

## MEDIA RELEASE

### YOUNG PERFORMING ARTIST WINS MAJOR DANCE FELLOWSHIP

4 March 2019

Melbourne experimental artist Geoffrey Watson has been awarded the highly-prestigious 2019 Tanja Liedtke Fellowship.

28 year-old Watson, a rising star in dance and choreography, will now travel to Berlin, Germany in July for a four-week residency at ada Studio where he will work alongside some of Europe's most-acclaimed companies and attend the *Tanz im August*, the city's annual international contemporary dance festival.

The Tanja Liedtke Foundation was established in July 2008 in honour of dancer and choreographer, Tanja Liedtke.

In 2009, the Foundation introduced the Tanja Liedtke Fellowship as a way to support emerging artists to broaden their choreographic practice and creativity and encourage global artistic connections and exchange.

Open to Australian dancers and choreographers between the ages of 20-35, the Fellowship is offered in partnership with Australian Dance Theatre's (ADT) International Centre for Choreography and is awarded after a rigorous interview and selection process by a panel from both organisations.

"The Foundation is extremely proud to see how well the past Fellows have developed. Our wish for Geoffrey is that this Fellowship gives him a similar inspiration for future development in his artistic work," said a spokesperson for the Foundation.

ADT's Artistic Director, Garry Sewart agreed, saying previous recipients have become leading artists within their fields and he has similar hopes for Watson.

"Geoffrey is a fascinating and compelling young artist who is in the process of evolving his own singular and unique methodology and point of view on dance," said Mr. Stewart.

"The unparalleled cultural buzz of Berlin will no doubt provide him the perfect stimulus to further distil his work and we are excited to witness the impact the Fellowship will make on Geoffrey's artistic trajectory and his future contribution to Australian contemporary dance."

Watson, who has also established a complementary and successful career in music, fashion and sculpture said securing the Fellowship couldn't have come at a better time.

"As an independent artist, maintaining freedom in your thought and work makes it difficult to find well supported opportunities," said Watson.

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“We’re always working with the hope that people connect with the excitement we feel for our own vision, and I’m very grateful that this has happened for me this year with the Tanja Liedtke Fellowship.

“Being awarded this means that I will have a period in which to work essentially unconstrained in the seductive new environment of Berlin and during this time I will be using photography and design as an in-road to performance.”

**Notes to editors: images available on request**

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**ABOUT GEOFFREY WATSON**

Based in Melbourne, Geoffrey Watson is an experimental artist who is rooted in dance but has branches in wearable design, text, music and sculpture. Geoffrey advocates for an advanced state of confundity in the already confusing landscapes of art, desire, identity and performance.

Geoffrey's choreographic work includes: *Camel* (Next Wave Festival 2016) and *Camel Extracts* (Saatchi Other Art Fair 2017), *Loving You Ad Nauseam* (Melbourne Fringe 2016), *DISTRACTION: T.C. is a Rotten Piece of Shit* (Counihan Gallery, 2017) *DISTRACTION: Smackdown* (Melbourne Fashion Week 2017), and *The Reverse Jayne* (Temperance Hall, 2018).

Geoffrey creates fashion, costume and wearable art under the label GEOFFREY GEOFFREY GEOFFREY. This work has featured in exhibitions at Virgin Australia Fashion Festival, Melbourne Fashion Week, and in performances by choreographers including Phillip Adams, Lillian Steiner, Nana Biluš Abaffy and Brooke Stamp.

Geoffrey works regularly with choreographers Nana Biluš Abaffy and Phillip Adams (BalletLab), and have also performed in works by artists and companies including Hermann Nitsch, Lee Serle, Natalie Abbott, Gekidan Kaitaisha (Tokyo), and The Australian Ballet.

**ABOUT THE TANJA LIEDTKE FOUNDATION**

The Tanja Liedtke Foundation was established in 2008 to honour the dancer and choreographer, Tanja Liedtke. The Foundation's purpose is to preserve the artistic legacy of Tanja Liedtke, support the development of contemporary dance theatre and foster Australian/European artistic connections.

The Tanja Liedtke Foundation seeks to achieve this by encouraging, supporting and celebrating a spirit of creative adventure in choreography and dance practice, and by enabling exciting opportunities for a broad range of dance artists.

**[www.tanja-liedtke-foundation.org](http://www.tanja-liedtke-foundation.org)**

**ABOUT AUSTRALIAN DANCE THEATRE AND THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR CHOREOGRAPHY**

Celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> year in 2015, Australian Dance Theatre (ADT) is one of Australia's pre-eminent contemporary dance companies, producing works that reflect Australia's creativity, innovation and vibrancy.

Under the artistic directorship of world-renowned choreographer, Garry Stewart, since 1999, ADT tours to wide acclaim nationally and internationally.

ADT's International Centre for Choreography was established in 2018 to expand the definition of choreography, to act as a nexus for the exchange of ideas and to provide support for local, interstate and international artists.

In 2019, the Centre has managed the Fellowship application process in partnership with the Centre's supporting partner, the Tanja Liedtke Foundation.

**[www.adt.org.au](http://www.adt.org.au)**

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