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ADELAIDE
FESTIVAL
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DANCE / FAMILY / AUSTRALIA

Zizanie

By Meryl Tankard
Restless Dance Theatre
WORLD PREMIERE

Image: Regis Lansac

14 – 17 Mar / Space Theatre

Duration 50 mins, no interval

Conceived and Directed by

Meryl Tankard

Associate Artist and Videography

Regis Lansac

Set and Costume Design

Jonathon Oxlade

Lighting Design/AV Chris Petridis

Sound design Luke Smiles

Assistant to the Director Larissa

MacGowan

Restless Dance Theatre Artistic

Director Michelle Ryan

Production Manager Lachlan Turner

Stage Manager Bridget Samuel

Artistic Manager Roz Hervey

Rehearsal Assistants Larissa

MacGowan and Carol Wellman-Kelly

Restless Company Manager

Nick Hughes

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Director's note

I love the word Zizanie.

In French it can mean discord, mischief, chaos, messing about!

A perfect title for my new work with Restless Dance Theatre. I really enjoy choreographing chaos, but there is always a precise order underneath.

Zizanie was a starting point, and as the rehearsal developed, the work became a response to where the world is heading. Everything is becoming homogenized. People are labelled; we are all expected to wear the same clothes, have the same haircuts and are expected to fit neatly into a box. If someone is slightly different they are frowned upon, considered strange or weird. Art, dance, music, culture, all fundamental aspects of humanity, are being eradicated. I wanted to create a work that celebrates difference.

Zizanie was inspired also by Robbie Cameron's wonderful children's book *The Fun Funnel*. The story is about a cranky old man who decides to 'rid the world of fun' because he doesn't know how to laugh. At the moment, the world seems to have been taken over by these cranky old men who are so full of fear, and without vision or imagination.

The individual skills of the Restless dancers have also been a big influence on the work. For example; Dana, who loves to draw hundreds of tiny people.

During the process, I also wanted to challenge the cast, so we invited Caroline Conlon to teach the cast Auslan phrases of the Beatle's Eleanor Rigby... "All the lonely people..."

And special thank you to the inspirational Kiriki acrobats from 1907.

My dear mother Margot was always baking delicious cakes and biccies for us, my dancers and her neighbours and, thinking of her, it made me realise how rare it is these days to be invited into someone's home to share a meal or even a cup of tea. Cooking for someone is an act of love. A simple act of kindness can make a big difference in people's lives.

Rather than build a wall to hide behind, we need to join hands with our neighbours and remember to be kind.

Diversity ignites curiosity and understanding of those around us. Children can be encouraged to appreciate diversity in our society, when they see it firsthand. By seeing the Restless dancers on stage, hopefully it will allow them to question their own beliefs and diminish judgement and stereotyping.

We are not born to hate. Racism and intolerance is created by adults. Our lives are more enriched when we share our skills and experiences and all work together.

Meryl Tankard

Restless Dance Theatre

Led by Artistic Director Michelle Ryan, one of Australia's leading dance artists, Restless Dance Theatre creates high quality real, raw and uninhibited dance theatre. It is Australia's leading dance theatre company working with young people with and without disability to collaboratively create outstanding inclusive dance theatre informed by disability. The company presents unexpectedly real dance theatre works in multiple mediums to diverse audiences.