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De Quincey Co Board: Kiersten Fishburn (Chair), Vanessa Bateup, Rebecca Bourne Jones, Tess de Quincey, Michael Huxley, Camilla Rountree, Antonia Seymour, David Studdy.

DE QUINCEY CO

Creating work at the intersection of dance, visual arts, theatre, music and performance since 2000, De Quincey Co turns dance inside out to question the ground on which we walk.

De Quincey Co is a performance company based in Sydney which builds on several decades of work by dancer-choreographer Tess de Quincey in Europe, Japan, India and Australia. The dance work is based in BodyWeather, which is a contemporary dance training founded in Japan by butoh dancer Min Tanaka, melding Asian and Western practices and thought. Grounded in principles of dialogue and exchange, BodyWeather is an open exploration, which proposes the body as an ever-changing environment reflecting the greater environment. Rather than forwarding the conception of an ideal, symmetrical body, instead a broken manipulated body is suggested as a site of reality and the scars of lived experience constitute beauty. The 'wounded dancer' foregrounds shadows as a way of reading light.

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DE QUINCEY CO



sydneyfringe.com



DE QUINCEY CO
presents

MOONDANCE

- isotopic reflections

September - November
SYDNEY, MELBOURNE,
WAGGA WAGGA

De Quincey Co presents

MOONDANCE

- isotopic reflections

A PERFORMANCE IN 3 PARTS:

Syllables; Blue; Silver Stories

Photographs: *Vsevolod Vlaskine*

Video Animation: *Samuel James*

Sound: *Vic McEwan*

Choreography & dance: *Tess de Quincey*

Costume: *Lian Loke & Claire Westwood*

Graphic design: *Bala Commerford*

Project management: *Cena Josevska*

Production manager Sydney: *Alex Clapham*

Production/stage assistants Sydney: *Kirsten Packham, Catherine McNamara, Angela French*

We hope you'll stay for a brief conversation with the artists after the show and exchange any thoughts you have about the performance.

Vlaskine's photographs are an exploration of the light of the full moon and the earth. Unobstructed, uncontrived movement was mapped into the night landscape through moonlight and captured by the camera lens. The resulting fields of abstract patterns were animated by video artist Sam James, to then be interpreted separately by composer Vic McEwan and dancer Tess de Quincey. So this performance is the coming together of these elements into a synaesthesia – the stimulation of one cognitive pathway leads to the automatic, involuntary experience in a second cognitive or sensory pathway.

The seeds of this work lie in a short improvised dance made by Tess de Quincey for the opening of MOONBOOK, an exhibition in 2013 by Vsevolod Vlaskine commissioned by SNO – Sydney Non Objective in Marrickville. A screen version of this performance has recently been shown as part of an exhibition of SNO artists in Nice, France.

THE ARTISTS

Visual Artist VSEVOLOD VLASKINE was born in Moscow, and moved to Sydney in 2004. His photographs and video works have been included in a few collective exhibitions at SNO and Articulate Project Space.

Video Artist SAMUEL JAMES has worked as a projection designer for contemporary performance and dance since 1995. He won Best Dance Film at the Australian Dance Awards in 2009 with Julie-Anne Long and continues to make video work that deals with phenomenology and media. His work has been seen in numerous festivals and he completed an MFA on Digital Animism in 2013.

Composer VIC MCEWAN is Artistic Director of The Cad Factory, the current Arts NSW Regional Arts Fellow and the 2015 Artist in Residence at The National Museum. Vic's practice uses sound, video, installation and performance and is deeply entrenched in cross-sector partnerships to examine dysfunctional communication, remote spaces and the poetry embedded in functional objects.

Dancer/Choreographer TESS DE QUINCEY draws from dance, graphics and sculpture on the basis of BodyWeather practice to create performance environments. Her main emphasis has been on inhabitation and the nature of place, developed in both city and desert terrains in Europe, Japan, India and Australia. Her work as a dancer with Min Tanaka and his Mai-Juku performance group in Japan for six years, (1985-91) has been the strongest influence on her performance work. She introduced BodyWeather to Australia in 1989 and founded De Quincey Co in 2000.

REFLECTIONS ON A MOON – Vsevolod Vlaskine

Trivial experience is most impenetrable. All the complexity of the human presence is hidden behind the opaque facade of daily routine. We are used to the fact that exposed, well-lit things are self-explanatory. Trivial experience is brightly illuminated, but that is why it is hard to see beyond it.

The white screen opening Moondance is darkness of sorts anyway. It moves the light away, out of control, relinquishing the failed purpose of exposition. Black marks appear and vanish in a few seconds to lead one's glance or develop into strokes and characters.

Thus provoked and failed effort of following or reading creates a force field. In a way, the dancer is not different from the audience: she also is facing the screen with the tension lines of force replacing her interpretative attention. Her only doubtful advantage is that she has her shadow double as her companion.

The space turns striated, tracing multiple ways the eye or a camera follow sources of light. The micro-pulls of the muscles turning the eyeball, a blink of the eyelid, a tear to lubricate the dry cornea; the turning of celestial bodies, the electricity celebrating distant shores are recorded and re-traced.

The web of traces grows, but instead of turning into a text, map, or a structure, it fills the space, gradually dissolves forms, and reduces the dancer's possibilities of relating to forms and fields. The sensory and bodily indeterminacy become the core of her movements in the growing, while the blunt light dims further.

Unlike light, darkness releases things reluctantly, demanding composure and courage. Emmanuel Levinas wrote: "There is a nocturnal space, but it is no longer empty space, the transparency which both separates us from things and gives us access to them, by which they are given."

"Darkness fills it like a content; it is full, but full of the nothingness of everything. Can one speak of its continuity? It is surely uninterrupted. But the points of nocturnal space do not refer to each other as in illuminated space; there is no perspective, they are not situated. There is a swarming of points."

It gives us access to the dancer, who faces the audience now, becoming a face, a shadow double of the audience entangled in a mute dialogue full of tentative hastily departures, which immediately interrupt themselves and turn onto themselves in the last remaining splinters of light among the boiling dark.

At this point everything stops. The space becomes empty and reverberant. The lights are coming back, this time, not to illuminate, but to be watched, to grow and ripen slowly in our sight, with the sounds growing, ripening, and falling like fruit to the feet of the dancer and to our feet.

¹ Emmanuel Levinas, There is: Existence without Exists. The Levinas Reader, p.31, Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1989