

LOFTY HEIGHTS: INAUGURAL LOFT EXPLORE AND EXPOUND RESIDENTS ANNOUNCED

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After being inundated with applications from across **Australia**, **Australian Dance Theatre (ADT)** is thrilled to announce the successful recipients of **LOFT's EXPLORE and EXPOUND** residencies – with **\$70,000 of grant funding** going directly to independent dance artists in LOFT's first year, with South Australian artists representing half of the successful recipients in the cohort.

A joint initiative between **CreateSA** and ADT, LOFT is a new space for independent dance in South Australia that takes up residence in a dedicated studio at **Level One, Lion Arts Centre** as well as ADT's Tanja Liedtke Studio.

"I love artists," says **ADT's Executive Producer Viviana Sacchero**, "and I love the messy, strange and almost alchemical process of making new work. It's an incredible privilege to not only provide funding to a group of amazing creatives from across Australia, but to support the strengthening of the South Australian ecology by giving makers the opportunity to deepen and extend their connection to dance."

Internationally renowned **Bharathanatyam dancer and choreographer Christopher Gurusamy** is the recipient of the **EXPOUND Residency**, the largest residency of its kind in Australia. Christopher will receive **\$30,000** and **up to six weeks of studio time** at LOFT to develop his work *Kalki*, which seeks to explore Bharatanatyam, Carnatic Music and South Asian work can look like in 21st century Australia.

"I am so full of gratitude to be the recipient of the 2025 Expound Residency," says **Christopher**, "Thank you to Australian Dance Theatre and CreateSA for this opportunity. I am very excited to share, create and learn in Adelaide and connect with its arts community. It will propel *Kalki* and broaden the trajectory of my practice."

Eight artists from around Australia will receive **EXPLORE** residencies, giving them 1 week of studio time, a \$3,000 grant and the opportunity to present a free workshop for the South Australian dance sector. Throughout the year, **Ade Suharto (SA)**, **Aimee Raitman (VIC)**, **Alix Kuijpers (SA)**, **Cheeky Chandler (NT)**, **Kaine Sultan Babij (SA)**, **Natalie Allen (WA)**, **Thomas Bradley (NSW)** and **Tyler Carney-Faleatua (NSW)** will take up residence at LOFT to crack into new works and ideas.

In addition to the **EXPLORE** and **EXPOUND** residencies, the previously announced **PEAK residencies** are underway with South Australian choreographers and collectives developing new work at LOFT throughout 2025. **Gabrielle Nankivell** has received a grant \$12,000 and studio time to continue development on her work *Conjuring (or how to make the show between us)*, while **Zoë Dunwoodie**, **Janelle Egan** and **Motus Collective** have each received a small grant to support the development of their proposed works.

"In line with CreateSA's cultural policy *A Place to Create*, LOFT positions South Australia as a leader in the national sector," says **Australian Dance Theatre's Executive Director Nick Hays**, "we want to honour and celebrate the deep well of talent here, and create pathways to connect those artists with what's happening across the country to build a sustainable and supportive environment for dance makers. We thank CreateSA, Hill Smith Art Advisory and Minister Andrea Michaels MP for their support of this initiative."

"Congratulations to the inaugural LOFT residents," says **Minister for the Arts, Andrea Michaels MP**, "South Australia has long been recognised for our wonderful contemporary dancers and dance companies and it's fantastic to have had so many applications from dancers right across Australia to be part of LOFT's first cohort. We have delivered a dedicated space for dancers to come together, develop their skills and share best practice as well as more opportunities for employment and funding."

"The Malinauskas Government is proud to be partnering with Australian Dance Theatre to deliver LOFT. This collaboration will help ensure South Australian dancers have opportunities to connect and thrive across their career."

As part of the inaugural LOFT program, South Australian artists can apply for the **EXPERIMENT Residency**, which provides a week of free studio time at ADT's Tanja Liedtke Studio, with multiple weeks still available throughout the year.

"We're thrilled to be able to support so many artists alongside our peers," says Viviana, "We can't wait to see what our residents create and how we can continue to develop our programs to support the sector here. Welcome to LOFT!"

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MEDIA REQUESTS:

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SUCCESSFUL RESIDENTS:

EXPOUND (\$30,000 + up to six weeks of studio time at LOFT):

Christopher Gurusamy for his work *Kalki*.

About Chris: Christopher is one of the world's leading Bharatanatyam artistes, recognised as a trailblazer of his generation within India, Australia and globally. Born in Perth with mixed Singapore-Indian and British heritage, Christopher lived in Chennai for 17 years, becoming the only Australian to graduate from renowned arts conservatorium Kalakshetra.

A highly popular soloist, Christopher performs annually in Chennai's prestigious December Season. He has received international praise including being named in 'Best Dance of 2017' (*New York Times*).

Christopher's work *Ānanda: Dance of Joy* (2024) staged for Eternity Playhouse (Darlinghurst) and Dancehouse (Melbourne) received critical acclaim including in *The Age* and *Fjord*, receiving the 'Outstanding Performer' nomination at the Green Room Awards. His most recent work *5 Arrows* premiered at Utp (Bankstown) in April 2025.

EXPLORE (\$3,000 + one week of studio time + a free workshop for the SA sector)

- Ade Suharto (SA),
- Aimee Raitman (VIC)
- Alix Kuijpers (SA)
- Cheeky Chandler (NT)
- Kaine Sultan Babij (SA)
- Natalie Allen (WA)
- Thomas Bradley (NSW)
- Tyler Carney-Faleatua (NSW)

PEAK RESIDENCY (SA Artists only)

- Peak Resident: Gabrielle Nankivell (\$12,000 + studio time)
- Additional funding: Zoë Dunwoodie, Janelle Egan and Motus Collective

CREATIVE ASSETS:

Click here to access a suite of creative assets related to this announcement. If you have any queries, please contact Anthony Nocera on 0421944146.

ABOUT ADT:

Australian Dance Theatre is Australia's oldest continuing contemporary dance company. Founded on Kauria Yerta (Adelaide) in 1965 by Elizabeth Cameron Dalman OAM CdOAL, ADT was established with the aspiration of 'expanding the boundaries of dance', a principle that still holds true today.

ADT is led by Wiradjuri man, Daniel Riley, who was appointed as Artistic Director in 2022. Since stepping into the role, he has created major works including *SAVAGE*, *THE HUM*, *The Third*, *Tracker* and *Marrow*.

In 2025, the company celebrates its 60th anniversary with the world premiere of *A Quiet Language* at Adelaide Festival and *Two Blood* in the second half of the year.