

# LIGHTING THE DARK

## Presenter Pack



Dancenorth acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which we make our work, the Wulgurukaba of Gurambilbarra and Yunbenun, and the Bindal of Thul Garrie Waja.

The Wulgurukaba and Bindal people continue to nurture a deep and respectful relationship to land and sea and it is our great privilege and honour to create on their incredible country.

We respectfully acknowledge neighbouring groups of our region – the Gugu Badhun and Nywaigi. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and their Elders past and present.

We acknowledge the fact that sovereignty was never ceded and that Aboriginal people are Australia's first dancers.

A major champion of the arts in North Queensland, Dancenorth Australia balances a dynamic regional presence with a commitment to creating compelling contemporary dance that tours the world.

"DANCENORTH IS FAST  
BECOMING THE MOST  
IMPORTANT CONTEMPORARY  
DANCE COMPANY IN  
AUSTRALIA . "

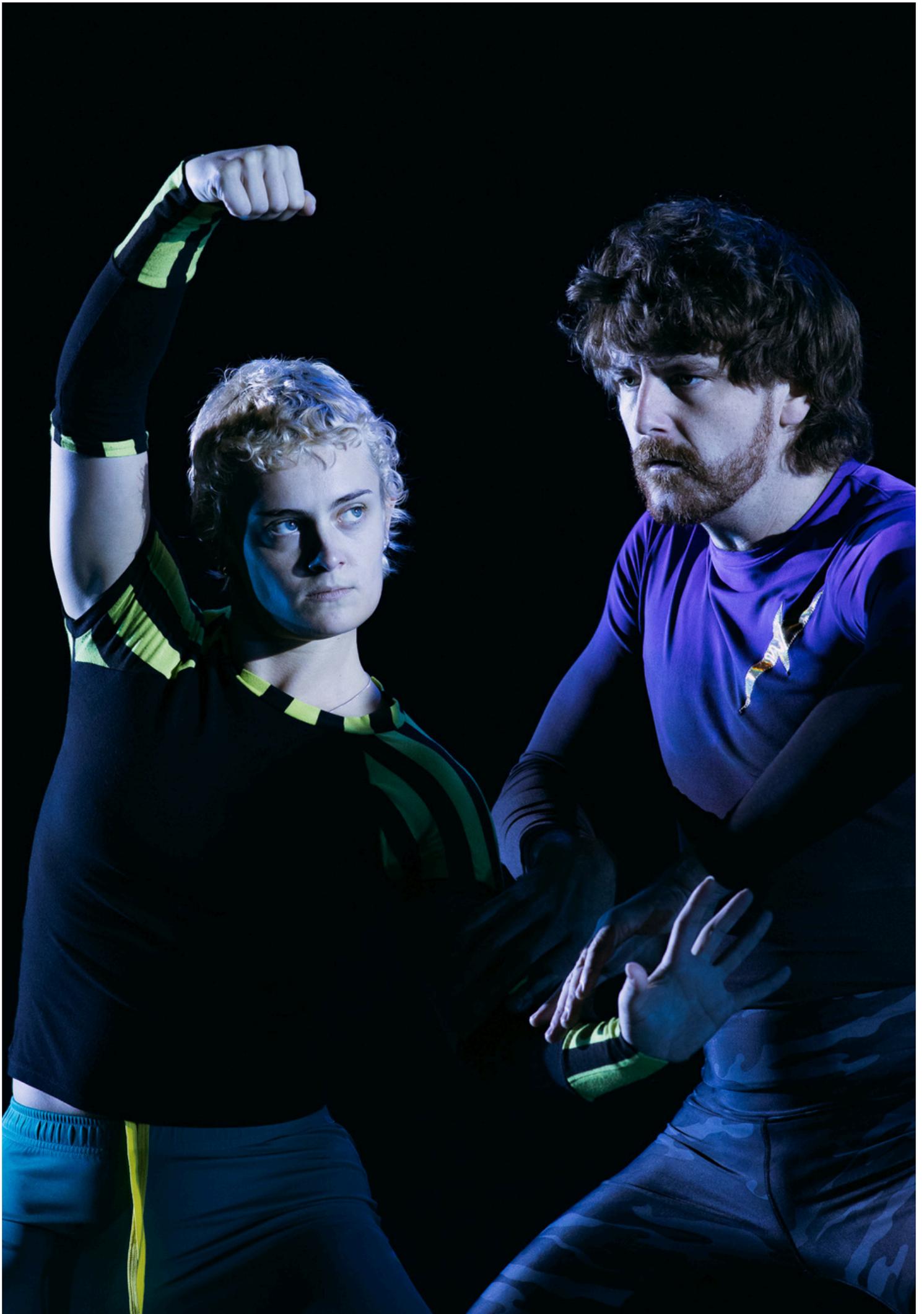
Wesley Enoch AM

Deeply committed to the creation of adventurous, thoughtfully conceived, and highly acclaimed new work; Dancenorth has presented work in more than 55 International Arts Festivals and venues around Australia and the world. Dancenorth has been recognised for its outstanding work with accolades including the prestigious Sidney Myer Performing Arts Group Award, two Australian Dance Awards, two Greenroom Awards, two Helpmann Awards, a PAC Australia Impact Award, and four Major Festivals Initiative (MFI) commissions.

Dancenorth has become an epicentre of cultural change by empowering, supporting and welcoming many artistic voices to its creative hub including a diverse range of choreographers, guest collaborators, Artists in residence and dancers.

Alongside the professional Ensemble and touring productions sits an equally vital pillar of focus: Community Experience. Dancenorth's dedicated team works with diverse and minority communities across Queensland using dance to support, enhance, inspire and heal - bringing communities together.

Led by Co-Artistic Directors Kyle Page (2017 Sidney Myer Creative Fellow) and Amber Haines, and Executive Director Hillary Coyne, 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.



# About Lighting the Dark

LIGHTING THE DARK is a bold new work by Chris Dyke, a Kurna (Adelaide) based dancer and choreographer living with Down syndrome.

Chris, the embodiment of love itself, emanates compassion, transcending limitations and inviting us all into his radiant embrace. Yet, amidst his rich internal landscape of dreams and boundless imagination, the world often fails to see beyond the cover of the book – a book that if we dared to open, would reveal radical inspiration, creative brilliance, hope and love.

With the mesmerising Dancenorth Ensemble by his side, Chris leads the way, transforming the stage into a portal where love and light illuminate the darkness. A masterpiece of collaboration and community, LIGHTING THE DARK reminds us of the complexity of life's challenges.

Inspired by the iconic figures of Banksy, David Bowie and Freddie Mercury, Chris finds kinship in their revolutionary spirit, each serving as a reflection of his own vision.

LIGHTING THE DARK is a profound celebration of the human experience: a transcendent journey, which traverses individual and universal truths in a dance to the very centre of what it means to be human.

## GENRE

Contemporary Dance

## DURATION

55 minutes

## CLASSIFICATION

Suitable for all ages

## WARNINGS

Contains strobe lighting, theatrical haze and loud / startling noise.

## PERFORMANCE HISTORY

Preview Season

Gurambilbarra (Townsville) | June 2024  
Townsville Civic Theatre, Queensland, AU

World Premiere

Brisbane Festival | September 2024  
Thomas Dixon Centre, Queensland, AU

## PROGRAMMING INPUTS

Immersive  
Contemporary Australia  
Multi-artform  
Joy-inducing

## CREDITS

Direction:  
Chris Dyke

Concept and Choreography:  
Chris Dyke, Amber Haines and Kyle Page

Composition and Sound Design:  
Anna Whitaker with Additional Lyrics and  
Composition by Felix Sampson

Design:  
Andrew Treloar

Lighting Design:  
Chloe Ogilvie

Original Performers/Choreographers:  
Sabine Crompton-Ward, Chris Dyke, Amber Haines,  
Tiana Lung, Damian Meredith, Darci O'Rourke, Tara  
Jade Samaya, Felix Sampson, Michael Smith

Performers/Choreographers:  
Sabine Crompton-Ward, Chris Dyke, Tiana Lung,  
Aleeya McFadyen-Rew, Damian Meredith, Jag  
Popham, Felix Sampson, Michael Smith





# Marketing

## STRAPLINE

### A JOURNEY TO THE VERY CENTRE OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN

#### COPY

**LIGHTING THE DARK** is a bold new work by Chris Dyke, a Kaurna (Adelaide) based dancer and choreographer living with Down syndrome.

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#### MARKETING MATERIALS

Dancenorth will provide access to our growing collection of marketing collateral:

- Exceptional print-quality promotional, production, and Rehearsal photography
- Sizzle reels (3 x short unbranded videos with space for your logos and call to action, available in 16:9 and 9:16 formats)
- Social media content including digital advertising content and pull-quotes

#### PUBLICITY

Dancenorth will provide a template media release that can be adapted for your market.

Creatives and performers will be available for publicity interviews on request.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**LIGHTING THE DARK** was commissioned by Brisbane Festival, and is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, and the Ian Potter Foundation.

Dancenorth Australia is assisted by both the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body, and the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland. Dancenorth Australia is supported by Townsville City Council.



# Video

**FULL LENGTH PERFORMANCE**  
Townsville Civic Theatre (2024)



**SIZZLE REELS**  
24 sec-35 sec, Preview Season (2024)





# Reviews

"CONTEMPORARY DANCE AT  
ITS MOST BROADLY  
APPEALING"

"AUDIENCES OF ALL AGES  
CAN ENJOY ITS WILDLY  
ORIGINAL CREATIVITY AND  
SENSE OF FUN"

IN REVIEW  
Olivia Stewart

## [EXTRACT]

Dancenorth Australia's *Lighting the Dark* reminds us – and celebrates – that some of life's greatest joys and most meaningful experiences come from the simplest things.

Bringing together superheroes, beatboxing, Bowie and Banksy, this Brisbane Festival world premiere running at Thomas Dixon Centre until Saturday is contemporary dance at its most broadly appealing. Audiences of all ages can enjoy its wildly original creativity and sense of fun without having to decipher anything; addressed directly from the get-go, the audience knows it matters and reflects the care back at the artists.

Instilling that sense of connection and empowerment is what director and performer Chris Dyke was aiming for, alongside inspiring people to make their dreams come true. The 34-year-old choreographer and dancer living with Down syndrome certainly achieves that as the first artist with an intellectual disability commissioned to direct a work in Australia.

Adelaide-based Dyke has undertaken an annual residency with Dancenorth since 2014, so artistic director (AD) Kyle Page knows Dyke's superpowers are movement, imagination and instinct. The pair collaborated with associate AD Amber Haines on *Lighting the Dark*'s concept and choreography, with the Dancenorth Australia ensemble also contributing to the latter.

Interactions between Dyke and long-time friend and ensemble member Felix Sampson help propel the action, with Sampson showing natural charm and humour providing commentary as an MC of sorts. He also impresses singing his own original song a capella.

[→ READ THE FULL REVIEW](#)



# Reviews

"THIS SHOW IS ABOUT FUN, SPONTANEITY, AND INCLUSIVITY"

"AN INTIMATE EXPERIENCE, WHERE THE AUDIENCE BECOMES PART OF THE SHOW"

BRISBANE STAGE  
Helen Gramotnev

[EXTRACT]

"You paint the world – you make it a better place." This really is the point of this show. Lighting the Dark is a collaboration between one of the most exciting contemporary dance companies in Australia, Dancenorth Ensemble, and a Kurna (Adelaide) based dancer and choreographer, Chris Dyke, living with Down Syndrome.

Beatboxing, superheroes, loud noises that reverberate in your chest, Jenga, David Bowie, Banksy, and more! This show is about fun, spontaneity, and inclusivity. Opening to Chris' own beatboxing sounds, the dancers create a human puzzle that breathes, moves, and pulsates, filling the stage with humour and impulse. It took me back to my childhood, with games, heroes, dreams, and fun, where anything is possible, and play is a form of communication. Rhythm pulsates through the space with so much happening, despite only six dancers on stage. Yet the result is an intimate experience, where the audience becomes part of the show.

Enter crates. These banal, simple objects form an integral part of the performance – again, turning the everyday into a tool to create something unexpected. A giant crate Jenga reminds us of the simple ways of playing together. The wall of crates reminds us of the joy of building blocks; and when the wall is broken – it serves as a symbol of breaking the boundaries between what we know and what is different from us. The crates pave way to love, as Chris walks along the long line of them with a heart balloon in his hand.

[→ READ THE FULL REVIEW](#)

"THIS JOYOUS WORK CELEBRATES HAPPINESS, CONNECTION AND LOVE"

"UNABASHEDLY A CELEBRATION OF LIFE"

DANCE AUSTRALIA  
Denise Richardson

[EXTRACT]

At the Thomas Dixon Centre Dancenorth presented Lighting the Dark (reviewed September 12). This joyous work celebrates happiness, connection and love, where subtext is all but absent. Conceived and choreographed by Chris Dyke with Artistic Director Kyle Page and Associate AD Amber Haines, it is also directed by Dyke, an Adelaide-based choreographer who incidentally lives with Down syndrome. This world premiere is the first time a major performing arts company in Australia has commissioned an artist with an intellectual disability to direct.

Lighting the Dark had a gestation over years, with Dyke taking up residency with Dancenorth on a regular basis. The trusting relationship subsequently built up between him and the Dancenorth team is evidenced by the way his fertile imagination, wrapped up in his generosity of spirit and compassion, has been brought to the stage, in what is unabashedly a celebration of life.

The audience knows what to expect from the outset, when ensemble member Felix Sampson, as sort of compere, introduces each of his fellow dancers, and, engaging in humorous banter with Dyke, invites us into the world of his superheroes: Banksy, Bowie, Batman and Queen. A very sassy beatbox performance by Dyke on mic, interpreted in moves by the dancers, launches the work in style.

[→ READ THE FULL REVIEW](#)



# Production

This summary is indicative and subject to change. A detailed Technical Specification is available by request.

## CREW REQUIREMENTS

### Bump In Crew:

2 x LX, 1 x SND, 2 x MX

To be confirmed with venue upon discussion of the Standard Lighting Rig. If in-house tarket/marley is being used, MX numbers are to be set by the venue.

### Running Crew:

Min. staffing requirements of venue. Dancenorth needs to be able to reset systems in case of emergency.

### Bump Out Crew:

To be confirmed with venue.

## EXAMPLE SCHEDULE - STAND ALONE SEASON

A pre-rig will be determined by venue lighting stock

Day 1: Bump In, Tech and Dress Rehearsal

Day 2: Opening Night / Performance 1

Day 3: Performance 2

Day 4: Performance 3, Bump out

NB: more than one performance in one day is not generally possible.

## STAGING

Designed for a proscenium or black box venue, the work takes place on a 12m x 12m tarket surface. The work contains 150 milk crates that get stacked into a 6m wide pyramid and a 2.5sqm cube throughout the performance.

## LIGHTING

The lighting design creates a suitably atmospheric but calm environment, that highlights the performance of the Ensemble. Design is outlined in the Technical Specifications (profiles, strobes and moving specials), it is mainly a moving head/led fixture rig with booms.

## AUDIO

Show content is playback only using an on-stage sound system, with a delay to the FOH system.

## WARDROBE

Post-show laundering. Personnel with repairs experience appreciated.

## REHEARSAL & WARM UP

A separate warm-up space is required for the dancers – this space should be a minimum of 8m x 8m and ideally have a sprung tarket floor. A small PA with jack input is required. Access to showers, basic kitchen facilities and a fridge is required.

## FREIGHT

The show can be air, road or sea freighted dependent on the presenting location.

## INFORMATION

More information and assets are available upon request:

- Detailed Technical Specifications
- Performance, Publicity, Editorial and Rehearsal Images
- Creative Personnel - Biographies and Headshots
- Program Credits/Logos
- Curriculum-aligned Education Resources

## CONTACT

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DAVID KELLY

