

INFINITY

Artistic Director

David McAllister AM

Executive Director

Valerie Wilder

Music Director & Chief Conductor

Nicolette Fraillon

Concertmaster

Adam Chalabi

with Orchestra Victoria
Arts Centre Melbourne, State Theatre

Friday evening
24 February 2012

There will be two intervals of 20 minutes

This performance will conclude at
approximately 10pm

INFORMATIVE TALK

Celebrating 50 Years of The Australian Ballet

Suitable for age 10 to adult
SATURDAY 25 FEBRUARY 5PM – 6PM
Arts Centre Melbourne, State Theatre

When The Australian Ballet was formed in September 1962, who would have guessed we would have so many highlights to celebrate in our Golden Anniversary year? Join Colin Peasley and special guests Marilyn Rowe, Christine Walsh, Simon Dow, Barry Kitcher and Steven Heathcote as they reminisce about the many memorable moments, people, ballets and tours that are part of our wonderful history.

Bookings

\$10 per person at the Arts Centre Melbourne Box Office.
FREE for 2012 subscribers of The Australian Ballet. Present your subscriber card at the State Theatre door to gain admission. Please note: special guests are subject to change.

To find out more about our Education program visit australianballet.com.au/education

THE POWER OF GIVING

Where would the bold new program you see tonight be without the generous Patrons whose gifts enable creativity to flourish? In our 50th year we have a loyal group of supporters who have been with us over many years, but there's always room for one more. You can make a gift to the company as soon as you leave the theatre by logging on to australianballet.com.au/donate, or during business hours by calling the Philanthropy Department on (03) 9669 2775. Even the smallest gift makes a difference.

The world premiere performance of THE NARRATIVE OF NOTHING

Adam Bull Andrew Killian
with artists of The Australian Ballet

Lana Jones with Amy Harris

Brett Chynoweth Chengwu Guo

Artists of The Australian Ballet

Lana Jones Amy Harris
Adam Bull Andrew Killian

Calvin Hannaford Charles Thompson
with Brooke Lockett

Lana Jones Adam Bull

Jessica Fyfe Jarryd Madden

Ako Kondo with artists of The Australian Ballet

Andrew Killian with Lana Jones

Artists of The Australian Ballet

Quartet: Musicians of Orchestra Victoria

Adam Chalabi, violin
Yi Wang, violin
Paul McMillan, viola
Melissa Chominsky, cello

The world premiere performance of THERE'S DEFINITELY A PRINCE INVOLVED

Introduction

Narrators: James O'Hara* Harriet Ritchie*
Odette: Madeleine Eastoe
Odile: Alice Topp
Prince Siegfried: Kevin Jackson
with artists of The Australian Ballet

Drone 1

Narrator: Benjamin Stuart-Carberry
Artists of The Australian Ballet with Sara Black*,
Robbie Curtis*, James O'Hara*, Harriet Ritchie*

Cygnets

Narrator: Robbie Curtis*
Artists of The Australian Ballet with Sara Black*,
James O'Hara*, Harriet Ritchie*

Drone 2

Narrator: Dana Stephensen
Madeleine Eastoe Harriet Ritchie*
Robbie Curtis Kevin Jackson

Grand Pas de Deux

Narrator: Madeleine Eastoe
Sara Black* and James O'Hara*

Finale

Narrator: Sara Black*
Artists of The Australian Ballet with Robbie
Curtis*, James O'Hara*, Harriet Ritchie*

*Guest artist

The world premiere performance of WARUMUK – IN THE DARK NIGHT

Evening Star *Djurrpun*

Vivienne Wong
with artists of The Australian Ballet and Bangarra
Dance Theatre

Julpan

Forbidden Fish
Leanne Stojmenov
Three Men: Daniel Riley McKinley**, Patrick
Thaiday**, Rudy Hawkes
The Catch: Artists of The Australian Ballet and
Bangarra Dance Theatre

Milky Way *Badurru*

Artists of The Australian Ballet and Bangarra
Dance Theatre

Full Moon *Ngalindi*

Full Moon: Elma Kris** and Waangenga Blanco**
Tides: Artists of The Australian Ballet and
Bangarra Dance Theatre

Eclipse *Gungama*

Sun: Ella Havelka**
Moon: Jake Mangakahia

Seven Sisters

Amber Scott, Yolande Brown**, Jasmin
Sheppard**, Tara Gower**, Juliet Burnett,
Vivienne Wong, Dimity Azoury

Morning Star *Barnumbirr*

Deborah Brown**
with artists of The Australian Ballet and Bangarra
Dance Theatre

**Artist of Bangarra Dance Theatre

The Australian Ballet

INFINITY

THE NARRATIVE OF NOTHING

Choreography Graeme Murphy
Creative associate Janet Vernon
Music Brett Dean
Costume design Jennifer Irwin
Stage and lighting design Damien Cooper
Sound design Bob Scott

The Narrative of Nothing was made possible with the support of The Angior Family Foundation

Fire Music by Brett Dean was commissioned by the Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Radio 3 and The Australian Ballet. These performances of Fire Music are given by permission of Hal Leonard Australia Pty Ltd, exclusive agents for Bôte & Bock (Boosey & Hawkes) of Berlin.

Choreographer's note

The narrative of nothing ... for we are by nature's strange design like children, who gazing upwards find "dragons in the clouds".
Graeme Murphy 2012

THERE'S DEFINITELY A PRINCE INVOLVED

Choreography Gideon Obarzanek after Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov
Music Stefan Gregory after Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Costume design Alexi Freeman assisted by Caroline Dickinson
Stage concept Benjamin Cisterne and Gideon Obarzanek
Lighting design Benjamin Cisterne

Original sets designed for The Australian Ballet by Hugh Colman used with kind permission of Mr Colman

Choreographer's note

So let's talk about ballet. What can you tell me?
... *Swan Lake*? OK, how does the story go?
... Hmm, that's an interesting take.
What do you think it's about?
... Love? So, let's talk about love.

Although I am very much involved with dance, it has been over 20 years since I worked with ballet. So when David McAllister discussed the idea of making a new work with the company, I found myself talking a lot about ballet with friends and colleagues. Interestingly, most knew very little about it, but when pushed to name a ballet almost all said *Swan Lake*. When I asked them to tell the story, I received some genuinely interesting variations on this ancient folktale. What was conclusive, however, was that it was very much to do with love, true love. This emerging topic seemed to be an invitation for people to speak more about themselves. Or maybe my discipline to stay on subject easily dissolved as I was seductively drawn to more personal and private stories.

In contemporary dance idealism is a rare concern. But given the opportunity to work with a classical ballet company, for me there is no getting around it. In *Swan Lake* we all pine for the prince and the swan queen to come together. Tragically, however, fidelity is irrevocably severed by a moment of regrettable ecstatic passion between the prince and the alluring black swan. This forever ruins the possibility of true love in their present world; it can now be fulfilled only in the afterlife.

I have always been interested in the seemingly irreconcilable differences between people's real lives and their ideals. In this case, our often messy, tedious or compromised relationships compared with our fantasy and desire for "the one true love". The one who will transform us from our lesser self and into the beautiful special person we deep down know our true self to be. As in *Swan Lake*, true love proves elusive. Despite this, most of us cling onto the belief that somewhere out there it exists. Romantic idealism is a driving force in human nature. It is also the backbone of classical ballet.
Gideon Obarzanek 2012

WARUMUK – IN THE DARK NIGHT

Choreography Stephen Page
Music David Page*
Orchestration Jessica Wells
Costume design Jennifer Irwin
Set design Jacob Nash
Lighting design Pádraig O Suilleabhain
Sound design Bob Scott

*featuring Dhuwa and Yirritja songs and stories from North East Arnhem Land
vocals by Jamie Wanambi, Banula Marika and Janet Guyprunguna Munyaryyun
David Page's music used with permission of Sony/ATV Music Publishing (Australia) Pty Limited

Warumuk – in the dark night was made possible with the support of The Ross Trust

Choreographer's note

Warumuk – in the dark night is my fifth work for The Australian Ballet and the third time we've collaborated with both companies. This time around the influence of Bangarra has been even stronger, with a concept inspired by the myths of and our long association with Yolngu families of North East Arnhem Land.

Coming together in a cohesive creative process, these wonderful dancers have embraced each other's dance language to awaken a distinctive contemporary style.

This work carries the Bangarra aesthetic through my collaboration with artistic peers in music, design and lighting. One of the most challenging aspects has been observing David Page's composition for orchestral instruments, combining recorded Yolngu songs and language and the hum of the land with the richness of live orchestra.

Jacob Nash's set design has created a mythical, timeless space that shelters and supports this Indigenous experience. A 20-year connection with Jennifer Irwin has been reflected intuitively in her amazing costume designs. With lighting so integral to the theatrical atmosphere, it has been exciting to work with Pádraig O Suilleabhain in his debut as lighting designer. I've always been fascinated with Aboriginal astronomy and the timeless mystery of the night sky. Over the years, Bangarra's cultural consultant Kathy Balngayngu Marika and I have talked about the myriad of Yolngu creation stories within the constellations of stars. So the process has been to digest and pay homage to the integrity of these stories, and shape them into a contemporary form.

From evening star to morning star and in between, *Warumuk – in the dark night* explores the Milky Way, shooting stars, the Seven Sisters, the tides of the moon and the drama of the lunar eclipse. Each of these elements has its Western interpretation, but my perspective comes from listening to the Yolngu.

Yolngu creation stories of the spiritual relationship between people, land and nature are reflected and celebrated in the night sky.
Stephen Page 2012

The Australian Ballet would like to pay its respects to and acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we gather. The Australian Ballet and Bangarra Dance Theatre wish to acknowledge the traditional Aboriginal people whose customs and cultures inspire Warumuk - in the dark night.

The commissioning of the three musical works in Infinity has been generously supported by The Robert & Elizabeth Albert Music Fund