



Information Pack

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Open Arms Dance Company

Information Pack Contents

1. Company Profile

- Aims
- Values and Activities

2. Mutual Benefits Partnership Program

- Partnership Benefits Offered
- Partnership Benefits Sought

3. Learning and Training Program

- Dance Class Program and Timetable
- Cultural, Social and Financial Development Program and Combined Program Timetable

4. Overseas Program

- Overseas Work Development and Performance Program
- Model of 5 Year Training, Development and Performance Timetable

5. Details of First Work

- Development Process

6. Professional Profiles

- Robin Wyllie
Artistic Director
- Fiona Bryant
Dancer

Open Arms Dance Company

Company Profile

Our Aims

Founded by Artistic Director Robin Wyllie in 2003, Open Arms Dance Company aims to produce contemporary dance works rich in cultural content that inspire, engage the imagination, and are thematically accessible and relevant to a wide audience.

Our notion of culture refers to a world culture that has existed since the beginning of humanity. It is evident in all of the major cultural traditions and practices that have existed. It is not a material culture, a consumer culture, or an academic culture, it is a deeply felt human culture that belongs above these activities and is accessible to every human being.

Containing a unique movement vocabulary performed by dancers trained in contemporary dance, ballet, improvisation, martial arts, gymnastics, acrobatics and yoga, their performances will not be strictly limited to a dance vocabulary, company members often possessing talents in other art forms such as music, multimedia, and writing, all of which are enthusiastically utilized.

Values and Activities

Through its dance works and other areas of activity, Open Arms Dance Company seeks to actively promote:

- The need in our society and education systems to facilitate, recognize, support and encourage the unique talents present within each individual for the benefit of both the individual and society.
- Cross cultural and inter-faith understanding, respect, co-operation and the facilitation of positive relationships between individuals and organizations.
- The realization of fundamental material, emotional and spiritual circumstances common to all humans and, consequently, the personal and social benefits that are possible through enterprises and relationships inspired and influenced by this realization.
- The importance of education in preventing social conflict and disharmony.
- Discussion on the sophisticated and dynamic outcome of simultaneously embarking on artistic, business and social development processes.

These values are addressed and promoted through the content of the company's shows as well as other programs of activity that the company engages in. These include:

Regular donations to humanitarian organizations

From its formation Open Arms Dance Company has placed a strong emphasis on the importance of contributing to society both culturally and financially. The company will donate ten percent of all box office takings to supporting various humanitarian organizations.

Promotion of the Human Development Curriculum

Open Arms Dance Company will also raise awareness of the importance of increasing education in humanitarian and social issues through its promotion of the Human Development Curriculum, an education project founded by Robin Wyllie in 2002. For more information on this project go to:

<http://members.ozemail.com.au/~tolstoy2>

Open Arms Dance Company's Home

Open Arms Dance Company aims to secure a home within the near future. Whilst refurbishing the building to cater for our needs, we will also incorporate socially responsible design and functionality into our plans. We have discovered a successful precedent of this aim in the design of the Australian Conservation Foundation's offices, also located in Melbourne, Australia, and will utilize their information resources in our process. To learn more about ACF's "60L Green Building" go to:

<http://www.acfonline.org.au/asp/pages/document.asp?idDoc=1194>

The Resource Lounge

Within the company home there will be a resource lounge containing books, music, videos, and other media sources, that will provide inspiration and education in the areas of cultural and business practice and social development.

Creative Workshops

Although not aiming to work intensively in the education field, Open Arms Dance Company will hold regular workshops centered on exploring expression in dance and other art forms and the creative, therapeutic and professional applications of these experiences.

Dance Class Program

In total, 8 dancers will be selected, through an audition/workshop process, as members of Open Arms Dance Company. As part of their formal physical training, the dancers will engage in the company's Dance Class Program. The content of this program will be influenced by the values of

the company with an emphasis on developing strong technique, individuality, creativity, strength, agility, and expressiveness.

Cultural, Social and Financial Development Program

Company members will also engage in a learning program designed to facilitate cultural, social and financial development. Within this program there will be a strong emphasis on self-education and company members will be encouraged to utilise the learning resources within The Resource Lounge. Accompanying this emphasis is the company's belief that the individual is best equipped to determine what they wish to learn, and what is important for their personal and professional development.

Overseas Work Development and Performance Program

The company will work overseas in partnership with local cultural organisations from primarily low socio economic areas to develop and perform new dance works. Over five years the company will travel to Columbia, Kalimantan (Indonesia), Italy, Spain, Saudi Arabia, China, Africa and India.

On-Line Employment Resource Base

Recognizing a widespread need for young people studying in the arts to have access to jobs that are suited to their character, skills and interests, Open Arms Dance Company will form an on-line resource base aimed at linking artistic organizations with people who have a genuine interest in working with them.

Networking

Open Arms Dance Company is committed to establishing a network of likeminded individuals, companies and organizations that directly or indirectly support, or work within, social, cultural, and enterprise development projects. This network will allow access to a large resource base of people wishing to share their skills, knowledge, products and services, and co-operate in identifying and achieving shared goals.

Open Arms Dance Company

The Mutual Benefits Partnership Program

The company is currently in discussions with individuals, companies and organizations that are interested in becoming involved in our Mutual Benefits Partnership Program. This program aims to endorse and promote the activities of other organizations and individuals that share the same values and aims as our company. We feel that this is an exciting, and highly effective, way of building a strong network of individuals and organizations committed to furthering social, cultural, and entrepreneurial development, whilst also promoting the business activities that they themselves are engaged in.

Partnership Benefits Offered

Due to the initial support that Open Arms Dance Company has received in relation to its choreographic intent and outcome, its values and activities, and overall aims and objectives, we believe that the media and general public will be very interested in our process and performances. Consequently the organizations and individuals that we are affiliated with through our mutual benefits program will gain local and international exposure, publicity and acknowledgement via:

- Advertising on performance programs.
- Advertising on the company's web site that will contain a resource base for social, artistic, dance, health, education and entrepreneurial projects around the world and also provide an online employment resource base increasing its usefulness, popularity, and consequently, its value as a promotional tool.
- Promotion through electronic and print mail lists.
- Promotion through print advertising.
- Tickets and programs giving you the opportunity to attend our performances.

Partnership Benefits Sought

We welcome the opportunity to create new and dynamic partnership arrangements and recognize that this can occur in many ways.

The main areas that we are presently seeking assistance in, however, include:

- Financial assistance for the company's operational expenses that are currently directed to ensuring adequate funding for its two-year company development process.
- In Kind Support in the form of printing services, multimedia and digital technologies (incl. digital camera, computers, scanner, audiovisual equipment etc).

If you would like to become involved please contact Robin Wyllie at wylleone@hotmail.com.au.

Open Arms Dance Company

Learning and Training Program

Dance Class Program

The eight full time members of Open Arms Dance Company will engage in an intensive physical training program. The content of the program will be influenced by the values of the company with an emphasis on developing strong technique, individuality, creativity, strength, agility, and expressiveness. Each day that dance classes run they will finish at 1:00pm. There will be no classes during the day on Wednesdays except for a yoga class in the morning and a gymnastics class at 6:00pm. The classes will be devised and taken by professionals within the relevant dance disciplines in consultation with Artistic Director Robin Wyllie. After these formal classes, time will be allocated for performance development.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30-10:00	Contemporary	Contemporary	Yoga	Contemporary	Contemporary
10:15-12:00	Ballet	Ballet	No Classes	Ballet	Ballet
12:15-1:00	Yoga	Yoga	No Classes	Yoga	Yoga
1:00-2:30	Lunch RW	Lunch RW	Lunch	Lunch RW	Lunch RW
2:30-4:30	Choreography	Choreography	No Classes	Choreography	Choreography
4:30-6:00					
6:00-7:30			Gymnastics	The Improvisation Club	

Following these classes the dancers will take part in the company's Cultural, Social and Financial Development Program.

Open Arms Dance Company

Learning and Training Program

Cultural, Social and Financial Development Program

The members of Open Arms Dance Company will also engage in a learning program designed to facilitate cultural, social and financial development. It will be divided into three areas of activity:

Social Development Project

As a group, company members will implement one or more projects that further social development through fund and awareness raising initiatives and the development and implementation of new programs.

Financial Education and Planning

Company members will be involved in financial planning sessions and have access to relevant learning materials within The Resource Lounge. There will be an emphasis on discovering alternative and profitable ways for artists to relate to, and manage, money.

Personal Artistic Development

This time is allocated for the dancers to engage in their own artistic development. The content and outcome of how this time is spent is determined by the dancers themselves and does not have to be dance related. Therefore a dancer may decide to learn about a particular event, person or culture, choreograph their own dance work, compose their own song, paint, draw, write or go for a walk with a digital camera. There are no expectations of how this time is spent. It is time for the individual. The dancers may choose to work alone or with others.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30-10:00	Contemporary	Contemporary	Yoga	Contemporary	Contemporary
10:15-12:00	Ballet	Ballet	No Classes	Ballet	Ballet
12:15-1:00	Yoga	Yoga		Yoga	Yoga
1:00-2:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
2:30-4:30	RW Choreography	RW Choreography		RW Choreography	RW Choreography
4:30-6:00	Social Development Project	Financial Education and Planning	No Classes	Break	Personal Artistic Development
6:00-7:30			Gymnastics	The Improvisation Club	

Open Arms Dance Company

Overseas Work Development and Performance Program

The Company's eight dancers will regularly travel overseas to develop dance-based performance works in collaboration with a local cultural organisation from the area. This will involve providing the organisation with a performance development structure and a financial base for the production of the consequent performance season. The company will travel to communities in Columbia, Indonesia, Spain, Saudi Arabia, China, Africa and India.

Whilst living in these communities, company members will continue with their regular dance training whilst also engaging in classes and workshops that will provide training in the local cultural form.

Through this process of cultural exchange the company wishes to facilitate a cultural connection that allows those involved to experience and express a shared cultural bond.

The company will predominantly live and work in low socio-economic areas in order to gain an understanding of our global society that is based on experience.

The process within each country will be fully documented and professionally edited as a record of the social conditions of the area and our activities. These documentaries will then be presented in various circumstances in the future.

Open Arms Dance Company

5 Year Training, Development and Performance Timetable

Model Only

Month	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
January		Company Training at Home		Home Development and Performance	China Development and performance	India Development and Performance	
February			1 Wk Break				
March		1 Wk Break	Company Training at Home	1 Wk Break	1 Wk Break		
April		Columbia Development and Performance	1 Wk Break			1 Wk Break	
May			Spain Development and Performance	1 Wk Break	1 Wk Break	1 Wk Break	Home Development and Performance
June					Saudi Arabia Development and Performance	Home Development and Performance	1 Wk Break
July		1 Wk Break					
August		Home Development and Performance	1 Wk Break	1 Wk Break		1 Wk Break	
September	Company Training at Home	1 Wk Break	TBA Development and Performance	Home Development and Performance	1 Wk Break		
October	1 Wk Break			1 Wk Break	Africa Development and Performance		
November		1 Wk Break	1 Wk Break				
December	Company Training at Home	Kalimantan Development and Performance	Company Training at Home	1 Wk Break	1 Wk Break		
	2 Wk Break		2 Wk Break	Company Training at Home	Company Training at Home		

Key

	Home - Development and Performance
	Overseas - Development and Performance
	Company Training at Home
	Break

Open Arms Dance Company

Details of first work

In 2002 I embarked on the development of a full-length dance work in collaboration with a dance colleague of mine, Fiona Bryant, who like myself was studying in a Bachelor of Dance at the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne, Australia.

As part of our Composition class we developed and performed a piece of this work for our assessment. It was entitled "Remnants of Presence" and displayed various conceptual and movement elements that we planned to incorporate in the full-length work. For us it was a deeply satisfying development process and performance and was well received by our assessment panel who awarded it the highest mark within our year group.

As well as the choreography and direction of the full-length work I was to be responsible for the composition of music accompanying the piece, the creation of accompanying video projections, and the writing of narratives that the choreography would be based upon, an important aspect of the performance format and development process. I began the development of these elements of the work including the composition of music scores, the collection of video footage, and the writing of various narratives that inform specific sections of the work. Unfortunately due to financial difficulties the piece was not realized and plans for its performance have been put on hold indefinitely. Nevertheless observations on the creative process have been included below in order to provide an insight into some of the areas that the company wishes to explore in the future.

The narratives that the choreography is based upon are of a mythical, imaginary type, similar in nature, but not imitating or referring to, the stories of ancient Greece, Rome and India. There are many stories, each with a rich imaginary world, not necessarily related to the other, but when joined somehow convey the sense of an inconceivable, wondrous whole - the experience of life.

The impulse for the movement material comes from an inner source, a source that throughout the work's development has been a place to return and stay attentive to. It is delicate, at times a whisper, but tangible nonetheless. The importance of this state has remained a priority in our process and allows us to experience great respect for ourselves, and each other, due to its honesty and openness. We also feel privileged to take part in this experience, as it is an adventure where one is able to discover new feelings, movements, and insights, which speak to us and fill us with a sense of real satisfaction.

We feel, and it is our hope, that this feeling of honest and real content that follows, as much as we are able, the guidance of an inner source will also be felt by the audience.

The following is from a passage of writing that prefaces the work and is available on my web site:

"The story is unfolding within me and without, yet it has already been told, is already known. Awaken memory and let us merge as one playing in the space beyond time.

Once I was told a story I couldn't hear. I listened very hard, and I understood. I shook. I

nodded. My arms, by my sides, hung, were lifted, yet driven, raised in deliverance and submission. I submit my self to you. I will serve you. My palms gave upwards and received from upwards. I could feel my bones become strong. The energy channels in my body were wide and flowing. Simultaneously giving, receiving, lifted, held, and holding on to. Within and without. My lips spoke, in another language, words of understanding, agreement, intention and fact. It was a conversation where both spoke the same thing. I listened to and spoke to at the same time. I was guided. I understood so clearly and passionately. I understood what I was meant to do, who I was meant to be. I understood and yet I didn't".

A small amount of video and still images were collected from this process and are available on request in digital format.

Open Arms Dance Company

Professional Profile of Artistic Director Robin Wyllie

This profile contains information that details my experience within the areas of social, artistic and education development. It also highlights relevant achievements in my academic and professional career. As well as my own observations, a number of references are available on request in digital format. These allow for an objective appraisal of my character, ability and overall professional capacity, which I believe is well equipped to ensure the success of Open Arms Dance Company.

The following information is divided into three areas that chronologically detail my demonstrated commitment to furthering social, artistic and education development. It also draws attention to the leadership and management qualities that I have demonstrated through projects that I have initiated.

Social and Educational Development

My relationship with social and educational causes formally started in year 12 at the Canberra College where I was an active member of the Social Justice Group. It was here that I became involved with the activities of Amnesty International and similar organizations through fundraising and educational campaigns. I learned of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a document from which I still gain enormous inspiration. This started a process of self-education in the area of social development that continues to this day. I went on to study subjects at school such as 'Social Commentators', 'Literature of War and Peace', 'Fascists and Socialists' and 'Native and African American History'. Into these subjects and assignments I brought my own theories on social development that were gradually forming. I learnt of past efforts that had been made to better society, I learnt of the people who had come before me who dedicated their lives to this end, people I will always respect, Martin Luther King Jr., Mahatma Gandhi and many others.

It was during this year that I demonstrated my capability to achieve high academic recognition based on work that was infused with values that I was passionate about. I received straight A's.

The capacity to present work of high quality was later rewarded during my tertiary studies. After receiving strong results in Literature whilst studying at the Australian National University, I was offered entrance into the English Honors Stream. Later, when studying at Deakin University, I was awarded membership into the Golden Key International Honor Society in recognition of "Outstanding Scholastic Achievement and Excellence", again based on strong results in literature.

Over the next few years I continued my process of self-education and involvement within the area of social development. This cumulated in late 2002 when I completed a draft version of the Human Development Curriculum, an education project that aims to join the areas of social, artistic and educational development.

After sending this curriculum to His Holiness The Dalai Llama I received a reply from his office that stated:

"It [The draft HDC proposal] very much goes in line with His Holiness's thinking about the need to develop such human values as integrity, honesty, compassion, respect for others etc. both at home and in the school. Your proposal seems to give the practical means to achieve this in the schools".

After sending this document to people within the United Nations and UNESCO I was approached to act as a research assistant for the implementation of a social and artistic development curriculum. This project is still regarded as confidential and therefore no further information is available at this time.

The draft HDC was also posted on-line at TakingITGlobal, an online community organization that I actively contribute to that facilitates the expression of youth on artistic and social development issues.

Related Resume Highlights:

In 1999, after completing a year of studies at The Australian National University, I went to Kalimantan, Indonesia, where I taught English at a local school. I will never forget my first taxi ride through the city of Jakarta and the hundreds of miserable and desperate faces that approached the taxi begging for money, the woman without a hand banging her amputated arm against my window. It was an educational experience impossible to gain from a school or university.

After returning from Kalimantan in 2000, I worked as an office assistant in the Ministerial Correspondence Unit of Environment Australia in Canberra. This allowed me to gain insight into how social development policy is implemented at a governmental level.

Artistic Development

I have studied within the arts at three tertiary institutions in Australia. These were the Australian National University (Drama, Literature), Deakin University (Dance, Literature) and most recently the Victorian College of the Arts (Dance). This has given me an insight into how art is taught across a range of tertiary institutions.

Over the last three years I have had solid performance experience in dance, drama, physical theatre and voice productions in Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney.

In 2001 I choreographed and performed a solo dance work, "Untitled, by Anonymous", at the Australian Choreographic Center. It was a piece that emphasized the importance of art and culture in social development.

In 2003, I left full time dance studies at the VCA in order to start Open Arms Dance Company.

Related Resume Highlights:

In 2000, I was able to gain valuable insight into the workings of the Australian dance industry through my work as office assistant at the Australian Choreographic Center.

Leadership and Management Experience – Initiatives and Responsibilities

Whilst studying at the V.C.A. I founded The Improvisation Club. This club was formed in recognition of the need for fellow students to gain a better understanding and awareness of their unique talents and worth as dancers and people. The following is an excerpt from my web site that details the activities of the club.

“The impetus for the clubs creation, and its continuation, is the dancers' desire to explore movement and theatre that follows and cultivates impulse and instinct. The primary goal of this activity however is not the development of improvisational skills but rather the dancers overall choreographic and creative ability. As the dancers spend time within their own creative state, a unique intelligence, insight and relationship with their own creativity emerges. Ultimately this unique sensibility and resource will penetrate future choreographic and other scripted works infusing them with meaningful content”.

Whilst still studying at the V.C.A. I also created a web site, that I continue to manage, that is a resource base for social, artistic, health and education projects throughout the world. Like the Human Development Curriculum, this is another project that works to further social and artistic development.

Related Resume Highlights:

Many of the activities mentioned in this profile have demonstrated initiative and the ability to organize people, mobilize thoughts into action, and manage and facilitate a harmonious working process. From a young age I have found opportunities to engage in leadership and management roles appealing. At the age of 15 I volunteered to arrange youth activities for a week-long national congress attended by over 200 people. These activities took place without disturbance. Later I worked as Services Manager at The Performance Café, a family-run enterprise, overseeing all aspects of performance and catering operations. It is mainly through initiatives in my artistic career however, that my managerial and leadership qualities have been recognized and exercised through my involvement in performance production, artistic composition and directing, choreography, performance, rehearsal, and collaboration in both project and training based environments.

The creation of Open Arms Dance Company, and the implementation of its activities in the areas of social, artistic and entrepreneurial development, is without a doubt the most ambitious project that I have yet embarked upon. On a personal level, its formation has involved major changes to my lifestyle that have required courage, honest self-assessment, practical planning and creative vision. Admittedly, throughout this process, amongst the times when hope and love for my work are most prominent, I have come across moments of despair and doubt. Regardless of how I am feeling however, when I return my focus to the core values and proposed activities of this company, I

cannot help but see the enormous potential that Open Arms Dance Company has to significantly and positively effect the social and cultural development of our community on a local, national and global scale. And this, along with the satisfaction I receive from both my managerial and artistic roles within the company, allows me to continue.

In conclusion, I believe that I have the education, experience and ability required to lead Open Arms Dance Company to the position of influence it has the potential to achieve and look forward to the process.

Open Arms Dance Company

Professional Profile of Dancer Fiona Bryant

Born in Queensland, Australia, Fiona's introduction to dance came through participation in weekly creative movement classes at a small private studio in Woolwin. Here she advanced to the position of assistant teacher and on many occasions directed works for the annual showing.

It was in the final two years of this activity that she undertook the QBSS approved high school Dance syllabus at Kelvin Grove State College. This consequently saw her participate in a variety of public displays including the Australian Dance Week festival.

Successfully auditioning for the Queensland Dance School of Excellence intake, 2000 marked the beginning of formalised dance training specializing in ballet and contemporary techniques. In the duration of this diploma course Fiona was the recipient of the McCormick Dance Centre Bursary in both 2000 and 2001 and a Queensland Dance School of Excellence Encouragement Award in 2000. Upon graduation she received further recognition for excellence in dance studies being awarded the Kelvin Grove State College Academic Prize for Dance and the Lyndal Hardie Memorial Award (Dance).

Seeking to further her training, Fiona successfully auditioned for a variety of private and tertiary institutions throughout Australia, ultimately electing to take up a position in the Victorian College of the Arts BA course in 2002. In the first year of this course she performed in works at the Melbourne Concert Hall and the biannual Gasworks season in addition to choreographing '*Remnants of Presence*' in collaboration with Robin Wyllie. Receiving first class honors in seven of the undertaken subject areas, Fiona has continued in this course and is currently in her second year. Fiona aims to finish her studies at the VCA and will possibly join Open Arms Dance Company when their paths cross again.