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## ***Infinity*: Murphy, Obarzanek and Page together in a powerhouse triple bill**

### **The Australian Ballet's 50<sup>th</sup> year starts off with a bang**

The Australian Ballet opens its milestone 50th year with a bold statement about the future of dance. *Infinity* will see the world premiere of three specially commissioned Australian works by **Graeme Murphy**, **Gideon Obarzanek** and **Stephen Page**. It's the first time in the company's history that a triple bill of all-new Australian works has been presented.

Murphy breaks away from his established narrative style with an abstract work, *The Narrative of Nothing*; Obarzanek provides a fresh look at classical ballet with a post-modern twist in *There's Definitely a Prince Involved*; and Page combines Western ballet with the spirituality of Indigenous dance to forge new frontiers of storytelling in *Warumuk – in the dark night*. These trailblazers each have unique choreographic sensibilities and will thrillingly test the limits of what ballet can be.

The artistic director of The Australian Ballet, David McAllister, believes *Infinity* is an important program that illustrates the strength and diversity of dance produced locally.

"We've worked incredibly hard over five decades to champion not only Australian ballet, but dance of all forms," explains McAllister. "To feature three premiere works by all Australian choreographers says loudly and proudly that this country is producing outstanding local dance that is exciting, relevant and of an international standard."

"All three choreographers have strong ties with the company as either former students of The Australian Ballet School, dancers with the company or past choreographic collaborators – in some cases all of the above – so it's a privilege to be premiering their works. It's an amazing way to start our 50th anniversary celebrations!" says McAllister.

Stephen Page, the founder and artistic director of Bangarra Dance Theatre, is credited with putting Australian Indigenous dance on the international stage. *Warumuk – in the dark night* follows three critically acclaimed collaborations with The Australian Ballet.

Dancers from both companies will join in telling a collection of traditional stories about the Evening Star. While past works *Alchemy* (1996), *Rites* (1997) and *Amalgamate* (2006) fused ballet with Indigenous themes – this is the first time the two companies have told an Indigenous narrative.

Having celebrated his 20th anniversary at the helm of Bangarra in July this year, Page continues to reinvent Indigenous stories both within his own company and through collaborations with other dance companies.

Set to a score by multi-talented composer David Page, *Warumuk – in the dark night* travels twelve hours in the nightly cycle of the Evening Star through seven short traditional tales. This spiritually rich work features set design by Jacob Nash and costumes by Jennifer Irwin.

Best known for his contemporary creations for Chunky Move, boundary-pushing choreographer Gideon Obarzanek explores the psychology of ballet in the cheekily titled *There's Definitely a Prince Involved*.

Obarzanek asked people "What is ballet?" and the range of answers formed the basis for this new work. Delving into the history of ballet, he unravels the myths and misconceptions surrounding the art form. In doing so, he has discovered a new story of the heroic Prince figure present in so many classic tales.

For all media enquiries, including interviews and images, please contact:

Eli Wallis, Publicist

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While taking inspiration from the past, Obarzanek's sights are squarely set on the future with bold costume designs by rising Australian fashion star, Alexi Freeman.

This will be Obarzanek's first major work after stepping down as artistic director of Chunky Move and will mark the start of a new chapter for the choreographer singled out by *The New York Times* as "a tour de force that will live long in the memory".

Heralded by *The Age* as "the master of movement invention", Graeme Murphy takes a step away from classic story ballets with his new abstract work ***The Narrative of Nothing***. It's a work that allows the audience to appreciate a pure, pared back ballet from which to draw their own stories.

Murphy has a long-standing artistic relationship with The Australian Ballet, as both a dancer and choreographer. *Romeo & Juliet*, which premiered in 2011, was his latest work in a long list of popular creations for the company, including *Swan Lake*, *Nutcracker* – *The Story of Clara* and *Firebird*.

Murphy knows the company's dancers intimately, and will use this knowledge to put their considerable strengths front and centre stage.

Underpinning the work will be the newly commissioned score by composer of the moment Brett Dean, recently lauded for his award-winning work *Bliss* for Opera Australia.

These visionaries continue to expand the horizons of Australian dance, showing that in the future, anything is possible.

## CREDITS

**THE NARRATIVE OF NOTHING (2012)**

*Choreography* – Graeme Murphy  
*Creative associate* – Janet Vernon  
*Music* – Brett Dean  
*Costume and set design* – Jennifer Irwin  
*Stage and lighting design* – Damien Cooper  
*Sound design* – Bob Scott

**THERE'S DEFINITELY A PRINCE INVOLVED (2012)**

*Choreography* – Gideon Obarzanek  
*Music* – Stefan Gregory after  
 Piotr Tchaikovsky  
*Costume design* – Alexi Freeman  
*Stage concept* – Benjamin Cisterne and  
 Gideon Obarzanek  
*Lighting design* – Benjamin Cisterne

**WARUMUK****IN THE DARK NIGHT (2012)**

*Choreography* – Stephen Page  
*Music* – David Page  
*Costume design* – Jennifer Irwin  
*Set design* – Jacob Nash  
*Lighting design* – Pádraig O Suilleabhain

## DATES

**Melbourne**

24 February – 6 March (13 performances)  
 the Arts Centre, State Theatre  
 with Orchestra Victoria

**Sydney**

5 – 25 April (21 performances)  
 Opera Theatre, Sydney Opera House  
 with Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra

**Bookings**

[australianballet.com.au](http://australianballet.com.au) or 1300 369 741

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