

# CANBERRA DANCE THEATRE

## Professional Development workshop

3 June 10.00 am to 5.00 pm

## Inclusivity in dance classes

### Information about sessions and presenters

#### Program

10.00 – 10.15	welcome – Jacqui
10.15 – 11.30	session 1 – Gretel
11.45 – 1.00	session 2 – Alison & Gabriela
1.00 – 1.45	lunch
1.45 – 3.00	session 3 – Amy & Michelle
3.15 – 4.30	session 4 – Philip & Jacqui
4.30 – 5.00	wrap up – Jacqui

#### Session 1: Imagine if.....

The focus of this session is the use of physical and conceptual stimuli to promote expanded movement and expression.

In a dance class, the use of props can assist the participants to develop specific movement skills, to extend their range of movement and to expand their creativity. Props are tactile; they can be manipulated; they can be explored for what they are, and can become many other things. Using props to explore concrete and abstract concepts and to generate movement is especially useful for people who are not skilled at using their imagination.

And once imagination is ignited and each of the five senses are enlivened, movement responses become so much richer in intent and in detail.

#### Gretel Burgess

**Gretel** has extensive experience in both the health and arts sectors. She has a Bachelor of communication in Theatre/Media, a Masters in Social Work and a certificate in Theatre and Dance from Sekolahah Tinggi Seni (university) Padang Pajang, Indonesia, where she won a scholarship to study dance and drama for twelve months. Gretel has toured and performed in Australia and overseas and has worked for numerous youth drama companies and dance theatres including Canberra Youth Theatre, Canberra Dance Theatre, Corrugated Iron Youth Arts, Darwin, PACT Youth Theatre in Sydney and NIDA holiday programs in Cairns and Canberra. She has taught many different cultural and community groups including asylum seekers on Christmas Island, the Multi-Cultural Council for Refugees in Darwin, children and teenagers with Down Syndrome in Canberra, adults with stroke and acute brain injury, adults with complex needs through ARC Disability Services and in Regis Aged Care Facility, Cairns, Queensland. Gretel is currently one of the teachers for the Wellbeing dance programs at Belconnen Arts centre in Canberra.

# CANBERRA DANCE THEATRE

## **Session 2: Techniques, Tools and Trust**

Gabi and Alison practically and critically explore approaches to movement techniques and alignment using set material within an inclusive dance context. With a focus on sensory and anatomical awareness they bring tools to open up physical capacity for all, extending each individuals experience of their body, imagination and the environment around them. Discussion and questioning amidst the group accompanies this practical session to allow for deeper understanding of their approaches to leading technically focussed inclusive dance.

### **Alison Plevy and Gabriela Green Olea**

**Alison** is an award winning choreographer and dance and physical artist based in Canberra. Her practice spans youth dance and theatre, dance education, choreography and performance, cross-disciplinary collaboration, festival commissions, solo research and industry development in regional NSW and the ACT. Alison holds a first class BA honours degree from WAAPA. She is a member of The Childer's Group, an independent arts advocacy group in Canberra.

Alison is Associate Director of dance and physical theatre company Lingua Franca with Adam Deusien. Based in Bathurst they create visceral original performance engaging professional, emerging and community artists. Their recent work 'unsustainable behaviour' was presented at the Regional Arts Australia Conference, ArtLands Dubbo 2016.

Alison is Leader of emergent Canberra company Australian Dance Party, driven by her ongoing study of dance as a universal communicative medium and a powerful practice for humanity to experience, debate and celebrate. The Party is an evolution of her artist-activist solo work and inspired collaborations with diverse Canberra artists. She aims to build the sustainability of professional dance in the capital, embracing its political culture and engaging community in contemporary ideas through the power, playfulness and vulnerability of dance.

Their recent work includes: 'Seamless' Floriade Fringe, 'Weave, Hustle and Halt' at the NPG, 'Mine!' (ACT National Science Week 2017), 'Nervous' at Mount Stromlo Observatory, and 'Strings Attached' at New Acton, 'Shake It' at Art, Not Apart Festival, 'Autonomous' at You Are Here Festival.

In 2018 the Party will create and present new works including 'In a flash' at the NPG, 'Moving to ZERO' short dance films, 'Autumn Lantern' at LUX festival NZ and 'ENERGEIA'.

**Gabriela** is a socially engaged and highly inclusive regional dance artist. She is based, living and working in the Bega Valley in NSW.

Gabriela graduated from the Victorian Collage of the Arts in 2014 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Dance. As a graduate dancer and emerging choreographer she has worked and seconded with Alison Plevy, Lee Pemberton, Nat Cursio, Rebecca Hilton, Rob McCredie, Gabrielle Rose, Richard Maude, Nick Power, Holly Durant, Gregory Lorenzutti, Sam Fox, THIS Ensemble (Ren Walters, Tony Yap), Alina Folini (Argentina), The Jose Vidal Company (Chile).

Gabriela found an interest in Inclusive Dance Practises in her Mother's country Chile, where she was a part of an all abilities dance group with the Non for Profit Organisation 'BEST BUDDIES CHILE'. Upon return to Australia Gabriela received a CREATE NSW Artist Support Grant to further development her experience in Inclusive Dance Practises and with this funding travelled to Europe over the course of 2 months and connected with 21 different Inclusive dance companies. She was a

# CANBERRA DANCE THEATRE

core performer in an Integrated Dance-Mix Media piece by The Leitung Ensemble BewegGrund Trier, Dance Company (Germany).

Gabriela is the Dance Development Officer for the Bega Based, Youth Dance Company, fLiNG Physical Theatre and in 2017 introduced an Inclusive stream to the company involving a youth all abilities dance group 'MoveMe'. The group of over 10 students ages 8-18 have been meeting weekly for 2 school terms and look forward to performing later this year.

## **Session 3: Communication and Music**

The first half of this session will focus on how to effectively and confidently communicate with people with disabilities, especially those with high needs. This will include how to tailor the style and level of your language to students, how to communicate with non-verbal students, and how to use communication strategies to manage challenging behaviour.

The second half of this session will focus on using music as communication. This will include how to communicate through sounds, and how to use music in response to student behaviour.

### **Amy Forman and Michele Forman**

**Amy** has been teaching dance for over eight years. She has taught dance for youth and adults with disabilities at Black Mountain School and Belconnen Community Service, and led the classes for children and youth with disabilities at Canberra Dance Theatre from 2013-14. Amy holds a Bachelor of Arts (Education), and has worked as a Learning Support Assistant to students with disabilities at Cranleigh School and Black Mountain School.

**Michelle** has been teaching music for over ten years. She has taught music for adults with disabilities in Music for Canberra's Mixed Ability Program since 2008, and coordinated the program for two years. She also teaches music for children with disabilities in out-of-home care, and regularly leads one-off music workshops for people with disabilities. Michelle holds a Certificate IV in Community Services and Mental Health.

**Amy and Michelle** have co-led music and dance workshops for people with and without disabilities at Belconnen Arts Centre, for children with disabilities at the Sony Camp, for people with hearing impairments at Belconnen Arts Centre and through Hearing Australia, and most recently led the holiday program for teenagers with disabilities at Canberra Dance Theatre. They are both passionate about inclusive arts programs, and love working with people.

## **Session 4: This Goes with That**

Drawing on the classes currently taught as part of Belconnen Arts Centre's Dance for Wellbeing Program, in this session we will look at aspects of class content and structure. These include ways of structuring a class that develops logically from the warm up to the cool down while simultaneously addressing physical, cognitive and social outcomes; the pros and cons of working with a theme in a class; the territory between set and improvised movement; and strategies for negotiating the line between encouraging participants to look after themselves and to extend themselves.

# CANBERRA DANCE THEATRE

## **Philip Pigg**

**Philip** trained and has worked in Australia and internationally. He was employed as a Community Dance Animateur in Wales, UK, and also with Common Ground Dance Theatre, a company of deaf and hearing dancers, focusing on dance and disability programs. In Australia he has worked regionally, teaching, lecturing, choreographing, performing and directing for many arts, educational and community groups, with and without disabilities. He has also served on various boards and arts funding authorities.

Since moving to the ACT in 1999, he has worked with Ausdance ACT, extensively in the education sector, and for Canberra Dance Theatre for 10 years, all these involving programs for all abilities.

Now he is employed as a Creative Team Member at Belconnen Arts Centre, where the philosophy is about “arts for all”. With the support of a Churchill Fellowship trip to the USA and the UK, Philip now pioneers dance programs for People with Parkinson’s, for People with Dementia and for People with other chronic conditions, throughout the ACT and beyond.

He was recently awarded Honorary Life Membership of People Dancing - the UK foundation organization for community dance, and this year was shortlisted for Services to Dance for the Australian Dance Awards.

## **Jacqueline Simmonds**

**Jacqui** has been involved in dance education for over three decades, developing and directing tertiary dance degrees for the University of Western Sydney (now WSU) and ACPE. As part of the management team at ACPE, her responsibilities included oversight of student engagement, welfare and retention.

As an educator, Jacqui’s philosophy of teaching is underpinned by research in somatic practices and dance as a community art. She completed the Feldenkrais Teacher Training course and is a qualified Iyengar yoga teacher. Publications include: *Dancers and communities: A collection of writings about dance as a community art*, edited with Helen Poynor; and *Somdance Manual*, co-authored with Greg Holdaway and Zoran Kovich.

Her service to the dance community has included her work as President of Ausdance NSW; Chair of the Dance Committee, NSW Ministry for the Arts (now Arts NSW); and Chair of the Tertiary Dance Council of Australia. She was also a member of NSW’s HSC Dance Examination committee. Currently she is on Ausdance National’s Board.

Last year Jacqui took on the role of Artistic Coordinator for Canberra Dance Theatre. She is also teaching for Belconnen Arts Centre’s Dance and Wellbeing program, and is on the teaching team at Canberra Yoga Space.