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Vol Restless

DANCE COMPANY

ANNUAL
REPORT 99



RESTLESS DANCE COMPANY INC.
ANNUAL REPORT 1999

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MISSION STATEMENT

To be Australia's leading youth dance company inspired by cultures of disability

Restless Dance is committed to the following principles...

- Innovation** through exploration and artistic risk-taking
- Participation** through accessible and inclusive interactions and experiences
- Collaboration** and partnerships which create mutual ownership of achievements

Company Goals

- 1 To create and present excellent and challenging youth dance theatre
- 2 To provide high quality recreational arts opportunities for people with a disability
- 3 To increase the profile of dance and cultures of disability within the community
- 4 To develop artistic and leadership skills to continue and extend the Company's work
- 5 To operate an efficient and effective Company

Background

Restless is one of Australia's leading youth dance companies, working with people with and without an intellectual disability to create dance theatre and run workshop programs which are stunning and inspiring.

People with a disability are powerful, expressive and distinctive performers, creating beautiful and dynamic dance theatre.

The dancers' skills are complemented by those of musicians, set, costume and lighting designers, to ensure that the performance is supported by high production values.

New works are planned each year. The company also takes productions on tour in South Australia and interstate.

COMPANY HISTORY

The company was founded by Sally Chance in 1991 following **MOC Connections**; a project organised through Carclew Youth Arts Centre. The company was incorporated in 1996.

Major Productions

1993/94	Ikons Norwood Town Hall (Come Out '93 Festival) The Gasworks, Melbourne (Next Wave Festival) "exhilarating" "a visual and musical feast"	<i>The Advertiser</i> <i>The Age</i>
1994	Love Dances Odeon Theatre (Adelaide Fringe) "It's an attitude which makes 'Love Dances' a winner"	<i>The Advertiser</i>
1995	Talking Down Lion Theatre (Come Out Festival) "engaging and enthralling" "beautifully develops themes of trust friendship and honesty"	<i>Rip It Up</i> <i>The Advertiser</i>
1995	Gigibori The Space Theatre (Brave New Works Program; Adelaide Festival Centre) "amazing ... High ... inspirational"	<i>The Adelaide Review</i>
1997	Sex Juggling Junction Theatre "touching and humorous" "A triumph for all concerned"	<i>The Advertiser</i> <i>The Messenger</i>
1998	The Flight The Space Theatre (High Beam Festival) "complex and challenging" "effective and brilliant ensemble"	<i>The Advertiser</i> <i>dB Magazine</i>
1999	Precious Cirkidz & the SA Opera Studio "inspiring and humbling" "an extremely high standard of conceptual work, translated into performances"	<i>The Messenger</i> <i>Lowdown</i>

Major Community Projects

1996-97	Out There Dance workshops for young people with a disability in the Southern, Western and Northern metropolitan regions of Adelaide
1997	Kin Dance workshops for young people with a disability in the Southern, Western and Northern metropolitan regions of Adelaide, exploring the theme of the family
1998	Vividha - diversity Community Dance Workshops embracing Indian cultural themes and exploring cultures of disability
1993-98	Restless Central Open access Community Dance Classes for people with a disability



ACTING CHAIR'S REPORT

Restless Dance continued to experience artistic and organisational success in 1999. The quality of our dance performances on stage and our organisation in the office and Board Room reflect the depth of character and maturity we have achieved. The struggle for financial security is a significant and ongoing burden for the Restless team and the Board of Management. 1999 saw no improvement in this situation. Existence continues to involve seemingly endless rounds of funding applications. Despite the challenges presented by the need for financial security, 1999 has been a year of tremendous success for Restless.

In December, 1999 Freddie Brincat resigned from the Board after 5 years, and 2 years as Chairperson. Freddie's leadership has steered Restless into a strong position, both in terms of our Dance Program and organisational effectiveness. We thank Freddie for all his hard work and for being an outstanding role model for other members of the Board.

The major new work by the Youth Ensemble was *Precious* which was directed by Ingrid Voorendt. Ingrid worked closely with the company to produce an excellent piece of work. *Precious* was developed throughout the year: in March a creative development took place with a short performance season at the Cirkidz Church Hall in Brompton as part of the Come Out Festival; in October the final production was presented at the Opera SA Studio in Netley. Both seasons were highly successful and attracted very favourable reviews. The production has been invited to Sydney as part of the Paralympic Artsfestival in October 2000.

The Central Workshop Program was run throughout all four terms, providing open access workshops in creative dance for people with and without a disability. The first two terms were funded by SPARC Disability Foundation, the third term was funded by Community Benefit SA and the final term was funded by Adelaide City Council. The third term was called *Dance Styles* and allowed participants to explore a different dance style each week; tap, rap, flamenco, line dance, circle dance, Greek dance, Papua New Guinean Dance and a Maori cultural session. Both Dance Styles and all terms of the Central Workshop Program were highly successful with 700 attendances at the 38 workshops involved. Over 90% of the participants were people with a disability.

The Professional Ensemble of five dancers who have been associated with Restless since 1991, undertook a creative development of *The Mocking Show* in May. This is a co-production with Back To Back Theatre in Geelong—the only professional ensemble of actors with a disability in the country. Eight members of Back To Back came to Adelaide and worked with Restless for a week. *The Mocking Show*, featuring members from both companies, will be presented in 2000. The Professional Ensemble also presented one other informal performance in the year, as a culmination of a Butoh project led by Don Frakes.

The company was commissioned by Adelaide City Council to develop a short piece of roving, outdoor performance entitled *Drift*. This was performed three times at the Greater Union Arcade on 18th April as part of Fest West. Eight dancers were involved, seven from the Youth Ensemble and Jotham Broad from the Professional Ensemble. *Drift* enabled the company to explore the fluid dynamics of outdoor performances.

Sally Chance, Artistic Director continues to be the driving force behind a team of dancers, dance tutors, designers, musicians and production staff. Their combined efforts under her guidance result in excellence, innovation and dance performances that take your breath away. Sally is not only an outstanding artist and facilitator herself, but has a unique ability to inspire and nurture the talent of others. Tutors who assisted Sally during 1999 are: Ingrid Voorendt, Nadia Ferencz, Anna Hickey, Philip Channells, Jotham Broad, Ziggy Kuster, Lauren Smeaton, Catheryne James and Don Frakes; we thank you. It is not surprising that we are not the only ones to recognise Sally's wide reaching contribution to Dance. In 1999 it was announced that Sally is to be the Chair of the Dance Fund of the Australia Council for the next three years. Congratulations Sally.

Nick Hughes as Company manager has provided the management and administration expertise necessary to support the creative side of Restless. Nick's commitment to Restless grows each year, as do his extensive array of skills. His contribution to the stability and growth of Restless is invaluable. Nick's reporting and system efficiencies have seen Restless reverse the small deficit from 1998 and we were able to add to the company's cash reserves at the end of 1999. In 2000 Restless again aims to operate within a workable budget, while maintaining a standard to which others aspire.

The friends of Restless have added a dimension to the company this year which is exciting and supportive. A successful quiz night and wine offer netted several thousands of dollars. Thank you to Sue Coley who was the driving force behind the quiz night. Thank you also to Jim Scott for his contribution to the Board of Management. This link between the Friends of Restless and the Board of Management is important and represents the community nature of Restless. Colin Offord who has been an ongoing supporter of Restless since the performances of IKONS in 1993, gave a benefit concert with Restless receiving the profits. This kind of generosity is appreciated and reflects the kind of supportive relationships Restless has built over the years.

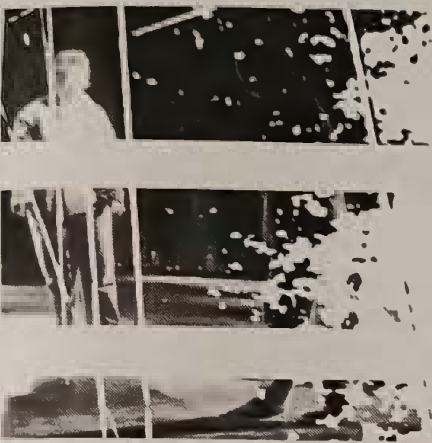
The World Dance Centre in Franklin Street continues to provide an appropriate and welcoming space for both the administrative and artistic sides of the Company. With office space and access to a well equipped dance studio Restless has been able to consolidate and develop a place to call home.

Restless projects have been funded by a range of organisations that rightly deserve recognition and thanks. These include the South Australian Government through the South Australian Youth Arts Board (SAYAB), Arts SA and Health Promotion; the Dance and Community Cultural Development Funds of the Australia Council; the Intellectual Disability Services Council; Commissioners of Charitable Funds, Adelaide City Council, SPARC Disability Foundation, Community Benefit SA and the World Bow Tie Club. This list is a reflection of the effort and time that is committed to seeking and applying for funds.

It is important that the members of the Board are thanked for their ongoing voluntary commitment to Restless Dance. Without their contribution Restless would not be the company that it is

Caroline Ellison

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Throughout 1999 the projects that make up the component parts of the Big Restless Picture developed as discrete aspects of our annual program while continuing to be interconnected.

Each Restless group gains strength from being linked to a broader disability cultural picture. This also means that everyone contributing to the company's artistic activities and management is extremely important.

During the year the feeling of a new generation of activity, artists, dancers and possibilities became tangible.

The Youth Ensemble remains the company's highest profile group. In 1999 it went "back to its roots" with the addition of an influx of new and mostly younger dancers with a disability, who joined the youth ensemble to devise and perform *Precious*, in the intimate, participatory version created for Come Out '99. These dancers were Sulmaz Khazie, Stuart Scott, James Bull and Mark Tanner. After the ambition and size of the 1998 season of *The Flight* it would have been tempting to go bigger and bigger. But bigger is not necessarily better and *Precious* was designed to be appropriately scaled to support these new dancers and Ingrid Voorendt, the extraordinary emerging dance artist, whose first directing experience with Restless was *Precious*.

The show still managed to be a highlight of Come Out. We were literally fending off media opportunities and reviewers because we regarded the piece as a work in progress with workshop style participation for very small audiences of people with whom we wanted to have a real dialogue. Ingrid and the dancers achieved this dialogue as well as some generous media responses:

"Of all the works I've seen presented in Come Out '99, this is easily my favourite. It is a work directed by a young person, for young people...and is used as an opportunity to introduce young people to how the company works and their style of contemporary dance...Restless Dance Company is typified by an extremely high standard of conceptual work, translated into performances that take into consideration and utilise the needs, dreams and thoughts of all its members." David O'Brien, Lowdown Magazine, April 1999

The full length version of *Precious* enjoyed a public season in October 1999. The youth ensemble was joined by Sophie Janson, as well as Philip Channels, whose involvement is generously supported by the Centre for the Performing Arts where Philip is a dance student and a valuable future member of the dance profession.

Restless is committed to the development of emerging artists.

In 1999 I began to think in terms of offering members of the company shorter term or one-off projects which specifically develop their skills or suit their personal style. With this in mind eight dancers were invited to perform in *Drift*, a piece commissioned by the City of Adelaide and designed to be performed outdoors. Performing 'on the streets' is no easy feat, but the cast of *Drift* handled the performances superbly. Further development in this area of performance practice would be worth pursuing.

A number of the dancers continued to be invited to co-lead workshop programs. Nadia Ferencz worked with Ingrid to co-lead Central, the company's community dance program, with wonderful support from Anna Hickey and Philip Channels. Lauren Smeaton, Jotham Broad and Ziggy Kuster co-led a number of sessions at Kilparrin Teaching and Assessment Centre, where we were artists-in-school during fourth term.

The company's professional ensemble members - Natalie Binks-Williams, Jotham Broad, Raffe Esposito, Sean McCormack and Richard Norman - were positioned in our 1999 annual program as dance artists emerging from the youth ensemble. Their first project was *The Mocking Show*, a week of creative development with Back To Back Theatre, a professional ensemble of actors with an intellectual disability. It was wonderful to work alongside peers exploring disability culture. Long term Restless collaborators Astrid Pill and Stephen Noonan also took part in the creative development.

The group's next project explored the Japanese contemporary dance form, Butoh, followed by their first piece as an autonomous group of performers with a disability *Between The Rhino and The Fingertips*. This ensemble's members represent for me the first generation of the company, the spirit of which is continuing to evolve under the influence of new dancers and directors. It is my pleasure to continue to work with these dancers, who are teaching me as much about dance and themselves as they did in the early 90s when it all began.

The group should have had a sixth member, Angus Goldie-Bilkens, who died on February 24 1999. A large number of dancers past and present danced for Angus at his service of celebration. Their performance was one of the most moving I have ever seen. I thank the Restless dancers for their ability to rise so sensitively and appropriately to every occasion and to talk about who they are and how they feel so eloquently through their dance.

Sally Chance



1999 was a year in which the dancers worked in a range of different areas, combining the creation and performance of new works with skills development.

Youth Ensemble

The Youth Ensemble began the year with a change of faces—a new director and a number of young new ensemble members—who all bravely leapt into a year-long program largely focused on performance outcomes. We devised and performed three new works in the space of 12 months, under the direction of Ingrid Voorendt.

Precious I

The Ensemble's first production for '99 was *Precious I*, an interactive performance/workshop for school audiences. *Precious I* was performed in the Cirkidz performance space (Brompton) as part of the Australian Festival for Young People. The dancers really enjoyed the practice of including our audiences in our performances and the intimacy and warmth of our performance venue.

Drift

The second work for the year was an outdoor performance piece, commissioned by the Adelaide City Council. *Drift* was performed in the West End of Adelaide and again saw the dancers assessing performer/audience relationships; this time in the context of establishing presence in an outdoor performance venue.

One Wing

The ensemble took a well-earned break from performance to explore themes of unity, fracture, loss and desire as a core element of Ingrid Voorendt's Honours Degree research. This eight-week workshop process culminated in the presentation of a work in progress titled *One Wing*.

Precious II

The final, and most high-profile work presented by the Youth Ensemble for the year was *Precious II*. A re-working of themes explored earlier in the year, *Precious II* was a piece concerned with atmosphere, aesthetic and structure, rather than *Precious I*'s focus on inclusion, intimacy and identity.

Precious II was an exciting and ambitious project for the ensemble. The dancers' performance was largely informed by the year's earlier works, in which we had come to work as a team and support each other in a detailed manner.

The Professional Ensemble and the Youth Ensemble journeyed through a range of new experiences in their program for '99. The dancer's experienced feelings of establishment and consolidation as we began working into the new millennium.

Anna Hickey

DANCERS' REPORT

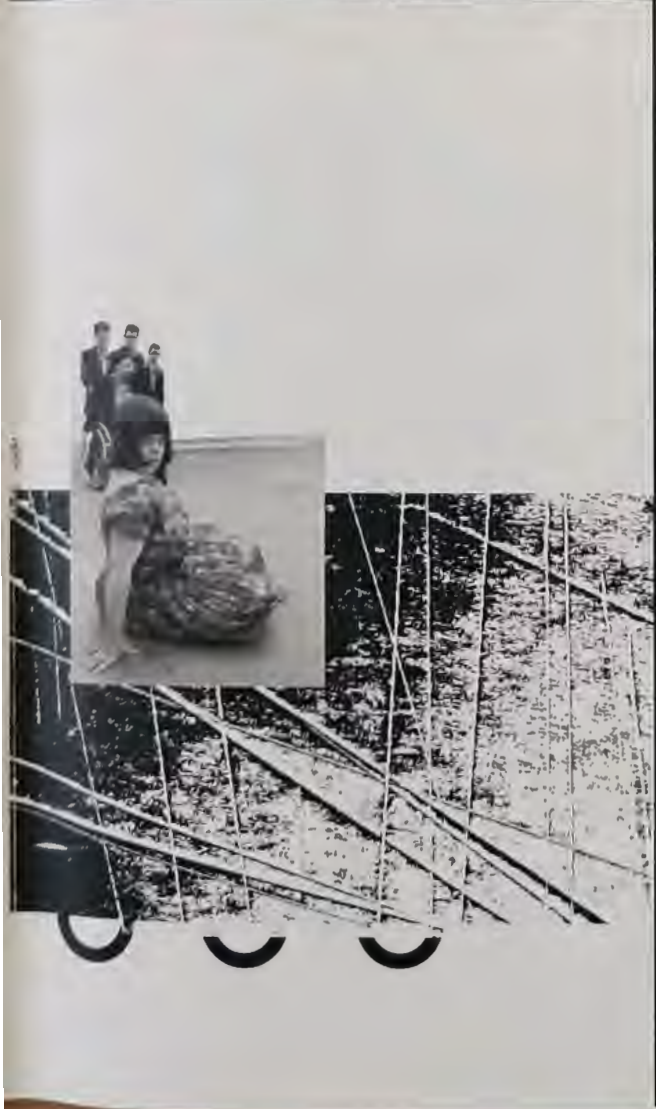
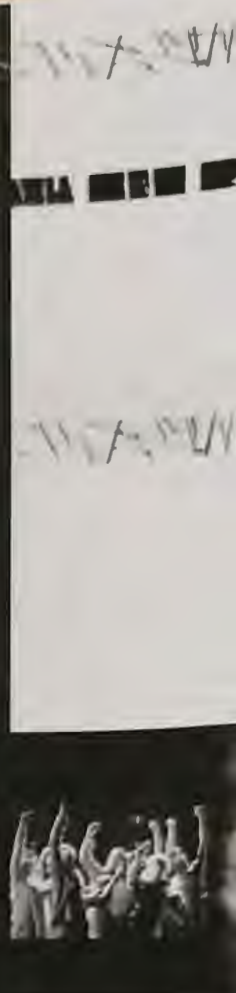


MEMBERS, BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Freddie Brincat	Chair (to Dec 1999)	Executive Director, Community Bridging Services Inc.
Caroline Ellison	Acting Chair, Treasurer	Developmental Educator, Minda Inc. and PhD Candidate, Flinders University
Meredith Bowman	Board Member	Dance Educator
Sally Chance	Artistic Director	Director and Dance Worker
Nadia Ferencz	Dancers' Representative	Employee of Norman Waterhouse & Associates
Pamela Hansen	Board Member	Job Coordinator, Personnel Employment Barkuma Inc.
Anna Hickey	Dancers' Representative	Student
Kellie Jones	Board Member	Project Officer, International Graduate School of Management
Jim Scott	Parents' Representative	Senior Ajudicator, Police Firearms Department
Emily Sharp	Dancers' Representative	Environmental Health Practitioner

Restless
DANCE COMPANY





BALANCE SHEET

BALANCE SHEET

	1999 (\$)	1998 (\$)
Members Funds		
Balance at Beginning of Year	13,476	15,869
Add Surplus (Deficit) for the Year	5,202	(2,393)
Accumulated Funds	18,678	13,476
Represented by:		
Current Assets		
Petty Cash	100	100
Cash at Bank	11,063	44,230
Term Deposits	90,000	20,715
Sundry Debtors	282	385
Prepayments	465	3,000
	100,910	68,430
Less Current Liabilities		
Sundry Creditors	0	4,864
Superannuation & Tax Liabilities	1	
Provisions	15,433	2,477
Grants in Advance	66,307	44,300
Sponsorship in Advance	0	4,500
Total Liabilities	81,740	56,141
Working Capital	19,170	12,289
Add Non Current Assets		
Plant and Equipment -at cost	3,799	3,799
Less Accumulated Depreciation	4,291	2,612
Total Non Current Assets	(492)	1,187
Net Assets	18,678	13,476

To the Members, Restless Dance Company Limited

Scope

I have audited the attached special purpose financial report of Restless Dance Company Incorporated comprising the Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Statements for the year ended 31 December, 1999. The Board of Management is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and the information obtained therein, and have determined that the accounting policies used are consistent with the reporting requirements of the Company's constitution and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. I have conducted an independent audit of the financial statements in order to express an opinion on them to the members. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used are appropriate to the needs of the members.

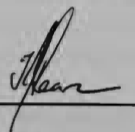
The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the Board of Management's financial reporting requirements under the constitution. I disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than which it was prepared.

The audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. Procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements, and the evaluation of significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether in all material respects the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with the requirements of Company's constitution so as present a view of the Company which is consistent with our understanding of its financial position and the results of its operations. These policies do not require the application of all Australian Accounting Standards and the Urgent Issues Group Consensus views.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit opinion

In my opinion the financial report of Restless Dance Company Incorporated presents fairly in accordance with the accounting policies described above.



TREVOR PEARCE
Associate, Australian Society of Certified Practicing Accountants

Dated this 29th day of February, 2000.

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

RESTLESS DANCE COMPANY INCORPORATED

COMMITTEE REPORT

Your Committee submits the attached accounts of the Association for the financial year ended 31st December 1999.

1) No Committee member or officer of the Association has received or become entitled to receive during the financial year a benefit as a result of a contract made by the Association with a Committee member or officer of the Association, a firm of which a Committee member is a member or an entity in which a board member has a substantial financial interest.

2) No Committee member has received pecuniary benefits from the Association during the financial period other than that received as a salary as an employee of the Association

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Committee:

Kellie Jones -

Sally Chan @

DATED THIS 21ST DAY OF FEBRUARY 2000

RESTLESS DANCE COMPANY INCORPORATED

STATEMENT BY COMMITTEE

In the opinion of the Committee:

1) the attached accounts present fairly the results of the operations of the Association for the financial year ended 31st December, 1999 and the state of affairs of the Association as at the end of that year; and

2) the Committee has reasonable grounds to believe that the Association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

Kellie Jones -

Sally Chan @

DATED THIS 21ST DAY OF FEBRUARY 2000

STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE

	1999	1998		1999	1998
INCOME			LESS EXPENDITURE		
Auspice Program	3,360	55	Accommodation	1,812	300
Box office	7,290	5,690	Advertising	1,159	645
Grants - CCDF	0	32,744	Audit	1,850	1,800
- Dance Fund	50,600	35,000	Auspice Fees	160	55
- Arts SA	19,000	10,000	Bank Charges	775	655
- Local Government	9,000	3,000	Computer Software	859	260
- Health Promotion	4,500	5,500	Depreciation	1,679	984
- Other	7,000	-	Design	950	-
- SAYAB	40,250	42,631	Electricity	229	1,011
Interest Received	2,145	1,762	Computer Equipment	7,499	1,276
Fundraising	5,057	-	Hire of Equipment	767	112
Memberships	450	-	Hospitality	1,525	1,304
Performance Fees	455	1,760	Insurance	2,072	1,853
Sales	15	65	Lighting & Sound	3,802	655
Sponsorship	16,300	12,900	Living Away From Home Allowance	1,471	-
Speakers'/Tutors' Fees	3,940	-	Marketing	0	-
Sundry Income	2,148	1,739	Meeting Expenses	1,009	322
Workshop Fees	3,782	3,452	Motor Vehicle Expenses	7	251
TOTAL INCOME	175,292	156,298	Participation Fees	650	335
			Postage & Courier	1,369	1,235
			Printing/Documentation	3,570	2,037
			Production Costs	747	428
			Provisions	15,409	4,340
			Publicity & Promotion	2,418	2,049
			Rent	5,464	4,116
			Repairs & Maintenance	10	38
			Royalties	63	68
			Sets, Props & Costumes	4,662	5,010
			Staff Amenities	65	55
			Staff Training	-	688
			Stationery & Office Supplies	1,600	2,778
			Subscriptions, Memberships & Registrations	518	225
			Sundry Expenses	1,356	1,496
			Superannuation	5,995	4,693
			Telephone & Facsimile	2,281	3,266
			Travelling Expenses	1,660	2,392
			Venue Hire	4,500	3,690
			Wages, Salaries & Fees		
			- Creative	61,394	78,158
			- Production	7,743	6,426
			- Management	19,800	21,437
			WorkCover	1,143	1,224
			Workshop Expenses	47	1,024
			TOTAL EXPENDITURE	170,090	158,691
			Surplus/ (Deficit) for the Year	5,202	(2,393)



Director's Notes

Precious is two edged: beautiful, special things, people and experiences we hold close to our hearts, and those that hurt, cut too deeply and cling too tightly.

The dancers and I have been on a journey through the two sides of preciousness, and into the most precious places of all - the worlds we carry around inside us, the way we see this world, and life itself. These are places which are hard to talk about with words.

Ingrid Voorendt

PRECIOUS



The Dancers

Elisa Benthin
James Bull
Philip Chance
Gemma Coley
Kynan Coley
Emily Collins
Nadia Ferencz
Anna Hickey
Rachel High
Sophie Janzon
Elka Kovalenko
Sulmaz Khazie
Ziggy Kuster
Stuart Scott
Lauren Smeaton
Mark Tanner
James Winter

Director
Artistic Director
Set and Costume Design
Lighting Design
Composer and Musician
Production Manager
Stage Manager
Costumiere
Production Crew

Ingrid Voorendt
Sally Chance
Gaelle Mellis
Mark Pennington
Catherine Oates
Mark Pennington
Anna Steel
Phyllis Williams
Nathan Evers,
Tony Mellis,
Jason & Ben



DRIFT

The Dancers

Elisa Benthin
Jotham Broad
James Bull
Gemma Coley
Kynan Coley
Rachel High
Ziggy Kuster
Lauren Smeaton

Directed by Sally Chance & Ingrid Voorendt
Designed by Gaelle Mellis & Phyllis Williams

Commissioned by Adelaide City Council
for the On The Streets Program as part of Fest West '99

review

RESTLESS DANCE COMPANY

SA

Precious (Part 1)

Choreographer: Ingrid Voorendt •
Designer: Gaelle Mellis • Lighting
Designer: Mark Pennington

Precious places, precious things and precious people – these three simple but substantially important parts of human life are given the warmest, most beautiful and passionate expression in Restless Dance Company's 'Precious (Part 1)'. Part one, because this remarkably tight and focused short work is, according to the company, only a work in progress. The full production

will be presented to the public later in the year

Of all the works I've seen presented in Come Out '99, this is easily my favourite. It is a work directed by a young person, for young people (with and without a disability) and is used as an opportunity to introduce young people to how the company works and their style of contemporary dance. 'Precious (Part 1)' fulfils an important *raison d'être* of youth arts – for young people by young people, and by association, for all of us

Restless Dance Company is typified by an extremely high standard of conceptual work, translated into performances that take into consideration and utilise the needs, dreams and thoughts of all its members. Choreographer Ingrid Voorendt's directorial debut displays a mature inventiveness. She has taken the larger scale proscenium stage influences that have typified many previous productions and brought the audience closer to the work. This production is the most intimate I've ever seen from the company. Within the cosy warm wood hued confines of the Cirkidz Church Hall, Designer Gaelle Mellis has created a set both simple and spectacular – upstage,

stage right and left are covered in white candles some tall some small on rectangular silver bases, with ice pieces in between them. She has dressed the cast in pyjamas. Lighting Designer Mark Pennington has equalled Mellis' simplicity, skillfully enhancing the emotional, sacred atmospherics of Mellis' design with four strategically placed low-key yellow washes that don't overcome the power of the candles.

All the warm, cosy and safe associations with preciousness are in place – what of the choreography itself?

Emotionally arresting and gently challenging, individual and group moves express with ease a sense of the precious self, the precious object, and the treasured precious other. Catherine Oates' sonorously beautiful soundtrack begins with the tinkling sounds of a musical toy and builds into a warm and spiritually rich cathedral-like anthem with the lines, 'Precious places, precious people, precious things'. Meanwhile sweets are scattered around the set and offered to the audience as, 'Something precious, something sweet'.

The dancers then embark on a series of group and individual movements that express how you physically treat that which is precious: with the stroke of hands, the gaze of the eye, even the very essence of preciousness as a sensation in itself. There's even the defending of a precious object from others with pushes and shoves, and moments when what is precious is momentarily shattered, sending the dancers' bodies into the shakes. You get a beautifully abstracted sense of what 'precious' might look and feel like – from little boxes that build up in an insy winsy spider pattern to the closing one person's arms around another.

One of the most interesting sections of the work which could be developed further is the little case of names. The students, prior to entering the venue, wrote their names on a piece of paper which was collected and placed in a little bag. That bag is opened towards the end of the show and each name is read out. The piece of paper is set loose – and a company member collects it and treats it as precious in their own way.

Recovering from the initial power and beauty of the work allows one to see where more work needs to be done conceptually. The notion of what is precious has only just been touched on. But for all that, 'Precious (Part 1)' is a remarkably solid work as it is. The real challenge may be in ensuring that the firm foundation which was so evident this time around is not lost through the future development process.



Restless Dance Company's Ziggy Kuster.

DAVID O'BRIEN

Paths of possession

Precious

State Opera Studio

Until October 29

DEVELOPED from an earlier exploration of all things precious during the Come Out festival this year, Restless Dance Company's new show, again directed by Ingrid Voorendt, expands the detail to present a strong, thought-provoking work that is frequently tender and always moving.

Gaelle Mellis's set of a massive back wall of glass bottles sees light glow greenly. This, combined with trays of ice on three sides, with 2m-high ice towers in which candles nestle, powerfully frames the action.

Meanwhile, Catherine Oates's live percussion alternately drives or soothes the 17 dancers as they delve into the emotional paths of possession, love and letting go. Dressed in pyjamas, the company moves with assurance through Voorendt's

multitextured choreography, from close-cupped treasures and whispered secrets to the tribal violence of schoolyard bullying, and back to the serenity of circling arms and cradled bodies. Well crafted, the work maintains a strong common vocabulary reflected through different emotional mirrors.

The backdrop of melting ice and gradually drowned flames is a reminder of the work's essential truth, the precious nature of the present. Precious is a thoughtful, rounded piece that draws on the strengths of the Restless dancers - a unique warmth and creativity that are adept at exploring the essence of things through personal journeys.

Celia Brissenden

Friday, October 22, 1999

The Advertiser

Pulse

DANCE THEATRE

Possessing the precious object

PRECIOUS: Restless Dance Company
Opera Studio, State Opera, 216 Marion Rd (cnr Richmond Rd), Netley
Until October 30
Reviewed by Russell Starke

THE half darkness of the performing space is surrounded by shallow trays, mounded with ice cubes and packed with towering columns of burning white candles.

Fire and ice combine in a surreal effect of purity.

On stage, two young dancers: he in dressing gown and pyjamas, seated on a chair, beside him a very large suitcase; she seated on the floor well distant from him.

A marvellous and broad selection of music flows from the techs in far corners of the space as she repeatedly drags the case to distant points, he doggedly returning it to its original position.

Possession being nine points of the law gradually her control over his precious object reduces until she returns it almost to its original place.

Her precious objects, the ice fragments, constantly counted and recounted, tossed, played with, admired, hard edged and ephemeral,

scatter across the floor as other dancers arrive two by two.

A slow rhythm of involvement draws brief spoken phrases and repeated movements into a mantra which at times calms at times explodes with frenetic energy.

These young dancers, some with disabilities, some without, conjure up amazingly fresh images of emotion through the expression of their movement.

The story is simple, whilst complex in performance. Each of us has a precious something, ours alone, unique and cherished. We may share it, display it, contain it, be contained by it, but it is solely ours.

The vivacity, energy and sympathetic interpretation of the company in such a dramatically luminous setting, is inspiring and humbling.

Several of the cast are particularly notable, Mark Tanner as the young man, who ultimately selects his own suitcase from the collection of smaller ones and folds himself safely inside it to end the show, and Rachel High whose delicacy of movement opens up a world of possibilities in interpretive dance.

Director Ingrid Voorendt is to be congratulated on her remarkable achievement in shaping this group to an impressive ensemble of individuals.

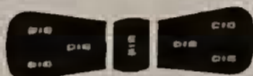
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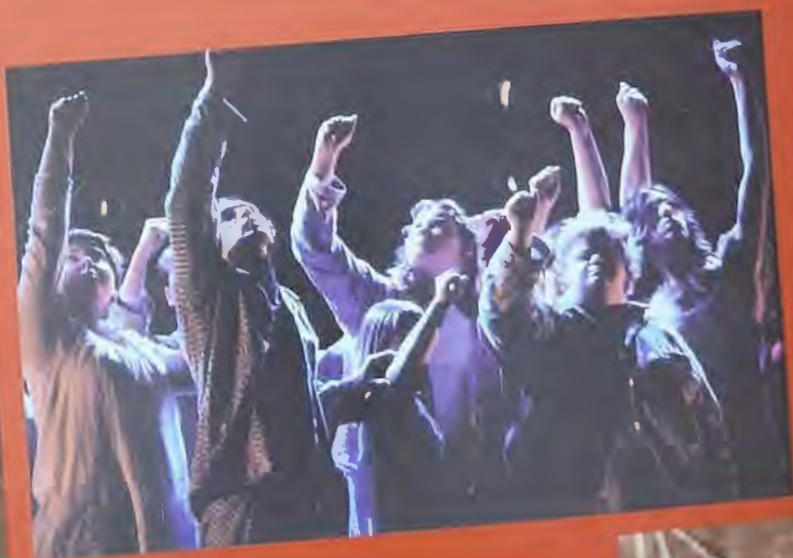


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Don
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