



MEDIA RELEASE

Embargoed until 7pm, Thursday August 16, 2018

Performance Space presents Liveworks Festival of Experimental Art 2018



From Left: Su Wen-Chi *Infinity Minus One* and Daniel Kok & Miho Shimizu's *xhe*.

Sydney, Australia: Performance Space is thrilled to reveal the program for the 2018 Liveworks Festival of Experimental Art. Running 18 to 28 of October at Carriageworks, Performance Space will present an inspiring program of innovative new work by acclaimed artists from Australia and the Asia Pacific. Audiences will see what's next in contemporary art and experience some of the most groundbreaking artists of our time as they reimagine our culture and push boundaries.

Since the first annual Liveworks Festival of Experimental Art in 2015, Performance Space has become an internationally recognised hub for Australian and Asia Pacific arts practice. This year's Liveworks program sees Performance Space deepen its connections with leading artists, curators and colleague organisations across Australia and the Australasian region. For this edition of Liveworks, Performance Space is particularly excited to include some of its most ambitious Asia Pacific projects and collaborations to date. It has co-commissioned two major new works with two of Asia's largest and most significant arts centres: The Esplanade in Singapore and the newly-built National Arts Centre Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Some of Asia's most significant new artists and companies are finding a home in the Liveworks program and this step marks an exciting new chapter for the festival.

Performance Space CEO & Artistic Director **Jeff Khan** is also committed to supporting artists at home. "We continue to champion new Australian works that push boundaries and ask questions about who we are: work that immerses audiences in unexpected and captivating new experiences," he says. "This is performance of a kind you won't see anywhere else, where the audience is an essential part of the journey, and the artists are really breaking the boundaries of traditional art forms."

“The theme of Liveworks 2018 is ‘bodies at the edge’. Whether bridging ancient traditions with radical new perspectives, challenging national or cultural boundaries or transcending narrow definitions of gender, sexuality and identity, we hope that this year’s performances will highlight the important role of the body as a powerful agent of change,” continues Khan.

Highlights from the Liveworks 2018 program include: the Australian premiere of *xhe*; a collaboration between Singapore-born and Berlin-based choreographer **Daniel Kok** and Japanese visual artist and designer **Miho Shimizu**. A co-commission between Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay (Singapore), and Performance Space with the Naomi Milgrom Foundation (Australia), this immersive performance promises to engage the audience in a search for the elusive *xhe*: a figure that is not “he”, not “she”, nor “it”. Extraordinary Indonesian dancer **Rianto** returns to Liveworks in 2018 for another Australian premiere in the form of his first full-length solo performance *Medium*. Co-commissioned by Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, Performance Space and Keir Foundation (Sydney), National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts (Weiwuying), and deSingel Internationale Kunstcampus, Staatstheater Darmstadt, *Medium* combines movement, live vocals and music to create a stunning universal call for freedom. Performance Space will also be presenting the Sydney premiere of *Working With Children*, a new work by Melbourne performance artist, writer, director and dramaturg **Nicola Gunn**. *Working With Children* is a trailblazing new performance filled with Gunn’s distinctive humour and unflinching social commentary. Sydney-based interdisciplinary artist and kidney-transplant survivor **John A Douglas** will perform the world premiere of *Circles of Fire: The Amphitheatre*. This visually rich four-part work explores the transformative experience of chronic illness, treatment and recovery through video installation, virtual reality, and live performance.

Says Jeff Khan: “Through Liveworks, Performance Space is excited to support artists who continue to pioneer new ways for art to meet its audience. More than ever, this year’s program invites you inside the work: to immerse yourself, to dance, embrace a stranger, play games, contemplate mortality, engage in conversation and wonder at the vastness of the universe. Come with us, and discover the infinite possibilities that performance reveals. See you at the festival.”

Presented by Performance Space, Naomi Milgrom Foundation & Carriageworks, *xhe* by **Daniel Kok** and **Miho Shimizu** is a remarkable collision of dance, sculpture and live electronic music and a search for the elusive *xhe*. Moving within a kaleidoscope of shifting patterns, moving objects, syncretic sounds, uncanny forms and enchanting moments, the artists will create a shared space of imagination and collective daydream in which to summon, receive, discover, and even become *xhe*.

In *Working With Children*, internationally acclaimed, Melbourne-based performance artist **Nicola Gunn** explores the moral and ethical minefield of working with children and the moral ambiguities it raises. In the Sydney premiere of her new work, Nicola asks us to imagine a woman who works with children, but has a secret she’s incredibly ashamed of, and to imagine a man who works with children, but says and does things in private he wouldn’t want made public.

Circles of Fire: The Amphitheatre is a new work by Sydney's own **John A Douglas**. Inspired by the artist's experience of a life-saving kidney transplant, John's work brings together video installation, virtual reality, medical procedures and live performance to invite us inside his own physical experience, witnessing the wonder and terror of the medicalised human body.

In *Medium*, Indonesian dancer **Rianto** provides a contemporary take on Lengger: the traditional, cross-gender Javanese dance developed over hundreds of years and taught to Rianto by masters of the form. Through *Medium*, Rianto opens the space between manhood and womanhood; customs and religious principles; conscious control and trance.

Performance Space is honoured to present the Sydney premiere of *Uncanny Valley Girl* by trailblazing local artist **Angela Goh**. Merging live performance, text and a razor sharp soundtrack by Melbourne-based producer CORIN, *Uncanny Valley Girl* explores our dread of the fembot; a hybrid of women and machine, as though our ultimate fear is not only the rise of the machine, but the rising up of the female body.

100 Keyboards is a work created by pioneering Japanese sound artist **Asuna** and provides a captivating site-specific listening experience. One hundred cheap plastic keyboards play the same key, generating an undulating sonic harmony both mesmerising and mysterious. Sound waves on the same frequency multiply and bounce off in myriad directions, creating a complex sonic field of interference and reverberation that swells and changes over time. Don't miss the Sydney premiere of this internationally acclaimed experimental music performance.

Performance Space & Carriageworks are proud to invite audiences to witness the power of a visionary future in *Fempre\$\$: WISHWITCH*. Created by Brisbane-based artist and proud Aboriginal woman **Hannah Brontë**, *Fempre\$\$: WISHWITCH* is a club night turned immersive installation celebrating women of colour. Drawing on First Nations cultural practices of empowerment and trance, this performance party will transport you to an alternate universe where societal structures are challenged and matriarchal futures manifest. Blending hip hop, video art, installation and performance, Brontë places women on the mic, the decks and the dance floor.

Infinity Minus One by Taiwanese choreographer **Su Wen-Chi** explores our place as humans in the vast scale of cosmic time and space. Created through research at CERN (the European Organisation for Nuclear Research), this hypnotic new work emulates the behaviour of cosmic rays and the scientific devices used to detect them. *Infinity Minus One* is a groundbreaking fusion of science and performance by one of Asia's most exciting choreographers, and also features the acclaimed Indonesian music powerhouse, Senyawa.

In *High Performance Packing Tape*, celebrated Australian company **Branch Nebula** employ readymade materials - stationery and disposable hardware items - to place performer Lee Wilson in a series of mind-bending planes and predicaments. Co-Presented by Performance Space & Branch Nebula, this world premiere sees safety and wellbeing de-prioritised in new and liberating ways. *High Performance Packing Tape* faces fear, self preservation and risk management to create enthralling new possibilities for physical performance.

In the back of a stationary truck, discover an unlikely bedchamber, where you're invited into a stranger's embrace. In a moment of fleeting closeness, audience member and performer enact a fundamental human desire: to hold and be held in the arms of another. A much-loved signature work originally performed by cross-disciplinary artist & writer **SJ Norman**, *Rest Area* enters its second decade re-scored for a cast of bodies. Simple and profound, *Rest Area* is a one-to-one meditation on longing, comfort, and the melancholy eroticism of loneliness.

Fifteen years ago, a group of Australians made 'Escape From Woomera': a politically explosive video game that put players in the shoes of a refugee held in immigration detention. In 2018 Performance Space is proud to present *Return to Escape from Woomera*, where performance collective **Applespiel** invite you to play the original video game in this specially commissioned live gaming and performance experience. Each night, the artists create a live commentary to accompany the gameplay alongside human rights advocates, refugees and the creators of the original game, exploring the contemporary significance of this cultural intervention.

Drawing on Carriageworks' industrial history, **110%** rezone the precinct's public space as a site of active art vocation. Unfolding throughout Liveworks 2018, this parasitic performance installation creates porous and leaky architectural forms that receive ongoing support and attention from highly disciplined workers. Come and wander through the wetness as 110% sweat the foundations of minimal sculpture and reimagine the practice of collaborative labour.

Performance Space & **RealTime** are honoured to present *RealTime In Real Time*, celebrating the legacy and vision of Australia's much-loved arts publication. This 5-hour-long, informally facilitated open conversation will evolve via chat, micro-performances and improvisations and will chart the remarkable transformation of the art experience over the last quarter of a century and how we've responded to it as practitioners, audiences and writers.

Performance Space is thrilled to present a series of Conversations and Workshops as part of the Liveworks 2018 program and to welcome visionary artist, curator and festival director **Ong Keng Sen** to deliver the *Liveworks 2018 Keynote Lecture*. Known for his transformative Artistic Directorships of TheatreWorks (Singapore) and the Singapore International Festival of Arts, as well as his groundbreaking work as a performance maker and theatre director, Ong's approach to interdisciplinary and cross-cultural performance has been a leading influence shaping how Asia-Pacific practice is received internationally. This year's Liveworks program will also feature a range of artist-in-conversation events and workshops that enable patrons to hear directly from the Liveworks artists and further explore the themes and ideas behind the works.

Day For Night returns to Liveworks in 2018, bringing the best of the club together with Australia's finest queer artists. This edition of Sydney's hottest and most diverse queer art party brings some of our most trailblazing senior artists - such as pioneering Sydney photographer William Yang - together with a new generation of performers, DJs and troublemakers including Koco Carey and Rhada La Bia. From stories of Sydney's secret history of queer underground parties to probing the intersection of race, culture and sexuality, Day for Night will make you think and sweat in equal measure!

For bookings and further program information visit the Performance Space [website](#).

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About Performance Space: Performance Space is the crucible for risk-taking artists. Emerging over 30 years ago in response to artists' articulated desire to explore and investigate new forms of art, Performance Space has consistently identified, nurtured and presented new directions in contemporary practice. We champion risk, experimentation, and new modes of creative expression. Performance Space continues to evolve and renew to meet the needs of the independent sector and explore new models for developing and presenting the most critical and important new work.

Performance Space is supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body; the New South Wales Government through Arts NSW; and the Visual Arts and Crafts Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments. Performance Space is a resident company and key programming partner at Carriageworks.

About Performance Space CEO & Artistic Director, Jeff Khan: Jeff Khan is Artistic Director & CEO of Performance Space, Sydney. Originally from Western Australia, Jeff is a curator and writer working across performance, dance and the visual arts with a particular interest in interdisciplinary projects and experimental practices. From 2006–2010 Jeff was Artistic Director of Melbourne's Next Wave Festival, overseeing the development and delivery of the 2008 Next Wave Festival: CLOSER TOGETHER and the 2010 Next Wave Festival: NO RISK TOO GREAT, as well as Next Wave's acclaimed Kickstart development program. Jeff was Guest Curator of NEW12 at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (2012) and of Primavera 09 at the Museum of Contemporary Art (2009). Jeff sat on the international jury of the 2017 Taishin Art Award—Taiwan's largest contemporary art prize, and has served on award and assessment panels for organisations including the Australia Council, Create NSW, the National Portrait Gallery and Bundanon Trust. He was Facilitator of the 2013 National Dance Forum, and sat on the Dance Board of the Australia Council from 2009-2011. Previously Jeff has held roles at Gertrude Contemporary (Melbourne), Perth Institute of Contemporary Art and John Curtin Gallery (Perth), and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York). As a writer, he has contributed texts to numerous publications, exhibition catalogues, magazines and artists' projects.

Media Queries

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