

YOUR DIGITAL PROGRAM / TEXT ONLY VERSION

Wayfinder

Dancenorth Australia

Dates: 15 – 17 Mar 2024

Venue: Space Theatre

Duration: 1hr, no interval

Warnings: Utilises theatrical smoke, haze and strobe effects. Recommended for audiences 8+

Note: Latecomers will not be admitted.

Wayfinder was commissioned by Brisbane Festival and North Australian Festival of Arts (NAFA).

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Visual Design Hiromi Tango

Design Associate Chloe Greaves

Design Assistant Jeanette Hutchinson

Polyrhythm Consultant Naomi Jean

Performers/Choreographers Marlo Benjamin, Sabine Crompton-Ward, Tiana Lung, Damian Meredith, Callum Mooney, Darci O'Rourke, Tara Jade Samaya, Felix Sampson & Michael Smith

CREW

Production Manager Liam Kennedy

Company Stage Manager Pip Loth

Production Technician – Technical Operation & Sound Yoshie Kenny

Production Technician – Lighting Stephen Hawker

A Note from the Directors

Amber Haines & Kyle Page

We all enter the world as Wayfinders. Finding our way we dance with the world, allowing the movements of life to illuminate the unshakable truth of our elemental connectivity.

Throughout this development, we have consciously focused our creative energy upon the heart – allowing its wisdom to guide the process. In doing so we have attempted to loosen the grip of modern humanity's default mode of rational, reductive brain-based being. In this space, a deeper, more intuitive and energetic creative eco-system has emerged.

The making of *Wayfinder* has been a heart expanding process. Nourished by the generosity of our collaborators Byron J Scullin, Chloe Greaves, Jeanette Hutchinson, Hiatus Kaiyote, Hiromi Tango, Nick Roux, Nik Pajanti and Robert Larsen, we have blurred the lines between form. Movement, light, sound, sculpture and song – each simultaneously finding and showing the way for the others. With deep gratitude we honour the artists and all that they have brought to this creation.

In the studio, the way with the dancers has been one of interbeing. A deeply interwoven exploration that has led to something profound, a choreographic language has emerged from the space between all of us, yet as is the case with most magical phenomena, words fail to capture the essence of what we have co-created in the making of this show. Damian, Felix, Marlo, Michael, Nelson, Sabine, Tara Jade, Callum, Darci and Tiana your energy and devotion have paved the way for us all.

Thank you, Niharika and Naomi, for your early contributions and to Aaron, Alice, Caitlin, Eloise, Felicity, Hillary, Laura, Liam, Matthew, Monique, Nicole, Sarah, Stephen, Suzy, Tom and Yoshie – nothing that

emerges within the studio does so in isolation. Your presence is felt, and feeds fuel into every aspect of the creation and presentation of this new work.

With love and appreciation for over 150 volunteers from across Australia who have woven their energy thoughtfully through more than 110 kilometres of salvaged wool – a visual metaphor for the energetic bonds that connect us all as one universal body.

Wayfinder is a beacon. Together may we find our way.

Biographies

CREATIVE TEAM

Kyle Page

Concept, Director & Choreographer

Kyle is an Australian director, choreographer and performer who has performed and presented work in over 20 countries. As artistic director and co-CEO of Dancenorth Australia he has co-directed a suited of award-winning works with his wife and longtime collaborator Amber Haines. He has also produced site-specific works and worked on large-scale productions, including for the Gold Coast 2019 Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony. An alumnus of Australia Council's Arts Leaders Program, Kyle has also participated in several international arts residencies.

Kyle is a recipient of the Sidney Myer Creative Fellowship (2017), the Australian Institute of Management 30 Under 30 (2015), Australian Institute of Management Emerging Leader of the Year North Queensland (2016) and the Townsville City Council Arts and Culture Award (2019).

Amber Haines

Concept, Director & Choreographer

Amber is the associate artistic director of Dancenorth. She received the Mary Orloff Prize for Most Outstanding Dancer when she graduated with a Bachelor of Dance from the Victorian College of the Arts in 2006. She has performed for prestigious companies and choreographers in countries around the world, earning multiple nominations for Best Dance Performance at the Australia Dance Awards, the Helpmann Awards and Green Room Awards.

Amber has co-directed eight full-length works for Dancenorth with Kyle Page, which have been performed nationally and internally, receiving numerous award nominations. Amber has participated in several artist residencies for

creative research, including a three-month Asialink residency in India, an Arctic Circle residency on a Tall Ship and an Aajuna Residency in Greenland.

Niklas Pajanti

Lighting Designer

Niklas is an award-winning lighting designer whose practice ranges across contemporary art forms and performance styles, including theatre, dance, opera, circus, musical theatre, comedy, events, exhibitions and public spaces. He has designed for leading Australian and international companies, including Sydney Theatre Company, Belvoir Theatre, Melbourne Theatre Company, Dancenorth, Chunky Move and more. Notable internationally touring productions he has worked on include *Angels in America*, *The Wild Duck* and *RUPERT*. Niklas has won three Green Room Awards and has been nominated for Helpmann Awards, Sydney Theatre Awards and APDG Awards for his lighting designs.

Hiatus Kaiyote

Composer

Hiatus Kaiyote, formed in 2011, is a Melbourne-based band that blends numerous genres, including funk, electronic, future soul, neo-soul, hip hop, nu-jazz and more. They released their debut album *Tawk Tomahawk* in 2012, followed by *Choose Your Weapon* in 2015 and *Mood Valiant* in 2020. The band has seen considerable critical and commercial success and their songs have been sampled by numerous artists including Kendrick Lamar, Beyoncé, Jay-Z and Anderson.Paak. They received Grammy nominations including a nod for best R&B performance after the release of "Nakamarra" featuring rapper Q-Tip.

Byron J Scullin

Sound Artist & Engineer

Byron explores the amplification and physical presence of sound, creating sonic environments

that blur the line between sound and noise. Over his 20-year career he has contributed sound to films, contemporary dance productions and theatre works, has created installations for museums and galleries and has produced engineered and mastered recordings. Byron collaborates with audio visual and video artists and has worked with notable composers such as Anthony Pateras, Marco Fusinato and Oren Ambarchi and has worked on sound for international artists including Bernard Parmegiani, Tony Conrad and Stephen O'Malley.

Nicholas Roux

Sound Sculpture, Design Construction & Implementation

Nick is an artist working in sound and video. His work is primarily focused on live performance and has manifested itself in composition, instrument creation, computer programming and visual/spatial design. He has created work locally and internationally across a wide spectrum of artistic platforms, from solo gallery performances to multi-million dollar main stage theatrical productions.

Robert Larsen

Sound Sculpture, Design Construction & Implementation

Rob has worked professionally in theatre and the wider performing and visual arts field for 20 years. His specialisation is at the intersection of technology and art, designing and implementing interactivity and control systems that can tell a story. He has an in-depth knowledge of lighting design, audio visual design, stage automation, computer programming and he regularly produces custom technical solutions for artists. Rob has worked extensively with Melbourne Theatre Company, Arts Centre Melbourne, Auckland Theatre Company, Lawrence Arabia, Taika Waititi, Sharing Stories Foundation, Opera Australia, The Australian Ballet, OPTO projects and Lucy Guerin Inc.

Hiromi Tango

Visual Designer

Hiromi is an artist who migrated to Australia in 1988 from Shijoku Island, Japan. She has been a resident of the Bundjalung Country Tweed Heads (NSW) since 2014. For nearly two decades, she has focused on the intersection between art and mental health. Drawing on her own experiences of anxiety, her installations and performances traverse the embodied self, the emotional terrain of our relationships with others and the healing

possibilities of art. She has collaborated with numerous scientists, health professionals and research institutions, exploring how various aspects of the artmaking process can contribute to positive mental wellbeing.

Chloe Greaves

Design Associate

Chloe is a costume and set designer for film and theatre based in Australia. She studied at the Victorian College of the Arts and has designed for companies such as Belvoir, Malthouse, Melbourne Theatre Company, La Boite Theatre Company, Juilliard and Dancenorth. Chloe has also worked with companies in the film industry and has designed music videos for various artists. She was a panellist for the Green Room Awards theatre companies panel from 2017 to 2019 and was the designer in residence at La Boite Theatre Company in 2021 – 22.

Jeanette Hutchinson

Design Assistant

Jeanette is a freelance artist, curator and workshop facilitator who operates Thrifty Luxe, an independent arts business in Townsville (Gutambilbarra), North Queensland. She was a guest workshop facilitator at the 2022 Mabo Day celebrations in Townsville in co-manages Diffraction Studio. Jeanette's experience includes managing exhibitions, events and film screenings. She was the Townsville workshop facilitator for the NQ RASN-funded Lizard Tail project from 2020 – 21, collaborating with internationally-acclaimed artist Hiromi Tango.

PERFORMERS & CHOREOGRAPHERS

Marlo Benjamin

Marlo is a Sydney-born contemporary dancer who began performing professionally at 13 with Force Majeure. She continued her training at the Victorian College of the Arts and Sydney Dance Company's preprofessional year. Since graduating, she has performed with major companies and renowned independent choreographers including Chunky Move, Australian Dance Theatre and Stephanie Lake Company. Marlo has been nominated for Best Female Dancer at the 2018 Green Room Awards and Best Performer at the Performing Arts WA Awards in 2019. She won an Australian Dance Award in 2020 for her role in Stephanie Lake Company's *Skeleton Tree*. Marlo joined the Dancenorth ensemble in 2021.

Sabine Crompton-Ward

Sabine, originally from Hobart, Tasmania, completed an advanced diploma of dance as part of Sydney Dance Company's preprofessional year in 2019 – 20. During her training, she worked with numerous choreographers including Rafael Bonachela, Vicki van Hout and Jessica Goodfellow. In 2020, she performed in Stephanie Lake Company's *Colossal* at Sydney Festival. Sabine joined Sydney Dance Company as a trainee dancer in December 2020, performing in Rafael Bonachela's *Impermanence* and the company's Australian regional tour in 2021. She also performed in Jasmine Shepherd's *Given Unto Thee* and Lillian Steiner's *Springtime Again* for the company's «New Breed» season in December 2021. Sabine is currently enjoying the explorative and adventurous moments of her early career as a contemporary dance artist. She joined the Dancenorth ensemble in 2022.

Tiana Lung

Tiana is a Sydney-born dancer who graduated from the New Zealand School of Dance in 2016. She has toured nationally and internationally as an independent freelancer, working with companies such as Taki Rua Productions, Okareka Dance Company, Discotheque Dance Company, Muscle Mouth, Movement of the Human and Chunky Move. She has also worked as a choreographer and in 2021 she was awarded the Moving Ideas Residency from Readymade Works in Sydney with Isabel Estrella to develop their new work in progress, *roach*. Tiana joined the Dancenorth ensemble in 2022.

Damian Meredith

Damian is an Australian-based contemporary performance artist, teacher and creative entrepreneur. He is trained at VCASS, NICA and Transit Dance, and worked with companies like Chunky Move, Stephanie Lake Company and Matthew Bourne. Damian is also the founder of Movement Décor, an independent contemporary performance art project that has performed at various festivals and events. He is the performance manager at Strawberry Fields Music and Arts Festival and curates music and arts events through his label Helipad Studio. Additionally, Damien works on sound design projects under the name DAME. His goal is to continue exploring movement and performance art while embracing a multifaceted creative approach to life. Damian joined the Dancenorth ensemble in 2022.

Callum Mooney

Callum is an Australian artist that has been performing and creating work through a multitude of fields including contemporary dance, theatre, physical theatre and streetdance / hip hop. As a performer, Callum has also worked with companies including Chunky Move, Antony Hamilton, Dream Dance Company, Maxine Doyle, Stephanie Lake and Meryl Tankard, amongst others, and also performed for Baker Boy at the 2022 Commonwealth Games. As a choreographer, Callum has created four works: *Train of Thought* (Annandale Arts Centre), *The Artist's Mind* (KABA Festival, Indonesia), *Cosmos* (commissioned by DirtyFeet) and *Jeppee Peppee* in collaboration with Jess Goodfellow (The Flying Nun Festival), as well creating a dance work for Austinmer Dance Theatre and Indefinite Dance Company. Callum has also worked closely as a movement director, choreographer and performer with musicians such as Keiynan Lonsdale, Macca 47, Second Idol and Friendless.

Darci O'Rourke

Darci grew up on the east coast of Australia in small town Sawtell. In 2018, she moved to Sydney completing two years at Ev & Bow and graduating with a Diploma in Dance. In 2020, Darci joined the Australian Dance Theatre's professional ensemble, working under the direction of renowned choreographer Garry Stewart and performing in works *Supernature*, *Objekt*, *South* and *G*. In 2022, Darci continued with the Australian Dance Theatre under the new direction of Daniel Riley, performing in the premiere of *The Third* and *Savage*. In 2023, Darci worked with Garry Stewart in the development and showing *Rituals of Memory*. She has since performed with Dancenorth in BambaraMa Dariburu (Noise). Darci's passion for life and art is sustained through her continual dedication to learning and the ever-unfolding discovery of all that makes up self and the universe.

Tara Jade Samaya

Tara is a queer eco-feminist and a multidisciplinary artist that, teaches, creates and performs dance. She joins Dancenorth's ensemble from 2024 for their Australian *Wayfinder* tour. She was recently rehearsal director at Opera Ballet Vlaanderen and danced with the Staatsballett Berlin. Tara has performed in Europe with Jeftha Van Dinter, Emmanuel Gat, Dasniya Summer and created the production *I'm here now* with filmmaker Pippa Samaya for the Komische Oper Berlin.

In 2019, Tara won Helpmann and Green Room Award for Best Female Dancer in Australia for her work in Chunky Move's *Common Ground* (Anouk Van Dijk). She was previously nominated for Green Room/Helpmann Awards in 2017, 2012 and 2010. Over the course of her career, she has worked with many companies, organisations and independent creators including Chunky Move, Australian Dance Theatre, Douglas Wright, Prue Lang and Lina Limosani, and was appointed Chunky Move's Artistic Associate 2016.

Her film collaborative, *The Samaya Wives*, with partner Pippa, has national and international acclaim for their short experimental movement films, screening across festivals, galleries and independent cinemas worldwide.

Felix Sampson

After graduating from the New Zealand School of Dance in 2015, Felix joined Australian Dance Theatre as a full-time company dancer in 2016, performing in multiple works by Garry Stewart including *Objekt*, *The Beginning of Nature* and *Doppelganger*. Felix joined Dancenorth in 2017 and, in addition to *Wayfinder*, has performed in *Dust*, *NOISE*, *Communal Table*,

Rainbow Vomit, *Attractor*, *Surge* and *One Infinity*. Alongside dance, Felix enjoys selecting records for local Townsville venues and writing music. He is also a member of indie pop two-piece Comfort Royale. Since bursting onto the scene in 2022, their electric on-stage energy has seen them support the likes of Lime Cordiale, Thelma Plum and Haiku Hands.

Michael Smith

Michael is a multidisciplinary artist whose work spans contemporary dance, dancetheatre, film and installation, exploring themes of gender, queerness, persona and paradise while challenging traditional roles of audience and space. Michael's choreographic works have been showcased at major festivals and platforms across the world. He received the Brisbane City Council Lord Mayor's Fellowship (2019 – 20), enabling opportunities across Europe and Israel. Michael has collaborated with The Farm, STRUT Dance, QAGOMA, Opera Australia, and worked with independent artists including Liesel Zink and Matt Cornell. He received two Matilda Awards in 2022 for his work *Cowboy*: Best Sound Design and Best New Australian Work. Michael joined the Dancenorth Ensemble in 2021.

About Dancenorth Australia

Recognised as one of Australia's leading performing arts companies, Dancenorth Australia balances a dynamic regional presence with a commitment to creating compelling contemporary dance that tours the globe.

Deeply committed to the creation of adventurous, thoughtfully conceived and highly acclaimed new work, Dancenorth has presented at over 45 international arts festivals and venues around Australia and the world. With a national reputation for producing works of the highest quality, Dancenorth has received two Helpmann Awards, two Australian Dance Awards, two Green Room Awards, the Sidney Myer Performing Arts Group Award and the PAC Australia Impact Award.

As a model for making outstanding art in a regional community, Dancenorth is an integral part of the Australian dance ecology making a significant contribution to the dance sector and building literacy around contemporary dance nationally.

An epicentre of cultural exchange, Dancenorth empowers and supports artists by providing a creative hub for many artistic voices, including a diverse range of choreographers, guest collaborators, artists in residence and dancers. Alongside the professional ensemble and touring productions sits an equally vital pillar of focus – Community Experience. Driven by a dedicated team, Dancenorth works with diverse and minority communities across Queensland using dance to support, enhance, inspire and heal – bringing communities together.

DANCENORTH AUSTRALIA STAFF

Artistic Director & Co-CEO Kyle Page

Executive Director & Co-CEO Hilary Coyne

Associate Artistic Director Amber Haines

Company Producer Eloise Grace

Production Manager Liam Kennedy

Marketing and Communications Manager Sarah Mathiesen

Operations Manager Felicity Organ-Moore

Creative Producer – Deeper than Dancing Alice Lee Holland

Office & Program Coordinator Caitlin Halmarick

Content Designer Aaron Ashley

First Nations Industry Placement William Koiki Mabo

Teaching Artists Madaleine Armstrong, Jordan Galliot, Andrea Gillham

Ensemble Marlo Benjamin, Sabine Crompton-Ward, Tiana Lung, Damian Meredith, Tara Jade Samaya, Felix Sampson, Michael Smith

Wayfinder Company Stage Manager Pip Loth

Wayfinder Production Technician (Technical Operation & Sound) Yoshie Kenny

Wayfinder Production Technician (Lighting) Stephen Hawker

Board of Directors Dr Judith McLean (Chair), John Drummond Montgomery (Deputy Chair), Kathryn Deyell, Marg Naylor, Debbie Rains, Roshni Senapati, Courtney Thompson, Jacinta Wight

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