

**MELBOURNE**  
International Arts  
**FESTIVAL**

2 → 20  
October  
2019

Jo Lloyd

# OVERTURE

Presented with Arts House



**Wed 2—Sun 6 October**  
**Arts House**

This performance runs for 50 minutes  
with no interval.

This performance contains nudity,  
smoke effects and loud music.

Please ensure all mobile phones  
are switched off or on silent.

## Artist Statement

### What do I see when I watch from within and without?

Unspoken words seep out of the skin and memories burst quietly through the fingertips. Desires and unspoken conversations pepper the overture before they are discarded or used to form new memories, conversations and other desires. Dancing through the culture, gender and genealogy stored within them, using skills and failures cultivated to communicate, the dancers disclose their private and shared pasts. They shake, run, halt, throw limbs and memories out through the ends of their fingers, their hair. They halt, gather, shake, halt, run, fling and halt again. They cross, meet, entwine and recoil. They find a common desire in fantasy, in the imagination of movement.

Felix Mendelssohn's overture for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* hit a nerve, one that reverberated through the past and present understanding of beauty and desire. It brought to light Fanny, the sister, the genius, the one who was only permitted to shimmer a fraction of what she could. It brought to light beauty as masculine determination. It brought to mind other voices that were never heard, desires that were never fulfilled. It brought out stories that were never shared, and things never said. It provided a musical overture to make new music that supports current dreams and desires and the possibility to recuperate mistakes and redesign them with new energy. Felix and Fanny's *Overture* is the departure point for a larger investigation into ideas of permission, being audible, pilgrimages, shared fictions, history making, overdue and redundant conversations, glorification, and a desire to penetrate.

*OVERTURE* imagines a way to draw back and reconnect to those gone, those who didn't have a voice, those who never heard yours. *OVERTURE* gathers memories, fleeting images and imagined pasts. It projects them into the space, on to the walls and onto one another. *OVERTURE* allows for the body to feel possessed and possessing. *OVERTURE* is for the brave ones. — **Anny Mokotow**

Photo: Bryony Jackson



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nerve, one that reverberated  
through the past and present  
understanding of beauty  
and desire.

## Artistic Credits

**Director &  
Choreographer**  
Jo Lloyd

**Performers**  
Deanne Butterworth  
Sheridan Gerrard  
Rebecca Jensen  
Jo Lloyd

**Original Cast**  
Shian Law

**Composer**  
Duane Morrison

**Lighting Design**  
Jenny Hector

**Set Design**  
Jenny Hector in  
collaboration with  
Andrew Treloar and  
Jo Lloyd

**Costume Design**  
Andrew Treloar

**Backdrop Image**  
Peter Rosetzky

**Dramaturg**  
Anny Mokotow

**Producer**  
Michaela Coventry  
(Sage Arts)



Photo: Peter Rosetzky

## Watching and Thinking

### It began with an overture.

Choreographer Jo Lloyd had the urge to create a really physical, tightly realised dance work and at the same time had been listening obsessively to Felix Mendelssohn's overture for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The two began to blur.

"I wanted to make the physicality as meticulous and impressive and remarkable as what he'd done. Almost do an old-fashioned pairing of this and that. Not as a competition but if he can do that, I can meet it physically."

Her fascination only deepened when she began to research Mendelssohn and his sister Fanny. "I learned that like a lot of history there were two people making art, but one isn't seen. She was told to stay in the home, not write, not play, not publish. She had these Sunday sessions in her home and Felix backed up her father and said no, you shouldn't play. Fanny Mendelssohn had a sad time but she made incredible music and a lot of it's still not even released by the family."

You might see Fanny Mendelssohn in *OVERTURE*, if you know how to look. Lloyd's choreography might not be literal or representational—this isn't a play about the Mendelssohns—but neither is it purely technical.

"I think of dancing as watching the thinking," says Lloyd. "You're watching us think. If we're thinking '5-6-7-8' that's a problem to me."

If we're thinking of a reference point to a film where in the final moments everything's got to be in that frame and everything's got to work together, if you're thinking of that when you gaze out at the audience, they're going to see it."

When Lloyd says 'we' she means it. Unlike most of her peers, she still performs in the work she creates. "I always felt I made better choices from the inside. If I made work from the outside I didn't really like my choices. I guess it's not so much I still want to be on show. It's more I'm still interested in the process of preparing and performing."

Lloyd says the goal of her work is to stir desires that we can't necessarily name. Her own choreography aims to provoke a more lingering response, and to have audiences questioning why they react a certain way.

Lloyd was baffled to discover more than a few viewers crying during *OVERTURE*'s initial season. Just as strange is the way her work can generate laughs among the crowd and even from the choreographer herself.

"In the studio we try and we try and there's this moment where we realise we've struck gold, and I'm often in fits of giggles," she says. "I'm incredibly serious, I'm intense about what I do. It must be the joy to have found something."

— John Bailey

John Bailey is a freelance writer based in Melbourne.

## Biographies



**Jo Lloyd**  
Director & Choreographer

Jo Lloyd is an influential Melbourne dance artist working with choreography as a social encounter. A graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts, she has presented work in Japan, Hong Kong, for Dance Massive, Liveworks, the Museum of Contemporary Art and PICA. Recent works include *LIVE JUNK*, *Garden Dance* for the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, *CUTOOUT* for ACCA (2018 Melbourne International Arts Festival), *Confusion for Three* (PICA 2018, Arts House 2015), and *Mermermer* for Chunky Move—Next Move 2016, which received Helpmann and Green Room Award nominations. In 2016 she was the Resident Director of Lucy Guerin Inc. She recently received an Australia Council Fellowship and is a Resident Artist at The SUBSTATION.



**Deanne Butterworth**  
Performer

Deanne Butterworth is a Melbourne-based, Perth born dancer and choreographer. Her practice is informed by the dynamics of how people work together while accessing different energies and memories often in relation to the space they occupy. Over 25 years she has worked with many choreographers including Phillip Adams, Shelley Lasica, Shian Law, Jo Lloyd, Sandra Parker and Brooke Stamp performing nationally and internationally. From 2017—19 she was a studio artist at Gertrude Contemporary and is currently Resident Artist at Temperance Hall where she recently premiered her work, *Group Furniture*. In June this year she co-created *Double Double* with Jo Lloyd, Evelyn Ida Morris and Tina Havelock Stevens which was performed at the Potter Museum, and will have its Sydney premiere at Liveworks in October 2019.



**Sheridan Gerrard**  
Performer

Sheridan Gerrard is a Melbourne-based dance artist. She graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Dance). She has performed at the Tanz Im August festival, Melbourne Fringe Festival and Tari International Dance Festival and in the works of choreographers including Jo Lloyd, Nebahat Erpolat, Shian Law, Emma Riches and Rebecca Jensen/Sarah Aiken. She was the recipient of the Ian Potter Cultural Trust for emerging artists in 2017, travelling to European dance festivals and performing in a reproduction of Anna Halprin's work. In 2018, she participated in the Venice Biennale College dancer program, training in somatic practices and performing in the works of Marie Chouinard and Daina Ashbee.

## Biographies



**Rebecca Jensen**  
Performer

Rebecca Jensen is a Melbourne-based, New Zealand born dancer, choreographer, and teacher. She has worked with Jo Lloyd for almost 10 years. Jensen's work collages narratives, symbolism and learned physicalities with an enduring interest in improvisational scores that examine social and ecological systems. Works include *Deep Sea Dances* (Dance Massive 2017), *Explorer* (Kier Choreographic Award finalist 2016), *Blue Illusion* (VCA 2018) and *Spawn* (Venice Biennale College Dance 2018). With Sarah Aiken, Jensen has created *What Am I Supposed To Do? (WAISTD)* (Arts Centre Melbourne/Melbourne Fringe Take Over! 2019), *OVERWORLD* (Next Wave Festival 2014, Dance Massive 2015) and *Underworld* (Supercell Festival Brisbane, Northcote Town Hall 2017, Melbourne Knowledge Week 2019) and the ongoing participatory project *Deep Soulful Sweats* presented locally, interstate and internationally.



**Duane Morrison**  
Composer

Duane Morrison graduated from Melbourne University majoring in Composition. Active in the composition of scores for contemporary dance artists in Melbourne, he has collaborated closely with choreographer Jo Lloyd for many years, receiving a Green Room Award (Music Composition and Sound Design) for his work on *Mermermer* (Chunky Move—Next Move 2016). He also received Green Room nominations for *OVERTURE* (2018), *Apparently That's What Happened* (2008 with David Franzke) and *Future Perfect* (2011/Dance Massive 2013). Other collaborations include Lloyd's *Garden Dance* (2019), Nicola Gunn's *Green Screen* (Melbourne Theatre Company's Neon Festival), *In Spite of Myself* (2013 Melbourne International Arts Festival), *Yellow Wheel's I Came Here to Dance* (2016) and *Neo* (2018). More recently he has produced the soundtracks for Christian Thompson's works *Berceuse* (2017) and *Phantom* (Adelaide Biennial 2018).



**Jenny Hector**  
Lighting Design

Jenny Hector first worked with Jo Lloyd in 2006, lighting her piece *I Smiled for a Full Minute* for Dance Works' last show *Duplicate*. Since then she has lit her work *Public=UnPublic*, *Not As Others* and *Confusion For Three* and designed the set and lighting for *Apparently That's What Happened* and *Future Perfect*. Jenny is the recipient of two Green Room Awards and the 2017 Technical Achievement Award.



**Andrew Treloar**  
Costume Design

Andrew Treloar is an artist working between contemporary art, dance and fashion design. From 2016 to 2019 he inaugurated and ran Treloarland, his own dance-specific development and small performance studio. Recent works include the design, production and choreography of *Insufficient Therapy Dance* at Kings Artist Run Flashnight in 2018 and *Splintering* at Treloarland in 2017. Treloar has worked extensively in costume and set design with leading choreographers such as Lucy Guerin and Dancenorth. His collaborative conversation with Jo Lloyd has developed through *OVERTURE*, *Live Junk* and *Garden Dance* and Deanne Butterworth and Jo Lloyd's *Double Double*.



**Anny Mokotow**  
Dramaturg

Anny Mokotow is a dramaturg, performer and lecturer. From the 1970s to the 1990s she worked in the Netherlands and Europe as dancer and theatre maker where she was involved in experiments with postdramatic and multidisciplinary theatre. With a degree in Film from the VCA, Anny worked as production designer and art director after her return to Australia. She has a PhD from the University of Melbourne on Dance and Dramaturgy and her current work is concerned with the dramaturgical body as part of multidisciplinary practice. Her research and interests lie in the social and cultural implications of contemporary performance and the visual arts.



**Michaela Coventry**  
Producer

Michaela Coventry's career as a producer spans 20 years and all artforms, and she is currently the Creative Director of Sage Arts. With Sage Arts she works with many independent artists and companies including Jo Lloyd, Gail Priest, Genevieve Lacey, Madeleine Flynn, Lee Serle, Matthias Schack-Arnott, Henry Jock Walker, Musica Viva's Future Makers Program with Aura Go and acts as an advisor to MESS.  
[sage-arts.com](http://sage-arts.com)

## Arts House

Arts House is where artists and audiences gather to find new frontiers in contemporary performance. Hyperlocal and intergalactic, Arts House's development and presentation programs create new live experiences across artforms. A key program of the City of Melbourne, Arts House drives major curatorial projects such as Dance Massive, BLEED and Refuge as well as presenting art in partnership with festivals in Melbourne and nationwide.

[artshouse.com.au](http://artshouse.com.au)

**ARTS HOUSE**



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Jonathan Holloway

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Cover photo: Peter Rosetzky

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Melbourne International Arts Festival acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live, learn and work. We pay our respects to the Kulin Elders and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

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