



MEDIA RELEASE

GARRY STEWART WINS INAUGURAL AUSTRALIA COUNCIL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN DANCE

11 March 2015: Artistic Director of the Australia Dance Theatre, Garry Stewart has been named as the inaugural recipient of the Australia Council Award for Outstanding Achievement in Dance.

Garry was both stunned and deeply honoured to be the recipient of the inaugural award.

“Of course no one in the Arts do what they do for an award, but this recognition is certainly affirming. I’ve been very privileged in my career to have worked with so many remarkable, talented and intelligent individuals from diverse areas of the arts, not just dance. At this juncture I feel more energetic than ever and I look forward to developing many more creative acts! I’m also very proud of the achievements of my colleagues in dance, in Australia - the sector has changed so much since I began choreographing many years ago. There are so many incredible artists making extraordinary, fascinating work in this country and I’m honoured to be a component in this unfolding evolution,” said Garry.

Garry Stewart has been honoured for his rich contribution to dance.

He has been the Artistic Director of Australian Dance Theatre since 1999, which this year celebrates their 50th anniversary. He has studied and collaborated with artists working in robotics, photography, architecture, animation and 3D technology. A prolific choreographer here and overseas - particularly acclaimed for his reworking of ballet language into contemporary forms. His award-winning work includes *Birdbrain*, *The Age of Unbeauty*, *Nothing*, *HELD*, *Devolution*, *G*, *Be Your Self*, *Worldhood*, *Proximity* and *Honour Bound* about the incarceration of David Hicks.

The award will be presented at a Sydney event on Thursday, 19th of March which will pay tribute to Garry and nine other distinguished recipients who have demonstrated consistent Artistic excellence, diversity and exceptional leadership across their careers.

Australia Council Chief Executive Officer Tony Grybowski said the awards were the highest accolade the Council could bestow, and that the 2015 recipients had a depth

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and richness to the contributions made in their respective art forms, which embodied the kind of artistic and cultural ambition the Council is committed to supporting.

“The awards are an acknowledgement of the significant achievements and contribution an artist has made to the vibrancy of Australian arts. The 10 recipients are widely respected by their peers nationally and internationally, and these awards give us the opportunity to reflect on their considerable body of work and the impact they have had on the arts in Australia and overseas,” Mr Grybowski said.

The 2015 Australia Council Award recipients are:

1. **Garry Stewart** (SA) – Australia Council Award for Outstanding Achievement in Dance
2. **Thomas Keneally** (NSW) – Australia Council Award for Lifetime Achievement in Literature
3. **Archie Roach** (Vic) – Australia Council Don Banks Music Award
4. **Judy Watson** (Qld) – Australia Council Visual Arts Award (Artist)
5. **Will Stubbs** (NT) – Australia Council Visual Arts Award (Advocate)
6. **Stelarc** (WA) – Australia Council Award for Outstanding Achievement in Emerging & Experimental Arts
7. **Bruce Gladwin** (Vic) – Australia Council Award for Outstanding Achievement in Theatre
8. **Tony Doyle** (SA) – Ros Bower Award (Community Arts and Cultural Development)
9. **Alyson Evans** (NSW) – Kirk Robson Award (Community Arts and Cultural Development)
10. **Alysha Herrmann** (SA) – Kirk Robson Award (Community Arts and Cultural Development)

Ends.

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Australian Dance Theatre – Celebrating 50 Years in 2015

Australian Dance Theatre has a rich history full of wonderful stories and achievements that have led it to its current world-class status, a dancing phenomenon that continues to push new boundaries across the globe, making it one of Adelaide's and Australia's greatest exports and ambassadors today.

Dr Elizabeth Cameron Dalman OAM and patron for the 50th anniversary celebrations founded the Australian Dance Theatre in 1965 after she was inspired by her experience in New York and by the Australian environment. It was the first time modern and contemporary dance was taught in Australia.

Since then, the Australian Dance Theatre has grown to be one of the most influential dance companies in the country and has been producing consistently great repertoire since it was formed.

Australian Dance Theatre is highly regarded within Australia and beyond. Under the artistic direction of Garry Stewart since the end of 1999, the Australian Dance Theatre embarked on a remarkably successful artistic trajectory that has distinguished it as a daring, exciting and highly skilled ensemble. As a result, they enjoy an enviable national and international reputation and is currently regarded as one of the most widely recognised contemporary dance companies in the world.