

MEDIA RELEASE



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New contemporary dance company for WA

The Boards of STEPS Youth Dance and Buzz Dance Theatre today announced their intention to create a new West Australian contemporary dance company.

The unanimous decision by both Boards comes after months of consultation.

STEPS and Buzz will continue their respective operations until the end of 2014.

Transitional arrangements will be put in place during 2014.

Pamela-Jayne Kinder, Chair of Buzz, said the State Government's *Future Moves* investment of \$1.6 million over four years had strengthened the contemporary dance sector in Western Australia, and that the Boards saw this as an important response to creating a more sustainable future for the dance sector.

"STEPS and Buzz are both in strong financial positions and continue to secure financial support through sponsorships, donations and other fund raising activities," Pamela-Jayne said.

"Buzz has completed a full regional tour of the national Monkey Baa co-production *Goodbye Jamie Boyd* and is entering the sixth year of Big Stretch program in the Pilbara and Kimberley regions. Working together will provide for increased opportunities for Western Australian dancers, choreographers and audiences".

Lisa Hutchinson, Chair of STEPS Youth Dance added: "This is an exciting prospect, both companies are building on their strengths. STEPS is about to open its new production; *ThreeFold* at the Studio Underground, is nominated for the fourth time in five years for Outstanding Achievement in Youth or Community Dance in the Australian Dance Awards, and celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2014. STEPS looks forward to increased opportunities to engage professional dancers with young people".

Acting Director General, Alan Ferris confirmed the Department of Culture and the Arts would fund the new dance company.

"In addition, the Department will fund further consultancy to look at transition models for the new contemporary dance company," Mr Ferris said.

This will be conducted in the second half of 2013.

The new company would continue to inspire young people, offer extraordinary dance experiences for young people, support dance in education, and maintain creative opportunities for choreographers.

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