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THE ASSEMBLY

RAGHAV HANDA | 7 - 9 MARCH 2024



Acknowledgement

We pay our respects to the Dharawal people who are the traditional custodians of the land, whose deepening connection to culture and customs have cared for this country for over 60,000 years.

We acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging for their immense spiritual connection to place, whose ongoing connection and traditions have nurtured and continue to nurture this land.

Dharawal land has always been recognised as a meeting place for people from other lands, and in this spirit we respectfully continue this tradition through the bringing together of our communities through arts and culture.

THE ASSEMBLY

RAGHAV HANDA | 7 – 9 MARCH 2024

Opening night

Thursday 7 March 2024, 7.30pm

Performances

Friday 8 March 2024, 7.30pm

Saturday 9 March 2024, 7.30pm



Foreword

Campbelltown Arts Centre is proud to present Raghav Handa's production, 'The Assembly' – a mesmerising performance, crafted beautifully here in Campbelltown.

Woven into the fabric of a captivating dance experience, this performance offers an insightful exploration into Handa's personal history and familial narratives. Combining traditional Kathak dance with contemporary dance movement, this performance delves into complex themes of masculinity and human behaviour inviting audiences to contemplate fragments of our daily lives prompted by memory and personal expectations.

This collaborative work brings together an exceptional team, led by celebrated choreographer Raghav Handa, acclaimed dance artists Victor Zarallo and Josh Freedman, sound designer James Brown, lighting designer Fausto Brusamolino, and costume and set designer Isabel Hudson, guided by dramaturg Vicki Van Hout.

On behalf of Campbelltown Arts Centre, I would like to wish the entire creative team all the best as they embark on this artistic journey. A very special thank you to our Creative Producer, Anthea Doropoulos and the dedicated Arts Centre team for their commitment and efforts in making this project a great success.

Mouna Zaylah, Acting Director
Campbelltown Arts Centre



Artist Statement

My grandfather (in northern India) would take us down to the local college grounds to perform army drills and target practice with a rifle. He wanted to prepare us for any terrorist attacks prevalent in the area at that time. The weapon of choice was a rifle, which was almost as big as I was. And sometimes I can still feel its weight!

He taught us how to spot the difference between a gunshot and fire crackers being let off. How not to get star struck (hit by burning ammunition, lighting the night sky) and how to survive a hand grenade.

'The Assembly – bastard of a place' is born out of my fascination with story, language and the role of human behaviour as an animating force. How do we learn through repetition? How do we distort what we remember? What happens when certain memories relegated to the back room of our psyche come forward?

'The Assembly' is a bit of an absurd mashup of my past - now - combined with the surrealist imagery danced by three performers. I feel, this piece straddles different expressions of masculinity and it is a manifestation of contradictions in everyday life. I hope as the audience you will submit to its dream logic, let go of time and space, flow with the movement, and experience it all communally.

– Raghav Handa







Creative Team

Choreographer and Performer	Raghav Handa
Dancer and Collaborator	Victor Zarallo
Dancer and Collaborator	Josh Freedman
Lighting Designer	Fausto Brusamolino
Sound Designer	James Brown
Designer	Isabel Hudson
Dramaturg	Vicki Van Hout
Production Manager	Jessica Pizzinga
Lighting Operator	Frankie Clarke
Creative Producer	Anthea Doropoulos
Assistant Creative Producer	Anne Cutajar
Pom-pom Designer	Rosie Deacon
Assistant Producer	Bedelia Lowrenčev





Artist Bios

Choreographer and Performer Raghav Handa

Raghav Handa is an Australian choreographer and performer of Indian heritage. Handa has worked with Sydney Dance Company, Force Majeure, Contemporary Asian Australian Performance, Sue Healey, Martin del Amo, The National Theatre of Parramatta, and First Nations choreographers Vicki Van Hout and Marilyn Miller. Inspired by his heritage – his works combine traditional Kathak principles and contemporary movement to create multifaceted and engaging explorations of modern Australian cultural identity.

Handa has worked in a variety of dance roles including choreographer, performer, collaborator, dance lecturer, artist representative and mentor for young performers. Handa's works: 'Tukre' (2015), 'Mebs Rea' (2016) and 'Folly & Time' (2018–19) have been performed across Australia and internationally to strong critical acclaim. In 2020, Handa's work 'Cult Of The Titans' was performed by Sydney Dance Company as part of New Breed and his work 'Dawn' featured in the Sydney Opera House digital season of Unwrapped. In 2020, Handa appeared in the Sydney Festival premiere of 'Double Delicious', an immersive theatre work by Contemporary Asian Australian Performance and Asia TOPA in Melbourne. In 2021, Handa premiered 'Two' in Sydney with further performances including 2021 Adelaide's OzAsia, 2022 Darwin Festival, 2023 Frame Biennale Melbourne and Perth Institute of Contemporary Art. In 2022, Handa's work 'Follies Of God' was commissioned by the Keir Choreographic Award with a further season at the Liveworks Festival by Performance space at Carriageworks. In 2023, he choreographed 'Sex Magic' with Griffin Theatre written by Nicholas Brown for the World Pride and performed in the Volume Festival by the AGNSW.

In 2021, Handa participated in Creative Australia's inaugural Transmitter residency with further developments at the 2022 Darwin Festival and 2024 Serendipity Arts Festival India. Handa's creations are woven through collaboration, incorporating his signature movement style, spoken word, film, and sculptural set design.



Dancer and Collaborator

Victor Zarallo

Victor Zarallo was born in Barcelona and trained at the Instituto del Teatro, The John Cranko School - Stuttgart, and graduated from the Royal Ballet School in July 2008. Before that Victor began his interest in dance at nine years of age doing Ballroom dance and achieving Junior Spanish Champion of 10 Dance Standard/Latin. Zarallo joined Scottish Ballet upon graduation and was promoted to Soloist in 2014.

Zarallo then joined Sydney Dance Company in 2018 as a dancer and later expanded his role to an in-house teacher, as well as training the Pre-Professional Year students and dancers of Sydney Dance Company.



Dancer and Collaborator

Josh Freedman

Josh Freedman is a mover, maker, and occasional shaker working between dance and performance art. Freedman grew up in Sydney on unceded Gadigal land and has been prancing and performing for as long as he can remember. Having trained at Rambert School, Freedman danced briefly in Europe before returning to Australia in 2021. Freedman has worked with Christopher Bruce, Thick&Tight, London Fashion Week, Zappala Danza, Sue Healey, and Chloe Fournier, among others.

An emerging dance maker, Freedman has produced and created several full length shows as well as working commercially for schools, community groups, tv and music. Recent projects include: 'Sweet Fleshed, Loose Skinned & Highly Perfumed' for Sydney Fringe, 'Dialogues with my Butt' for The Flying Nun, and 'From, Amongst, Within' for Canberra Dance Theatre.

Freedman also performs as nightlife alter ego 'Jiggy', in club, festival, theatre, and gallery spaces across east coast Australia. This involves both traditional and experimental forms of drag, cabaret, and striptease. Freedman is passionate about blending queer performance lineages with established dance and theatre forms, aiming to be a conduit for silliness and absurdity in all things.

Lighting Designer Fausto Brusamolino



Fausto Brusamolino is a lighting and visual artist currently living on Darug land, Australia.

Brusamolino devises lighting and generative visuals for live performances, filming and art installations.

Brusamolino has lit productions in traditional venues like theatres, concert halls and art galleries, alongside less conventional locations like multilevel car parks, roof tops, large scale outdoor installations and abandoned locations.

Brusamolino's approach to lighting design organically embraces a wide range of visual and video techniques and uses Creative Coding to build custom made software, allowing a creative, engaging and unique control over the aesthetic of the work.

As a freelancer and creative business owner, Brusamolino has designed shows and worked for: Sydney Festival, Sydney Opera House, Adelaide Festival, Rising Melbourne Festival, City Recital Hall, MCA, Biennale of Sydney, Opera Australia, Australian Ballet, New Zealand International Arts Festival, Post, Victoria Hunt, Lewis Major, Roslyn Oades, The Cad Factory, Urban Theatre Projects, Festival del Teatro Europeo, Teatro Stabile di Torino and many more.



Sound Designer James Brown

James Peter Brown is a composer, sound designer and theatre maker known for his evocative and diverse music scores. Brown's practice investigates emotive experiences that explore character and aid storytelling. Brown has worked across a range of forms, from mainstage theatre and contemporary dance to film, documentary, animation, video games and virtual reality. Brown's processes often involve creating music and sound simultaneously with the development of a project, building connections between performance material and sound.

This project is his third major collaboration with Raghav Handa, including previous works: *Cult of the Titans* and *'Follies of God'*.

Brown holds a Bachelor of Visual Arts from Sydney College of the Arts, in which his focus was on composition and sound design for animation. Brown also holds a Master of Acoustic Physics from The University of Sydney for which his thesis was on the impacts of low frequency sound on the body and mind.



Designer Isabel Hudson

Isabel Hudson is an award-winning set and costume designer. Hudson holds a Bachelor of Design from NIDA and a Bachelor of Arts (Screen and Sound) from the University of New South Wales. Hudson is a lecturer at NIDA in Design for Performance.

Design credits include: 'A Fool In Love', 'Constellations', 'Hubris And Humiliation' (Sydney Theatre Company); 'Torch The Place' set (Melbourne Theatre Company); 'Jailbaby', 'Pony' (Griffin Theatre Company); 'Blessed Union', 'Winyanboga Yurringa' 'Every Brilliant Thing', (Belvoir); 'Maureen: Harbinger Of Death' (Sydney Festival/Rising Festival); 'Young Frankenstein' set, 'American Psycho' set (Hayes Theatre Co); 'The Mousetrap' costume (Crossroads Live).

Hudson has won four Sydney Theatre Awards for her outstanding designs; best set design for 'Constellations', 'American Psycho', and 'Cry-baby'; and best costume design for 'Hubris and Humiliation'. Hudson also won the APDG award for best set design for 'American Psycho'. Nominations include: an APDG Award for Best Set Design and two more Sydney Theatre Award nominations for Best Set Design.



Dramaturg Vicki Van Hout

Vicki Van Hout is an indigenous choreographer with over twenty years experience working in both a grassroots capacity and creating mainstage works. Van Hout's work is reflective of the contemporary urban indigenous experience. Van Hout's first work 'Wiradjourni' examined the reconciliation of Aboriginal kinship under western intervention, while her work 'My Right Foot, Your Right Foot' charted the introduction of welcome to country ceremonies. Van Hout's choreography, 'Briwyan' was a celebration and acknowledgement of the magical power associated with the act of painting.

While the world shut down during covid Van Hout was invited to dance on the Sydney Opera House mainstage as part of their UnWrapped series. In 2022, Van Hout's became a member of the Artistic Directorate for PACT Theatre. Van Hout's also featured in the environmental spectacle 'THAW', performing on a 2.4 tonne block of ice hanging 20 metres over Sydney Harbour for Legs On The Wall of which she has also been appointed associate artist. Van Hout's solo show 'plenty serious TALK TALK' received two Green Room Awards and an Australian Dance Award and will be touring to New Zealand in 2023. Van Hout is currently in development for a new work titled 'Goody Two Shoes' tackling the ubiquity of lateral violence and is the recipient of the Creative Australia Dance Fellowship to focus on the intersection between text and the creative process and legacy.

Production Manager Jessica Pizzinga



Jessica Pizzinga is a Sound Designer, Composer, and Production Manager based in Sydney, Australia. She is a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Arts, with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Technical Theatre and Stage Management). Pizzinga has experience in a diverse range of theatrical and live performance genres both as a musician, composer and production manager. This makes her an out-of-the-box designer and collaborator. Pizzinga loves to work with new technologies and explore new ways of generating work through experimentation.

Some of Pizzinga's previous work includes: Sound Design Associate for 'Murder for Two' (Christmas Edition) by Hayes Theatre Co (2023), Sound Designer and Composer for 'The Lives of Eve' by Whitebox Theatre (2023), Sound Designer and Composer for KXT Bakehouse's 'Human Activity' (2023), Mic Technician for STC's production of 'The Importance of Being Earnest' (2023), Production Manager for Darlinghurst Theatre's 'Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812' (2023), Touring Production Manager for Art's on Tour's 'Wild Thing' (2023), Video Designer for Ensemble Theatre's 'A Broadcast Coup' (2023), Technical Director of ETC:Breakthrough development resented at Riverside in collab with NIDAX, Sound Designer, Co-Composer and System supervisor of 'Eugene' for NIDA's October Main Season in collaboration with Force Majeure (2022), Mic Technician for STC's 'Tenant of Wildfell Hall' (2022), Production Manager of 'Picnic at Hanging Rock' in NIDA's Main Season (2022), Mic Technician for ATYP's 'The Deb' (2022), Sound designer and Composer on 'Hotel' in NIDA's Festival of Emerging Artists (2021-2022) Assistant Event Coordinator for Barangaroo in Sydney Festival (2021-2022) Sound Designer/Composer, Systems' supervisor for 'DRRRM PLAY' in NIDA's Festival of Emerging Artists (2020) Sound Designer/Composer and System's supervisor for 'Perfect Stranger' in NIDA's June Season (2021).

CAMPBELLTOWN ARTS CENTRE

Staff list

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Thank you

I would like to thank Campbelltown Arts Centre for commissioning this piece and the entire team of collaborators who have contributed so generously to my process. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to my mum, Shashi Handa for trusting me with my Grandfather's stories and propelling me to take them to weird and wonderful places, I may not have chosen to go otherwise!

– Raghav Handa





Campbelltown Arts Centre
1 Art Gallery Rd Campbelltown
Open daily, 10am - 4pm
02 4645 4100
C-A-C.com.au



Located on Dharawal land, Campbelltown Arts Centre is proudly owned by the people of Campbelltown and is a cultural facility of Campbelltown City Council. Campbelltown Arts Centre is assisted by the NSW Government through Create NSW and also receives support from the Packer Family Foundation and the Nelson Foundation.

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