



Grace

YORKE DANCE PROJECT

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Artistic Director: Yolande Yorke-Edgell

Executive Producer: Cath James

Dancers: Ben Ash, Caroline Hotchkiss, Greig Cooke, Caroline Lynn, Pari Naderi, Sarah Warsop

Guest Dancers: John Pennington, Luo WeiChun, Elsa Petit, Edward Mitton

Production Manager: Alan Burgess

PR: The Works PR

Patron: Richard Alston, CBE

Board of Directors: Sue Booker, Peter Dunleavy, Holly Aird

A message from our Patron Richard Alston

'I was delighted to be asked to be Patron of Yorke Dance Project as I have fond memories of having worked together with Yolande only a short time ago. I wish her and all the dancers the very best with this new programme – it feels good to watch colleagues take wing and develop their own paths.' *Richard Alston CBE*

Yorke Dance Project would like to thank John Kilroy, Nic Espinosa and London Studio Centre, Sue Booker, John Struthers and Tanya Steinhauser and all the staff at Bath ICIA, Adrian Chiles, Paula Hammond, British Ballet Organisation, Diana MacNeil, Frances Yeoh, Mousey Brown, Stephanie Vizer Dowley and Keith Dowley, Tracy Sullivan and the Arc Theatre Trowbridge, Sam Coren, Hazel Yorke-Edgell, Dr. Peter Hamlyn, Teejay Sogunro and Applied Pilates, David Nicholson, Kevin Lidlow, and all our family and friends who have supported the company during this first year and helped bring this project into reality.

A special thank you to the wonderful dancers for their passion and creative commitment to the project, and to the youth dance leaders who agreed to test run our pilot youth dance project; so thanks Ben, Carrie, Alison, Joanne and Louise.

A very special thank you to Lee Dixon for all his support and hard work for the company and to Back Fore Productions for their generous support without which we could not have produced this programme.

Welcome to GRACE

Sometimes people come together and connect in ways that are not completely obvious at first. There are just underlying messages that signal the other person to respond and therefore a connection is made. My aim was to bring together three female choreographers' work, all of different generations but all very defined in the dance world and in Lea Anderson's and Bella Lewitzky's cases, very important role models and pioneers of their own style of movement. What I have found fascinating as this project has progressed is the uncovering of some very similar points of reference. Three women of very different backgrounds, all sharing common influences; the most defined being visual arts, something



that has featured greatly in all our lives. Bella watched her father paint as a child and went on to create renowned works based on artists such as Van Gogh and Henry Moore. Lea and I both studied art at St. Martins and Chelsea College of Art and have also created work inspired by artists' work with our own unique style. The other link that has become apparent is our affiliation with California. Bella was born and lived most of her life there and based

her company in Los Angeles. Lea has been a choreographer in residence at Davis University, California, she has also worked at UCLA and has friends and colleagues with whom she collaborates on the West Coast. I danced with the Lewitzky Dance Company and then formed YDP in 1998 also in Los Angeles and hope to continue to perform and tour there in the future. We have all been united in this project without realising what strong connections we have. It has been, and is, a fascinating journey.

One last note... I am honoured to be able to present the work of Bella Lewitzky and Lea Anderson and I am equally honoured to have Richard Alston as patron of Yorke Dance Project.

Like Bella, Richard has been a huge influence during my career and I have always connected with his style of movement and above all his musicality, a passion I share. Along with a group of very established and wonderful dancers I hope this diverse evening of dance and the launch of Yorke Dance Project in the UK is an experience that you will find as enjoyable and fascinating as it has been in the making.

Yolande Yorke-Edgell, September 2009



Programme Running Order

Strandgade 30

(Pause)

herk·y-jerk·y

(Interval)

Recuerdo

(Pause)

Divisions on a Ground

Strandgade 30

Choreography: Yolande Yorke-Edgell

Movement Material: in collaboration with the company dancers, and Ben Dunks and Carrie Syckelmoore

Music: JS Bach, Cello Suite No. 2 in D Minor

Costume Design: Peter Todd

Lighting Design: Adrian Plaut

Dancers: Greig Cooke, Caroline Hotchkiss, Ben Ash, Sarah Warsop
Caroline Lynn.

Inspired by the paintings of Vilhelm Hammershøi, Strandgade 30 is a work based on the artist and the subjects he paints. Mystery surrounds the artist and the emptiness of his rooms and, most dramatically, the figures he depicts with their backs to the viewer.

The artist had a very strong bond with his mother, wife and sister which is clear in his work. He also had a close friend, later to become his brother-in-law, Peter Ilsted, who was also a successful artist. Although he is not present in any of Hammershøi's work, both Hammershøi and Ilsted's paintings had a very similar subject matter and they were clearly influenced by each other. Yorke-Edgell collaborates with the cast to capture the mystery of the artist, his life and work.

"Hammershøi is not one of those about whom one must speak quickly. His work is long and slow, and at whichever moment one apprehends it, it will offer plentiful reasons to speak of what is important and essential in art".

Rainer Maria Rilke, 1905



Photograph: Kevin Clifford

herk·y–jerk·y

Choreography: Lea Anderson

Original Music: Steve Blake and Will Saunders

Costume Design: Peter Todd

Lighting Design: Adrian Plaut

Dancers: The Company

herk·y–jerk·y (hûrk–jûrk)

adj. Spasmodic, irregular and unpredictable, as in movement or manner.

This work consists of a series of very short dances and very short pieces of music. Each dance is derived from a drawing or watercolour by the Austrian artist Egon Schiele (1890–1918)

Recuerdo

Choreography: Bella Lewitzky

Reconstruction by: John Pennington and Yolande Yorke-Edgell

Original Music: Larry Attaway

Lighting Design: Adrian Plaut, after Darlene Neel

Costume: Diana MacNeil

Dancers: Yolande Yorke-Edgell, Greig Cooke, Caroline Hotchkiss, Pari Naderi, Caroline Lynn, John Pennington (selected London performances only)

First performed at University of California, Irvine, November 2 1990

Recuerdo is Spanish for remembrance; a three-part extended solo for a woman. It is about what has been, a time past.

'must surely be one of Ms. Lewitzky's best works',
'infused with emotional power' *Jack Anderson of the New York Times: March 24, 1992*

Thanks to the Lewitzky Foundation for permission to remount this work, and in particular to Nora Reynolds and John Pennington for their time and energy in helping the company to restage Recuerdo with the attention to detail that Lewitzky's work demands. Thanks to Melinda Hayes at the Lewitzky Archive, University of Southern California, and Diana MacNeil for her generosity and support.



Divisions on a Ground

Choreography: Yolande Yorke-Edgell

Music: English Country Dances by David Douglass from the 17th century publications of John Playford

Costume Design: Peter Todd

Lighting Design: Adrian Plaut

Dancers: Pari Naderi, Caroline Hotchkiss, Sarah Warsop, Caroline Lynn.
First performed in Los Angeles 2004

The setting is 1940s wartime, England... Set to traditional English folk tunes, four generations of family pass on their stories that influence and affect each other. History tries to repeat itself but one woman attempts to break the traditions of the past and not allow the past to be part of her future.



Biographies

Yolande Yorke-Edgell

Artistic Director, Choreographer



Yolande was born in Hertfordshire and trained at Arts Educational School, Central School of Ballet and London Studio Centre. After graduating she joined Extemporary Dance Theatre. She went on to dance with Extreme Measures before joining Rambert Dance Company under the direction of Richard Alston.

In 1994 she moved to Los Angeles to join the Lewitzky Dance Company where she danced many leading roles and was appointed a Master Teacher by Lewitzky herself. In 1998 Yolande formed her own dance company in Los Angeles: Yorke Dance Project, presenting her own choreography alongside fellow Los Angeles based choreographers. Yolande has been a guest artist for Pacific Dance Ensemble, the Posthouse Dance Group and Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra's Stravinsky Evening at the new Walt Disney Concert Hall. She has worked for the Los Angeles Opera and in 2001 she co-directed the play Time Out for the New York Fringe Festival.

On returning to England she danced in Adam Cooper's production of Les Liaisons Dangereuses and Graham Vick's production of A Midsummer's Marriage with the Royal Opera. Yolande joined Richard Alston Dance Company in the summer of 2006 touring throughout the UK and the US. Whilst performing with Alston, Yolande continued to develop her own choreography with the premiere of two of her works in the Resolution! season at the Robin Howard Dance Theatre in 2007 and 2008.

Bella Lewitzky (1916-2004)

Choreographer



Lewitzky spent her childhood in a utopian community in the Mojave Desert until her family later moved to San Bernadino, California. In 1934 she joined Lester Horton's dance company, became its lead dancer, and was instrumental in the development of the Horton Technique. In 1946 Lewitzky founded Dance Theater of Los Angeles with Horton. She left the company in 1950 to pursue her own interests and an independent career. In 1951 she was called before the House Un-American Activities Committee to answer questions about communist activities in the arts. "I'm a dancer, not a singer," she replied. In 1958 she became the founding chair of the dance department at the Idyllwild School of Music and the Arts. In 1966 she was appointed

Dean of Dance at the California Institute of the Arts and founded the Lewitzky Dance Company. Under her artistic guidance the company became one of the leading international modern dance companies, performing to critical acclaim in 43 states across the U.S. as well as 20 countries on five continents. An ardent advocate of free artistic expression, when accepting a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in 1990 Lewitzky scratched out a mandatory anti-obscenity pledge. Later she successfully sued the NEA to remove the pledge from its awards process. She received many awards including honorary doctorates from California Institute of Arts (1981), Occidental College (1984), Otis Parsons College (1989), and the Juilliard School (1993). Designated one of America's Irreplaceable Dance Treasures by the Dance Heritage Coalition she was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Clinton.

Lea Anderson

Choreographer

Lea Anderson studied Art at St Martin's College before attending the Laban Centre where she met Teresa Barker and Gaynor Coward. They formed The Cholmondeleys in 1984 after graduating from Laban.

Branching out from their early performance roots in pubs and clubs, The Cholmondeleys grew in size and reputation with more dancers and specially commissioned live music for each piece, pushing them to the forefront of British dance and creating a growing reputation in Europe. The all-male company The Featherstonehaughs, established by Lea, joined them in 1988.

Lea's work has won many awards including three consecutive Digital Dance Awards, a Time Out/01 for London Award, a London Dance and Performance Award, and she has been a finalist in the prestigious Bagnolet competition.

In 2003 she was Artist in Residence at the University of California and in November 2006 Lea was proud to accept an Honorary Doctorate of Arts from the Dartington College of Arts. Throughout her career Lea has also created work for television, video and film. These include two series of Tights, Camera, Action for Channel 4 (1992 and 1994), which she wrote and presented and in 1997 she choreographed Todd Haynes' feature film Velvet Goldmine.



Company Dancers



Ben Ash

Ben has worked with Charles Linehan, Wayne McGregor, Richard Alston, Siobhan Davies, Rosemary Butcher, Finn Walker, Rosemary Lee, Wally Cardona (New York) Jan Puch (Germany) and Vasco Vellenkamp (Lisbon). In 2004 Ben formed the Dog Kennel Hill project with Rachel Lopez de la Nieta and Henrietta Hale. Ben mounted the choreography for Manon at the Lyric Opera in Chicago last autumn to open the season. Ben was awarded 2008 Artist in Residence at Moving East (assisted by the Place) to support the development of a new solo work Man Working, which premiered recently.

Greig Cooke

Greig performed internationally for fourteen years originating roles for Adventures in Motion Pictures' production of Swan Lake, Richard Alston, The Featherstonehaughs, Aletta Collins, Charles Linehan, Mark Bruce, Random Dance, Arthur Pita, Tom Sapsford, Fleur Darkin and the reworking of Peter Schaffeur's west end production of Equus in 2007. Greig took the role of rehearsal director for The Featherstonehaughs on the reconstruction of Flesh and Blood.



Caroline Hotchkiss

Caroline worked with Richard Alston Dance Company, Jan De Schynkel's Bark Dance Productions and Silesian Dance Theatre before joining the Mark Bruce Company in 2007. Other choreographers with whom she has worked include Jeremy James, Philip Taylor, Frauke Riquardt, Simon Birch, Martin Lawrence, Fleur Darkin and Tom Sapsford.



Caroline Lynn

Caroline danced with New English Contemporary Ballet, Leipzig Ballet and Ballet Ireland. Other work includes Will Tuckett's Pinocchio at ROH2 and Didy Veldman's Peter and the Wolf for In the Wings. Caroline has worked with Kim Brandstrup, Lucy Burge and Philippe Giraudeau, for Glyndebourne, Grange Park Opera and The Royal Opera, and as assistant choreographer for the Teatro Regio Torino.



Pari Naderi

Pari performed in the South Bank Show Award-winning 'Grass' with Javier de Frutos. She has worked with Colin Poole, Charles Linehan, Mark Bruce, Mark Baldwin and Richard Alston, with English National Opera, Opera de Lille and most recently with Siobhan Davies.

Pari's fascination with photography has evolved throughout her dance career. Her photographic work has been exhibited at Siobhan Davies Studios as part of the Primary Bank Project 2008, The Robin Howard Dance Theatre, The Corn Exchange Newbury and her exhibition 'The Thinking Body' will be at 'The Lighthouse' in Brighton from September 11th.



Company Dancers



Sarah Warsop

Sarah is a dancer, choreographer and designer. She most recently exhibited at Victoria Miro Gallery March 2009. Previously she has performed and exhibited at Tate Britain, Queen Elizabeth Hall, and the Royal Opera House. She has danced with Rambert Dance Company and Siobhan Davies Dance and has co-run her own dance company Snag. Sarah is a trained Yoga teacher and teaches private clients and group classes.

John Pennington

John is Artistic Director of the Pennington Dance Group. He enjoyed a 14-year career with the Lewitzky Dance Company as a performer and teacher, and continues his association with the Lewitzky Dance Foundation. He is a frequent guest artist at workshops in the states and internationally, both for his work in dance reconstruction and contemporary technique classes. Presently John serves on faculty at Pomona College. He is the recipient of several grants and awards including two Princess Grace Grants, California Community Foundation Grant, Goethe Studies Grant, Durfee ARC Grant and he served as the Annenberg Dance Scholar for Inner City Arts-LA. John joins the company for selected performances in London only.



Luo WeiChun

WeiChun was born in Taoyuan and worked with Henri Oguike Dance Company from 2006-2009, also working with Darren Johnston in Underdrome. She is currently completing her MA dissertation in Contemporary Dance.



Edward Mitton

Edward trained at the London Studio Centre, where he was the recipient of the Merrifield award for excellence in the field of Musical Theatre, and was awarded the 'Most Outstanding Contemporary Dance Performance' award. Commercial work includes dancing in the 'Be Happy at Home' advertisement campaign for Shelter.



Elsa Petit

Elsa was born in France where she trained in music and dance at the Conservatoire National de Dijon. She completed a psychology degree at Universite Lyon II. In 2009 Elsa gained a BA Hons degree from London Contemporary Dance School. During her training she performed in work by Jan de Schynkel, Anna Williams and Richard Alston.



Artistic Associates

Adrian Plaut, Lighting Design

Adrian has worked closely with numerous dance companies, notably Rambert Dance Company and Siobhan Davies. As associate lighting designer to Peter Mumford, he has worked on 13 Different Keys, Lautrec at the Shaftesbury Theatre, God Only Knows at the Vaudeville Theatre and This House Will Burn at the Royal Opera House.

Other original designs include Because I Sing for Artangel and Channel 4 at the Roundhouse, and those for Mark Baldwin, Jeremy James, Richard Alston, Rambert Dance Company and Australian Dance Theatre.

Peter Todd, Costume Design

Peter's designs for theatre include 'Rents' for the Courtyard Theatre, 'tis Pitty She's a Whore' and 'The White Devil' for Greenwich Playhouse and 'Les Liaisons Dangereuses' designed for and created with students at the Central School of Speech and Drama whilst in the role of visiting designer.

Peter has been designing costumes for Richard Alston Dance Company since 2004.

Peter also works as a freelance Costume Supervisor, most recently on the revival of Verdi's 'Un Ballo In Maschera' for the Royal Opera in June 2009.

Steve Blake, Composer

Steve is a self-taught musician/composer. He has composed for and performed with the Cholmondeleys and the Featherstonehaughs Dance companies since 1985. He has also worked with The Sofa Trio (Hungary), Retina Dance, Akram Khan and New Art Club. He has created (with Maho Ihara) his own award winning Dance Theatre work as 10,000 Steps. He drums regularly with the bands Nigel Burch and the Flea Pit Orchestra and Man Aubergine.

Will Saunders, Composer

Will Saunders graduated in Sonic Arts at Middlesex University in 2007. Having played improvised guitar in The Cholmondeleys and Featherstonehaughs "Russian Roulette" project last year he will be writing and performing new music with Steve Blake for The Featherstonehaughs forthcoming production.

Larry Attaway, Composer

Larry was appointed Director of the Jordan College Academy of Dance at Butler University in Indianapolis in 1997 following a 25 year association with the California Institute of Arts in Los Angeles. From 1972-1997 Attaway was composer-in-residence for the Lewitzky Dance Company, collaborating on over 16 works in the company's repertoire. These included commissions from the ARCO Foundation (Agitime), the Krannart Centre in Urbana, IL (Four Women in Time), the Chateauvallon Festival in Toulon, France (Facets), the UCLA Centre for the Performing Arts (Impressions # 2, Van Gogh), and the Los Angeles Arts Festival (Impressions #1, Henry Moore).

David McCormick, Art Installation: Conception, Videographer

David works in screen-based, performance and site specific video art. His work has included collaborations with choreographers, directors and orchestras leading to screenings and performances at leading UK and international venues including Tate Britain, ICA and the Royal Opera House. He is currently a part time senior lecturer at The University of Winchester.

In 2008 he directed and produced a film version of Punchdrunk's internationally acclaimed Faust. David was the 2007/8 recipient of the Wallace Potts Bursary from the Nureyev Foundation in support of his work as a video and dance artist.



Grace Youth Dance Project

For this inaugural season, the company pilots a new youth dance project working with 6 youth dance companies, allowing them to interpret the ideas and inspirations used by the company in the creation of GRACE. This will be facilitated by the youth dance group leaders, who were invited into the company's creative process, to experience the creative tasks that they will use with their own youth groups. Using these creative tasks set by their leaders, the youth groups develop their own works and perform it as a curtain raiser to the company's performances during the GRACE tour.

Finally, the groups come together at the Arc theatre in Trowbridge to take master classes with the company, but more importantly, to meet and see each other's versions of the works created and have the chance to talk about their experiences in an open facilitated discussion with the company after the event.

The 6 youth dance groups and their leaders are:

Band of Lads, Cornwall, Benjamin Dunks (Acom Arts Centre, Penzance 6th Oct only)

Dynamic Youth Dance, Devon, Alison Selway (The Flavel Arts Centre, Dartmouth)

Taunton Youth Dance, Somerset, Joanne Willmott (Tacchi-Morris Arts Centre, Taunton)

Salisbury Youth Dance, Wiltshire, Carrie Syckelmoore (Salisbury Arts Centre)

Frome Youth Dance and Arc Youth Dance, Louise Barrett (Merlin Theatre, Frome)

Centre for Advanced Training, London. (Tabernacle Theatre Notting Hill 15th Nov only)

This model brings diverse communities from across the south west together, sharing a common experience but each group personalising that experience for themselves. Working in the studio with professional dancers and Yorke-Edgell enriches and supports the youth leaders' own creativity.

Art Installation

The Art Installation that accompanies GRACE provides an arena and context for pre-show discussions and a social space for audience and artists to meet and connect during the length of

the company's stay in each venue. David McCormick, the artist, writes: 'This installation is my response to the act of making dances. This is the result of time spent in the company of the dance makers and is inspired by the processes (thinking, talking, imagining and moving) involved in the making of these dances'.

At the Salisbury Arts Centre and Tabernacle Theatre, London, only.

Participate

Yorke Dance Project recognises that there are few bigger influences on a young person's creative development than the experience of meeting, working with and seeing how professional artists work, whether in dance, theatre or any of the arts.

Particularly in areas with few or no dance companies and where there may not be many professional dancers working, these opportunities are a rare source of professional contact, affirmation and inspiration for dance artists and students.

Dancers want and are frequently expected to be creative individuals with choreographic abilities and input. This is how Yorke Dance Project works and our Participate programmes allow other dancers, whether they do or don't already work like this, see how it is done by our company. Participants learn how to use their own interests and experiences as routes into creating material, along with frameworks actually used by the company during the making of our works. Many of our dancers have worked as teachers throughout the world and are constantly in demand in the UK to lead professional classes for other companies as well as for Colleges and Schools.

Company Class

When the company is in rehearsal or on tour, we would welcome any professional or graduate dancers into class. Please contact the company to check dates, times and venues.

GCSE and A Level students

For more information on supporting your GCSE and A Level students, whether through practical sessions or a seminar on comparing and contrasting professional works, please contact the company: Email: info@yorkedanceproject.co.uk

About Yorke Dance Project

Originally founded by Artistic Director Yolande Yorke-Edgell in Los Angeles in 1998, Yorke Dance Project earned a reputation in the States for producing distinctive and well produced programmes of dance performance. Yorke Dance Project has now relocated to the UK, and launch our première season in Autumn 2009.

The company's work is diverse in form and content; to date the company has created a number of works for the stage, and will this year, produce a new-media installation work that sits alongside the dance production. It opens at Salisbury Arts Centre on the 20th October and will inhabit the foyer of the Tabernacle Theatre Notting Hill, during the company's London performances of GRACE.

Yorke Dance Project's programming initiatives aim to foster and support a strong and vibrant dance culture, and also create critically acclaimed and popular productions for touring. Part of this programming vision is to re-introduce UK audiences to the work of Bella Lewitzky. Lewitzky's work has not been seen in the UK for decades, and Yorke Dance Project is currently the first professional company in the world with the rights to perform Lewitzky's works since the closure of her company. Yorke Dance Project actively engage with presenting the work of female choreographers based in the UK and the USA, and are delighted to be working with Lea Anderson for the premiere tour.

Support Yorke Dance Project

Yorke Dance Project offers businesses and individuals a range of sponsorship opportunities. The company generates substantial media coverage and performs both in the UK and the USA.

Get in contact

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