

# **fLiNG Physical Theatre AGM 2012 Artistic Report**

## **Prepared by Lee Pemberton**

In 2011 fLiNG Physical Theatre grew in strength, knowledge and fame. Our performer member ranks swelled to over twenty-five excellent young people and our reputation spilled into the Illawarra and beyond. A collaborative project with Circus Monoxide's Half High Circus forged new relationships for the company and for our young performers. The Voyage production from 2010 was nominated for the Australian Dance Awards and our local season of I Wanna Be sold out. Within the Valley, fLiNG Physical Theatre's name has spread far and wide and the demand for our community classes is growing.

Our home at the indoor stadium became a circus space with tissu rigging and circus seating for our main season. Alumni came back to perform and they took responsibility for creating and rehearsing our 10<sup>th</sup> birthday show. Many friends and families who had been involved with the company from its beginnings came to see and join in our celebration. With the help of the community and my long-term colleague and friend Jennifer Hunt, I am proud to say that fLiNG Physical Theatre has come of age.

In 2012 we welcome the arrival of Sarah Taylor to the team. fLiNG can now extend our program delivery to the community and we have already celebrated our first YfLiNG project titled Red Green. We have also just arrived back from our first international tour to the Singapore Youth Festival International Night and as we look ahead I hope we can be a part of more international tours where the lives of young people are celebrated and their talents are encouraged.

## **Program of activities 2011**

### **Company Projects**

The first of four exchanges were held in January with Circus Monoxide's little circus troupe Half High and twenty-three fLiNGers when we travelled to Wollongong for a three day workshop together. Intensives followed in Bega in April, and Wollongong in July. The company was working with Lee Pemberton, Adam Wheeler and Jane Davis through support of the Regional Arts Artists Residency Fund to create a show called I Wanna Be.

fLiNG Auditions were held on February 12<sup>th</sup> and twenty-five young people were accepted into the company, with eighteen YfLiNG.

I Wanna be opens in Bega on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. It is an outstanding success with sell out shows. The cast consists of twenty-three performers from Bega joined by ten performers from Wollongong. With audiences of 1,026 people attending in a town with a population of 7,000, our audience average is over 10% of the population. Reviewer Alex Nicol says fLiNG is “a jewel to be treasured” and “the grace and strength of the circus performers seems effortless; the dancers are both subtle and sensitive”.

A cast of twelve fLiNG and ten Half High go on to perform the show in Wollongong at the Illawarra Children’s Festival. The show has three runs and 600 people attend.

### **Additional performances and projects**

Due to cancellation of the Australian Youth Dance Festival and in partnership with QL2, ten young performers travelled to Canberra with Lee Pemberton and Adam Wheeler where fLiNG attends a gathering of Youth Dance Groups at Canberra’s Quantum Leap Headquarters for three days of workshops and performance exchanges.

During 2011 fLiNG also performs at relay for life in March, Merimbula Jazz festival in June, Candelo Markets in September, Mumbulla Foundation fundraising ball and Bega Chamber of Commerce event at Bega TAFE in November.

Socialsize me development workshops are held with eight performers during July school holidays. The workshops are led by Lee Pemberton and they explore dance making with each performer making a solo.

### **Home Base and take fLiGHT**

In December Take fLiGHT becomes a special occasion as fLiNG’s 10<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration. fLiNG members have been learning repertoire from the previous 10 years of past shows. Traditionally Home Base is a week that invites Alumni back to work with the company and in 2011 we have eight Alumni, twenty-three fLiNGers and eighteen YfLiNGers performing at Take fLiGHT.

Local filmmaker Toni Houston is engaged to edit a media film with Lee Pemberton that uses highlights from the archives of past performances. The media has been designed to work with live performance and to

celebrate past and present performers, dances and celebrate fLiNG's heritage.

fLiNG Physical Theatre performs two shows of Take fLiGHT and it is a glowing success and many, many people come who have been performers with the company or family of performers or those who have seen fLiNG shows from the past. The performance highlights fLiNG's contribution to the community during the past ten years and is a lot of fun.

### **Community Involvement**

From January 7 to 9 forty-four young people participated in three days of dance in three different styles with guest teachers who were all fLiNG Alumni. There is a showing of dances learnt and the summer school becomes a great success, for the benefit of the community and our alumni.

The fLiNG program commences after auditions in February and it includes community classes in gym on Tuesday and Boys Only on Friday. We have a group of thirty-five community members attending fLiNG weekly classes.

I Wanna Be, guest artist Adam Wheeler, and Lee Pemberton deliver five workshops for secondary school students at Eden, Bega and Narooma High Schools and a part of I Wanna Be project, they also record 30 voices from Tathra Public School for the sound score that was created for the show.

### **Artistic Director and Additions**

Artistic Director, Lee Pemberton, attends the National Dance Forum in Melbourne organized by the Australia Council and Ausdance. The forum was a dynamic conversation for the whole dance sector choreographers, dancers, independent artists, artistic directors, educators and dance producers.

Jane Davis and Lee Pemberton attend and speak at the Illawarra Merrigong Theatre Children's Festival conference. They present a talk about collaboration and creativity to conference delegates. Eight fLiNG and Half High performers are installed in performance vignettes in the foyer of the theatre that is a feature at the conference.

fLiNG's 2010 performance of The Voyage is nominated for an Australian Dance award.