

I Dance II Introduction

Liz:

Good morning and hello and welcome to I Dance II on the first Monday of the Uncharted Festival. I am standing here with the brilliant Matt Shilcock and the wonderful Andrea Llorens.

Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land upon which we are meeting the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people, to pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. And to absolutely acknowledge that this land was never seeded. We walk gently on this land, particularly as dancers, and that is one of the fundamental core principles of I Dance II. So Matt, would you like to give us some context?

Matt:

My gosh. So, uh, the first I Dance Festival was how long ago?

Liz:

2020.

Matt:

So there was some kind of, global event, I don't know if you've heard of it, that has we went through a little while. So it's pretty amazing to be here in person at the moment. And dancing didn't stop. Some of it stopped for a little while, but we plugged on and kept on going. And today's festival of film submissions is a celebration of those amazing other ways to present dance when it's not live.

Dance is very different from dance on film. It's a whole lot of other ball game, a lot of other things to think about. And I really have a love for dance on film because the accessibility of it is like a whole new platform. You know, we can audio describe, we can close captions, we can translate and you can watch it from your hospital bed if you need to. Um, which is for a lot of us, the reality of just how we're accessing our dance.

So I'm very passionate about this this new element that we, it's not really a new element, but I'm very passionate about the continuing evolution of dance film and us really highlighting not just dance in general but dance with artists disability.

And as we continue to champion the access and inclusion of the arts, I think that dance on film is another very bold frontier that we can really level the playing fields and really, um, bring everybody to the table and we each get a seat.

Liz:

Absolutely, and thank you Matt. Um, so I Dance II, which is the second one, is part of the Uncharted Festival, which is all about innovation and the arts. And realistically, access and inclusion should not be something that sits in an innovation festival because it should just be happening, but it is very, very difficult to do.

The infrastructure isn't there and there are a lot of different attitudinal issues that arise. So we have had to be really innovative to pull together all the different access options that will be available, uh, in the festival that sits online for two weeks. And also today, for example, the films that will be shown will be offered with audio description tracks if people need those. So the volume levels of the films will be slightly reduced so that if people are accessing the audio description tracks which will be played at exactly the same time as the films, then those verbal tracks are not overridden by the sound of the films.

Some of the films, as Matt says, well all of them are created with people who live with disability. Some are created by people who live with disability. Some are films of live performance, some are dance films or films made specifically as a film with dance in them. We have a little bit of a world premiere of the film of Exposed by Restless Dance Theater, which is being shown here today. And the next time that will be performed is at Sydney Opera House in a live version that will not be available online because it is still on tour.

I want to thank the National Film and Sound Archive for their incredible support. Brilliant, brilliant team. We are really pushing forward boundaries of access and inclusion here and Stephen Forrest will be speaking at the end of the day and the team could not have been more helpful and friendly and welcoming. And because a lot of these systems are not in place, we are literally learning on the spot. The films we will be showing today include the world's premier, excuse me, of Danse de la Lune by Canberra's first inclusive Dance Company created by the extraordinary Melanie Lane.

Logue, which is created by Scottish and Indonesian artists, Marc Brew and Mariska Febriyani. And Marc is also an Australian artist based over in Scotland.

Then we have Hanna Cormick, who is one of our co-directors, an extraordinary person who due to the conditions that she lives with, is not able to join us today. So what you will have is this incredible image, which is a, a kind of closeup of a larger image of hers and her extraordinary and meditative voice coming at you all throughout the cinema. Then we have a screening of Fountain by Alexandria Hemsley from the UK, which is approximately 30 minutes long and absolutely beautiful. Then we have a break as we're all gonna need a cup of tea at that point. Then we have our first keynote speaker, Justin Ray in conversation with Tamzen Nugent and Justin has some really exciting news to share with us today about a new appointment that he has just received.

Following this, we have a film screening of 111, which is a UK film created by Joel Brown and Eve Muso and then Resemblance by Claire Cunningham, also based in the UK. Then we have lunch.

After lunch the Deaf butterflies, who are a group of deaf or hard of hearing seniors, here in Canberra will be performing to a film that Justin also filmed. So that's gonna be great. And then we have Paul Nunnari, who is the director of Inclusive Infrastructure, placemaking and experience driving in currently from the New South Wales, from regional NSW. He's in a car and he's on his way.

He's bringing two sub packs and those are vests that people wear that are somehow attached to sound and they vibrate with the sound. So people, gamers use them a lot, but also potentially people who are deaf or who harder hearing will be able to wear these packs in future and hear their sound in class rather than Gretel having to walk around with a speaker that is as large as hers. That gives you the sub base within a studio.

Then we have the film Common Colors by Chris Dike and Karl Page, which is an Australian film.

Sister from the UK by Parable Dance, Gypsy Love from Singapore by Diverse Abilities, Dance Collective and Antonio Vargas, who was the star of Strictly Ballroom, he's still really hot <laugh>. I met him in Singapore. It's okay, it's fine.

Then we have Exposed by Australia, by Restless Dance Theater. Then we have Bus Stop Films in conversation discussing their exquisite film Look The Part which will also be screened.

We have Steven Forrest, and then we have First Language and Animate Loading from Riana Head-Toussaint. And I realize there isn't an afternoon break, so we'll squeeze one in. It's gonna be great.