

PLAY

Thursday 14 March 2024
Brighton Dome Corn Exchange

Director's Note

Since 1994, Vincent Dance Theatre's live work has remained at the heart of the company's practice, the space from which all our other work flows: on film, online and in mentoring, participation and professional development contexts.

In March 2020, along with the rest of the world, Covid stopped us in our tracks, on tour in Folkstone. It took two years of planning and replanning to get on the road in November 2022, and when we did the audiences weren't really ready and neither were we. Another two years on and we are still in recovery: rethinking our practice, its purpose, its value, its distribution methods and still fighting strains of viruses just to stay in a studio together. Coupled with the cost of living crisis and high unemployment over the past four years, many mature and experienced colleagues are exhausted and moving out of the arts sector, reframing their immense collaborative skills into more sustainable contexts. Younger generations of dancers keep training, building skills for a career in the performing arts whilst dance and theatre courses close across the country and the cultural infrastructures in major cities across the UK are slowly being torn apart. In this serious, challenging context it's easy to lose your nerve, lose your confidence and most definitely lose your sense of humour.

So, in making **PLAY**, the only way forward seemed to be to look back, to remind ourselves of all the company has achieved and remind myself that we never start from nothing. There are always foundations to build on. We know how to imagine. We know how to move. We must trust the creative process. Making something together is an excellent reminder of what once felt more possible, necessary, vital, full of life. It's essential in the current political and social climate that we find ways to PLAY, breathe life into new ideas, stay curious, remain grounded with each other and alone.

So, here we are, in 2024, inviting young people to **PLAY** within VDT's past works to explore ways of moving into the future. To find strength in the solidity of what has already been tried and tested, to conquer anxiety, to build resilience, to have fun with it.

That's what live work does.

Charlotte Vincent

Artistic Director and Chief Executive, Vincent Dance Theatre, March 2024

CREDITS

Directed and Designed by Charlotte Vincent

Artistic Associates Robert Clark and Aurora Lubos

Sound composed by Jules Maxwell, featuring excerpts from previous soundtracks by Dean Honer, John Avery, Colin Elliot, Alex Catona, Scott Smith, Patrycja Kujawska, Johann Sebastian Bach, Heinrich von Biber, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Roberta Flack.

Testimonies - thanks to the young women, adoptive parents and foster carers who recorded their voices for *Virgin Territory* (2016) and *In Loco Parentis* (2020)

Lighting Designer Nigel Edwards

Rehearsal Director / Stage Management Robert Clark

Production Manager Mat Ort

Performers

Aurora Lubos

Tegwen

Tia

Sorrel

Veronika

PERFORMERS ON TV VIDEO ARCHIVE

Harry Theaker, Charlotte Vincent, Peter Shenton, TC Howard, Iona Kewney, Janusz Orlik, Patrycja Kujawska, Aurora Lubos, Leszek Bzdyl, Elliot Kay, Iris Heitzinger, Lindsey Butcher, Geir Hytten, Alexandru Catona, Darren Anderson, Eleanor McDonald, Lee Clayden, Matt Howden, Robert Clark, Scott Smith, Greig Cooke, Andrea Catania, Benita Oakley, Leah Yeger, Antonia Grove, Valerie Ebuwa, Elysia, Maia, Nathan, Millie, Tia

THANKS

VDT's success and longevity is built entirely in association with my closest and most valued collaborators past and present: Aurora Lubos, Robert Clark, Patrycja Kujawska, Janusz Orlik, TC Howard, Harry Theaker, Jules Maxwell and Alex Catona (Composers), Anna Williams (Rehearsal Director), Ruth Ben Tovim (Dramaturgy), Nigel Edwards (Lighting Designer) and Mat Ort, Huw Edwards (RIP), Dom Martin, Steve Collis and Jim Harrison (Production Managers).

Thanks also to management teams, past and present: Jane Whitehead, Judith Hibberd, Sian Williams, Katie Bough, Eleanor Ward, Niahm Lynam Cotter, Holly Morris, Kim Johnson, Siân Gilling, Sarah Trist. Also to promoters and commissioners John Ashford (RIP) and Eddie Nixon (*The Place London*), Simon Dove, Wieke Eringa and Bush Hartshorn (*Yorkshire Dance*), Andrew Comben, Beth Burgess, Tanya Peters, Kyla Booth-Lucking, Lou Rogers (*Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival*) and Annabel Dunbar (*Danceworks, Sheffield*). Special thank you to Business Consultant (and former Director) Gregory Nash and former trustees Claire Macdonald and Deborah Chadbourn, whose ongoing friendship and support is invaluable. Huge gratitude to Megs Bruce, Leona Good, Jessica Turner and Jon Clayton for ongoing support and childcare.

Thanks to all VDT's past creatives, understudies and crew, past and current trustees, partners, funders, venue programmers, freelancers and staff who have enabled the practice to keep going over three decades. Thank you to the Dome for encouraging the move to Brighton in 2014, for commissioning this work and having VDT as an Associate Company for the past ten years.

VDT STAFF / FREELANCE TEAM

Artistic Director/Chief Executive Charlotte Vincent

Executive Director Eleanor Ward

Finance & Operations Director Katie Bough

Participation & Digital Development Director Sian Williams

General Manager (Maternity Cover) Kim Johnson

Marketing & Communications Manager Siân Gilling

Trainee Facilitators Lucy Clark and Catherine Sleeman

VDT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Casey Scott-Songin, Pauline Rutter, Tasneem Bhopalwala, Judy Ironside MBE, Lyna Zaim

PLAY is commissioned by Brighton Dome and Brighton Festival. VDT is a National Portfolio Organisation, funded by Arts Council England and Associate Company at Brighton Dome.