

'a moving voice'

A choreography of voices exploring *why dance matters now*, conceived and arranged by Alison Plevy with contributions from Australian dance makers and doers aged between 11 and 86 years; Akira Byrne, Caspar Ilchner, Cloe Fournier, Elizabeth Cameron Dalman, Eliza Sanders, Kristina Chan, Lara Dorling, Philip Piggan and Emily Wells.

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Dance, it's how I can truly connect... to the present moment.

Um - Ah - Or something – um - yea I guess - generally in terms of – um - sort of our – um - because I feel like – to - um.

In this time of climate change, major technical advancements and issues in politics,

at the moment there's so much going on and we just watch Facebook and we just ahh read things and...

mostly two dimensional, it excludes genuine emotions and feelings.

We are fat.

Blobs.

Physically illiterate.

We are seduced into ease, with less motivation to move.

Physically illiterate.

Perpetual isolation and anxiety, routine and schedule.

We forget, and now, we get in the way of ourselves, we stop ourselves dancing and I think that's really sad.

We're not taught what the real power of dance is, in a safe enough space to really unleash it, and

some years ago, centuries maybe ago, dance had a major part in everyday life, people were not necessarily dancers, that was a way of life, that was the way for them like they would work very hard and then dance would come to them as a release, just to, celebrate the fact they were alive really.

We dance because we always have. Indigenous people have been dancing on these lands since time immemorial, and now, as the youngest generation of one of the oldest surviving cultures in the world. It is our turn, it is our right, it is our responsibility to take our place in this cultural continuum.

Dance brings us back to our true selves.

It's a way for people who speak different languages to share a feeling, to share a moment, to share an idea. And their culture and their past and their lineages.

To all bodies, all ages, all abilities.

We get to really unlock and realise what's at, at heart.

and dance can be a break of whimsy or confirmation of cold reality.

In discovering in our own bodies that we are not invincible,

to my environment,

it allows us to somatically feel problems, whether it be positive or negative.

To connect to memory.

I watched a video of myself when I was just a toddler learning how to walk, and I'm sort of climbing up on the furniture figuring out how to stand on my feet, and as soon as I've kind of got my balance, I do a little butt jiggle a groove thing... I love that video, because it confirms that expressive movement in the body is so completely natural to humans.

And whether we've known our dances since we were born, whether we are finding ways to revive these as we grow, or if these stories are sleeping and we are creating new stories in response to today,

it can bring joy, it can bring sadness, it can bring frustration, it just brings something out of you and whether you like the show or not...there is a reaction.

Through deep and thoughtful processes, creativity, trust, risk-taking and listening.

To dig deeper into trauma and emotions, process them.

We are really easily able to intellectualise these problems, but it's not until we feel these problems deep down that we actually get up and do something about it.

...Oiee what am I saying... because we're fragile, because we're...um.

I believe our mental states would be 10 times better if everyone danced.

Dance for me makes everything feel...better. There are some things that I can't explain through words, but I can explain through my body.

It has a transformative power that affects one's ability to learn and cooperate effectively with others. This promotes more harmony and kindness within people who participate in dance, which is paramount to furthering integration, the progression of societies and understanding between people.

Dances sheer physicality, diversity, intensity, articulation and individuality, makes it a thought-provoking form of communication and expression.

It's also just really fun,

it feels nice.

Dance gives you a sense of nirvana, a sense of addiction.

The joy, the beauty, the ecstasy and the power of moving bodies and human to human contact.

While I was sitting watching them, I was just like, transported, and it reminded me of how much **I love dance** and what it does to me and **it makes me feel alive** and

It is giving and it is sharing, and it is...taking nothing in return.

I really feel like dance could reconnect us, because it's something that everyone has done before people could even speak words or write, they were dancing.

Now, as Indigneous and Non-Indigenous people we all have a responsibility to use this timeless tool of gathering, sharing and healing.

Dance reminds us of our interconnectedness with the natural world.

Nature needs us to dance, now.

And I'm sure I could go on for hours more...

but yea, that's...that's a bit of a dance of words about dance and why it matters.

***Alison Plevy** is a dance artist and performance maker based in Canberra engaging in the contemplation of contemporary issues through the dancing body and connection to place. Central to*

her practice is cross-disciplinary collaboration, connection to nature, youth dance and positioning artists as active citizens. In 2016 she founded Australian Dance Party, a company of Canberra dancers harnessing the communicative power of dance to enable change.

<http://australiandance.party/>

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Image by Lorna Sim.