

QUEENSLAND BALLET and HOTA present

Elastic Hearts to the Music of Global Pop Sensation, Sia

DIRECTED AND CHOREOGRAPHED BY GARRY STEWART



Queensland Ballet, *Elastic Hearts*. Image by David Kelly

Brisbane 16th October, 2025: In a bold new collaboration, Queensland Ballet presents, *Elastic Hearts*, a world premiere that reimagines the music of global music sensation, Sia, through the visionary choreography of Garry Stewart. Set to a new lush orchestral arrangement of Sia's original track by Grammy Award nominee, Elliott Wheeler, *Elastic Hearts* opens in the Talbot Theatre on 30 April, 2026, for four shows only.

Known for his pioneering choreography and physically demanding performances, choreographer and former Artistic Director of Australian Dance Theatre, Garry Stewart, will bring Sia's anthems of vulnerability, defiance, and transformation to life in this unexpected fusion of high energy dance and emotionally charged Australian pop music.

Stewart describes the work, *Elastic Hearts*, as a creative response to the music of Sia Furler, the celebrated Australian artist, originally from Adelaide and now based in LA.

"The track, *Elastic Heart*, speaks to the strength and resilience of the human heart and human relationships, the interconnections we have to each other, and the necessity for finding community" Stewart said.

"There is a line in Sia's track that I love, 'I may snap and I move fast'. There is an elasticity and pliability to emotions. We need to bend and flex with the world around us but we also need to cultivate resilience and not break."

"*Elastic Hearts* is more than just a performance - it's a sensory experience, a celebration of nature, music, and the strength of the human spirit," Stewart explained.

Artistic Director of Queensland Ballet, Ivan Gil-Ortega, said Queensland Ballet is proud to lead this unique and unforgettable collaboration, uniting acclaimed Australian artists in a creative partnership with HOTA.

“This collaboration was originally curated by Leanne Benjamin who had seen and admired Garry’s unique dance works such as *Birdbrain* and *G*, and recognised Elliott Wheelers huge body of musical compositions,” Gil-Ortega said.

“Powered by Sia’s soaring vocals and the richly layered arrangement by Queensland Symphony, *Elastic Hearts* is sure to pulse with the same creative energy that defines HOTA and the Gold Coast. Audiences are in for a treat,” Gil-Ortega added.

While Sia’s music provided the emotional foundation, Stewart’s long-standing artistic interest in nature shaped the visual and thematic design.

“The visual world for *Elastic Hearts* is inspired by nature and the essential idea of interconnection. I’m curious about the processes of life, death, decay, and regeneration. At the heart of Sia’s music lies a deep emotional honesty – to descend into pain, collapse and then to rise again with defiance and joy. These arcs of breaking and rebuilding echo the ecological cycles of nature itself,” Stewart said.

As a representation of nature, I have centred my work around Gaia, the Greek goddess of nature and the planet. Gaia serves as a guiding force, conjuring the work into existence and embodying the themes of connection and transformation. At its core my work is joyful while also acknowledging the difficulty and heartbreak of life. Ultimately it is about the creativity found within resilience and overcoming, and I think the music of Sia is the perfect vehicle to convey that,” Stewart explained.

Composer, Elliott Wheeler, who has previously produced several of Sia’s tracks, said the opportunity to give one of her acclaimed songs a second life was irresistible.

“I’m a massive fan of Sia, and I believe that what so many people respond to in her songs, apart from the incredible lyrics and unnerving knack for melody, is her voice. It’s a force of nature,” he explained.

“Pop songs are concise, often built on just a few musical ideas. In the ballet world, those same ideas might need to stretch to eight minutes. I thought I would run out of material - but the opposite happened. You can take a small idea and build an entire landscape around it, letting the orchestra play to its strengths. It was liberating,” he said.

“The orchestral arrangement by Elliott captures the raw vulnerability in Sia’s tracks and lifts them with the sound of a full orchestra,” Stewart added.

Ends

Performance Details

- **Dates:** 30 April – 2 May, 2026
- **Venue:** Talbot Theatre, Thomas Dixon Centre, West End

Editors Note

- Interviews: Claire Vince, Communications Manager, cvince@queenslandballet.com.au / 0468 726 910
- Background information and photos see [here](#)

The creative team for *Elastic Hearts* includes:

Music – SIA, Choreography/Director & Staging Concepts – Garry Stewart

Music Producer & Arranger – Elliott Wheeler

Originating Artistic Producer – Leanne Benjamin

Music Recording – Queensland Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Nigel Gaynor

Set & Costume Designer – Charles Davies

Lighting Designer – Alexander Berlage, Dramaturg – Lou Cope

Assistant to the Choreographer – Daniel Jaber

[About Queensland Ballet](#)

Queensland Ballet's mission is to contribute to Australia's cultural landscape by being an integral part of the national and international ballet ecology - striving for artistic excellence, pathways for emerging artists, and impact through our community outreach, education, and Dance Health programs. We aim to enrich lives and contribute to wellness across society through the magic of ballet.

FAST FACTS ABOUT ELASTIC HEARTS

- The seeds of *Elastic Hearts* were sown through an expected network of Adelaide connections. Sia grew up in Adelaide and Stewart spent two decades there when he was the Artistic Director of Australian Dance Theatre. While there, he became acquainted with one of Sia's friends.
- Elliott Wheeler, who produced the music for Baz Luhrmann's films *Elvis* and *The Great Gatsby*, said that every character in a movie has a theme tune — “even the shark in *Jaws*!”
- This is Elliott Wheeler's first ballet score, and he described the process as refreshingly open—unlike film, where music serves someone else's story, here he could fully express his own ideas.
- The recording of Wheeler's score differed significantly from the typical process for ballet productions, according to conductor, Nigel Gaynor. Rather than capturing the full orchestra in a single session, the score was recorded in layers — commencing with lower strings and brass together, followed by other instrumental groups, all synced to a click track to ensure precision.
- Gaynor said it was “like assembling a jigsaw puzzle. Every player has headphones or earphones, and the tempo is locked in so we can layer each section perfectly.”
- Designer, Charles Davis, studied production design at NIDA and architecture at Monash University. While designing for *Elastic Hearts*, he is also busy with Queensland Opera's production of Puccini's, *La bohème*.
- Garry Stewart replaced Meryl Tankard at ADT when Tankard retired. He went to become the longest-serving Artistic Director – 22 years, with 19 stage productions and six film and video works to his name.
- Stewart came to dance late in life at age 20, after initially studying social work at university. Now, his academic and artistic journeys have come full circle – he was the founding director of Assemblage, a new creative arts research centre at Flinders University.