

restless

DANCE THEATRE

Intimate Space Education Guide

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This guide is designed to be used in conjunction with the DVD version of *Intimate Space*. *Intimate Space* is suitable for audiences of all age groups, but the activities in this education guide are based around the Australian Curriculum years 8-10. They can be adapted to suit the relevant senior school curriculum in each state.



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Photo: Check in

1. About Restless Dance Theatre

Restless Dance Theatre is Australia's leading dance company working with people with and without disability. The company creates high quality, real, raw and uninhibited dance theatre.

Vision

Restless artists invigorate, influence and diversify Australian dance.

Mission

Create and present unexpectedly real dance theatre nationally and internationally, that is collaboratively devised, inclusive and informed by disability.

There are 2 distinct areas of the company: The workshop program and the Performance Ensembles.

The Workshop Program

The workshops involve creating movement in a safe and fun environment where the participant's ideas become dance. No experience is necessary, just the desire to take part. Workshops are open to participants with and without a disability and are led by highly experienced tutors in an accessible space.

Additional programs are run throughout the year for organisations, school and other age ranges.

- Links-open to anyone from 8-14
- Central-open to anyone form 14-26

The company

The company are the core dancers of Restless, working on multiple projects for the next four years. Membership is by invitation only.

Impulse

Impulse consists of young artists with and without disability aged 15 to 26. The ensemble collaborates with nationally and internationally recognised directors to create distinct, high quality performances across a range of art forms. Membership is by invitation only.

Junction

Graduates from Impulse have the opportunity to join Junction to continue their growth as artists and performers.

History of Restless and current awards

"...exceptionally beautiful and highly skilled, often funny, and always moving" - Robyn Archer

Restless Dance Company grew out of a project of Carclew Youth Arts Centre in 1991 led by Sally Chance and Tania Rose. The company became independent from Carclew in 1996 and changed its name to Restless Dance Theatre in 2008.

During the 27-year history, Restless has created 33 major productions to widespread critical acclaim. The recent production, *Intimate Space* was awarded a Ruby Award for Innovation and Enterprise and an Adelaide Critics Award for Best Professional Company. The work also garnered a Helpmann Award nomination and a Ruby Award nomination for Best New Work.

The company has conducted 27 major community workshop programs and produced highly acclaimed film works in collaboration with Closer Productions. *Necessary Games*, won four awards at the SA Screen Awards in 2009. In 2010 these films also received awards at several film festivals including the XIII Brooklyn International Film Festival in New York and the ReelDance Australia and New Zealand Awards.

Restless has also received an award for Outstanding Achievement in Youth or Community Dance at the Australian Dance Awards in 2010 and an SA Ruby award for Sustained Contribution by an Organisation. In 2015 Restless Dance Theatre was nominated for Outstanding Achievement in Youth for *Salt* at the Australian Dance Awards.



Photo: Whispering duet, the balcony

Michelle Ryan - Artistic Director

Michelle has enjoyed a career that has spanned over 25 years in the arts. Michelle joined Meryl Tankard in Canberra and Adelaide as part of Meryl Tankard's Australian Dance Theatre for 7 ½ years, followed by projects in Europe as Tankard's assistant. Michelle was also a founding member of Splintergroup and worked at Dancenorth for five years in various capacities.

Michelle returned to performing in 2011 as a guest artist for Alain Plattel's *Out of Context for Pina* by Les Ballet C de la B followed by *Take Up Thy Bed and Walk* by Gaelle Mellis in 2012. She performed in London at the Unlimited Festival, at the Melbourne Malthouse Theatre and the Adelaide Festival Centre in Torque Show's *Intimacy*. The production won the 2015 Australian Dance Award for Independent Dance and Michelle was awarded the Adelaide Critics Circle Award for her performance. Michelle also worked with Meryl Tankard and Hedone Productions on the multi award winning film, *Michelle's Story* directed by Meryl Tankard which premiered at the 2015 Adelaide Film Festival and won the People's Choice Award for Best Short Film, three South Australian Film Awards and the 2016 Australian Dance Award for Best Dance on Film or New Media. The film was screened on ABC TV in March 2016.

Michelle was appointed Artistic Director of Restless Dance Theatre in 2013 and has created three works for the company, *In the Balance*, *Touched* and *Intimate Space* which have been presented in the Adelaide Festival and Adelaide Cabaret Festival. *Intimate Space* received a Ruby Award for Arts Innovation and Enterprise, an Adelaide Critics Award for Best Professional Group and nominations for a Helpmann Award and Ruby Award for Best New Work.

Michelle was inducted into the South Australian Woman's Honour Roll in 2015.



Photo: The Laundry

2. Getting to know Restless-Interviews

Meet Michelle - Director of *Intimate Space*

Tell us about what inspired you to create *Intimate Space*?

I have always been fascinated with hotels. Essentially a temporary home. A public place, yet with the illusion of being private. I live next door to a large hotel and I love watching the people in the lobby, and imagining their stories. A hotel is a building quite charged with emotion. Friends meeting, friends parting. People away from their homes in unfamiliar spaces, yet searching for a slice of the familiar. I can't help but notice though, that I seldom see people with a disability in the beautiful foyer of the hotel. I felt driven to create a work that put people with a disability right amongst the general public.

It is a huge undertaking to create a site-specific work? Did you find it challenging?

Yes, it was a challenge to coordinate all the different aspects of the performance, however I knew the end result would be aesthetically beautiful and also thought provoking. Working in a hotel was not dissimilar to being in a theatre. There is always the polished and sophisticated front of house where everything always seems luxurious and effortless, but behind the scenes there is another world. A hidden world. In theatre it is backstage, in a hotel it is back of house. Not many get to see that world, which is one of the reasons I think *Intimate Space* is so appealing to people.

What was your creative process for this work?

I am quite deliberate and methodical in my planning, and I think this gives the dancers a chance to experience a very creatively fulfilling environment. I have an idea in my head of what I would like a section of movement to look like, and then I "task" dancers to create a section of movement, which I then refine and edit. For example, if I am searching for a section of movement that is quite fluid I might ask the dancers to create a section of movement based around drawing circles with different body parts. I think this approach gives *Restless* works their unique look. The movement is created by the dancers for their bodies. It is not a pre-prescribed or dictated movement. The dancers are not trying to copy or imitate anyone. They are simply moving in a way that is completely natural and organic to their own bodies. It means that the dancers can attach meaning to their movement, which allows them to perform with not only their bodies, but their hearts.

What does it mean to have dancers with a disability at the heart of the show?

I feel really passionate about people with disability being presented in a really positive light. I can see how art can change people's lives, both performers and audience. You can challenge people's perceptions on who or what people are and what they should be.

Very rarely do you have people with disability on stage or on film or in the arts on a level that's considered professional and challenging other mainstream companies. I see the *Restless* dancers as artists first and foremost. I feel really privileged that my work with the company allows me to facilitate other people seeing them as artists too.

Meet Michael Noble Restless dancer/concierge Intimate Space

How did audiences respond to Intimate Space?

I think the back of house was exciting for people. I felt like every audience was different. Sometimes they were more wary but other times they just dove straight in to the experience.

Do you have any stand out moments as a performer?

Some people thought I actually worked in the hotel! They would come up and ask me questions about things, like where the closest coffee shop was or how do they find certain rooms. Sometimes I would just answer the questions. It was always entertaining!

Were there any difficulties working in a hotel?

For me it was a completely new experience. It wasn't just the audience watching it, the public were watching too. The public were part of the performance, so it was always different. I enjoyed seeing the public's reaction to the show as much as the audiences.

What does being a dancer mean to you?

Dancing is a way to express myself. It is also a way for me to let go of things. It lets me vent, and get rid of emotion. It works for me. I hear lots of people say they dance to express emotion, but for me it really is about letting go of the emotion. I feel like I have probably always been a dancer, even though I have only done it for a few years. The more opportunities I get to dance, the more chances there are for people to understand me.



Photo: Michael Noble, Concierge

4. Sections

Scenes and Cast - In order of appearance

Concierge	Ashton Malcolm Kym Mackenzie Michael Noble
Girl in suitcase	Darcy Carpenter
Corridor Waving	Darcy Carpenter Bhodi Hudson Isadore Sweeney
Couple in bedroom	Kathryn Evans Michael Hodyl
Man in lift	Andrew Pandos
Laundry worker	Chris Dyke Lorcan Hopper
Giggling staff	Kathryn Adams Abbey Marshall
Man in lift	Andrew Pandos
Chef in kitchen	Rachel High
Tense couple	Alice Langsford Jesse Rochow
People in bar	Joshua Campton Alex Luke Zoe Messenger Caitie Moloney
Whispering duet	Jianna Georgiou Alex Luke
Finale moment in bar	Joshua Campton Jianna Georgiou Alice Langsford Alex Luke Kym Mackenzie Zoe Messenger Catie Moloney Michael Noble

5. Before watching.....

1) Discuss

- What does the term inclusive mean?
- What is a site-specific work?
- How fairly are different groups of people represented in mainstream media, advertising, film?
- Can students recall a film or theatre piece that features an artist with disability?
- Are there any books in the school library that tell stories of people living with disability?
- How accessible is your school yard?
- Would someone in a wheelchair be able to access your home?
- What would be challenging about a dance work staged in a hotel?
- Are costumes important to a dance piece? Explain

2) Move

- Improvise by creating a phrase of movement in an unfamiliar environment. For example in a confined space, a long hallway or a stair well.
- Expand on movement by considering different focus points. How would your movement change if viewed from above or from the side?

3) Write

- What are some of the challenges that may be encountered when performing in a public space?
- Research Australian companies that give young people a chance to perform professionally.



Photo: Suitcase

6. Post Show Activities

- Extended Practical Activity-skills development
- Creating site specific dance movement phrase inspired by *Intimate Space*
- Learning Intention: Students create a site specific dance phrase/piece and document their process in a learning journal.

Lesson 1. Gathering Inspiration

1. Gather some sources of inspiration for your work. Take photographs or make sketches of places around your school site that may be appropriate for your piece. Try for 5.
2. Write a paragraph about a site specific dance work, such as *Intimate Space*, that you have seen. Explain the concept of the work.
3. Start thinking about a theme, or an intention for your work. In the first stages of exploration, you can keep it fairly broad. Don't limit yourself with a very specific theme yet. You may find your inspiration leading you away from your original idea.
4. Keep written documentation about your process.

Lesson 2. Exploration

Key vocab: Improvisation = spontaneously creating movement

Accompaniment = something that supplements or supports something else (music for your dance piece)

1. Start exploring some movement possibilities. Try improvising in your chosen space.
2. Journal- Is it important for your song or music to relate to your theme? Why or why not?
3. Can you find an example of a dance piece on youtube that uses spoken word to reinforce the performance, similar to the balcony scene of *Intimate Space*?

Lesson 3. Creation

1. Using visuals or a story board, outline the basic structure of your piece.
2. Explain your understanding of tasking and what it is used for
3. Set a movement task for yourself to create movement for your site specific piece. Write your task in your learning journal and explain using descriptive writing what sort of movement was created.

Lesson 4. Refinement

1. Refine your movement. Use the elements of dance. Edit and manipulate your work. If you get stuck go back to your lesson 1 journal entries and revisit your inspiration sources.
2. Gather feedback on your movement from two different people.

Lesson 5 - Evaluation

1. Do you work better by yourself or with others? What is easier or harder for you?
2. How successfully did you communicate your intent?
3. What are the pros and cons of choreographing a solo or a duo?
4. Did your phrase evolve the way you thought it would?
5. Did you give your class mates feedback on their phrases?
6. Analyse how your piece could be further refined.

Post show short answer questions

1. Discuss Michelle Ryan's choreography. In what style is Intimate Space choreographed? What do you think was the choreographer's intent?
2. How do the audience and public interact to value add to the work?
3. Is this work narrative? Abstract? Explain
4. Do you think specific locations of the hotel were chosen for specific reasons? Explain your answer
5. Explain how the music in the balcony scene is different from the music for the rest of the work?
6. Can you think of why the role of the concierge was important to the work?

Post Show extended answer questions

1. Michelle Ryan aims to challenge our perception of not only who should dance, but what dance is. To what extent does intimate Space challenge our ideas of what Australian dance looks like?
2. "This performance creates spaces that are at times so intimate, it threatens discomfort, but this is perhaps the point". Discuss, giving specific reference to at least two scenes in Intimate Space.



Photo: The Tense Couple



Photo: The Giggling Staff

After the show-practical activity:

Michelle Ryan has a unique choreographic style. The movement language she creates is based on each individual. She is able to draw out the strengths of each dancer by allowing them to create movement very specific to their own physicality. Michelle then edits and refines the dancer's movement using verbal instruction or prompts. When creating original movement, Michelle often bases her stimulus for the dancers around a theme.

In this activity, you will create a phrase of movement based on verbal prompts, and then try and abstract that movement.

LEARNING INTENTION (Why): Understand how the elements of dance can be used to create original movement that does rely on dance vocabulary. Explore different starting points. Use personal stories as an impetus for creation.

DESCRIPTION (What): You are to create one minute of original movement which is thematic but not narrative. The movement will be abstract and not rely on a dance vocabulary.

PROCESS (How):

Michelle Ryan explores a variety of stimulus to create original and beautiful movement. Because the exploration of movement in any given sequence or phrase is tied to a theme or concept, the choreography still appears to have some elements of a narrative piece.

In this task, you will turn an everyday situation into a one minute phrase of movement. As a class you will agree on a theme based around something you may see in a hotel (people transporting bags, checking in, entering an elevator etc) and create a phrase of “pedestrian” style movement.

From there you will manipulate the movement using the elements of dance and create an abstract and original phrase of movement.

Step 1: Generate ideas through analysing pedestrian movement (10 movements)

Step 2: Abstract the movement using the elements of dance (body, space, time, dynamic, relationships)

Step 3: Refine ideas to only include what is most relevant and effective to your theme

Before we start:

Watch the first section of movement that the concierge performs in the lobby. Can you think about task the dancer may have been given to create that phrase of movement?

Remember: Every offer is accepted



Photo: The Hallway

Year 9 and 10 dance content descriptions

- Improvise to find new movement possibilities and explore personal style by combining elements of dance ([ACADAM020](#))
- Manipulate combinations of the elements of dance and choreographic devices to communicate their choreographic intent ([ACADAM021](#))
- Practise and refine technical skills to develop proficiency in genre- and style-specific techniques ([ACADAM022](#))
- Structure dances using movement motifs, choreographic devices and form ([ACADAM023](#))
- Perform dances using genre and style-specific techniques and expressive skills to communicate a choreographer's intent ([ACADAM024](#))
- Evaluate their own choreography and performance, and that of others to inform and refine future work ([ACADAR025](#))
- Analyse a range of dance from contemporary and past times to explore differing viewpoints and enrich their dance making, starting with dance from Australia and including dance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and consider dance in international contexts ([ACADAR02](#))

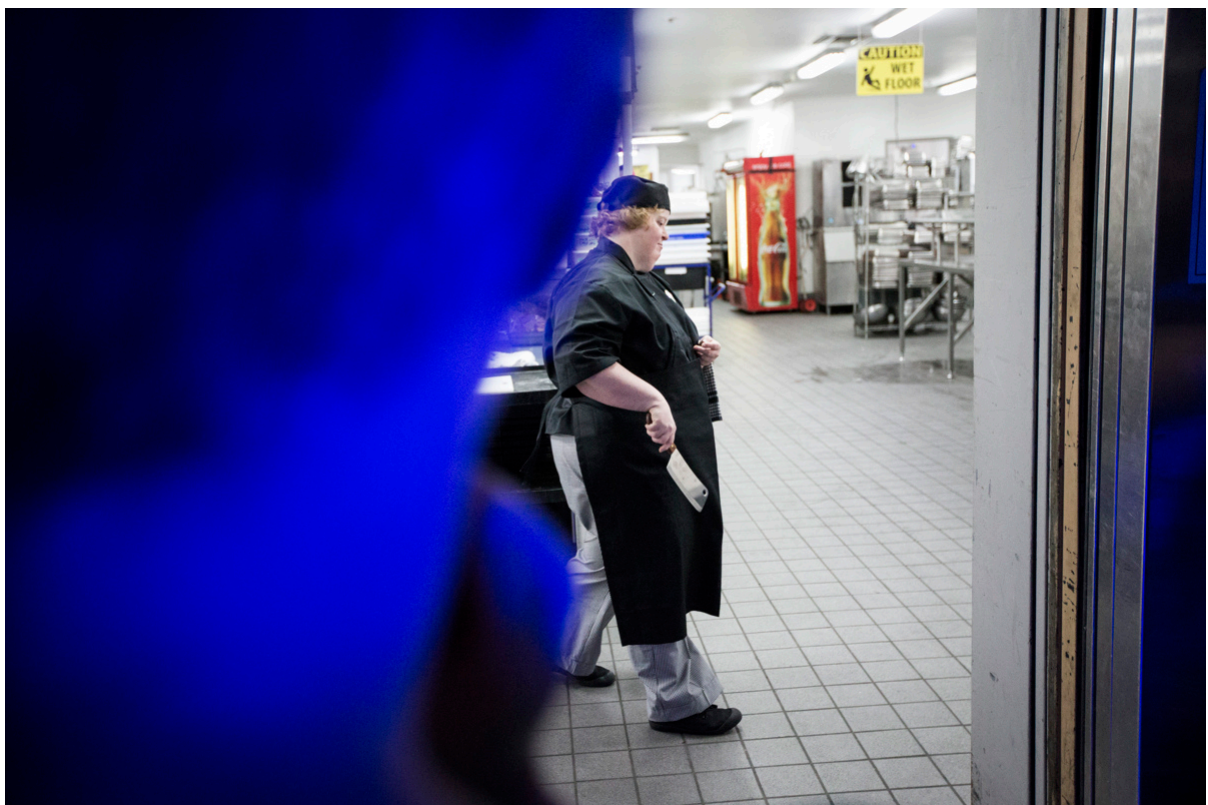


Photo: The Kitchen

7. Reviews

"5 STARS. Innovative, potent, bold and beautiful, *Intimate Space* is an extraordinary and highly entertaining experience."

– [Limelight](#), 3 Mar 2017.

"By turns tender and provocative, *Intimate Space* invites us to contemplate questions of public and private activity in a work that is insightful, touching and compelling."

– [ArtsHub](#), 4 Mar 2017.

"*Intimate Space* is a funny, touching, uplifting gem: it's generated such a buzz around Adelaide that all 60 shows have sold out."

- [Dance Australia](#), 6 Mar 2017.

"Using the iconic Hilton Hotel as its live canvas, *Intimate Space* is a stunning exploration of the balance between the realms of public and private."

– [The Adelaide Review](#), 6 Mar 2017.

"*Intimate Space* is exquisite, daring, compelling, profound, thrilling, funny, cheeky and sweet."

– [The Advertiser](#), 6 Mar 2017.

"Brilliant theatrical ideas don't always translate into successful performance. *Intimate Space* does."

– [The Australian](#), 6 Mar 2017.

"Immaculately produced and studded with wonderful performances, *Intimate Space* is a triumph that is at turns mischievous, tender and outraged but is deeply moving throughout."

– [Glam Adelaide](#), 4 Mar 2017.

"They are, indeed, a top flight profession group, going from strength to strength, winning friends and influencing people at every turn."

– [Broadway World](#), 5 Mar 2017.

"Restless Dance Theatre's Michelle Ryan and company have created an extraordinary, technically sophisticated spartan work."

- [The Barefoot Review](#), 7 Mar 2017.

"A magically beautiful, stunningly presented and wonderfully staged production"

- [The Upside News](#) 18 Mar 2017



Photo: The Bedroom

8. Extended Written Responses

Michelle Ryan aims to challenge our perception of not only who should dance, but what dance is.

- To what extent does intimate Space challenge our ideas of what Australian dance looks like?
- “This performance creates spaces that are at times so intimate, it threatens discomfort, but this is perhaps the point”. Discuss, giving specific reference to at least two scenes in Intimate Space.

9. Further resources

Restless Dance Theatre:

- Restless Dance Theatre website: <http://restlessdance.org>
- Restless Dance Theatre Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RestlessDanceTheatre>
- Company Promo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VEZZG1iTbI>
- Intimate Space Promo: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=kdRmZQ7A0z8
- Intimate Space Gold Coast: <https://www.gc2018.com/event/intimate-space-restless-dance-theatre-aus>

Interview with Michelle Ryan:

- <https://indaily.com.au/arts-and-culture/film/2015/10/14/michelles-story-of-resilience/>
- <http://www.adelaidereview.com.au/arts/performing-arts/michelle-ryan-intimacy/>

Other Disability Organisations

- Access Arts Australia: <https://artsaccessaustralia.org>
- Access2Arts: <https://access2arts.org.au>
- Candoco: <http://www.candoco.co.uk>
- Back to Back Theatre: <http://backtobacktheatre.com>
- Tutti Arts: <http://tutti.org.au>
- No Strings Attached: <http://www.nostringsattached.org.au>



Photo: Bar Scene



Photo: The Service Lift

CREATIVES

Director	Michelle Ryan
Assistant Director	Josephine Were
Composer	Jason Sweeney
Lighting Designer	Geoff Cobham
Designer	Meg Wilson

TECHNICAL CREW

Artistic Manager	Roz Hervey
Stage Manager	Stephanie Fisher
Costume Construction	Emma Brockliss
Technical Manager	Hamish McAdam, Audio Pod
ASMs and Show Leaders:	India Lennerth, Jo Curren and Cinzia Schincariol

RESTLESS DANCE THEATRE STAFF

Artistic Director	Michelle Ryan
Company Manager	Nick Hughes
Artistic Manager	Roz Hervey
Development Manager	Julie Moralee
Administration Co-ordinator	Mikki Reichstein
Bookkeeper	Theresa Williams



Photo: Bar Scene

DVD's to accompany the Education Guide can be purchased from Restless Dance Theatre

Please contact Roz Hervey

roz@restlessdance.org

www.restlessdance.org

08 8212 8495



Photo: Conceirge

Restless Dance Theatre have begun a journey of understanding the Spirit of Place. We know this place is ancient and that the living spirit of the first peoples still breathe here. We respect the continuing living spirit of culture which lives through their generations today. Restless acknowledges the family clans of the Kurna Nation and we shall walk softly and with respect as we feel the footprints of their ancestors.