

'INTERIM'

A choreographic collaboration with Ben Wright and US choreographer Allyson Green.

Allyson and myself have known each other for some 8 years now and this duet marks the first time that we have actually ever danced together professionally. The project was begun in July 2002 at Greenwich Dance Agency where we completed four weeks of working time. At the end of this period we had a clear sense of the piece's direction but needed a considerable amount of time to complete the process. As we had a premiere date already booked in New York for January 2003 it was imperative that a second and third period was needed to finish the work. Due to the geographical distance between us it was clear that these following periods of working time would have to be conducted in the US.

Thanks to funds from the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship I was able to fly to San Diego in November 2002, where Allyson is based, and spend a further three weeks working intensively on the duet. During my five-week stint in California I was also able to create a new short work for the Beverly Hills High School Dance Company, which was also premiered in January 2003.

The November rehearsal period was a pivotal amount of time where we were able to question and fine-tune the growing nature of the work. The duet format can give rise to a whole host of emotional connotations and it became clear that our choreographic invention was summoning up a fragmented story. This fractured narrative grew organically from our movement investigation and while in San Diego we called on the assistance of a local theatre director, Margaret Williams, to help guide this through line.

Allyson had in her possession a book of poetry by Bernice Kenyon a contemporary of Dorothy Parker. This old volume was in fact given to her grandmother as a gift by the authoress herself. The final set of sonnets, entitled 'Interim' was to be the main influence on the overall affecting colour of the work. We decided to set the piece visually in the 1930's to tally with the historical period of the poetry and this choice greatly influenced our lighting designer Sarah Gilmartin and costume designer Leslie Malitz.

We held a viewing of the work in progress at our rehearsal venue, San Diego State University, at the end of November. This was a valuable opportunity to gain feedback from various local dance artists. Their comments helped carve the final version of the duet.

Whilst in America we were also able to meet regularly with the fine artist Peter Terezakis who was creating a visual and sculptural response to the duet. His contribution to the final evenings performance added a gallery type experience where audience members were able to wander around an installation of objects and video works. These were built to illuminate the themes held at the heart of the duet and offer viewers a collection of alternative objects to experience in a more intimate way, hence balancing their group experience of watching the duet en masse.

I returned to the UK at the start of December 2002 to complete other work commitments and returned to the US on 27th December to enter the last stage of rehearsal prior to our premiere at Danspace Project at St Marks Church on January 16th 2003.

I would like to thank The Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship for their generous support in enabling me to complete the second period of rehearsal for this project. Collaborating with Allyson has offered me invaluable insight into the intimate act of making a dance with one other person. Having won the Jerwood Choreographic award in November 2003 to make another duet with fellow UK dance artist Rachel Krische, I am certain that the experiences of working on 'Interim' will have a dramatic impact on future processes. We have a performance of 'Interim' in June 2003 at Greenwich Dance Agency and subsequent dates in the US during the autumn of 2003. I hope that the trustees will be able to attend the London performance.