a performance by Sydney Dance Company's Primary Youth Ensemble with Gondwana's Junior Performing Choir, a rare opportunity to observe Artistic Director Rafael Bonachela in an open rehearsal of *E2 7SD* ahead of *Current*, and a live recording of the Life Academy podcast, returning to one of the iconic locations featured in the acclaimed television series *Dance Academy*.

40 Pre-Professional Year students will pay homage to the Company's home with 40-minute site-specific improvisations unfolding across the piers and surrounding spaces of the Wharf during the *Current* season. Rather than presenting a staged work, the activation invites audiences into a shared moment of presence, curiosity and reflection, an offering of gratitude, respect and acknowledgement to the land, the waters, the enduring spirit that flows through this place.

Complementing *Current*, choreographers Raghav Handa, Jenni Large and Azzam Mohamed will each lead an intensive three-hour Advanced Contemporary Workshop, for professional and pre-professional dancers. This is a rare opportunity to engage directly with the artists behind Sydney Dance Company's latest commissions and gain insight into the creative practices shaping Australian contemporary dance.

Beyond the stage the company has launched 40 Years at the Wharf: The Next Steps - a major fundraising campaign to enable planning with confidence and creating with ambition; not just for the next season, but for the next generation. This is not simply about sustaining what the company does today. It is about giving the company the financial strength and independence to continue to create and commission ambitious new work, invest in artists over the long term, expand their reach across Australia and internationally, and deepen their engagement with community and future audiences, ensuring the people inside Sydney Dance Company's Wharf home can share their work with audiences across Australia and around the world.

Sydney Dance Company Artistic Director Rafael Bonachela said:

"For forty years, the Wharf has been much more than our location. It is where ideas are born, where artists come together to take creative risks, and where audiences become part of our story. Every rehearsal, performance, class and conversation has contributed to the extraordinary community that exists here today."

Celebrating 40 Years at the Wharf is an opportunity to open our doors and invite people inside this remarkable place. Whether you're joining us for Current, taking a class, exploring our history or simply visiting for the first time, we hope audiences and participants experience the creativity, generosity and sense of belonging that has made this our home for four decades."