

Split shifts between two bodies, reconciled and in conflict.

Dividing and Sub-Dividing

When it premiered at Dance Massive at Arts House in 2017, Lucy Guerin's *Split* quickly became the must-see work audiences were raving about.

It has been touring almost constantly ever since, and at 70 performances Guerin thinks that might be more runs than any of her previous works. She's not entirely sure why. "I would never have expected it. I felt like it was a fairly abstract work and often audiences struggle with that."

Split might not be a literal work but it is one with rules and boundaries, and unfolds with the beauty of an elegant equation. Much of the pleasure it affords arises at the intersection of surprise and inevitability.

"I think there is something about the readability of the structure and the way that the space is divided each time, that people feel like there's an outline for it. They feel quite secure with it, somehow. They feel that they know where it's going, not in an emotional sense or in the narrative of it, but just structurally and spatially."

The structure of *Split* wasn't there from the outset. Guerin's is a process-driven practice, never beholden to an overarching premise, and the taut form of *Split* was a way of organising the volume of work that was left on the rehearsal room floor. "We were dancing around inside big cellophane bags at one stage and learning cartoon movements off YouTube. There were a lot of things that really didn't find their way into the work. But all the while I was building these different phrases based on the idea of looping. That really became the first section of the work. And then I had these other more abstract sections that were made through tasks. We had also been working on this kind of hyper-dramatised movement, amongst a lot of other things. There was a certain moment when I had all these bits and was wondering what I was going to do with them."

That was when the simple genius of dividing and sub-dividing the stage with tape came to Guerin. "I knew that it would have a slightly dramatic form because of the decreasing time and space. It would give it some sense of urgency and tension. And so I started arranging everything into that structure."

That was the turning point. "I'll be working on a lot of different things and then there'll be a penny drop moment when something seems to make sense of it all. It's quite scary, because if that doesn't happen then you've got to do the best you can, but I try to trust that that moment will come." — **John Bailey**

John Bailey is a freelance writer based in Melbourne.

Lucy Guerin Inc

Lucy Guerin Inc (LGI) is an Australian contemporary dance company established in Melbourne in 2002 by Artistic Director Lucy Guerin to create and tour new dance works. Renowned for the skill of its creative team and the originality of its productions, LGI is dedicated to researching, challenging and extending the art of contemporary dance.

lucyguerininc.com

LGI/

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.

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ARTS HOUSE



Lucy Guerin Inc is supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body, the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria's Organisation Investment Program and the City of Melbourne, through its triennial funding.

Split is supported by City of Melbourne through Arts House.

Photos (original cast): Gregory Lorenzutti

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2 → 20
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Lucy Guerin Inc

Split

Presented with Arts House

Wed 2—Sun 6 October
Meat Market

This performance runs for 50 minutes with no interval.

This performance contains nudity.

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

Principal Public Partner





Director's Note

The inspiration for *Split* came from a desire to get into the studio with just two dancers.

Having worked on some larger pieces over the last couple of years, I wanted that luxury of closeness with the dancers, to play and search in a low-pressure environment. This for me is the joy of dance making, a chance to burrow into the pure elements of choreography: time, space, structure and the movement of the human body. And to allow content to develop from that process which has resonance in the world.

Split shifts between two bodies, reconciled and in conflict. The diminishing world that they inhabit induces competition, negotiation, harmony and aggression. They set their own parameters. Dividing the time length of each section and the amount of space for each, I also wanted to disrupt the harmony between the two dancers. We tried different costumes but that didn't seem to read clearly. Having one naked and the other clothed created a *Split* in identity that intensified the piece. For me it gives seriousness and normality to the female body, which is such a site of commodification, exploitation, shame and shock. In *Split* it is what the body does as much as what it is that is important. — **Lucy Guerin**

Artistic Credits

Choreographer
Lucy Guerin

Dancers
Ashley McLellan
Lilian Steiner

Composer
Scanner

Lighting Designer
Paul Lim

Sound Designer
Robin Fox

Producer
Michaela Coventry
(to August 2019)
Aneke McCulloch
(from September 2019)



Lucy Guerin
Choreographer

Born in Adelaide, Lucy Guerin graduated from the Centre for Performing Arts in 1982 before joining the companies of Russell Dumas (Dance Exchange) and Nanette Hassall (Danceworks). She moved to New York in 1989 for seven years where she danced with Tere O'Connor Dance, the Bebe Miller Company and Sara Rudner, and began to produce her first choreographic works. Guerin returned to Australia in 1996 and worked as an independent artist and in 2002, she established Lucy Guerin Inc (LGI) in Melbourne to support the development, creation and touring of new works with a focus on challenging and extending the concepts and practice of contemporary dance. Recent LGI works include *The Dark Chorus* (2016 Melbourne International Arts Festival), *Split* and *Attractor* (2017) and *Make Your Own World* (2019). Guerin has toured her work extensively in Europe, Asia and North America as well as to most of Australia's major festivals and venues. She has been commissioned by Chunky Move, Dance Works Rotterdam (Netherlands), Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project (USA), Lyon Opera Ballet (France), Skånes Dansteater (Sweden) and Rambert (UK) among many others. In 2016, Guerin received the Australia Council Award for Dance.



Ashley McLellan
Dancer

Ashley McLellan graduated from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts in 2010 with an Advanced Diploma in Performing Arts (Dance). During and after her training, McLellan performed with the West Australian Ballet under the directorship of Ivan Cavallari until 2011. She has worked with artists such as Melanie Lane, Graham Murphy, Garry Stewart, Ivan Cavallari, Nana Bilus Abaffy, Tony Yap, Alisdair Macindoe, Kyle Page, Amber Haines, Geoffrey Watson, Stephanie Lake, Ross McCormack, Lee Serle, Lucy Guerin Inc and Gideon Obarzanek. McLellan joined Dancenorth Australia as a full-time dancer in 2015. McLellan has choreographed and performed in short works including *Other* (2013), *Pearl* for Lucy Guerin Inc's season of *Pieces for Small Spaces* (2014) and *Free Dive* with Dancenorth (2017).



Lilian Steiner
Dancer

Lilian Steiner is a Melbourne-based dancer and choreographer working within dance, visual arts and experimental sound performance. Since graduating from the Victorian College of the Arts in 2010, Steiner has worked with Lucy Guerin Inc across many projects including *Structure and Sadness*, *Weather* (2012 Melbourne International Arts Festival), *Motion Picture*, *The Dark Chorus* (2016 Melbourne International Arts Festival), *Split* and *Make Your Own World*. She has worked with Phillip Adams BalletLab, Shelley Lasica, Melanie Lane, Brooke Stamp, Leah Landau and Rennie McDougall, visual artists Sally Smart, Brooke Andrew, Ash Keating, Mikala Dwyer and Alicia Frankovic, architect Matthew Bird (Studio Bird) and sound artists JLIN, Anna Homler and Richie Cyngler. Steiner received the Green Room Award for Best Female Dancer in both 2017 and 2018, as well as the Helpmann Award in 2017.



Scanner
Composer

Since 1991, Scanner—British artist Robin Rimbaud—has been intensely active in sonic art, producing concerts, installations and recordings, connecting a bewilderingly diverse array of genres. He scored the hit musical comedy *Kirikou & Karaba* (2007) and *Narnia ballet* (2015), *Philips Wake-Up Light* (2009), the re-opening of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and in 2016 installed *Water Drops* at Rijeka Airport in Croatia. His work *Salles des Departs* (2003) is permanently installed in a working morgue in Paris. Committed to working with cutting edge practitioners he has collaborated with Bryan Ferry, Wayne McGregor, Mike Kelley, Michael Nyman, Steve McQueen, Laurie Anderson and Hussein Chalayan. Scanner worked with Lucy Guerin on the 2016 commission for Rambert, *Tomorrow*.



Paul Lim
Lighting Designer

Paul is a Melbourne-based lighting designer with a broad range of experience in theatrical and event production. His multifaceted knowledge has been used to provide integrated solutions for theatre, festivals and events around the world. Lighting design credits include *The Dark Chorus* (2016 Melbourne International Arts Festival) and *Split* for Lucy Guerin Inc, *The Magic Flute* for New Zealand Opera, *Changes* 變 and *Siva* for Black Grace Dance Company, *Fault Lines* (2012 Melbourne International Arts Festival) for Le Shan Modern Dance Company, *Trapper and Robot Song* for Arena Theatre Company and *Hot Brown Honey, Briefs: Close Encounters, Briefs: The Second Coming* and *Yana Alana: Queen Kong* for Briefs Factory. Lim is a director of Additive, providing lighting design and technical solutions to the entertainment industry.



Robin Fox
Sound Designer

Robin Fox is an artist working in sound and light across performance, installation, interactive systems and contemporary dance. His AV works with lasers (*Monochroma*, *RGB*) have been performed worldwide to critical acclaim. In dance he is a frequent collaborator with Lucy Guerin and has also collaborated regularly with Stephanie Lake, Antony Hamilton and Gideon Obarzanek, among others. His music is released internationally through Editions Mego. Current projects include *Sky Light*, a citywide laser installation commissioned by Melbourne Fringe and *Double Vision*, a collaboration with electronic music legend Atom TM. Fox is co-founder of MESS (Melbourne Electronic Sound Studio) which opened in April 2016.