

the dance company presents

# RUMOURS





the dance company presents

# RUMOURS

*Choreography:* Graeme Murphy

*Music:* Barry Conyngham

*Scenery and Costume Design:* Alan Oldfield

*Assistant to the Choreographer:* Janet Vernon

*Production Director:* Ross Barnett

*Lighting Designer:*

*Stage Manager:* John Rayment

*Baby puppet, 'Genitalia'*

*for "Rumours II"; Masks for "Rumours III":* Joe Gladwin

*Wardrobe:* Ivy Johnson

*Assistant to the General Manager:* Christine Lenton

*Publicity:* Janine Kyle

*Secretary:* Lee Kirkland

*Programme Design:* Brian Crowther

Photography for The Dance Company exclusively by

Branco Gaica

Make-up *Les Fantastiques* by Christian Dior

---

## The Dance Company

*Artistic Director:* Graeme Murphy

*General Manager:* David Cowell Spicer

Studios and Head Office: 36 Bourke Street,  
Woolloomooloo 2011.

Address for Mailing: Post Office Box 303,  
Kings Cross 2011.

## Board Members:

Chairman: Sir Ian Turbott, C.M.G., C.V.O.

Deputy Chairman: Phillip Cox, M.B.E., F.C.A.

Deputy Chairman: Gordon Stewart, B.A., LL.B.

H. M. H. Arnott

Rena Barnum

Gordon Douglass

Ian Esplin, C.B., O.B.E., D.F.C.

Peter Ferris

David J. Hopkins

Elsa Jacoby, M.B.E.

Bernard J. Leser (United Kingdom)

Sydney Londish

Kenneth Parker

Jeanne Rockey

Brian Scanlen, F.C.I.S., F.A.S.A.

Joseph Skrzynski

Margaret Whittlam

## Patrons:

The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor of Sydney,  
Alderman Nelson Meers

The Hon. Sir Eric Willis, K.B.E., C.M.G., M.L.A.

The Hon. Mr. Justice Rae Else-Mitchell

Dame Peggy van Praagh, D.B.E., D.Litt.

## The Sydney Opera House Trust

*Chairman:* Sir Robert Norman

Mr. E. A. Edwards, O.B.E.

The Hon. Justice Elizabeth Evatt

Mr. W. K. Fisher, Q.C.

Lady Macarthur-Onslow

Professor R. H. Myers, C.B.E.

Mr. A. H. Urquhart, C.B.E.



*General Manager:* Mr. Lloyd Martin

*The Dance Company gratefully acknowledges the support and co-operation of the following organisations in its presentations during 1979*

The Australian Government through the Theatre Board of the Australia Council

The State Government of New South Wales through the Division of Cultural Activities

—Minister, The Hon. Neville K. Wran, Q.C.

The Sydney City Council—The Rt. Hon. the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Alderman Nelson Meers

Qantas Airways Ltd.

The Australia Music Centre

TAA

Jacqueline Huie

Ron Lowe

Instant Scaffolds

Radio 2UW

Christopher McGill

Time Magazine

Grace Bros (Rental Division)

Sony (Australia) Pty. Ltd.

Peter J. Rosenwald

The Dance Company Friends

Wrangler Australia

---

The original drawings for *Rumours* are now in the collection of The Australian National Gallery, Canberra. *Rumours* is being performed at the Canberra Theatre Centre on September 12th to 15th

The Canberra Theatre Director: Terry Vaughan

## The Canberra Theatre Trust

Mr. D. M. Purnell, M.B.E.

Mr. J. W. Leedman

Mr. L. Bevis

Mr. J. B. C. Kirby

Mrs. F. Moore

Mr. R. C. Refshauge

Mrs. V. Waterhouse

Mr. T. Z. Whitgob







## Graeme Murphy and Janet Vernon

---

Graeme Murphy was appointed Artistic Director to The Dance Company late in 1976 with his assistant, dancer Janet Vernon. Together they have worked hard to bring The Dance Company to its present level, encouraging works from within the company, at the same time attracting outside talent in the related fields of design and musical composition.

Both former members of The Australian Ballet and graduates of that school, they have travelled extensively and danced frequently in foreign countries and for European companies. Each has performed a wide variety of soloist roles whilst with The Australian Ballet, and, for The Dance Company, have appeared in Murphy's own works as well as works by Graeme Watson and John Butler.

Together they have established The Dance Company as a major force and given it the special individuality so often acclaimed in Murphy's work. Perhaps the most notable of his new creations for the company has been *Poppy*, which became the first full-length contemporary dance work conceived in this country. Based on France's Jean Cocteau, the ballet has been an unqualified success.

For *Rumours*, Graeme looks closer to home for his inspiration, finding it in our Australian lifestyle — the life in a city like Sydney. The idea for *Rumours* was born in August 1978, and since that time both Janet and Graeme have worked incessantly to bring the project to the stage.

One section of *Rumours* (Lady Jane Beach) was previewed during Ballet '78, a major Australian dance Festival held in The Sydney Opera House last November. The reception that the work received in performance reinforced the choreographer's belief in the original concept of *Rumours* as a dance trilogy.



# RUMOURS



## RUMOURS I

### WEEK-DAY DREAMING

Music: "Sky" Barry Conyngham

Cast: *Couples* Sheree da Costa, Graeme Watson  
with

Victoria Taylor, Neil Grigg, Glenda Morley, Christopher Morley,  
Nina Veretennikova, Robert Olup, Kathy Chard, Ramli Ibrahim, Susan Barling,  
Ross Philip

*Game I* Ross Philip, Larry Köhne-Drube, Christopher Morley, Robert Olup, Ramli Ibrahim

*Quartet* Nina Veretennikova, Graeme Watson, Susan Barling, Ross Philip

*Game II* Victoria Taylor, Larry Köhne-Drube, Jennifer Barry

*Duo* Janet Vernon, Christopher Morley

Interval

## RUMOURS II

### BARE FACTS & FANTASIES

Music: "Five Windows" Barry Conyngham

Cast: *Lovers* Susan Barling, Ross Philip  
*Voyeur* Graeme Watson  
*Transistor Girl* Jennifer Barry  
*Umbrella Boy* Larry Köhne-Drube  
*Trendies* Nina Veretennikova, Robert Olup  
*Marrieds* Glenda Morley, Christopher Morley

*Gay Guys*

*Modest Girl*

*Secretary*

*Fat Lady*

Ramli Ibrahim, Neil Grigg

Janet Vernon

Sheree da Costa

Victoria Taylor

Interval

## RUMOURS III

### LAST DREAMS

Music: "Snowflake" & "Ice Carving" Barry Conyngham

Cast: *The Aged* Jennifer Barry, Kathy Chard, Sheree da Costa, Neil Grigg, Ramli Ibrahim,  
Christopher Morley, Glenda Morley, Ross Philip, Victoria Taylor,  
Nina Veretennikova, Janet Vernon, Graeme Watson

*Young Couple* Susan Barling, Larry Köhne-Drube

*Old Couple* Graeme Murphy, Robert Olup

*Their Son* Artists of The Dance Company

Television sets generously supplied by Grace Bros. Ltd. (Rental Division)

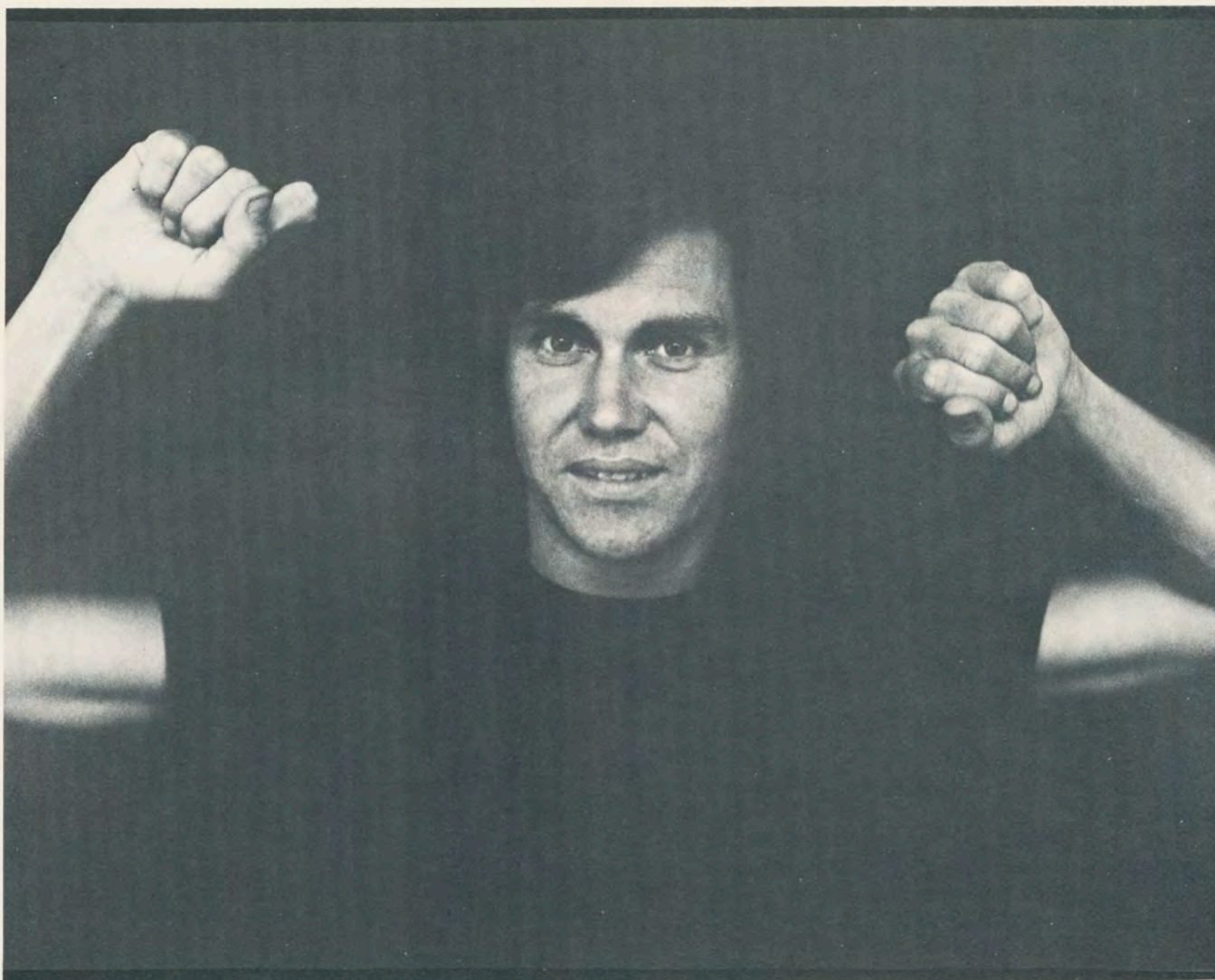
NOTE: The aspects of Sydney life depicted in this trilogy are the rumours that I care to spread. I am not pretending they are everybody's, or that they succeed in covering all facets of our lifestyles. The essence of the work stems from my observations, the dancers' involvement and the collaborative efforts of all in the production. For those who require more graphic guidelines in a programme note, I hope the following is of assistance.

*Rumours I* deals with dance abstracted images of Sydney and its inhabitants. The choreographic approach is pure dance. *Rumours II* touches a specific area of Sydney. Detailed characters are drawn and developed to create complex theatrical comment. *Rumours III* deals with the aged. It attempts to show a loss of independence and the resulting loss of dignity. Choreographically, I describe it as danced-drama.

There are no books on the geographical, sociological or physical aspects of Sydney that would have been in any way relevant to my dance concept. Consequently in rehearsals, we were all forced to share freely of our personal experiences, a situation that was exciting though sometimes unnerving. Through this shared experience I believe we have stumbled on some enlightening truths. It is my hope that you too will find some truth in *Rumours*.

Graeme Murphy





## Barry Conyngham

---

Barry Conyngham occupies a central position in Australian composition, both as a leading figure of the 'middle generation' of Australian composers and because of his achievements in different areas.

Born in Sydney in 1944, he did not begin to compose seriously until 1965, when he entered the music course at the University of Sydney, at the same time continuing legal studies. Previously he had been almost entirely occupied with jazz music.

At this time, composition activity at the Music Department of the University of Sydney was the most lively in Australia. He took supplementary lessons from Raymond Hanson, and in 1967 gained a Commonwealth Scholarship, and won a prize from the Guild of Australian Composers for his *Dialogue for String Trio*, which was recommended for performance at the 1967 Cologne ISCM Festival.

In the next year his first choral work *Farben* was performed at the ISCM concert for the 1968 Adelaide Festival of Arts. The same year saw an impressive work *Crisis—Thoughts in a City* for two string orchestras and percussion, followed in 1969 by *Five Windows* for symphony orchestra and percussion, and *Three*, for two groups of percussion and a string quartet. An important commission, *Horizon*, written for the Australian Pavilion at the Osaka Festival Expo '70, coincided with a Churchill Fellowship and took him to Japan where he spent six months and worked with Toru Takemitsu. He returned

with two important works, *Water . . . Footsteps . . . Time* and *Ice Carving* for amplified violin and four string orchestras. After returning to Australia Conyngham composed a large music theatre work, *Edward John Eyre*, which was produced by the NSW University Opera Group, who subsequently took it to Europe where it was well received. *Six*, his next work, was commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Commission for Les Percussions de Strasbourg.

In 1972 he was awarded a Harkness Fellowship which took him to the United States for nearly two years, and later with a Music Board grant he spent a year in Europe. During these three years he gained a wide experience of the international music scene as well as with major electronic and computer music studios.

On his return to Australia in 1976, he was appointed as lecturer at the Music Department of the University of Melbourne, where he has invigorated the department with his promotional activities for contemporary music and set up the Computer Music Project of that university which has received substantial funding.

Other major works include *Without Gesture* (1974) which was premiered at an ABC Prom Concert in 1977; *Sky* (1977) which was commissioned by Musica Viva for the Australian Chamber Orchestra; an opera to a text by Alan Seymour, *Ned Mark II* (1978), and a music theatre work to a text of Murray Copland, *The Apology of Bony Anderson* (1978), for the Victorian State Opera. Barry Conyngham's compositions are published by Universal Edition (Australia).

—James Murdoch



## The makings of a strong Rumour

---



Alan Oldfield

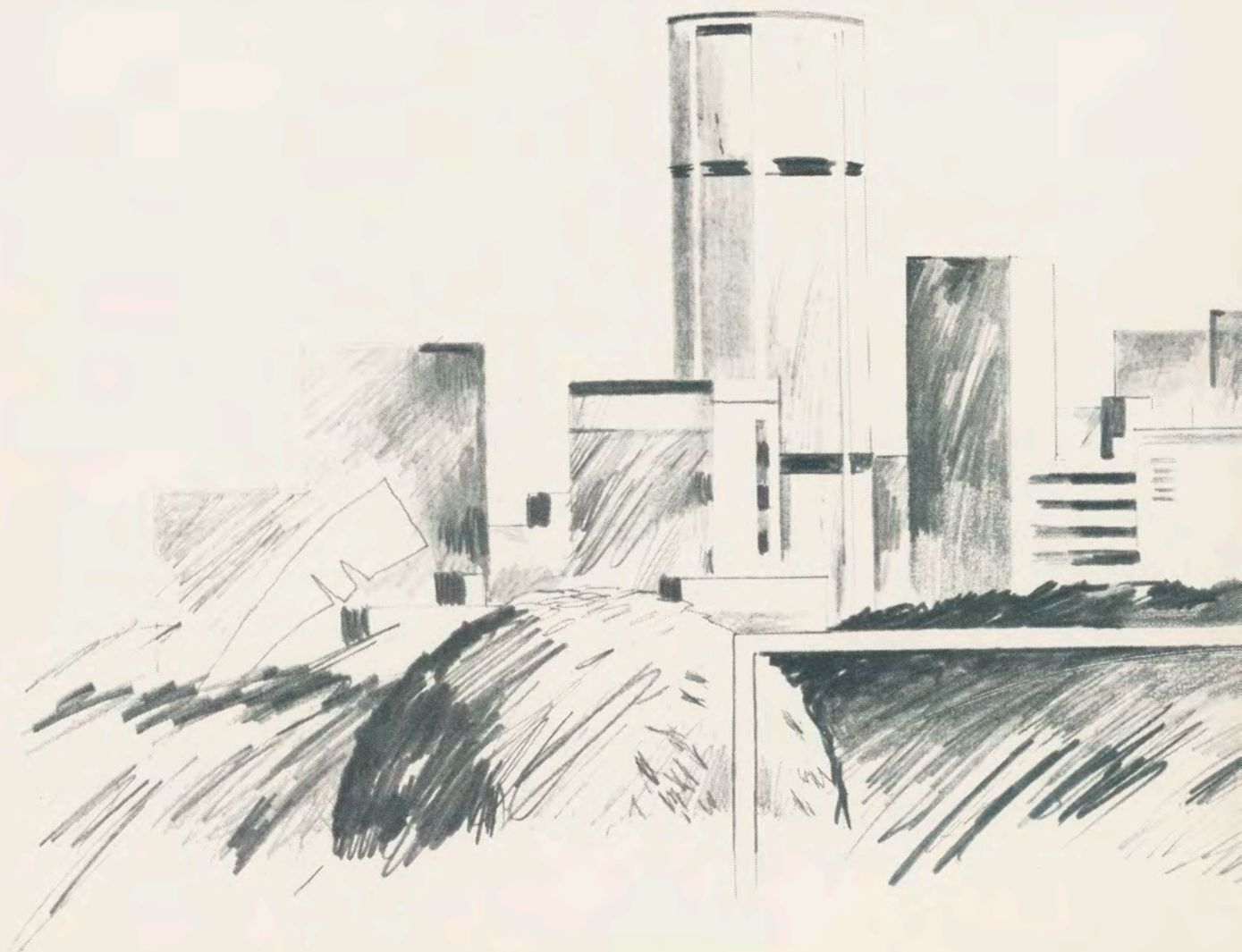
The original drawings for *Rumours* are now in the collection of The Australian National Gallery, Canberra

Alan Oldfield was born in Sydney on 30th December, 1943. He studied at the National Art School, Sydney, from 1962-1966 and later taught there. In 1973 he received a grant from the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council to paint and study in Rome. Returning from Rome after eighteen months he was appointed as lecturer at the Alexander Mackie College of Advanced Education. He lives at Palm Beach, New South Wales. Alan Oldfield has held eleven One Man Exhibitions and has won many art awards including the Sulman Prize (1976) and the Civic Permanent Art Award (1977). His work has twice been sent abroad by the Australian Government in important travelling exhibitions. The work of Alan Oldfield is represented in The National Gallery, Canberra, and most State, regional and university collections. He is represented in private collections in the United States and Europe and the collection of King's College, Cambridge.

*"When I was first asked by The Dance Company to design Rumours I was uncertain about accepting the commission. Designing a ballet is something quite different for a painter because you have to deal with shapes in movement and still make a scene visually satisfying. Painters deal with stillness.*

*"I was fortunate to be working with a team which gave me every encouragement. Graeme Murphy is a rare curiosity; a choreographer who thinks very visually, very much like a painter in fact. Between us there has been complete rapport—now it is difficult to sort out who was responsible for whatever idea. The design and the choreography are inextricably linked."*

Alan Oldfield







Alan Oldfield with Lighting Designer/Stage Manager John Rayment (left) and Production Director Ross Barnett

When The Dance Company decided to preview the central section of *Rumours* at the Ballet '78 Festival, in the Sydney Opera House last November, it represented an immediate challenge for the production department. Designer, Alan Oldfield, had only just accepted the commission and work began immediately on drawings for sets and costumes. There had been many ideas circulated between the collaborators on how the Lady Jane Beach section should look, and it was once thought that the starkness of imagery seen in the finished designs for the Festival performances should eventually be "coloured in".

Designer Oldfield decided, with Graeme Murphy's absolute agreement, that the starkness should remain, then set about finishing the design ideas that had been discussed for sections one and three. The softness of colour for section one contrasts with the starkness of the second section and the colourful backcloth for the third. Working with Production Director Ross Barnett, who already had *Tip*, *Fire Earth Air Water* and *Poppy* to his credit, Oldfield has been able to capture exactly what the choreographer had envisaged.

Murphy chose John Rayment to light *Rumours* for the Ballet '78 Festival performances after which he was engaged as full time Lighting Designer for The Dance Company. To evaluate the impact of *Rumours* is to realise that an original idea can only come together successfully with the right combination of choreography, concept, design and lighting.

*Rumours* represents the first time that a painter has been commissioned to design a full length work for an Australian choreographer.



Wardrobe Mistress: Ivy Johnson with Joe Gladwin







From left to right: Resident Choreographer and Repetiteur Graeme Watson, Glenda Morley, Ross Philip, Assistant to the Artistic Director, Janet Vernon and Sheree Da Costa.

Resident Choreographer and Repetiteur Graeme Watson joined The Dance Company in 1973. Since then he has choreographed fourteen works for the company and danced principal roles in the ballets of John Butler, Anna Sokolow, Glen Tetley, Don Asker and Graeme Murphy.

Glenda Morley studied with Estella Nova and Jeffrey Kovel and then with Scully-Borovansky. She joined The Tasmanian Ballet in 1975 as dancer and ballet mistress. Glenda travelled to Frankfurt, Germany with husband Christopher and danced with Frankfurter Ballet Bühne and Kassel State Theater Ballet. Returning to Australia she joined The Dance Company in 1977.

Sheree Da Costa is a graduate of The Australian Ballet School and studied at The Royal Ballet School in London. Sheree joined The Australian Ballet in 1975 and danced soloist roles which included "Bluebird" and "Rose Fairy" in *The Sleeping Beauty*. She joined The Dance Company in 1977 dancing in the company's productions of *Fire Earth Air Water*, *White Women*, *Everyman's Troth*, *Carmina Burana*, *Regale* and *Poppy*. Sheree Da Costa is married to Dance Company Stage Manager John Rayment.

Ross Philip studied with The Ballet Victoria School and later joined that company in 1974. He travelled to Israel in 1976 and, through the encouragement of Charles Czarny, joined The Bat-Dor Dance Company and worked with choreographers John Butler and Alvin Ailey. Returning to Australia in 1977 he joined The Dance Company and has danced in the company's productions of *Tip*, *Toccata*, *White Women*, *The Perils of Pauline* and *Poppy*. Earlier this year Ross choreographed his first ballet, *Chore Blues*.





From left to right: Kathy Chard, Larry Köhne-Drube, Jennifer Barry, Susan Barling and Victoria Taylor.

Kathy Chard commenced her training with Prudence Bowen in Sydney (RAD to Solo Seal). She spent two years with The Royal Ballet School in London and subsequently joined The Dance Company staying for a period of four years. Kathy was invited back to London to take up a contract with Ballet Rambert and appeared in works such as Christopher Bruce's *Wings* and *Girl in a Straw Hat*. She rejoined The Dance Company at the end of 1978. Roles for the company have included those in John Butler's *Carmina Burana* and *Les Noces* as well as in ballets by Anna Sokolow and Graeme Watson.

Larry Köhne-Drube studied with Joanne Priest and subsequently joined The Australian Ballet School in 1976. He joined The Australian Ballet company at the commencement of their 1978 season and danced in that company's productions of *Romeo & Juliet*, *Mamzelle Angot*, *Swan Lake* and *Spartacus*. Larry joined The Dance Company early in 1979 and appears for the first time in *Rumours*.

Jennifer Barry studied with Cecil Bates in Adelaide and was a foundation member of Australian Dance Theatre. As a result of her first trip to Europe Jennifer met

choreographer Eleo Pomare. In 1971, with the aid of an Australia Council Grant, she joined The Eleo Pomare Dance Company, which visited The Adelaide Festival of the Arts in 1972. In 1975 Jennifer visited Australia again to teach for ADT, The Queensland Ballet and The Australian Ballet School. She has taught at The Alvin Ailey Summer School and is a member of The Martha Graham School teaching faculty. She joined The Dance Company in mid '77 and has appeared in *Glimpses*, *Regale*, *White Women*, *Fire Earth Air Water* and *Poppy*.

Susan Barling studied with the Prudence Bowen Academy and entered The Australian Ballet School in 1975. She left the school after eighteen months and travelled to France to study with Mme M. Bresobarsova. Susan was contracted to dance for one year with the Koblenz Opera Theater, and returned to Australia in 1978 to join The Dance Company. Susan has appeared in *Glimpses*, *Regale*, *The Perils of Pauline*, *Chore Blues* and *Poppy*.

Victoria Taylor studied with the Prudence Bowen Academy in Sydney and entered The Australian Ballet School in 1975. After graduating in 1976 she joined The Dance Company in early '77, appearing in productions of *Regale*, *Scintillation*, *Glimpses*, *A Gathering of Vagrants*, *White Women*, *The Perils of Pauline*, and the role of Galahad in *Poppy*.





From left to right: Christopher Morley, Nina Veretennikova, Neil Grigg, Robert Olup and Ramli Ibrahim.

Christopher Morley studied with Joanne Priest in Adelaide and later graduated from The Australian Ballet School. He joined The Tasmanian Ballet in 1975 and later that year travelled to Frankfurt, Germany with his wife Glenda to dance with Frankfurter Ballet Bühne and Kassel State Theater Ballet. He returned to Australia in 1977 and joined The Dance Company appearing in productions of *Regale*, *Everyman's Troth*, *The Perils of Pauline* and *Poppy*.

Nina Veretennikova studied with the Valeria Hansen Dancing Academy in Rockhampton and entered The Australian Ballet School in 1975. After graduating Nina joined The Dance Company at the conclusion of 1976 on the invitation of Graeme Murphy. Now in her third year, Nina has worked with choreographers Don Asker, Andris Toppe, Graeme Watson and Graeme Murphy appearing in productions of *Fire Earth Air Water*, *Regale*, *Toccata*, *Tip*, *White Women*, *Everyman's Troth* and *Poppy*.

Neil Grigg studied dance as a member of The Melbourne State Dance Theatre and later as a student of Lynne Golding. Simultaneously, Neil secured his B.Ed. at The

Melbourne State College, studying Drama and English. Neil joined The Dance Company in 1978 and has appeared in *Glimpses*, *3rd Conversation* and *Poppy*. In 1976 Neil made the original ornate headdresses for *Glimpses*, assisting designer Christian Clare Robertson.

Robert Olup was a foundation member of The Australian Ballet, leaving the company as soloist in 1976. During his career he has danced roles too numerous to mention but those Robert most likes to recall include Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet*, Widow Simone in *La Fille Mal Gardée*, Baron Zeta in *The Merry Widow* and Sancho Panza in Rudolf Nureyev's *Don Quixote*. As a result of regular guest appearances with The Dance Company, Robert joined in 1978 and has appeared in productions of *Glimpses*, *Everyman's Troth*, *The Perils of Pauline* and *Poppy*.

Ramli Ibrahim was born in Malaysia and came to Australia as an engineering student. At the same time he studied dance and performed with The West Australian Ballet. Ramli entered The Australian Ballet School in 1976 and joined The Dance Company in 1977, to further study dance and choreography. He has appeared as Nijinsky in *Poppy* and the Faune in *Glimpses*. Ramli is also accomplished in Bharata Natyam, which is the southern classical dance of India.



# the dance company: a short history

In 1965 Suzanne Musitz was invited by Dame Peggy Van Praagh to form an educational dance group. By 1971, through a direct grant from the then Australian Council for the Arts, The Dance Company had become a full time professional group.

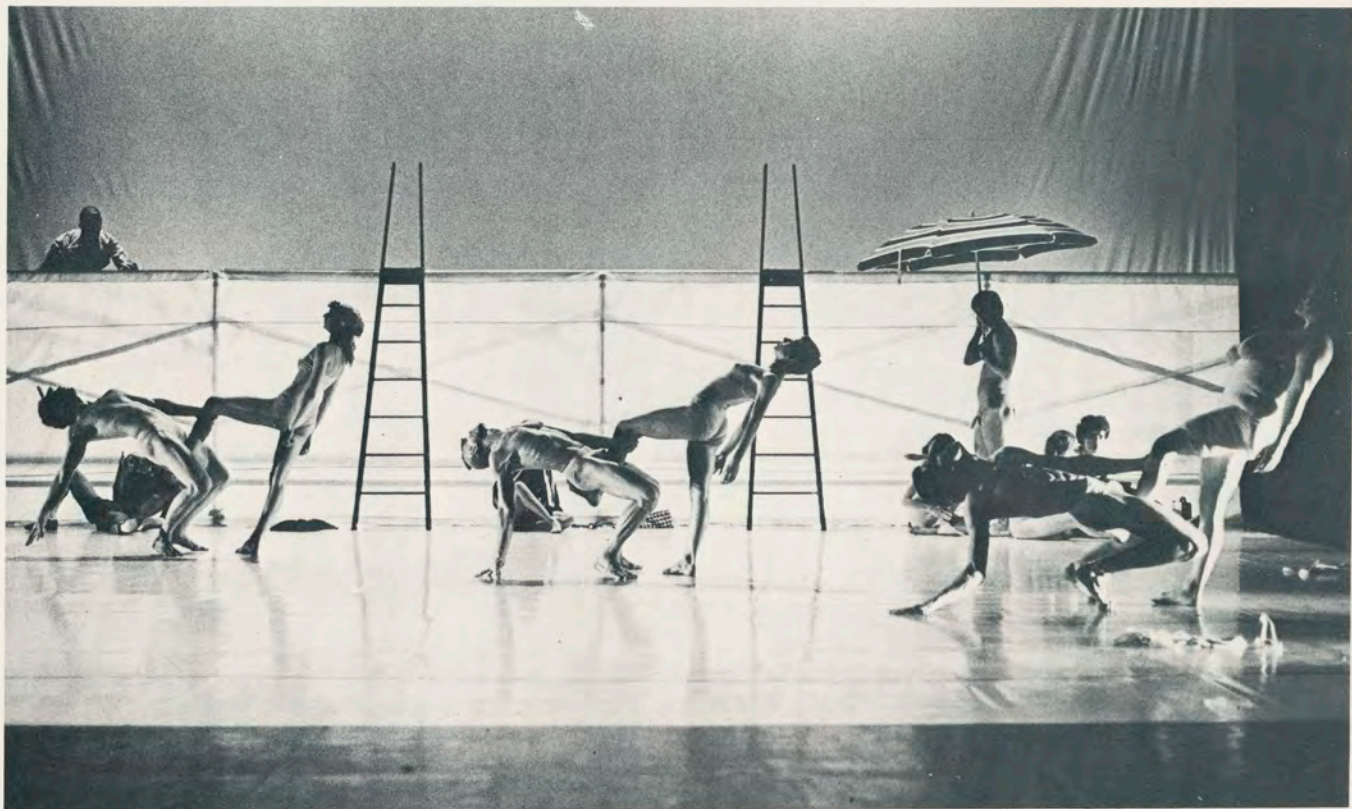
In 1974, Miss Musitz turned over the directorship of the company to Dutch born dancer/choreographer Jaap Flier. Flier commenced work early in 1975 together with his wife Willy de la Bye, who acted as Rehearsal and Training Director. Under Flier's direction the company began to gain greater notice in the performing arts community. Mounting such works

as Glen Tetley's "Pierrot Lunaire" and "Circles" and working vigorously with The Australian Opera, collaborating on productions such as "Lakme", Stravinsky's "Les Noces" and "L'Amfiparnaso". Flier lured overseas choreographers such as John Butler, Remy Charlip and Anna Sokolow to The Dance Company.

When Jaap Flier and Willy de la Bye decided to return to Europe at the end of 1976 the job of Artistic Director went to young Australian dancer/choreographer Graeme Murphy.

It is the aim of The Dance Company to build a strong ensemble capable of presenting the best of what can only be described as an intrinsically Australian style of contemporary dance — to encourage choreographic talent and to build a strong repertoire which will certainly include works from overseas which can suitably enhance the company's repertoire and the experience of the dancers.

# the dance company friends



# please be a friend

The Dance Company Friends are a growing movement of strong followers for contemporary dance.

Our membership has increased greatly in the past two years but we still need your support. As a Friend you enjoy the benefits of reduced ticket prices, dress rehearsals, workshop studio evenings and regular newsletters to keep you informed.

The Dance Company benefits greatly from funds raised through the Friends, enabling the purchase of valuable stage and sound equipment and contributing toward production costs. Won't you help us grow? Become a Friend now!

*Rena Barnum  
President*

I wish to become a Friend at the Annual Membership Fee of \$7. (Youth Membership Fee \$4).

Enclosed is my cheque (or Money Order) crossed and made payable to The Dance Company Friends, Post Office Box 303, KINGS CROSS 2011

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Phone (Day) ..... (Night) .....

Please include a stamped addressed envelope for return of Membership Card.

Each evening The Dance Company gives you the opportunity to learn to dance. If you are a beginner and interested in learning Classical, Jazz, Modern, Primitive or Disco then telephone The Dance Company, 358 4600 for further details.