

Queensland Ballet

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR LI CUNXIN AO

A male and female ballet dancer are captured in a dynamic, low-to-the-ground pose. The male dancer, shirtless and wearing dark blue shorts, is supporting the female dancer. She is wearing a black leotard and is arched backwards, with her head near the floor and her legs extended. The background is dark, with bright, horizontal light streaks on the floor and walls, creating a dramatic effect.

Bespoke

PRODUCTION NOTES FOR THE CLASSROOM

Bespoke

In 2019, Queensland Ballet joins forces with leading creative talents including Lucy Guerin, Amy Hollingsworth and Loughlan Prior to produce an extraordinary program of genre-blending contemporary creations that reimagine dance.

Bespoke challenges assumptions about what dance is, what dancers can do, and how dance is experienced. It creates a multi-sensory experience, bringing together a collaborative space for artists who share a vision to co-create, to disrupt the norm and to embrace the interlacing of technology and dance. The mesmerising outcome is art that is innovative, thought-provoking and relevant, creating wonder and an inspiration in all of us.



From Within



Choreographer	—	Amy Hollingsworth
Music	—	<i>Blackbird</i> by The Beatles <i>It's Oh So Quiet</i> by Björk <i>String Quartet No.2</i> by Joby Talbot
Score	—	Wil Hughes
Virtual Reality	—	JosephMark and Breeder
Costume Design	—	Noelene Hill
Lighting	—	Cameron Goerg

About the work from the choreographer, Amy Hollingsworth

— *From Within*, is a work of multiple iterations that can be experienced live in the proscenium setting or from within via the VR film. Wil and I wanted the score to be a glorious patchwork of the dancers voices, a palette of different music and soundscapes to give the piece a rich technicolour feel to lead the audience through this experience. The score is driven by the dancers' voices as inner monologue/dialogues giving another layer of the work being 'from within'.

At its heart, I wanted to create a piece that was driven by the incredible artists of QB, knowing them so well and wanting to celebrate what I know is within them. It is an exploration of all the things that make us human, through the lens of this cast of dancers. It is a dark comedy that touches on the anxiety, joy and tumult of life, the messy journey of being us.



The Appearance of Colour



Choreographer — Loughlan Prior
Music — John Metcalfe
Lighting — Cameron Goerg
Animation Design — Glynn Urquhart
Costume Design — William Fitzgerald

About the work

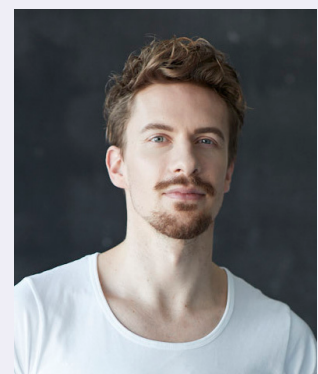
— In this work, choreographer Loughlan Prior uses John Metcalfe's compositions as a stimulus for exploring the human response to colour emerging from darkness.

Drawing inspiration from the introduction of colour television in the 1970s, and the advancements in technology with the pixilation of television since then, Prior experiments with the states between black, white, and bold colour. The Appearance of Colour integrates music, digital animation, puppetry, and dance to create a rich sensory feast for audience members.

Movement notes from the choreographer, Loughlan Prior

— The vocabulary in the work fuses the fluidity and precision of the classical idiom with an energetic and frenzied contemporary sensibility.

Structurally the trajectory of the work, and the formations created by the ensemble, are influenced by large scale animations designed by Glynn Urquhart. These are projected from above the stage and inform the dance space through the use of light, shape and colour. Each dancer wears a double layered garment as the first costume layer begins in muted grey fabric and progresses to flesh tones hidden underneath. Overhead projections are used to paint the dancers bodies in an explosion of technicolour and movement as the work reaches its climax.



pointNONpoint



Choreographer — Lucy Guerin
Music — György Ligeti
Set & Costume Designer — Andrew Treloar
Lighting — Cameron Goerg

About the work

— *pointNONpoint* is an abstract build of dancers, movement, sound and costume. It uses different modes of creation from choreographed steps to improvisations that have no author and are generated spontaneously from within the group of dancers.

It begins with a solo and expands incrementally to an interconnected community of twenty-three people. *pointNONpoint* begins with the attention on one person in the space and swells to an impressionistic mutating mass of bodies with no single focal point for the viewer, a cloud of impressions through which one must choose one's own visual journey.

Movement notes from the choreographer, Lucy Guerin

— I am working with space, time, rhythm, texture and the tone that movement creates on stage, as the impacting elements of the work. The costume, which grows with the group, more and more obscures the human form, gradually transforming it into a less recognisable shape.

The score by Ligeti, a composer who was interested in making texture a driving force in music, resonates strongly with me. I have chosen two of his choral works that create a constantly evolving amorphous cloud of sound, rather than specific melody lines where different voices can be heard. I have also used a Ligeti piece written for one hundred metronomes which creates a blur of sound through overlapping rhythms.



Choreographer, Lucy Guerin

Can you share with us a little bit about your new work for *Bespoke*?

My work for *Bespoke* involves 23 dancers, made up of 11 young artists and 12 company dancers. This is a great opportunity for me to work with a larger number of dancers as the works for my own company are generally quite intimate. When making this work I was interested in developing a contemporary dance vocabulary and meshing it with ballet technique. Nine dancers are on pointe, including three of the men, and the others have bare feet.

What was your inspiration for the work?

I wanted to make a work that builds from one person, and incrementally adds people until it includes the whole group. The solo in the beginning is very clearly defined but as the group grows, it becomes more complex until it loses any sense of a single focus. The stage morphs into a texture or cloud like field of impressions.

What is your creative process when creating a work like this?

I use a number of different ways of creating the material. I set improvisational tasks for the dancers which mean that every performance will be slightly different. The improvisations in this piece are about responding in different ways to the movement of others, which builds a sense of connectedness, and each person affects what is happening in the group. I also choreographed a lot of the material, relying on the interpretations and fabulous technical and memory skills of the dancers. Where the pointe work was involved, I was trying to create a different way of working with the pointe shoes. I was interested in the noise they make (which is usually hidden in ballet) and creating some less typical shapes and rhythms.

What is it like working with the dancers from QB?

Working with the QB dancers was wonderful. They are so open and available to try anything. There is a very good culture within the company of openness and a positive approach to creating something new in rehearsals. I have really enjoyed my time with them.

Can you tell us a bit about the music for this piece?

In this work I use some pieces by the Hungarian composer György Ligeti. They are choral works and create a textural cloud of sound which was very inspiring to me. I really wanted to work with this idea of no singular focus for the viewer to latch onto in the dance, but that each audience member would pick out a different journey through the work. So these dense layerings of sound were very important to the concept.



Queensland Ballet

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This Production Notes for the Classroom was developed
in collaboration with Queensland Ballet's Education Ambassadors
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