

DANCENORTH ANNOUNCES UNPRECEDENTED NATIONAL TOUR

Recognised as one of Australia's foremost performing arts companies, Dancenorth Australia is set to embark on a ground-breaking national tour of their visionary production, *Wayfinder*.

With its unparalleled scale and reach, the 2024 *Wayfinder* National Tour is supported by the Australia Council's Playing Australia Project Investment and spans across six states and territories, playing in 23 venues nationwide. The ambitious tour affirms Dancenorth's commitment to sharing their work with audiences far and wide and connecting regional communities.

By far the largest national tour that Dancenorth has undertaken in the company's 38-year history, Artistic Director and co-CEO Kyle Page said the announcement marked a significant milestone for the company since its entrance to the National Performing Arts Partnership Framework in 2021.

"This is an incredibly extensive tour, ground-breaking in its depth and reach, clearly highlighting the demand for Dancenorth as a National Performing Arts Partnership Framework company. To have such a high level of interest for a contemporary dance work, particularly from regional venues, is truly remarkable and speaks to the accessible and celebratory nature of the work," Mr Page said.

With the financial support of the Australia Council's Playing Australia Project Investment, Dancenorth Australia's groundbreaking national tour of *Wayfinder* connects communities in 23 remarkable locations, from north to south and coast to coast. Sweeping across the diverse landscapes of Australia, the tour itinerary covers a mesmerising journey from the rugged beauty of Pilbara region in Western Australia, through the vibrant cities of Adelaide and Melbourne, to the coastal charms of Newcastle and the tropical paradise of the Torres Strait. With stops in Tasmania, Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia and the Northern Territory, this tour expands across the breathtaking beauty and cultural richness of the country.

Premiering to rave reviews at the 2022 Brisbane Festival, *Wayfinder* swiftly garnered acclaim as the hit of the festival. With its captivating presence and ground-breaking artistic vision, the performance attracted attention from festival directors, programmers, and presenters from across Australia and internationally. This momentous debut has since resulted in an array of invitations for future presentations, solidifying *Wayfinder's* status as a regional success story that deserves national recognition.

A summoning of collective awe and wonder, *Wayfinder* is a tonic for the times. Speaking to our sensorial nature, *Wayfinder* recognises connection as the central axis of the universe.

Wayfinder is a unique and immersive performance incorporating pre-show 'knitting sittings' workshops.

"The Knitting Sittings invite local communities to finger knitting workshops hosted by Dancenorth Ensemble members and touring staff with remote video introduction to the creative ethos behind the set design by Hiromi Tango. It's a beautiful moment of connection and deep engagement. These community created artworks are then literally woven into the performance," Mr Page added.

Further interaction with local communities is evident in the performance itself via the use of 100 light and sound emitting 'pearls' which are distributed amongst the audience at the beginning of the show. These pearls act as a cipher for a human voice, collectively forming a rising aural body of sound creating a sense of intimacy and connection to the performance far beyond traditional passive engagement.

Recognised as one of Australia's leading performing arts companies, Dancenorth Australia balances a dynamic regional presence with a commitment to creating compelling contemporary dance that tours the globe. Under the leadership of Artistic Directors Kyle Page and Amber Haines and Executive Director Hillary Coyne, Dancenorth is deeply committed to the creation of adventurous, thoughtfully conceived, and highly acclaimed new work. Since 2015 Dancenorth has presented work in over 45 International Arts Festivals and venues around Australia and the world. With a national reputation for producing works of the highest quality, Dancenorth has received two Helpmann Awards, two Australian Dance Awards, two Green Room Awards, the Sidney Myer Performing Arts Group Award, and the PAC Australia Impact Award.

As a model for making outstanding art in a regional community, Dancenorth is an integral part of the Australian dance ecology making a significant contribution to the dance sector and building literacy around contemporary dance nationally. Dancenorth has received five Major Festival's Initiative commissions over the past six years, more than any other Australian company. These works have been presented in almost all Australian International Arts Festivals and a number of smaller regional centres across almost every state and territory. Dancenorth has also enjoyed significant international touring throughout North America, Europe, and Japan.

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