

Media release

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National forum asks the question: Why dance?

The National Dance Forum 2013 is set to continue the national conversation set in motion by the inaugural event in 2011. Providing a space for sector debate, discussion and ideas, the forum will focus on the central question, "*Why dance?*"

Presented by project partners Australia Council for the Arts and Ausdance National, the second **National Dance Forum** (NDF2013) will take place at **Footscray Community Arts Centre** in Melbourne, **15-17 March 2013** and is set to coincide with **Dance Massive**.

"The National Dance Forum offers participants a wonderful opportunity to foster the artistic development of Australian dance through inspiration, reflection and critical dialogue," says Elizabeth Walsh, who was recently appointed chair of the Australia Council Dance Board.

"We're delighted to be partnering again with Ausdance National after the success of the event in 2011, which was attended by over 170 dance professionals from all over Australia and sold out four weeks before the event," says Elizabeth

NDF2013 will be facilitated by **Jeff Khan**, Performance Space Co-Director, with a program developed by a curatorial panel of **Matthew Day** (independent artist, VIC), **Margrete Helgeby** (independent artist, WA), **Raewyn Hill** (Artistic Director, Dancenorth, QLD), and **Frances Rings** (Bangarra Dance Theatre artist-in-residence, NSW); they join **Julie Dyson** (National Director, Ausdance), **Carin Mistry** (Director, Dance Board Australia Council) and **Kath Papas** (NDF Producer).

NDF2013 will have a focus on practice and the program will be built around the central question ***Why dance?***

"As a practitioner, it's exciting to think about the central question, 'Why Dance?'" says Brian Lucas, National President of Ausdance.

"It's a question we all ask ourselves as makers and performers, but the answers are often complex, leading our thinking in multiple directions - why do we, as artists, use dance as our chosen form? What has lead us into this lifetime of practice? Why do humans seem to have such an innate and intrinsic connection with dance?"

"The National Dance Forum will offer dancers, choreographers, educators and students a wonderful opportunity to explore these and other aspects of the central question, and to share, broaden and hone their own perspectives on them," says Brian

Participants will be able to see works in the Dance Massive program, to see showings about choreographers' practice and works in progress, to attend workshops and classes with colleagues from across Australia and to engage with some of the associated industry events.

"The two weeks in Melbourne in March provide an opportunity for a major focus on Australian contemporary dance for artists and audiences," says Elizabeth Walsh.


The National Dance Forum is a project of the Australia Council for the Arts and Ausdance National and is presented in association with Footscray Community Arts Centre.

The full NDF2013 program will be released in February.

For further details, updates and to contribute, visit the NDF2013 webpage on the Ausdance National website. To engage with NDF2013, Follow NDF 2013 on Twitter: @natdanceforum and the hashtag #natdanceforum, and the link to Ausdance National Facebook page is [here](#)

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