

ABSTRACTS

KEYNOTES

Dr Nadine George-Graves: Academic Bedfellows: Genres, Genealogies and Gestures

Although Dance and Theater are both embodied performing arts, although there are many genres that straddle the lines between the two forms, and despite the fact that there are many departments of “theater and dance,” the scholarly fields too seldom communicate with each other. Most would acknowledge theater and dance as natural bedfellows, but work that examines the interstices is truly interdisciplinary. Taking corporeality, embodiment and theatricality as ideas that unite the work of dance and theater scholars, this talk advances a border-crossing paradigm shift toward the goal of examining genealogies, erasing many of the lines of demarcation between the two fields and encouraging less respect in the future for historical disciplinary boundaries. In foregrounding the politics and poetics of moving bodies, and by focusing on performative embodiment as a negotiation of power dynamics, this undertaking challenges the two disciplines to take a closer look at the histories, theories and practices of physical performance.

Dr Rolando Vázquez: Decoloniality, Dance and the End of the Contemporary

A central thesis of decolonial thought is that there is no modernity without coloniality. We will begin to address the question of decolonizing contemporary dance by asking how contemporary dance functions as modernity and how it functions as coloniality. Its function as modernity is the way in which it affirms itself as an aesthetic territory, as the framework of representation, recognition and validity. Its function as coloniality is the way in which it functions to exclude, invalidate, disdain, erase and silence all that does not fit into its domain. In particular, the normativity of contemporaneity has functioned to normalize the empty present of modernity as the field of recognition while exercising forms of temporal discrimination that exclude the plurality of temporalities denied by the colonial difference. The combined movements of modernity/coloniality constitute the vortex of the colonial difference. A vortex with concentric and eccentric forces that at one and the same time incorporate into its hollow center while expelling and laying waste the plurality of other worlds.

Decoloniality calls for the end of the contemporary as a way of undoing the colonial difference. It challenges the dominance of abstraction in western aesthetics and its temporal regime. In their practice, decolonial dancers are exceeding the temporality of contemporaneity by re-membering the silenced bodies, by bringing to the forth vernaculars bodies, by reclaiming earth-bodies, communal bodies, ancestral-bodies that lie silenced under the oblivion of coloniality. Decolonial dance, is a dance that disobeys the performativity of the dancing body and its realm of abstraction and representation, a dance that refuses to forget, that re-covers the plurality of who we are. Decolonial dance challenges the regime of oblivion of contemporary dance and disobeys the colonial difference. It helps us to re-member who we are, to recover the freedom of being earth, and to receive back the pluralities that we have been.

SCHOLARLY PAPERS

Alan Parker and Gavin Krastin: Opening through ecology: conceptualising the role of open-platform, immersive performance experiences within the closed spaces of the university

This paper considers the role of immersive, interdisciplinary performance as a potential form through which the seemingly closed spaces of the university can become opened. This opening of space is conceived as a literal opening (of access to otherwise controlled spaces), a disciplinary opening (of boundaries between disciplines, departments and faculties) and an epistemic opening (of alternative and diverse thinkings within the academy). Using the newly established performance event *Open House* (2018 & 2019)—an annual, interdisciplinary, and immersive platform initiated by the Drama Department at Rhodes University—as a departure point, the paper considers the particular ways in which this initiative has sought to encourage and provoke diverse openings within the department and the university. The authors draw on Erin Manning’s theorising of touch, in *Politics of touch* (2007) and *The minor gesture* (2016), as an inquisitive gesture toward knowing which establishes and creates “ecologies”—tactile and embodied environments of co-composing and co-becoming—occurring between bodies and between bodies and their surroundings. The particularities of these immersive ecologies are examined as a means to make explicit the efficacy of immersive performance and of interdisciplinary approaches to the making of theatrical experiences in the current university context.

Dr Janine Lewis and Jeannette Ziady: Towards vocational training of the South African dancer: anxiety or agency?

The dance world is dominated by instilling technique and discipline in the dance training. Technique and discipline have been inculcated through training regimes that are dogmatically transferred through the generations – from teacher to dancer – and who in turn perpetuate technique and discipline in their teaching. Within a multicultural setting, adult dancers are required to start afresh and subscribe to a standardisation that is often unattainable due to gender, physique, and bias that results in the standardisation determining and prescribing a “deficit” dancer; which in turn reinforces a coloniality of power. This article examines this phenomenon and serves to promote inclusive strategies towards training vocational dance. Consideration is afforded cultural interface theories as well as theories of learning, to advocate towards a long-term transformatory strategy that also takes the notions of deficit dancers and teachers within dance education into account. To incorporate these aspects towards a strategy on dance vocational training that constructs a professional learning community (PLC) which may not be seamless in implementation. Through reflective and reflexive inquiry, Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) somatic performance training courses are case studies for a gap-analysis framing of such a strategy. By actively participating in co-creating new knowledge and futures, a sense of agency may be afforded the individual student.

Juanita Finestone-Praeg: (e)merging through *Wreckage*: activating, agitating and archiving a performative proxemics through/as ruin

In 2011, an unexpected performance collaboration between two Eastern Cape based performance companies, UBOM and First Physical, took place at the National Arts Festival. *Wreckage* excited in its possibility and expectation and from its first reviews the work provoked controversy. A fractious online dialogue ensued which was something that both companies took delight in, given that the work intended, from the outset, (and as its title *Wreckage* suggests), to invoke the difficulty of its subject matter (shipwrecked histories of the Eastern Cape, South Africa) and the challenges of its form (the aesthetic collision of the two companies very different dramaturgical approaches). In his review of the work, Mike van Graan stated that “*Wreckage* is one of the finest, most revolutionary pieces of collaborative art to ever be presented at this South African National Arts Festival” (Mike van Graan, Artsblog, 3 July 2011). In response to this claim, this research considers the political significance and performance consequence of this collaborative collision. Discussion explores the ways that the

production activates, agitates and archives alternate embodiments/narratives of identity that position themselves against official versions of institutionalised power and traditional performance forms. The search for the particularity of its vision and production to perform its own choreopolitical stance will be investigated.

Dr Karen Vedel: The problems (and promise?) of the precarious yet persistent existence of dance in Danish academia

My paper tracks the trajectory of dance in Danish academia from a sub-discipline of Theatre Research grounded in Western European humanism in the mid 1900s - over the impact of a critical cultural studies approach at the end of the 20th century to the tensions and challenges offered in more recent years when increasing attention is granted to a critique of the Eurocentrism of academia and the inter-, or as Rosi Braidotti would have it, trans- disciplinary nature of Dance and Performance Studies. Through examples it will be suggested that new avenues for critical perspectives on the impact of colonialism on the aesthetic disciplines are being opened up in - sometimes more, sometimes less productive - dialogues between dance studies and not only university programs of theatre and performance studies, sports science and musicology but also cultural institutions in Danish society at large such as museums of cultural history and visual arts. Impacting on the larger ecology of the practice (Isabelle Stengers) is also the ongoing implementation of artistic research as an integrated part of the educations in the National Danish School of Performing Arts.

Dr Ketu H. Katrak: Decolonizing Choreographic Practices: Gender Dimensions

I analyze the commodification of male and female bodies in postcolonial societies that continue to be haunted by apartheid and colonial legacies that collude with indigenous patriarchy. Dancer-choreographers with their pulse on their own socio-political environments create works that intervene in decolonizing and redefining gender and queer identities as part of working towards social justice. They seek new paradigms of interdisciplinarity that express their conceptual content in performance. I analyze selected dancer-choreographers decolonizing the gendered body, delighting in subversive choreographic practices. Indian-Canadian choreographer-dancer Hari Krishnan's works such as *Skin*, and *Uma*, play with *stree vesham*, cross-dressing, part of a South Indian tradition, translocated in a contemporary queer context. In another performed historical excavation, female courtesans in 18th century India are linked to contemporary women enduring domestic violence in The Post-Natyam Collective's collaborative, multi-disciplinary work, *Sunoh! [Listen] Tell me Sister!* A hybrid layering of voice, movement, visual art, and media design conveys an evocative performance of courtesans as the female foremothers of Indian dance whose sexual services to patrons are linked to contemporary women. Decolonizing content and form from colonial and neo-colonial legacies is an ongoing endeavor via innovative choreographic practices that endorse hope for diverse people

Dr Marelize Marx-van Heerden: Dance education as agent of social cohesion: A critical approach

In South Africa, we dance! We dance to build community, to establish identity, to show solidarity and to enable collective healing. In contemporary South African society, dance has communal, cultural, public and political connotation; hence my decision to explore the potential of dance to promote social cohesion in a culturally and politically diverse post-apartheid South Africa, as my doctoral dissertation. My research investigated the experiences of a group of culturally and politically diverse University students, as they engaged with a particular 7-week dance education programme as part of their B.Ed. (general education) degree. This paper regards the critical issues surrounding my investigation of dance education as an agent of social cohesion in a culturally and politically diverse (post-) conflict classroom. Issues such as decolonising notions of dance, aesthetics, "movement habitus" and teaching methods, alongside potential consequences of these in the dance education classroom, are discussed. Consequences of these issues can also reach beyond the dance education classroom. Dance can

indeed become an agent of hegemony and separation, dance can become paralysed as a symbol of ethno-cultural identity and dance can no longer be capable of being an agent of social cohesion in a country that promotes “unity in diversity”.

Dr Nicholas Akas: The use of iconic symbols during traditional indigenous performances (Dance), has remained an indispensable tool. The major problem facing the use of signifying symbols during performances is because, they are seen as mere cultural artifacts or for aesthetic flexibility display. These assumptions might be generally accepted, but in core dance scholarship is not acceptable and must be redressed through this paper. The aim of this paper is to communicatively interpret some of the signifying symbols, used in dance towards understanding their socio-cultural essence. Objectively, this paper would analyze the signifying symbols used in Nkwanwite traditional dance for the following reasons: (a) To acknowledge the use of cultural symbols as part of people’s mythology belief. (b) To interpret, analyze and document the signifying symbols as a socio-communicative tool. (c) To give each of the signifying symbols, sense of belonging and value wherever they exist in the dance. In order to achieve this; Sense Making Theory would be used as theoretical frame work towards interrogating the essence of the signifying symbols. From the findings, due to lack of interpretation and documentation on the use of signifying symbols in dance. It is gradually going into extinction or mis-classify as mere props. In conclusion, non dance scholars should always attribute meaning to every signifying symbols used in traditional dances beyond the aesthetics perception; because in them people's cultural identity and sustainability are imbedded.

Dr Nkululeko Sibanda: no info available

Dr Rosemary Candelario: Ecological Dance as a Method of Decolonization

At its foundation, colonization is a process of acquiring ownership of space. Colonization claims local ecologies—networks of land, people, flora, fauna, practices, etc.—and through various means of force and discourse extracts (and justifies the extraction of) “useful” components—crops, labor, mineral wealth—for profit elsewhere. The (at best) climate change and (at worst) environmental devastation facing the world today, and the resultant wars and migrations, are inextricable from practices and discourses of colonialism and neocolonialism. Decolonization, it would then follow, must engage practices aimed at interrupting and unraveling these now deeply-entrenched systems. This paper argues that what I am calling ecological dance can double as training for developing an alternative relationship between humans and the vast and varied nonhuman world, thereby working a method of decolonization. By calling this dance “ecological,” rather than the more common “environmental dance,” I emphasize the inherently interrelational qualities of “ecology,” what Bottoms et al. refer to as “networks of interdependence” (2012) or what Morton refers to as “the mesh” in which all beings, constructions, and objects are entangled (2012). Moving through theoretical and ethnographic pathways, this paper outlines the potentialities of ecological dance to alter our collective understanding of the body, and to train people to shift out of habitual patterns and into new ecological orientations.

Dr Sara Matchett: Walking and Stumbling: the aesthetic as agitator for change

The paper interrogates the efficacy of site responsive performance art and its contribution towards embodied activism. It proposes performance art that by its aesthetic nature is provocative; where the aesthetic of the performance is the agitator for activism, where the location or site of the performance intersects with the content of the work so as to create an additional layer of meaning. The paper examines two works created by The Mothertongue Project, a collective I co-founded 19 years ago. The first work, *Walk*, was created in 2014 and has had various iterations since then. The paper focuses on the most recent version that was performed at the NAF in Grahamstown this year. *Walk* consists of eight performance installations that respond to rape culture and gender violence. The second work, *#StumblingBlocks*, was made with The Mothertongue Youth Theatre Company, based in McGregor, a

rural village in the Langeberg region of the Western Cape. It was performed in the 'bushes' on the outskirts of McGregor. The provocation for the performance installations was for the performers to conceptualise a ten-minute piece that spoke to the systemic challenges young people in rural South African contexts in the Western Cape face on a daily basis.

Saranya Devan: A dance, born of the sun, fire cannot destroy

Although I feel that the traditional dance form of Bharathanatyam should be preserved for future generations of South Africans because it is a part of history and culture, I do not want to see a regression from the traditional form to meaningless movements. Research for my BA Hons degree indicated a lowering of the standard of Bharathanatyam in South Africa – possibly because the dance form is not institutionalised. My paper will analyse the changes that have taken place in the teaching, learning and performing of the dance form in South Africa today as compared to India. I will also look at the future of Bharathanatyam in South Africa. To demonstrate how proper teaching of Bharathanatyam may be revived, I will relate my experiences of incorporating South Asian dance into a South African dance pedagogy. I took on a creative twist when teaching the basics of Bharathanatyam to a group of mixed-race, young, disadvantaged children in Durban in 2018 creating six community-based teaching classes which accessed the ideas of creative movement in an enjoyable way. Bharathanatyam has a long history of adaptation, modification and transformation. From being only a form of worshipping the Gods, Bharathanatyam can also help heal those who are hurt and bring joy to the unhappy. It is food for the soul.

Dr Veronica Baxter: Laughter as an ethical choice' in the Second Chance Theatre Project

Thematic strand: How do the transdisciplinary approaches in performance make visible new pedagogies of hope in Freirian terms?

The paper will discuss the impact of laughter and comedy as artistic and dramaturgical choices in creating theatre with offenders in Pollsmoor Prison and in a parole theatre company, both part of the Second Chance Theatre Project. To this end the paper will examine Charlotte Wood's (The Guardian, 9 August, 2018) provocation that laughter brings about "a lightness, of joy, the sense of possibility". Arguably in this context, laughter also offers resistance to the socially-constructed scripts that dehumanise and stigmatise people. The making of performances, *Mission I('m)Possible* (2018) and *Being Young* (2019), will be discussed in relation to development of the performances, style, audience responses and the post-performance evaluation. The work of Paulo Freire, specifically Pedagogy of Hope, will be discussed in relation to the Second Chance Theatre Project. The Second Chance Theatre Project is a collaboration between UCT's Centre for Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies and Dept. of Social Development

Dr Yvette Hutchison: Gatekeepers of Knowledges and practices: artists/ academics, editors, publishers/ producers

In exploring this question of the role of gatekeeping in the performing arts, I employ an autoethnographic, self-reflexive theorised analysis of aspects of my experiences as co-editor of the *African Theatre* series (2009-2019), and my work on the African Women Playwrights' Network (AWPN, 2015-19) to trace factors impacting on whose theatre and dance knowledges are being (re)produced and consumed from both an African and global northern perspective. In particular, I will analyse how the ways in which artists interact with one another; academics engage with artists; publishers, producers and theatre programmers engage with artists and diverse publics define cultural perceptions, knowledges and practices of the past, present and future. In reflecting on the launch events surrounding *Contemporary Plays by African Women* (2019), I will analyse the responses the plays staged in whole or part received by programmers and audiences in the UK and SA; and consider how AWPN's work with the Royal African Society's Africa Writes Program is attempting to decolonise curricula in primary and secondary schools in the context of UK austerity. I end by tracking some best

practices and innovative approaches to engaging theatre and dance forms and practices not readily available through mainstream published or programmed resources.

In Conversation with....

And then...: A Conversation on Choreographic Praxis"

Butoh performance as an aesthetic lens from which to probe questions of liminality, identity and body will be part of this witnessed discussion that is led by **Prof. Mark Fleishman** and unpacked by published Butoh authors: **Dr Rosemary Candelario** (University of Texas) and **Jacki Job** (UCT). Candelario will focus on job's latest work *And then ...* in relation to her PhD research, as well as reflect on performance theorisation and a situatedness of theatre-dance research in southern Africa.

Jay Pather and Catherine Boule: *Counting eights in monotone while we re-arrange the deckchairs: Clinging to the conservatoire in the face of catastrophe*

UCT's Curriculum Working Group document published in 2018 states that: "*In the arts curriculum ... African genres and art forms occupied a fringe status in the curriculum, while the Global North was reflected powerfully in how texts, scripts and bodies of knowledge were selected and enacted.*" What do findings like these mean for the conservatoire-driven creative art department that originates in the global North with its emphasis on replication and mastery of technique over original thought and invention? In this conversation Pather begins with assembling a series of fragments to create the turbulent background to these questions: the state of urgency that marks contemporary South Africa, the black body and the groundswell of abjection. Pather and Boule will then converse with the audience around the value of closer readings of public spheres, interdisciplinarity and live art.

Dr Gerard Samuel: Dance Pedagogy and arts integration: access and inclusion'

This title suggests a broad topic within the Applied Dance field. This conversation pit brings lived experiences from the dance classroom into the academic cauldron to investigate some of the navigations being made by dance teachers, artist-teachers, choreographers and researchers as they consider their roles in re-evaluating arts integration, challenges to access and barriers to inclusive education. Participants include **Dr Charlotte Svendler Nielsen** (University of Copenhagen) and **Carla Viljoen** (WCED).

Dr Mark Fleishman: A conversation centred around an idea of 'Distributed Choreographic Labour' as manifest in seven collaborations between Magnet Theatre and Jazzart Dance Theatre between 1994 and 2007.

Award winning, Cape Town based Magnet Theatre company has collaboration and interdisciplinarity as cornerstones of its performance practice. What happens when choreographers, musicians, dancers and theatre directors meet? How do diverse practitioners negotiate their individual expertise and also achieve artistic goals when multimodal approaches are at play? How does a research centered approach impact on creative works? What were some of these artists' success stories and challenges? What is erased in these artistic and research exchanges and what emerges? Dance, (e)merge, Theatre. Participants include **Alfred Hinkel, Jackie Manyapelo** and **Neo Muyanga**.

WORKSHOPS

Maxwell Xolani Rani: Beyond the “museum” approach to the teaching of African dance

The notion of teaching “African” dance begs the questions: “what is African dance” and “what does it express culturally and socially?” Within the African dance community there remains on-going debate around the question of whether or not “African Dance” should be allowed to be taught outside of the areas of origin of the dances and whether these may be codified. Some believe, that teaching African dance beyond the borders of the African continent and in formalised settings, places may result in the tainting of the distinctive dance forms as they converge with western dance styles. This argument endorses a standpoint that seeks to separate an African cultural identity as opposed to one that allows for a universal type of dance meant to be learned and studied by the global community. We have seen that ballet, hip-hop, jazz, and tap dances, which all have unique cultural roots, have been disseminated internationally and therefore there is no reason why African dance cannot be taught, expressed, studied and internationally recognised as a performing art and the decolonisation of African dance teaching in the 21st century is vital. This class experience focuses on Pan Africanism teaching pedagogy to demonstrate that socio-traditional dances, providing that the teacher is informed about nuance, can be taught in a studio based arena.

Kristina Johnstone and Thalia Laric: Before Naming: Immediacy as a compositional tool to exercise the movement of the present

The ‘post-’ and ‘de-’ in post-colonial and de-colonising cues us to the critical operations of time in any artistic practice that aims to be post- and de-. Time, as described by Merleau-Ponty and Mbembe, is ‘that which one inevitably encounters on the path to subjectivity’ (in Mbembe, 2017: 120). Quoting Mbembe further, he writes that ‘time is born out of the contingent, ambiguous, and contradictory relationship we maintain with things, with the world, or with the body and its doubles’ (ibid:121). Time, in other words, has the ability to be conjured. Its closest place of experience is in the body where the senses (seeing, hearing, touching, feeling, smelling, tasting) are attended to. Through our shared artistic work, we propose a practice that trains the senses to guide compositional choices. A focus on sensory information lets us access, sharpen, heighten and even distort perception. By staying in a perceptual realm, in a space before naming takes place, immediacy emerges as a compositional tool. By not fixing composition to predetermined plans, time is freed from the confines of things we’ve already thought of before, making it possible for new powers to be unleashed as it falls to the hands of the players and the public. Our masterclass, with live music, focuses on composing through the senses with special attention to the workings of time.

Lisa Wilson: Re-crossing the Atlantic Dinki-Mini style Dinki-Mini is a Jamaican dance tradition of West African origin. The dance is performed usually after the death of a person to cheer up the bereaved. This workshop will explore this dance tradition through its songs, movements and playful merry-making.

Ilona Frege: Daily Yoga Class

PERFORMANCES

And then... is all about desire that lies beneath the surface and thus, often kept secret. Desire vibrates, agitates and encounters what seems strange and different to convention. This production awakens and reveals what is secret and takes audiences on an insatiable journey of yearning that simultaneously palpates with compassion. And then... uncovers salacious appetites, cravings, and wants of something or someone that is not immediately available and remains out of reach. And then ... is an original new work conceived, directed and performed in the signature innovative dance language of Jacki Job in close collaboration with pianist, José Dias. In addition, opera singer, Bukelwa Velem, and performers Ciaran Heywood and Tafara Nyatsanza expand the scope of the work. The nuanced stratum of desire are also evoked in the costumes, set and light designs, giving this production an "other-worldly", immersive atmosphere. And then ... will fluster and inflame, tug at the heart and expand how we imagine and play ourselves in everyday life.

Performed by *jacki job*

.BEFORE NAMING

The performance of 'Before Naming' is a 30-minute dance work that exposes immediacy as a movement of the present in real time composition. *Before Naming* comes from the ongoing practice and the shared research interests of dancers Kristina Johnstone and Thalia Laric. The work uses the dancers' solo investigations of the mechanics of the body to develop movement material. With a score loosely guiding the dancers' attention, *Before Naming* uses an approach to composition that allows a performance to evolve in real time. Resisting narrative and the improvising artist's inner dramaturgical drive, the work arises from the interplay of dance, music, light and space, and the telepathic exchange of bodies attempting to share the same thinking place.

Performed by Kristina Johnstone and Thalia Laric

Lighting by Andi Colombo

CONTACT

A choreographic work exploring the bodily sensation and movement between two individuals in contact. The bond between male and female is the art of connecting on a deeper level. This bond is characterised by emotions such as affection and trust. The power when souls collide is felt by the sense of touch that transfers energy through movement. This energy produces a strong bond that connects for life. Sharing your soul is the ultimate connection, silence is one of the ways we connect spiritually.

Performed by Michail Labans (male) & Carla Scholtz (female)

Song/Track title: Inner Quiet. Musician & Song Writer: Riley Lee. Record Label: Narada

Choreographer: Janine Booyens

ENCOUNTERING "I":

A Mixed Bill performed by Jazzart Dance Theatre, Students of CTDPs and K Sarveshan

Jazzart Dance Theatre: Limitless Self

Limitless Self is a new work that explores the pinnacles of discovering oneself. As an artist one constantly sharpens and deepens one's understanding of who we are as performers by being vulnerable and open; our joy, sorrow, pain and pleasure, juxtaposed with the discipline and self-reflection is necessary to create an artist and embrace the landscape of our lives.

Choreographer: Shaun Oelf

Performed by: Darion Adams, Gabriella Dirkse, Keenun Wales, Siphosethu Gojo, Tanzely Jooste, Vuyolwethu Nompetseni

Music: Olafur Arnalds – Brim Nils/Anne Muller, Ludovico Einaudi-My Let

Lighting Design: Faheem Bardien

Costume Designer: Lee Kotze

BhavaSaagaram

BhavaSaagaram literally translates into the Ocean of Existence. In South-East Asian philosophies, it is believed that you are born and re-born until you fulfil your purpose. This work seeks to move our collective focus on the physical to the metaphysical by sharing an alternative perspective on life and consciousness. Universal concepts and truths are woven into the narrative of this piece making it dynamic rather than linear. "BhavaSaagaram" begins with the portrayal of Brahman or Apeiron desiring to manifest himself as a living being and his journey into and through the human form. As he wades through the waters of life, his consciousness develops as he is subjected to the various temperaments of the ocean. All is well until the 6 enemies: Kama (lust), Krodha (anger), Lobha (greed), Moha (attachment), Mada (pride) and Matsarya (jealousy), set in to toss and turn the tide against him. Realising and understanding the lessons imbedded in each experience, he detaches himself from his mortal coil and re-unites with his cosmic form.

Performed by K Sarveshan

Music: Lilavan Gangen Bronwen Clacherty

MAHARENG: THE PASSAGE OF A BIRD

Based on a myth by Pule Welch and Samantha Nell, has been collaboratively made by the CTDPs 3rd year Acting students. The production considers migration and its associated challenges through tracing the passage of a bird that was born to a human King and Queen. The bird is forced to take on human qualities. When the nation realise that the boy-child is in actual fact a bird, they cast the King, Queen and their bird-child out. Their only hope is for their child to remember how to fly. They take him into the Land of the Dead to drink from the River of Remembrance. He remembers how to fly and carves a path of stars through the sky for his parents to follow. However, after the King, Queen and Bird have been cast out, power struggles over who should lead the nation erupt, resulting in civil war. The land burns and everyone is forced to flee. Their only hope is to follow the path of stars carved by the bird in the sky. The production traces the many trials and tribulations they have to face on this journey to 'freedom'.

Written by Pule Welch

Based on a story by Samantha Nell

Directed by Sara Matchett

Assisted by Jackie Manyapelo and Alfred Kunutsor

Choreography: Jackie Manyapelo

Percussion: Alfred Kunutsor

Vocal Coach: Morné Steyn

**Various sites on Hiddingh Campus are being utilised. The audience will journey from site to site.
Please wear comfortable shoes and dress warmly**

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VIDEO PERFORMANCE

MOHAMAANA- IN LOVE

Freedom means the opportunity to create without confinement and the openness to encounter new revelation. Until mid 19th Century the Indian Classical Dance – Bharatanatyam (formerly “Sadir”) was practiced exclusively by a community of female dancers called Devadasi-s. After India’s independence from the British rule, many students were encouraged to learn Sadir. The dance was renamed as Bharatanatyam and was “revived” through middle-class appropriation. This made it bereft of its kernel- “sensuality”. Yet, the puritanical view allowed even men to learn Bharatanatyam. Using myself, a male dancer as the canvas, I explore sensuality through “Mohamaana- in love”, a choreographic work on Indian love poems penned in Tamil and Telugu languages. Penned by male poets who assumed the identity of the male deity’s/ hero’s female beloved through poetry, the metaphorical lyrical passages in this presentation communicate stories of love, lust, jealousy and agony through Bharatanatyam.

Performed by Giridhar Raghunathan

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